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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 May 2025

by **A. J. Boughton MA (IPSD) Dip.Arch. Dip.(Conservation) RIBA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 June 2025

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**Appeal Ref: APP/M2840/W/25/3360654**

**Land to the rear of 40 High Street Gretton Corby NN17 3DE**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mrs Britt Cordi against the decision of North Northamptonshire Council.
  - The application Ref is NC/24/00091/OUT.
  - The development proposed is New dwelling on land to the rear of 40 High Street Gretton.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for New dwelling on land to the rear of 40 High Street Gretton NN17 3DE in accordance with the terms of the Application Ref: NC/24/00091/OUT and the plans submitted with it subject to the following conditions:
  - 1) Details of the access, appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale, (hereinafter called "the reserved matters") shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before any development takes place and the development shall be carried out as approved.
  - 2) Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the local planning authority not later than 3 years from the date of this permission.
  - 3) The development hereby permitted shall take place not later than 2 years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.

### Preliminary Matters

2. Although the Council describe<sup>1</sup> the application as seeking '*permission for a two bedroomed detached bungalow including associated parking and landscaping*' that neither reflects what appears on the application form<sup>2</sup> nor that the application is in outline with all matters reserved. Consequently, many issues referred to by the Council and by others would be subject to later consideration. The drawings submitted are indicative and not determinative as to appearance, landscaping, layout and scale, being the matters reserved.

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<sup>1</sup> In the officer report

<sup>2</sup> Which is correctly set out in the decision

3. The first reason for refusal states that there would be a '*detrimental impact on the visual pattern of development* (within and adjoining the Gretton Conservation Area)....'. and the third reason for refusal suggests there would be '*unacceptable harm to the outlook and amenity of adjoining occupiers*'. However an entirely different proposal could be submitted at reserved matters stage, potentially providing an acceptable response to these and other concerns, consequently the main issues to be addressed in this decision are limited accordingly.
4. The planning application was submitted on 24 February 2024, however the application form claims exemption from the Biodiversity Net Gain requirement on the basis that the house would be a custom-built self-build property.

### **Main Issues**

5. The Main Issues are, therefore:
  - whether, having regard to the relevant policies of the development plan and the effect of the development upon the use of Orchard Lane, the proposed development would be suitably located, and
  - the effect of introducing a new dwelling upon the character and appearance of the area including upon the Gretton Conservation Area (GCA).

### **Reasons**

#### *Location of the proposed development*

6. The appeal site falls within the curtilage of 40 High Street Gretton (No.40), occupying part of the rear garden which is currently accessed by gates from the unmade part of Orchard Lane that serves several dwellings including No.40. Whilst I note the comments of third parties including the Highways consultation response, even if the existing access were found to be little used at present, the appeal site is, nevertheless capable of being used as parking by occupiers of No.40 with capacity for up to two private cars or vans within the appeal site. Whilst the proposed additional dwelling would change this situation as occupiers of No.40 would no longer have the alternative of off-road parking, in the absence of evidence as to where the occupiers of No.40 currently park it has not been shown that the effect of the development would be to unacceptably increase the use of on-street parking which, at the time of my visit, was freely available within a convenient distance of the pavement entrance to No.40.
7. The unmade section of Orchard Lane which serves the proposal site does not accord with dimensional standards for highways, however there appears to be adequate manoeuvring room to access the other dwellings and the appeal site. Overall, whilst the garden to No.40 would be reduced this would not be to an unacceptable degree and with regard to the use of Orchard Lane what is proposed would not significantly change the existing position in that the appeal site is currently accessible by vehicle. I further note that the proposed development need not detrimentally increase the use of Orchard Lane on the basis that the number of vehicles accessing the property could be appropriately limited by a layout submitted as part of reserved matters.
8. Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2016) (NNJCS) sets out the principles for high quality design, primarily seeking a design-led approach to development. I consider the appeal site to be a size suitable for the construction of

a small dwelling<sup>3</sup> and to a design which might more favourably reflect the character of other buildings within the GCA, a matter to which I now turn.

*Character and appearance*

9. The appeal site lies partly within the GCA and partly in its setting and therefore special attention should be paid to the design of the proposal having regard to the General Duty set out in S72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. It lies at a higher level at the rear of No.40 and is both offset and separated by intervening garden. In that regard it is clear that the development pattern within the GCA, which features an intimate arrangement of dwellings densely arranged along the High Street frontage, albeit with irregular gaps and view opportunities with various ancillary structures to the rear, differs significantly from the later infilling found to the north of the GCA boundary.
10. Policy 2 of the NNJCS seeks to ensure development enhances the significance of heritage assets and their setting. In this case the indicative design of the proposal suggests a single storey dwelling built closely to neighbouring boundaries, sharing elements of the more suburban character in terms of plot sizes and building form. However, given the extent of matters reserved, I do not find it necessary to attach more than limited weight to the indicative proposals as it is plainly possible by careful design to respond more appropriately to the pattern and character of built form in the GCA which includes many secondary structures, and to use appropriate materials and landscaping opportunities.
11. It is not disputed that the appeal site could be a suitable location for development as a windfall site and is of a size and shape such that a small dwelling, albeit with a different configuration of built form to that indicated, could be acceptable in terms of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale. These matters are not before me to determine but having concluded no planning harm would arise from the use of the access or from its location in principle my reasoning directs that the appeal should succeed subject to the conditions necessary to ensure approval of all the reserved matters in a timely manner.

*Andrew Boughton*

INSPECTOR

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<sup>3</sup> Not necessarily of the size or design indicated