
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 July 2025

by J Bell-Williamson MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W2845/D/25/3366916

95 Billing Road, Brafield On The Green, West Northamptonshire NN7 1BL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for the development of land without complying with a condition subject to which a previous planning permission was granted.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Stuart Jacobs against the decision of West Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/0480/S73.
 - The application sought planning permission for first floor rear extension and new window to first floor side elevation without complying with a condition attached to planning permission Ref 2024/4806/FULL, dated 8 January 2025.
 - The condition in dispute is No 2, which states that: 'The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved plans and details unless a non-material or minor material amendment is approved by the Local Planning Authority under The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). The approved plans and details are: Location and Block Plan – Drawing No: 024-045-005 Received 15.10.2024; Proposed Plans – Drawing No: 024-045-004 Rev A Received 15.10.2024; Proposed Elevations – Drawing No: 024-045-003 Rev B Received 06.12.2024'.
 - The reason given for condition No 2 is: 'To clarify the permission and for the avoidance of doubt'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The application the subject of this appeal sought permission for an amendment to a previously approved first floor extension to the appeal property. This is to change the external materials for the extension from brick to cladding.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed variation of the condition on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and related to this on the setting of Nos 89, 91 and 93 Billing Road, which are Grade II listed buildings.

Reasons

4. No 95 is a two storey detached dwelling set back from the road frontage, with a stone-built barn to the front of the plot. The barn is on the same building line as the
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neighbouring row of listed cottages. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character, with a range of property types and ages.

5. Nos 89, 91 and 93 are eighteenth century stone cottages with some more recent alterations. The traditional appearance and prominence of the cottages makes them an important feature in the street scene. As a neighbouring property, No 95 forms part of the listed buildings' setting.
6. Policies S10 and BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (2014) (JCS) both require that development will protect heritage assets and their settings. Policy HE5 of the South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan 2011-2029 (2020) (LP) says that development within the setting of a listed building will be permitted provided that the setting is preserved and that appropriate materials are used.
7. *The South Northamptonshire Design Guide* Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) indicates that stone is the predominant material for residential development, with very few other materials used, particularly within the historical core of villages. There are some examples of brick buildings, and even fewer examples of any other facing materials¹. This is evident within this part of Brafield On The Green where the majority of dwellings are stone and brick buildings.
8. The SPD also says that other facing materials, including the use of weatherboarding, are not characteristic of South Northamptonshire. It does not fit with the local vernacular and should not be proposed for any homes within the area².
9. While the proposal in this case would involve only partial use of cladding on the appeal property, it would nonetheless be contrary to the established character and appearance of the properties within the surrounding area, as indicated in the SPD. Moreover, it would result in the use of an uncharacteristic and incongruous material within the setting of the listed cottages. I am particularly mindful in this regard of the statutory requirement for decision makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building³.
10. I acknowledge that due to the set-back of the appeal property from the road frontage, the cladding on the extension to the side and rear would not readily be visible from public views. It would, however, be apparent to the rear of the listed cottages, despite the presence of vegetation and the separation distances between the properties. From these views the material's incongruous and uncharacteristic appearance in contrast to the stone and brick buildings would be apparent. Moreover, listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest and, therefore, visibility of the effects of development in their setting is not the sole or determinative consideration.
11. There is an example of similar cladding to No 86A on the opposite side of the road. However, this is a single example of use of this material, and it is not directly neighbouring the listed cottages in terms of the effect on their setting, as is the case with the appeal property. I note the appellants' contention that the SPD is guidance

¹ Paragraph 4.330.

² Paragraph 4.332.

³ Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

and not policy. It does nonetheless provide specific guidance to support the implementation of the development plan policies referred to, concerning the effects of development on heritage assets and their setting.

12. Accordingly, for the reasons given, the proposed variation of the condition would fail to preserve the setting of Nos 89, 91 and 93 Billing Road. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation⁴. Based on the above findings, I consider the harm to be less than substantial in this instance, but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.
13. Under such circumstances, the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal⁵. The appellants argue that it is not possible to obtain bricks to match the existing dwelling. I accept that it might not be possible to achieve a precise match and, therefore, the use of similar but not matching bricks needs to be weighed against the harm that has been found to result from the proposed use of cladding. As the harm to the designated asset is of considerable weight, I consider that the proposal would not provide sufficient benefits over and above the use of a similar brick finish to the existing dwelling to outweigh the harm that has been found.
14. I acknowledge that there were no objections from other parties to the proposed change of material, but this is not sufficient reason to set aside the harm that has been found.
15. Therefore, for the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed variation of condition No 2, to allow for cladding rather than brick as the external material for the approved extension, would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and would not preserve the setting of Nos 89, 91 and 93 Billing Road. Consequently, the proposal is contrary to Policies S10 and BN5 of the JCS and to Policy HE5 of the LP, as described.

Other Matters

16. I have had regard to the representation of an interested neighbouring resident. However, as this raises concerns about loss of privacy from the new window it is not directly relevant to consideration of this appeal, which is only concerned with the merits of the proposed change of material for the extension.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above it is concluded that the appeal should not succeed.

J Bell-Williamson

INSPECTOR

⁴ Paragraph 212.

⁵ Paragraph 215.