
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 September 2025

by **Paul Martinson BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H0520/D/24/3357583

30 Church Lane, Tilbrook, Huntingdon PE28 0JS

- 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 Mr Darren Pescod against the decision of Huntingdonshire District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00779/HHFUL.
 - The development proposed is described as: 'Erection of car-port'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken the site address from the appeal form as this is more accurate.
3. The appeal site is close to the Grade I listed Church of All Saints¹. It is also within the Tilbrook Conservation Area. I have therefore had special regard to sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
4. The appeal application was submitted following the grant of planning permission for the erection of a sizeable single storey extension² of a linear nature, extending from the gable of the dwelling to a position close to the side boundary of the garden. Whilst not implemented this approved scheme forms part of the appeal scheme. As this has already been approved and, on the basis of the Council's reasons for refusal, my assessment shall concentrate on the proposed car port element which would attach to the front elevation of the approved extension.
5. On the site visit I saw that an extension had already been constructed occupying part of the footprint of the approved extension. This is not shown on the existing plans that have been submitted with the appeal. Moreover, the elevational treatment as it exists on site is different to that shown on the proposed plans of the appeal scheme. Nonetheless, as I am required to do, for the avoidance of any doubt, I have based my assessment on the existing and proposed plans.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on heritage assets, including the effect on the setting of the Grade I listed Church of All Saints and whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Tilbrook Conservation Area.

¹ List Entry Number: 1214784.

² Ref: 23/00945/HHFUL.

Reasons

Special Interest and Significance

7. The Tilbrook Conservation Area (the CA) extends over much of the historic part of the village. It is characterised by predominantly detached dwellings, typically dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Materials are typically brick with some render, and slate or clay tiled roofs. Dwellings tend to be located within large open plots, the spaciousness and vegetation of which makes a highly positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA. The spaciousness of the gardens, alongside the open churchyard has the effect of blending the settlement into the surrounding countryside.
8. Based on the limited information before me, the special interest and significance of the CA, insofar as it relates to the appeal, derives from the sporadic settlement pattern comprising of spacious plots abutting open countryside, the prevalence of traditional dwellings, and its countryside and agricultural setting.
9. The Grade I listed Church of All Saints is a dominant building within the locality and the CA. It seen within a predominantly open, undeveloped landscape in views within the CA and its setting. These include views from the entrance to the village along Station Road, from High Street and from further east along Tilbrook Road, as well as along Church Lane itself. Its spire is also dominant in views from the public rights of way that terminate along Tilbrook Road. The dominance of this building seen alongside its open, undeveloped setting thus also contributes to the special interest and significance of the CA.
10. The appeal site comprises of an attractive Victorian painted brick house comprising of two gables fronting Church Lane with a slate roof. The building was constructed in 1868, however it is understood to have been extended on several occasions. Nonetheless, the extensions that have been carried out are generally subservient and, as a dwelling of traditional appearance, it makes a positive contribution to the CA. Furthermore, it is located within a spacious plot and despite the previous extensions, its built form remains distant from its boundaries with the open land to the north and west. The garden space to the side (north) of the dwelling thus remains predominantly open and undeveloped, despite the presence of a boundary fence that separates the side garden from the driveway. The garden abuts a field that adjoins the churchyard that together forms part of the open undeveloped setting of the Church of All Saints. The undeveloped nature of the side garden thus contributes to the spacious character of the CA and reinforces its special interest and significance.
11. The Church of All Saints itself is constructed of limestone rubble with some dressed stone. Part of its north arcade dates to the twelfth century, whilst the majority of the building today was constructed in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The special interest and significance of this asset, insofar as it relates to this appeal largely stems from its architectural and historic interest as a medieval parish church with extensive surviving historic fabric. It also derives from its spacious setting within the open churchyard and the neighbouring undeveloped open space, as seen across large parts of the village and beyond. The open and spacious nature of its setting is an important way in which this asset is experienced and makes a strong contribution to its special interest and significance.

12. The open nature of the garden to the side of the dwelling enables the dominance of the asset to be appreciated and, alongside the adjacent field and churchyard, contributes to the spacious character of its setting. On this basis the appeal site reinforces and contributes positively to the special interest and significance of the Grade I listed building.

Proposals and Effects

13. The appeal proposal would involve the construction of a car port capable of accommodating two cars and a store to be constructed in addition to the approved linear extension. The car port would have a significant footprint and would project out from the front elevation of the eastern limit of the approved extension, creating an L shape. The car port would have open sides. However, owing to its scale, height and solid roof, it would nevertheless appear as a substantial addition to the building, which, alongside the approved extension, would result in the extensions dominating the original building, to the detriment of its traditional character.
14. Moreover, the extension would infill much of the open space around the dwelling, eroding the spacious and open character of the plot and negatively affecting the character of the streetscene here, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the CA. Due to its, scale, position and height, the proposal would be visible for some distance in views from the churchyard, along this part of Church Lane, as well as from Station Road and the aforementioned views referred to above, albeit in some of these views the car port would be behind the approved element of the scheme.
15. It would also extend the built development within the site closer to the Grade I listed church, diminishing the openness of its setting and, to a degree, eroding its dominance. This impact and the structure itself would be particularly evident in views from the churchyard, whilst the harm would also be evident in the aforementioned wider views, all of which would adversely affect how the asset is experienced, to the detriment of its special interest and significance.
16. Whilst I am provided with limited details in this regard, I understand that a similar extension was dismissed at appeal in 2021. The Inspector at that time highlighted the importance of the spacious character to the area and found that the forward projection of that extension would have diminished that character to the detriment of the significance of the CA. This supports my above assessment.
17. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the CA. It would also fail to preserve the setting of the Grade I listed building, Church of All Saints. This would be contrary to the requirements of sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Act. In doing so it would cause harm to the significance of these designated heritage assets.

Public Benefits and Balance

18. Paragraph 212 of 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 conservation. That is irrespective of the magnitude of that harm. Consistent with that approach, paragraph 213 sets out that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, should require clear and convincing justification.

19. Given the extent and nature of the proposal, I find that the harm in this instance would be 'less than substantial' but, nevertheless, of considerable importance and weight. Under such circumstances, paragraph 215 advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing the asset's optimum viable use.
20. The appellant sets out that the proposal would result in improved functionality for the property through covered parking and storage. I acknowledge that the proposal would be beneficial in those respects. However, these would be private benefits to the appellants rather than public benefits. I have no evidence that the future of the existing dwelling would be at risk without the provision of the proposed car port, as such, the benefits in terms of ensuring the long term sustainability of the dwelling would therefore be negligible. That the proposal would replace ad-hoc external storage would not represent a meaningful benefit as I have found that its replacement would be harmful.
21. Nonetheless there would be economic benefits arising from the construction and occupation phase of the proposal. However, owing to the scale of the proposal, such benefits are inherently limited.
22. Taken together, the overall limited public benefits that would arise are not sufficient to outweigh the considerable importance and weight I attach to the identified harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets.
23. The proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. It would also fail to preserve the setting of the Grade I listed building, Church of All Saints. This would be contrary to the requirements of sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Act and the provisions within the Framework which seek to conserve and enhance heritage assets. The harmful impact would also be contrary to Policies LP 11, LP 12 and LP 34 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan (2019) which seek to ensure new developments constitute high quality design that conserves heritage assets.
24. The Council has found conflict with section 16 of the Act, however, this relates solely to listed building consents and is therefore not relevant to the appeal scheme.

Other Matters

25. I appreciate that the appellant has sought advice from the Council and that the development has been scaled down from earlier iterations. Nonetheless, my role is to assess the scheme that is before me, as I have done.

Conclusion

26. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan. There are no material considerations which indicate that the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Paul Martinson

INSPECTOR