



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 October 2025

by **R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 October 2025

Appeal Reference: APP/W2845/D/25/3370344

57 Main Road, Duston, Northampton NN5 6JN

- 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. S. E. Holland against the decision of West Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application reference is 2024/5233/FULL.
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as “Removal of existing conservatory and replacement single storey extension to rear”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for “Removal of existing conservatory and replacement single storey extension to rear”, at 57 Main Road, Duston, Northampton NN5 6JN, in accordance with the terms of the application (reference 2024/5233/FULL), subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule of Conditions.

Main issue

2. The main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surroundings in the Duston Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. Durston is an ancient village that has, in practice, joined with Northampton and now forms part of the wider urban area. Main Road is an important route through the village (as its name indicates), leading back to Northampton and it is closely built up in the vicinity of the appeal site, with buildings of various ages. In spite of the traffic flow, Main Road retains its village character and it runs through an historic area that is now designated as the Duston Conservation Area. The Conservation Area is graced by a number of listed buildings and by other buildings that have been identified in the Conservation Area Plan as “Buildings making a positive contribution”.
4. Number 57 Main Street is not specifically identified as a heritage building in this way, but it is a significant building in the Conservation Area, nonetheless. It is one of a short terrace of three cottages, close to the northern edge of the Conservation Area, with a large telephone exchange building beyond (and outside the Conservation Area). The cottages are set back from the highway with space for cars to be parked on their frontages, but they make a significant and positive contribution to the streetscene. Their front elevations are constructed of stonework

- and number 57 retains a slate roof, though the neighbouring roofs have more modern tiles.
5. At the rear, the three cottages have long narrow gardens that slope upwards, away from the buildings and the road level. The garden at the rear of number 57 is well cared for and it benefits both the property and the surroundings. The rear elevation of the dwelling shows stonework to the first floor but either side of the panel of stonework there are rendered elements on the rear elevation of the terrace. A relatively modern and somewhat nondescript conservatory extension has been added to the rear of number 57, at some time in the past.
 6. It is now proposed that this existing conservatory should be removed and replaced by a single-storey extension at the rear.
 7. Provisions in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 impose obligations on those considering whether to grant planning permission for development that would affect a conservation area. In such cases, decision makers are required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas affected by development proposals.
 8. Those formal requirements in the primary legislation are reinforced by the 'National Planning Policy Framework', especially at Section 16, which emphasises the importance of conserving or enhancing the historic environment, though it also points out the desirability of putting a heritage asset to its "optimum viable use" as does the 'Planning Practice Guidance'.
 9. In addition, the 'National Planning Policy Framework' emphasises the aim of "achieving well designed places" in the broadest sense (notably at Section 12), while making effective use of land and encouraging economic activity. It is aimed at achieving good design standards generally, by adding to the overall quality of the area and being visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history, although it is also recognised that appropriate change may include increased densities.
 10. An emphasis on the importance of protecting heritage assets as well as encouraging good design more generally is also to be found in the Development Plan. In the 'West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1)' (dated December 2014), Policy BN5 is concerned with "the historic environment and landscape", while Policy S10 addresses "sustainable development principles" and design considerations more generally. Similarly, in the 'Northampton Local Plan Part 2 2011-2029' (dated March 2023), Policy ENV6 is concerned with the "protection and enhancements of designated and non-designated heritage assets", while Policy Q1 has the broader subject of "placemaking and design".
 11. The 'Duston Neighbourhood Plan' was "made" in December 2015. Policy OP1 aims at creating a high quality environment, protecting the character and appearance of the local area.
 12. The 'Duston Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan' (dated October 2009) does not have the weight of the Development Plan but it also emphasises the importance of conservation areas.

13. The proposed rear extension at 57 Main Road would not have any visual impact on views from Main Street and would be hardly visible from other properties at the rear, other than its immediate neighbours, due to the lie of the land and the small scale of the proposal. Moreover, the flat roofed design would preserve the existing stonework element on the rear elevation and would maintain the general form of the historic building. The design of the flat roofed extension would not incorporate a traditional pitched roof but the extension would be in keeping with the original, making use of sympathetic materials, while it would be clearly subservient to the original building.
14. Although the cottage is neither a listed building nor given any other formal designation, it does make a contribution to its surroundings. The building itself would retain its character, however, and the effect on the wider Conservation Area would be minimal. Thus, the proposed extension would cause no material harm to the surroundings but would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and would be in harmony with the host building itself.
15. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is “sustainable” in planning terms, and the proposed extension would be a useful, if very small, practical improvement to the accommodation at 57 Main Road. I have concluded that the project would preserve the character and appearance of the Duston Conservation Area and that the proposed extension would be acceptable in the context of the host building and its setting. Thus, it would not be in conflict with the Development Plan or with national planning policies.
16. In short, I am persuaded that the scheme before me can properly be permitted and, although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.
17. I have, however, also considered the need for conditions and, in imposing conditions, I have taken account of those suggested by the Council in the usual way (without prejudice to their main arguments in the appeal). In particular, I have concluded that conditions are necessary, to define the planning permission and to ensure that quality is maintained.
18. In this respect, the Council have suggested a standard condition, requiring the materials to be used in the new extension to match those of the existing building. Even so, I am convinced that a more detailed control over materials is required in this case and I have imposed a condition to require the detailed materials to be formally approved by the local planning authority, prior to their incorporation into the works.

Roger C. Shrimplin

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:
 - drawing number SE/1559/1 (Existing Plans and Elevations);
 - drawing number SE/1559/2c (Proposed Plans and Elevations);
 - drawing number SE/1559/3a (Location and Block Plan).
- 3) No materials shall be incorporated into the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted until samples (or specifications) of those materials and drawings (at appropriate scales) of the construction details to be used have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details, using the approved materials.