



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 November 2025

by J Bell-Williamson MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W2845/D/25/3370865

2 Home Farm Close, Creaton, West Northamptonshire NN6 8NE

- 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 David Aveyard against the decision of West Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/1005/FULL.
 - The development proposed is removal of existing hedgerow and fence, replaced with new stone wall and composite fence on line of new boundary (retrospective).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant indicates that the original description of development has changed. Therefore, the above description reflects the amended description shown on the appeal form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the fence that has been erected on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, in particular on the setting of the Creaton Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. No 2 Home Farm Close is a one and half storey detached property in a rural village setting. It is located on the north-eastern edge of Creaton, with open land to the south and east. The appeal property is adjacent to the boundary of the Creaton Conservation Area, with a row of cottages on the other side of Home Farm Close within the conservation area.
5. The Creaton Conservation Area covers the north-western end of the village that is largely centred around The Green and includes the High Street with a range of historic and other buildings. The area also includes open fields to the northeast of the village.
6. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) defines the setting of a heritage asset as the surroundings in which that asset is experienced. Given its physical proximity and visual relationship with the conservation area, No 2 is within the area's setting.

7. Boundary treatments within the area surrounding Home Farm Close, including to the front of properties within the conservation area, are predominantly hedges or low wooden fences, often with hedges above them. These treatments complement the enclosure of the open fields adjacent to the settlement, which have hedgerows or post and rail fences at their boundaries. As such, the predominant form of boundary treatment within this part of the village reflects its wider rural setting and makes a positive contribution to the area, including the conservation area.
8. The proposal includes a new stone wall on Home Farm Close to the frontage of the appeal property. While this is relatively tall compared to other boundary treatments, it is of limited length, and the material reflects that used in surrounding properties. As such, the principal issue is the effect of the fence that has been erected, particularly along the Cottesbrooke Road frontage.
9. This is a substantive structure, comprising large composite panels, that runs along the full depth of the relatively large garden and wraps around the garden boundary at either end. The fence is forward of the position of the previous boundary treatment and, therefore, is in a prominent position within the open street scene. The height, solidity and materials contrast unfavourably with the character and appearance of the predominant forms of boundary treatment. As a result, and due to its overall extent, presence and prominence it is an incongruous and uncharacteristic feature within this setting.
10. The *Creton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan* (CAAMP) indicates that views and vistas impact upon and contribute to how the conservation area is experienced, both within the boundary and from outside the designated area. It includes two views from outside the conservation area that are relevant to the appeal proposal.
11. V2 comprises the view from Cottesbrooke Road approaching the conservation area. From this view the fence is a dominant feature in the foreground of the area, which obscures views of the row of cottages within the conservation area boundary. I have had regard to the appellant's contention that the indicative view is beyond the appeal property and, therefore, the fence has little bearing. However, the description of V2 in the CAAMP refers to the wide verges and the terrace of ironstone and brick cottages and properties on Home Farm Close.
12. Moreover, irrespective of the details in the CAAMP, the view approaching along the road from the east marks the distinct transition from open countryside to built development within the settlement. As there is a direct relationship between the fence in the foreground and the conservation area beyond this, the proposal harmfully affects the setting of the conservation area by detracting from the manner in which it is experienced when entering the settlement from the east.
13. V3 is a longer distance view in the same direction as V2, but from Footpath 4 further to the east. As I experienced at the inspection, from this footpath the end fence panels next to the paddock behind the appeal property are readily seen. The height and solidity of the fence contrasts unfavourably with the adjacent hedges and low-level fencing to the rear boundaries of neighbouring dwellings on Home Farm Close.
14. The appellant contends that the fence is lower in height than the hedge it has replaced and that a similar lower fence could be erected as permitted development. I must, however, determine the appeal on the basis of current circumstances with

the current fence in situ. The fact that the Council did not refer to the CAAMP in its reason for refusal does not have a direct bearing on the relevance of this guidance in support of development plan policies. Similarly, whether or not relevant views are referred to as 'protected' does not have a direct bearing on the overall consideration of the effects of the development.

15. Therefore, based on the above findings, I find that the fence fails to preserve the conservation area's setting and so results in material harm in this regard. The Framework advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation¹; and any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, including from development within its setting, should require clear and convincing justification². Based on the above findings, I consider the harm to be less than substantial in this instance, but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.
16. Under such circumstances, the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal³. The appellant refers to the need for privacy and security, as well as the durability of the fencing material. This is not, however, the only form of boundary treatment that is feasible in this location and it has been found that the harm to the setting of the conservation area is of considerable weight. Therefore, the proposal would not provide sufficient public benefits that would outweigh the harm that has been found.
17. Accordingly, for the above reasons, I conclude that the fence has an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, in particular as it fails to preserve the setting of the Creton Conservation Area. Consequently, it is contrary to Policy ENV7 of the Settlements and Countryside Local Plan (Part 2) For Daventry District 2011-2029 (2020), which concerns the effect of development on the historic environment; and to Policy ENV10 of the Local Plan, which requires high quality design in new development.

Other Matters

18. I have had regard to the representations made by interested parties both in support of and opposition to the appeal proposal. While I have had regard to other matters raised in addition to comments relating to the main issue, these do not lead me to reach a different overall conclusion.
19. While I note the appellant's concerns about the Council's pre-application advice in the context of its decision on the application, this cannot have a bearing on the outcome of the appeal which must be based on the planning merits of the proposal. For the same reason, allegations relating to organised opposition to the proposal do not have a bearing.

Conclusion

20. The fence that has been erected is contrary to the development plan as it has a materially harmful effect on character and appearance and the setting of the Creton Conservation Area. There are no other material considerations that

¹ Paragraph 212.

² Paragraph 213.

³ Paragraph 215.

outweigh the conflict with the development plan. Accordingly, it is concluded that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Bell-Williamson

INSPECTOR