



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 22 October 2025

by **Rachel Hall BSc MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th December 2025

Appeal A: APP/T2405/W/25/3361628

Narborough Arms, 6 Coventry Road, Narborough, Leicestershire LE19 2GR

- 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 Greene King against the decision of Blaby District Council.
 - The application reference is 24/0474/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as 'new accessible ramp associated with an existing public house'.
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Appeal B: APP/T2405/Y/25/3361629

Narborough Arms, 6 Coventry Road, Narborough, Leicestershire LE19 2GR

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Greene King against the decision of Blaby District Council.
 - The application reference is 24/0477/LBC.
 - The works proposed are described as 'new accessible ramp associated with an existing public house'.
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Decision

Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. As the proposal is in a conservation area and relates to a listed building I have had special regard to sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) (the Act).
4. The appeal site is located diagonally opposite a grade II listed building known as '1, Coventry Road' (No 1). The Council did not identify any harm in respect of the effect of the appeal scheme on the significance of that heritage asset. On the evidence before me, including my own observations, I see no reason to conclude otherwise.

Main Issues

5. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve the Grade II listed building known as the "Narborough Arms" (Ref: 1177288) (the LB), and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses, and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Narborough Conservation

Area (the CA). A further main issue is whether the proposal would be acceptable with regard to highway safety.

Reasons

Historic environment

6. The LB comprises a two storey public house and hotel, part of which was formerly a separate house. The main part of the building is described as being 17th century, with large extensions to the rear being 19th and 20th century. The main part of the building is timber framed. Its front elevation is striking with close studding and render infill, with much of the timber said to have been renewed in the 20th century. This sits above a granite rubble plinth, and below a Swithland slate roof. Square sett cobbles form much of the hard surfacing between the building's façade and the pavement. A large canted bay projects from the ground floor front elevation, said to date from 1909. To the right of this is the front door, with a moulded segmental arch. Adjoining to the right is the rendered former house that is now part of the public house. Also two storey, but projecting closer to the road edge, this part of the building is described as being early 19th century.
7. Therefore, insofar as it relates to these appeals, the significance of the LB is primarily derived from the architectural and aesthetic interest of its front elevation, including its close studding, granite rubble plinth and cobbled surfacing.
8. The CA has a broadly linear form, extending along Coventry Road and Leicester Road through the village, also incorporating All Saints Church and Narborough Park to the north and Narborough Station to the south. This encompasses a range of residential, commercial, civic and transport buildings that are illustrative of the development of the village over time. Building materials are varied but include red brick, granite rubble stone and rendering. The front elevation of the appeal site makes a positive contribution to this variety, appearing as one of only a few timber framed buildings. Insofar as it relates to this appeal, the significance of the CA is primarily derived from its variety of historic buildings notable for their architectural and aesthetic interest, that illustrate the historic evolution of the village.
9. The LB's existing front door on Coventry Road may originally have been secondary to another door on that elevation that has since been removed. The proposed ramp and railings would not entirely block visibility of that existing front door, the close studding and the rubble plinth on the front elevation. The ramp would only be required to overcome a small difference in height between the pavement and the threshold of the public house. The handrails and posts would not be fixed to the elevation of the public house. Also, the choice of black as the painted finish on the railings would provide a visual link with the black timber colour on the front elevation, contrasting with the proposed buff paving stones.
10. However, the proposed railings and ramp would project out from the front elevation, extending close to the pavement. They would thus comprise a prominent addition, adding visual clutter that would detract from the building's architectural quality. The proposed handrail and posts would need to be durable and fit for purpose. However, the proposed use of black painted steel posts and rails would appear noticeably modern and of poor quality relative to the higher quality craftsmanship displayed on the existing building. Even if retained on site for future use, the removal of cobbles to facilitate the ramp would be a further harm due to the loss of historic fabric.

11. Therefore, the proposal would be an unsympathetic addition to the building that would detract from the architectural and aesthetic value of its front elevation. This would harm the special interest of the LB.
12. Turning to its effect on the CA, I note that the proposal would sit within a recess formed by the projecting bay on one side and the former house on the other. This would help to screen the ramp in views when approaching from the direction of Desford Road. Whereas it would be much more visible from outside the appeal building and when approaching from the direction of Church Lane. From there it would appear as a prominent and poor quality addition. Given the prominence of the LB's front elevation in the street scene and its positive contribution to the architectural and historic interest of the CA, the proposal would consequently harm the significance of the CA.
13. Thus, the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building and the significance of the CA. Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 213 goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets and that any such harm should have a clear and convincing justification.
14. Given the scope of the works and development, I find the harm to the LB and CA to be at the lower end of less than substantial in this instance but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight. Where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of designated heritage assets, paragraph 215 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimal viable use.
15. The proposal would provide level access to the building where currently there is only stepped access. This would assist in meeting the needs of disabled people and therefore would provide a more inclusive venue for use by the local community. In addition, the Framework seeks to achieve places which are safe and accessible. Historic England guidance also recognises the balance to be struck between conservation and access in historic buildings. Therefore, improving the building's accessibility by providing level access is a clear public benefit of the proposal for which I note that there is some local support.
16. Evidence has been provided of alternative access routes that have been considered in order to make the building accessible via ramps. I accept that some of these would require lengthy ramps to overcome more substantial level changes at the rear of the building and therefore may not be practical or desirable (options A1, A2 and B). Another (option C) appears impractical as it would provide access to a service area of the building.
17. A further option (D) is to the side of the building. This is said to require structural alterations and would provide access to an area with a raised floor, thus presenting the need for additional solutions to provide level access within the building. Nonetheless, limited information is provided on the nature and extent of such works and the areas of the building that would be affected. Consequently, any structural alterations and internal solutions might reasonably be less harmful to the special interest of the LB and significance of the CA than appeal scheme.

Moreover, evidence that ownership issues would prevent works in this area of the building is not sufficiently persuasive.

18. Accordingly, the options presented do not provide a sufficiently comprehensive assessment of alternative routes or methods of providing level access to the appeal building. A less harmful alternative means of level access cannot be ruled out on that basis. As such, I am not persuaded that the proposal is necessary to secure the optimum viable use of the building as a public house, or that the same public benefit could not be achieved by a more sympathetic scheme that would sustain the significance of the heritage assets.
19. Consequently, the public benefit of improving the accessibility of the building attracts moderate weight. I therefore find that the public benefits in this case would be insufficient to outweigh the harm to the LB and CA which must be given great weight.
20. For these reasons, the proposal fails to satisfy the requirements of the Act and paragraph 210(a) of the Framework. Insofar as relevant the proposal would conflict with policies CS2 and CS20 of the Blaby District Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document (2013) and Policy DM1 of the Blaby District Local Plan (Delivery) Development Plan Document (2019) (Local Plan). Together these generally seek to ensure proposals achieve good design having regard to the character and quality of the historic environment.

Highway safety

21. The Council considers that the proposal would be unacceptable because people that park in the rear car park and wish to use the ramp would need to use the narrow pavement on Station Road. I accept that the pavement is narrow there, with vehicles passing close by. Also, that visibility for users of the pavement is constrained at the corner of Station Road and Coventry Road. However, that is an existing situation that would not be altered by the proposal. Moreover, not all visitors seeking to use the proposed ramp would approach the LB from that direction. For example, although not for exclusive use for its visitors, there are a limited number of parking bays outside the front of the LB on Coventry Road that could be used by visitors requiring level access to the public house. Visitors approaching from those spaces, or from further along Coventry Road or from Leicester Road, would not need to use the narrow pavement on Station Road.
22. Consequently, I find that the proposal would be acceptable with regard to highway safety. It would thus accord with Policy DM1 of the Local Plan which, amongst other matters, requires that the layout of developments achieve good design. It would also accord with Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy. Amongst other matters this requires that developments are designed having regard to access and mobility needs.

Other Matters

23. In determining this appeal I have had due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which sets out the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. I have found that the appeal scheme would advance these aims by providing an access ramp for

disabled people, including a wheelchair user, and others with physical disabilities mentioned in representations to this appeal that are unable to access the appeal building. As such, my decision has the potential to affect persons with a protected characteristic for the purposes of the PSED. However, set against the statutory protection of heritage assets under the Act, and for the reasons given, dismissal of the appeal is proportionate and necessary in this instance. Furthermore, in the particular circumstances of this case, conditions seeking to remedy design defects could not reasonably be imposed.

Conclusions

24. Given the above and considering all other matters raised, the appeals are dismissed.

Rachel Hall

INSPECTOR