



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 December 2025

by Ryan Cowley MPlan (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/W2845/W/25/3374443

Land to rear of Ashmore House, The Green, Weedon Lois NN12 8PN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant permission in principle.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Jamie Cartwright against the decision of West Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/1008/PIP.
 - The development proposed is a self-build dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and permission in principle is granted for a self-build dwelling at land to rear of Ashmore House, The Green, Weedon Lois NN12 8PN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2025/1008/PIP, dated 13 March 2025.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposal is for permission in principle (PiP). Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that this is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. The permission in principle consent route has two stages: the first stage ('permission in principle') establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle, and the second stage ('technical details consent') is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. This appeal relates to the first of these 2 stages.
3. The scope of the considerations for permission in principle is limited to location, land use and the amount of development permitted. All other matters are considered as part of the subsequent Technical Details Consent (TDC) application if permission in principle is granted. I have determined the appeal accordingly.
4. In the banner heading I have set out a truncated form of the description of development in the application form, omitting that which is unnecessary to accurately describe the scheme.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is whether the site is suitable for residential development, having regard to its location, the proposed land use and the amount of development.

Reasons

6. The appeal site comprises a large parcel of land to the rear of Ashmore House, on the northern side of the village of Weedon Lois. The illustrative workbook provided proposes a single detached dwelling towards the northeast corner of the site.

7. Policy LH1 of the South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan 2011-2029 (LPP2) states that development outside settlement confines is considered to be in the open countryside and will not be acceptable, other than in connection with a closed list of exceptions. These exceptions include self or custom build projects that accord with policy LH5.
8. Weedon Lois is defined as a Small Village for the purposes of the development plan. Policy LH5 supports single self or custom build sites immediately adjoining the confines of Small Villages, where they help to meet demand as demonstrated by Part 1 of the Council's Self and Custom Housebuilding Register.
9. The appellant highlights that Part 1 of the Council's published Self & Custom Build Register demonstrates there are at least 11 households with an interest in a self-build plot at Weedon Lois, with the appellant and his family included within that figure. More widely, it is argued there are around 20 households locally with such an interest. The Council does not appear to dispute this.
10. A small portion of the site adjoins the settlement confines of the village, albeit the dwelling is indicatively proposed to sit at the opposite end of the site, with access taken from High Street, beyond the village confines. In this location, the proposed dwelling would be appreciably set back from the road.
11. Weedon Lois has a largely organic, unplanned layout. This part of High Street is winding, with development of varying ages extending away from it along short cul-de-sacs and intersecting lanes. Development is not particularly densely arranged, with buildings along High Street somewhat sporadically placed and with variations in their relationship to the highway. Open spaces along the road and gaps in the frontage provide partial views into the countryside beyond. Mature landscaping features heavily in local views. This gives the village a predominantly rural setting and an overall spacious but verdant character and appearance.
12. While the dwelling itself would be separated from the closest neighbouring buildings, this gap would not be incongruous in the context described above. The access sits in proximity to another nearby access, and neighbouring development is visible in the immediate setting of the site. Moreover, most of the village can be accessed within a 5-to-10-minute walk of the site, demonstrating its proximity.
13. I recognise that the proposal would extend development into a currently undeveloped area. However, I saw on my site visit that the wider application site is already somewhat domesticated. It can be accessed directly from Ashmore House, and features an expansive mowed lawn, decorative shrubs and hedges, garden pathways and hardstanding. Other domestic paraphernalia included goal posts, timber benches, outbuildings, and gardening vehicles.
14. The proposal would thus not be a significant departure from the character and appearance of the site and would not compromise the rural setting of the village. The density of the development would be appropriate for its edge of settlement location, while the spaciousness of the site and retention of mature landscaping around the dwelling and along the frontage would ensure the character and appearance of the village can be conserved.
15. In view of the above, I am satisfied that not only does the site adjoin the settlement confines, but the proposed dwelling would have a relatable connection to them, and appear as a natural, contextually appropriate extension to the village.

16. The site is therefore suitable for residential development, having regard to its location, the proposed land use and the amount of development. It would accord with Policies SS1, SS2, LH1 and LH5 of the LPP2, and Policy R1 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan Part 1 Adopted December 2014. These policies, among other provisions, support development immediately adjoining settlement confines that enhances or maintains the vitality of rural communities, does not adversely affect areas of particular significance to the character of the settlement and is a self or custom build project that meets an identified demand.

Other Matters

17. Appendix 1 of the Council's statement comprises "suggested conditions". In the first instance, the PPG clarifies that it is not possible for conditions to be attached to a grant of permission in principle¹. Planning obligations also cannot be secured at the permission in principle stage².
18. Nevertheless, applicants may be informed about what the local planning authority expects to see at the TDC stage. The information in Appendix 1 sets out what the Council requires as part of any subsequent TDC application. This includes details of access arrangements (including parking, turning, visibility splays and refuse collection); the layout and scale of the dwelling; bin and cycle storage; elevational treatment of the dwelling (including architectural detailing such as eaves, verges, windows, and doors); finishing materials; landscaping (including boundary treatments); foul and surface water drainage; biodiversity mitigation and enhancement; assessment of potential land contamination; and a legal undertaking to secure the development as a genuine custom/self-build scheme.
19. The appellant should have regard to these matters when preparing a submission as part of the TDC stage of the process.

Conclusion

20. The proposed development would adhere to the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations which outweigh this finding. Accordingly, for the reasons given, the appeal succeeds.

Ryan Cowley

INSPECTOR

¹ Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 58-020-20180615

² Paragraph: 022 Reference ID: 58-022-20180615