



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 March 2026

by R Snow BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th March 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/E2530/W/25/3376529

Adjacent to Cumberland House, Irnham Grange, Irnham Road, Corby Glen, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG33 4NE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Robert Broom against the decision of South Kesteven District Council.
 - The application Ref is S25/0567.
 - The development proposed is erection of one house and double garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The application was made in outline with only details of access to be determined at this stage. This includes access to the site and a driveway and circulation area depicted on the site block plan. Matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are reserved for future consideration (the 'reserved matters'). I have therefore treated any references to reserved matters in documentation as illustrative, including the indicative layout shown on the site block plan.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - Whether the proposed house would be in a suitable location for new residential development, having particular regard to the development strategy for the area and the accessibility of services and facilities, and;
 - The effect of the proposed dwelling on the character and appearance of the rural landscape and open countryside.

Reasons

Location of development

4. Policies SP1 and SP2 of the South Kesteven District Council Local Plan 2011-2036 (2020) (the LP) establish a spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy to direct new housing to sustainable locations where access to services and facilities is greatest and the need to travel is minimised. The appeal site is located roughly equidistantly, and approximately 1.4km, from the villages of Corby Glen to the south-west and Irnham to the north-east. It is adjacent to a cluster of three isolated

dwelling and the wider surrounding area is unmistakably rural with an open landscape and is mainly agricultural in nature.

5. Policy SP2 defines Corby Glen as a 'Larger Village' within which development proposals will be supported where they promote and support the role of the village and do not compromise its nature and character. Irnham is defined by the policy as a 'Smaller Village' where development proposals will be supported in accordance with other policies of the LP where these do not compromise the nature and character of the village. Whilst development boundaries for villages are not defined, it is evident that by being located 1.4km from the villages, the proposed dwelling would not be within those settlements and would not constitute infill development as a consequence.
6. There is disagreement between the parties as to the relevance of Policy SP4 of the LP for this appeal. Policy SP4 supports development on the edge of the settlements, subject to accordance with all other LP policies and 6 essential criteria. Given that the proposed dwelling would not, in any sense, be located on the edge of either Corby Glen or Irnham villages, being remote from each of those settlements, with open countryside providing clear visual and spatial separation, I find that Policy SP4 is not determinative here. Accordingly, there is no need to assess the proposals against the 6 essential criteria identified in that policy.
7. I give little credence to the appellant's suggestion that by being located adjacent to three existing isolated houses some distance to Corby Glen and Irnham, the appeal site could be considered to be on the edge of a settlement. Whilst the appellant relies on officer advice previously given to the council's planning committee, I do not find this advice compelling nor determinative in this case. That advice related to an example of a dispersed settlement with clusters of outlying buildings and differs from this case in that Corby Glen and Irnham each have a tight nucleus and there is significant separation between them and the appeal site.
8. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the appeal site is neither within, nor on the edge of, a defined settlement. Policy SP5 of the LP ("Development in the open countryside") applies in such circumstances. This policy reflects the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in seeking to avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless there is an essential need to locate the dwelling outside a settlement. Four specific types of development are offered support by the policy. None of these apply here and I accordingly find that the proposals do not accord with Policy SP5. Given the level of consistency between Policy SP5 and the Framework, I give substantial weight to the conflict with this policy.
9. Journeys from the site to the nearest villages would be undertaken using Irnham Road to Corby Glen and Corby Road to Irnham. This is essentially the same rural road, renamed midway between the villages. It is relatively narrow with an unrestricted speed limit and no road markings. The road is unlit and without footways. Cycling or walking are not likely to be attractive or safe options as a consequence. The evidence provided suggests there is no public transport linking the appeal site to these villages. As a consequence, the absence of alternatives would be likely to put a daily reliance on the use of private vehicles to access services and facilities.

10. This reliance on private vehicles would conflict with Policy SD1 of the LP which seeks to promote sustainable development, including by minimising the need to travel and locating development where services and facilities can be accessed by walking, cycling or public transport. The policy is reflective of the objectives in the Framework in seeking to ensure rural housing is delivered in sustainable locations. The appellant's reliance on his current ownership of electric vehicles (EVs) in seeking to evidence sustainable patterns of transport is given little weight given that on-going ownership of an EV could not be guaranteed through the planning system.
11. The appellant has drawn attention to other planning permissions granted by the council which, it is suggested, set a precedent for assessing proposals for new dwellings outside villages. I have limited information provided in relation to these cases and cannot be sure that they are comparable to the circumstances in this appeal. Similarly, the appellant draws my attention to other outlying dwellings referred to in the Corby Glen Neighbourhood Plan (the NP). I am not satisfied that these references in the NP give support to the appeal proposals, particularly as the policies of the NP seek to direct housing to sustainable locations within Corby Glen village and protect landscape character. In any case, I have assessed the appeal proposals on their own merits.
12. Accordingly, when judged against the policies identified above, the proposed dwelling would not be in a suitable location. Permitting it would be harmful in that the principles of the settlement hierarchy and spatial strategy of the LP would be undermined and car-borne travel to access services and facilities would be encouraged. As such there would be a conflict with Policies SD1, SP1, SP2 and SP5 of the LP, Policy CG1 of the NP and the Framework's policies for the delivery of sustainable development. Collectively, these policies require, among other things, new housing to be located in sustainable locations which can be accessed by a choice of means of transport.

Character and appearance

13. The appeal site is an open, grassed square of land forming part of a triangular former paddock, located to the immediate south of a small cluster of three dwellings built on the site of a former farmhouse. The wider area is open and distinctly rural in character with surrounding fields in agricultural use. The appeal site contains no built development and is both visually and functionally distinct from the adjacent dwellings. The wider triangular land forming the remainder of the former paddock is bordered by trees and hedgerows.
14. Given that scale, layout and appearance are reserved matters, it is not possible to reach a detailed conclusion on the likely impact of any specific dwelling. However, given the open, rural nature of the site and its surroundings, it is apparent that any dwelling on the site, even if this were to be single storey, would have a harmful impact on the character of the rural setting. Land which currently contributes to the rural landscape setting would no longer be open and undeveloped. The substantial driveway, manoeuvring space and twin access points to the access road, all of which fall for consideration now, would introduce urbanising domestic features to the open countryside, harming its character.
15. Development of the site would lead to the extension of built form south-eastwards from the cluster of three isolated dwellings and into open countryside. The council's

Landscape Character Assessment 2007 identifies the surrounding area as part of the Kesteven Uplands Character Area. Key characteristics identified include the undulating agricultural landscape. Development encroaching into the site would be harmful to this rural character of the area.

16. For the reasons above, I find that the proposals conflict with Policy DE1 of the LP and Policy CG5 of the NP, which, among other things, require that development make a positive contribution to local character and does not detract from the open countryside character of the landscape. Similarly, the Framework requires development to be sympathetic to local character. The appeal proposals would not be sympathetic to, or positive contribute towards, the open, rural character of the undulating agricultural landscape within which it would sit. I give little weight to the appellant's suggestion that a new dwelling would provide a point of interest in the landscape. The conditions recommended by the appellant would not address the concerns identified and I conclude that the conflict with Policies DE1 and CG5 should be attributed significant weight.

Other Considerations

17. Set against the harm identified, there would be limited benefits associated with the development identified by the appellant. The proposals would constitute a self-build dwelling and the evidence suggests that the council has failed to grant permission for sufficient self-build plots to meet identified need. Notwithstanding this, there is no planning obligation before me which would secure the development as self-build as defined in the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended). The council has suggested a condition in the event that I am minded to allow the appeal. However, a condition requiring occupation of the dwelling by the person who built it would be unlikely to pass the tests set out in the Framework. In the absence of an appropriate means of securing the dwelling as a self-build property, I can give little weight to this factor in support of the proposals.
18. Minor economic benefits would be achieved during the construction of the dwelling and through subsequent expenditure in local services and facilities. Given that the proposals would provide for one single dwelling, I find these benefits add only limited weight in favour of the proposals.
19. The appellant suggests there is local support for a new dwelling on the appeal site and points to the results of a public consultation undertaken prior to submission. Public support is not a consideration which adds weight in favour of this proposal given that I have identified that Policy SD4 is not determinative in this case.
20. The appellant further suggests that the site constitutes previously developed – or brownfield – land which it is suggested weighs in favour of the proposals. As described above, the site is open grassland and devoid of any built development or areas of hard-standing. The site, a former paddock, is physically separate from, and unrelated to the adjacent dwelling at Cumberland House. I do not accept that it forms part of its curtilage as the appellant contends. It does not, therefore, meet the definition of previously developed land in the glossary of the Framework. My attention has been drawn to an appeal decision elsewhere in the country in which an Inspector identified a paddock as brownfield land. It appears that the circumstances differ given that the appeal site in that example included a building used for stables and associated hard-standing, which is not the case here.

Planning balance

21. I have found that the proposals would cause harm to the principles of the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy in the LP. The proposals would provide for a dwelling in the open countryside, outside any defined settlement and with the only practicable access to local services and facilities possible by private vehicle. I have also found that the dwelling would harm the intrinsic rural character of the site and its surroundings by introducing built form into the open countryside. I accordingly find conflict with Policies SD1, SP1, SP2, SP5 and DE1 of the LP, Policies CG1 and CG5 of the NP and with the Framework.
22. The council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites and indicates a 4.07 year supply. In these circumstances, footnote 8 of the Framework establishes that the policies which are most important for determining the appeal are out of date. The appeal site is not with an area protected by the policies identified in footnote 7. Accordingly, paragraph 11 d) ii of the Framework is engaged.
23. Consequently, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations. In this respect, footnote 9 directs me to paragraph 84 of the Framework. As an isolated dwelling which does not meet any of the circumstances identified in that paragraph, the proposals do not accord with the Framework in this regard. As described above, the benefits associated with a single dwelling would be limited, even taking into account the council's housing land position and the objective in the Framework for significantly boosting the supply of new homes.
24. Accordingly, the adverse impacts of an isolated dwelling, of increasing travel by private vehicles, and in causing harm to the open, rural character of the area would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. As a result, the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply.

Conclusion

25. For the reasons given above, the proposals do not accord with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations that indicate I should take a decision other than in accordance with it. Accordingly, the appeal should be dismissed.

R Snow

INSPECTOR