



North  
Northamptonshire  
Council

## **Planning Appeal Decision Letters**

- (a) Top Farm, 10 High Street, Great Doddington
- (b) 126 Northampton Road, Earls Barton



## Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 25 April 2023

**by R Sabu BA(Hons), MA, BArch, PgDip, RIBA, ARB**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

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### **Appeal A Ref: APP/M2840/W/22/3299746**

#### **Top Farm, 10 High Street, Great Doddington, Northamptonshire NN29 7TQ**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mr Cory Barlow against the decision of North Northamptonshire Council.
  - The application Ref NW/22/00087/FUL, dated 10 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 31 March 2022.
  - The development proposed is conversion of barns to form 3 bedroomed dwelling and annex complete with parking area and private garden.
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### **Appeal B Ref: APP/M2840/Y/22/3299748**

#### **Top Farm, 10 High Street, Great Doddington, Northamptonshire NN29 7TQ**

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
  - The appeal is made by Mr Cory Barlow against the decision of North Northamptonshire Council.
  - The application Ref NW/22/00088/LBC, dated 10 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 31 March 2022.
  - The works proposed are the conversion of barns to form 3 bedroomed dwelling and annex complete with parking area and private garden.
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### **Decision**

1. The appeals are dismissed.

### **Preliminary Matters**

2. As I observed during my site visit, the scheme has been completed largely in line with the drawings. I have nevertheless assessed the scheme based on the submitted drawings.
3. As the proposal is in a conservation area and relates to listed buildings I have had special regard to sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
4. The site and building benefits from planning permission and listed building consent for the conversion of barns to form 3 bedroomed dwelling and annex complete with parking area and private garden. The approved scheme included windows within the arched openings that were to be divided into two vertical panes and fully glazed. The primary difference between the approved scheme and that subject of these appeals is the brick infills and window design within the arched openings.
5. I note the evidence regarding issues in obtaining the materials that have been approved as part of the consented scheme and manufacturing limitations.

However, further details are not before me to demonstrate that the approved scheme could not be implemented should this appeal fail. Therefore, the approved scheme forms a fall-back position.

### **Main Issues**

6. The main issues are whether the proposal would preserve Grade II listed buildings, Top Farm, 10, High Street (Top Farm) and Barn Approximately 50m North East of Number 10, High Street (Barn), and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that they possess and the extent to which it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Great Doddington Conservation Area.

### **Reasons**

7. Top Farm lies at the north-eastern end of the Great Doddington Conservation Area (CA). While the area surrounding St Nicholas' Church and Manor would have formed the nucleus of the settlement, the historic core of the village is essentially linear running from Top Farm in the northeast to The Farm in the southwest. The Heritage Asset Survey (HAS) states that the parish was encompassed by an estate centred on Earls Barton during the late Saxon period. It also states that much of the land and associated properties within the village was owned by the Compton family, Earls and later Marquises of Northampton, from the late seventeenth-century.
8. The buildings along High Street are of a modest scale and traditional materials and massing and are generally arranged in a linear fashion along the road between a number of historic farms.
9. Given the above, I find that the significance of the CA, insofar as it relates to these appeals, to be primarily associated with the medieval origins of the settlement and the buildings of varying types and ages that reflect the development of the agricultural village between a number of farmsteads, including Top Farm, over a number of centuries.
10. The listing for Top Farm states that it has perhaps 14<sup>th</sup> century origins with datestones 1588, 1764 and 1888. However, the HAS states that, with respect to the first date, there is nothing within any of the surviving architectural detail externally or internally which can be reasonably assigned such a date. As such, it is considered that the farmhouse building dates from around 1764. The farmhouse part of the building is constructed in coursed limestone rubble.
11. The rear parts of the Top Farm farmstead that contained ancillary functions such as stables, stores and animal shelters date from 1880s with the majority of this phase constructed in brick.
12. The Barn is also constructed in coursed limestone rubble and dates from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Given its large size, it is likely to have had a number of functions and appears to have originally had a thatched roof. The roof, re-built after the pitch was reduced, appears to date from the nineteenth-century.
13. The considerable expansion and remodelling of Top Farm and the Barn in the 1880s attest to the wealth of the Compton family and the retained importance of Top Farm in the village over a number of years.

14. Given the above, I find that the special interest of the listed building, insofar as it relates to these appeals, to be primarily associated with the legibility and fabric of its 18<sup>th</sup> century origins and later 19<sup>th</sup> century phases as well as the agricultural character of the 19<sup>th</sup> century phase.
15. The works subject of the appeals include the infilling of the top part of the arched openings in the open-sided former animal shelter. The brick infills are recessed back from the arches. However, since they are a similar brick as the arches, the contrast between the arch and the top of the openings are reduced such that they diminish the prominence of the arched features, particularly when viewed from the highway.
16. The fall-back scheme includes glazing that would fill the entirety of the openings. As such, although the brick infills are in keeping with the materiality and detailing of the brick piers and other parts of the barn, the works have eroded the legibility of the arched openings to a greater degree than the approved scheme.
17. The works also include multi-pane rectangular windows (Crittall style windows) in the openings. The horizontal glazing bars are thinner than the frames that extend the full height of the openings. Notwithstanding this, the number and position of the glazing bars result in horizontal proportions of the glazing panes that are noticeable in a number of views. This aspect of the works has a residential appearance that has diminished the agricultural character of the wider building.
18. Therefore, the legibility of the 19<sup>th</sup> century phase of the building and its historic agricultural use and character has been eroded by the scheme. Accordingly, these works fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building. As the works are visible from the highway, the agrarian character of the CA has also been diminished.
19. The windows of the fall-back scheme have vertical proportions that are in keeping with the agricultural character of the building. As such, the works result in a greater harm to the special interest of the listed building compared with the fall-back position.
20. While I note the Crittall style windows on the host dwelling, since the dwelling has a residential character, it is not directly comparable to this scheme. I note the examples of Crittall style windows in other buildings including The Great Tew Estate. However, they generally appear to be of more square or vertical proportions or associated with dwellings rather than agricultural buildings. Therefore, they do not directly compare to the appeal scheme and have not altered my findings.
21. Given the above, I find that the scheme fails to preserve the special interest of the listed building and the significance of the CA.
22. Due to the limited scale of the proposal, I find the harm to be less than substantial in this instance but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.
23. Under such circumstances, paragraph 202 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, which includes the securing of optimal viable use of listed buildings.

24. I acknowledge the manufacturing limitations set out by the Appellant. However, even if the fall-back scheme could not be implemented, I cannot rule out the possibility that an alternative design could be found which would not harm the special interest of the listed building. Moreover, as the conversion of the barn to a dwelling appears to have been largely completed, it is unlikely that the building would fall into a state of disrepair should the appeal fail. In the absence of any substantiated evidence to the contrary neither would any public benefits accrue in relation to the CA.
25. Given the above, I conclude that, on balance, the scheme fails to preserve the special historic interest of the Grade II listed buildings and the character or appearance of the CA. This fails to satisfy the requirements of the Act, paragraph 199 of the Framework and conflict with Policies 2 (a), (b) and (d) of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031 Adopted July 2016 that seeks, among other things, to conserve and, where possible, enhance the heritage significance of an asset or group of heritage assets in a manner commensurate to its significance. As a result, the scheme is not in accordance with the development plan.

### **Conclusion**

26. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised I conclude that the appeals should be dismissed.

*R Sabu*

INSPECTOR



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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 April 2023

**by J D Westbrook BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/M2840/D/23/3314524**

**126 Northampton Road, Earls Barton, NORTHAMPTON, NN6 0HF**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mrs Linda Harbicher against the decision of North Northamptonshire Council.
  - The application Ref NW/22/00489/FUL, dated 5 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 9 September 2022.
  - The development proposed is the demolition of existing garage building and stores, and erection of part two-storey part single-storey side extension.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main Issues

2. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposed extension on
  - The character and appearance of the area around Northampton Road, and
  - The living conditions of the occupiers of No 124 Northampton Road by way of outlook.

### Reasons

3. No 126 is a two-storey detached house within a large plot and is situated on the eastern side of Northampton Road. It has a two-storey rear projection on the southern side of its rear elevation, and a single-storey conservatory on the northern side. There is a single-storey double garage/store built up against the boundary with No 124 to the south, and this is connected to the main house by way of a glazed lobby. It is set well back from the front elevation of the house and projects around 6 metres beyond the existing rear elevation.
4. The proposed extensions would involve demolition of the garage/store and the construction of a new building on a larger footprint, referred to by the appellant as an annexe. It would comprise a two-storey element to the front, set further forward than the existing garage/store and set a little beyond the line of the main rear elevation, and a single-storey element projecting from the rear of the two-storey structure to around 1 metre from the rear boundary of the property. Both elements would be set away from the boundary with No 124 by around 1 metre.

5. Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (CS) indicates that development should create a distinctive local character by responding to the site's immediate and wider context and local character to create new buildings which draw on the best of that local character without stifling innovation.
6. Policy EB.D1 of the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan (NP) indicates that development proposals should be of a high standard of design and layout in keeping with local character and should seek to utilise sustainable building techniques and materials wherever practical. New development proposals will be supported in the event that they protect, conserve and enhance the built environment, and perform well against all relevant locally adopted design guidance.
7. The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Residential Extensions – A Guide to Good Design (SPG) indicates that, when considering applications for extensions, the Council will consider the design in relation to the house; the effect on the character of the area; and the effect on occupiers of neighbouring property. Considerations will include how an extension might affect the outlook from neighbouring properties with regard to the size of the extension and how far it extends from the house. Side extensions should be set back from the front of the house, while with two-storey extensions, normally a minimum gap of 1 metre to the side boundary should be retained to respect the character of the area and give a visual separation between the houses. In some cases even greater gaps to the boundary may be required.
8. With regard to annexes, the SPG indicates that it is important that they are designed to be ancillary to the existing dwelling. The annexe should therefore take the form of an extension to a dwelling with an internal link to the main accommodation, so enabling it to be easily used as part of the main dwelling in the longer term.
9. The Council contends that by virtue of the scale, massing and design, the proposed extensions to facilitate an annexe would be an overly large and incongruous addition to the existing house which would adversely affect the external appearance of the property. The proposed development does not respond to the site's immediate or wider context to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area. In addition, the proposed extensions, due to their scale and positioning, would lead to a loss of neighbouring amenity due to an overbearing and oppressive relationship with the neighbouring property of no. 124 Northampton Road.
10. The appellant contends that the surrounding area displays a variety of different designs with large, detached dwellings and that, by and large, the proposed extensions would make use of the existing garage and lobby footprint and replace the existing feature which currently detracts from the character of the area. The appellant also points to permissions for extensions to other dwellings in the immediate vicinity, and that the host property has no special architectural merit. With regard to impact on residential amenity, the appellant contends that the proposal meets the recommended daylight standards and would not result in a loss of daylight or sunlight. Finally, the use of the extension is apparently required by her family for medical purposes. It would not have a kitchen and the kitchen of the host dwelling would be shared between the occupants.



### *Character and appearance*

11. The proposed two-storey extension would be around 8 metres wide and some 10 metres deep. On the ground floor it would comprise a double garage with a hallway/porch running the full length between the garage and the host property. On the first floor would be three bedrooms and a bathroom. It would be set back a little from the front elevation of the house, but would project some 2 metres beyond the current rear elevation of the house. The single-storey extension would project a further 13 metres to the rear and would be around 7 metres wide. The ground-floor hallway/porch would extend from the front elevation to give access to the rear single-storey element which is shown as comprising a living/dining area.
12. The existing house would appear to have a footprint of around 110 sq metres, with the garage/store/porch adding a little over 80 sq metres approximately. The proposed extension alone would have a footprint of around 170 sq metres. This represents an extension with a footprint significantly larger than the main house itself and almost the same size as the existing house and garage/store/porch combined. In addition the extension would have a front elevation some 8 metres wide, whereas the main house has a front elevation of just 10 metres. The proposed extension would have a large, fully independent hipped roof, a large garage door, and what would appear from the front as a second front door giving access to the new hallway.
13. On the basis of scale, I find that the proposed extension would appear as over-dominant in the context of the host property, and would have the nature of a separate but attached dwelling. It would not appear subservient. Furthermore, the extension would have three bedrooms and an extensive ground-floor living/dining area. Although the appellant notes that the extension would not have a separate kitchen, and would operate as a dependent annexe, the scale of the ground-floor accommodation is such that a kitchen could easily be incorporated into the space available. In addition, the existing door from the house to the porch would appear to be blocked off, and there is no obvious alternative door from the house to the extension clearly shown on the submitted drawings.
14. The appellant also notes that the extension is needed for medical purposes, and has provided a letter from a doctor relating to the issue. I have sympathy with the situation of the appellant, but I am not convinced that a three-bedroomed annexe with an extensive ground floor living space is either necessary, or indeed the only solution to the medical problems experienced by the family.
15. Whilst the appeal dwelling is sited within an extensive plot, the space between the main house and the boundaries on either side is a significant feature. The existing garage/store/porch is single-storey only, and does not fill the visual gap between Nos 124 and 126 in the same way that would occur with the wide two-storey side extension proposed for the appeal property, albeit that the extension would be set 1 metre away from the side boundary. The appellant has referred to previous approved extensions at nearby properties, but from the information before me, it would appear that these are either much smaller than that of the current appeal proposal, or dating from a considerable time back, or both. In any case, I do not consider that these represent a precedent for the current proposal.



16. In conclusion on this issue, I find that the proposed extensions, by virtue of their scale and design, would not be subservient or appear as ancillary to the existing house. They would not respond sympathetically to the immediate context of the host dwelling and although the existing garage/store/porch is not architecturally attractive, this is not reason to replace it with extensions of the type and scale proposed. They would not represent high quality design in the context of the host property and would, therefore, be harmful to the character and appearance of the property and its immediate surroundings. On this basis, the proposal would conflict with Policy 8 of the CS, Policy EB.D1 of the NP and guidance in the SPG.

*Living conditions*

17. I have no detailed information on sunlight factors affecting Nos 124 and 126. However, the two-storey element of the proposed extension would lie to the west of the rear garden at No 124 at a distance of only 1 metre from the boundary, and would be set further back than the rear elevation of the neighbouring property. It would appear, therefore, that there is a likelihood of the two-storey extension having a detrimental effect on light reaching that part of the rear garden of No 124 that is the closest to the rear of the house and the most private element of its amenity space. Given the limited height of the proposed single-storey extension and its position to the north-west of No 124, I do not consider it likely that this element would result in a significant reduction of sunlight at the rear of the neighbouring property.
18. In the light of the proximity of the proposed extensions to the boundary with No 124, I consider that the projection of the two-storey element beyond the rear elevation of No 124, coupled with the length of the single-storey element along the full depth of the rear gardens, would result in a somewhat oppressive outlook for the occupiers of the neighbouring property. The single-storey extension would be clearly seen above the boundary fence and would be readily visually apparent. The scale and mass of the extensions would be harmful to the outlook from the rear of No 124.
19. In conclusion on this issue, I find that the proposed extensions, by virtue of their scale and siting, would be harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 124 by way of outlook. I do not think it likely that the proposal would result in significant loss of light at the rear of No 124, but there would be some detrimental effect and this adds to my concerns about the overall impact of the extensions on the residential amenities enjoyed by the neighbouring occupiers. On this basis, I find that the proposal would conflict with guidance on the effect of extensions on the occupiers of neighbouring property as set out in the SPG.

*J D Westbrook*

INSPECTOR