
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 27 October 2020

by Helen B Hockenhull BA (Hons) B. PI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 09 December 2020

Appeal A: APP/L2820/W/20/3249536

Main Lodge, Harborough Road, Dingley LE16 8PQ

- 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 Luke Abraham against the decision of Kettering Borough Council.
 - The application Ref KET/2020/0017, dated 7 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is single storey side and infill extensions.
-

Appeal B: APP/L2820/Y/20/3249537

Main Lodge, Harborough Road, Dingley LE16 8PQ

- 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 Luke Abraham against the decision of Kettering Borough Council.
 - The application Ref KET/2020/0018, dated 7 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 March 2020.
 - The works proposed are single storey side and infill extensions with creation of 2 no. openings in outbuilding and 1 no. enlarged opening and removal of front and rear courtyard walls and gates.
-

Decision – Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed

Decision - Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed

Preliminary Matters

3. As Appeal B relates to a listed building consent, I have had special regard to sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
4. The descriptions of the proposal I have used above, differ from those on the original application forms. I have used these alternative descriptions, which are stated on the Council's decision notices, as they better reflect the scheme proposed.

Main Issues

5. I consider that the main issues are whether the proposal would preserve a Grade II listed building, Main Lodge, Dingley Hall and Attached Pump and

Outbuilding (Ref:1189712), and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possess and the effect of the proposal on the setting of a Grade I listed building, the former Dingley Hall (Ref:1294135) and the setting of two Grade II listed buildings, Gatepiers, Wall and Gate (Ref:1189714 and 1372350).

Reasons

6. The appeal property forms a single storey mid-19th century lodge house constructed in limestone ashlar with a gabled slate roof located in the open countryside to the north west of the village of Dingley. A small single storey outbuilding to the east of the Lodge, set into the bank at the edge of the elevated garden area is also included in the listing. The outbuilding has a mono pitch roof and four door openings and is attached to the rear elevation of the Lodge by a low wall with timber fence panel above. Garden areas lie to the south and east.
7. The Lodge has a high evidential value as a well-preserved example of a mid-19th century lodge house that the appellant recognises as being of regional importance. It retains many of its detailed architectural features including sash windows in moulded stone surrounds, a canted stone bay with sash windows to the west elevation, rusticated quoins, plain barge boards and a central stone chimney stack. It also provides a good illustration of the design, layout and functional associations of a diminutive country estate lodge house. This is further enhanced by the nearby piers, wall and gate that are also listed. Given the above, I find the special interest, insofar as it relates to these appeals, to be the well-preserved architectural detailing, restrained proportions and functional legibility of this building.
8. The gatepiers, wall and gate provide the gateway to the former Dingley estate. They form a prominent feature on the A427, set against a woodland backdrop. The open grassed garden area to the Lodge, the access drive as well as the Lodge itself contribute positively to their setting.
9. The appeal property was a gate house associated with the former Dingley Hall which is located at the end of the private drive leading from the Lodge. The Hall has since been converted to residential apartments. The Hall and the Lodge being in separate ownership, are now functionally separated, and have no inter visibility. However, they retain a clear relationship as the Lodge was formerly the gatekeeper's residence providing security at the entrance to the Estate. This gives rise to a strongly linked historic interest and value to the Lodge. The parkland and woodland of the former estate together with the access drive and the functional relationship of the Lodge and gatepiers, wall and gate, form integral parts of the Hall's setting.
10. The proposal is to provide a single storey glazed infill extension linking the Lodge and the outbuilding. Following alterations to ground levels, a new opening would then be created to the rear of the outbuilding providing access to a single storey extension accommodating a further bedroom, ensuite and living space.
11. The infill extension would be constructed with a lightweight powder coated aluminium frame. Most of the courtyard area would be retained, however the low front wall, fence and gate would be removed. These structures appear to be later additions, added sometime between 1900 and 1925 and their removal

in my view causes no harm to the special interest. The use of full-length glazing and contemporary design would be appropriate creating a distinction between the original dwelling and the outbuilding. In widening the opening to the front of the outbuilding and creating a new opening to the rear, original fabric would be lost. However, these works would not harm any particular features of architectural interest and the legibility of the Lodge and the ancillary outbuilding would be maintained.

12. Turning to the proposed single storey side extension, its scale would nearly double the footprint of the existing Lodge. I acknowledge that the scheme has been designed to make use of the topography and existing vegetation to reduce the perceived massing of the extension. However, due to its overall length, the extension would lack subservience. It would lead to an over dominant addition that would form a visually jarring juxtaposition when viewed alongside the modest proportions of the Lodge.
13. I accept that the proposed extension would be separated from the existing outbuilding by a narrow red brick section and that it would be clearly differentiated. This would provide a break between the two, allowing the extension to be read as a separate built form. However, it does not diminish the harm I have already identified above.
14. The stone walls to the northern and eastern elevations of the proposed extension are described on the submitted plans as having the appearance of a formal walled garden. Whilst being of the local vernacular, the expanse of walling would detract from the form of the heritage asset. Furthermore, the extension would result in a significant loss of part of the open garden area. This would have an adverse impact on the buildings setting.
15. I acknowledge that the single storey extension would be set lower than the existing ground level and lower than the internal floor levels of the Lodge and the outbuilding. The roof height of the extension would be lower than the ridge of the outbuilding so that when viewed from the immediate west the extension would not be visible. From the private drive, the existing beech hedge and the setting down of the levels, would limit views from this position. However, this would be less effective during the winter months and form an impermanent feature which could be removed or die of natural causes at any time. In any event, listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest.
16. Due to its position, the lower floor levels and the presence of existing vegetation, the appeal proposal would not be seen in views towards the gatepiers, wall and gates. It would therefore preserve the setting of these structures. In terms of Dingley Hall, the appeal proposal would not negatively impact the historic connection between the Lodge and the Hall and would therefore have a neutral impact on its setting.
17. In summary, I find that the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building, though it would preserve the setting of the gatepiers, wall and gate and Dingley Hall. I give the harm to the Lodge considerable importance and weight in the planning balance of these appeals.
18. Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their

conservation. Paragraph 194 goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets or from development within their setting and that this should have a clear and convincing justification. Given the fact that the historic form of the Lodge would remain largely intact, I find the harm to be less than substantial but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.

19. Under such circumstances, paragraph 196 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. The proposed extension would provide additional living accommodation for the appellant. However, this would be a private benefit, not of benefit to the wider public.
20. The appellant has argued that whilst the Lodge is currently occupied and in a good state of repair, there is the possibility that the property may not continue to be sustainable in a residential use as a result of its size, a single bedroom dwelling. This could lead to neglect and disrepair.
21. I accept the property is small, however it provides a reasonable standard of accommodation and contributes to the diversity of local housing provision. I have no indication before me to suggest that it would be seriously threatened or that continued repair and maintenance would be uneconomic. I have no evidence that an extension to provide a two-bedroom property would be essential for its optimal viable use.
22. Despite my finding that the appeal scheme would preserve the setting of the gatepiers, wall and gate and Dingley Hall, given the above and in the absence of any substantiated public benefits, I conclude that the proposal would nevertheless fail to preserve the special historic interest of the Grade II listed building. This would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act, paragraph 192 of the Framework and conflict with Policies 2 and 8d) of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. These documents, among other things, require proposal to conserve and where possible enhance the heritage significance and setting of an asset. As a result, the proposal would not be in accordance with the development plan.

Conclusion

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

Helen Hockenhull

INSPECTOR