



Appeal Decisions

Site Visit made on 16 March 2021

by William Cooper BA (Hons) MA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 April 2021

Appeal A: APP/R5510/W/20/3254111

**Swakeleys Cottage, 2 The Avenue, Ickenham, Uxbridge, Middlesex
UB10 8NP**

- 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 Lady J Singleton Booth against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref: 846/APP/2020/18, dated 23 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 24 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is erection of a timber framed garden room.
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Appeal B: APP/R5510/Y/20/3254113

**Swakeleys Cottage, 2 The Avenue, Ickenham, Uxbridge, Middlesex
UB10 8NP**

- 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 Lady J Singleton Booth against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref: 846/APP/2020/113, dated 23 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 24 April 2020.
 - The works proposed is erection of a timber framed garden room
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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 relates to a listed building and is in a conservation area 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 new London Plan: The Spatial Development Strategy for London, March 2021 (LP) has been published since the Council's decisions. Policy HC1 of the LP supersedes previous Policy 7.8 as the relevant London Plan policy on heritage conservation. The parties have had an opportunity to comment on the engagement of Policy HC1 in this case and I will determine the appeal on this basis.
5. The reason for refusal does not mention the Ickenham Village Conservation Area (CA), in which the building is located. Nevertheless, the Planning Officer's

report states that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the CA and I am duty bound to consider such impacts under s72(1) of the Act.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is whether the proposal would a) preserve the Grade II listed building, 'Swakeley Cottage' (Ref: 1192483), or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses and b) preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.

Reasons

7. The CA covers a mainly residential area of Ickenham village located between a river and railway line. From what I saw during my site visit and the evidence before me, the CA's significance, insofar as it relates to these appeals, lies in its illustration of the village's architectural evolution from the medieval period to the twentieth century, as manifested in its characterful mix of historic houses and structures.
8. The listed building is a cottage dating from the seventeenth century with a two-storey core. It has an eighteenth century west wing, which is partly two-storey and part single-storey. The building has brick, painted rendered walls, a right end chimney and pitched clay tile roofs.
9. The appeal building's historic role as an entrance lodge for the Swakeleys House estate is reflected in the following characteristics. It is located on a prominent corner plot at the head of The Avenue which was an access drive from Swakeleys Road to Swakeleys House. Substantial gate posts towards the head of The Avenue, one of which partly frames the front driveway of the appeal building, further emphasise the latter's historic gatekeeping function.
10. The building's front elevation faces south down The Avenue and the architectural primacy of the front of the building is expressed in the relative ornamentation of the following detailing. Its eighteenth century doorcase is decorated with reeded pilasters, urn and swag frieze with paterae at angles, topped by a dentil cornice. Alongside this are nineteenth century casement windows, each with a hood above.
11. The clay tile roof, similar fenestration style with hood detailing, rendered wall and subordinate height and step down in profile of the two-storey part of the building's west wing help the latter to transition harmoniously from the two storey core.
12. Consequently, the listed building embodies evidential and historic values. The above contributes to both the building's special interest and the significance of the wider CA.
13. Given the above, I consider the special interest of the listed building, insofar as it relates to this appeal, to be primarily associated with the legibility of its seventeenth to nineteenth century cottage architecture, including the primacy of its front, southern elevation which reflects its history as an entrance lodge for the Swakeleys House estate, at the head of The Avenue.
14. Within this context, the following combination of factors would cause the proposed extension to appear as an intrusive and incongruent modern addition

to the listed building. The proposal would extend across the width of the two-storey part of the west wing and obscure the latter's ground floor fenestration. The proposal would also extend close to the line of the front facade of the cottage's core. This mass would combine with the extension's modern, proportionately extensive fenestration and its shallow-pitch glass roof to contrast discordantly with the traditional cottage architecture. It would visually clutter and disrupt the transition from the cottage core to the west wing. Moreover, the proposal would distract from the historic detailing of the front elevation of the cottage core.

15. The above impacts would be noticeable from various viewpoints within the grounds of the cottage and from The Avenue, including on the southern approach to the property and on the approach to the front of the building, looking up the latter's front driveway. This would compromise the legibility of the historic cottage architecture. It would also undermine the primacy of the listed building's front elevation and associated articulation of its history as an entrance lodge for the Swakeleys House estate.
16. The proposed windows would be noticeably bulkier in frame width and depth than the historic fenestration of the building's front elevation. The angular tops of the proposed windows would also contrast with the characteristic arched tops of existing windows. These contrasts would further draw attention to the discordant presence of the proposed extension.
17. Furthermore, the proposed valley gutter would add the risk of future damp damage to the adjoining fabric of the listed building.
18. The unimplemented listed building consent from more than a decade ago for a conservatory at the appeal property¹ does not constitute a fallback position. Nor does it negate the identified adverse impacts of the current appeal proposal. It also differs from the proposal in that it was smaller. As such the previous conservatory scheme carries little weight in this case.
19. Taking the above together, the combination of incongruent massing, design and material would distract from the historic form of the building. Consequently, the over-dominant addition that is being proposed would erode the historic legibility of the building and put historic fabric at risk.
20. Given the visibility of the proposal from various viewpoints within the grounds of the appeal property and The Avenue, and the building's historic association with the Swakeleys House estate, the identified adverse impacts of the proposal would also harm the character and appearance of the CA.
21. Therefore, I find that the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building and the significance of the CA. I give this harm considerable importance and weight in the planning balance of these appeals.
22. Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (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, and that this should have a clear and convincing justification. Given the extent of the changes, I find the

¹ Application Ref: 846/APP/2009/2616, granted 4 February 2010.

harm to be less than substantial in this instance, but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.

23. Under such circumstances, paragraph 196 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against public benefits of the proposal, including any contribution to securing optimal viable use of listed buildings.
24. The proposal would provide additional living space in the form of a garden room. However, the benefit would be limited to the private convenience of the occupiers. The modernity of the proposed construction techniques, as cited by the appellant, would not in itself be a public benefit. Moreover, the continued viable use of the appeal property as a residential dwelling is not dependent on the proposal, as the building has an ongoing residential use that would not cease in its absence.
25. Given the above, I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest of the Grade II listed building, and the character and appearance of the CA. This would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and paragraph 196 of the Framework. It would also conflict with Policies BE1 and HE1 of the London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 Strategic Policies (2012), Policies DMHB1 and DMHB2 of the London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies (2020) and Policy HC1 of the LP. Together the policies seek to ensure that proposals complement local character and distinctiveness, including through conservation of heritage assets. As a result, the proposal would not be in accordance with the development plan.

Conclusion

26. For the reasons given above I conclude that these appeals should be dismissed.

William Cooper

INSPECTOR