



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2025

by **O S Woodward MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C1570/Y/24/3345931

Barn At Waltons, Steventon End, Ashdon, Essex CB10 2JD

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Thomas Boden against the decision of Uttlesford District Council.
 - The application Ref is UTT/23/3138/LB.
 - The works proposed are the removal of later addition, small, single-storey lean-to structure adjacent to east gable of barn.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was released in December 2024 and further amended in February 2025. The changes were not material to the main issue for the appeal so I have therefore based my Decision on the revised document without needing to consult the main parties.
3. I have removed unnecessary descriptive elements from the description of development as it was set out on the application form. This has not materially changed the nature of the description.
4. The listing includes any object or structure fixed to the listed building. The lean-to is directly fixed to the barn and is therefore part of the listed building. I reflect this as appropriate throughout my Decision.
5. Because the appeal relates to a refusal to grant listed building consent I have had special regard to Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
6. There is a holding objection due to insufficient ecological information on European Protected Species, ie bats. However, this is not a material consideration in relation to a listed building consent and I do not, therefore, consider this as part of my Decision.

Main Issue

7. The main issue is whether or not the proposal preserves the Grade II listed building 'Barn to south west of Place Farm Farmhouse, Fronting Road'¹ or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

¹ List entry number 1112465

Reasons

Significance

8. The barn is from the 17th Century. The evidence is that it is substantially complete and largely unaltered. It is in good condition. It is a substantial size. The form, scale and prominence of the roof of the main part of the barn is particularly striking. The main part of the barn derives its significance from a combination of its size, historic materials, aesthetic value, the main roof and continuity of agricultural use from its construction until the present day.
9. A small lean-to structure is present on its eastern elevation. Historic mapping and other evidence suggests this is from early 20th Century, although it is possibly from slightly earlier in the late-19th Century. The appellant has also found 21st Century elements of fabric. Nevertheless, it is substantially from before July 1948. It is constructed of a timber frame with weatherboarding which matches the barn and has a slate roof. The lean-to is attached to the barn but with limited incursions into the barn's historic fabric. It has independent access, directly from outside. There is no access between the lean-to and the barn. It is currently being used as an incidental store room.
10. The lean-to partially obscures the original eastern flank wall of the barn. There is a slightly awkward relationship where the roof of the lean-to meets the flank wall of the barn higher than the eaves to the roof of the main barn. Nevertheless, the use of weatherboarding reflects the weatherboarding to the lower part of the main barn. It is partially built on top of a flint wall which helps to integrate the lean-to with the barn and its curtilage. It contains some reasonably historic fabric. The lean-to is evidence of the adaption of the barn over time and forms a positive part of its special architectural and historic interest.

Assessment

11. Demolition of the lean-to would harm the significance of the barn by eroding the ability to understand the adaption and evolution of the barn over time. The lean-to is an important part of the historical evolution of the building, being a physical manifestation of a particular part of the building's history where it required this additional and different style of storage space. Therefore, I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the special architectural or historic interest of the Grade II listed building, thus failing to satisfy the requirements of the Act and Paragraph 210 of the Framework. I assess the level of harm to be less than substantial.

Heritage Balance

12. In accordance with Paragraph 212 of the Framework, I place great weight on the conservation of designated heritage assets. Although less than substantial, I place considerable importance and weight on the harm that I have identified to the listed building. As set out at Paragraph 215 of the Framework, where there is less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing their optimum viable use.
13. In this case, there would be a public benefit from better revealing the original form and silhouette of the eastern flank of the main barn, and part of the flint wall. This

reflects Historic England's conservation principle to take opportunities to reveal heritage values. However, the lean-to is small both intrinsically and in comparison to the size of the barn and only makes a small impression on the eastern elevation. The flint wall is a successful curtilage wall with regard to its relationship to the main barn irrespective of the lean-to. Much of the wall is visible either with or without the lean-to. These are therefore only very minor benefits which do not outweigh the harm caused by the erosion of the ability to read the evolution of the building over time. The harm to the significance of the listed building therefore outweighs the public benefits.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons above, the appeal is dismissed.

O S Woodward
INSPECTOR