



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 26 August 2025

by Jennifer Wallace BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 September 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/J0405/W/25/3362194

Hill Farm House, Lenborough Road, Gawcott, Buckinghamshire MK18 4BP

- 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 Mr & Mrs C Lodge against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council - North Area (Aylesbury).
 - The application Ref is 24/03233/APP.
 - The development proposed is single storey porch to front entrance door.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/J0405/Y/25/3362212

Hill Farm House, Lenborough Road, Gawcott, Buckinghamshire MK18 4BP

- 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 & Mrs C Lodge against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council - North Area (Aylesbury).
 - The application Ref is 24/03234/ALB.
 - The works proposed are single storey porch to front entrance door.
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Decisions

1. Appeal A: The appeal is dismissed.
2. Appeal B: The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. These decisions address both planning and listed building consent appeals for the same site and the same scheme. To prevent duplication and for the avoidance of doubt, I have dealt with both appeals within a single decision letter.
4. I have had special regard to sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) as appropriate in reaching my decisions. These require me to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Although the site address is given as Hill Farm House, I will refer to the appeal property as Hill Farmhouse in this decision letter as that is its list entry name.
5. The appellants have submitted amended drawings with the appeals. These show the proposed porch as slightly shorter than in the proposal before the Council. I have considered whether it would be appropriate to accept these revised plans, having regard to the guidance in the 'Procedural Guide: Planning Appeals – England and the tests given in the 'Holborn Studios' judgment¹.

¹ Holborn Studios Ltd v The Council of the London Borough of Hackney [2017] EWHC 2823 (Admin)

6. In this case, as the size of the porch is reduced, the proposed amendments do not substantially alter the development or works as proposed, nor materially alter its nature. I therefore consider that no party would be prejudiced were I to consider these plans and I therefore accept the revised plans and determine the appeals with regard to them.

Main Issue

7. The main issue for both appeals is the effect of the proposal on the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building Hill Farmhouse.

Reasons

Special Interest and Significance

8. Hill Farmhouse² is an early-mid 19th century former farmhouse constructed of red brick with a slate roof and brick end stacks. It lies in a rural location, with surrounding buildings also displaying an agricultural heritage.
9. The east elevation is the principal entrance to the property. It appears to have maintained its aesthetically pleasing, polite architectural form. The south elevation has a similar form, while the north and west elevations are somewhat more functional in appearance and appear to have undergone more alterations.
10. The front door is 6-panel with a four pane overlight and a moulded wood surround with panelled reveals and a straight hood on moulded brackets. These reflect the elegance of the form of the east elevation.
11. From the evidence before me, the special interest and significance of Hill Farmhouse are largely derived from its architectural and historic interest as an early-mid 19th century rural domestic property. Its design reflects the functional requirements of a farmhouse and societal values of the time in which it was built.

Appeal Proposal and Effects

12. The proposal would see the removal of the hood while the existing door, surround and overlight would remain. It is proposed to construct a limited sized, flat roof porch from reclaimed red brick around the existing door and detailing. I prefer the appellants' evidence that the hood is a modern addition to the property, and I find that its removal would not have an adverse effect on its significance. As a small addition to the listed building, there would be no effect to its setting or curtilage from the addition of the proposed porch. The plan form of the building would remain legible.
13. Notwithstanding, brickwork relief panels and a York stone parapet are proposed, with decorative spheres. Dummy windows are shown on both of the return elevations. This level of proposed detailing would appear at odds with the simplicity of the front elevation of the property.
14. The appellants have put forward that the parapet would be adding a hierarchy of architectural detail that would have been "aspiring in its status at the time". There is no substantive evidence before me to demonstrate how this would be the case. The appellants have also submitted examples of porches on other listed farmhouses in Buckinghamshire. There is no evidence that Hill Farmhouse has

² List Entry Number 1201427 listed 03 Apr 1973

previously had a porch. While there are similarities between the proposal and one of those examples, I am not aware of the history of those properties or details of their special interest. Neither are the examples closely related to the architectural detailing of Hill Farmhouse. These therefore would not alter my assessment of the proposal on the significance of the designated heritage asset as they do not provide a strong evidence base for the design of the proposed porch.

15. Furthermore, the porch would be a modern addition to the property. Seeking to construct a feature which is present on other buildings of a similar age and function does not automatically equate to an acceptable effect on the authenticity and intrinsic special interest of Hill Farmhouse today. The porch would be very modest in scale and so a blank side elevation would have a neutral effect. It is therefore inconsistent to suggest that the detailing to the side elevations would be necessary to prevent them from appearing overbearing.
16. I find that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building Hill Farmhouse. This would be contrary to the requirements of sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Act. As a result, the proposal would harm the significance of this designated heritage asset.

Public Benefits and Balance

17. Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) sets out that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, irrespective of whether this would amount to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to significance. Paragraph 213 further advises that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.
18. Given the scale of the works proposed to Hill Farmhouse, I find that the harm to its significance I have identified above would be less than substantial and at the lower end of that category. Nonetheless, this harm carries considerable importance and weight. In such circumstances, paragraph 215 of the Framework confirms that these harms should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, which includes securing the asset's optimum viable use.
19. The proposal would improve the thermal performance of the property by providing a thermal break between the exterior and the heart of the house. There would be a public benefit arising from the improved environmental performance this would effectively result in. There would also be the economic benefits that would arise during the construction stage. However, these benefits would be of the most limited weight.
20. Additional storage space and an improved family layout would provide a personal benefit to the appellants only. The fact works to the property can be recorded would not be a public benefit of the proposal. While they are not heritage and/or public benefits that can be taken into account in the appeals before me, the submitted evidence all indicates that the development and works the appellants have carried out to the building have been in a manner appropriate to its significance and that they are a good steward of the property.
21. There is no substantive evidence before me that the works are required to secure the optimum viable use of the asset as a dwelling. Nor is there a clear and convincing justification for the works where I have found harm. Overall, in giving

considerable importance and weight to the identified harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, I find that this would not be outweighed by the public benefits arising from the proposal.

22. The proposal would have a harmful effect on the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building Hill Farmhouse. This would be contrary to the requirements of sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Act, and the provisions within the Framework which seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment. It would also be in conflict with Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (2021) Policies BE1 and BE2 which taken together require proposals to seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance and to consider and complement that architectural detailing of the locality.

Conclusions

23. **Appeal A:** The appeal proposal would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole. There are no material considerations of sufficient weight to indicate the decision should be taken otherwise. For the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.
24. **Appeal B:** For the reasons given, I conclude that Appeal B should be dismissed.

Jennifer Wallace

INSPECTOR