



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 9 September 2025

by Ann Veevers BA(Hons) PGDip(BCon) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 November 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/A0665/W/25/3360627

Lime Cottage, Wrexham Road, Pulford, Chester CH4 9DG

- 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 and Mrs Nock against the decision of Cheshire West and Chester Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/02645/FUL.
 - The development proposed is removal of existing shed/logstore, new vehicular access with gates, infilling of existing shared access point with new hedgerow.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/A0665/Y/25/3360626

Lime Cottage, Wrexham Road, Pulford, Chester CH4 9DG

- 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 and Mrs Nock against the decision of Cheshire West and Chester Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/02646/LBC.
 - The works proposed are the removal of existing shed/logstore, new vehicular access with gates, infilling of existing shared access point with new hedgerow.
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Decisions

1. Appeal A is dismissed.
2. No further action taken in respect of Appeal B. The appeal is not determined on the basis of listed building consent not being required.

Preliminary Matters

3. The description of development provided on the planning application form read 'Proposed new vehicular access point'. The Council changed the description to that in the banner heading above. This description is more precise and was used by the appellants for the purposes of the appeals. Consequently, I am satisfied that no party will be prejudiced by my use of it.
4. The appeals follow the refusal of both planning permission and listed building consent. I have sought and received the comments of both main parties on the need for listed building consent. The appeal relates to a pair of semi-detached dwellings, 1 and 2 Manor Cottages, which form a Grade II listed building referred to on the list entry as 'Manor Cottages and attached storeshed and domestic offices'¹. Within the enclosed gardens of this listed building is a separate detached dwelling, Lime Cottage, and other detached garden buildings and fences. No information has been provided to suggest any of these buildings (including Lime Cottage) are contemporary with the listed building or pre-date 1 July 1948².

¹ National Heritage List for England, List Entry Number: 1136634

² Section 1(5)b of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Neither party suggest they form part of the listed building and from the evidence, I agree.

5. As such, from the information before me and observations at my site visit, it does not appear that listed building consent is required given that the proposal would not constitute works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest³. Moreover, the decision notice relating to listed building consent refers only to the setting of listed buildings.
6. I have therefore taken no further action in relation to the s20 appeal against the refusal of listed building consent but have continued to determine the s78 appeal against the refusal of planning permission.
7. The appeal site is also adjacent to another pair of semi-detached cottages that form the Grade II listed building referred to on the list entry as 'Oak Cottage (formerly police house) and Glenwood'⁴. The site is also located within the Pulford Conservation Area (PCA). Consequently, as required by sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act), I have had special regard to the desirability of preserving the buildings or their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess; and paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the PCA.

Main Issues

8. The main issues are whether the proposal would preserve the settings of the Grade II listed buildings, 1 and 2 Manor Cottages, and Oak Cottage and Glenwood; and whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the PCA.

Reasons

Listed buildings and Conservation Area - special interest and significance

9. The Grade II listed building known as 1 and 2 Manor Cottages is a semi-detached pair of two-storey dwellings dating from the mid-to-late 19th century. The pair are handed and appear asymmetrical when viewed from the front. The building as a whole is constructed in Flemish bond brick on a sandstone plinth with gabled roofs and a square central chimney. The list entry describes the building as 'simplified Jacobean in expression' and it includes distinctive cast iron latticed casement windows under moulded sandstone lintels. Although the rear of the building has been altered and extended, it still maintains a vernacular authenticity that reflects its historic origins as a pair of estate dwellings.
10. Given the above, from the information before me and my own observations, I find the special interest and significance of the listed building to be mainly derived from its architectural and historic interest as a good example of a domestic estate building from the 19th century. Important contributing factors in this regard are the use of traditional methods of construction and materials, the building's surviving historic fabric and the legibility of its historic plan form.

³ Section 7(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

⁴ National Heritage List for England, List Entry Number: 1138393

11. Oak Cottage and Glenwood is a Grade II listed building which the list entry identifies dates from 1865 and incorporates a similar handed form, materials and detailing as 1 and 2 Manor Cottages. Whilst a porch has been added to the listed building and there are other alterations and additions at the rear, I find that the special interest and significance of this listed building to also be primarily associated with its architectural and historic interest as a good example of a domestic estate building from the 19th century. Its traditional construction, intact historic fabric and its aesthetic qualities are important factors in these regards.
12. Both the above listed buildings have group value insofar as they are inherently experienced together as part of the development of the Grosvenor Estate of the 2nd Marquis of Westminster. In this regard, and highly pertinent to the appeal, special interest and significance also stem in part from the setting of the listed buildings as part of this wider, predominantly agricultural, estate. The limited information submitted with the appeal suggests the Grosvenor Estate is widespread, but parts have the character of small, designed landscapes. The substantial grounds within which each of the assets sit, its designed symmetry and the historic relationship with the surrounding open agricultural estate land form an attractive architectural set piece within a planned enclave of mid-19th century estate cottages, which makes a positive contribution to the significance and special interest of the listed buildings.
13. The listed buildings are therefore both integral parts of the estate as a whole and also provide reciprocal and overlapping settings for each other. The spacious gardens and dense vegetation along the boundary with Wrexham Road are some of the important elements that make up the immediate setting of these buildings. This is the main space where the listed buildings are experienced and contributes considerably to both their significance as designated assets, as well as the ability to appreciate that significance.
14. Lime Cottage is located between the listed buildings and appears to be of some architectural merit in its design and from the use of traditional materials. However, because of the singular accesses to the individual properties within 1 and 2 Manor Cottages, Oak Cottage and Glenwood; the set back of Lime Cottage and other outbuildings within the gardens of 1 and 2 Manor Cottages behind the principal elevation and their subordinate form and design, the individual domestic setting of 1 and 2 Manor Cottages as well as the relationship between this listed building and Oak Cottage and Glenwood is still legible. As such, Lime Cottage and the other outbuildings, have a neutral effect on the ability to appreciate the important contribution the setting makes to the significance of the listed buildings.
15. The PCA is a linear conservation area which, from the information before me, runs along Wrexham Road to the Welsh border and includes a large proportion of the centre of the small village of Pulford. Although the size, age and appearance of buildings within the PCA varies, there is a general consistency of height and materials to buildings, which are predominantly residential. The individual design of buildings set within spacious plots reflect Pulford's growth around the key building of the Parish Church of St Mary and the prevailing architectural styles of the time.
16. Relevant to the appeal, a common characteristic along Wrexham Road north of the village is the roadside vegetation. This area is less developed with large stretches of mostly flat open countryside interspersed with a single or cluster of

buildings set back from the road. The appeal site lies just beyond a change in speed limit along Wrexham Road in open countryside and while roadside vegetation in this area is punctuated occasionally by driveways, these are discrete and narrow.

17. From the evidence before me, the character and appearance of the PCA in relation to this appeal derives from its historic development pattern, richness of historic buildings and its verdant spaciousness. As a cohesive architectural group within the predominantly rural PCA, the listed buildings and associated gardens positively contribute to the character and appearance of the PCA as a whole and thereby to its significance as a designated heritage asset.

Proposal and effects

18. The proposal would result in the loss of a large section of hedgerow to create a vehicular access with visibility splays. An associated length of the grass verge would also be removed, and the raised footway would be lowered to create a dropped kerb. Timber gates would be installed to match existing gates at 2 Manor Cottage (No.2) and would be set back slightly within the new opening. A relatively modern garden shed/log store would be removed in order to accommodate the inward opening gates and new access. The relatively short section of driveway would be surfaced in stone shingles to match the existing parking area in the front garden. The existing shared access between Lime Cottage and No.2 would be divided by a new hedge.
19. Despite the creation of a new hedge subdividing 1 and 2 Manor Cottages and Lime Cottage, the removal of the hedgerow along the Wrexham Road frontage would increase the openness to the front of plot. Given that a footway extends along the front of the appeal site, a bus stop is located directly in front of No.2 and that the site is within walking and cycling distance of the centre of Pulford, the proposal would be clearly visible by users of Wrexham Road passing the site in either direction.
20. I agree with the parties that Lime Cottage is currently located discretely within the grounds of No.2, being set back from the listed buildings and partially screened by the front boundary hedge and other trees and vegetation. However, the proposed access would significantly increase the visibility of Lime Cottage and its associated parking area. As a consequence, they would become more prominent features within the grounds of the listed building which would disrupt the hierarchy of buildings and spaces within the setting of the listed buildings. In combination, they would compete with and detract from the primacy and importance of both 1 and 2 Manor Cottages and, due to its proximity, Oak Cottage and Glenwood. This would be even more so given the proposed replication of width of entrance and style of gates to the listed building.
21. I acknowledge a vehicular access is currently provided for each of the four dwellings within the two listed buildings. However, these are discretely located between hedges and trees and spaced apart. I also note other gates at neighbouring properties, but these are within existing openings and are not obtrusive. Even considering the additional hedge planting proposed between No.2 and Lime Cottage, the creation of an additional opening close to an existing one would be a clearly modern alteration that would be at odds with the simple vegetated frontages and weaken the legibility of the enclosed gardens associated

with the separate pairs of listed buildings. On this basis, even if the proposed gates were of high quality materials and design, the appearance of the surrounding area and views towards the listed buildings would not be enhanced. Rather, the overall loss of green enclosure and the presence of parked cars and views of Lime Cottage would create a jarring and alien juxtaposition in relation to both listed buildings.

22. Moreover, the proposal would create a defined boundary and a clear separate residential section to part of the grounds of 1 and 2 Manor Cottages. This would sever the visual and functional relationship between this listed building and its historically associated grounds, diminishing the legibility and authenticity of the site as a designed estate cottage.
23. For the above reasons, the proposal would lessen the positive contribution that the asset's setting makes to its significance, as well as reduce the ability to appreciate that significance. I find the proposal would fail to preserve the setting of the two Grade II listed buildings, 1 and 2 Manor Cottages, and Oak Cottage and Glenwood, which collectively contribute to the appreciation of the development of the Grosvenor Estate, and thus diminishing their significance.
24. These harmful effects would feed through to the character and appearance of the PCA. Indeed, notwithstanding the pleasing design of the proposed gates and the introduction of new hedging within the site, I find the proposal would result in the loss of frontage hedgerow that would allow associated public views of the parking area which would urbanise and detract from the prevailing character and appearance of the PCA. It would also disrupt the pattern of development, that being buildings set within spacious plots. Consequently, the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the PCA as a whole and therefore diminish the significance of this designated heritage asset.

Public benefits and planning balance

25. In finding harm to the significance of designated heritage assets, the magnitude of that harm should be assessed⁵. Given the nature and extent of the development proposed, I find the harm to the listed buildings from the proposed development within its setting would be at the lower level of less than substantial. Similarly, I find the harm identified above in relation to the PCA to also be at the lower level of less than substantial. Nevertheless, this harm carries considerable importance and weight.
26. Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that great weight should be given to a heritage asset's conservation, irrespective of the degree of potential harm. Paragraph 215 of the Framework confirms that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing the asset's optimum viable use.
27. The related construction works would provide a boost to the local economy and local employment during the period of the development. This outcome would flow from the proposed development and is of a nature to be of benefit to the public at large. However, the weight it carries in the balance is moderated by the limited extent of the proposal but, nonetheless, weighs in favour of the appeal.

⁵ Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 18a-018-20190723

28. The appellant has advanced the argument that there would be public benefit arising from better highway safety associated with a new access, less traffic congestion caused by the current shared access and fewer vehicular movements in front of No.2. However, from the information before me and what I saw, I find the existing shared access and parking areas associated with No.2 and Lime Cottage are sufficiently large to allow for several vehicles to manoeuvre and park.
29. I note the proposed gates would be set back sufficiently within the site to allow a vehicle to park clear of Wrexham Road, as is currently the case at No.2. Nonetheless, although the appellant refers to a number of serious motoring accidents in the area, no compelling evidence has been provided to substantiate the claim that the existing arrangement compromises highway safety. From the information presented, the proposal would neither reduce the number of traffic movements to and from the highway or reduce traffic congestion. Consequently, I do not consider a public benefit arises in relation to highway matters. The appellant's assertion that fewer vehicles would be likely to pass in front of No.2 would be a private benefit.
30. There is no substantive evidence before me that the proposal is required to secure the optimum viable use of either of the listed buildings. They have an ongoing residential use that, on the basis of the information before me, would be unlikely to cease in its absence.
31. Paragraph 200 of the Framework is explicit in its requirement that any harm to, or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, which, in all of the respects outlined above, I find not to be the case in the appeal before me. Overall, the limited weight that I ascribe to the public benefit that would accrue from the proposal is not sufficient to outweigh the considerable importance and weight I attach to the harm I have found.
32. I therefore conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the settings of the Grade II listed buildings, 1 and 2 Manor Cottages, and Oak Cottage and would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the PCA. This would conflict with the statutory requirements of the Act. It would also be contrary to Policy ENV5 of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan, Part One: Strategic Policies, adopted January 2015 and Policies DM47 and DM48 of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan, Part Two: Land Allocations and Detailed Policies, adopted July 2019. These policies seek, amongst other things, that development will be required to respect and respond positively to designated heritage assets and their settings, avoiding loss or harm to their significance. There would also be conflict with the provisions of the Framework which seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

Conclusion

33. The proposal in relation to Appeal A would conflict with the Act, the development plan and the Framework. There are no material considerations which indicate that the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Accordingly, for the reasons given, I conclude that Appeal A should be dismissed.
34. No further action is taken on Appeal B.

Ann Veevers INSPECTOR