



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 October 2025

by J Parsons MSc BSc(Hons) DipTP Cert(Urb) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U2235/D/24/3357256

2 Elnothington Cottages, Ashford Road, Hollingbourne, Ashford, Kent, ME17 1PB

- 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 Ms Mary Edwards against the decision of Maidstone Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/502608/FULL.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the development would preserve the Grade II listed building, known as 1 and 2 Elnothington Cottages, or any feature of special architectural or historic interest it possesses.

Reasons

Heritage asset

3. The appeal site comprises 2 Elnothington Cottage and is attached to its semi-detached neighbour at 1 Elnothington Cottage. They lie between Ashford Road to the front and Penfold Hill to the rear. No 1 has a side garage attached via a small extension link. Both have had similar sized lean-to type extensions to the rear which are of more recent origin. Beyond No 1, Penfold Hill forms a junction with Ashford Road. The Grade II listed Elnothington House lies to the east of the appeal site in the other direction.
4. Both Nos 1 and 2 are listed as Grade II as a pair and noted for their group value. Both cottages are early 19th century. The official list entry (entry number 1060823) details a double depth building of two storeys on a rendered plinth. It also indicates a ground floor with painted brick, a first floor with pebble dash, gable ends weatherboarded on the first floor and a plain tile roof. There is a noticeable finely dentilled wooden eaves cornice on the frontage. Other noted features include hipped roof with hips returning, central brick ridge stack and a regular two-window front of 16-pane sashes in open boxes. Doors include half-glazed open timber porch to No 2.
5. The listed building is well-preserved and, despite changes over time, continues to be experienced as historic vernacular dwellings within a rural, edge-of-village setting. Surviving fabric, traditional detailing, rectangular plan form and layout are amongst the features that underpin the listed building's architectural and historic

interest. Their interest is greatest where they face onto Ashford Road. The rear elevations of the two cottages are more subservient in appearance, simpler in architectural detailing, with modern windows, and at No 1, there is a garage with link extension to the side.

6. However, the garage and link extension do not dominate or compete with the architectural and historic interest of the cottages due to their low-slung appearance, being flat roofed with parapets. The lean-to rear extensions are similarly low-key due to their size and simple roof design, largely matching one another. Indeed, detailing and form, including the roof, of the cottages is still evident from Penfold Hill, as is their symmetry, and such qualities here, still contribute significantly to historical and architectural interest. For all these reasons, the historical and architectural qualities of No 2 and as part of the pair of cottages are of value and importance, and contribute to significance.

Effect of proposals

7. The proposal would be constructed of matching materials, including joinery details, but it would result in a larger single storey rear extension in place of a smaller existing lean-to extension. It would be far greater in depth, approximately 3m deeper than the original lean-to, and would have a bulky roof gable. The rear section of the extension would also be stepped in from the common boundary with No 1 and the gable would be discordantly asymmetrical as a result. Additionally, a shallow pitched roof with gable would visibly clash with the simplicity of the roof of the neighbouring lean-to extension which comprises a mono-pitch roof sloping down from just below a first floor window. Viewed from the side, the extension's overall depth would be at least three quarters of that of the original dwelling and in this respect, it would appear an overly elongated feature that would not be subordinate to the original dwelling.
8. The public views of the extended building would be largely from Penfold Hill but such localised views would not point to a lack of harm. In any case, the unsympathetic nature of the proposal would be visible from the public footway on this road, and listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest irrespective of whether or not public views of the building can be gained. This is borne out by the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which indicates heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource.
9. For all these reasons, the proposal would have a discordant and incongruous relationship with the form, balance and detail of No 2 and the listed building taken as a whole. It would fail to preserve the Grade II listed building, known as 1 and 2 Elnothington Cottages, or any feature of special architectural or historic interest it possesses. The degree of harm to the significance of the listed building, as a designated heritage asset, would, in terms of the Framework, be less than substantial, at mid point within the spectrum of this type of harm. In accordance with paragraph 215 of the Framework, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing the optimum viable use.

Heritage balance

10. In providing additional accommodation, the proposed extension would be largely satisfying the private wants and needs of the appellant, which are not public benefits. There is no evidence that the proposal is required to secure optimum

viable use, especially given the existence of an extension already. Conversely, the proposed development would not preserve the Grade II listed building, or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses. It would conflict with the requirements of s66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act). The modest public benefits, which would accrue from the proposal, are not sufficient to outweigh the less than substantial harm identified and the considerable importance and weight this carries. Conflict, therefore, arises with the historic environment protection policies of the Framework.

Other matters

11. The Grade II listed Elnothington House dates to the late 18th century/early 19th century. It is two storeys and constructed with red brick with Flemish bond and slate roof. The roof consists of a plain parapet with a brick band, gambrel roof, red brick gable and stacks, and 3 flat-fronted dormers. The listed building description (entry number 1367043) further details a regular three window front of two recessed 16 pane sashes and central round headed sash within arch. It also details a central panel door with semi circular fan light with radiating glazing bars in doubly recessed round headed brick architrave. Such features give rise to a historic house of high status.
12. The garden walls are also part of the listing comprising red and grey brick largely in header bonds abutting the front elevation of the house to enclose the frontage. The listed building's age, detailed design and grandeur are of architectural and historical interest contributing to its significance. Such significance is appreciated from outside of its curtilage. The Framework establishes great weight should be given to a Heritage Asset's conservation. However, the proposed extension would be single storey, partially replacing a previous extension and it would also be located a modest distance back from common boundary, separating the appeal property and that of the listed building. Accordingly, the setting of Elnothington House would not be harmed and there would be no conflict with s66(1) of the Act in respect of this heritage asset.

Planning balance and conclusion

13. The development would fail to preserve a Grade II listed building for all these reasons indicated. Consequently, the proposal would conflict with Policies LPRSP14, LPRSP15, LPRENV1, FPRQD4 and LPRHou11 of the Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan Review 2021-2038 (2024), which collectively and amongst other matters, requires the quality of heritage assets to be conserved and where possible, enhanced, high quality design, proposals to positively respond to historic character of the area, building extensions to be in scale and sympathy with existing buildings, respecting local building styles and materials. There would be conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. No material considerations indicate that the planning appeal be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal should be dismissed.

J Parsons

INSPECTOR