



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 30 September 2025

by **Samuel Watson BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 November 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/K1128/W/25/3364121

Beach Cottage, Hope Cove, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 3HP

- 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 A Williams against the decision of South Hams District Council.
- The application Ref is 3175/24/HHO.
- The development proposed is Proposed Installation of ensuite to existing Bedroom at first floor level.

Appeal B Ref: APP/K1128/Y/25/3364125

Beach Cottage, Hope Cove, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 3HP

- 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 A Williams against the decision of South Hams District Council.
 - The application Ref is 2867/24/LBC.
 - The works proposed are Proposed Installation of ensuite to existing Bedroom at first floor level.
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Decision

Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed and listed building consent is refused for the erection of an extension.

Preliminary Matters

3. As the appeals relate to works to a listed building, I have taken Sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) into account.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve Beach Cottage¹, a Grade II listed building, and the Inner Hope Conservation Area (the IHCA) along with any special architectural or historic interest they possess.

Reasons

5. Beach Cottage is a small cottage built in the 18th century, or slightly later, finished in rendered rubble walls and served by a thatch roof. Internally the historic layout of the building was largely intact, allowing the two-room plan to still be legible. The significance of this building stems, in part, from the age of the building, the extent

¹ List Entry Number: 1108464

to which its historic interest is still intact, and its group value with the surrounding historic development.

6. From the information before me it appears that the roof of the listed building has been altered by way of replacing the hipped roof section with a gable end on the south-east elevation. There is no chimney externally visible on this end of the building and I note, from the submissions before me, that the chimney has been capped. The only evidence of a chimney on this side of the building is, internally, the chimney breast visible within the bedroom covered by the appeal proposal. I note the appellant's suggestion that the fireplace was installed much more recently and is solely for show.
7. However, no substantive information has been provided as to the chimney's history or what works were historically carried out on it and the roof. Although lacking any detailed information it is likely that this chimney, and fireplace, along with that at the opposite end of the building, formed important features integral to the lives of those historically living there. I therefore find that its importance and contribution to the understanding of the room and wider building as a whole, is likely to be high.
8. It appears that at some point the first floor has been altered to accommodate two bedrooms, a bathroom and a staircase into the attic space. By subdividing the appeal bedroom to create an ensuite, the proposal would further dilute the legibility of the two-room plan on this floor. The subdivision, by way of installing a new stud wall, would go some way to hide the historic layout of the bedroom and the presence of the chimney breast. The removal of the fireplace and covering the chimney breast with cladding would further obfuscate the fire and chimney's presence. With the presence of bathroom furniture within the ensuite, the chimney would not be obvious from this room either.
9. I note concerns as to the build-up of humidity and dampness within the ensuite as it is not served by a window or other existing ventilation. The appellant has, however, suggested that an extractor vent could be provided within the ceiling of the ensuite, exhausting through the eaves of the roof. I am content that an extractor fan could manage dampness within the room preventing damage to the building. However, I have not been provided with details of how the vents, ducting and any other associated features would be installed and what works to the fabric of the listed building would be necessary. Moreover, the visual appearance of steam rising from the eaves of the roof would be incongruous and is not characteristic of this type of building.
10. To the rear of the building the existing waste pipes would be rearranged to accommodate a soil pipe from the ensuite. This pipe would be larger in diameter but make a more direct route to the ground where it would connect into the existing drainage system. The proposed, tidier, arrangement of pipes would not be an improvement over the existing, given its increased size, but it would nevertheless not result in any harm to the listed building.
11. I note the extract provided by the appellant from Historic England's Guide for Owners of Listed Buildings. This states that the installation of new bathrooms should not be a problem if they sited with care. However, it goes on to detail that rooms containing important historic features should be avoided unless they can be retained. One example of such a feature is a fireplace. Very limited information has

been provided as to the age of the fireplace, as noted above, but it appears to be historic. Given my findings above, the placement of the ensuite would not be suitable in line with the guidance from Historic England.

12. It has been suggested that the dwelling's attic space provides space for an additional two beds. This would mean that the house provides three bedrooms and could accommodate six people. However, at the time of my visit it was clear that the attic was arranged to provide a storage room and, although two single-beds were present, there was no evidence the room was suitable for accommodation. Consequently, I have considered the house to be a two-bed property providing accommodation for four people. Against this level of accommodation, the demand for a toilet and washing facilities would not be so great as to justify the proposal.
13. Against this background, and given the scale of the development, I find that a modest degree of less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset would occur. Although less than substantial, the Framework is clear that great weight should be given to any asset's conservation. Paragraph 215 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
14. The proposal would provide some improvement to the provisions of the accommodation in line with modern expectations. It would, therefore, provide some benefit to local housing stock. This improvement is likely to attract more guests to the property who in turn would support the local economy and community. I am mindful though that the holiday accommodation is already present and, as such, would already provide some social and economic benefits. Consequently, I find that at most, these matters would provide a modest public benefit.
15. Moreover, as the building is already in use, and as this use is not reliant upon the proposal, I consider the proposal would not help secure the longevity of the building or its optimum viable use.
16. I have found public benefits above. However, they are only modest given their nature and scale. In the circumstances of this case, these public benefits do not outweigh the harm identified to designated heritage asset.
17. The proposal would result in harm to the significance of the Grade II listed building and no public benefits have been demonstrated that outweigh this harm. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policy DEV21, of the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034, which, amongst other matters, requires proposals to conserve the historic environment with consideration of their significance, character and local distinctiveness. The proposal would also conflict with Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, including Paragraphs 202, 208 and 215 which identify heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource whose significance should be accounted for and conserved.
18. The listed building also sits within the Inner Hope Conservation Area (the IHCA). By way of its location and the fact that it is a heritage asset in its own right, the appeal building contributes to the significance of the IHCA. I am mindful that the Council did not refuse the proposal on any effect to the conservation area. However, given the harm I have identified above, should the development be carried out, it would also result in harm to the character of this designated heritage asset.

Conclusion

19. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

Samuel Watson

INSPECTOR