
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 4 November 2025

by Stuart Willis BA Hons MSc PGCE MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 December 2025

Appeal A: APP/Y9507/W/25/3362330

Cruckwell House, Park Lane, Swansmore, Hampshire SO32 2QQ

- 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 Jason Vigiers against the decision of South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application reference is SDNP/23/05084/HOUS.
 - The development proposed is erection of single-storey extension linking house; associated alterations to dwelling to create entrance hall and w/c.
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Appeal B: APP/Y9507/Y/25/3362331

Cruckwell House, Park Lane, Swanmore, Hampshire, SO32 2QQ

- 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 Jason Vigiers against the decision of South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application reference is SDNP/23/05085/LIS.
 - The development proposed is erection of single-storey extension linking house; associated alterations to dwelling to create entrance hall and w/c.
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Decisions

1. Appeal A and Appeal B are dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. As the proposal relates to a listed building, I have had special regard to sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) (the Act).

Main Issues

3. The main issues are whether the proposal would:
 - Preserve the Grade II listed building known as “Cruckwell House Park Cottage” (Ref: 1350593) and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses; and
 - Preserve the setting, as it relates to the special interest of the Grade II listed building known as “Barn 4 Metres North East Of Park Cottage” (Ref: 1095626).

Reasons

Cruckwell House Park Cottage (Cruckwell House)

4. Cruckwell House is a medieval building with cruck-timber frame. Formerly an open hall the property was subsequently altered to create a first floor and chimney stack. It has Flemish bond brickwork with flintwork and tiled roof. There have been several further extensions, including in the 20th century to the rear beneath a catslide roof flowing from the historic roof form. Despite the alterations the legibility of the historic core has been largely retained, and the massing of the later additions are subservient and follow much of the domestic architectural traditions in terms of materials, roof form and style. Therefore, while the building has evolved, it retains a relatively compact form with the historic core predominating within the extended layout.
5. Given the above, I find that the special interest of Cruckwell House, insofar as it relates to these appeals, is primarily associated with its architectural interest and historic interest as derived from the predominance of the historic core in the hierarchy of the dwelling as well as the legibility of historic construction techniques and the consistent use of traditional materials.
6. The proposed extension would be off the later phase rear addition and not require a loss of fabric other than minor widening of the existing doorway. Notwithstanding this, it would lead to a sprawling footprint away from the historic core of the property and create a disjointed layout that would erode the current hierarchy. While the appellants consider the existing space to not be well laid out, the need to pass through rooms to get to others, reflects the historic phasing of the building. This existing compact layout and its circulation patterns would be eroded by the proposal.
7. Moreover, while said to be a 'pavilion' style, the proposed external materials, style and appearance of the extension would lead to inconsistency with the historic elements of the building. The extension, whilst clearly differentiated, would disrupt the architectural cohesion of the dwelling and appear as an incongruent alien feature.
8. The glazed link would still allow views through it of the rear elevation of the property and would offset the proposed footprint from the rear wall. Details of the link and internal garden walls could be conditioned were the appeals allowed. However, while part of the elevations would be glazed, some walls would be solid, as would the roof and tinted glass is referred to on the plans. This, along with the presence of furniture in the kitchen and blinds/shutters would likely further prevent meaningful views through the extension obscuring current ones and the ability to appreciate the building.
9. Moreover, in the absence of further details of the proposed glazing it is unclear whether reflections would further reduce the ability to see through the extension. Although subservient in height to the dwelling, the contrasting materials and form would draw the eye and be distracting.
10. This part of the garden where the extension would be located is not grassed like other parts and may well be less used due to its orientation and was said to have previously been overgrown. Nonetheless, it is not particularly unkempt, is not obtrusive and as a result does not detract from the appreciation of the property.

11. The creation of the doorway to the side elevation and the widening of the doorway entrance to the proposed glazed link relates to a modern addition so would not be harmful in terms of loss of historic fabric. A condition requiring details of the new side door and window could be imposed if the appeals were allowed.
12. The new extension would be located to the rear. There would be minimal views, if any, of it outside of the garden itself and reducing land levels in this part of the garden would also help screen it from other locations. Furthermore, other changes relate to the internal parts of the building. Despite this, listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest irrespective of whether or not public views of the building can be gained.
13. Given the above, I find that the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building. Due to the nature of concerns, the scheme would cause harm at the lower end of less than substantial harm.

Barn 4 Metres North East Of Park Cottage (the Barn)

14. The Barn is a 17th century timber frame building with brick infills and straight struts to the beams. It is located close to the rear corner of Cruckwell House. It is an oak-framed building of three bays with a central cart entry in the middle bay. It has a tiled roof. While the frame is currently exposed there is consent to re clad the building in timber weathering boarding, said to have historically been present. Along with Cruckwell House, the Barn is believed to have been part of farmsteads associated with nearby Swanmore Park House.
15. The special interest of the Barn, insofar as it relates to these appeals comes in part from its architectural and historic interest from its traditional construction, materials and group value as one of a series of buildings associated with historic farmsteads. Consequently, the setting provided by the close association with Cruckwell House directly contributes to its special interest.
16. The Barn is physically very close to Cruckwell House and seen with the surrounding largely open fields. There is a large domestic building to the front. However, the modern building clearly draws on the local vernacular in terms of its materials and form and its appearance is not dissimilar to an agricultural building. Its position gives the appearance of it forming part of a farmyard with the Barn and Cruckwell House with the garden area to the other side.
17. Where seen together the extension would not fully obstruct views of the Barn and the proximity to the existing dwelling would still be obvious. Moreover, there would be little if any public views of it with the Barn. Nevertheless, as set out above, the extension would be incongruous in terms of design with Cruckwell House. In addition, its scale, roof material and glazing neither reflects the Barn or other domestic buildings at the site or agricultural ones in the nearby area. Its position and discordant design would be distracting. It would appear as a bulky and incongruous feature filling the space between the two listed buildings. This would erode their visual connection as well as the ability to appreciate the layout of the farmstead and also result in a cramped overdevelopment of this space.
18. Given the above, I find that the scheme harms the setting as it contributes to the special interest of the Barn. Due to the extent of setting affected, it would cause harm at the lower end of less than substantial harm.

Other Matters

19. Glazed links and modern additions may be acceptable at some properties. However, this is not the case for this scheme for the reasons above. The examples of properties in the area where this has taken place relate to different properties, extensions and alterations. As such, even without full details of these schemes, they are not directly comparable to the proposal before me and not a reason to allow the appeal scheme.
20. There is limited evidence Cruckwell House was previously 2 cottages, and the scheme has been amended to overcome previous concerns. However, this would not alter the harm identified above.
21. In addition to the statutory duty at section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) provides that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Landscapes (NLs). Policy SD8 of the South Downs Local Plan and Policy 3 of the Management Plan¹ similarly seek to protect and enhance dark night skies.
22. The NL has a varied landscape with large areas of undeveloped farmland and provides opportunities for recreation where its qualities can be experienced. An important factor of the NL's character is that of dark skies and tranquillity. Given there is little in the way of street lighting nearby, and the distance to other properties, dark skies around the property are likely to be apparent.
23. The appeal site is located outside of a settlement and within a Dark Night Sky Zone. Nevertheless, there are already several windows and openings on each elevation at the property. Therefore, there would be some light from the building already. While there would be some additional light from the proposed glazing, automatic blinds, shutters and tinted glass are proposed. Furthermore, the extent of glazing is not significant on many elevations or a considerable distance from the existing openings with several windows facing back towards the house. The extension would also be set down from the rear garden. As such, any increase in light spill would be small. Were the appeals to be allowed conditions could be imposed to ensure measures are in place to mitigate additional light.
24. The existing dark skies and tranquillity of the area would not be meaningfully diminished, and the landscape and scenic beauty of the NL would be conserved.

Planning and Heritage Balance

25. While less than substantial harm has been identified for each of the assets, this is nevertheless of considerable importance and weight. This harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
26. The proposal would provide more accommodation at the property and flexibility in terms of the use of existing rooms. The current occupiers desire a large kitchen/diner, and these are typical of some modern properties. However, given the scheme relates to a single dwelling, the public benefit of this improvement to the housing stock would only be minor.

¹ South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan 2020–2025

27. The continued viable use of the appeal property as a residential dwelling is also not dependent on the appeal scheme as the building has an ongoing residential use and there is no convincing evidence that would cease in its absence.
28. Consequently, I find that the public benefits do not outweigh the harm to the designated heritage assets, the conservation of which carries great weight. As such, the scheme fails to preserve the special historic interest of the listed building and the Barn. As such, it would not satisfy the requirements of the Act and paragraph 210 of the Framework and is contrary to the heritage protection aims of Policies SD12 and SD13 of the South Downs Local Plan.

Conclusion

29. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeals should be decided other than in accordance with it.
30. For the reasons given above the appeals should be dismissed.

Stuart Willis

INSPECTOR