



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 10 September 2025

by Jennifer Wallace BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 January 2026

Appeal A Ref: APP/D3505/W/25/3365727

Linton House, The Street, Kersey, Suffolk IP7 6DY

- 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 Stiff against the decision of Babergh District Council.
 - The application Ref is DC/24/04280.
 - The development proposed is erection of single storey rear porch (rear) erection of two-storey rear extension, erection of single-storey outbuilding, alterations (external/internal) to existing GII dwelling (following demolition of extra porch, garage and garden room).
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Appeal B Ref: APP/D3505/Y/25/3365730

Linton House, The Street, Kersey, Suffolk IP7 6DY

- 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 and Mrs Stiff against the decision of Babergh District Council.
 - The application Ref is DC/24/04284.
 - The works proposed are erection of single storey rear porch (rear) erection of two-storey rear extension, erection of single-storey outbuilding, alterations (external/internal) to existing GII dwelling (following demolition of extra porch, garage and garden room).
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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. The appeals relate to applications for planning permission and listed building consent where the building lies within a conservation area. I have had special regard to sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) which 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; and to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.
5. The descriptions of development and works were altered during the application process to reflect alterations that were made following consultation responses. I have therefore taken the descriptions from the appeal forms.

6. I note the submitted floor plan drawings do not provide an access to the bathroom adjacent to bedroom 5. As I am dismissing the appeals for other reasons, it is not necessary for me to consider this matter further.

Main Issue

7. The main issue for both appeals is whether the proposal would preserve the Grade II listed building known as Linton House, or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses; preserve the settings of surrounding listed buildings; and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Kersey Conservation Area.

Reasons

Special Interest and Significance

8. Linton House¹ is a Grade II listed building likely of 16th to 17th century origin. It is a detached property, set in a large plot within the village of Kersey. From the evidence before me, it is a timber framed building which likely had a thatched roof in the past. Much of the property was re-faced in brick, likely as part of a Victorian gentrification of the building. It has a gable feature on the front and rear elevations.
9. From the evidence before me, the special interest and significance of the listed building as it relates to these appeals lies in its architectural and historic interest as a vernacular domestic property subject to considerable alteration and extension in response to changing tastes and economic circumstances, and its value as part of a group of listed buildings. Features of particular interest are the front and rear gables and the pattern of openings which reflect historic uses of the building. Special interest and significance also stem, in part, from the asset's setting. Its domestic garden to the rear and village streetscape to the front are the main spaces within which the asset is experienced and its interest understood. As such, the building's setting contributes in a meaningful way to its significance.
10. While there are many listed buildings within Kersey, the Council has identified the following as being relevant to the proposal. The appeal site lies within the setting of Bouttels² to the north of the appeal site and The Stone House³ to the south which are both Grade II listed and noted as having group value. The Tapers and Bumble Cottage⁴, 3 and 4 The Street⁵, and 5 and 6 The Street⁶ are Grade II* listed and sit opposite Linton House. The list descriptions note that these properties form a continuous range of buildings and are graded for their importance in the street scene. The special interest and significance of these listed buildings are primarily derived from their historic and architectural interest as high status vernacular buildings, and in their value as part of a group. Insofar as they relate to Appeal A, special interest and significance also stem, in part, from the assets' settings. Their immediate domestic curtilages and wider village context, which includes the appeal site, are the main surroundings within which the assets are experienced and appreciated. As such the settings of the surrounding listed buildings positively contribute to their significance.

¹ List Entry Number: 1037245 Date first listed: 10 July 1980

² List Entry Number: 1285496 Date first listed: 23 January 1958

³ List Entry Number: 1180399 Date first listed: 23-Jan-1958 Date of most recent amendment: 10-Jul-1980

⁴ List Entry Number: 1351485 Date first listed: 23-Jan-1958 Minor Amendment on 15 August 2024

⁵ List Entry Number: 1285468 Date first listed: 23-Jan-1958

⁶ List Entry Number: 1037249 Date first listed: 23-Jan-1958

11. The appeal site lies within the Kersey Conservation Area (CA). The CA has a linear layout along the slopes of either side of a river valley, with a ford at the lowest point of the settlement. Its character and appearance are mainly derived from its modest vernacular structures with limited alterations and modern development. This in part results from Kersey's evolution as a prosperous rural settlement associated with the wool trade, its subsequent relative economic decline and movement towards a more agricultural based economy resulting in limited alterations to the properties. These have led to the attractive, valued settlement of today. The position of Linton House relative to the street and its changes over time contribute positively to this.

Appeal Proposal and Effects

12. The proposal would see the demolition of the existing porch, garden room and store attached to Linton House. These are all acknowledged as being 20th century additions to the property with little, if any, heritage merit. The existing garage would also be demolished, along with other outbuildings which are again considered to have little to no heritage merit. I have no reason to disagree with these conclusions.
13. Following the demolition of the conservatory and porch, it is proposed to erect an extension parallel to the existing cross wing. This would be sited where it would overlap with the gable on the rear elevation. The proposed extension would have a relatively shallow pitch to it to allow the roof of the original cross wing to be appreciated. However, the overlap would partially obscure the gable. There would be some loss of historic fabric from the roof to accommodate the proposed extension. The proposal would result in a more complicated roof form with a flat roof element to account for the angling of the existing cross wing and further variations in pitch. This would result in the proposed extension appearing as a poorly related addition to the dwelling because it would obscure and complicate the ability to appreciate the gable feature on the rear elevation which is one of the features of architectural interest to the building.
14. The proposal includes a number of internal works to Linton House. Most significant of these is the removal of the staircase, with its replacement being sited within the proposed extension. Other aspects of the proposal include the removal of a number of internal walls. The evidence before me, particularly in the Heritage Report 2025 by J Parker MSc, indicates the staircase and the internal walls are modern alterations and additions to the property. From my observations at my site visit of the interior of the property and of the bricked-up door opening to the front elevation, I have no reason to disagree. These works, and moving the staircase in particular, would alter the plan form of the building. However, the internal layout at present does not strongly contribute to the appreciation of the evolution and so special interest of the listed building. I am satisfied these works would preserve its special interest.
15. There would be further alterations in the form of new openings following the demolition of the existing extensions and the reconfiguration of the property, most notably the installation of a window to the dining room and a door to the sitting room. Given the pattern of fenestration and openings is not regular, these would have a neutral impact on the special interest of the building. The proposed cart lodge and store would not affect the authenticity of how the building is experienced, nor alter the ability to appreciate its significance, instead appearing

as a typical domestic adjunct. The building's setting would therefore be preserved and its significance not harmed.

16. The proposal would not result in any physical alterations to the front elevation of the property. Consequently, its relationship to The Street and so to the setting of the adjacent listed buildings, would be unaltered. The erection of the cart lodge and store, as domestic structures in the rear garden, would not alter the way in which the special interest of Bouttels would be appreciated. The proposed development and works would therefore have a neutral effect on, and so would preserve, the settings of the surrounding listed buildings.
17. Given the linear nature of the settlement and relatively uniform relationship of properties to the footpath, Linton House is not prominent in views along The Street or from the church steps. The limited view through the site to the countryside beyond would not be altered. However, due to the spacious nature of its plot, and the access to the properties set back from The Street, its southern elevation is visible in localised views although it is not prominent. The proposed southern extension would use sympathetic materials and proposes the installation of windows which would reflect the traditional detailing of the existing windows on the front elevation. It would not appear as overbearing or unduly prominent in the street scene. The proposed extension would therefore preserve the character and appearance of the CA as a whole.
18. I find that the setting of Linton House and the settings of surrounding listed buildings would be preserved, as would the character and appearance of the CA. Their significance in these respects would therefore not be harmed. However, I find that by virtue of the proposed development and works to the asset, the scheme would not preserve the special interest of the Grade II listed building Linton House. This would be contrary to the requirements of sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Act and would harm the significance of the designated heritage asset.

Public Benefits and Balance

19. 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.
20. Given the scale of the development and works proposed to the listed building, 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 this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, which includes securing the asset's optimum viable use.
21. There would be economic benefits during the construction and occupation stages of the development, along with the social benefit of a dwelling within an existing settlement being occupied. There would be environmental benefits from the use of energy efficient construction techniques. The works are proposed to undo unfortunate works that have been carried out in the past including the removal of unsympathetic extensions and internal works. These would represent a heritage benefit.

22. The appellants set out that the optimum viable use of the asset is a dwelling and that the proposal is necessary to facilitate modern living requirements. I have no reason to doubt that the proposal would make Linton House a very attractive family dwelling. However, there is no substantive evidence before me that the present condition and size of the property mean that it is an unacceptable option for modern living. Nor has it been established that it would be necessary for the extension to be constructed for other repair and maintenance works to be carried out. Repair and maintenance is a usual part of the ownership of a building and the benefits of this would primarily flow to the owner of the property. Nor is there a mechanism to secure the removal of the existing wires to the property so this would reduce the weight it would carry as a benefit of the proposal.
23. The appellants have sought appropriate professional advice in the preparation and submission of the applications and appeals. I acknowledge their long family connection to the property, the wider area and community. I also acknowledge there is support for the proposal from the parish council. There is no evidence before me to indicate deliberate neglect, nor did my observations at my site visit indicate this was the case. However, these do not change my assessment of the effects of the proposal on the significance of Linton House.
24. Given the layout and orientation of the building, it is inevitable that there would be fewer openings facing east. However, this does not equate to the building being poorly connected to its view east. Nor is there any evidence before me that the land to the east of the site has any historic connection to Linton House such that additional openings facing this direction would enhance any historic connection of the building to the land.
25. The proposed development and works would fail to preserve the Grade II listed building known as Linton House or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. 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 Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan 2023 (LP) Policies SP09 and LP19 which taken together require the special interest of heritage assets to be safeguarded when proposals seek to enhance their environmental performance and for development to consider the historic environment.

Other Matters

26. The effect of the proposal on protected species would be acceptable and appropriate biodiversity net gains could be secured, notwithstanding the proposal would not be subject to mandatory biodiversity net gain. Off street parking would continue to be provided within the site. The Council has not expressed any concerns with respect to the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers and I have no reason to reach a different conclusion.

Conclusions

27. 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.
28. Appeal B: For the reasons given, I conclude that Appeal B should be dismissed.

Jennifer Wallace

INSPECTOR