
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 26 November 2025

by **N Praine BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 FEBRUARY 2026

Appeal A Ref: APP/P1940/W/25/3368249

The Fisheries, Solesbridge Lane, Chorleywood, Hertfordshire WD3 5SS

- 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 V Gallagher against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/0123/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as an erection of a single storey extension with glazed link. Internal remodelling.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/P1940/Y/25/3368255

The Fisheries, Solesbridge Lane, Chorleywood, Hertfordshire WD3 5SS

- 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 V Gallagher against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/0124/LBC.
 - The works proposed are described as an erection of a single storey extension with glazed link. Internal remodelling.
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Decision

Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. There are two appeals on this site. They relate to the planning application and listed building consent for the same scheme. To avoid duplication, I have dealt with them together, except where otherwise indicated.
4. As the proposal relates to a listed building, I have had special regard to sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) ("the Act").
5. During the appeal, a draft version of the National Planning Policy Framework was published for consultation. Having regard to the matters in dispute between the parties and the draft status of the document with the possibility of change following consultation, I attach limited weight to it. I am therefore satisfied that the interests of the parties would not be prejudiced by proceeding to determine the appeal without inviting further comments.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve the Grade II listed building known as The Fisheries Cottage (Ref:1173366) (“the listed building”), and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

Designated heritage asset

7. The listed building dates from the early 19th century and is a Gothick Revival inspired former fishing house overlooking the River Chess. It features an ornate wrought-iron verandah facing the river, and behind this sits an elegant oval room with a ribbed ceiling, glazed bay and French windows.
8. The remainder of the building is plainer in appearance, nevertheless, the 19th century front door, its moulded architraves, Flemish bond, nine-pane sash windows, and the round headed reveals to the windows adjacent to the front door are also of interest. The evidence indicates that the listed building was enlarged in the early twentieth century and parts were also rebuilt following a fire in the later part of the 20th century.
9. The cottage occupies a generous plot, and next to it are the remains of a brick outbuilding that once had a chimney. While the remains of the outbuilding are limited, there is evidence to suggest it is from the same period as the cottage such as historic Ordnance Survey details and its construction in matching bricks to the cottage. Its past uses are less clear; however, the presence of a chimney and historic sales particulars, suggest a historic use as a wood house, washhouse, or smokehouse.
10. The significance of the cottage, in so much as it relates to the appeals before me, is largely derived from its uses, age, form, historic fabric and its architectural detailing. These elements show the work of a skilled architect, and the impressive artisanry delivers a charming cottage within this riverside setting. The cottage is therefore an important survival of a period fishing house, and the significance of this building is clearly apparent when viewing the elevation that faces the river. However, detailing and features to the other elevations also directly contribute to its special interest and significance, particularly the door and window details of the west elevation.
11. The brick outbuilding is not identified in the list description; however, these descriptions are for identification purposes and do not necessarily provide an exhaustive or complete description of the special interest of curtilage structures. In this case and given what we know about this outbuilding’s age, siting, materials, design, and likely past uses, its historic connection to the cottage contributes to its special interest and significance.
12. There are other modern timber and corrugated iron outbuildings at the appeal site, however all the evidence suggests that these other outbuildings are not of special architectural or historic significance.

Effect of the proposal

13. It is proposed to erect a single-storey extension with a glazed link and internal remodelling. The remains of the brick outbuilding would be cleared with the materials retained for re-use, and the proposed glass link would connect the

existing cottage to the proposed new wing. The extension would include a mix of full-length openings and smaller, more traditionally designed openings. Four roof lights are also proposed in the extension.

14. It is common ground between the main parties that planning permission and listed building consent has been previously granted for an extension of similar footprint and location at the appeal site. The Council also confirms that site circumstances have not materially altered since these consents. Having reviewed the evidence and following my site visit, I would agree with the Council that: the overall footprint of the extension, its positioning, and the internal alterations to the existing building could be broadly acceptable, subject to the detailed considerations below.
15. The proposed incorporation of a glazed link is understood in principle; a transparent, lightweight link can serve to create a sympathetic connection between a historic building and its new extension. If undertaken in a subservient and sensitive manner, a glazed link can create a clear and coherent visual dialogue between the past and present.
16. The proposed glazed link would exceed the eaves height of the existing eastern projection of the listed building. This would make the glazed link appear overly prominent when viewed in the context of the existing building diminishing its status as an important survival of a period fishing house. For the same reasons the eaves of the remainder of the proposed extension would also sit higher than this ground-floor eaves height of the listed building.
17. This greater prominence of the proposed works would create a visual dominance which would unacceptably make the listed building appear less significant. This would undermine the architectural appreciation of the fishing house and the type of life it was designed for. Overall, these elements of the extension would not be subservient or complementary in relation to the composition of the host cottage.
18. The proposed full-length glazed windows which would serve the 'snug' in the western elevation would add further harm to that identified in the preceding paragraphs. This is because the height and width of these proposed windows would introduce a significant amount of further glazing to this western elevation and this would compete with and confuse the intended visual experience of the glazed link.
19. Architectural detailing and openings in the proposed extension such as lintels, windows and roof lights do not always have to be identical to the heritage features of the host building. But it is appropriate that an element of aesthetic harmony is incorporated to ensure the historical integrity of the host building is retained once the proposed works are completed. Maintaining stylistic consistency can be important as appropriate references to the past ensure that the story of the listed building is echoed in the new extension but without slavishly mimicking the past in a pastiche way. The proposed lintels, full-length window glazing, and roof lights depart from the original features of the listed building, and these inconsistencies negatively blur the aesthetic harmony across existing and proposed. Even if low-reflective glass with minimal structural profiles and flush, conservation-style designs were incorporated, I am not satisfied that these proposed design features would ensure the historical integrity of the host building would be retained.

20. The existing brick outbuilding is derelict, and while some of the bricks are in situ, the Appellant has provided an engineering assessment report which confirms that this outbuilding cannot be reconstructed or incorporated into a new structure without extensive rebuilding. The report confirms the lack of foundations, compromised brickwork, missing roof and absence of structural integrity makes it unsuitable for safe restoration.
21. Nonetheless, the outbuilding is of significance to the listed building and while its use over time is less clear, it had a historic relationship with the main dwelling which necessitated the incorporation of its own chimney and substantial brick construction. I note the Appellant proposes to re-use the salvaged materials in the new construction to preserve some of the historical character and this is welcome.
22. However, it is regrettable that the historic chimney would not be incorporated into this scheme as contextual references in the proposed fabric can discreetly echo elements of the past. The absence of this reference point would be harmful as it does not allow for an understanding or interpretation of a relevant building which once occupied this historic site. Consequently, this would harmfully diminish the opportunity for revealing a better understanding of the historic use and activity.
23. I have considered the use of conditions to alter parts of the scheme or remove harmful elements of the works; however, this approach would relate to fundamental issues at the heart of this decision. It would not, therefore, be appropriate to use conditions in this case.
24. Therefore, and bringing all these considerations together, I find that the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest and significance of the listed building. Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework ("the Framework") advises that, when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 213 goes on to say that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets and that any such harm should have a clear and convincing justification.
25. Given the scope of the works, I find the harm I have identified in this instance would be less than substantial and at the mid-point of this category. Nevertheless, this is of considerable importance and weight. Where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of designated heritage assets, paragraph 215 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimal viable use.
26. The appellant states that the proposal would be beneficial because it would tidy the site and improve the overall functionality, maintenance, and usability of the property as a primary residence. They also explain that it would also ensure that the listed building remains viable and in beneficial use therefore reducing the risk of future neglect or inappropriate alterations.
27. However, I have been given very limited evidence that the continued viable use of the appeal property as a residential dwelling or protecting it from inappropriate alterations is dependent on this specific proposal. For the same reasons there is also very limited evidence to show that the tidying of the site and improvements to the functionality, maintenance, and usability of the property could not be achieved

by an alternative scheme which does not involve harm to this designated heritage asset. This matter, therefore, can only attract limited weight in this consideration.

28. The Applicant states that the proximity of the M25 motorway presents significant noise-related challenges and the positioning of openings within the extension would mitigate these environmental impacts and create a liveable, comfortable interior. For the same reasons, the Appellant explains that the openings have been incorporated to improve natural light internally and enhance views. However, I regard these as a private rather than a public benefit.
29. Even if they were public benefits, there is no technical evidence before me to suggest that unacceptable noise or light levels exist currently or would / would not exist if the extension were built in certain ways. In addition, it has not been clearly shown that the size and location of these openings would be the only way to secure an acceptable internal environment.
30. I give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency, tackle climate change, and promote low-carbon heating as required by paragraph 167 of the Framework. However, it does not disapply those parts of the Framework set out above or the need to give any resulting heritage harm great weight in the public benefit balance.
31. There would be other economic and environmental benefits including work for local tradespeople, contractors, and biodiversity improvements. These, however, would be limited given the quantum of works, and moreover the evidence shows that other acceptable proposals could achieve these benefits.
32. In this case, I do not find that the public benefits would be sufficient to outweigh the harm identified. I also note that the continued viable use of the appeal property as a residential dwelling is not dependent on the proposal as the building has an ongoing residential use that would not cease in its absence.
33. Given the above and in the absence of public benefits that would outweigh the harm that would be caused, I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the listed building and its features of special interest that it possesses.
34. This would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act, paragraph 210(a) of the Framework and conflict with the relevant provisions of Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Three Rivers District Council Core Strategy (2011) and Policies DM1, DM3 and Appendix 2 of the Three Rivers District Council Development Management Policies Local Development Document (2013). These, among other things, seek to ensure a high standard of design appropriate to local context while conserving and enhancing heritage assets.

Other Matters

35. The appeal site lies within the Chilterns National Landscape. Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 includes a requirement to seek to further the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of National Landscapes. As set out earlier in this appeal decision, the proposed works would have effects locally. However, these would be closely contained and related to the existing listed building, therefore limiting any harm beyond the appeal site. Consequently, the proposed works would not adversely affect the natural or scenic qualities of the Chilterns National Landscape.

Conclusion

36. Given the above and considering all other matters raised, the appeals should be dismissed.

N Praine

INSPECTOR