



Appeal Decision

Hearing held on 24 February 2026

Site visit made on 24 February 2026

by G Bayliss BA (Hons) MA MA MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th March 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3630/Y/25/3374481

The Gate House, Bishopsgate Road, Englefield Green, Surrey TW20 0XY

- 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 W Joseph against the decision of Runnymede Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is RU.25/0191.
 - The works proposed are a part 1/part 2 storey extension following demolition of existing part 1/part 2 storey extension and outbuilding.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have a statutory duty under section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Although the Council does not appear to object to the proposed alterations on the second floor of the property, to accord with my statutory duty, I have also taken these alterations into account in my decision.
3. The evidence indicates that the appellant originally applied for both planning permission and listed building consent for the scheme subject to this appeal. However, only the listed building consent appeal is before me, and I have limited my consideration to this matter.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether or not the proposal would preserve the Grade II listed building or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, and whether its significance as a heritage asset would be preserved.

Significance

5. The Gate House is a Grade II listed building (Ref.1242732). The list description mentions that the house dates from the early 19th century and is constructed in Flemish bond brickwork with a hipped slate roof. It explains that the building is of three storeys and has a rectangular plan with a lower service wing to the left. It also describes the arrangement and style of openings including sash windows with gauged brick arched heads and a central doorway to the frontage with panelled door, fanlight, and round hood over flat pilasters.

6. At my visit, I saw that the building was a neat and attractive property with well-proportioned classical detailing. That attractive detailing extended to the lower service wing with its imposing sash windows to the front and side elevation. In many respects this side elevation, facing into the garden, had the appearance of a secondary frontage, and I noted an unusual, rounded corner detail wrapping around onto the rear of the building. On the rear elevation, I saw that the main building appeared to show evidence of alteration and repair. Nevertheless, whilst the rear did not exhibit the refinement of the front or side elevation, it reflected many classical design references of the frontage, including sash windows, gauged brick lintels and stone sills, and there was clear verticality to the arrangement of the openings and building form.
7. The evidence indicates that the rear extensions are relatively modern. They are modest in their size and form and generally assimilate well with the historic building. Overall, I found that they had a neutral impact on the significance of the listed building. At the hearing, the appellant's heritage consultant commented that these extensions replaced a previous single storey extension, but it was not known what this looked like.
8. From the details before me, including the list description, and my visit, I consider that the special interest and significance of the listed building, insofar as it relates to this appeal, is largely derived from the building's age, form, function, historic fabric, and architectural features. Its unified classical architectural form and detail to the frontage and garden elevations are key aspects of that significance.
9. The building is located close to a gated entrance to Windsor Great Park. Although there is little to suggest any direct functional relationship with the park, the building has a notable presence on the road at this point. I also saw on site that an extended part of the grounds around the appeal property formed a boundary with the park and incorporated an historic gate linking the two. At the hearing, the heritage consultant advised that a former lodge had stood within this now extended part of the grounds and referred to historic mapping in the Statement of Significance and Heritage Impact Assessment (Asset Heritage Consulting, January 2025). The appellant advised that the immediate grounds of the former lodge now served as part of the appeal property's garden.
10. Whilst historically public views of the side and rear of the appeal property may have been obscured by the now demolished lodge, its setting has evolved over time. In this regard, when standing within the park I was able to see glimpsed views of the side and rear of the appeal property through the mature but rather gappy hedged boundary. Therefore, views from the road and glimpsed views from the park contribute to its special interest and significance.

The proposal and its effect

11. The appeal proposal seeks to demolish the rear extensions and erect a two storey extension of increased width with a part hipped, part flat roof. Alongside, would be a single story orangery-style extension with a flat roof and lantern. The orangery would project beyond the depth of the two storey extension and would extend onto the rear wall of the service wing.
12. It is immediately apparent that the proposed extensions would have a considerable footprint and volume compared to the existing building. As such, cumulatively, although the Council may consider that they would not represent a

disproportionate addition in terms of the Green Belt, in relation to the building's special interest and significance they would nevertheless represent an overly large addition. Furthermore, the two individual forms would relate poorly to the vertical divisions of the rear elevation, especially the single storey element which would partially overlap with the two storey extension and extend across onto the service wing. Given the elevated significance of the more diminutive service wing that I have identified, the size and massing of the proposed orangery would overwhelm and visually compete with it. Furthermore, the two storey extension would relate awkwardly to the sills of the second floor windows and would incorporate a roof construction which appears rather contrived to provide the desired floor-space.

13. Apart from the intention to use complimentary materials and some period details, the extensions would appear to draw very little design reference from the listed building and would not relate well to each other. They would represent a large and awkward adjunct to the listed building disrupting its legibility, and would have a considerable, adverse impact on its special interest and significance.
14. The proposal would be clearly viewed within the garden setting, particularly from the larger, more open part adjoining the park boundary. In addition, some glimpsed views of the proposal would be obtained from within the park. In this regard, I am mindful that listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest irrespective of whether public views are available. Equally, the significance of a listed building is not just focussed on frontages. Therefore, I find that the proposal would detract from the ability to appreciate and enjoy views of the listed building, including the distinctive service wing. Furthermore, should the boundary vegetation with the park be reduced in height or density, more open public views of the proposal could be achieved.
15. On the second floor, it is proposed to block two doorways on the landing and to form wider openings closer to the building frontage to form a more open bedroom suite. Although both parties in the Statement of Common Ground consider that the second floor layout is unlikely to be historic, despite further discussion at the hearing, I have insufficient evidence to agree with this view. It appears to me that the two doorways proposed to be blocked may be historic, especially as they appear to reflect the positions of doorways below. There is also insufficient evidence to indicate that most detailing is modern or that ceiling heights have been raised. Therefore, the proposed changes to suit a desired internal arrangement may interfere with the building's historic legibility. Erring on the side of caution and aware of my statutory duty, given the lack of adequate analysis, it is not possible to make an informed decision on whether these proposals would harm the building's special interest and significance.
16. Considering the above, the proposal would have a harmful effect on the special interest and significance of the Grade II listed building. Furthermore, clear and convincing justification has not been provided for this scheme which would compromise the building's conservation to an unacceptable degree and would not conserve it in a manner appropriate to its significance.
17. Paragraph 212 of the Framework advises that when considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. It goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the asset, and any such harm should have a clear and convincing justification. I find the harm to be a moderate

level of less than substantial harm in this instance. This commands considerable importance and weight and is not to be treated as a less than substantial objection to the proposal. The Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing the asset's optimal viable use.

Public benefits

18. In undertaking this balance, I have taken account of the Planning Practice Guidance which explains what constitutes a public benefit. At the hearing there was a discussion as to what matters may constitute public benefits. The proposal would be beneficial to future occupants of the property, providing more space, a better functional arrangement, and elements of modern, contemporary living. However, these are private rather than public benefits. I have little evidence to confirm the historic position of the rear wall, and although the greater enclosure may help reinforce the historic character of the rooms, this apparent speculation carries little weight as a public benefit. Nor do I find that the demolition of the garage which lies towards the side of the garden would have any marked effect on improving views of the building. I do not find that the proposal would be better proportioned than the existing rear extensions or have any certainty that works would be better executed.
19. Moreover, from the evidence before me, there is little to suggest that the building's optimum viable use as a single-family dwelling would be jeopardised, or that its conservation as a designated heritage asset would be at risk, if the appeal were to fail and the proposal as submitted was not implemented. Even if it was found that some elements of the proposal were essential, it has not been demonstrated that these could not be achieved through alternative means, thereby avoiding the harm identified to the heritage asset.
20. Having considered all the suggested public benefits, I find that they attract very minimal weight as public benefits. However, these are not sufficient to outweigh the considerable importance and weight I attach to the identified harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset.
21. I therefore conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the Grade II listed building or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, and its significance as a heritage asset would not be preserved. As such, the proposal would be contrary to the requirements of the Act and the Framework. The scheme would also conflict with Policies EE3 and EE4 of the Runnymede Local Plan (2020) insofar as these are relevant.

Other Matters

22. At the hearing, the appellant expressed concern regarding a lack of assistance by the Council at pre-application stage. These are matters for the Council and do not affect my decision.

Conclusion

23. For the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Bayliss

INSPECTOR

APPEARANCES

FOR THE APPELLANT

Mr W Joseph

Appellant/Ascot Design

Mr P Dickinson

Paul Dickinson and Associates

Dr N Doggett

Asset Heritage Consulting Ltd

FOR THE COUNCIL

Ms A Pack

Senior Planning Officer

Mr D Buckley

Built Heritage Consultant

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED AT THE HEARING

Updated list of suggested conditions agreed by both parties.