



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 10 February 2026

by **R Sabu BA(Hons), MA, BArch, PgDip, RIBA, ARB**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6th March 2026

Appeal A Ref: APP/A1530/D/25/3376398

Layer Fields House, Fields Farm Road, Layer-De-La-Haye CO2 0JN

- 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 Paul Mersh against the decision of Colchester City Council.
 - The application Ref is 251353.
 - The development proposed is described as, 'the addition of full height glazing and doors to the south and east elevations of the rear outrigger (retrospective). The replacement of single pane casement windows to the lean-to extension with multi-paned casement windows more in keeping with the property (proposed works)'.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/A1530/Y/25/3376397

Layer Fields House, Fields Farm Road, Layer-De-La-Haye CO2 0JN

- 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 Paul Mersh against the decision of Colchester City Council.
 - The application Ref is 251354.
 - The works proposed are describes as, 'the addition of full height glazing and doors to the south and east elevations of the rear outrigger (retrospective). The replacement of single pane casement windows to the lean-to extension with multi-paned casement windows more in keeping with the property (proposed works)'.
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Decision

Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. I note the evidence regarding the Appellant's knowledge of the building's status as a listed building. However, I have necessarily assessed the appeal on the basis that the appeal building is Grade II listed. Accordingly, I have had special regard to sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
4. As I observed during my site visit, the full height glazing and doors to the south and east elevations of the rear outrigger appear to have been constructed in accordance with the submitted drawings. In the interests of certainty I have assessed the scheme against the submitted drawings.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve a Grade II listed building, Field Farmhouse, and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

6. The appeal building is Grade II listed and is named Fields Farmhouse (Farmhouse) in the list description. It is a two storey red brick house that dates from the late 18th century. As set out in the Heritage Appeal Statement, it is likely that the property was constructed by John Pearson a local farmer.
7. Reference in the listing to a rear wing at the north end appears to be an error as the front of the building is on the north side. The rear outrigger is shown on the circa 1838 tithe map and appears to be a 19th century addition to the house. It is shown in subsequent maps in varying dimensions. A side lean-to extension on the western side of the house adjoins the rear outrigger and also appears to have been constructed in the 19th century. These elements of the house, given their relatively simple appearance and single storey scale, are likely to have been a service range.
8. Accordingly, the significance and special interest of the building, insofar as it relates to this appeal, lies in the legibility of the property as a high status 18th century dwelling with later ancillary phases that illustrate the development of the function of the house and domestic life of past occupants.
9. The full height glazing to the east elevation of the outrigger extends across most of the length of the east elevation. The significant extent of glazing on this elevation results in a modern character and appearance of an element with a higher status than a service range. This has eroded the subservient character of the outrigger and diminished its legibility as a historic service range.
10. The east elevation glazing is in keeping with the full height glazing to the sunroom on the south side of the building. However, it therefore appears as an extension to the sunroom rather than part of a service range. The full height glazing to the sunroom benefits from listed building consent and contributes to the sunroom's character as a modern extension to the 18th century main house. The glazing to the outrigger, however, given the extent of glazing, erodes the subservient character of the service range, thereby detracting from its significance.
11. The full height glazing to the south elevation of the outrigger is also full height and together with the fixed glazing above the door detracts from the ancillary character of the historic service range. As such, the character of the service range has been altered by the glazing such that the significance of the listed building has been diminished.
12. Given the limited evidence of the fabric of the east and south elevations of the outrigger prior to the works being carried out indicates that there were windows in these elevations. However, the extent of loss of historic fabric is unclear. The historic maps indicate changing lengths and widths of the outrigger. However, as the accuracy of historic maps cannot be guaranteed, this in itself does not demonstrate that the east and south walls of the outrigger were entirely rebuilt in the 19th and 20th centuries.

13. Nonetheless, for the foregoing reasons, the full height glazing of the east and south elevations to the outrigger detract from the subservient character of the historic service range. As such, these works have eroded the special interest and significance of the listed building.
14. Turning to the proposed window in the west elevation of the lean-to extension, the existing 2-pane casement windows are proposed to be replaced with sash windows. The existing casement windows have no subdivision with glazing bars and therefore appear modern in contrast to the rest of the windows on the west elevation which are in keeping with the traditional character of the host building. Accordingly, the windows provide a negative contribution to the significance of the listed building.
15. The proposed vertical sash windows would subdivide the windows in a manner similar to that of the other windows on the elevation. The windows would therefore appear more in keeping with the rest of the elevation and would have a more traditional character. Accordingly, the character of the building would be enhanced as a result.
16. I note the Council's view that side sliding sash windows or side hung casement would be more appropriate for the landscape format of the windows. However, I have necessarily assessed the scheme before me. For the foregoing reasons the proposed windows in the west elevation would enhance the significance of the listed building.
17. Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. Given the scale of the works to the east and south elevations of the outrigger, the harm to the Grade II listed Fields Farmhouse would lie at the low end of the less than substantial end of the spectrum in this instance but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.
18. Under such circumstances, paragraph 215 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, which includes the securing of optimal viable use of listed buildings. The replacement of the casement windows on the west elevation would enhance the significance of the building and therefore would provide a heritage benefit. Given the limited scale of the windows, I attach limited weight to this benefit. As the extent of glazing on the east and south elevations are significant compared with the size of respective outrigger facades, the associated harm carries considerable weight. Accordingly, the public benefits of the scheme do not outweigh the harm identified.
19. Consequently, the works erode the special interest and significance of the listed building. Therefore, it conflicts with Policies DM15 and DM16 of the Colchester Borough Local Plan 2017 – 2033 Section 2 Adopted July 2022 and Policy SP7 of the North Essex Authorities Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan Adopted February 2021 which together seek, among other things, development that positively integrate, conserve and enhance the significance of the heritage asset.

Other Matters

20. I note the evidence regarding restorative and refurbishment works to the building carried out by the Appellant. As these works do not form part of the proposal, they

do not constitute heritage benefits with respect to this appeal. I have necessarily determined the proposal before me based on its planning merits.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons given above, Appeal A and Appeal B are dismissed.

R Sabu

INSPECTOR