



Appeal Decisions

by J P Tudor BA (Hons), Solicitor (non-practising)

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Date of decisions: 24/07/2025

APPEAL A

Appeal reference: CAS-04103-G9V3H0

Site address: North Barn, Whitehouse Farm, Llanvair Grange Road, Llanfair Kilgeddin, Monmouthshire NP7 9BB

- 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 Emma Dymond against the decision of Monmouthshire County Council ('the Council').
 - The application Ref: DM/2024/01510, dated 6 December 2024, was refused by notice dated 22 January 2025.
 - The development proposed is new single storey rear lean-to oak framed extension and new opening providing access from kitchen into extension. Internal alterations to provide open plan living space.
 - A site visit was made on 18 June 2025.
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APPEAL B

Appeal reference: CAS-04104-P3D7Y2

Site address: North Barn, Whitehouse Farm, Llanvair Grange Road, Llanfair Kilgeddin, Monmouthshire NP7 9BB

- The appeal is made under section 100 of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Emma Dymond against the decision of Monmouthshire County Council ('the Council').
 - The application Ref: DM/2024/01511, dated 6 December 2024, was refused by notice dated 22 January 2025.
 - The development proposed is new single storey rear lean-to oak framed extension and new opening providing access from kitchen into extension. Internal alterations to provide open plan living space.
 - A site visit was made on 18 June 2025.
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Decisions

Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. Aside from concerns about an element of the proposed single-storey rear lean-to extension, the Council did not object to other proposed internal alterations to create an open-plan living space. I also note that the appellant's Heritage Impact Statement ('HIS') indicates that, given previous alterations to the interior of the building when it was originally converted to residential use in the 1990s or early 2000s, those relatively minor changes would not adversely affect its historic character, and I see no clear reason to disagree with that assessment. In any event, I understand that those internal alterations already form part of an approved scheme, referred to below.
4. Planning permission and listed building consent were granted by the Council on 22 January 2025 (refs: DM/2024/01508 & DM/2024/01509) for a scheme that included essentially the same single-storey rear lean-to extension and internal alterations to provide an open-plan living space, along with some additional elements involving changes to doors/openings and fenestration. The main difference between the approved scheme and the appeal proposal, in respect of the rear lean-to extension, relates to the size of the opening that would be created in the existing external rear wall of the building to provide access from the kitchen into the new extension. While I have considered the proposal as a whole, as it is that particular element (i.e. the size of the opening) which is at issue between the main parties, and given the extant consents which would represent an effective fallback position, I will focus on that disputed aspect in this decision.
5. The applications for planning permission and listed building consent were refused for essentially the same reason, relating to the effect on the curtilage listed building. I shall therefore consider Appeals A and B together.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is whether the proposed development and works would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of Whitehouse Farmhouse, a Grade II listed building.

Reasons

7. The appeal site comprises a property known as 'North Barn', which is one of a group of former agricultural buildings, including the South Barn and the Coach House, associated with Whitehouse Farmhouse, which was designated in 1991 as a Grade II listed building. North Barn is not individually listed and the group of farm buildings, of which it is one, are not specifically referred to in the list description for Whitehouse Farmhouse. However, as North Barn: (i) forms part of the land and has done so since before 1 July 1948, and (ii) was within the curtilage of the building, and ancillary to it, on the date on which the building was first included in the list, or on 1 January 1969, whichever was later, as referred to under s76(5) of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 ('the 2023 Act'), it is treated as part of the listed building and enjoys the same level of protection. Such buildings are frequently described as 'curtilage listed' buildings. There is no dispute between the parties that North Barn falls within that definition.
8. Section 314A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) requires that the decision maker, in considering whether to grant planning permission which affects a listed building or its setting, must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses. Section 96 of the 2023 Act contains the same requirements in respect of considering whether to grant listed building consent. Planning Policy Wales, Edition 12

(‘PPW’) and Technical Advice Note 24, ‘The Historic Environment’ (‘TAN 24’), reiterate that position. I have taken account of the legislative framework, along with relevant policy and guidance.

Significance

9. The significance of Whitehouse Farmhouse derives primarily from its architectural and historical importance as a substantial early 17th century house, which retains much of its original form and notable period detailing. The North Barn is a rubble stone building with an attached single storey byre range to the rear. It is indicated that it was converted to residential accommodation in around 2000 as part of a wider scheme to convert all three of the farm outbuildings to residential use. Although North Barn is now in separate ownership from Whitehouse Farmhouse, it retains significance as an example of a substantial former agricultural threshing barn, possibly dating from the 18th century, which are said to be typical of rural Monmouthshire and to reflect its agricultural prosperity during the 17th and 18th centuries. In addition, it has historical value through its association with the adjacent listed farmhouse and collection of farm buildings.

Effects on Significance

10. The Council advises that small ancillary lean-to structures are sometimes found on agricultural buildings in this area. It considers that, taking account of its size, scale, slight setback from the main threshing opening, and materials, which would include a natural slate roof to match the existing main roof, an oak finish and glazing, the details of which could be conditioned, along with its overall relationship to the barn, the proposed single-storey rear lean-to extension would be acceptable. I also note that this addition would, as indicated by the appellant, be potentially largely reversible. Overall therefore, I see no clear reason to take a different view from the Council in that regard. In any event, as explained above, the rear lean-to extension benefits from extant consents.
11. However, the appeal proposal would involve the removal of a wide section of the existing rear external wall, at ground floor level, to create an opening to access the new lean-to extension from the kitchen of the main building. That would entail the loss of one of two arrow slit vents within that section of the wall, along with a modern window added during the original conversion works. While the Council accepts that the modern window is uncharacteristic and has an adverse effect, it finds that the removal of such a large section of the external wall, along with the arrow slit, would harm the special character and historic interest of the curtilage listed building.
12. Cadw also considers that the proposed opening, given its size and position, would have a detrimental effect on the character of the building, albeit it appears to object to the scheme in broader terms.
13. Conversely, the appellant submits that, given the concession that the existing window is an unsympathetic modern addition, its removal as part of the proposed works would potentially improve the overall character of that elevation. With regard to the arrow slit vent that would also be lost, the appellant states that the slit vents on this elevation have been rebuilt in a non-traditional square-sided manner, without splays, while those at ground floor level are blocked.
14. Although, overall, the appellant’s HIS favours the proposal, it acknowledges that the heritage impact would relate to the amount of existing fabric that would be removed to create the opening and that, traditionally, the barn would have been less likely to have had such a wide opening in this position. It also accepts that, compared with the subsequently approved scheme, which involves replacing the existing unsympathetic window with a doorway, removing only the masonry below the sill, and retaining the

arrow slit vent, the appeal proposal would clearly involve the removal of a greater amount of the existing fabric of the building. In addition, it advises that: *'The slit vents add further evidential value as to the original function of this building'* even though it goes on to suggest that their much-altered appearance diminishes some of their authenticity.

15. While the appellant submits, in mitigation, that the new opening would be fully concealed by the lean-to extension, given the predominantly glazed nature of the extension, including proposed sliding doors, I agree with the Council that the opening within would be likely to remain visible to a degree. Moreover, the heritage harm caused by the removal of the existing fabric, albeit partly comprising a modern window, along with the arrow slit vent, is not solely contingent on visibility.
16. The appellant maintains the magnitude of any harm caused would be low, taking account of the degree of change that the curtilage listed building has already undergone, which the HIS indicates has diminished its historic character as a farm building. However, while the original conversion of the building to residential use inevitably altered its character to an extent, its external form, structure and detailing continue to make it recognisable as a former threshing barn, while its position among a group of former agricultural buildings, historically associated with Whitehouse Farmhouse, contribute to its significance. Moreover, previous changes to North Barn including the modern window, even if unsympathetic, would not justify causing further heritage harm by removing a sizeable section of the external wall and a feature of evidential value.
17. Views from, and the immediate setting of, Whitehouse Farmhouse itself would not be directly affected given that it is about 40m south-east of North Barn and on lower ground. I also agree with the appellant that the creation of the large opening would not have a significant effect on the internal layout of the building, given that the original internal form would have been much altered by the earlier conversion to residential use. However, it would be out of character with the original form of the building, as a wide opening in the proposed position on the external wall would be untypical historically.
18. I understand that threshing barns would typically have been buildings with few or no windows and limited apertures, aside from large central openings with tall timber doors on either side, which would have allowed access to the threshing area for carts or wagons with crops, and arrow slits for ventilation. Therefore, in my view the creation of a wide opening in this part of the external wall, along with the removal of an arrow slit vent, notwithstanding its alleged modified form, would have a detrimental effect on the historic character and significance of the existing building.
19. Overall therefore, I conclude that the proposed scheme would fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of Whitehouse Farmhouse, a Grade II listed building, as a result of the adverse effects on the significance of North Barn, which is deemed part of it. Consequently, it would conflict with an objective within paragraph 6.1.6 of PPW and relevant parts of TAN 24, which seek to safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved. In respect of Appeal A, it would also fail to comply with policies DES1 and H4 of the Monmouthshire County Council Adopted Local Development Plan (February 2014) ('LDP') with regard to respecting the historic environment and ensuring that proposals for subsequent extensions to buildings already converted to residential use in the countryside respect the rural character and design of the building.

Other Matter

20. In representations submitted regarding the appeals, Cadw appears to go further than the Council by objecting to not only the proposed opening in the external wall but also to the lean-to extension itself and the ancillary works. While that is noted and I have considered

the proposal as a whole, it is relevant that those other elements already benefit from planning permission and listed building consent, as indicated above, which would be capable of being implemented as a fallback. In any event, I am dismissing the appeals for the reasons given.

Conclusions

21. As established by case law, the harm identified to the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building must be afforded considerable importance and weight, given the statutory presumption that preservation is desirable.
22. While section 5.13 of TAN 24 advises, among other things, that the extent to which proposed works would bring substantial community benefits should be considered, there is no evidence that such benefits would arise in this case. North Barn is already in residential use and the continuation of that use is not dependent on the proposed works. Although the lean-to extension would provide additional functional living space, that could also be provided via the extant consents which do not involve the creation of such a wide opening in the external wall or the loss of the arrow slit vent. In any case, such benefits, in terms of living space, would not outweigh the harm that would be caused by the appeal scheme to the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building. Consequently, the proposal conflicts with PPW and TAN 24 and, with regard to Appeal A, fails to accord with relevant policies within the LDP.
23. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that both Appeal A and Appeal B should be dismissed.
24. In reaching my decisions, I have taken into account the requirements of sections 3 and 5 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act'). I consider that these decisions are in accord with the Act's sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Minister's well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the Act.

JP Tudor

INSPECTOR