



Appeal Decisions

by H W Jones BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Decision date: 22/12/2025

Site address: Forge Cottage, The Hendre, Monmouthshire, NP25 5HG

Appeal reference: CAS-04255-H6P5W7

- The appeal is made under section 100 of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 against a refusal to grant of listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Caitlin Williams against the decision of Monmouthshire County Council.
 - Listed building consent (ref: DM/2024/01468), dated 27 November 2024, was refused by notice dated 7 February 2025.
 - The works proposed are alterations & extension to rear of existing dwelling.
 - A site visit was made on 14 October 2025.
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Appeal reference: CAS-04254-Z8S8Y8

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against the refusal of an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Caitlin Williams against the decision of Monmouthshire County Council.
 - The application (ref: DM/2024/01467), dated 27 November 2024, was refused by notice dated 7 February 2025.
 - The proposed development is alterations & extension to rear of existing dwelling.
 - A site visit was made on 14 October 2025.
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Decisions

1. The appeals are dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. As the appeals relate to the same proposal and give rise to similar reasons for refusal, I have dealt with them together.

Main Issue

3. In both appeals there is one main issue, that is whether the development preserves the special character and interest of this Grade II listed building and the setting of the nearby listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Hendre Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. The appeal property lies with the village of The Hendre, which is a loose collection of properties, generally well-spaced and separated by mature trees and other vegetation which emphasises its rural character. It is prominently sited, elevated above the road and lying opposite the entrance to the Hendre, a Grade II* listed building, now a golf club and the Grade II* Registered Historic Park and Garden.
5. Forge Cottage is a sandstone-faced, two-storey, semi-detached dwelling with steep, clay tile covered roofs. It has 2 prominent front gable features, which contain windows serving first floor accommodation partly contained within the roof space, and a centrally positioned, ornate front porch. This composition is replicated in the main façade of the neighbouring dwelling in which original features and detailing appear to have been extensively retained. The dwellings are listed as 'a well-detailed pair of estate cottages, part of an important series of buildings built by the Hendre Estate in the 1890s; and for group value with the nearby horse trough and with Box Bush Lodge opposite'.
6. At the rear of the dwelling there is a two-storey, ridged-roof rear projection and, straddling the boundary with the neighbour, there lies a single-storey projection which extends further than the two-storey element. Both are of the same style and materials as the front part of the dwelling. The two-storey projection is set in from the main side elevation. A small lean-to sits within this set back and between the rear projections there is a porch. Both these subservient elements are makeshift additions that are to be demolished. There is no dispute that their loss would not harm the character of the building or surroundings. A particularly tall timber fence extending at a perpendicular line from the side elevation of the front part of the house presently screens much of the rear of the house from the highway.
7. The scheme proposes to extend the two-storey rear projection. Its roof would follow the form and cladding of the existing projection whilst stepping down modestly in height. Its walls would be clad in Cedral cement fibre horizontal board cladding. At ground floor a near flat roofed extension would wrap around the first-floor element extending further to the rear and to the side. On the side elevation the roof would continue such that it would cover the recess presently occupied by the lean-to. A ground-floor, side window would be enlarged and several 'conservation' rooflights inserted.
8. I acknowledge that an overtly modern approach to enlarging a historical building is not necessarily harmful; it can ensure that the original form of the building can continue to be appreciated because of the contrasting appearance of the additions. In this case the approach taken includes a mix of modern contrasting style, such as the ground-floor, flat-roofed extensions in modern materials, and the more traditional, in particular the form and roof covering of the first-floor extension that replicates the appearance of the host building.
9. Viewed against the elegance of the present form of the building, particularly the narrow, steep gable features, the box-like shape of the ground floor extension would appear discordant. Given its extent it would be a prominent feature when viewing the building from several directions. There would be oblique views of the side elevation available along the driveway from the road.
10. I agree with concerns expressed regarding the interface between the host dwelling and the extensions. For instance, there would be a discordant change in materials on the side elevation where the stonework would abut the cladding. The continuation of the glazed roof over part of the original dwelling reinforces a complex appearance where the modern would visually intrude on to the host building.

11. There is a single-storey side projection which is set back from the front elevation of the attached dwelling which is clearly visible from the highway. It appears an original feature that replicates the style, form and materials of the main part. In contrast, the detailing of the proposed ground-floor extension and the cladding of the first-floor projection would not only appear as incongruous but would also disrupt the symmetry of the composition of the pair of dwellings when viewed along the adjacent section of highway.
12. Although, as the appellant points out, the Council has not cited concern over the effect on the CA, Cadw considers that there would be harm. The pair of dwellings are prominent features within the CA, that demonstrate the traditional appearance of buildings that characterise the area. For reasons already explained the additions would appear discordant in relation to the host building. That impact would, albeit to a modest extent, be visible from outside the site sufficient to be harmful to the CA character. Having regard to the principles established in *South Lakeland District Council v Secretary of State for the Environment and Another* [1992] UKHL J0130-1, I consider that the scheme fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.
13. I am satisfied that the setting of the Registered Historic Park and Garden and the other nearby listed buildings, including those identified for their group value with the subject building, would not be materially harmed.
14. For the foregoing reasons I conclude that the proposed development would harm the special character of the listed building and the character and appearance of the CA. In reaching my findings on this main issue I have noted the professional credentials in heritage and conservation matters of those representing the appellant, and the evidence provided in support of the proposal, including the Heritage Impact Assessment and the information therein on the historical and architectural context.
15. As the proposed development fails to respect the existing form and materials of the host dwelling it conflicts with policy DES1 of the Monmouthshire Local Development Plan (LDP). Its failure to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA means it conflicts with LDP policy HE1. As it does not preserve the special character of the listed building it is at odds with Section 6.1 of Planning Policy Wales and the associated Technical Advice Note 24.
16. I agree with the Council that the scheme conflicts with requirement b) of policy H6 which sets out an expectation that “where the building is of a traditional nature, to respect its existing form, including the pattern and shape of openings, and materials”. However, as the appellant notes, the stated aim of the policy is to protect the character and appearance of the countryside from overly large extensions to dwellings which is not a concern in this case. As such I afford the technical breach of the policy limited weight. That the increase in the volume of the dwelling exceeds the 30% guideline set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance also carries little weight given that the guideline is only marginally exceeded.
17. In reaching the above conclusion on the main issue I have noted the decisions to allow appeals at Llanmihangel which have been drawn to my attention by the appellant, but have based my decisions on the case particular details before me.

Other Matters

18. The appellant suggests that the proposal seeks to retain the existing use of the building as a dwelling. I note the limitations in the present level of accommodation when measured against the household's expectations. However, whilst noting the feedback the appellant received during an unsuccessful effort to sell the property, I am not persuaded that these limitations bring into question the future use of the property as a dwelling.

Moreover, there may be means of adapting or extending the building that can address some of the limitations in an acceptable manner. Accordingly, I afford limited weight to the personal circumstances of the resident family.

19. I acknowledge the efforts that the appellant and her professional advisors have made in seeking to refine the proposal in advance of submitting the applications, and their frustration over the pre-application process, but my assessment must be confined to the merits of the scheme presented.
20. The appellant draws my attention to the fact that it appears that the representatives of the Council and Cadw did not enter the site. Whilst I did so, it only served to confirm the accuracy of the documents before me, which included photographs of the rear part of the site, and does not lead me to afford lesser weight to the considered opinions expressed by those parties.
21. The appellant identifies LDP policies with which the scheme are considered to be in accord or not in conflict. However, any such compliance with the policies identified would represent an absence of harm rather than a positive consideration that should influence the planning balance.

Conclusion

22. For the reasons set out above, and having considered the factors raised in support of the scheme, including representations received at the application stage, I conclude that both appeals should be dismissed.
23. In reaching my decision, I have taken into account the requirements of sections 3 and 5 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. I consider that this decision is in accordance with the Act's sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives.

H W Jones

INSPECTOR