
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 2 September 2016

by Andrew Dawe BSc(Hons) MSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 23 September 2016

Appeal A: APP/C1625/W/16/3151960

Hillview, Wortley Road, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire GL12 7QP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Diana Whitlock against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref S.16/0231/HHOLD, dated 3 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 16 March 2016.
 - The development proposed is single storey rear extension.
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Appeal B: APP/C1625/Y/16/3151962

Hillview, Wortley Road, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire GL12 7QP

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Diana Whitlock against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref S.16/0232/LBC, dated 3 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 April 2016.
 - The works proposed are single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. Appeal A is dismissed and Appeal B is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. For ease of reference I refer to the different cases as Appeals A and B in this decision letter as set out in the headers. I have dealt with each appeal on its individual merits but to avoid duplication have considered them together in this document.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve the special interest of the host Grade II listed building (the LB) and the pair of LBs as a whole, comprising Nos 1 and 2 Hillview.

Reasons

4. The existing building, No 2 Hillview, is one of a pair of Grade II LBs comprising Nos 1 and 2 dating from the 18th Century. The two cottages are presumed to have once formed a single dwelling of a simple two storey gable ended design. This simplicity, verticality and clarity is an important feature of its heritage
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significance and special architectural interest. No 1 has a large modern side and rear extension that disrupts the original character of the building. The historic form and character of the pair nevertheless remains clearly evident, in large part because the existing single storey extension to the appeal building is of modest height with the top of the lean-to roof of one part and the ridge of the other no higher than the cill level of the first floor rear windows of the main house, and with gable ends of fairly modest width.

5. Special attention has to be paid to the desirability of preserving the LB and the pair of LBs, comprising Nos 1 and 2 Hillview, as a whole.
6. The removal of the existing single storey element alone would be unlikely to harm the integrity of the LB, subject to ensuring any necessary restoration of the external stonework. However, the proposed extension would have a significantly greater bulk than the existing one, as it would not only square off the existing staggered appearance but would be noticeably higher at both eaves level and overall. This would be to an extent that it would dominate the rear elevation of the simple main original two storey part of the dwelling. Additionally, the render finish would be inconsistent with the materials of the historic building, matching only No 1's extension, resulting in a dominance of modern render to this side of the building. The hipped roof design would also contrast with the gabled roofs of the rest of the existing building. All of these factors relating to the proposed extension would contribute towards it being a jarring and incongruous addition to the LB. For these reasons the historic significance of the LB would be materially harmed.
7. I acknowledge that the proposed glass atrium feature would be intended to reveal and display the whole of the original rear elevation. However, the remainder of the proposed extension would still be in very close proximity to that elevation which would be likely to diminish the extent to which such exposure would be appreciated. Furthermore, insufficient details as to the nature of the frame of that atrium link, including its profile and means of fixing to the main building, have been provided. I am therefore unable to make a clear assessment as to whether it would achieve the desired effect of revealing the rear of the original dwelling without itself being overly heavy in appearance.
8. The detailing is also unclear in respect of the design of the proposed windows. However, the submitted elevation drawings show thicker horizontal central cross bars on the two larger windows which, if anything, suggests a different form of opening to the casements which are a characteristic feature of the existing dwelling.
9. As referred to above, No 1 has been extended with a two storey side and rear extension, which is clearly visible from the nearby road. However, I do not have full details of the circumstances relating to the associated planning decision and in any case its design is not comparable to that proposed. Furthermore, any harm already caused does not justify the further harm of the proposal.
10. Whilst the integrity of the LB in itself would be harmed for the reasons set out above, that impact would also be clearly seen on the eastward approach to the site along the public footpath running to the west as well as from the upper floor rear windows and garden of the adjoining LB of No 1.

11. Having regard to paragraphs 132 and 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), harm to the significance of the LB would be less than substantial. I acknowledge that the proposal would provide an improved internal layout to the dwelling in respect of more direct access to bathroom and toilet facilities from bedrooms. However, I have not received any substantive evidence that the existing layout is prohibitive of an adequate living environment or of the dwelling to be used to its optimum. It may not represent a layout seen in many modern properties but that is reflective of it being an historic building. The proposals would therefore not amount to a public benefit that would outweigh the less than substantial harm, and I have not received any substantive evidence of any other public benefits relating to the proposal that would do so.
12. For the above reasons, the proposed development would fail to preserve the special interest of the host LB and the pair of LBs as a whole, comprising Nos 1 and 2. As such, it would be contrary to Policies ES10 and HC8 of the Stroud District Local Plan which together, in respect of this issue, require the District's historic environment to be preserved, protected or enhanced, and that residential extensions are in keeping with the scale and character of the original dwelling. It would also be contrary to section 12 of the Framework which relates to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
13. The appellant refers to pre-application advice by the Council that the principle of development options for a rear extension may be acceptable. However, I have determined the appeals on their merits based on all of the evidence before me.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeals should be dismissed.

Andrew Dawe

INSPECTOR