
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 November 2017

by Andrew Owen BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20 November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/G1630/D/17/3181369

Bramble Cottage, Spring Lane, Cleeve Hill, Cheltenham GL52 3PY

- 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 Mr & Mrs Smith against the decision of Tewkesbury Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00075/FUL, dated 18 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 3 July 2017.
 - The development proposed is a first floor and roof extension to provide two additional bedrooms and new entrance porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr & Mrs Smith against Tewkesbury Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area which is within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Reasons

4. The site accommodates a modestly sized dormer bungalow on a steeply sloping site. The works would involve swapping the dormers for a first floor extension which follows the footprint of the ground floor and which would also replace a first floor balcony. Above that, the ridge height of the roof would be increased and a rear facing gable provided including full length glazed doors.
5. The rear gable would project considerably above and beyond the existing rear facing roof slope and dormers and would appear unduly dominant. Due to this, and also because of the large amount of glazing in the gable, I do not consider these alterations would respect the character, scale or proportions of the existing house. Furthermore, the extension would be visible from positions along Lye Road, albeit at a distance, and hence would detract from the dwelling's appearance when seen in the wider context.
6. At the front, due to the site topography and a tall thick hedge on the front boundary, it is likely that only the increase in the ridge height would be

noticeable. I do not consider the works on this side of the dwelling would significantly alter the character or scale of the house, or result in it adversely affecting the character of the area when seen from Spring Lane. Nonetheless, this does not outweigh the harmful effect of the rear extensions.

7. I note there is a large dwelling currently under construction on the adjacent site and the structure, as it currently stands, appears prominently from positions on both Spring Lane and Lye Lane. I do not dispute that that dwelling will most likely appear more prominent than the extended Bramble Cottage would. However as the adjacent dwelling appears to be a wholly new build, it cannot be required to harmonise with the character of a host dwelling, which is the main issue in this appeal.
8. Similarly, though I accept there are some large houses nearby, these do not act as precedents for this proposal, as it is the effect of the extensions on the host property that is the main issue here, not the size of the resultant dwelling.
9. I have carefully considered the other examples referred to by the appellant, and though these all appear to involve large extensions, their host dwellings also appear large. Indeed, from the evidence before me, none of these other examples appear to exceed the height of the host dwelling as would be the case in the proposed development.
10. I accept there would be a limited benefit to the local economy during the construction period, and I understand the development would better serve the existing occupiers' needs. Nevertheless, these matters do not weigh heavily in my deliberations and do not offset the harm identified above.
11. Due to the development's small scale in relation to the wider landscape I do not consider it would have a material effect on the scenic beauty of the Cotswold AONB. Notwithstanding this, the development would fail to compliment the character and appearance of the host dwelling and therefore would also harm the character and appearance of the local area. Accordingly it would conflict with Policy HOU8 of the Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan which aims to ensure extensions respect the character of the existing dwelling and the immediate locality.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, and taking account of all other considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR