
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 December 2017

by R A Exton Dip URP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 13th December 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/W/17/3181687

The Hams, London Road, Brimscombe GL5 2TR

- 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 and Mrs M Aldridge against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref S.16/2885/FUL, dated 6 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 14 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as erection of new dwelling house with associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and the landscape and scenic beauty of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ('the AONB')

Reasons

3. The Hams is the last property within the Settlement Development Limit of Brimscombe ('the SDL') on the northern side of London Road. The appeal site lies to the east of this, within the countryside, the AONB and is defined as Stroud Landscape Character Type B16 'Secluded Valleys'. The character and appearance of the landscape changes significantly outside the SDL and within the AONB. In common with the developed parts of the north side of London Road the land rises steeply to the north but it also has undulations in topography within the overall incline and contains pockets of scrub and larger vegetation amongst rough grassland. This gives rise to a rugged character and appearance which is in clear contrast to the developed areas to the west.
4. A significant visual change to the area would result from the proposal. Although the proposed dwelling would be partly set into the slope of the appeal site, it would never the less be highly prominent within the surrounding landscape due to its scale and design. The proposed sweeping driveway from London Road would emphasise this prominence. It would also contrast with and consequently sit uncomfortably within the established landscape character of the AONB. When viewed on the approach from the east in particular, the proposal would form an obvious extension of the built up area of Brimscombe into the countryside. This would erode the clear division between Brimscombe

and the countryside and AONB. Overall, the proposal would appear as a dominant and harmful intrusion into the undeveloped nature of the countryside and the AONB.

5. I note the sites location in relation to local services and means of access to those further afield, the contributions, albeit limited, it would make to boosting housing supply and the local economy. However, these factors do not outweigh the harm to character and appearance and the AONB I have identified.
6. In light of the above, I conclude that of the policies referred to in the Councils decision notice, the proposal conflicts with Core Policy 15 and Delivery Policy ES7 of the Local Plan. These seek to protect the separate identity of settlements and the quality of the countryside. They also require all development proposals to conserve or enhance the natural and scenic beauty of the AONB and diversity of different landscape character types within the district. The proposal would also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework insofar as it relates to recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and giving great weight to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB.

Other matters

7. I note the planning permission for an access to serve The Hams across the front of the appeal site the appellant's willingness to amend the design of the proposal. However, based on the limited information before me relating the previous permission I can afford it only limited weight. I must also assess the proposal based on its own merits and the policies and evidence before me and therefore can afford little weight to possible future design changes.
8. Planning is concerned with land use in the public interest and personal circumstances very rarely outweigh this. In this case the personal circumstances of the appellant do not outweigh the harm I have identified above.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above, and taking all other matters raised into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Richard Exton

INSPECTOR