
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 November 2017

by M Aqbal BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 February 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/J3720/D/17/3181163
Glencoe, Ascott Road, Whichford CV36 5PE

- 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 Caroline Gibbs against the decision of Stratford on Avon District Council.
 - The application Ref 17/01137/FUL, dated 16 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 29 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is single storey extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are whether the proposed development would affect the character and appearance of the appeal property and surrounding area including the setting of the Whichford Conservation Area (CA); and, the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property ('Glencoe') is an end dwelling amongst a terrace of four similar two storey cottages, which are of a traditional design and similar in appearance. These dwellings are set behind shallow frontages close to the highway and are therefore prominent within the street scene. Due to a degree of uniformity, rhythm and space at either end of the terrace, this constitutes a distinct street scene offering a pleasant aesthetic.
4. Although most of the existing built form of Glencoe is located within the CA, the area of the proposed extension largely falls outside its eastern boundary. Nonetheless, I concur with the main parties that the proposed extension would be visible from the CA. The appeal site is also wholly within the AONB.
5. From my observations the CA is characterised by a range of traditional houses, cottages and terraces. The unifying factors of the CA include historic vernacular and traditional materials. Some buildings also benefit from fore and side amenity areas which provide relief from the built development and give the area an open character. The quality of the built environment and associated

green spaces also contribute towards the character and appearance of the AONB.

6. The proposed extension with its pitched roof would be mainly extended off the side elevation of the existing gable-ended rear extension and would also be seen in the context of another single storey side extension with a lean to roof. This relationship would result in a discordant visual arrangement between these various extensions in terms of their roof designs and the simple roof form of the original dwelling and wider terrace.
7. I acknowledge that the proposed extension would be set back from the principal elevation of Glencoe by approximately 5.5m and would be no higher in height than the eaves of its main roof. However, the overall scale of the proposed extension in terms of width, which would be similar to that of the principal elevation of the original dwelling combined with its height, would result in a substantial increase in the built form to Glencoe.
8. Despite the use of matching materials, when viewed from Ascott Road the extension would predominantly comprise a large dominant expanse of brickwork and roof, with minimal articulation. Consequently, for the above reasons the design of the proposed extension would detract from the appearance of Glencoe and the wider area.
9. The proposed extension would also extend into the side amenity area to Glencoe, which although secured by a fence about 1.5m in height, is free of any significant development and therefore retains an open aspect whilst also providing some relief to the built development and therefore contributes to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the proposed extension due to its scale and siting would appreciably erode the existing open aspect of the amenity area.
10. The removal of the existing fence and creation of a parking space would only provide some limited degree of openness, temporarily, when the parking space would not be in use. I also accept that the proposed single parking space would displace a vehicle off the corner near the appeal site. However, there is no guarantee that other vehicles would not park along the corner. As such, I attach limited weight to these arguments.
11. For the above reasons due to its design, siting and scale the proposed side extension would harm the character and appearance of the appeal property and surrounding area. The proposal would therefore conflict with the design aims of Policy CS.9 of the Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy (2011-2031) (CS), which amongst other matters requires new developments to be of high quality design and Policy CS.20 of the CS, this amongst other things requires extensions to be of an appropriate scale having regard to the site location.
12. Consequently for the same reasons set out above the proposal would also fail to preserve or enhance the setting of the CA. The significance of the heritage asset would be harmed. I attach considerable importance and weight to the desirability of avoiding any such harmful effect. I therefore find conflict with Policy CS.8 of the CS, which amongst other things seeks to protect and enhance the wide range of historic and cultural assets that contribute to the character and identity of the District, including their settings, townscapes, streets, spaces and built form.

13. The harm the proposal would cause to the significance of the setting of the CA would be less than substantial. Paragraph 134 of the Framework states that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
14. In this particular case as a consequence of the proposal the telegraph pole, which presently stands within the appeal site, would be removed and the associated cables would be diverted below ground. I view this as a public benefit. However, in my judgement for the reasons set out above the proposed extension would have a significantly more deleterious effect on the street scene than the existing telegraph pole and associated cables, which are established features within the street scene. Therefore this public benefit does not outweigh the harm to the setting of the CA.

The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

15. Having already identified that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of Glencoe and the wider area, it therefore follows that the proposal would also harm the built character of the AONB. The proposal would therefore be in conflict with Policy CS.11 of the CS, which supports small-scale development within the AONB, subject to it not harming the built character.
16. Similar to my conclusions in respect of the CA, in my judgement the removal of the existing telegraph pole and associated cables would not outweigh the harm the proposed extension would cause to the character and appearance of the AONB.
17. I note the appellant's concerns that the existing accommodation is cramped and that the proposed extension would improve the well-being of the occupiers of the dwelling. Whilst I appreciate this would be a social benefit this does not outweigh the environmental harm I have already identified.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons set out above, I dismiss this appeal.

M Aqbal

INSPECTOR