



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 January 2022

by Lewis Condé BSc (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Friday 28 January 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/D/21/3285409

St Augustines Well, The Barn, High Street, Arlingham GL2 7JN

- 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 Tony Bean against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref S.21/1529/HHOLD, dated 17 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 10 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is single storey front porch and additional roof window to front elevation, double storey rear extension and alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the single storey front porch. The appeal is allowed, however, insofar as it relates to the remainder of the application and planning permission is granted for an additional roof window to the front elevation, double storey rear extension and alterations at St Augustines Well, The Barn, High Street, Arlingham, GL2 7JN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref S.21/1529/HHOLD, dated 17 June 2021, so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and subject to the conditions set out in the schedule attached to this decision.

Procedural Matter

2. For the reasons that follow, I find the proposed double storey rear extension and additional roof window to the front elevation to be acceptable. These elements are clearly severable both physically and functionally from the proposed porch. Therefore, I intend to issue a split decision in this case and grant planning permission for the double storey rear extension and roof window, and dismiss the appeal in relation to the proposed porch.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area, including whether the proposal preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Arlingham Conservation Area (CA);
 - the effect of the proposal upon the living conditions of the neighbouring residential property 'Graceland', with regard to privacy

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal property is one of a pair of semi-detached dwellings. It is a former barn, the conversion of which to two dwellings was undertaken in the 1990s. The conversion of the appeal property has been undertaken in a largely sympathetic manner and retains a simple but attractive form, but has a relatively domesticated appearance, which is far more evident at its rear.
5. The property is set within a former farmyard containing a cluster of historic buildings that is accessed from High Street. Despite its setting in a former farmyard, the front elevation and entrance to the appeal dwelling directly face on to the access. This aspect of the building is therefore visible from public vantage points along High Street.
6. The former farmyard is located within the Arlingham CA. I consider that the significance of the CA arises from the character of Arlingham itself, being a rural village with a predominantly linear layout, containing a range of historic buildings. Buildings within the CA are strung out with varying cohesion, primarily along High Street and south onto Church Road, which provides an organic quality to its setting. The CA contains an array of properties that vary in appearance but share a common rural vernacular, while historic buildings largely retain their traditional form. Some more modern dwellings have been developed that intersperse with historic buildings throughout the CA. The more modern additions have been built to reflect their rural setting, albeit some more successfully than others.
7. Permitted development rights were removed as part of the original permission to convert the barn to two dwellings, with the intention to prevent the building from becoming overly residential in character. However, it was clear on my site visit that the adjoining semi-detached property 'Graceland', which forms the other part of the sub-divided barn, has been extended to the front and rear. I do not know the circumstances in which those extensions took place, but it was evident on my site visit that these neighbouring extensions have already added a domestic character to the former barn, particularly through the addition of a conservatory to the rear.
8. The proposed double storey extension is located to the rear of the appeal property and it would therefore not be prominent in the street scene. It would, however, be visible from a public footpath that runs behind the appeal site, beyond a stream. From my site visit it was apparent that the extension would only be visible from a very limited section of the footpath, and from some distance away.
9. Despite being a sizeable double storey extension, the proposal would nevertheless appear subordinate to the host dwelling. The ridge height would be below the roofline of the existing dwelling. It would also be set relatively centrally and away from the corner of the former farm building. Additionally, the materials proposed are predominantly to match the existing building, while the proposed oak frame is reflective of the building's rural context.
10. The design of the double storey extension does incorporate a significant level of glazing, but in my experience, this is often typical for barn conversions and would help delineate the new addition from the original building. Furthermore,

the extension would replace an existing area of substantial glazing at the rear of the property.

11. The extension would result in a domestic addition to the former barn. Nevertheless, when viewed from the rear, the former barn building already has a highly domesticated appearance due to several factors. Firstly, as indicated, a large central section of the rear elevation of the appeal property already contains full height glazing, while existing roof lights and a chimney flue also contribute to its domestic character.
12. Additionally, as previously indicated, the adjoining property has already added a conservatory extension to its rear elevation. The conservatory is large in scale and adds a highly domesticated element to the former barn building. It is also visible from the footpath to the rear of the appeal site and therefore the appeal proposal would be viewed alongside this wider development to the former barn.
13. Finally, timber garden fences at the rear of the appeal site provide distinct definition to the individual residential curtilages, especially where the barn has previously been sub-divided into separate dwellings.
14. Overall, I consider that the proposal would give the building a more domestic appearance. However, when viewed from the rear, as the two-storey extension would be, the building and its curtilage are already significantly domesticated in appearance. The proposed extension would not materially alter this perception and would not cause harm to the character or appearance of the host dwelling, or to the CA.
15. I also consider that the addition of a small rooflight to match existing rooflights on the front elevation roof plane would not cause harm due to its scale and design. Whilst visible from the public highway, the window would match a number of existing rooflights in the front roofscape and would be placed to fit within the overall pattern of windows.
16. I have therefore found that the proposed two-storey extension and addition of a rooflight to the front elevation would not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area and would preserve the character and appearance of the Arlingham Conservation Area. These elements of the proposed development would comply with Policies ES10, HC8 and CP14 of the Stroud District Local Plan 2015 (the Local Plan). Together these policies seek to preserve, protect, and enhance heritage assets, ensure that the scale of development is in keeping with the character of the original dwelling and its wider site setting, and requires development to be respectful to its surroundings.
17. Turning to the porch extension, the existing front elevation of the appeal property retains a character that is more reflective of its agricultural past. This is in part due to the more limited nature of alterations that have taken place at the front of the property, but it is also due to how the building sits within the former farmyard setting, with a general lack of definition between the curtilage of separate neighbouring buildings.
18. The position of the appeal property within the former farmyard is also such that its front elevation and entrance remains visible from public vantage points, particularly on High Street. The simple and pleasant form of this aspect of the

appeal dwelling provides a positive contribution to the character of the CA. However, I consider the porch extension to be overly large and not in keeping with the simple form of the converted barn. The proposed porch would therefore represent an incongruous addition to the dwelling that would be at odds with its existing character, resulting in harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the CA.

19. For the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) the CA is a designated heritage asset. Within the overall context, it is considered that the level of harm arising to the significance of the CA from the porch would be less than substantial. However, any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should be given great weight and in accordance with paragraph 202 of the Framework, weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
20. The appellant has indicated personal benefits that would be derived from the proposals, as well as indicating that the proposal would have environmental benefits through increased insulation and heat retention. The reuse of materials in the construction of the porch has also been cited as a positive aspect of the development.
21. However, such benefits would be mainly private and any such benefits which would be public would be insufficient to outweigh the harm to the significance of the Conservation Area, to which I am required to give great weight.
22. On the porch extension, I therefore conclude that the scheme would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area and would fail to preserve or enhance the Arlingham Conservation Area. It would therefore be contrary to Policy ES10 of the Local Plan. Furthermore, this element of the proposal would also fail to meet the requirements of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 or the Framework insofar as it relates to heritage assets.

Living Conditions

23. The proposed porch contains glazing in its side elevation that would directly face onto a kitchen window serving the adjoining neighbouring property. Given its function as a porch, it is unlikely to be used for prolonged periods. I am also mindful that the appellant has suggested the design of the porch has been developed in conjunction with the neighbour, while there has been no objection from the neighbouring residents. Nevertheless, given the close relationship with the neighbouring property, the orientation of the windows and use of the neighbours' room as a kitchen, I consider that the porch as proposed could result in unacceptable effects on the living conditions of the neighbours.
24. However, such harm to living conditions could be mitigated through an appropriate planning condition requiring the use of obscure glazing within the relevant element of the porch. With such a condition I conclude that the proposal would not have an adverse effect upon the living conditions of the neighbouring residential property 'Graceland', with regard to privacy. The proposal in this respect would comply with Policy E3 of the Local Plan, which states that permission will not be granted to any development which would be likely to lead to, or result in an unacceptable level of a loss of privacy.

Conditions

25. I have considered the conditions suggested by the Council should the appeal be allowed, including the standard time for commencement of development.
26. A condition to ensure compliance with the approved plans, in so far as they relate to the approved development, is necessary for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. A condition regarding materials is necessary in the interest of the appearance of the development and the character and appearance of the CA. I also agree that a condition to control the hours of development activity is necessary due to the intimate relationship that the property shares with neighbouring dwellings.

Conclusion

27. I have concluded that the proposed additional roof window to front elevation, double storey rear extension and alterations would not have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area, and would preserve the character and appearance of the Arlingham Conservation Area (CA). While I have concluded that, with the imposition of a suitable condition, the proposed porch would not have an adverse effect upon the living conditions of the neighbouring residential property 'Graceland', I have concluded that this element of the proposal would neither preserve nor enhance the Arlingham Conservation Area and would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling.
28. Therefore, for the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed in part and dismissed in part.

Lewis Condé

INSPECTOR

Schedule of 4 Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans in so far as they relate to the additional roof window to front elevation, double storey rear extension and alterations:
Site Location Plan – Drawing No. PR5;
Block Plan – Drawing No. PR6;
Proposed Ground Floor Plan – Drawing No. PR1;
Proposed First Floor Plan – Drawing No. PR2;
Proposed Elevations – Drawing No. PR3.
- 3) No construction site machinery or plant shall be operated, no process carried out and no construction related deliveries taken at or dispatched from the site except between the hours 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Fridays, between 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays and not at any time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays.
- 4) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.