



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 February 2024

by A. J. Boughton MA (IPSD) Dip.Arch. Dip.(Conservation) RIBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15.03.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/D/23/3335100

Holcombe, Shute Street, Kings Stanley, Stonehouse GL10 3JS

- 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 Simon Blythe against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref: S.23/1554/HHOLD dated 02 August 2023 was refused by notice dated 31 October 2023.
 - The development sought to be approved is Erection of ground floor and first floor extensions with raised roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for Erection of ground floor and first floor extensions with raised roof at Holcombe, Shute Street, Kings Stanley, Stonehouse GL10 3JS in accordance with the terms of the application Ref: S.23/1554/HHOLD dated 02 August 2023 and the drawings submitted with it subject to the following 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: Proposed Site, Floor & Block Plans – Drawing No 21150/12A; Proposed Elevations / Street Scene – Drawing No 21150/13A.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal the character and appearance of the host dwelling and street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal site ('Holcombe') is a modestly-sized single-storey dwelling that presents to the wider street scene of Shute Street with the visual character of an independent dwelling but of an ancillary accommodation related to the adjacent and much more substantial two storey dwelling ('Sholom') to which 'Holcombe' is attached. Overall, the street scene includes a mix of hedged, fenced and open frontages to a variety of residential building typologies including bungalows set in generous plots, terrace blocks and individual dwellings such as 'Sholom'. The southern side of Shute Street includes the appeal site, accesses to the rear of the dwellings on either side and a block of garages with a frontage parking area.

4. The reason for refusal asserts that the *'height, scale and form of the extensions would not be compatible with the existing character and would result in the dwelling appearing unduly prominent within the street scene'*. The officer report refers to a previously refused permission with the same justification: *'the current proposal does not differ significantly from what was (previously) refused'* explaining that *'As before, the mass, scale and bulk of the proposed development would have a negative impact on the character of the existing dwelling as well as the street scene'*.
5. Policy HC8 of the Stroud District Local Plan 2015 (SDLP) at Criterion 2, which the Council point to, refers to extensions and outbuildings being 'in keeping' with the scale and character of the existing dwelling. Such language is problematic in circumstances such as those I have outlined where visual consistency is absent. Elsewhere Policy HC8 indicates that *'extension of existing dwellings is often an effective means of improving the housing stock'* and that: *'The Council is committed to allowing people to improve and extend their property'*. Whilst such opportunities must have regard to policy provisions and constraints such as those voiced in HC8, and what is proposed would represent change, it is far from clear as to what planning harm is suggested as the consequence of the proposal. The addition of an upper floor and increased building depth will increase height and mass but the existing dwelling is disproportionately smaller than its neighbour (and other dwellings nearby) so the result would not be 'out of keeping'. My observations direct that the impact upon the street scene of the proposal cannot, in my consideration, be reasonably contemplated as a causation of harm given the starting point of what currently exists.
6. The Council's conservation officer confirms no heritage harm could be substantiated and the surrounding pattern of development and built form is irregular and varied. I therefore conclude the proposal would not conflict with policy HC8 of the SDLP and therefore, would accord with the development plan as a whole. Consequently, having regard to all matters raised and for the reasons given, the appeal succeeds subject to the usual timing and plans condition.

Andrew Boughton

INSPECTOR