



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 April 2024

by G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13TH May 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/D/24/3337617

61 Bath Road, Eastington, Gloucestershire, GL10 3AY

- 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 Stephen Mcnamara against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref. S.23/2306/HHOLD, dated 22 November 2024, was refused by notice dated 17 January 2024.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side extension at 61 Bath Road, Eastington, Gloucestershire, GL10 3AY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. S.23/2306/HHOLD, dated 22 November 2023, and the plans submitted with it and subject to the conditions listed below.
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
 - 2) 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 or otherwise be in accordance with those shown on the approved plans.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawings No. 893-08; 893-04B; 893-05B; 893-06B; 893-07A.
 - 4) The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until detailed plans of the method of disposal of surface water within the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be brought into use until that agreed method has been processed and is available for use.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken the description of development from the Application Form, which states that planning permission is sought for a two storey side extension. Whilst the submitted plans also show a proposed single storey extension that did not form part of the development applied for. As I observed on my site visit, work on constructing the rear extension has commenced and I assume that these works are being undertaken as permitted development pursuant to

application reference S.22/1223/GDPE, to which the Council raised no objection in July 2022. Even if I am wrong in this, the Council's objection relates to the proposed two storey extension and the new, rear single storey extension would in any case be acceptable in terms of its design, height and siting. I have determined the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and wider streetscene.

Reasons

4. The Council contend that the proposal is contrary to criterion 2 of policy HC8 of the Stroud District Local Plan (November 2015) (SDLP). This requires the design of extensions to be in keeping with the scale and character of the original dwelling (taking into account cumulative additions) and the sites wider setting and location. The Council also contend that there is conflict with criterion 5 of policy CP14 of the SDLP, which seeks to secure an appropriate design and appearance for new development that is respectful of its surrounds, including local topography, the built environment and heritage. The Council do not allege any conflict with the other criteria to these policies, which is a finding I concur with. There is also no reference in either the Council's reason for refusal or its Delegated Report to any relevant supplementary design guidance for extensions.
5. More up to date policy guidance is provided in paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) (Framework) which states that being sympathetic to local character should not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or change. The policies of the SDLP predate those in the Framework as well as those in the National Design Guide (NDG) (January 2021). The latter reinforces the Framework, for example, at paragraph 44 by emphasising that well designed places do not need to copy their surroundings and that it is appropriate for new development to include innovation and change to reflect how we live today.
6. The appeal proposal involves a two storey side extension which the Council contends would, by virtue of its scale and massing, unbalance the pair of semi-detached properties and thus represent a harmful addition that would be out of keeping with the scale and character of the host property and streetscene. I do not agree. The width, length and height of the proposed extension would be modest. As such, the scale, massing and form of the proposed extension would also be modest. Whilst I accept that it would result in a material change to the side and front elevation of the host, I am satisfied that the proposed changes and increase in mass and form would not be significant or harmful to the host property or to the streetscene.
7. The proposed extension has been designed to integrate with the design of the host. The ridge of the proposed hipped roof would be set marginally below that of the main roof and the new front elevation would be marginally set back from the main front wall of the host property. The proposal would therefore appear reasonably subservient and proportional to the host. A pallet of materials to match existing and windows that are of a similar style and aligned with the existing windows on the front elevation to the host would further ensure that the new extension appears as a sympathetic addition that does not compete

- with the host property. For all the above reasons, the proposal would comply with criterion 2 of policy HC8 and criterion 5 of policy CP14.
8. I accept that the proposed extension would result in the host property not being symmetrical when viewed with the adjoining semi, 63 Bath Road. However, I do not consider that this should be the overriding consideration when assessing the acceptability of the proposal. Most side extensions to semi-detached properties have the same effect, but based on experience elsewhere and as the examples reproduced in Appendix A to the Appellants Grounds of Appeal (GOA) show, high quality side extensions can be designed to integrate well with existing semis, and are a common and well accepted form by which householders can seek to improve their living accommodation.
 9. Furthermore, even though the date and status of the extract from the Stroud Design Guide, reproduced in Appendix B to the Appellants GOA, is unclear, the image does show extensions in an 'Additive Form' which is not dissimilar to the proposed two storey side extension. As I confirmed earlier, the Council have not referred to this or any other design guidance and my attention has also not been drawn to any other policy guidance other than that set out in the criteria to policies HC8 and CP14.
 10. Overall, I am satisfied that the impact of the proposed extension on the host property, its semi-detached neighbour and the streetscene would not be harmful and that the new extension would sit comfortably on the appeal site. The proposed extension would not represent a harmful addition or be out of keeping with the scale and character of the host or the wider street scene.
 11. Accordingly, I find that the appeal proposal would not result in any harm to the character and appearance of the host property or to the streetscene. It would thus be compliant with all the criteria to policies HC8 and CP14 of the SDLP, as well as the corresponding policies of the Framework and NDG.

Conditions

12. I have considered the Council's suggested conditions against the advice in the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance chapter on the use of planning conditions. Conditions requiring compliance with the submitted plans and for the submission and approval of the method of surface water disposal, are necessary and reasonable to secure a high-quality development, to reflect the details included in the application and to ensure the site is suitably drained. However, a condition requiring the submission and approval of samples of the materials to be used in construction is neither necessary nor reasonable. The materials to be used are shown, on the approved plans and in the Application Form, to match existing. I have, therefore, just added a standard condition that requires the permitted development to be constructed from materials to match existing or otherwise as shown on the approved plans.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above and having taken all the matters raised into account I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

G Roberts

INSPECTOR