



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 December 2024

by **B J Sims BSc (Hons) CEng MICE MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/D/24/3349846

Alleyers Cottage, Overton Lane, Arlingham, Gloucestershire, GL2 7JJ.

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Alistair Lomax and Ms Suzanne Aspden against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/0927/HHOLD.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two-storey rear and side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Planning Issues

2. The Council raises no objection to the principle of a substantial built extension to the appeal dwelling, nor with respect to material planning interests of residential amenity, highway safety or biodiversity. Having reviewed all of the written evidence, including the overall neutral stance of the Parish Council, I agree with the Council's assessment of those issues.
3. I consider the sole main issue for this appeal to be the effect that the proposed extension would have in detail on the character and appearance of Alleyers Cottage itself.

Reasons

Character and Appearance of Alleyers Cottage

4. I recognise that the proposed design makes acceptable use of modern and local materials, including extensive glazing and timber cladding, in a style widely accepted in the renovation of period properties such as Alleyers Cottage. That is generally appropriate in terms of achieving sustainability and energy efficiency.
5. It is in the detailed scale and form of the several elements of the proposed extension, as well as the enlarged porch included in the scheme, that I have concerns.
6. The side element of the extension is made recessive and subservient to some extent. However, in the important view available from Overton Lane, the eaves line of the extension would be uncomfortably above that of the main construction, whilst the fenestration would differ in proportion and shape from that existing in the main front elevation.

7. In the largest element of the new construction at the rear, the extensively glazed twin gables, rising to the same height as the side extension, would appear oversized and out of proportion with rest of the main rear elevation. This effect is emphasised by the height of the mono-pitch roof of the central, single-storey section, which appears to be incongruously cut away around the two first-floor windows above.
8. The pitched roof of the enlarged porch would rise a little above the cill level of the larger first-floor front windows and make the new porch also appear disproportionately large.
9. In my judgement, the overall impression is of a series of built additions which are excessive in size, out of keeping and proportion and do not integrate sufficiently with the host dwelling. I consider that this gives rise to awkward visual conflicts of shape, form and scale, diminishing the quality of the overall design.
10. As a result, I find that the proposed development would be in unacceptable conflict with Policy HC8(2) of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan. This specifies that the height, scale, form and design of an extension should be in keeping with the scale and character of the original dwelling and the site's wider setting and location. There is also some conflict with Policy CP14(5), requiring development to achieve an appropriate design and appearance, respectful to its surroundings. These policies are essentially consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, wherein Section 12 broadly seeks high-quality design in new development.

Potential Modification and Previous Approvals

11. The Appellants complain, and the Case Officer's Review notes, that there was no pre-application discussion that might have led to modifications to the design. This is unfortunate but it is a matter between the Appellants and the Council. Be that as it may, this appeal must proceed on a fresh and independent appraisal of the cases for and against the detailed application, as formally considered and refused by the Council.
12. Much of the Appellants' appeal statement consists of comparisons with previous approvals of substantial house extension in the vicinity of Alleyers Cottage. Consistency in decision making is important but, fundamentally, every appeal is decided on individual planning merit, albeit necessarily involving subjective judgements by the decision maker.
13. However, in order to take into account the site's wider setting, location and surroundings, in terms of Policies HC8(2) and CP14(5), I have reviewed the examples which have found favour with the Council and are now cited by the Appellants.
14. I agree that, like the present appeal proposal, the local examples quoted represent a great variety of design, style, built form and materials. Importantly however, I have failed to find, in any of these cases, the degree of disproportionality and conflict in form and detail that I have identified in the submitted scheme now before me. To that extent, I do not regard those examples as directly comparable with the present case.

Conclusion

15. Accordingly, for the reasons explained above with respect to the main issue of character and appearance, I conclude that the appeal proposal is to be regarded as contrary to the development plan as a whole, and that this appeal should be dismissed.

B J Sims

INSPECTOR