



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 October 2024 by N Manley BA (Hons) MSc

Decision by A M Nilsson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/D/24/3349241

1 Erin Park, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 3TW

- 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 Jamie Boot against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref is S.24/0921/HHOLD.
 - The development proposed is described as an "Erection of two storey side extension and rear single storey rear extension. Erection of 1 meter high retaining wall with 1.2m high fence on top. Enlarged drop kerb."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. No 1 Erin Park (no 1) is a two-storey semi-detached property situated on a corner plot at the junction of Erin Park and Eros Close. The property features a single storey extension from the north elevation, finished in similar materials to that of the host dwelling. The site's elevated topography gives it a prominent position above the highway, while its corner location features a spacious front and side garden that wraps around the house along both streets. This setting gives the plot a positive sense of spaciousness and openness when viewing eastwards towards Eros Close. The property also features a modest single-storey extension, set back from the front elevation of the house.
5. The surrounding area comprises a mix of housing styles. Erin Park is predominantly lined with semi-detached houses similar in style to no 1, whereas Eros Close is largely defined by semi-detached bungalows. Despite these differences, the properties share a cohesive palette of materials, including rendered finishes in various colours with predominantly hipped roofs, creating a harmonious and recognisable character for the area.

6. Due to its scale, form and design, the proposed extension would create an incongruous addition that significantly and harmfully contrasts with the existing character and appearance of the host property and the wider area. The use of a protruding flat roof, at odds with the predominantly pitched roofscapes nearby, would further exacerbate this harm, resulting in a development which would not be subservient to the host property and would fail to respect the character and appearance of both no 1 and its surroundings.
7. The proposed use of contemporary materials, such as zinc and red cedar, would introduce finishes currently absent from the area, creating a stark contrast with the prevailing character defined by traditional materials like rendered elevations and tiled roofs. This departure from the established materials and colour palette, combined with the already discordant scale, form, and design features of the proposal, would further exacerbate its inconsistency, causing harm to the character and appearance of both the host property and the surrounding area.
8. Overall, the size, form and positioning of the extension, alongside the proposed materials would result in an extension which could be interpreted as a completely separate dwelling to no 1, making the property appear somewhat heavy-ended and unbalanced and lacking subservience to the host property. This, coupled with the elevated topography of the site, would result in a visually imposing addition to the streetscape, eroding the sense of openness and existing gap between the property and highway that currently exists.
9. It has been suggested that the existing extension at no 1 and the full-height two-storey extension on the semi-detached dwelling immediately north of the site demonstrate the existence of already unbalanced semi-detached properties in the area. However, the extension at no 1 is a single storey extension and is set significantly back from the front elevation, ensuring it remains subservient to the host property and does not unbalance its appearance. As for the extension opposite, while I acknowledge its presence, I do not have full details of the circumstances under which it was approved, including the development plan in effect at the time. Regardless, its design differs from the current proposal, as it incorporates materials and a roof style that complement the existing semi-detached property.
10. Furthermore, the appellant, in support of the appeal, has referenced a previous application on the site¹, noting its more traditional design, which was refused. However, as I have not been provided with the full details of this application, I cannot confirm the specific circumstances of its refusal. Regardless, I have assessed this appeal before me on its own individual planning merits.
11. The proposal also includes alterations to the land levels in the side and front garden, with a new retaining wall and picket fence enclosing the existing garden. In some areas, the combined height would exceed 2 metres, creating an imposing boundary treatment that diminishes the site's sense of openness and spaciousness. This harm would not be mitigated by the limited visibility through the gaps in the proposed fence. While the appellant highlighted similar developments nearby, particularly at the property opposite the entrance to Erin Park, most boundary treatments in the area are of a smaller height.

¹ ref. S.24/0130/HHOLD

12. The appellant outlines that this part of the development is necessary to ensure the safety of their children and pets. However, a simpler fence around the existing garden could achieve the same objective. Additionally, the property includes other garden areas, such as an enclosed rear amenity space, which arguably also provide a safe environment for children and pets. As a result, I have given this argument limited weight and do not consider it sufficient to outweigh the identified harm.
13. For the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the proposed extension would harm the character and appearance of both the host property and the wider area. As such, it would conflict with Policies HC8, CP14(5), and ES12 of the Stroud District Local Plan (adopted 2015). These policies require, among other things, that developments respect the scale and character of the original building and its broader setting, feature an appropriate and contextually sensitive design, and achieve a quality of design that makes buildings visually appealing and suitable for their purpose and location.

Other Matters

14. I acknowledge that the proposed development would provide additional living accommodation for the appellant and their expanding family. It would also provide additional space for visiting relatives. Such personal circumstances, however, seldom outweigh general planning considerations and I therefore give them limited weight in the appeal.

Conclusion and Recommendation

15. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Manley

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

16. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

A M Nilsson

INSPECTOR