



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2025

by **Lewis Condé BSc, MSc, MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U1620/D/24/3347405

1 Alderton Close, Abbeymead, Gloucester GL4 5UE

- 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 & Mrs Danny Snelling against the decision of Gloucester City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00140/FUL.
 - The development proposed is extension and alteration to property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 12 December 2024. In respect of matters of pertinence to this appeal scheme, there have been no fundamental changes to national policy. As such, comments have not been sought from the main parties on the implications of the revised Framework.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are: a) the effect of the proposal on highway safety; and b) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

Reasons

Highway Safety

4. No. 1 Alderton Close is a two-storey, three-bedroom, detached dwelling located within a relatively modern residential estate. It is located within a small Close containing a limited number of detached dwellings, each served by allocated off-street parking to the front of the dwellings.
5. Alderton Close is served by a relatively narrow, shared surface, road and has a rather tight turning head for vehicle manoeuvres. Consequently, should vehicles park on the shared surface within the street it would likely severely hinder the ability of vehicles to turn within the Close. Vehicles parked on the shared surface could also hinder access into neighbouring dwelling's driveways.
6. The proposed development would increase the size of the dwelling, including the addition of a first-floor office that could be used as an extra bedroom. It would also lead to a reduction in the area of parking to the front of the property.

7. Policy G1 of the Gloucester City Plan 2011 – 2031 (adopted 2023) (the City Plan), amongst other matters, requires all new developments to be provided with car parking to a level and design that is appropriate for its local context. It further sets out that the minimum size of car parking spaces should be 2.4m x 4.8m. Meanwhile, the Manual for Gloucestershire Streets (July 2020) (Addendum - October 2021), (MFGS) sets out more detailed guidance on the layout of parking spaces and an expectation that a minimum of two external parking spaces will be provided for 3 to 4 bedroom dwellings.
8. The appellant has provided a plan indicating that two parking spaces (2.4m x 4.8m) could be provided within the front garden of the proposed development. A photograph to demonstrate how two vehicles could still be accommodated on the site has also been provided by the appellant. However, the layout of the parking spaces would not follow the detailed design guidance expressed under the MFGS. Furthermore, the position of the parking spaces shown would likely require vehicles to make several manoeuvres to achieve. It would also necessitate vehicles being parked extremely close to the dwelling's frontage so that they did not overhang the public highway. As such, I find that it would be an impractical arrangement, and I do not consider that vehicles are likely to be parked in such a manner as a matter of course. Indeed, vehicles matching the make and models shown in the submitted photograph were present at the time of my site visit and were not parked in the demonstrated arrangement.
9. The appeal property, given its size, nature and location would clearly attract parking demand, whilst the proposal would not provide adequate on-site spaces. No detailed evidence of parking capacity in the surrounding streets has been provided to me. Nonetheless, given the lack of parking restrictions within Alderton Close, and the convenience of parking near to the appeal property, parking within the Close is likely to be attractive to residents of the proposed development. I therefore consider it probable that the proposed development would result in either vehicles parking on the shared surface within Alderton Close or partially overhanging it. In turn, this would likely lead to conflicts between vehicles utilising the shared surface, including the inability of service vehicles to exit the Close in a forward gear. This poses highway safety concerns in the form of reduced visibility and increased risk of collisions.
10. The appellant has also indicated an alternative location for the parking of a vehicle on adjacent land. Notwithstanding that the space is outside of the appeal site boundary (and that I have no precise details over the ownership/control of the land), the parking of a vehicle in this location could also potentially conflict with vehicles utilising an adjacent garage structure.
11. Consequently, I find there is a significant risk that the proposal would give rise to adverse impacts upon highway safety. Accordingly, the appeal proposal conflicts with policies SD4 and INF1 of the Gloucester, Cheltenham, and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy 2011 - 2031 (adopted 2017) (the JCS) and Policies A.1 and G.1 of the City Plan. Together, amongst other matters, these development plan policies seek to ensure that development includes appropriate parking provision and maintains a safe and efficient transport network.

Character and Appearance

12. Several of the dwellings within Alderton Close are of the same modern house-type design as the appeal property. Nevertheless, there remains a mix of dwelling styles within the street with notable variances in their scale and appearance. Neighbouring streets on the estate also contain a mix of dwelling types, that differ in scale and design, albeit share similarities in appearance through their generally consistent heights and use of materials.
13. The proposed extension would only project slightly forward from the existing main two-storey element of the dwelling. Although sizeable, the proposed extension, including the introduction of a large front gable, would not overwhelm or dominate the appeal building. Indeed, I saw several examples of dwellings with elongated roof forms and/or displaying large gable frontages close to the appeal property, such that the appeal proposal would not appear out of place. Nor would the property appear cramped within its site, despite the reduction in space for parking of vehicles. Additionally, the proposal involves the use of appropriate materials, which could be suitably secured via a condition on the grant of any permission.
14. As such, I do not consider the proposal would result in any material harm to the character and appearance of the host property or surrounding area. Consequently, in respect of this main issue, I find no conflict with Policies A1 or A9 of the City Plan, Policy SD4 of the JCS, or the aims of the Gloucester City Council Home Extension Guide Interim Adoption Supplementary Planning Document (2008). These policies and guidance, amongst other matters, aim to ensure that new development respects the character of its locality, including being of a suitable scale and appearance.

Other Matters

15. Compliance with other development plan policies, for example in respect of the effects of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbours, do not overcome my above concerns with highway safety matters.
16. The appellant has referred to a previous permission from 2003 for a two-storey side extension to the appeal property. However, I have been provided with no specific details of the previously approved scheme, including whether the permission remains extant or how the design compares to the current proposed development. As such, I have not been able to draw any suitable comparisons between the schemes and so my decision does not turn on this matter.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above the appeal scheme conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole, and there are no material considerations that indicate a decision other than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

Lewis Condé

INSPECTOR