



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 February 2025

by Hannah Guest BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/D/24/3347077

Edge Cottage, Edge Road, Painswick, Gloucestershire GL6 6UW

- 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 Ms Cathy Bond against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref is S.24/0429/HHOLD.
 - The development proposed is two-storey front and side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by the appellant against the Council. This is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. The appeal site is located within the Cotswold National Landscape. In determining this appeal, I have therefore had regard to my duty under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (as amended) to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of this landscape.
4. The Council's first reason for refusal set out on its Decision Notice refers to harm to the setting of the Painswick Conservation Area (PCA). However, from the evidence before me, the appeal property is located within the PCA. I have therefore assessed the appeal on this basis.
5. It has been brought to my attention that the appeal proposal is very similar to a previous application¹ at the appeal site, which was granted permission in 2011. Since 2011 the relevant policy framework has changed. The Stroud District Local Plan (Local Plan) was adopted in 2015 and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in 2012. The Framework has since been updated several times with the latest update being on 12 December 2024. It may be that the principles and objectives of the former policy context, that is the Stroud District Local Plan (2005) and suite of Planning Policy Statements, which supported the approval of the previous application in 2011, were not radically different from the current policy context. Nevertheless, I must determine this appeal in accordance with the development plan, and on the basis of national policy, that is currently in place. I have determined the appeal on this basis.

¹ Application Reference: S.11/1410/HHOLD

6. The Council's second reason for refusal set out on its Decision Notice related to the effect of the proposal on bats. As part of the appeal process, the appellant submitted an Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA), prepared by Wildwood Ecology, dated 23 May 2024. The Council and interested parties were given opportunity to comment on the EIA as part of the appeal proceedings and therefore no party would be prejudiced by my consideration of it as part of the appeal. The Council acknowledge that the EIA found the building to possess features that would be suitable for roosting bats. Notwithstanding this, an emergence survey recorded no emergence from the building. The Council is therefore satisfied that, subject to a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted report, including its recommendations, its second reason for refusal has been overcome. From the evidence before me and my observations on site, I am of the same view. Overall, I am satisfied that the proposal would not result in any harm to protected species.

Main Issues

7. In this context, the main issues in this appeal are:
- the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area, and;
 - whether it would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Painswick Conservation Area (PCA).

Reasons

Character and Appearance

8. The appeal property is a two-storey detached house with a simple form and traditional pitched roof. The original house has been extended three times, twice to the front and once to the side. The three extensions are modest and subservient to the original house, which remains legible from its additions. The principal façade comprises symmetrical fenestration, which positively contributes to the well-proportioned original house.
9. The proposed extension would replace two of the existing single-storey extensions. It would comprise two elements, a two-storey side extension and a two-storey front extension. Despite being a large addition, the plot would accommodate the extensions without appearing cramped.
10. The proposed side extension would be in keeping with the original house, in so far as it would be the same height, depth and form, and would use matching materials. However, despite this and the proposed side extension being narrower than the original house, it would not appear as a subservient addition. Rather it would extend the original house in its totality. This would unbalance the principal façade of the original house, which would erode its legibility.
11. Like the proposed side extension, the proposed front extension, would be in keeping with the original house, in so far as its traditional and simple form. Its ridge and eaves would sit below those of the proposed side extension and the main roof of the original house. This would give the extension a degree of subservience and, unlike the proposed side extension, it would be a more evident addition. Nonetheless, given it would protrude forwards of the principal façade, it would

dominate the original house to an even greater degree than the side extension, despite the reduction in height.

12. In conclusion, although the proposed extensions would be in keeping with some aspects of the host dwelling's scale and character, they would unbalance the proportions of the original house and erode its legibility, which is an imperative part of its character and appearance. This would result in a moderate degree of harm.
13. The surrounding area is made up largely of historical houses and buildings, many that are listed. They are typically 2-3 storeys and constructed of stone. Most are positioned on the edge of the footway and follow the highway, also taking account of the varying topography. While the style and features of the houses and buildings can differ, many have simple forms, and their principal facades appear largely unaltered. Extensions tend to be modest, yet evident additions. Many of the houses and buildings also have symmetrical patterns of fenestration, like the appeal property. As a result, the area has a pleasing consistency. It also has a large degree of visual interest created by variations in height between the 2 and 3 storey properties, and the differences in style and features.
14. Edge Road leads away from the village. The houses along the road are positioned at right angles to the highway with their flank walls set right up against it, due to the absence of a footway on this side of the highway. This is with the exception of Dry Knapp House, which is set further from the highway, behind a single storey block of garages. Together with the houses and buildings on New Street, this creates a cluster of built form. However, the appeal property is separated from this cluster by its garden and parking area. As a result, I saw on my visit that it appears somewhat detached from the nearby houses, especially in views along Edge Road when leaving the village, and its principal façade is very prominent in the street scene. Given its positioning, the appeal property is prominent in views taken along Edge Road when both entering and leaving the village of Painswick.
15. The proposal would be less noticeable in views along Edge Road when entering the village. The rear elevation of the appeal property is blank and, as such, the proposal would not unbalance it in the same way as the principal elevation. While the proportions of the appeal property would change and the existing single storey side extension would be lost, these changes would not be so significant that they would be detrimental to views along Edge Road when entering the village. Nonetheless, the proposal, and subsequently the moderate harm to the character of the original building that I have identified above, would be evident in views from Edge Road when leaving the village. Notwithstanding this, the proposal would only be seen in reasonably short distance views, so the harm to the surrounding area would be localised.
16. Accordingly, for the reasons set out above, the proposal would result in moderate harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and moderate but localised harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposal would conflict with Policies HC8 and CP14 of the Stroud District Local Plan, which require development to achieve an appropriate design and appearance, which is respectful of the surroundings, including the local topography, built environment and heritage. In particular, extensions must be in keeping with the scale and character of the original dwelling (taking into account any cumulative additions) and the site's wider setting and location.

Conservation Area

17. The appeal site is located in the Painswick Conservation Area (PCA). I have therefore approached this appeal in the context of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which requires special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the PCA. From the evidence before me and my observations on site, the significance of the PCA, in so far as it relates to this appeal, is the architectural value of the historic buildings and how their layout and composition relates to the evolution of the area. The appeal property in its current form makes a positive contribution to this significance.
18. For the reasons set out above, the proposed extensions would significantly alter the appeal property and would erode the legibility of the original historical house, including its well-proportioned, largely symmetrical and unaltered principal façade. This would harm the significance of the PCA.
19. In this case, I find that the harm to the significance of the PCA would be less than substantial. As such Paragraph 215 of the Framework requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In this case, there would be limited public benefit arising from the construction and provision of the additional living space. Paragraph 212 of the Framework gives great weight to the conservation of the PCA, irrespective of whether any harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm. The limited public benefits would therefore not outweigh the harm I have identified to the significance of the PCA.
20. Accordingly, the proposal would conflict with Policies ES10 and ES12 of the Local Plan. These policies require new development to create, amongst other things, well designed, high-quality places and support proposals that conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance and setting of the District's heritage assets.

Other Matters

21. The appeal property is located close to Hambutts House, Dry Knapps House, Wellington House, Jasmine Cottage, Fairview, Hazelbury House, Packers and Hazelbury Cottage, which are all Grade II listed buildings. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to give special regard to preserving these buildings or their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.
22. The listed buildings, apart from Hambutts House, are all located fairly close to each other. As a result, their surroundings are primarily urban, comprising other buildings, including one another, albeit with an open countryside backdrop, which is characteristic of the village. This historic townscape contributes positively to the settings of the listed buildings.
23. The degree of intervisibility between the appeal property and the surrounding listed buildings varies. Views from Hazelbury House, Packers and Hazelbury Cottage of the side of the appeal property where the extensions would be located are limited due to the position of the properties and intervening mature trees. Given this, the proposal would have a very limited effect on the settings of these listed buildings and would not result in any appreciable harm to their settings or significance.

24. Views of the appeal property from Wellington House are also limited due to the position of the properties and intervening built form. As are views from Fairview and Jasmine Cottage, due to the distance between the properties and intervening mature trees. As with Hazelbury House, Packers and Hazelbury Cottage, any effect of the proposal on the setting of these listed buildings would be very limited and would not result in any appreciable harm to their settings or significance.
25. Dry Knapp House is the closest listed building to the appeal property and would likely afford views of the proposal from its rear windows. Nonetheless, it is already surrounded by varying scales of built form, and, given this and the position of the two properties, views of them together would be very limited. Therefore, while the proposal would be visible from Dry Knapp House, any effect it would have on the setting of the listed building would be very limited and would not result in any appreciable harm to its setting or significance.
26. Hambutts House is located further along Edge Road. Its setting is more rural, with open countryside opposite affording views of the wider landscape. Its setting also includes Hamfield, another listed building, a group of more modest properties and views along Edge Road towards Painswick. The view from Hambutts House towards Painswick includes the rear of the appeal property. As set out above, given the alterations to the rear elevation of the appeal property would be less evident than those to the principal facade, any impact on the setting of Hambutts House would be limited and would not result in any appreciable harm to its setting or significance.
27. These views also include the spire of St Mary's Church, which is Grade 1 Listed. For the same reason as above, the alterations to the rear elevation of the appeal property, as a result of the proposal, would not result in any appreciable harm to the setting of the spire or its significance.
28. I am mindful of the grant of permission at the appeal site for a similar proposal in 2011. However, despite there being some similarities between the previous and current policy contexts, this does not justify allowing the appeal in this case.

Conclusion

29. I have found that the proposal would result in moderate harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. It would also result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the PCA, which would not be outweighed by public benefits. The proposal would therefore conflict with the development plan read as a whole.
30. The economic and social benefits arising from the construction of the proposal and resulting additional living space would be modest. These benefits would neither outweigh nor address the harm that I have identified.
31. Accordingly, having had regard to all relevant material considerations, it has not been demonstrated that there are any of sufficient weight to indicate a decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Hannah Guest INSPECTOR