



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 June 2025

by R J Redford MTCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24TH July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/D/24/3356813

The Wad, Damery Lane, Woodford, Berkley, Gloucestershire GL13 9JR

- 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 Rene Cullen-Bond against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref is S.24/1641/HHOLD.
 - The development proposed is described as the retention of and alterations to a residential annexe, alterations to storage building and soft landscaping.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background and Main Issues

2. It is recognised that there is a residential annexe in use within the appeal site and there is an enforcement case pertaining to it as well as significant planning history. Nevertheless, I am required to deal with the scheme before me on its own merits.
3. Therefore, the main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and local area, and whether the appeal site is a suitable location for the proposal with regard to relevant policies relating to residential annexes in the countryside.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is a broadly triangular plot, enclosed by fencing and located at the junction of Middle Mill Lane and Damery Lane. It includes a detached 2-storey dwelling and even discounting the current residential annexe building, the appeal site is quite intensely developed with a number of other large outbuildings. The rest of the site is a mix of garden and hardstanding. Due to the topography of the surrounding area, there are partial views into the site from the road junction, otherwise it is largely screened from public view.
5. Within the immediate vicinity of the appeal site is a number of other dwellings and some commercial uses. This has created an enclave of development surrounded by fields, although in proximity of, and with direct access to, the motorway services and M5 corridor. However, as this location is beyond any development plan defined settlement boundary it is considered to be within the countryside.
6. The host dwelling is clearly separate from the outbuildings and maintains a semblance of primacy in terms of the development hierarchy on site. The location of the proposed residential annexe (the annexe), although narrowing the gap

between the main dwelling and outbuildings, would retain this. And this would be further emphasised by the use of cladding on the proposed annexe which would ensure it is read as part of the range of outbuildings rather than competing directly with the main dwelling.

7. The proposed annexe would have a multi-faceted roof which would reflect the pitch of the host dwelling's roof and be completed in matching tiles. The combined dual gable and flat roof form would be significantly less bulky than previous iterations, and when viewed from the road junction would not be overly dominant. This is because the pitch of the proposed roof would slope away from the host dwelling and the gable ends would break up the roof line. The flat roof element in combination with the reduction in the adjacent shed could also create space between the various outbuildings and so improve the openness of the appeal site as a whole. However, with only a plan showing the change in footprint it has not been shown how the shed and annexe would relate to each other once the alterations had been undertaken. Although a relatively small part of the overall scheme this would be necessary to be able to properly assess the overall impact of the proposal.
8. The use of a condition to secure these details has been considered. However, due to the level of development on the site this course of action would not provide adequate precision or clarity of detail to ensure the proposal did not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling.
9. When considering the wider area, it is evident that properties immediately adjacent to the appeal site have reasonably developed plots with a mix of large outbuildings and the proposal would be viewed as part of this relatively densely developed pocket of land within the wider countryside. Therefore, in this instance the proposal is unlikely to cause harm to the character and appearance of the local area. Nevertheless, this does not overcome the need for details pertaining to the alterations to the shed to understand any potential impact on the host dwelling.
10. Accordingly, there is not enough information to ensure the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling. As such the proposal fails to comply with Stroud District Local Plan (LP) Policies HC8 and CP14 insofar as they seek development to respect character and appearance.

Location

11. As the proposal is for a residential annexe in a separate building and would be located within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse, the most relevant LP policies are HC7 and HC8.
12. LP Policy HC8 allows for extensions to dwellings, and this includes the erection of outbuildings. As set out in the first main issue the annexe would be in keeping with the character of the host dwelling and the site's setting. The proposal would not harm the current adequate parking provision and would be constructed in accordance with relevant energy efficiency and sustainable standards. However, without the specific details of the alterations to the storage buildings, it cannot be shown the proposal would not result in a cramped site. Therefore, as a whole the proposal would fail to comply with LP Policy HC8.
13. LP Policy HC7 allows specifically for annexes for dependents and carers with the overarching aim to prevent the creation of new planning units. As the proposal

would constitute a separate building to the host dwelling it would not comply with the specific criteria of LP Policy HC7. However, supporting text for this policy clearly states that the annexe should form part of the same planning unit and in some cases existing detached buildings could be used so long as they do not become separate self-contained units.

14. Although not an existing building, as set out above, in isolation the proposed annexe could constitute an acceptable outbuilding. It would share access, parking and outdoor space with the host dwelling and is clearly part of that existing planning unit. As it would constitute 2 bedrooms, a bathroom and living space, it would be large enough to support independent day to day living separate from the host dwelling. However, in a previous appeal¹ the need for an annexe of this size was found to be justified and there is nothing before me to conclude otherwise.
15. As the occupation could be controlled by condition and any future severance from the host dwelling would require planning permission, the proposed annexe would align with the overarching aims of LP Policy HC7. Although this does not overcome the lack of compliance with LP Policy HC8 for the proposal as a whole.
16. Therefore, by failing to comply with LP Policy HC8, the proposal would also fail to comply with LP Policy CP1, insofar as it requires planning applications to accord with the relevant LP policies. As such the appeal site would not be a suitable location for that proposed.

Other Matters

17. A lack of harm has been identified in relation to the living conditions of neighbouring occupants, ecology and land contamination. By definition a lack of harm cannot weigh for or against a proposal.
18. The appellant's comments relating to pre-application advice received in 2023² are noted. Pre-application advice constitutes the individual professional opinion of a planning officer, and a Council is not bound to accept the recommendations of its officers.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above the appeal scheme would fail to comply with the development plan when read as a whole and there are no sufficiently weighted material considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework, that would indicate a decision otherwise. The appeal is, therefore, dismissed.

RJ Redford

INSPECTOR

¹ APP/C1625/D/20/3252920

² 2023/0499/PREIMT dated 18/12/23