
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 March 2025 by S Indermaur

Decision by A Walker MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15th August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/B1605/D/25/3360038

5 Merriville Gardens, Gloucestershire, Cheltenham GL51 8JD

- 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 Eddie Olczak against the decision of Cheltenham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/01900/FUL.
 - The development proposed is alterations and extensions to existing house (part-retrospective).
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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.

Preliminary Matter

3. The appeal scheme would appear to have been submitted as an evolution of the design approach for development as an alternate to the previously refused planning application. Concerns over the impacts on character and appearance of the area remain.
4. Part of the works within this proposal have been carried out and therefore part of the proposal is retrospective and during the site visit I observed this part of the completed works. The appeal has therefore been considered on a part retrospective basis and part on the proposed drawings.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and locality.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The appeal property is a gabled roof detached bungalow with a rendered façade located at the end of a cul-de-sac. There are a mix of detached and semi-detached two storey houses with varied roof types in the surrounding area. However, the property is located on a street characterised by detached and semi-detached bungalows in brick, with the majority of these properties exhibiting hipped roofs and small flat roofed entrances and a fairly consistent roofline. The host property is located at the end of a junction and next to the boundary of another bungalow

which does not share a similar design to the host street scene. The dwelling therefore occupies a prominent corner plot, visible from two roads.

7. The form of the roof would be at odds with the those found in the street scene. Whilst the front elevation of the new roof would be pitched, it would be a steeper angle to that of the hipped roofs on neighbouring properties. Furthermore, the first-floor element would be clad in grey composite cladding to the rear and one side, with a flat green roof atop. Even if the appeal property has a mixture of pitched and flat roof, the large aspects of flat roof would appear as jarring when compared with the small flat roofs positioned over the porches that are exhibited on the other bungalows within the street scene.
8. Together the combination of the gable to part hip roof and large areas of flat roof has significantly altered the pre-existing roofscape, creating a development with a top-heavy disjointed appearance. Although some of the bungalows in the vicinity appear to have been extended and altered, this does not appear to be in the form of an additional storey. Overall, the alterations in design and added bulk to the roofscape would cause harm to the architectural integrity of the dwelling and would undermine the contribution made by the consistency in rooflines to the street scene. Furthermore, due to the positioning of the appeal property, the incongruity would be very prominent from multiple vantage points.
9. The appellant has made references to multiple examples of approved planning applications and development that involve roof alterations with some similar aspects to the proposal. These examples are not located within the same street scene as the appeal property and I have not been provided with full details of the circumstances and context in each instance. Nevertheless, all of the examples presented to me appear to respect the architectural integrity of their host dwelling, or in the case of the new buildings, have a more coherent and uniform design than the appeal proposal. In any event, each case must be considered on its own merits and this matter is given limited weight.
10. For the reasons outlined above, the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. In this regard, the proposal would conflict with Policy D1 of the Cheltenham Plan (2020) and Policy SD4 of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (2017) (JCS). Together, these Policies state that development will only be permitted where it complements and respects the character of the locality and adequately reflects principles of urban and architectural design.
11. Policy SD4 of the JCS requires development which includes extensions and does not state that it is only relevant for large scale development. As such this Policy, specifically the section on context, character and sense of place is relevant to the proposal.
12. The proposal would also conflict with the guidance set out in Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Alterations and Extensions (2008). This states that extensions must be of a style, form and design that is appropriate and respectful to the character of the locality and the appearance of your existing house.
13. There would also be conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to ensure development is sympathetic to local character and visually attractive.

Other Matters

14. I have taken account of the letters of support of the proposal; however, they do not outweigh the significant harm identified. I acknowledge the appellant's intention to reduce the massing by altering the existing flat roof into a pitch style and that the rebuild may be challenging and costly, however, these matters do not outweigh the harm identified.
15. Whilst the introduction of a green roof adds an element of sustainability to the overall design, it would not mitigate the harm identified by way of harm to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

16. The proposal would conflict with the development plan read as a whole and there are no material considerations that justify granting permission. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Indermaur

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

A Walker

INSPECTOR