



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 October 2025

by **P Barton BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/W/25/3368930

Worthy View, Hay Lane, Horsley, Gloucestershire GL6 0QD

- 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 Robert Charlesworth against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref is S.25/0487/HHOLD.
 - The development proposed is erection of a first floor extension, external alterations and solar panels. External alterations to detached garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a first floor extension, external alterations and solar panels. External alterations to detached garage at Worthy View, Hay Lane, Horsley, Gloucestershire GL6 0QD in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref S.25/0487/HHOLD, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant has submitted a Bat Survey as part of the appeal. This information does not involve a substantial difference or fundamental change. Due to the nature of the information and that the Council has had the opportunity to review the information, I am satisfied that taking it into account would not cause procedural unfairness to anyone involved in the appeal. As such I have accepted the Bat Survey.
3. The Council has stated that the Bat Survey has addressed the second reason for refusal in the Decision Notice. Subject to the imposition of an appropriate condition, the Council is no longer pursuing this reason for refusal as the proposal would have no adverse impact on protected species. I see no reason to disagree with the Council and will determine this appeal accordingly.
4. There is dispute between the main parties as to whether the proposal should be considered as an extension to an existing dwelling or a replacement dwelling. Policy HC5 of the Stroud District Local Plan (SDLP), as referred to in the Council's first reason for refusal covers replacement dwellings. Policy HC8, as referred to by the appellant, covers extension to dwellings. On the basis of the substantial retention of the existing ground floor, I am satisfied that the proposal would represent an extension to an existing dwelling as described in the application documents. The lack of a demolition report or structural survey is not a determinative factor in this case. Therefore, I have considered SDLP Policy HC8 in the determination of this appeal.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, including the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL).

Reasons

6. Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (as amended) requires that regard be had to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of National Landscapes. There is also a duty under Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of these areas. These purposes also include increasing the understanding and enjoyment by the public of the special qualities of the National Landscapes.
7. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) also requires great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of these areas.
8. Worthy View is a chalet-style bungalow with an external finish in Bradstone and a reconstituted stone tiled roof. It is located in the open countryside and within the CNL. In the locality of Worthy View, I saw a number of vernacular and more modern 2-storey residential properties that utilised a limited range of external materials. Furthermore, a number of contemporary residential properties are also located within the wider locality, including one that I observed a short distance from the appeal site. The variety of architectural styles is a contributing factor to the area's character.
9. The appeal scheme would retain the ground floor with some existing openings altered. The proposed first floor accommodation would involve the removal of the existing roof structure down to first floor joists level, which would, along with the ground floor ceiling, be retained. A timber box frame would be added at first floor with some structural support to the overhanging sections.
10. The appeal site is positioned on the inside bend of Hay Lane where there is a steep bank leading up to a level plateau containing the dwelling. Ground levels continue to rise to the rear into the open field. With the exception of the uppermost part of the dwelling's east gable and the driveway leading to the garage, established vegetation on the steep bank and along the site's boundaries provides robust screening from public vantage points on Hay Lane.
11. The first floor extension with a shallow pitched roof would see a slightly higher ridge as well as an increase in scale and massing at this upper level. However, this increase would be broadly limited to the existing footprint, and the impact would be modest. Moreover, it would remain visually embedded into the surrounding topography and wider landscape. The adjoining veranda would appear lightweight and of an open nature with little overall impact.
12. The design of the extension represents a clear departure from that of the existing dwelling and thereby its appearance. However, it would not look like a barn conversion as is put to me and would in fact appear as a contemporary dwelling a number of which I have established contribute to the character of the area. Furthermore, the use of Cotswold stone to the ground floor and timber cladding to the first floor would be reflective of nearby built form.

13. For the reasons above, I have found that its height, scale, form and design would complement the scale and character of the original dwelling and the site's wider setting and location. The proposal would also not impinge on wider views within the CNL and no harm would result to its natural beauty. Therefore, I am satisfied that the proposed development would conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of this National Landscape inline with paragraph 189 of the Framework.
14. Due to the minimal increase in the size of the dwelling's footprint, the first floor extension would retain the plot's spacious nature with sufficient space for parking. Moreover, the proposal would incorporate energy efficiency measures, including a mechanical ventilation with heat recovery and solar panels.
15. In conclusion, the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the area, including the CNL. I find no conflict with SDLP Policies HC8 and CP14, which seek, amongst other things, high quality development of an appropriate design and appearance that is respectful of the surroundings, as well as extensions to dwellings that are in keeping with the scale and character of the original dwelling and the site's wider setting and location.
16. The Council's Decision Notice refers to SDLP Policy CP15 (5) and as previously discussed Policy HC8. Following my findings on the proposal representing an extension to an existing dwelling, these policies are not relevant as they relate to replacement dwellings.

Other Matters

17. The appeal site has been identified as being within the Cotswold Beechwood Special Area of Conservation (SAC) core catchment. The SAC consists of ancient beech woodland, some secondary woodland and a small area of unimproved grassland. These represent one of the most westerly extensive blocks of such beech forests and are floristically rich compared to other similar sites. I have been provided with a copy of the Recreation Mitigation Strategy that sets out a strategic approach to mitigate recreation impacts, associated with new housing growth, on the SAC.
18. The document sets out that all new residential growth within the zone of influence needs to secure a financial contribution towards measures to mitigate the adverse impacts resulting from increased recreational pressures. However, on the basis that the residential use of the site is established and the proposal would not result in an increase in recreational pressure on the SAC, a financial contribution is not required in this case. I conclude that there would be no likely significant effect on the SAC.

Conditions

19. I have had regard to the conditions put forward by the Council, and the appellant's comments on these. I have amended the wording where necessary in the interests of clarity. I have also had regard to the tests in the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance.
20. In addition to the standard time condition, I have imposed a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans as this provides clarity.

21. A condition covering biodiversity protection and enhancement is necessary to preserve and enhance the biodiversity value of the site.

Conclusion

22. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be allowed, subject to the conditions set out below.

P Barton

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with Proposed Site Plan (Feb 2025), Proposed Plans – Ground Floor (Feb 2025), Proposed Plans – First Floor (February 2025), Proposed Roof Plan (Feb 2025), Proposed Elevations (Feb 2025), Proposed Garage Floor Plan (Feb 2025) and Proposed Garage Elevations (Feb 2025).
- 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations as set out in the Bat Survey Report (ATW Ecology July 2025 Ref: 5717 v1.0). The ecological measures shall thereafter be retained at the site.

*****END OF CONDITIONS*****