



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 March 2020 by Darren Ellis MPlan

Decision by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q0505/D/19/3242072

81 Union Lane, Cambridge, CB4 1PX

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs M Peat against the decision of Cambridge City Council.
 - The application Ref 19/0954/FUL, dated 3 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 30 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is front and rear extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matter

3. The Council has raised no objection in principle to the proposed rear extension. Moreover, the appellant has submitted a separate application¹ for prior approval for a rear extension. On that basis my determination of this appeal relates only to the front extension.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site comprises a two-storey mid-terraced dwelling located in Union Lane, Cambridge. This part of the street is residential in character and is mostly comprised of semi-detached and terraced properties set out on fairly well-defined building lines.
5. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and the National Planning Policy Framework is clear that decisions should be sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment, and should maintain a strong sense of place.

¹ Planning application ref 19/1421/GPE

6. Properties within the terrace in which the appeal property lies have a similar appearance to each other which creates a sense of uniformity. With the exception of canopy features above the doors, the terrace has a flat frontage. The positioning of doors and windows creates a rhythm to the block as a whole. This pattern contributes positively to the character of the terrace and wider area. The extension, which would have a shallow pitched lean-to roof, would project from the front elevation and would span the width of the appeal property. Accordingly, it would be a bulky and prominent feature that would not reflect, and would detract from, the form, massing and appearance of the terrace and the street scene.
7. I acknowledge that there are properties opposite the terrace and elsewhere in the street that have front porches of varying designs. However, these porches are of a smaller scale than the proposed front extension and as such do not represent such a prominent feature on the front elevation.
8. Owing to the height of the proposed front extension, in their current form the existing hedges on both sides of the front garden would not prevent wider views of the extension from the street. In any case, a hedge could be cut down to a lower height or removed completely at any time. The hedges are therefore not deemed to be a permanent screen and would not mitigate the visual impact of the proposed front extension. I note that the appeal terrace sits slightly back from blocks on either side of it, however I am not persuaded that this arrangement would lessen the impact of the proposed development on the frontage of the building.
9. My attention has been drawn to front extensions at 26, 28 & 30 Warwick Road, Cambridge. Warwick Road is a considerable distance from Union Lane and has no bearing on the street scene at the appeal site. Moreover, no details of any planning permissions for these extensions has been submitted. Furthermore, the street scene in Warwick Road is more varied than the street scene in Union Lane around the appeal site. For these reasons I am not persuaded that the front extensions at these properties are directly comparable to the scheme before me.
10. I acknowledge that the proposal raises no objections in terms of its impact on the living conditions of neighbouring residents or in terms of parking provision or bin storage. However, these matters have no bearing on the main issue.
11. I therefore conclude that, for the above reasons, the proposed front extension would cause significant harm to the appearance and character of the appeal property, the terrace and the street scene. As such, the proposal would be contrary to policies 55 and 58 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) which seek, in various ways, to ensure development responds positively to its context and draws inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings, and reflects, or successfully contrasts with, the existing building form while ensuring that proposals are sympathetic to the existing building and surrounding area.
12. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Darren Ellis

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

S Ashworth

INSPECTOR