



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 March 2020

by Benjamin Clarke BA (Hons.) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 April 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q0505/W/19/3239445

2a Carisbrooke Road, Cambridge CB4 3LR

- 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 Mr Grange against the decision of Cambridge City Council.
 - The application Ref: 19/0573/FUL, dated 26 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 19 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is the enclosing of a further portion of the Application Site with 1.8m close-boarded fencing to increase the private amenity space for the property. Note: the proposed fencing adjacent to Histon Road is positioned 2.4m inside the property boundary.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The site consists of a detached dwelling with a garden that is bounded by wooden fences. To the side of the fence is an open grassed area, which faces Histon Road. This area also contains some trees. This open area is adjacent to the junction between Carisbrooke Road and Histon Road. On the opposite side of Carisbrooke Road is a similar open area. Both areas are visible for notable distances in Histon Road.
4. The character of Histon Road can be summarised as being more open owing to the fact that dwellings are generally set back from the highway edge, have front gardens and low level boundary treatments. These properties have the strongest relationship with the appeal site. The proposed fence would result in an enclosing effect of the site, which would therefore conflict with the prevailing character of openness.
5. This is particularly concerning as owing to the road pattern within the surrounding area, the proposed fence would be particularly prominent and therefore the effect on the area's character and appearance would be notable. Whilst the proposed boundary fence would be set back from the highway edge, this distance would not be substantial. Accordingly, it does not offset the enclosing effect arising from the scale and positioning of the proposed fence.

6. In addition, the proposed fence would disrupt the relationship that is derived from the presence of open grassed areas that are present on either side of Carisbrooke Road. These areas currently provide a verdant character at the commencement of Carisbrooke Road, which would be eroded by the proposed development.
7. The evidence before me is indicative that the health of the trees and other planting on the site would not be impinged by the proposed development. However, as the bulk of these would be enclosed by the proposed fence, they would be less noticeable in the surrounding area. This would amount to an erosion of the area's character.
8. I acknowledge the presence of fences and other boundary treatments in some nearby streets, including Badminton Close, Histon Road, and Tavistock Road. I do not have full information regarding their planning circumstances, which lessens the weight that I can attribute to them. However, I note that these generally occur in streets where boundary treatments are typically closer to the highway edge. Furthermore, these fences do not have the same level of prominence as the scheme before me. I therefore find that the presence of these boundary treatments does not require me to disregard my previous concerns.
9. Planning permission has previously been granted to enclose some of the site. However, it is apparent that this involved a smaller proportion of the open area than the appeal scheme. In result, the previous permission would have notably different impacts, and I do not believe that this allows me to disregard my concerns.
10. I am aware of issues experienced by the appellant regarding unauthorised access to the appeal site and associated problems, however, given that I have found that the development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, I do not find that these are sufficient to set aside my previous findings.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The development, in this regard, would fail to accord with the requirements of Policies 55, 56 and 59 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018). These policies, amongst other matters, seek to ensure that new developments respond positively to existing features; create and respond to landscaped areas; and that external spaces, landscaped areas and boundary treatments are designed as an integral part of new developments.

Other Matters

12. The evidence before me is indicative that the proposed development would not cause harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties or highway safety, and that the site is not within a Conservation Area, or near to a listed building. Whilst these are matters of note, they do not overcome my concerns in respect of the Main Issue.
13. I acknowledge that the original planning application was reported to the Council's Planning Committee with a recommendation to grant planning permission, and that a decision was made later than originally intended.

However, in considering this appeal, I have limited my considerations to the planning matters before me.

Conclusion

14. For the preceding reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Benjamin Clarke

INSPECTOR