



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 July 2020

by M Chalk BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q0505/D/20/3248791

93 Akeman Street, Cambridge CB4 3HE

- 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 Lubna Chowdhury against the decision of Cambridge City Council.
 - The application Ref 19/1553/FUL, dated 11 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 17 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as "single storey front single storey part two storey rear extensions".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development proposed on:
 - The living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, with particular regard to the outlook from and natural light to No 91 Akeman Street; and,
 - The character and appearance of the site and surrounding area.

Reasons

Living Conditions

3. The rear extension proposed to the appeal property would extend beyond the rear extension to the adjoining house, No 95. Although the first floor rear extension would not be as deep as the ground floor rear extension, it would still significantly increase the overall depth of the appeal property. Due to its height and depth the proposed rear extension would be an oppressive feature when viewed from the neighbouring property No 91, even though it would be set off the shared boundary. It would result in an unacceptable loss of outlook from the conservatory to that property.
4. I note that there is a side window serving the kitchen to No 91. As this is a secondary window I am satisfied that the loss of outlook would not be unacceptable in this instance.
5. The rears of the properties face to the north, and I saw during my visit that there is a mature tree in the rear garden of No 91 adjacent to the conservatory. Given these circumstances I do not consider that the

development proposed would result in an unacceptable loss of natural light to No 91.

6. The development proposed would therefore result in unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 91 as a result of loss of outlook. It would therefore conflict with Policy 58 of the Cambridge Local Plan October 2018 (the LP). This policy requires, amongst other things, that extensions to buildings do not visually dominate neighbouring properties.

Character and Appearance

7. The proposed two-storey side and rear extension would significantly increase the scale of the existing house. The roof over the extension would fail to integrate with the roof of the existing house, resulting in a cluttered profile and an unsympathetic appearance with conflicting ridge heights. The extension would be wider than the existing house at its widest, and would fail to integrate with its form and character.
8. The Council stated in their delegated report that they had no objection to the appearance of the single-storey front extension as it would reintroduce a level of symmetry to the front elevations of Nos 93 and 95. I see no reason to disagree with this.
9. My attention has been drawn to the extensions to the adjoining property No 95. I saw during my visit that this property has been substantially extended, but the design of these extensions is different to the appeal proposal. In addition, the Council has stated that these extensions were approved prior to the adoption of the current LP and the publication of the National Design Guide in October 2019. The circumstances under which the extensions to No 95 were granted permission are therefore different, and given the difference in the appearance of the extensions I can only give limited weight to this earlier approval.
10. The development proposed would, as a result of the scale of the proposed extensions, be harmful to the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. It would conflict with Policies 55 and 58 of the LP, which amongst other things require that proposals are sympathetic to the existing building and surrounding area.

Other Matters

11. My attention has been drawn to other extensions to properties in Akeman Street and Darwin Drive. However, I do not have details of the planning status of these properties, nor the relationships between the extended properties and their neighbours as I was only able to view the properties from the public highway during my site visit. I am therefore only able to give limited weight to the presence of these extensions in determining this appeal.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, the appeal fails.

M Chalk

INSPECTOR