



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 May 2020

by M Shrigley BSc (Hons) MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W0530/D/20/3245431

36 Whittlesford Road, Newton, Cambridge CB22 7PH

- 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 & Mrs Chapman against the decision of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - The application Ref S/3376/19/FL, dated 27 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 25 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is a one and two storey rear extension and single storey front extension to bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development on (i) the character and appearance of the area, and (ii) neighbouring living conditions having regard to privacy, light and outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a modest semi-detached bungalow with a gable roof design, set within a row of other bungalows some of which are detached. Properties in the row have noticeably long rear gardens which are treed.
4. I acknowledge the Council's reason for refusal given on the Decision Notice concerns only the two-storey rear extension component of the development proposed. Therefore, I have focused on that aspect. The Council have not objected to the front extension and I have no reason to conclude otherwise.
5. The two-storey rear extension, as proposed, has a maximum depth of around 7.7m with a roof ridge height comparable to the main dwelling house. The overall width of the extension would also encompass the entire rear elevation inclusive of roof plane. Owing to the scale and profile of the extension relative to the modest size of the host dwelling it would therefore be visible from neighbouring gardens as a large incongruous addition. Moreover, the substantial expanse of flat roof proposed in the context of the gable roof plane would erode from, rather than complement, the visual appearance of the pair of semis. As a result, the extension would not respect or successfully integrate with the character of the main dwelling house or adjoining semi.

6. I appreciate that no.34 has been altered and extended to the rear with a substantial two-storey rear addition. However, the appeal extension is of a different design and physical appearance compared to that. Furthermore, unlike the appeal property the neighbouring dwelling is detached and the separation gap which exists results in a markedly different visual relationship from the rear aspect.
7. I therefore conclude that the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. It conflicts with the design criteria contained within Policy H/Q1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 which requires that developments preserve or enhance the character of the local urban and rural area and respond to its context.

Living conditions

8. The presence of existing garden trees diminishes closer towards the rear elevation of the host dwelling, and properties either side, to a more open aspect. In this context the proposed extension would be positioned against the boundary shared with the adjoining semi. Although the plans show the extension to be set inwards by approximately 1.1 metres at first-floor level the depth and mass of the extension seen in totality would be excessively dominant and overbearing. This would cause an intrusive impact.
9. I note from my site visit that the first-floor windows of the proposed two-storey rear extension would have open views of neighbouring gardens either side. However, factoring the existence of tall boundary trees the level of overlooking apparent would be of a marginal nature. Additionally, ground floor windows proposed would face towards closed boarded fencing of a similar height and obscure glazing could be applied to the first-floor side facing window evident by way of planning condition.
10. In terms of the effect to neighbouring light levels, the rear elevation of the adjoining semi is staggered. The two-storey of component of the extension is in line with the part of no.34 which projects outwards the furthest and because of that it would not result in a significant overshadowing.
11. Accordingly, there would not be a significant erosion of neighbouring privacy levels of the properties either side, or material overshadowing. However, the development would result in an unduly overbearing and intrusive impact to the adjoining semi, eroding from the enjoyment of outdoor garden space.
12. I conclude the development would be harmful to neighbouring living conditions with respect to outlook in relation to no. 38 Whittlesford Road. The development conflicts with Policy HQ/1 criterion (n) of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 which seeks to protect the amenity of occupiers and surrounding uses from development that is overbearing.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above I dismiss the appeal.

M Shrigley

INSPECTOR