



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 November 2020

by E Brownless BA (Hons) Solicitor (non-practising)

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Wednesday, 16 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V0510/D/20/3257091

57 Parsons Lane, Littleport CB6 1JX

- 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 Omunakwe Oguguo against the decision of East Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - The application Ref: 20/00392/FUL, dated 13 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 15 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is a front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Parsons Lane is generally characterised by two-storey terraced and semi-detached dwellings that are set back from the highway with open frontages. Notwithstanding some more modern additions to the streetscene, including a number of blocks of flats, the area retains a uniform character as a result of repeated house styles and the use of a recurring palette of materials. Despite the presence of some alterations to dwellings along Parsons Lane, front extensions are not commonplace.
4. As a terrace of four dwellings, numbers 53, 55, 57 and 59 appear largely unaltered to their front elevation. They form a cohesive group that retains a clear sense of balance and symmetry. In this respect, they make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the streetscene. The creation of a single storey extension that would project for some 3 metres beyond the front build line of the terraced dwellings would unbalance the appearance of the terraced row and remove the sense of symmetry.
5. By reason of the proposal's excessive and unrelieved width and depth, the proposed extension would appear unduly dominant and incongruous to the host dwelling, the group of terraced dwellings and the streetscene. The inclusion of a sloping roof to match the existing roof structure of the host dwelling would not lessen the impact of the proposed development.
6. There is dispute over the material finish of the proposed extension. The submitted plans indicate the use of red brick which would exacerbate the discordant effect and prominence of the proposed scheme. However, even if

the appeal scheme were to be constructed in matching render, this would not ameliorate the effect of the proposal.

7. By reason of its open frontage the proposed development would be readily visible from the highway and neighbouring dwellings from where it would be read as a strident and inharmonious addition to the host dwelling, the terraced group and the streetscene.
8. Overall, I consider that the proposal fails to complement the form and style of the host dwelling and has an unbalancing effect on the group of terraced dwellings. Consequently, the proposal would have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.
9. Thus, the proposal would be contrary to Policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2015) insofar as this policy requires high quality development to have regard to local context and relate sympathetically to the surrounding area by reason of its location, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and colour. It would also conflict with the requirements of the Council's Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document insofar as it requires extensions to dwellinghouses to retain the form and proportions of the original dwelling and symmetry for terraced dwellinghouses.

Other Matters

10. Reference has been made to a number of examples of extensions within Littleport and the surrounding villages. I have had regard to the appellant's photographic evidence. However, there is little information before me concerning the circumstances of those developments, or specifically the character and appearance contexts of those schemes. I am therefore unable to consider their relevance to the case before me and, in any event, I must consider the appeal scheme on its individual planning merits. I am not persuaded that the general existence of similar extensions elsewhere justifies the harm I have identified above.
11. I have had regard to the appellant's desire to provide additional living space to accommodate a large family. This benefit of the proposal is very limited in scope and is insufficient to outweigh the significant adverse harm I have described above.
12. A general lack of objection to a proposal is a matter that weighs neither for nor against a scheme.
13. I note the appellant's frustrations concerning the Council's timeliness in the decision-making process. However, these are not matters to which I need to have regard for the purposes of this appeal decision.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

E Brownless

INSPECTOR