
Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 20 July 2021 by Emma Grierson BSc (Hons) MSc MRPTI

Decision by Andrew Owen BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 August 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W0530/D/21/3272776

23 Magna Close, Great Abington CB21 6AF

- 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 Owen Covill against the decision of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/05001/HFUL, dated 4 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 16 February 2021.
 - The development proposed is a two storey front extension and single and double storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The part of the appeal that relates to the two storey front extension is dismissed.
2. The part of the appeal that relates to the rear extension is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single and double storey rear extension at 23 Magna Close, Great Abington CB21 6AF, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 20/05001/HFUL, dated 4 December 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 692/4 SPLP, 692/4 PE and 692/4 PP only in so far as they relate to the rear extension.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the proposed development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Appeal Procedure

3. 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.

Preliminary Matters

4. A split decision has been recommended (in accordance with s79(1)(b) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) allowing only part of the proposal. This has been done on the basis that the two parts of the proposal are severable.

5. The Government published on 20 July 2021 a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework. Accordingly, and in light of the reference made to the previous iteration of the Framework within the submitted evidence, the parties have been provided with a further opportunity to make submissions in respect of the publication. No further comments have been received.

Main Issues

6. The main issues in the appeal are:
- the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area, and
 - the effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of the occupiers of the appeal property in relation to outlook.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and Appearance

7. The appeal site is occupied by a two-storey semi-detached dwelling which is brick-built with a simple design, matching that of the attached neighbouring dwelling. It is located in a small row of dwellings off the main cul-de-sac of Magna Close and accessed via a footpath to the front of the dwelling with vehicular access and parking to the rear. The proposal would introduce a two-storey front extension and a part two-storey, part single storey rear extension.
8. Although the appeal property does not front Magna Close, the front extension would still be visible from the footpath to the front of the property, with some views from the main road itself, and would therefore have some impact on the overall streetscene. It would be lower in height than the ridge height of the main roof and would use materials which match the main dwelling. However, the height would still be substantial, with an eaves height matching that of the main dwelling, and its significant depth would result in a large and dominant addition to the front of the property. This would be to the detriment of the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area from which it is visible.
9. It is noted that there are other examples of front gables on the main street, however these are not comparable as they have a lesser depth than the proposal before me and form part of the original building design.
10. Although visible from the parking area, the rear extension would have limited impact on the overall streetscene. The part single, part two-storey design would be a cohesive addition to the rear of the dwelling by using matching materials, and due to its location would not be visually dominant.
11. For the reasons above, I consider that the proposed front extension would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area and therefore would conflict with the relevant sections of Policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018). This policy requires new development to respond to the local context and be compatible with its location. It would also be contrary to paragraph 130 and 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to ensure development adds to the overall quality of the area. However, the proposed rear extensions would accord with these policies.

Living Conditions

9. The existing first floor window on the front of the dwelling would be in close proximity to the proposed front extension. However, although the front extension would appear bulky, the depth of the front extension is not substantial enough to have a significant overbearing impact on the outlook to the users of the room which the window serves.
10. Therefore, the proposed development would not harm the living conditions of the occupiers of the property and would not conflict with the relevant sections of Policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) which seeks to protect the amenity of occupiers. It would also accord with paragraph 130 (f) of the National Planning Policy Framework which requires a high standard of amenity for existing users.

Conditions

12. With regard to the rear extension, in addition to the standard time period for commencement of the development, I have attached a condition requiring the development to accord with the approved plans, as this provides certainty and precision. A condition requiring the use of materials matching that of the existing building is also necessary to ensure an appropriate appearance for the development.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. Although the proposed front extension would not harm the living conditions of the occupiers of the appeal property, it would result in harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, the proposed front extension would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed in so far as it relates to the front extension.
14. However, the proposed rear extension would not harm the character and appearance of the area and for the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, the proposed rear extension would not conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. I therefore recommend that the appeal should be allowed in so far as it relates to the rear extension.

Emma Grierson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal in respect of the front extension is dismissed, but in respect of the rear extension, is allowed subject to conditions.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR