



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 11 October 2021

by T Gethin BA (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 November 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/Q0505/D/21/3282535

172 Sturton Street, Cambridge CB1 2QF

- 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 Kieran Perkins against the decision of Cambridge City Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00822/HFUL, dated 23 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 24 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is ground, first and roof rear extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for ground, first and roof rear extensions at 172 Sturton Street, Cambridge CB1 2QF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/00822/HFUL, dated 23 February 2021, and 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: Location Plan (STU18-000-Location); Existing (Drawing No STU18-Exist-003); and Proposed - Option 9 (Drawing No STU18-Op9-003).
 - 3) With the exception of the proposed green roof, the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) The roof areas of the extensions hereby permitted shall not be used as a balcony, roof garden or similar amenity area.

Preliminary Matters

2. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in July 2021. However, as the Framework's policies that are most relevant to this appeal have not materially changed, no parties will have been prejudiced by my having regard to the latest version in reaching my decision.
3. As the appeal proposal is located within a conservation area, I have paid special attention to section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the designated heritage asset.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and the Mill Road Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

5. The appeal site is situated within a row of modest Victorian terraced houses fronting Sturton Street and contains two adjoining properties which have previously been combined to form a single dwelling. In contrast to the coherence of the terrace's frontage, its rear is characterised by various additions with different scales, types and forms, including flat-roofed projections, dormer roof extensions and a mixture of outriggers. The terrace's rear elevation therefore includes a diverse set of projections, roof forms and eave heights and it is not alleged that these various features are unauthorised. The surrounding area also includes some larger and more modern buildings, such as the three-storey properties with dormers on Fairsford Place.
6. The site is located within the Mill Road CA and the terrace which the site forms part of is identified in the Council's Mill Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2011) as a positive unlisted building in the CA. The designated heritage asset and the Mill Road and St. Matthews Character Area part of the CA is significant for, amongst other things, the long rows of well-detailed terraced houses with concealed back gardens, with the continuous lines of terraced houses having a similar scale and design providing cohesive frontages and being remarkably consistent in their overall form and detailing. However, with public views of the rear of the site and terrace restricted to limited glimpses from for example Fairsford Place and Abbey Walk, the varied rear elevations of the terrace are well concealed and do not detract from the cohesive terraced frontages which are a core contributor to the significance of the CA.
7. The Council previously granted planning permission 19/0585/FUL for ground, first and rear roof extensions at the site. That extant scheme includes, amongst other things, a pitched roof extension presenting a rear gable extending over the full depth of the approved first-floor extension. The submitted evidence indicates that the proposed ground- and first-floor extensions would have an identical footprint to the extant scheme, with the main changes relating to the size and form of the proposed roof extension, which would instead involve a flat-roof – similar to a dormer roof extension – and also result in a flat rather than pitched roof and gable finish to the proposed first-floor extension.
8. The proposed rectilinear roof extension would be higher than the approved pitched roof finish and would partly project over the proposed first-floor extension. However, it would not extend above the existing ridge and would be slightly set in from the sides and set well back from the end of the first-floor extension. The additional floor area – at approximately 12 square metres compared to the extant scheme – would also be relatively limited while the overall volume would be less than the approved development.
9. Combined with its limited width and central position within the existing roof, the proposed roof extension would therefore read as a dormer rather than a full third storey extension. The appeal proposal would also neither unacceptably disrupt the eaves or dominate the traditional roof form of the terrace nor appear as a dominating, bulky feature at odds or out of proportion with its varied context. The minor projection of the first-floor extension above the

property's existing eaves does not lead me to a different conclusion. In addition, the proposed flat roofs would reflect the numerous flat roof forms present on the rear of the terrace.

10. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area or the Mill Road CA, whose significance would be preserved. I therefore find that it accords with Policies 55, 58 and 61 and Appendix E 'Roof extensions design guide' of the Cambridge Local Plan. Amongst other aspects, these set out: that proposals should preserve or enhance the significance of the city's heritage assets; that development will be supported where it responds positively to its context; and that extensions will be permitted where they reflect, or successfully contrast with, existing building form, are sympathetic to and respect the character and proportions of the original building and surrounding area, and are in keeping with the requirements of Appendix E (Roof extensions design guide) which, adopting a flexible approach, provides general design principles for common roof extensions and seeks to promote good quality design appropriate to its setting. The proposal would also be consistent with the provisions in the Framework in relation to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Conclusion and Conditions

11. For the above reasons, the appeal is allowed. With each case determined on its own merits, allowing this development would not set a precedent.
12. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition requiring the carrying out of the development in accordance with the approved plans in the interests of certainty. A condition requiring matching materials, with the exception of the proposed green roof, is necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the area. To protect the living conditions of adjoining occupiers, it is also necessary to impose a condition preventing use of the extensions' roof areas.

T Gethin

INSPECTOR