



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 12 October 2021 by Emma Grierson BSc (Hons) MSc MRPTI

Decision by B J Sims BSc (Hons) CEng MICE MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/V0510/D/21/3276353

14 West Lodge Lane, Sutton, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB6 2NX

- 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 Karl Hogg against the decision of East Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01544/FUL, dated 16 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 14 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is a first-floor bedroom extension and ground floor battery store.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. 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.

Applications for costs

3. An application for costs was made by Mr Karl Hogg against East Cambridgeshire District Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

4. The Government published on 20 July 2021 a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (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. In this respect, I am mindful that the parties have not made any further submissions regarding the revised Framework. However, in light of this re-consultation, I am satisfied that any references made to the revised Framework within this decision would not be prejudicial to them.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposed first floor extension on the character and appearance of the existing house and the surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The appeal property is a two-storey detached dwelling located on the junction between West Lodge Lane and The Row. The dwelling currently has a single storey extension to the rear with a flat roof and blue cladding. The surrounding area is residential in nature with the surrounding buildings, traditional in appearance, largely being constructed from brick.
7. The proposal would introduce a pitch-roofed first-floor extension above the existing rear projection along with a small single storey extension to the side of the property. The Council raise no objections to the single storey side extension and I find no reason to disagree with this. Therefore, the following assessment will focus on the first-floor extension proposed.
8. The mass of the extension would be minor in relation to the total volume of the present house and it would be separated by 20m from neighbouring buildings. Importantly however, due to the corner plot location of the appeal site and the positioning of the extension, adjacent to The Row, the proposed first floor extension would be highly visible within the streetscene. By comparison, the current single storey rear extension, although partially visible from the road, is largely screened by existing hedging along the boundary and therefore has little impact on the surrounding area.
9. Although the proposed first floor extension would not increase the building's footprint, and would have a pitched roof and would be set back from the boundary, it would still have a much larger massing than the existing projection. Due to its size and height, the extension would be an overly dominant addition to the appeal property and the streetscene, whilst its brightly coloured cladding would be prominently out of keeping with the neutral palette of materials used on the surrounding buildings.
10. It is noted that the proposed materials are intended to match the existing extension as a mis-match materials would appear at odds with the host dwelling. However, as the proposal would be larger and much more visible, to repeat this use of materials at first floor level would be significantly detrimental to the character and appearance of the streetscene. Some neighbouring properties have varying finishing materials, including dwellings with two different brick colours at ground and first floor levels. However, these properties use colours which do not stand out as much as would the blue cladding in the proposal before me and therefore are not as prominent.
11. Consequently, the proposed first floor extension would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area and contrary to Policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2015). These Policies require development proposals to demonstrate that the materials and colours used will create a positive, complementary relationship with existing development and be designed to a high quality complementing local distinctiveness. The appeal extension would also be contrary to the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2012) which requires extensions to be subservient to the existing dwelling.

Other Matters

12. The appellant has highlighted a number of similar extensions in the surrounding area which are claimed to set a precedent for the appeal proposal.

Although similar in size, the two-storey extension at 89 The Row is constructed wholly from brick and therefore is different to the proposal before me. Cladding on the dwellings at Yew Tree Gardens has a natural timber appearance, which is less prominent than the cladding proposed. 30 Merlin Drive, 85 Downham Road and 11 Robins Close all include similarly clad extensions, however these are some distance from the appeal site and are within a different setting. Therefore, these examples are not directly comparable to the appeal proposal.

13. The energy benefits of the proposed development, due to the inclusion of solar panels on the roof, have been noted. However, this minor benefit would not outweigh the harm found to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.
14. The appellant states that the committee was mis-informed in relation to a letter of representation which was received from the occupier of a neighbouring dwelling. However, this does not affect the planning merits of the proposal in my fresh consideration of the development proposed. Similarly, information provided relating to the outcome of the decision and the consensus within the planning authority would not alter the outcome of this appeal.

Conclusion and Recommendation

15. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal be dismissed.

Emma Grierson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

16. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

B J Sims

INSPECTOR