



Appeal Decision

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

Decision by Zoe Raygen Dip URP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W0530/D/21/3276919

35 Frog End, Great Wilbraham CB21 5JB

- 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 Marx against the decision of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00160/HFUL, dated 14 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 7 April 2021.
 - The development is an extension to the front of the property and raising of the roof to accommodate a loft conversion.
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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.

Preliminary Matters

3. The application was submitted retrospectively, and I saw at my site visit that the extension had already been constructed. I have therefore considered the appeal on a retrospective basis.
4. 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. Any comments which have been received have been addressed within the appeal decision.

Main Issues

5. The main issues in the appeal are:
 - the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area, and
 - the effect of the development on the living conditions of the occupiers of 37 Frog End in relation to outlook, light and privacy.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and Appearance

6. The appeal property is a detached bungalow that has been extended with a single storey extension to the front and a roof extension, creating two storeys with a flat roof, to the rear. These extensions are the subject of this retrospective appeal. The surrounding area is residential in nature within a rural setting and the surrounding properties are varied in size and design. However, the dwellings immediately surrounding the appeal site are bungalows with a modest scale and appearance.
7. Planning permission was previously granted¹ for the front extension and a large box dormer to the rear. The front extension has been constructed in accordance with the consented scheme and the Council has no objections to this part of the development. Therefore, the appeal will focus solely on the roof extension.
8. The rear extension is greater in height and width than the dormer approved under the consented scheme. Rather than a subservient dormer which is set back from the eaves, the rear extension appears as a full second storey, which is out of keeping with the bungalow/chalet bungalow nature of the surrounding dwellings. The simple character of the host dwelling has been lost with the excessive size of the rear extension subsuming the original dwelling. Furthermore, its blockish nature, flat roof and parapet walls gives the extension an overly modern appearance, more akin to the design of a small block of flats, which is out of keeping with the surrounding rural environment.
9. Although this extension is to the rear of the property and the dwelling is set back from the road and partially shielded by trees, views of the roof extension's substantial flank walls are still possible from the public realm. Therefore, the incongruous nature of the extension is readily visible within the streetscene to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area.
10. The appeal site is not located within the Green Belt, however Policy NH8 states that development on the edges of settlements which are surrounded by the Green Belt must include design measures of a high quality. The proposal would be highly visible from the adjacent Green Belt land and although set within the existing row of dwellings, its incongruous appearance does not represent high quality design, contrary to this policy.
11. For the reasons above, I conclude that as the roof extension has a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area it would be contrary to Policies S2, S7, NH8 and HQ1 of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan (2018). These policies collectively require development to be high quality and well-designed, which preserve or enhance the character of the local area, respond to its context in the wider landscape and is a scale appropriate to its location. The development is also contrary to the design objectives within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Living Conditions

12. The neighbouring property, 37 Frog End, has two ground floor windows on the side elevation which face the appeal property, separated by a driveway. Although these may be secondary windows, they still provide an outlook and some daylight to the habitable rooms which they serve. Due to the two-storey,

¹ Reference S/1592/18/FL (the consented scheme)

bulky nature of the extension, along with the proximity to these windows, the development detrimentally affects the outlook from these windows, and the light received by them and creates a harmful sense of enclosure to the occupiers of this neighbouring dwelling. The effect is materially greater than that resulting from the consented scheme, or any existing fences, due to the increase in mass, height and width of the roof extension.

13. The fenestration on the rear of the property is similar to the consented scheme, with large Juliet balconies on the first floor. Although the development has a significant amount of glazing, views into the rear garden of the neighbouring property, No.37, are largely blocked by an existing garage and not dissimilar to the views provided by the consented scheme. Furthermore, the rear windows on the roof extension sit perpendicular to the side windows on the dwelling at No.37 and therefore do not result in any substantial loss of privacy.
14. Although it has been found that the development does not have a significant impact on the privacy of neighbouring occupiers, it does have a harmful impact on the outlook of the occupiers of the neighbouring dwelling, 37 Frog End. Therefore, the development does not comply with Policy HQ1 of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan (2018) which requires development to protect the amenity of occupier and surrounding users from development that is overbearing or results in a loss of daylight. It would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework which requires development to have a high standard of amenity for existing users.

Other Matters

15. The suggestion from the appellant to clad the sides of the roof extension to reduce the level of brickwork and give the appearance of a more traditional dormer would not reduce the excessive size and bulk of the development. Therefore, it would not be a sufficient solution to overcome the harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area which has been found.
16. The proposed dwelling, which was approved to the rear of 29 and 31 Frog End, may be similar in height than the resultant roof extension, and also adjacent to the Green Belt. However, this new dwelling does not have the bulky appearance of the roof extension and is less imposing on the surrounding area. Similarly the dormer extension to the dwelling at 31 Frog End and the replacement dwelling at 22 Frog End assimilate into the surrounding area, unlike the proposal before me.
17. It is noted that the development is intended to meet the growing needs of the family who occupy it, as well as improving energy conservation and living conditions within the dwelling. However, these minor benefits would not outweigh the significant harm found.

Conclusion and Recommendation

18. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, the proposal would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole, and I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Emma Grierson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

Zoe Raygen

INSPECTOR