



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 August 2022

by A Berry MTCP (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 October 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Q0505/W/22/3294519

25A Bishops Road, Cambridge CB2 9NQ

- 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 Bastow & Tipping against the decision of Cambridge City Council.
 - The application Ref 21/05016/FUL, dated 15 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 8 February 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as “erection of a detached two-bedroom dwelling following demolition of the existing garage, retention of existing dwelling with new access from Bishops Road, and associated works at 25A Bishops Road”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Bishops Road is a residential street comprising predominantly two-storey semi-detached dwellings, but there are also examples of detached two-storey and single storey dwellings. The dwellings are sited so that they are angled towards the road and set behind a front garden that is largely used for off-street parking. Each dwelling has a substantial long linear rear garden. No 25A Bishops Road comprises a three-storey detached dwelling.
4. Between No 25A and No 27 Bishops Road is a single width entrance that provides access to the detached garages belonging to some of the dwellings fronting Bishops Road, as well as No 25, 25B and 25C Bishops Road. These dwellings form a cluster of development with No 14, 18 and 20 Exeter Close and are sited beyond the rear gardens of those dwellings that front Bishops Road. My attention has also been drawn to a recent planning permission to demolish No 25B and erect 2 dwellings. These properties comprise backland development, however, their siting does not disrupt the long linear rear gardens of the dwellings on Bishops Road. These dwellings have a separate character to those dwellings fronting onto Bishops Road, with varying plot shapes and sizes. Accordingly, these examples are not directly comparable to the proposal before me and in any event, each development must be determined on its own individual merits.
5. The long rear gardens of the dwellings fronting Bishops Road are largely devoid of development, other than the presence of detached outbuildings that are

subservient in scale and footprint. The proposed dwelling, which would result from development of the rear part of No 25A's plot, would be in stark contrast to this character, as the building would occupy a sizeable part of No 25A's rear garden and would be partly two-storeys in height. The subdivision of the rear garden of No 25A would erode the cohesive character of the long, linear rear gardens. Furthermore, the siting of the proposed dwelling would reduce the verdant character and appearance to the rear of Bishops Road.

6. The proposed dwelling would be positioned within its plot so that its exterior walls would be sited close to the site boundaries. The height and positioning of a proposed boundary wall would further enclose the site. The garden of the property would be sited between the entrance road and the front door and would comprise a relatively small area that would also include the path from the entrance gate to the front door. The scale and footprint of the proposed dwelling relative to the size of plot would result in a cramped form of development that would not reflect, and would be harmful to, the prevailing character of development within the surrounding area.
7. The proposed development would result in a cramped form of development that would not reflect the prevailing layout or plot sizes of the surrounding area, thereby causing harm to the area's character and appearance. It would not comply with Policy 52 of the Cambridge Local Plan, adopted 2018 (LP) which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure that the form, height and layout of the proposed subdivision of existing dwelling plots is appropriate to the surrounding pattern of development and character of the area.

Other Matters

8. The appellant considers that the Council's LP is not up to date. However, while some of the background evidence may pre-date the LP by a number of years, it was adopted in October 2018. It has not been robustly demonstrated that the relevant policies of the LP should be considered out-of-date for this or any other reason, and I therefore, attribute full weight to the conflict that I have found with its policies.
9. The provision of one additional dwelling weighs in favour of the proposal and would make a contribution, albeit limited, to the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of new homes. It is also noted that the proposed dwelling would be located within a built-up area with access to various shops, services and facilities which carries moderate weight in favour of the scheme. However, taken as a whole, these benefits do not outweigh my findings in respect of the main issue.
10. The Council's absence of concern in respect of the effect the proposed dwelling would have on the occupiers of neighbouring properties and its design are neutral factors.

Conclusion

11. There are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight to indicate a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

A Berry, INSPECTOR