The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 December 2022

by Martin H Seddon BSc MPhil DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/V0510/D/22/3305776
68 Bellairs, Sutton, Cambridgeshire CB6 2RW

- 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 Claire Cox against the decision of East Cambridgeshire District Council.
- The application Ref: 22/00457/FUL, dated 14 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 9 June 2022.
- The development proposed is ground floor rear and side extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the streetscene and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal building is a two-storey end terrace dwelling with a rear conservatory. It is located in a corner position within the cul-de-sac road system of Bellairs. Properties in the area north of No.68 Bellairs have a layout which is interspersed with open frontages and grassed areas. These add to the pleasant character of the locality. In contrast there are tightly packed terraced dwellings to the south of No.68, many of which included parked cars at their frontages at the time of my site visit.

4. The proposed side part of the extension would occupy a strip of land at the rear of the footway which forms part of the original layout for the residential development. It would have a building line which followed an existing boundary wall. The proposed elevation of the extension facing the terraced properties on the opposite side of the road would be a long flat roofed structure. Despite continuing the line of the boundary wall, it would harm the character and appearance of the building of No.68, by contrasting with its pitched roof form. It would result in a long blank extension wall that would be prominent in view when approached along Bellairs from the east and west and when seen from the front of opposing dwellings. The proposed extension would conflict with the Council's Design Guide supplementary planning document which indicates that the form of the original dwelling will determine the extent to which it can be extended. The proposed extension would also fail to meet the design objectives within the National Planning Policy Framework.

5. The appellant has referred to examples of development in the wider area which is close to its boundaries. Nevertheless, the circumstances of those dwellings are different and insufficient reason to justify the appeal proposal. The loss of the strip of green space next to the side of No.68 would detract from the character and appearance of this residential area by bringing development closer to the back of the footway.

6. I find that the proposal would have a significant harmful effect on the character and appearance of the streetscene and surrounding area. The extension would conflict with East Cambridgeshire Local Plan policies ENV1 and ENV2, which together seek to ensure that proposals complement existing development, have regard to the local context and take the opportunity to enhance the character, appearance and quality of an area.

Other Matters

7. The appellant advises that the grassed area to the side of the property which would be affected by the extension is an area of scrub and weeds and previously contained overgrown bushes which had to be cut down as they were causing subsidence. The appellant adds that the land collects rubbish and is fouled by animals. However, the strip of land is relatively small and I see no reason why it cannot be maintained in good order. Although the appellant suggests that planting would be carried out at the front of the property to soften the boundary, its potential benefits would not outweigh the loss of this area of incidental greenspace.

8. The proposal would provide improved accommodation and make use of existing land in the residential area. However, it would fail to constitute sustainable development because of the resultant environmental harm.

Conclusion

9. I have taken all other matters raised into account, including the lack of objections from neighbours and the Sutton Parish Council. However, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Martin H Seddon

INSPECTOR