



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 June 2023

by S. Hartley BA (Hons) Dist.TP (Manc) DMS MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th July 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Q0505/D/23/3320657

89, St. Bedes Crescent, Cambridge CB1 3TZ

- 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 and Mrs Saji against the decision of Cambridge City Council.
 - The application Ref: 22/05066/HFUL, dated 17 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 8 February 2023.
 - The development proposed is for a first floor side extension to the house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property lies within a relatively modern housing area of mainly two storey dwellings with buff coloured brickwork and double pitched roofs. The area is carefully landscaped to give views, and glimpses of views, of mature trees. Some of the housing blocks are arranged on three sides of a rectangular area with open spaces between them. The overall arrangement, including views of the mature trees, either directly along the access roads or from between the houses, adds positively and distinctly to the character and appearance of the area.
4. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling with a linked garage that has been converted into living accommodation. It is set amongst other such dwellings and forms part of the originally designed housing area.
5. The proposal creates an additional first floor bedroom and study. The view between the appeal property and the adjoining property when seen from St. Bedes Crescent is of a tall, mature tree which adds considerably to the visual appearance of the area as a whole.
6. The proposed development, by infilling part of the gap between the properties, would restrict and diminish views of much of the tree when viewed from the Crescent, to the detriment of the visual appreciation of the area. While the tree can be seen from other vantage points, the restriction of its view from between the front elevations of the dwellings would be a significant loss to the character and appearance of the area.

7. In terms of the built form of the area, a predominate design feature is the number of terraced blocks of four or more dwellings. However, the overall design has been carefully planned and the group of semi-detached houses, of which the appeal dwelling forms a part, adds a visually attractive variation which would be lost if the gap between them were to become built over by a first floor extension.
8. Therefore, I conclude that for the above reasons, the proposed development would not accord with the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 55, 56 and 58 which stress the importance of good design and where development does not adversely affect the setting of, amongst other things, trees as well as the character and appearance of an area.

Other Matters

9. I accept that the proposed extension, using the proposed external materials, would be of an appropriate design in itself.
10. It is also possible that the mature tree may have a limited life, though I have no information before me as to its physical condition. While the residents and visitors to the area have the benefit of other trees and landscaped areas, I consider that this would not be a sufficient reason to restrict or diminish views of the mature tree in question.
11. I accept that the proposed extension would provide additional accommodation for the appellant and for future occupiers of the property, and would make effective use of land. It would also provide work for local builders, though such work, while beneficial, would not be of long lasting duration.
12. However, these matters, whether individually or cumulatively, do not outweigh my conclusions on the main issue.

Conclusion

13. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Hartley

INSPECTOR