



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 December 2023

by **P. D. Biggers** BSc Hons MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date:

Appeal Ref: APP/Q0505/D/23/3329809

13 Stratfield Close, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB4 3NA.

- 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 Dr Manikhandan Mudalier against the decision of Cambridge City Council.
 - The application Ref 23/02096/HFUL dated 1 June 2023, was refused by notice dated 26 July 2023.
 - The development proposed is two storey side and single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and permission is granted for two storey side and single storey rear extension at 13 Stratfield Close, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB4 3NA in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 23/02096/HFUL dated 1 June 2023 and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted must be begun no later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted documents and the following approved plans: 2214(2)-100; 2214(2)-103; 2214(2)-104; 2214(2)-105;
 - 3) Notwithstanding Condition No 2 (Development in accordance with approved plans) no development above floor slab level must take place until details of the materials to be used on the exterior walls and roof have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of the development on the application form incorrectly omits reference to the single storey element of the proposed extension. For the avoidance of doubt I have therefore used the description set out on the decision notice for the purposes of my decision.
3. In the period since the appeal was submitted the Government has published a revised version of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework). None of the changes directly affect this appeal but I have used the paragraph referencing from the new Framework in my decision below.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings on Stratfield Close.

Reasons

5. The appeal site sits at the southern end of Stratfield Close and is a two storey end of terrace property in a terrace of four. The terraces are constructed in brick and render with tile hanging detailing under tiled gabled roofs.
6. A number of dwellings in the vicinity have been extended most notably the adjacent dwelling to the north (No 12) which benefits from a large brick-built two storey side extension and a large single storey extension in the form of a garden room to the rear.
7. It has been put to me that these developments justify the appeal proposal being allowed. However, I am not persuaded that any of these are directly comparable to the appeal proposal although they do indicate a number of larger extensions on smaller plots than is the case with the appeal property.
8. The principle of an extension to No 13 would be acceptable but it has been put to me that the proposed scale is too large. I acknowledge that the extension would represent a significant increase in floor area compared to the existing house (around 83%) which ordinarily for a terraced house would be excessive. However for a number of reasons in this case the extension would not be inappropriate.
9. No 13, being a corner plot, has a very substantial garden area compared to other houses in the vicinity and the extension in this context would not be disproportionate to the plot, with the total extended house occupying only a small part of it and leaving substantial garden space.
10. I acknowledge that in what is a relatively high density end of Stratfield Close the spaces at the end of the short terrace comprising Nos 13-16 are important and therefore why the previous proposal at No 13 to simply extend the terrace would not have been appropriate. However in the appeal proposal this has been addressed and the extension frontage would be set back about 5 metres, the width reduced to less than the main house and the roof ridge set substantially below the height of the main roof. Viewed from Stratfield Close the extension would not close the gap at the end of the terrace because of the setback. The extent of the terraces would still read as they do currently. Moreover, viewed from the Close there would be no perception of the depth of the extension as this is only apparent viewed from the gardens of Nos 12 and the appeal site. Therefore, in the context of possible views from the public realm, the extension would appear proportionate to the house and would not unduly impact on the suburban character of the Close.
11. I accept that the appeal proposal would not be dissimilar in size to the previous refused scheme but in that case the result of the large scale would have been to virtually join the two terraces completely closing off the gap. The same would not be the case with the appeal proposal despite the similar scale.
12. I have been invited to conclude that the proposed extension would appear as a separate and independent dwelling. However, as a result of the substantial setback, narrower frontage and set down at the roof and the absence of any entrance on the elevation facing Stratfield Close, I am not persuaded that this would be the case.
13. Regarding the roof design, in order to retain the ridge orientation to the close and a low profile to the roof to avoid neighbour impact, the appellant has opted for a

dual pitch design over the extension which from the side (garden view) would appear at odds with the design of the main house. However, as this would not be visible from the close it would not impact on the character and appearance of the surroundings. Although an alternative roof design would have been preferable it does not amount to sufficient reason in its own right to dismiss the appeal.

14. The reason for refusal indicates concern over the proposed materials for the extension. The proposal is that the extension would simply be constructed in a matching brick, an approach which I note has been accepted by the Council in respect of the large extension at No 12. However, notwithstanding the submitted plans it would be possible, by imposing a condition to require material details to be submitted for approval, to allow the Council the opportunity to ensure these reflect the surroundings as appropriate.
15. For the reasons above I am satisfied that the revised proposal, the subject of the appeal, would reflect the requirements of the Framework at paragraph 135 on design and respond to the context of Stratfield Close as required in Policy 55 of the *Cambridge Local Plan* (CLP). It would also result in the satisfactory integration of the new building in the context as required in CLP Policy 56. Policy 58 of the CLP specifically sets out requirements of extensions and alterations and, subject to the control of materials as proposed, the extension design would reflect the existing building form and as explained above the proposal would respect the space between buildings and retain sufficient amenity space for the dwelling.

Other Matters

16. There would be some overlooking from the first floor side bedroom windows of the proposed extension towards the side windows of No 12's rear garden room extension but this would be at an oblique angle and unlikely to result in any significant loss of privacy.
17. With regard to the relationship of the proposed extension to No 14 at the rear, the positioning of the single storey element to the extension means that the 2 storey section would be a sufficient distance away to avoid any overbearing relationship.

Conclusion and conditions

18. I have had regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in the Equality Act 2010 and understand the appellant's wish to expand his accommodation to meet his family needs. For the reasons above the proposal would be acceptable and the appeal is allowed and permission is granted subject to conditions.
19. I have considered the proposed conditions in the light of the advice in the Framework and *Planning Practice Guidance*. A condition requiring development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted plans is necessary in the interest of certainty. The Council proposed a simple condition requiring materials to match the existing dwelling. Whilst it is proposed to use matching bricks and roof tiles, in the light of the Council's concerns about materials on the front elevation facing Stratfield Court I have imposed a condition requiring submission of details of the materials allowing the Council control over the finished appearance of this elevation to ensure the character and appearance of the Close is respected.

P. D. Biggers

INSPECTOR