

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 March 2024

by P Eggleton BSc(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V0510/D/23/3333412

Highfield House, 72 Mill Road, Ashley, Cambridgeshire CB8 9EE

- 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 Andrew McCarthy against the decision of East Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 23/00982/FUL, dated 5 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 24 October 2023.
 - The development proposed is a roof extension over existing garage to form annex.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The existing garage is screened to some extent by the high front boundary hedge, although at the time of my visit, the level of screening was reduced by the limited foliage. This would increase significantly during the summer months. It is visible through and above the gate and above the hedge in some views from the west. From the south, it is evident across the front garden of 70 Mill Road. Despite the screening, it represents a relatively prominent feature in front of the main building line of the house. In the views from the south, from where it is most prominent, it represents a large structure with little design interest, particularly given that it is the rear and side elevations that are evident.
 4. The increase in roof height and the loss of the hipped roof, would significantly increase the scale and mass of the building. Despite some enhanced architectural detailing to the eaves and gable, the element of the garage which is most prominent from the south, would become considerably more dominant. The greater scale of the building would also be apparent from the west, through the gates and over the western boundary. This would increase its prominence. Overall, the existing garage is not a positive feature of the overall property when experienced from Mill Road. The greater height and bulk of this proposal would result in it being more prominent and more dominant. Although offering some design detail improvements, these are minor and would not
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overcome the greater negative impact resulting from its increased scale. It would therefore detract from the character and appearance of the area and would represent poor design in this context.

5. The proposal would conflict with the design aspirations of policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 as it would fail to create a positive, complementary relationship with existing development. It would also consolidate the conflict with the Supplementary Planning Document: Design Guide 2012 with regard to the position of the garage in relation to the house. It also conflicts with the *National Planning Policy Framework* 2023 as although the building would function well, it would not add to the overall quality of the area and would not represent high quality design in this particular context.
6. Reference has been made to alterations associated with three of the properties to the north. These differ, particularly with regard to layout, to the appeal property. The details provided and the evidence on the ground, do not indicate that this proposal would be acceptable or that the council has been inconsistent in its approach. I have had regard to the benefits of the proposal to the appellant, the increased resulting accommodation and the economic benefits that would flow from the construction works. I am also mindful of the lack of objections made. Whilst these matters provide weight in favour of the development, they are not sufficient to outweigh my concerns. I therefore dismiss the appeal.

Peter Eggleton

INSPECTOR