



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 March 2025

by **K E Down MA(Oxon) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q0505/D/24/3357093

23 Long Reach Road, Cambridge, CB4 1UQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Agnes Starnawska against the decision of Cambridge City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/03690/HFUL.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and construction of two storey side extension – full depth on ground floor and ½ depth on first floor, installation of new roof lights, extension to front porch, removal of front hedge and widening of dropped kerb.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. There is one main issue which is the effect of the proposed side extension on the character and appearance of the street scene of Long Reach Road.

Reasons

3. The Council raises no objection, subject to conditions, to the proposed dropped kerb or to the demolition of the existing garage or the proposed alterations to rooflights and doors. I agree these would be acceptable. I shall therefore restrict my further consideration to the proposed extension.
4. The appeal dwelling is a semi-detached house in a residential street of similar dwellings. The semi-detached pairs were originally separated by driveways to the side, contributing to the open, spacious, character of the street. In a number of cases, side extensions have been built into the gaps at both ground and first floor. Where first floor extensions have been built, the gap is noticeably narrowed and thus more fragile but nevertheless a separation is maintained between the pairs of dwellings and openness is preserved. A noticeable gap has been preserved at first floor in all the cases I saw.
5. The appeal dwelling has a single storey garage to the side and its non-attached neighbour No 21 has a two storey extension up to the shared boundary. There thus remains a gap of some 2.6m at first floor between the two dwellings.
6. The proposed extension would replace the existing garage and therefore the ground floor element, including the extension to the front porch, would preserve the existing gap.

7. However, at first floor the proposed extension, notwithstanding its set back by over 2m from the front elevation and its set down roof, would close the gap between the dwellings. I accept that when approaching along the street, the neighbouring pairs of dwellings would not appear as a terrace. Nevertheless, the loss of openness between the dwellings would fail to respect the space between buildings, which in Long Reach Road makes a valuable contribution to the character of the street. This would conflict with Policy 58 of the Cambridge Local Plan (LP), 2018, which expects extensions to existing buildings to respect the space between buildings where this contributes to the character of an area.
8. Notwithstanding that, in view of the position of the extension set well back from the front elevation, I find the proposed contrasting materials and the lack of window in the front elevation acceptable, this would not outweigh the identified harm to the character and appearance of the area.
9. It is therefore concluded on the main issue that the proposed side extension would have a materially detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the street scene of Long Reach Road. In consequence, it would conflict with LP Policies 55, 56 and 58. Taken together and amongst other things these expect new development, including extensions, to identify and respond positively to existing features such that they: use appropriate local characteristics to help inform siting and massing; successfully integrate buildings and spaces between them; ensure that proposals are sympathetic to the existing building and surrounding area; and, in particular, respect the space between buildings where this contributes to the character of an area.
10. However, I find no conflict with LP Policies 57 and 59 which refer to new buildings and landscaping in the context of the public realm respectively.
11. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

KE Down
INSPECTOR