



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: 14th March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W0530/D/25/3358612

11 Thatchers Wood, Longstanton, Cambridgeshire, CB24 3BX

- 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 Mr & Mrs A Meredith against the decision of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/03755/HFUL.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing single garage, a two storey extension to the side, new infill to the porch, installation of solar panels, air source heat pumps and roof lights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of existing garage, a two storey extension to the side, new infill to the porch, installation of solar panels, air source heat pumps and roof lights at 11 Thatchers Wood, Longstanton, Cambridgeshire, CB24 3BX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/03755/HFUL, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) Except as otherwise shown on the approved plans, the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 771 24PL100, 771 24PL101, 771 24PL102, 771 24PL103, 771 24PL104, 771 24PL105, 771 24PL106, 771 24PL107.

Main Issue

2. There is one main issue which is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the street scene and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal dwelling is a large, detached house on a substantial corner plot. It is one of a small, well established, development of similar properties together with some smaller and newer dwellings. Materials are predominantly red brick under tiled roofs. The street is spaciouly laid out, surrounded by trees and there are prominent trees in gardens, giving the area a semi-rural, sylvan setting. The appeal

dwelling and some of its neighbours are characterised by strong two storey front-facing gables. Designs vary but the appeal dwelling has two front-facing gables, one of which is wider and projects further forward, giving it greater prominence and importance. The dwelling has single storey additions to one side and to the rear, and also a detached single and double garage.

4. The proposed development includes the demolition of the single garage and the installation of solar panels and air source heat pumps. The Council raises no objection to these elements and I agree they would be acceptable. I shall therefore restrict my further consideration to the two storey side extension.
5. The side extension would extend as far from the dwelling as the single storey garage and would infill the gap between the two. It would have a strong, feature gable to the front that would be set slightly forward of the smaller existing gable but noticeably back from the main front gable. It would have the same ridge height and pitch as the existing gables but would be wider on the non-attached side, to end with a dropped eave. The gable would thus be asymmetric. It would be constructed of matching brick at ground floor with vertical wood cladding to the first floor. The existing porch would be extended forward and be enclosed to fill the gap between the proposed and main projecting gables. It would have a catslide roof that joined seamlessly with the existing roof and projected slightly forward of and lipped round the proposed extension. To the rear, the proposed extension would project beyond the main rear elevation but be set noticeably back from the rear of the existing single storey addition.
6. The Council raises concerns regarding the width of the proposed extension. However, in terms of the lack of symmetry, whilst other gables are symmetrical there are many examples of asymmetry and lack of uniformity in the street scene, including in the form of wide side extensions. Since the proposed extension would conform in terms of height, pitch and window arrangement, I do not find the asymmetry detrimental or disruptive to the character or appearance of the dwelling. Moreover, its clear setback from the main front gable and limited additional width would ensure it remained subservient to the original façade and dwelling as a whole.
7. In terms of the wood cladding, whilst this is not seen elsewhere in the street, it would be an aesthetically pleasing material and in view of the semi-rural, sylvan setting of Thatchers Wood I do not consider it out of place. I agree that the majority of dwellings are of uniform red brick but I am satisfied that the introduction of a more contemporary appearance and some variety in the form of the proposed wood cladding would not be detrimental to or disruptive of the character or appearance of the dwelling or the street scene. The Council is concerned that the thickness of the cladding would result in the first floor projecting over the ground floor and appearing unbalanced. However, the projection would be minimal and insufficient to have an unbalancing effect. Likewise, I do not consider that the lipped roofline of the porch would result in a noticeably unbalanced appearance.
8. The side and, in part, the rear elevations of the proposed extension would be seen from the street. However, I am satisfied that their appearance, whilst more contemporary, would be compatible with both the host dwelling and the street scene.

9. Overall, I conclude on the main issue that the proposed extension would amount to an addition that was sympathetic to local character and visually attractive whilst introducing some innovation. It would therefore have no materially detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the host dwelling, the street scene or the surrounding area. In consequence, it would accord with Policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2018, and the National Planning Policy Framework, 2024. Taken together these expect new development to be of high quality design that is visually attractive and responds to its context whilst including variety and interest within a coherent place-responsive design that is compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of, amongst other things, scale, form, design, proportions and materials in relation to the surrounding area.
10. Turning to conditions, in addition to the statutory commencement condition, I agree with the Council that the development should be carried out in accordance with the approved plans in order to provide certainty and that materials should either match those used in the existing building or, where these differ, be as set out on the approved plans to protect the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.
11. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, including the representations of third parties, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

KE Down
INSPECTOR