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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 March 2025

by **H Marriott MPlan MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 March 2025

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**Appeal Ref: APP/W0530/D/24/3353359**

**33 Chishill Road, Heydon, Cambridgeshire SG8 8PR**

- 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 and Mrs Liam Nicholls against the decision of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
  - The application Ref is 24/02553/HFUL.
  - The development proposed is extension at first floor level to create bedroom and bathroom accommodation and entrance porch.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matters

2. The site is located in the Heydon Conservation Area (CA). There is a duty imposed by Section 72(1) of the Act requiring decision makers, in the exercise of planning functions, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
3. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in December 2024. In this instance, the policies of the Framework most relevant to the appeal are unaffected by the revisions. I am therefore satisfied that there is no requirement to seek further submissions on the revised Framework, and that no party would be disadvantaged by this.

### Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.

### Reasons

5. The CA designation encapsulates the majority of the village of Heydon and parts of agricultural fields, located adjacent to the built form of the settlement. The village comprises linear built form along Chishill Road, Fowlmere Road and Heydon Lane which lead away from the core of the village. Thatched cottages are among the various building types and styles and chimneys on many buildings form a unifying feature of the village. Boundaries tend to be defined by brick/stone walls or hedgerow and mature trees. The significance of the CA is informed by the village's history which is evident in the range of buildings that are often spaciouly arranged along road frontages and its connection to the countryside that surrounds it. The village's verdant qualities, use of consistent boundary treatments, arrangement of

buildings and use of traditional materials, are important components that contribute to the significance and special interest of the CA as a whole.

6. Number 33 Chishill Road (No 33) sits between a two-storey terrace of dwellings that front the roadside and a pair of two storey semi-detached dwellings which are set behind small front gardens. No 33 comprises a single storey dwelling with rendered walls and a steeply pitched concrete tile roof. The evidence suggests the roof may have historically been thatched. An existing timber clad single storey extension<sup>1</sup> sits at an oblique angle to the main part of the dwelling. The side gable of the main part of the dwelling sits perpendicular to the road and a hedgerow defines part of its front garden boundary.
7. No 33 is a prominent building visible from Chishill Road and despite its more recent alterations and extensions, its rustic aesthetic and the verdant qualities of the appeal site share characteristics with other dwellings located in the wider CA. In these respects, No 33 positively contributes to the character and appearance of the locality.
8. The eaves height, scale and form of the existing extension ensures a degree of subservience which makes a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the CA. In contrast, the proposed first floor extension over the existing single-story extension, would have a notably higher eaves and ridge height than the main part of the dwelling.
9. Whilst the guidance contained in The District Design Guide: High Quality and Sustainable Development in South Cambridgeshire Supplementary Planning Document (2010) recognises that every site is different, it advises that extensions should remain subservient to the original building, suggesting that this will usually involve a lower roof.
10. Despite the use of similar materials and being connected to the main part of the dwelling by a lower linked structure, the high eaves and ridge of the extension, in combination with the addition of two dormer windows would dominate the main dwelling. This would result in an unsympathetic response and detract from the modest proportions of the main dwelling. Even though the hedge would partially screen the proposed extension from Chishill Road, this hedge could be removed. In any case, glimpsed views would still be appreciable along Chishill Road. The proposed first floor extension would therefore fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA as a whole.
11. The Council's report indicates that the proposed porch would be an acceptable addition to the dwelling. Having considered the small-scale nature and siting of the proposed porch, I concur that particular aspect of the proposal would preserve the character or appearance of the CA.
12. Even so, it follows that the proposed development as a whole would fail to accord with the statutory presumption under s72(1) of the Act and there would be some harm to the significance of the CA as a designated heritage asset. Given the scale and nature of the proposal, the degree of harm to the significance of the CA would be less than substantial. Paragraph 215 of the (the Framework) states this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

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<sup>1</sup> Council ref: S/1156/18/FL Single storey side and rear extension – granted May 2018

13. Public benefits would derive from the enlargement of the dwelling which may assist in the provision of a more suitable family dwelling in walking distance to the school, in an area where affordable housing options may be limited. However, given that the proposal relates to a single dwelling, the public benefits would be limited. Furthermore, No 33 is already used as a dwelling and there is no substantive evidence to suggest that occupation of the dwelling would become unviable without the proposed extension. The Framework indicates great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset. The public benefits of the proposal would not outweigh the less than substantial harm identified, leading to conflict with the historic environment protection policies of the Framework.
14. My attention has been drawn to new build developments at 33 and 47 Chishill Road and to extensions at Hill Cottage and 25 Chishill Road. I am not aware of the planning circumstances of those examples given, including whether they were approved under the same planning policy context. In any case, they do not share the same site-specific context of the appeal dwelling. The appellant has also drawn my attention to the use of similar dormer windows at 15 and 45 Chishill Road. However, these dormers appear to be located within a larger area of roof slope within the main part of a dwelling as opposed to an extension. Therefore, even if large buildings, extensions or dormer windows have been built elsewhere, they do not appear to be directly comparable to the appeal proposal.
15. The evidence also indicates that a building previously existed on the appeal site closer to the road than the proposed extension. However, it was sited in a different position and orientation within the plot and does not justify the harm identified in the reasons above.
16. Overall, the proposed development would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. It would therefore conflict with Policies HQ/1 and NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018), which seek to promote high quality design, be appropriate in terms of scale and conserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets including conservation areas.

## **Conclusion**

17. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

*H Marriott*

INSPECTOR