
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 April 2025

by **A Phillips MPlan BA CertHE MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q0505/W/24/3353339

558 Newmarket Road, Cambridge CB5 8LL

- 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 P Prechner against the decision of Cambridge City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/01837/FUL.
 - The development proposed is: Single storey new dwelling with associated landscaping and off street parking at the rear of 558 Newmarket Road.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Since the appeal was lodged there has been an updated version of the National Planning Policy Framework. However, I am satisfied there are no implications for the main issues for this appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - Effect on highway safety.
 - The effect on the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

Highway safety

4. While not in the reason for in the Decision Notice, the case officer in their report argues the proposal does not comply with the special strategy of residential development defined within Policy 3 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 (Local Plan) due to the proposal not being inclusive. This directly ties with Policy 56 of the Local Plan that argues for inclusive and safe design, which is referred to in the Decision Notice.
5. The site is accessed via a narrow private gravel drive that connects onto Cut Throat Lane, which provides rear parking spaces to approximately 11 Newmarket Road dwellings and the single one storey dwelling adjacent to the appeal site. Cut Throat Lane is a single lane vehicular highway that connects Elfleda Road and Newmarket Road, it does not benefit from any separate footpaths and is a mix of bound gravel and tarmac. In addition, Cut Throat Lane also provides access to the

football stadium car park and a separate driveway/parking area to approximately eleven dwellings on the opposite side to the appeal site.

6. The proposal is seeking to convert part of the rear garden and a parking area for the host dwelling for the new dwelling plot. It is noted that both parties reference a previous Inspector's decision on a nearby site for a single dwelling (APP/Q0505/W/22/3290444). It is considered given the proximity of the site to a lamppost on Cut Throat Lane and that a condition could be added to secure low level lighting on the appeal site that the proposal would benefit from sufficient light while using the private driveway. The private driveway would not allow two cars to pass each other, which could cause one of the cars to reverse back onto Cut Throat Lane. While this would create a significant danger to pedestrians, cyclists and other users of Cut Throat Lane, given the lack of visibility this is not a material change to the current situation. However, given the mixed road surface of Cut Throat Lane and the existing conflict between motor vehicles and other uses of this lane that this would put people, specifically who are disabled or those with mobility issues at a disadvantage from accessing the appeal site.
7. The proposal will not provide safe pedestrian access to the site via Cut Throat Lane and will specifically exclude those who are disabled or with mobility issues. On this basis the proposal is not considered to comply with Policies 3, 56 and 57 of the Local Plan; which all seek for safe, accessible and inclusive design for all. The proposal also fails to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework, specifically paragraphs 116 and 117, which requires applications to provide safe access and address the needs of disabled and people with mobility issues.

Character and appearance

8. The proposed single storey dwelling will be located adjacent to an existing single storey dwelling that both would have access to the private driveway onto Cut Throat Lane. The proposed dwelling will have a lean-to style roof. It is also noted that another single storey dwelling is located on the opposite side of the access onto Cut Throat Lane. The character and appearance of Cut Throat Lane is noticeably different between the stadium side and the appeal site side. The stadium side is defined by large areas of hard surfacing and prominent garage buildings, while the appeal site side is more defined by the soft landscaping that helps obscure garages/outbuildings along the private driveway.
9. The proposed dwelling is considered to detract from the character of soft landscaping on this side of Cut Throat Lane and does not have sufficient space on site to provide comprehensive planting. However, given it's location adjacent to an existing single storey dwelling the harm to character of the area is limited.
10. The proposal causes harm to the character and appearance of the area. On this basis the proposal does not comply with Policies 55, 56, 57 and 59 of the Local Plan, which seek to create high quality buildings that benefit its locality.

Other Matters

11. Both parties refer to the proposal being a self-build unit and that there is a current shortfall. However, no details have been provided on the level of shortfall and on this basis, it only has limited weight in favour of the proposal. In addition any economic benefits during construction would be short term and small given the scale of the scheme. Therefore, given the limited harm to the character and

appearance of the area as detailed above, it is considered that these benefits would outweigh this identified harm. The economic benefits and need for self build plots would not outweigh the harm identified above to pedestrian safety and accessibility.

Conclusion

12. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and there are no other considerations that outweigh this conflict. For the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

A Phillips

INSPECTOR