
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 April 2025

by **H Marriott MPlan MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 May 2025.

Appeal Ref: APP/H0520/D/24/3349745

1 Holbein Road, St Ives, Cambridgeshire PE27 3EA

- 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 Lewis against the decision of Huntingdonshire District Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/02084/HHFUL.
 - The development proposed is a rear single storey extension with associated landscaping and drainage. Rear dormer loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. 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

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. Holbein Road is a residential cul-de-sac which leads off Constable Road, a primary route leading through a modern housing estate. Both routes are gently curved and each primarily contain two-storey detached dwellings located on similar sized plots, set back behind small front gardens and driveways. Brickwork facades and tiled roofs are prevalent materials on external surfaces of houses in the area, with render applied to occasional dwellings and solar panels on some roof slopes. There are differing house types and distinctive pockets of red brick dwellings with brown tiled roofs or buff brick dwellings with red/brown tiled roofs which form part of the planned design of the estate. Despite this variety, there is a regularity in the scale and form of development and an overall consistency in the materials within the distinctive pockets and this makes a positive contribution to the area's cohesive character and appearance.
5. Number 1 Holbein Road (No 1) comprises a detached two-storey dwelling with a rear conservatory extension. It is prominently located on a corner plot at the junction of Holbein Road and Constable Road. Its external surfaces comprise buff

brick with subtle red/brown brick banding and a red/brown tiled roof. These materials together with its spacing on the corner plot, reflect the prevailing characteristics of the surrounding area and the materials palette of the distinctive pocket it sits within.

6. The external surfaces of the proposed flat roof dormer roof extension would utilise plain roofing tiles and creasing tiles, in the same colour as those proposed on the rear single storey extension which would have a part flat, and part hipped plain tile roof with roof lights.
7. The precise colouring of the proposed materials has not been confirmed at this stage. However, the appellants indicate that the proposed design is intended to be contemporary, and the proposed materials would be deliberately chosen to distinguish the proposed extensions from the original dwelling. The revised 3d visuals, indicate that the proposed materials would be red/brown in colour, similar to the banding around the existing dwelling or to the red brick seen on buildings in other pockets of dwellings on the wider estate.
8. From my own observations on site, the side elevation of the single storey extension would be partially visible over the side wall of the garden from Constable Road. Whilst the walls of the proposed single storey extension would contrast with the colour of the existing prevailing buff brick walls of No 1, the Council indicate that this extension would be acceptable given the limited views from public vantage points. Even if I were to accept this view, the dormer roof extension would be large and very prominent in views from neighbouring gardens and windows and on Constable Road.
9. The proposed materials indicated in the evidence, would not of a similar colour and design to the materials used in the main roof of the house and would not therefore assist in assimilating the dormer roof extension into the roofscape. Furthermore, creasing tiles do not form part of the design of the existing or surrounding dwellings and the proposed dormer windows do not align with the existing first floor windows. These features combined would be eye catching due to the resulting contrasting texture and design compared to the existing building. I do not agree that the expanse of plain roofing tiles on a dwelling of this scale requires breaking up in the manner proposed. Whilst the appellant suggests that windows are positioned in the interests of privacy, there is no objective evidence to demonstrate that these are the only options available.
10. The Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017) recognises that extensions do not always have to match the existing house in terms of materials or architectural design. Even so, as No 1 is a new build dwelling within a pocket of housing with a consistent material palette on a modern housing estate, I am not convinced that the approach proposed would complement the character and appearance of the existing house.
11. Due to concerns raised by the Council, the appellants have indicated an intention to explore the blending and tone of the proposed materials to work with the existing dwelling and a willingness to accept a condition to agree precise material details. However, the appellants also indicate that the choice of materials is limited by the range available as well as the supply and cost issues in the materials industry. Given the appellants resistance within their evidence to confirm the use of either matching materials or materials of a similar colour and design to the prevailing

materials utilised in the existing house, I cannot be certain that an acceptable solution could be found by way of condition. No details of any acceptable alternative options have been provided. It would not therefore be reasonable to impose a condition in this regard.

12. The main parties indicate that the dimensions of the proposed dormer roof extension could be permitted development¹, although this has not been confirmed through a lawful development certificate. However, the Council indicate that they do not consider it to be permitted development as the proposed materials would not match the existing dwelling. If there is an option to build a dormer roof extension in similar materials, dismissing the appeal would not prevent the appellants from doing so.
13. Overall, the scale of the dormer roof extension in combination with its unsympathetic materials and misalignment of its windows would result in an incongruous addition which would be discordant amongst the otherwise coherent pocket of similar dwellings within this specific part of the estate.
14. I conclude that the proposed development would result in a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. In this regard, it would conflict with Policies LP11 and LP12 of the Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019) which require proposals to respond positively to their context; to have regard to guidance which promotes high quality design and to implement a cohesive design through the use of a limited palette of quality, durable materials.
15. For the same reasons, it would also conflict with the policies of the Framework and the guidance contained in the National Design Guide (2021) which aims to achieve well-designed places and advises that the scale, form and appearance of a building influence what materials may be appropriate for its construction, helping new development to fit harmoniously with its surroundings.

Other Matters

16. The appellants have provided a number of images showing examples of where contrasting materials including a combination of cladding, wall hanging tiles and brick coloured fenestration/brickwork have been utilised, both within and outside of Huntingdonshire. Examples of certificates of lawful development² granted by the Council have been provided. However, the appeal proposal relates to an application for planning permission and these examples are not therefore directly comparable to the appeal proposal. Other examples of dormer windows in St Ives have also been provided. These include at 21 Degas Drive, 9 Monet Close, 68 Edinburgh Drive and 6 Nene Way. I saw that these are very much in the minority and none are not directly comparable to the appeal proposal. Furthermore, in all of the examples provided, I do not know the circumstances of those particular cases, including whether they were also permitted development.
17. Extracts from plans showing dormer windows utilising contrasting materials or containing windows that do not align with those below, approved by the Council have also been provided including at 20 Mill Hill Road³ and Pepys Road⁴. However,

¹ Schedule 2, Part 1, Class B of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)

² Council Ref: 23/00715/CLPD, 23/001644/CLPD and 23/02291/CLPD

³ Council Ref: 23/00001/HHFUL

⁴ Council Ref: 19/02590/HHFUL

this is not representative of the prevailing character and appearance of the area surrounding the appeal proposal and they do not justify the site-specific harm identified.

18. The appellants have also drawn my attention to a number of allowed appeal decisions located outside of Huntingdonshire including at 23 Connaught Avenue⁵, 3 Linkside⁶, 51 Craigen Avenue⁷, 1a Flora Gardens⁸, 5 Fairfield Rise⁹. Again, I am not convinced that the planning circumstances of these developments are directly comparable to the appeal proposal, particularly as it is not clear whether material treatment in these cases were similar to the appeal proposal. Indeed, the majority of examples provided include a condition requiring proposed materials to use those used in the existing building. In any event, I have considered the development on its own merits and site-specific circumstances.
19. Matters relating to living conditions are not disputed by main parties. Furthermore, I note that the proposed development would facilitate the removal of the existing conservatory, and the additional space would assist in improving the health and well-being of the appellants. There is an intention to incorporate bird/bat boxes and bee bricks. Given that the appeal proposal relates to the extension of a single dwelling, these associated benefits would be limited and would not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area identified.
20. The appellants have raised concerns regarding the Council's handling of the planning application including the time taken to make its decision. However, this is not a matter for this appeal, and I have made my decision on the basis of the merits of the proposal including my own planning judgement.

Conclusion

21. 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

⁵ APP/J1535/D/22/3306624

⁶ APP/J1535/D/23/3318412

⁷ APP/L5240/D/21/3285621

⁸ APP/W5780/D/19/3235932

⁹ APP/V1505/D/23/3317942