



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 July 2025

by **Jonathan Price BA(Hons) DipTP DMS MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 July 2025

Appeal Ref: **APP/W0530/D/25/3367375**

Staithesyde, The Drift, Oakington and Westwick, Cambridgeshire CB24 3AD

- 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 Mrs Speed against the decision of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00346/HFUL.
 - The development proposed is described as 'extensions to the existing property - single storey front porch extension, rear single storey extension (pd) loft conversion to the rear (pd) internal alterations - installation of new roof lights and demolition of existing single storey garage and construction of new granny annex for applicant's parents'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The effects on the character and appearance of the area and on the living conditions at the next door homes at 49 Longstanton Road and The Barn, with particular regard to privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The proposals relate to a bungalow located within a built up, residential part of the village. It lies amongst an irregular arrangement of other dwellings served off The Drift. The narrowness of both the approach road and site frontage, with a single flat-roofed garage to the fore, rather conceals the bungalow within the street scene. Sited at an angle further back in the plot and screened by boundary vegetation, the contemporary remodelling of this bungalow would blend into its built surroundings, which are of a varied architectural character.
4. The removal of the flat-roofed garage would then better reveal the main dwelling. However, its replacement with a larger detached one bedroom annex would have an uncomfortable relationship with the extended bungalow, both through its prominent location at the front of the plot, which would leave little space for the manoeuvring and parking of cars, and by backing closely onto the front bedroom windows. The additions to the main bungalow would provide a five bedroom dwelling. This suggests to me scope for meeting the need for a self-contained annex within a single, enlarged building, to avoid the rather incongruous arrangement of providing a small, detached dwelling at the front.

5. The detached annex would be of a suitably contemporary design that matched the changes to the main bungalow and can be considered subservient in scale through being significantly smaller. However, sited at the front of the plot, and detached from but overbearingly close to the main house, the annex would comprise a cramped and incompatible feature, harmful to the character and appearance of the street scene and this residential area. As a whole, the proposals would therefore comprise an over-development of a quite restricted plot, conflicting harmfully with the design principles set out in Policy HQ/1 of South Cambridgeshire Local Plan of 2018 (LP), as further expounded upon in the District Design Guide¹.

Living conditions

6. The balcony to the proposed rear facing master bedroom would provide elevated rear views, primarily down the appellant's own back garden. This balcony would be to the side of the extended dwelling closest to 49 Long Stanton Road. This house is set back from Staitheyside, such that side views from the balcony would be mainly onto its blank gable end. With boundary fencing and vegetation, this would largely preserve privacy within this neighbour's back garden. With the provision of a 1.8 metre obscure glazed screen to the side of the balcony, there would be very limited harm to the living conditions at No. 49, in respect of any significant loss of privacy.
7. In respect of The Barn, the dwelling to the west, the balcony is to the side of the appeal property away from the boundary. With intervening outbuildings and vegetation, there would similarly be limited harm to this neighbour's living conditions through any significant reduction of privacy. Although the proposals would thus not have a materially harmful effect on the living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers, satisfying relevant parts of LP Policy HQ/1 and the Design Guide, this would not overcome the harm already found in respect of character and appearance.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

8. In addition to the modest economic benefits deriving from the construction project, there would be more significant social benefits from meeting family accommodation and care needs. However, these benefits might be achieved without the associated harm to the character and appearance of the area caused by this particular scheme. Therefore, material considerations would not indicate this appeal be determined otherwise than in accordance with the LP, with which there would be conflict when considered as a whole. Accordingly, I conclude the appeal fails.

Jonathan Price

INSPECTOR

¹ South Cambridgeshire District Design Guide SPD (2010)