

Application Number	15/0881/FUL	Agenda Item	
Date Received	28th May 2015	Officer	Lorraine Casey
Target Date	23rd July 2015		
Ward	Romsey		
Site	25 Thoday Street Cambridge CB1 3AS		
Proposal	Retrospective roof extension incorporating rear dormer with juliet balcony		
Applicant	Ms Elodie Valery 25 Thoday Street Cambridge CB1 3AS		

SUMMARY	<p>The development accords with the Development Plan for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are other box type dormers in the surrounding area. The proposed rear dormer would not appear out of context with the surroundings or harmful to the Conservation Area. - The proposed dormer would not adversely overlook any neighbouring properties.
RECOMMENDATION	APPROVAL

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION/AREA CONTEXT

1.1 The application site, No.25 Thoday Street, is a two-storey mid-terrace Victorian property located on the west side of Thoday Street. At the rear of the house is a two-storey shallow-pitched wing that sits under the eaves line of the original dwelling. The surrounding area is residential in character and is formed of similar sized terraced properties set linear to the pattern of the road.

1.2 The site falls within the Central (Mill Road) Conservation Area.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal seeks retrospective planning permission for the erection of a roof extension incorporating a rear box dormer with Juliet balcony. The dormer incorporates slate faced cheeks and a flat UPVC covered roof.
- 2.2 The application has been called in to committee by former Councillor Catherine Smart due to concerns regarding the inclusion of a Juliet balcony in the design.

3.0 SITE HISTORY

None

4.0 PUBLICITY

- 4.1 Advertisement: Yes
Adjoining Owners: Yes
Site Notice Displayed: Yes

5.0 POLICY

- 5.1 See Appendix 1 for full details of Central Government Guidance, Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policies, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations.
- 5.2 Relevant Development Plan policies

PLAN		POLICY NUMBER
Cambridge Plan 2006	Local	3/1 3/4 3/7 3/14 4/11

5.3 Relevant Central Government Guidance, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations

Central Government Guidance	National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 National Planning Policy Framework – Planning Practice Guidance March 2014 Circular 11/95
Supplementary Planning Guidance	Sustainable Design and Construction (May 2007)
Material Considerations	<u>City Wide Guidance</u> Roof Extensions Design Guide (2003)
	<u>Area Guidelines</u> Mill Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2012)

5.4 Status of Proposed Submission – Cambridge Local Plan

Planning applications should be determined in accordance with policies in the adopted Development Plan and advice set out in the NPPF. However, after consideration of adopted plans and the NPPF, policies in emerging plans can also be given some weight when determining applications. For Cambridge, therefore, the emerging revised Local Plan as published for consultation on 19 July 2013 can be taken into account, especially those policies where there are no or limited objections to it. However it is likely, in the vast majority of instances, that the adopted development plan and the NPPF will have considerably more weight than emerging policies in the revised Local Plan.

For the application considered in this report, there are no policies in the emerging Local Plan that should be taken into account.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

Cambridgeshire County Council (Highways Development Management)

6.1 No objection.

Urban Design and Conservation Team

6.2 The dormer that has been constructed seriously detrimentally affects the character of the Conservation Area. It consists of a large flat roofed, slate hung box dormer with a pair of doors and Juliet balcony. Within this part of Thoday Street is a similar dormer on a rear roof slope several houses to the north and one on a property several houses to the south. Their siting in this part of the road is very sporadic and has not changed the character of the place notably.

6.3 The work that has been carried out is inappropriate and severely detrimental to the character of the place. There is no attempt to blend in to the existing historic roof form, and the box is large and ungainly. It turns a traditional terraced property into a flat roofed three-storey house with a notable, detrimental impact on the character of the rear roof slopes of this terrace. Recent appeal decisions explain how the presence of inappropriate recently erected rear dormers do not automatically justify further inappropriate rear dormers, because they do not preserve or enhance the character of the area irrespective of any precedent.

6.4 The above responses are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the consultation responses can be inspected on the application file.

7.0 REPRESENTATIONS

7.1 Former Councillor Smart requested that the application be referred to Committee if Officers are minded to support the proposal. The matter of concern is the Juliet balcony. There is always a degree of mutual overlooking in the terraced housing in Romsey but a balcony lifts this to a new level and merits full discussion in Committee of the implications.

- 7.2 No neighbour representations have been received.
- 7.3 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations can be inspected on the application file.

8.0 ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 From the consultation responses and representations received and from my inspection of the site and the surroundings, I consider that the main issues are:

1. Context of site, design and external spaces (and impact on Conservation Area)
2. Residential amenity

Context of site, design and external spaces (and impact on Conservation Area)

- 8.2 The application site is located in the middle of a long terrace of approximately fourteen properties on the west side of Thoday Street. To the rear/west is a passageway that provides access to the rear gardens of properties in Thoday Street and Catharine Street, the gardens of which abut the passageway to the west. St Philip's Road runs at 90 degrees to Thoday Street and Catherine Street approximately 40-50 metres to the north of the site.
- 8.3 The Urban Design and Conservation Team has objected to the proposal on the basis that the flat-roofed box form of the dormer seriously detracts from the character of the property, resulting in harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The UDC Team has also referred to a number of recent appeal dismissals where the presence of nearby inappropriate dormers has not been seen to automatically justify further unacceptable development.
- 8.4 It is generally accepted that box-style dormers that span the width of the roof and turn the rear elevations of historic dwellings into three-storey flat-roofed buildings are unattractive and can be harmful to the Conservation Area. Following the appeal decisions referred to by the UDC Team, Officers have agreed a procedure that takes into consideration the degree of

visibility of the dormer and the extent to which the roof slopes in the area are already compromised by extensions.

8.5 In this case, there are two other dormer windows in the terrace of 14 properties of which the site forms part. These are at Nos. 17 and 37 Thoday Street.

□ No.17 Thoday Street is located four properties away to the south. It has a rear box dormer with inverted French doors and a Juliet balcony that is almost identical in design to the dormer constructed at the rear of the application property. This dormer was approved at Planning Committee in February 2013 (Ref: 13/0137/FUL) and constructed after the designation of the area as a Conservation Area in 2012. In recommending approval, contrary to the advice at the time of the Conservation Team, the Officer noted that, although there are restricted views of the rooftops of the properties in Thoday Street from St Phillips Road, the rooftop of No.17 is not clearly visible due to the distance along the terrace and existing chimneys. Reference was also made to similar extensions at the rear of properties in Catharine Street.

□ No.37 Thoday Street is located near to the corner of Thoday Street and St Philips Road. It has a rear box dormer that is believed to date from prior to the Conservation Area designation and to have been constructed under permitted development rights at the time. It is very prominent in the streetscape due to its corner location and close views of the rear roof slope from St Philips Road.

8.6 The application site is located in excess of 40 metres away from St Philips Road to the north. As concluded by the Officer in the consideration of the scheme at No.17, public views at this distance are very restricted and broken up by the rear outriggers and chimneys. The dormer can be glimpsed from the rear access passage, but due to the narrow width of the passage and the height of the boundary fences, it is not a prominent or readily discernible feature. I would also note that, due to the presence of the two-storey cat-slide style rear outrigger, the dormer has the appearance of sitting within the roof slope rather than creating the appearance of a flat-roofed three-storey property. The dormer represents the third addition to a terrace of fourteen houses. Whilst I appreciate that it could be argued that the existing roof extensions in the immediate

vicinity are sporadic rather than widespread, a combination of the following factors leads me to conclude that, on balance, the dormer that has been constructed is acceptable in this instance:

- The restricted public views of the rear roof slope.
- The design and position of the rear wing that helps to avoid the three-storey flat-roofed appearance normally seen as one of the most negative features of the box-dormer design.
- The presence of an almost identical dormer in close proximity that was approved at Planning Committee after the Conservation Area designation.
- The presence of other roof extensions/dormers within the roof slopes of properties in Catharine Street.

8.7 In my opinion, the proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 3/4, 3/7, 3/14 and 4/11, and a decision to approve would be consistent in terms of an approach to dormers adopted by officers within this part of the Conservation Area and of Members of Planning Committee.

Residential Amenity

Impact on amenity of neighbouring occupiers

- 8.8 The dormer, due to its position on the roof slope of the property, does not visually enclose or overshadow any neighbouring properties.
- 8.9 Former Councillor Smart has expressed concern about the dormer as its design includes a Juliet balcony. As the railings sit flush with the rear elevation of the dormer, this opening does not look directly down into the main private garden spaces/patio areas of the adjacent properties but, instead, provides a more oblique view towards the rear parts of adjacent gardens. There is already a strong sense of mutual overlooking between the rear gardens of properties in this area, and the dormer has a similar view to the existing first-floor windows. I do not therefore consider the privacy of neighbours would be severely compromised by the development.
- 8.10 In my opinion the proposal adequately respects the residential amenity of its neighbours and the constraints of the site and I consider that it is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 3/4 and 3/7.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 In conclusion, I consider the works that have been carried out are acceptable on balance and do not have a significantly harmful impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as listed on this decision notice.

Reason: In the interests of good planning, for the avoidance of doubt and to facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.