



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 March 2018

by R Norman BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th April 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/Q0505/W/17/3187958

44 George Street, Cambridge CB4 1AJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Dan Brown against the decision of Cambridge City Council.
 - The application Ref 17/0671/FUL, dated 11 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 16 October 2017.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of the existing house and replacement with a new dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development on:
 - The character and appearance of the area; and
 - The living conditions of adjoining occupiers.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site is located on a corner plot along George Street and consists of a dwelling with rear amenity space. The road bends quite sharply at this point and the existing dwelling is located on the back of the footpath, and follows the bend in the road. George Street is characterised by residential development on both sides of the road, comprising predominantly of semi-detached and terraced properties.
4. The proposed development would involve the demolition of the existing dwelling and its replacement with a larger dwelling. The proposal would include a basement level with the remainder of the dwelling set over three floors. It would also retain some of the rear outdoor space, provide a small terrace at first floor from the master bedroom and a further roof terrace at second floor. An integral garage would be provided adjacent to No 48.
5. The northern elevation of the proposed dwelling would provide a sliding garage door at ground floor level with windows to first floor and rooflights. The overall height of this elevation would reflect the existing adjoining dwelling at No 48 and the design and fenestration would also reflect the character of the

- adjoining dwelling. The proposed brickwork detailing of this elevation would add interest and would represent a visual improvement over and above the northern elevation of the existing dwelling.
6. However, the eastern elevation of the proposal would present a complex and highly detailed appearance. The projections and heights of the various proposed elements would be staggered and the proposed windows would be positioned in an irregular arrangement and would vary in size. The overall effect of the varied heights, fenestration and positioning would result in an incongruous and dominant feature within the street scene which would lack coherence. Furthermore, although the overall height of the dwelling would not exceed that of No 42 adjacent to the site, the proposed dwelling would be clearly visible above the eaves height of this property and this, in combination with the busy nature of this elevation, would result in the development being highly prominent and of a design and form which would be incongruous with the general character of George Street.
 7. I note that many of the other properties in the area have dormers, many of which occupy a large proportion of the roof, and accordingly, the proposed zinc clad box dormer itself would not be out of keeping. However, in combination with the complex design of the eastern elevation, the dormer would add to the dominance of the proposed dwelling within the street scene.
 8. There is another dwelling on the opposite side of George Street which presents a contrasting and more modern design to the general character of the area. However this presents an anomaly within the prevailing character of the street. The Council have identified that this was constructed in the 1980s and its location and scale differ from the appeal site and proposal. The appeal site is in a more prominent location, on the corner, and as such I consider that the existing dwelling does not set a precedent for the appeal proposal.
 9. I acknowledge that the design of the proposal has tried to avoid mimicking the predominant architecture of the street and seeks to turn the corner in an interesting fashion and I consider that the proposed materials would be suitable. However, although the northern elevation represents some improvement to the appearance of the appeal site, the complexity of the design and form of the eastern elevation results in the proposed development having a dominant and incongruous appearance which would be out of keeping with the existing character and appearance of George Street.
 10. For the above reasons the proposed development fails to comply with Policies 3/4, 3/7 and 3/12 of the Cambridge City Council Local Plan (2006) (Local Plan). These policies seek to ensure that new development responds to the context and characteristics of the locality and has a positive impact on its setting in term of height, scale, form, materials and detailing to enhance the townscape.

Living Conditions

11. The existing dwelling is located between Nos 42 and 48 George Street, which are both semi-detached, two-storey properties. No 42 has a first floor window in the side elevation of the dwelling facing the appeal site, which I understand serves a study. Whilst the overall height of the dwelling would be increased as a result of the proposed development, the depth of the dwelling into the site would not extend any further than the existing main dwelling at No 42. The window facing the site is located in the rear outrigger of the property which is

set back from the main side elevation of No 42. The proposed dwelling would not extend out as far as the window and therefore, whilst there would be an increase in the built structure in proximity to this window I consider that it would not result in undue harm in terms of outlook or result in a significant enclosing effect.

12. In addition to the side window of No 42, there is also a large area of glazing to the roof of the ground floor side element. The proposed side elevation adjacent to No 42 would introduce windows at first and second floor. The Appellant has demonstrated that there would be minimal views from the second floor window into this area. Furthermore, two of the proposed windows would serve a hallway and staircase, and another would be a frosted bathroom window, which are unlikely to give rise to significant levels of overlooking.
13. No 51 is located opposite the appeal site, across the road, and faces the eastern elevation. The proposed development would include a small terrace which would be located opposite a first floor window of No 51. I have had regard to the Council's concerns with this aspect of the proposal however, given the separation between the appeal site and No 51, across George Street, and the size of the terrace proposed, which would preclude excessive use, this would not result in significant harm to the occupiers of this property in terms of loss of privacy.
14. For the above reasons the proposed development would not be harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of Nos 42 and 51. As such the proposal would comply with Policies 3/4 and 4/13 of the Local Plan which require development to identify and respond to existing features and avoid significant adverse effects on amenity.

Other Matters

15. Objections have been received from local residents concerning impacts on living conditions and parking issues. I have considered the living conditions above. Given my overall findings it is not necessary for me to conclude on the parking matters.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Norman

INSPECTOR