

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

8 May 2019

AUTHOR/S: Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development

Application Number: S/4276/18/FL

Parish(es): Cambourne

Proposal: Single storey extensions to the front, side and rear elevations and conversion of integral garage

Site address: 38 Anson Road, Cambourne, Cambridge, CB23 6DQ

Applicant(s): Mr and Mrs Stoneman

Recommendation: Approval

Key material considerations: Visual Impact, Impact on Residential Amenity & Parking

Committee Site Visit: 8 May 2019

Departure Application: No

Presenting Officer: Aaron Sands, Senior Planning Officer

Application brought to Committee because: The applicant works for the 3C ICT Shared Service.

Date by which decision due: 9 May 2019

Planning History

1. S/1371/92/O – New settlement comprising up to 3,000 dwellings, village centre with shops, community facilities, primary school, employment, realignment of A45, the Caxton bypass and associated ancillary development – approved
S/6446/07/RM – Erection of 71 dwellings and associated infrastructure – approved
S/0468/09/RM – House type substitution and amended layout for plots 22-46 inclusive – approved

Planning Policies

2. National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019 (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan 2018

3. S/3 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
S/7 Development Frameworks
HQ/1 Design Principles

TI/3 Parking Provision

Consultation

4. **Cambourne Town Council** – object to the application and made the following comments:

‘Due consideration was given to the amended drawings and it was agreed they had not changed sufficiently to address the issues raised in our original objections. Especially in connection to overdevelopment, proximity to the boundary and loss of parking. The original objection still stands.

It was resolved that the Planning Committee object to the planning application on the following grounds:

1. The proposal is out of keeping with the street scene
2. The proposal is overdevelopment of the site with the reduction in garden meaning a loss of amenities for the present and future occupants of the dwelling
3. Detrimental effect on the amenities of adjoining properties
4. The proposal is of poor design standard
5. The net loss of off-street parking will have a detrimental effect on the adjoining properties and the junction opposite
6. The proposals indicate that the extension is abutting the boundary meaning that there is no access for the storage of the bins to the rear of the property meaning they will be stored to the front having a detrimental impact on the street scene and adjoining properties
7. There is insufficient space onsite to maintain the boundary wall, therefore having a detrimental effect on the adjoining property.

Local Highway Authority – made the following comments:

‘The conversion of the garage may therefore impose additional parking demands upon the on-street parking on the surrounding streets and whilst this is unlikely to result in any significant adverse impact upon highway safety, there is potentially an impact upon residential amenity which the Planning Authority may wish to consider when assessing this application’.

Representations

5. Representations were received from four neighbours in respect of the amended plans:
1. ‘In regard to the revised conversion plan, it has only reduced one metre of the extension to the garden. There’s no change on the front or the others. The same comment is the conversion creates an imbalanced front view, compared to the other houses in the terrace house group. Also, the demands of the on-street parking have been increasing which caused us difficulties of getting out from our own driveway. I doubt the front extension/conversion will increase the burden of on-street parking. The new 4 metre extension at the back still needs to remove two main walls from an end of terrace house?! Who will take up the responsibilities if anything happens on the wall structure or subsidence for the rest of the four houses in future? Will there be any guarantee?’
 2. ‘We maintain our objections to this planning application as the amended plans do not appear to address our concerns. The plans are still out of keeping with

the area, no other house in this row has an extension taking up such a large proportion of the back garden.

Our own garden at number 40 suffers from a build up of surface water at some times of year, particularly behind our garage where the depth can reach 2-3 inches. Our worry is that the proposed extension at 38 will reduce the local soakaway area and make the problem even worse.

The proposed side extension at no.38 comes really close to the corner of our garage, how close it is not possible to tell from the plans but we are concerned that footings for the extension might undermine our garage.

Although the compass points have been corrected, we object to the building right up to the border on the south side. The proposed rear extension is directly south of our garden and will overshadow our beds and plants.

The loss of the garage at no.38 is not compensated for by the off road parking provided at the front of the property, as this has existed for some time and is already in use. The on-road parking in Anson Road is becoming particularly difficult.

Given the above points we urge the Council to refuse the application in its current form'.

3. 'For the revised application plan, only one metre being reduced for the back garden extension. None of my concerns have been addressed, therefore I object to the application strongly.

If this application is approved, there will be nothing to stop other houses doing similar applications and soon we will have no usable gardens left and cause more parking problems.

More than half of the external wall will be removed and too much internal wall as well. Their house will be half floating over the ground. No structural survey is being provided and no party wall agreement is being done. This causes a big concern for us, if dangerous for the whole terrace of houses.

Five metres backward extension plus sideways, half of the garden length (10 metres) and half of the current garden will be taken up.

Our small gardens are behind a row of five 3 storey terraced town houses, which are the tallest in the area. They are already being overshadowed and lack of light. This large extension will make things worse.

The most important thing is that our garden is full of water during heavy rain periods in summer and take days to dry up. And in the winter, it is always watering and the moss grows very heavily. The extension will make less area to spread and make our gardens unusable.

5 metre x 2.7 metre wall will be erected just next to my fence and will leave no gaps. This long and high wall is just in front of my kitchen door, visible in most parts of my kitchen and block views and lights to my kitchen.

The garage conversion, especially the big change to the front (push the wall forward and add windows etc) will be visible to the outside. This will encourage

more garage conversions if approved. The parking is already bad for this area. The Council should encourage residents to use their garage and not covert them.

Although the front garden has already been hard surfaced to add one extra parking space, but this happened years ago by removing a tree and cutting bushes. We have lost some green space and this should not be encouraged as well.

The front door will be pushed forward together with the garage conversion. This is a 10 year old house and has the same outlook and design of the whole street. The change will make the street strange, ugly and out of character with all neighbouring properties.

The purpose of the extension is definitely not because of lack of space. This is a very large 3 bedroom town house with 3 big bedrooms, a large kitchen and a living room and should be enough for two people to live. I have seen a few houses around being sold immediately after extension. I really don't want to see our houses and area be ruined and people just leave'.

Proposal

6. The existing dwelling lies within the village framework. It is a three storey townhouse with a height of approximately 11.4 metres and forms the end house of a terrace of five properties. The properties are of a uniform design and appearance. The proposal seeks a single storey extension to the front to create a porch, a single storey extension to the side to create a utility room, a single storey extension to the rear to create a lounge and the conversion of the garage, which will become the kitchen, following an alteration of the existing ground floor layout.

Planning Assessment

Visual Impact:

7. The proposed single storey rear extension will project approximately 4 metres and will be 2.675 metres in height, excluding the proposed lantern. It will have a width of approximately 6.6 metres and will be stepped in from the boundary by 75 mm at both sides. The proposed single storey rear extension will join to the proposed single storey side extension, which will be approximately 3.4 metres in height, approximately 3.2 metres in length and 1.3 metres in width.
8. The existing garage doors are set back within a brick arch, which forms part of a projecting gable on the principal elevation. The proposed garage conversion would remove the existing garage door, bring the wall in line with the brick arch and add a window. In the original design, the front porch was extending beyond the existing brick arch; this has now been amended. The front porch will be approximately 3.2 metres in height, with a width of 1.2 metres.
9. It is considered that the porch is a minimal addition of an appropriate scale, form and mass and is proportionate to the existing dwelling. While the proposed single storey rear extension is wider than the existing dwelling, the footprint of the proposed extensions (side and rear) does not exceed the footprint of the existing ground floor (including the garage).
10. The materials proposed are buff external facing brickwork to match the existing, grey

plain concrete roof tiles to match the existing, with a rubber bond flat roof to the single storey rear extension and white upvc windows and doors. The proposed materials are considered to be appropriate.

11. From the street scene, it is considered that the proposed single storey rear extension would not be visible, given its location at the rear of the dwelling. There is a gate adjacent to the principal elevation of 38 Anson Road, which leads to the side passage where the proposed single storey side extension will be located. This gate is joined to the neighbouring garage at number 40 Anson Road. The gate is set approximately 7 metres back from the street scene when measuring the plans and the single storey side extension will be set 4 metres back from the gate. It is considered that the proposed single storey side extension will not be highly visible, given its set back location behind a gate.
12. As the porch and the garage conversion are on the principal elevation of the dwelling, they will be highly visible. While it is noted that the changes proposed will result in the appearance of the terrace no longer being completely uniform, the proposed front porch and garage conversion are minor alterations. It is considered that if the porch was reduced in height by 0.2 metres, it could be built using permitted development rights, not requiring planning permission.
13. The proposed extensions are considered to be of an appropriate scale, form and mass and are proportionate to the existing dwelling. The design is considered to be appropriate, as are the proposed materials. The proposals are therefore considered to preserve the character of the local area and not result in a significant adverse impact to the street scene.
14. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2018.

Impact on Residential Amenity:

15. 38 Anson Road has three adjacent neighbours; these are nos 36 and 40 Anson Road either side and no. 28 Anson Road to the rear.

Overlooking:

16. There will be a set of patio doors in the rear elevation of the single storey rear extension, which will face into the garden. The boundary treatment is a high close boarded fence. Given the single storey nature of the proposal, it is considered that the addition of patio doors would not result in an overlooking impact.
17. There is a window proposed in the principal elevation to serve the kitchen in the proposed garage conversion. It is considered that given that the window is at ground floor level and looks out onto a public view that this window would not result in an overlooking impact.
18. The proposal also seeks two rooflights in the roof of the proposed single storey side extension. These rooflights will be positioned higher than the roof of the single storey rear extension, which is approximately 2.6 metres in height. It is considered that these windows would not offer a view and therefore would not result in an overlooking impact.

Overshadowing:

19. There has been concern raised by neighbours that the proposed extensions will result in an overshadowing impact to the adjacent gardens. The Town Council have also commented that the proposals will have a detrimental effect on the amenities of neighbouring properties.
20. The proposed single storey extension will be situated in the rear garden of 38 Anson Road, with the garden of 36 Anson Road to the south and 40 Anson Road to the north. Given the sun's natural path, it is considered that there is likely to be an existing overshadowing impact to these dwellings and gardens, particularly when the sun is in the south west and west, given the height of the dwellings.
21. The neighbour comments that their small gardens are already being overshadowed and this extension will make things worse. It is considered that the proposal may have an impact to the neighbouring dwelling to the south (number 36) in the early morning and late evening in the summer months. However, it is considered that any overshadowing impact would not be as a direct result of the proposed extension. It is considered that there are already significant overshadowing impacts to the garden at no 36 and that the proposed extension by virtue of its height and the neighbouring garden being to the south of the extension, would not result in a significant increase to the existing impact.
22. In respect of number 40 Anson Road, the proposed extension will be situated to the south. It is considered that the proposed extension is most likely to have an impact when the sun is directly to the south, however, it is considered that there is already an overshadowing impact to the garden of number 40 when the sun is in the south/south west. Although the proposed extension is positioned adjacent to the boundary, it is relatively low in height and it is considered that it would not result in a significant impact above what is already experienced.
23. On balance, it is considered that the proposal would not result in a significant overshadowing impact to neighbouring dwellings.

Overbearing:

24. It is considered that there is sufficient distance from the proposed extension to the dwelling that the proposal would not result in an overbearing impact to number 40 Anson Road.
25. Concern has been raised that the erection of a 4 metre extension, which is 2.7 metres in height adjacent to the boundary, will obscure views and light from the kitchen at number 36 Anson Road. The loss of view is not a material planning consideration.
26. On the rear elevation at ground floor level, there is a set of patio doors and a window to serve the kitchen. The proposed single storey extension will be close to the adjacent patio doors at number 36. The existing boundary treatment is a high close boarded fence. It is considered that given that the proposed extension is approximately 2.7 metres in height that much of the extension would be obscured by the existing fence. It is considered that while the proposed extension may result in a loss of outlook from the patio doors, the kitchen is also served by a window.
27. When taking into account what could be achieved under permitted development, an extension of 3 metres in length, 3 metres to the eaves and 4 metres in height could be erected in this position. While the proposed extension is a metre longer than the permitted development rights would allow, it is 1.3 metres less in height than the maximum allowed under permitted development.

28. It is considered that while there may be a loss of outlook to the patio doors, the kitchen is also served by another window. The existing fence is close to the patio doors and it is considered that although the proposed extension will exceed the height of the fence, that much of the extension will be obscured by the fence. It is considered that on balance the proposed extension would not result in a significant impact enough to warrant a refusal.

Garden space:

29. The Town Council have commented that the proposal is overdevelopment of the site and the reduction in garden results in a loss of amenity for the present and future occupants of the dwelling and one neighbour has commented that half of the current garden will be taken up with the extension.
30. The existing garden is approximately 10 metres in length with an area of approximately 70 m². Following the proposed extension, the garden would be approximately 6.1 metres in length and 40 m². Neighbouring dwellings in the terrace have smaller gardens, at around 52 m². than the existing garden at 38 Anson Road. It is considered that even at a reduction to 40 m², it would not be substantially smaller than the gardens at the neighbouring dwellings. While its 10 m² less than the minimum size for dwellings (50 m².) as recommended in paragraph 6.75 of the District Design Guide, the proposed extension would still leave sufficient garden space and would not result in an adverse impact to the residential amenity of current or future occupiers.
31. On balance the proposal is considered to comply with policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2018.

Parking:

32. There has been concern raised by the Town Council and neighbours regarding the loss of off street parking resulting in an increase in on street parking. The Local Highway Authority has also commented that the conversion may impose additional parking demands on the surrounding streets; however this has been raised as a point for the LPA to consider in respect of residential amenity rather than an objection on the grounds of highway safety.
33. Policy TI/3 states that the indicative car parking provision is two spaces per dwelling and garages will only be counted as car parking spaces if they meet the minimum size requirement which is 3.3m x 6m for a car, with an additional 1m at the end and or 650-750mm at the side to park cycles.
34. The existing garage does not meet the size requirements to be counted as a parking space as it is approximately 4.7 metres in length and 2.7 metres in width when measuring the plans. Notwithstanding this, there are two off street parking spaces in front of the garage which were observed at the site visit; the provision of two spaces would comply with the indicative car parking provision as set out in policy TI/3.
35. Two neighbours have commented that the loss of parking has not been compensated for by the off road parking provided at the front of the property as it has existed for some time and is already in use and this was provided some years ago by removing a tree and cutting bushes and that green space has been lost and this should not be encouraged. Although the LPA would not want to encourage the loss of green space, the assessment of the planning application can only be based on the current situation.

As noted above, the applicants are providing the number of spaces sought under the indicative parking provision in policy TI/3 and therefore further parking provision by way of compensating is not required.

36. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the parking provision as set out in policy TI/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2018.

Other Matters:

Bin storage:

37. The Town Council have raised concern that as the extension is abutting the boundary there is no access for the storage of the bins to the rear of the property, meaning that they will be stored to the front having a detrimental impact on the street scene and adjoining properties. It was noted on the site visit that the bins are stored in the passage to the side of the property. There is approximately 4 metres between the gate and the single storey side extension, meaning that bins could still be stored in this area. Notwithstanding this, it was noted on the site visit that there was bins stored to the front of the garages and at the front of the property at other dwellings in the terrace.

Maintenance:

38. The Town Council have raised concern that there is insufficient space onsite to maintain the boundary wall, therefore having a detrimental effect on the adjoining property. It is advised in the South Cambridgeshire District Council Householder Design Guide that a minimum distance of 750mm is provided for access and maintenance. However, extensions can be built up to the boundary. The maintenance of the fence would be considered a civil matter.

Structural Issues:

39. There has been concern raised that the proposal would remove two main walls from the house and that this may cause structural issues/subsidence to the remaining houses in the terrace. One neighbour has commented that no structural survey has been provided and no party wall agreement has been done. A structural survey is not a national requirement for Householder Planning Permission; this would be provided at the stage of securing Building Regulations approval. The Party Wall Agreement is not part of part of the planning process, it is a civil matter.

Surface Water:

40. There has been concern raised that the proposed extension will increase the surface water currently experienced at the two neighbouring dwellings. The site is not situated within a flood zone and it is considered that given this and the scale of the proposal that it would not be proportionate to condition a scheme for the provision and implementation of surface water drainage as these elements would be covered under Approved Document H of Buildings Regulations.

Precedent:

41. One neighbour has commented that if approved, the proposal will encourage more garage conversions. The Council must consider each application on its own merits and would consider factors such as residential amenity, visual impact and parking in relation to the application.

Recommendation

42. Approval with the planning conditions and informatives as set out below, with the final wording of any amendments to these to be agreed in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair prior to the issuing of planning permission:

Conditions

43. (a) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission. (Reason - To ensure that consideration of any future application for development in the area will not be prejudiced by permissions for development, which have not been acted upon).
- (b) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: JPT/STM/1018/001 Rev C and JPT/STM/1018/002 Rev C. Received 12th March 2019.
(Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990).
- (c) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extensions hereby permitted shall be as described in the application form or shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. Where materials are approved by the Local Planning Authority, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
(Reason - To ensure the appearance of the development is satisfactory in accordance with Policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018).

Background Papers:

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2018.
- Local Development Framework, District Design Guide, SPD
- Planning File Ref: S 4276/18/FL

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