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**MAIN CASE**

**Reference No:** 19/01773/FUL

**Proposal:** Additions & alterations comprising two storey side extension & necessary enabling work

**Site Address:** 11 Robins Close Ely Cambridgeshire CB6 3EG

**Applicant:** Mr & Mrs Carl Beavis

**Case Officer:** Gemma Driver, Planning Officer

**Parish:** Ely

**Ward:** Ely West

Ward Councillor/s: Sue Austen  
Paola Trimarco  
Christine Whelan

**Date Received:** 27 December 2019      **Expiry Date:** 15 June 2020

[V7]

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1.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

1.1 Members are recommended to REFUSE this application for the following reason:

1.2 The proposed two storey side extension would cause significant and demonstrable harm to the visual amenity of the host dwelling and character of the surrounding area, by virtue of its bulk and being overly prominent and intrusive on an exposed corner position within the streetscene. The proposal would fail to visually protect or enhance the character and appearance of the surrounding area and streetscene. Therefore, the proposal would be contrary to Policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and the Council's Design Guide SPD, which seeks new development to relate sympathetically to the surrounding area through appropriate form and massing.

2.0 **SUMMARY OF APPLICATION**

2.1 The applicant seeks consent to construct a first floor extension above the existing single storey element at no.11 Robins Close. The application has been amended following concerns from the Officer regarding the proposed materials. The original scheme proposed weatherboarding on the entire extension and existing dwelling at first floor level, which was considered to be out of character in the streetscene and

is not a dominant material type within the housing estate. The amended scheme now shows weatherboarding cladding on the extension element only.

- 2.2 The extension would measure 4.1 metres in width, by 9.3 meters in depth and positioned directly above the existing single storey form. The overall height of the extension would match that of the original dwelling, measuring 6.2 metres in height. The application also includes alterations to the existing porch, changing the roof form of the porch from a flat to a dual pitched roof. Further to this, amendments include enlarging the porch to measure 1.6 metres in depth by 2.7 meters in width. The overall height of the porch would be 3 metres. The proposed extension would be constructed using weatherboarding.
- 2.3 The application was called into planning committee by Councillor Whelan as there have been no objections from consultees and therefore the merits of this application should be discussed and decided at Planning Committee.
- 2.4 The full planning application, plans and documents submitted by the Applicant can be viewed online via East Cambridgeshire District Council's Public Access online service, via the following link <http://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/>. **Alternatively a paper copy is available to view at the East Cambridgeshire District Council offices, in the application file.**

### 3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1

86/00272/FUL	EXTENSION	Approved	24.04.1986
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### 4.0 THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

- 4.1 The application site is a detached dwelling located in Ely, within the development envelope. The dwelling is situated on a corner plot, connecting Robins Close to Merlin Drive. There is a small grassed area to the front of the dwelling, together with a small gravel area to the Eastern side of the dwelling. The streetscene is comprised of detached and semi-detached dwellings, all of which are similar in design.

### 5.0 RESPONSES FROM CONSULTTEES

- 5.1 A site notice was displayed near the site on 17 January 2020. In addition two neighbouring properties have been directly notified by letter. No responses have been received.

#### **Parish Council - 28 January 2020**

The City of Ely Council had no concerns regarding this application.

#### **Ward Councillors – Councillor Whelan - 20 February 2020**

I wish to call in this application to Planning Committee

I understand that the application will be recommended for refusal on the grounds that the extension is 'over bearing' and will impact the street scene.

Having looked at the area I am not convinced that the extension will have a massive impact on the street scene.

A similar extension was completed just a few metres down the street in December last year only having had planning permission during the summer of 2019.

This area has various designs including many extensions. It is not in a conservation area.

There were no concerns from the Parish council and have been no objections from the neighbours regarding this extension. The applicants have tried to work with you on this application and have now asked that this be looked at in full committee.

Therefore I am asking that the planning committee look at this application and be asked to reach a decision on the application.

### **Consultee For Other Wards In Parish - No Comments Received**

#### 6.0 The Planning Policy Context

#### 6.1 **East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015**

ENV 1 Landscape and settlement character

ENV 2 Design

#### 6.2 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Design Guide

#### 6.3 **National Planning Policy Framework 2019**

12 Achieving well-designed places

### 7.0 **PLANNING COMMENTS**

7.1 The main considerations in determining this application are the impact on the character of the area and impact on residential amenity.

#### 7.2 **Impact on the Character of the Area and Visual Amenity**

7.2.1 The site is within the development envelope, where in principle terms, extensions to residential properties are considered acceptable subject to compliance with the relevant planning policies plus all other material planning considerations that form part of the planning balance for this application.

7.2.2 Policy ENV1 states that development proposals should ensure that location, scale, form, design, materials and colour create positive, complementary relationships with existing development.

7.2.3 Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan 2015 states that design which fails to have regard to local context, including architectural traditions and does not take advantage of

opportunists to preserve, enhance or enrich the character, appearance and quality of an area will not be acceptable and planning applications will be refused.

- 7.2.4 The Council's Design Guide, SPD states that the form and proportions of the original dwelling will determine the extent to which it can be extended. Furthermore, it requires the original building to be clearly legible and pre-dominant following an extension. Any extension will need to be subservient to the existing dwelling.
- 7.2.5 The proposal has two elements; an enlargement to the existing porch and a first floor extension spanning the length of the existing single storey element.
- 7.2.6 The first floor extension would sit above an existing single storey and would be seen from the streetscene of both Robins Close and Merlin Drive, therefore visible from all angles within the vicinity. Due to the depth that the proposed extension would be stretching (9.3 metres) it is considered that the extension would be adding a considerable level of bulk to the original dwelling. This mass would be clearly visible from the streetscene of Merlin Drive.
- 7.2.7 As a result of the extension, the spans of the original dwelling would increase and would result in an overall addition of mass along the eastern boundary. In turn, the proposal would alter the shape of the original dwelling. The extension would result in changing the, once rectangular dwelling, to an 'L' shape. By altering the dwelling in this way, it is considered that the integrity of the host dwelling would be lost. As such the original dwelling would no longer be clearly legible against the proposed extension as there is no clear break between the two built forms, contrary to the recommendations in the Design Guide SPD.
- 7.2.8 It is considered that due to the mass, the dwelling would result in an overbearing and prominent building and would be intrusive and would not relate sympathetically to the character of the existing streetscene, therefore result in a significant detriment to the appearance of the area.
- 7.2.9 The proposed enlargement of the porch and a change from a flat to a pitched roof is not considered to be significant. It is noted that there are a variety of styles of porches in the area and therefore this element of the proposal is considered acceptable.
- 7.2.10 In terms of visual amenity, it is considered that the first floor extension that forms the main element of the proposal would add an unacceptable level of additional bulk on the East elevation and would be visually intrusive, creating a form that is uncharacteristic of this part of Robin's Close. The corner position of the site means that any development at first floor level would be prominent and highly visible. The proposal therefore fails to respect the character and form of the neighbourhood by virtue of the massing and bulk. It is therefore considered that the proposal would be contrary to Policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Local Plan 2015 which seek to preserve the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is also considered to be contrary to the Design Guide SPD.

### 7.3 **Residential Amenity**

- 7.3.1 Policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 requires proposals to ensure that there are no significantly detrimental effects on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers.
- 7.3.2 The proposed first floor extension would be located to the East of the dwelling and would stretch the depth of an existing single storey, therefore increasing built form along both the North and the East of the dwelling due to the position on the corner of the plot. The dwelling nearest the proposed extension is no. 24 Merlin Drive, located to the North of the dwelling. The separation distance between no.11 Robins Close and no.24 Merlin Drive is approximately 11 metres. Consideration has also been given towards neighbouring dwelling no.1 Herons Close located to the North West of the host dwelling. The separation distance between no.11 Robins Close and no.1 Herons Close is approximately 15 metres.
- 7.3.3 The proposal does not include any insertion of new openings in the projecting rear elevation of the extension. Therefore it is considered that chances of overlooking to no.24 Merlin Drive have been minimised. The proposal does include the insertion of one window to the West side elevation of the projecting extension. The impacts of this have been assessed. It is considered that due to the separation distance of 15 metres between the host dwelling and no.1 Herons Close that the chances of an increased level of overlooking from this window would not be significant.
- 7.3.4 Although it is noted that the extension would result in an increase in built form at first floor level, it is considered that due to the significant separation distances between no. 11 Robins Close and neighbouring dwellings no. 24 Merlin Drive and no. 1 Herons Close that any impacts of overbearing and overshadowing would not be significant.
- 7.3.5 The proposal also includes changes to the existing porch. These changes include an increase in size from 2.1 metres in width and 1 metres in depth to 2.7 metres in width and 1.6 metres in depth. The proposal would also see a change from a flat to pitched roof. Due to the minor changes that are being proposed it is considered that this element of the proposal would not detrimentally impact the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.
- 7.3.6 It is therefore considered that the proposal would comply with Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan 2015 in relation to residential amenity.

### 7.4 **Planning Balance**

- 7.4.1 The proposed first floor extension is considered to have a detrimental impact on the form and character of the area and has a poor relationship with the host dwelling due to the mass and bulk. However, it is considered that the proposal does not have a significant impact on the residential amenity of adjacent neighbours. Therefore, on balance, it is considered that the impacts on the character of the area is out-weighted by the proposal causing significant and demonstrable harm to the visual amenity of the host building and the surrounding area, which fails to visually protect or enhance the streetscene. The proposal is therefore considered to be

contrary to Policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Local Plan 2015 and the Design Guide SPD, which require all proposed developments to be of a high quality and design and protect, enhance or enrich the distinctive character of the area. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

## 8.0 **APPENDICES**

8.1 None

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<b><u>Background Documents</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Contact Officer(s)</u></b>
19/01773/FUL	Gemma Driver Room No. 011 The Grange Ely	Gemma Driver Planning Officer 01353 665555 gemma.driver@east cambs.gov.uk

National Planning Policy Framework -

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 -

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Local%20Plan%20April%202015%20-%20front%20cover%20and%20inside%20front%20cover.pdf>