

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 February 2017

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 22 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/D/16/3165130
23 Lancot Drive, Dunstable, LU6 2AP.

- 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 Mrs Alice Stewart against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref CB/16/03999/FULL dated 30 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 17 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is for a first floor side and two storey rear extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a first floor side and two storey rear extensions at 23 Lancot Drive, Dunstable, LU6 2AP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref CB/16/03999/FULL dated 30 August 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 2856-01A, CBC/001 & CBC/002.
 - 3) The external materials to be used in the construction of the extensions hereby permitted shall match those of the host dwelling.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the scheme on the character and appearance of the dwelling, the pair of dwellings and the street scene.

Reasons

3. The Appeal site is located in an established residential area that is characterised by post war detached and semi-detached family dwellings from a complementary range of designs. The dwellings typically have similar front building lines and good sized front gardens set behind low walls and hedges. These gardens, together with the soft planting within them and the grass verges within the highway contribute to the spacious and suburban character and appearance of the locality.
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4. The Appeal property is one of a pair of symmetrically designed semi-detached houses with fully hipped roofs and matching hipped roof front porches. The dwellings have brick walls up to the bottom of the first floor windows, above which the walls are rendered. The semi-detached dwellings within this part of Lancot Drive are similarly designed, although a number of the dwellings have been extended to the side. Some of the two storey side extensions are set back from the front building lines and others are flush with them. Both forms of extension have affected the original symmetry of the dwellings, although typically they all respect the overall proportions and detailing of the host dwellings and contribute to the unified mix of dwellings within the locality.
5. Together and amongst other things the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), policies BE8 & H8 of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review 2004 (Local Plan) seek to ensure that new development reflects the identity and harmonises with local surroundings. Extensions should take account of the character of the site and its surroundings and should relate well to the host building in terms of design, bulk, fenestration and materials.
6. The proposed extension would follow the front building line, eaves line and ridge height of the host dwelling, albeit the proposed rear projecting wing would have a lower ridge line. The proposed fenestration and materials would match the host dwelling and a good sized gap above ground floor level would be retained between the host dwelling and No.22. Within the street scene the extension would follow the form of the existing extension diagonally opposite and another extension located a short distance to the northwest.
7. As a result of these factors the proposed side extension would respect the proportions, detailing, character and appearance of the host property, the pair of dwellings and the street scene. As stated in the *Central Bedfordshire Design Guide – A guide for designing high quality new developments* (SPG) has similar objectives. Side extensions should be proportionate to the main house and should respect the character of matching pairs of semi-detached dwellings.
8. It is acknowledged that, contrary to the advice set out in the SPG, the proposed side extension would not be set back from the front elevation by at least 300mm and the ridge height would not be lower than that of the host building. However, for the reasons set out above the proposed extension would nonetheless respect the host building and its surroundings.
9. Within the rear garden environment a significant number of the dwellings in the immediate area have been altered and extended. The proposed extension would respect the detailing of the host dwelling and would be readily assimilated into the rear garden environment.
10. Finally, the Council has suggested the imposition of conditions relating to matching external materials and adherence to the submitted drawings. Both of these conditions are necessary to ensure the proposed extension blends in appropriately with the host dwelling and in the interests of certainty.
11. I conclude that the proposed extension would respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the pair of dwellings and the street scene. Accordingly the proposal would comply with policies BE8 & H8 of the Local Plan and the NPPF. Whilst the side extension would not adhere to all of the advice

set out in the SPG, it would comply with its objective to ensure that side extensions respect the character of matching pairs of dwellings.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR