

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 May 2017

by Tom Gilbert-Wooldridge BA (Hons) MTP MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 23rd June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/D/17/3173148

27 Quantock Close, Bedford MK41 9EW

- 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 Lynda Wray against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00524/FUL, dated 21 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 30 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development on (a) the character and appearance of the area and (b) the living conditions of occupiers of 26 Quantock Close with particular regard to their outlook and light.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. Quantock Close consists of semi-detached properties arranged around a cul-de-sac. Although some properties have extended to the side, including the two storey side extension to No 26, there are gaps between each pair of properties at ground and/or first floor, giving an overall spacious layout of development. The gaps between Nos 23-28 are not immediately apparent on the approach along Quantock Close due to the staggered building line, but there is no terracing effect once you reach the first of these properties. The appeal property has a single storey flat roof side extension that projects forward of the front elevation of the main property and infills the gap to No 26 at ground floor. However, a gap remains at first floor providing separation between the two pairs of semi-detached properties.
4. The proposed development would involve a more subservient side extension at first floor level compared to a previous appeal scheme that was recently dismissed¹. It would not compete with the main property or unbalance the pair of semi-detached properties as much as the previous appeal scheme, noting the comments of the previous Inspector. However, the proposed side extension would still be located in the gap between the main property and the boundary with No 26, and would be very close to the flank wall of No 26's extension. Due to the staggered building line, the extension would project

¹ APP/K0235/D/16/3163563

forward of No 26's extension at first floor. It would largely close the gap between Nos 26 and 27 and would result in a terracing effect. This would be at odds with the overall spacious layout of development in Quantock Close.

5. Concluding on the main issue, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, it would not accord with Policy CP21 of the Bedford Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan 2008 ('the Core Strategy') and Policies BE29 and BE30 of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2002 ('the Local Plan'). Amongst other things, these policies seek good design and development that fully considers the context within which it is placed. It would also conflict with Design Code E3 of the Residential Extensions, New Dwellings and Small Infill Developments Supplementary Design Guidance 2000 (SDG). The design code seeks to safeguard space around buildings and gaps between the sides of houses.

Living conditions for occupiers of 26 Quantock Close

6. The proposed development would not project as far forward at first floor level compared to the previous appeal scheme, but it would still project further forward than the front building line of No 26. Moreover, the remaining parts of the single storey side extension would have a long mono-pitch roof significantly taller than the existing flat roof at the point where it would join the first floor. Thus, there would be an overbearing effect on views from the driveway and entrance given the proximity and scale of the extension in relation to these locations. It would also have a shadowing effect in terms of light to the driveway and entrance, including sunlight later in the day. The effects would be reduced compared to the previous appeal scheme but would still be harmful to the living conditions of occupiers of No 26 from these locations.
7. From the first floor front bedroom window of No 26 closest to the extension, the set back at first floor would greatly reduce the effects on outlook and light to an oblique angle standing at the window within the bedroom. I note that the bedroom is long and narrow, but there would only be limited harm to the living conditions of occupiers of No 26 from this location.
8. Concluding on this main issue, the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the living conditions of occupiers of 26 Quantock Close with regard to outlook and light. Therefore, it would not accord with Policy CP21 of the Core Strategy or Policies BE29 and BE30 of the Local Plan which seek good design and development that avoids giving rise to disturbance to neighbours. It would also conflict with Design Code E7 of the SDG which seeks to avoid overbearing effects on other properties.

Conclusion

9. I note that the appellant has sought to address the previous Inspector's comments and does not appear to have received feedback from the Council on revising their proposals. However, the appeal scheme before me still results in harm to the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of occupiers of 26 Quantock Close. For these reasons, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Tom Gilbert-Wooldridge

INSPECTOR