



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 August 2019

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/D/19/3229250

26 Furness Close, Bedford MK41 8RN

- 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 and Mrs Yannaki against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00199/FUL, dated 23 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 13 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is a first floor extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a first floor extension at 26 Furness Close, Bedford MK41 8RN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/00199/FUL, dated 23 January 2019, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings: Location Plan at 1:1250 and 1:500 scale, Survey Plan, Proposed Plan, and Section S-03.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matter

2. I have taken the spelling of the appellants' surname from the application form, rather than from the appeal form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character of the area.

Reasons

4. Amongst other things, Design Code E3 of the *Bedford Residential Extensions, New Dwellings and Small Infill Developments Supplementary Design Guidance 2000* ('SDG') sets out the need to assess an extension's impact on the character of the streetscene. It states that in tightly developed areas with minimal gaps between the sides of houses, two storey extensions should be at least 1.5m away from a side boundary. However, it also sets out that the Code

- may be applied flexibly, with applications assessed on their individual circumstances.
5. The houses in Furness Close are generally two storeys high and detached. They are mainly finished in buff brickwork, tiles, and sections of timber cladding. Some have gabled roofs, whilst others are hipped.
 6. Some of the dwellings have single storey sections to one side, thus providing a larger gap at first floor level to the neighbouring property. However, elsewhere there are two storey flanks located fairly close to one another, such as opposite the appeal site between Nos 9 to 13 Furness Close, and on this side of it between Nos 22 and 24. Consequently, in my view, there is no consistent or prevailing pattern in terms of the spacing between the dwellings at first floor level.
 7. It is proposed to build above the host property's single storey side projection, thus reducing the gap above ground floor level between it and No 24. However, viewed from the road, the extension would have a long, sloping roof, with its tallest section recessed well back compared to the host's property's front wall. The form of the highest part of its roof would be half-hipped, compared to No 24's gable.
 8. Given its form and siting, the scheme's visual impact on the streetscene would be limited, and it would not result in a significant 'terracing' effect. Whilst I have had regard to potential cumulative impacts should other schemes be permitted, I have not been made aware of any other specific proposals nearby. In any event, in the context of this fairly diverse area and the variable gaps between the buildings, the scheme would not appear out of place.
 9. As a result, whilst the proposal would project up to the boundary with No 24, in the particular circumstances here and having assessed the impact on the streetscene, it would not conflict with the SDG's broad approach.
 10. As it would not harm the character and appearance of the area, and it would be of an appropriate design standard, the scheme would not conflict with Policies BE29 and BE30 of the Bedford Local Plan 2002, or with Policy CP21 of the Bedford Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan 2008.
 11. Turning to the matter of conditions, I have considered those suggested by the Council against the tests in the National Planning Policy Framework. I have imposed the standard time limit condition and, in the interests of certainty, a condition requiring that the development be carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Additionally, in the interests of the character and appearance of the host property and the area, a condition is necessary requiring that the extension be faced in materials to match those in the host property.
 12. I conclude that the scheme would not harm the character and appearance of the area, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is therefore allowed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR