



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 June 2021 by Darren Ellis MPlan

Decision by Chris Preston BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/D/21/3270334

16 Mayhew Close, Bromham, MK43 8PW

- 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 & Mrs Hartwell against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/02719/FUL, dated 13 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 16 February 2021.
 - The development proposed is a first floor side extension, front porch extension and garage conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for a first floor side extension, front porch extension and garage conversion at 16 Mayhew Close, Bromham, MK43 8PW in accordance with the terms of the application 20/02719/FUL, dated 13 November 2020, subject to these 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: Site Location Plan and Block Plan drawing no. JJ20-006 Sheet 002; Proposed elevations and proposed plans drawing no. JJ20-006 Sheet 001 Rev B.
 - 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.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matter

3. The Government published on 20 July 2021 a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework. Accordingly, and in light of the reference made to the previous iteration of the Framework within the submitted evidence, the parties have been provided with a further opportunity to make submissions in respect of the publication. Any comments which have been received have been taken into account within the appeal decision.
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Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site comprises a two-storey detached dwelling located on Mayhew Close. The street is comprised of detached properties which have all been built with similarities in design and exterior materials. Overall, the street has a cohesive appearance and rhythm which makes a significant contribution to the character of the area.
6. Some of the dwellings in the street, including the neighbouring property at No 14, match the design of the appeal property with the first-floor element above the garage being set back from the front elevation and with the ridge at a lower level than the main roof. However, there is some variety to the street scene as other properties have no set back to the first floor above the garage and no reduction in ridge height. The proposed first-floor front extension would align with the existing front elevation of the property and would see the ridge raised to match the ridge height of the main roof. While this would differ from the appearance of No 14, the design of the extension would tie in with the design and features of other properties in the street and would produce a balanced and broadly symmetrical frontage.
7. The raising of the ridge height would cause a slight reduction in the gap between the built form of the appeal property and No 18, however the reduction would not be significant and would not result in a terracing effect given the slightly staggered building line and the separation from the site boundary.
8. I acknowledge that the proposed design does not accord with the guidance in policies E1 and E2 of the Residential Extensions, New Dwellings & Small Infill Developments Design Guide (2000) (DG), which suggest that extensions should be stepped down and set back to appear secondary to the existing dwelling and to maintain a balanced appearance. While the proposed extension would not be set down from the ridge height of the main roof or set back from the front elevation, I find that its scale and design would respect the character and appearance of the appeal property and the properties in the street. The DG recognises that design will be dependent on the context and, for the reasons given, the proposal in this instance would respond positively to the character of the property and surrounding area.
9. Several of the properties on the opposite side of the street have front porches of a similar design to the porch proposed in this scheme, and some properties in the street have fenestration for habitable rooms instead of garages. The proposed porch and garage conversion would therefore be in keeping with the street scene. I note that the Council has no objections to these elements of the proposal, and based on the evidence before me I have no reason to disagree with their conclusions.
10. For these reasons, the proposed extension, porch and garage conversion would not detract from the character and appearance of the appeal property or the area. As such, I conclude that the proposal would accord with policies 28, 29

and 30 of the Bedford Borough Local Plan (January 2020) (LP). These policies all seek, amongst other things, to ensure that development complements the character of the area. The proposal would also satisfy the aims of the guidance of policies E1, E2 and E3 of the DG, which seek in various ways to protect the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

11. The conclusion in the Council's delegated report also cites a conflict with policies 31 and 32 of the LP, although these policies are not referred to in the decision notice. Policy 31 refers to access to the public highway and policy 32 refers to disturbance and pollution. No objection to these issues has been raised by the Council in its delegated report, and as such policies 31 and 32 of the LP are not relevant to this appeal.

Conditions

12. The standard time limit condition and a condition specifying the approved plans are required to provide certainty.
13. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, it is necessary for a condition requiring the external materials of the extensions to match the exterior materials of the existing dwelling.
14. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed, and planning permission granted subject to the conditions listed above.

Darren Ellis

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and, on that basis, I agree with the recommendation and shall allow the appeal and grant planning permission subject to the conditions above.

Chris Preston

INSPECTOR