
Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 7 September 2021

by Luke Simpson BSc MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/D/21/3272679

Summermead, Lodge Road, Cranfield, MK43 0BG

- 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 Lionel Richardson against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref CB/21/00665/FULL, dated 15 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 30 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is to erect a wooden triple car port to front of property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 20 July 2021. Both parties have been consulted in relation to the revised Framework. As such, I have had regard to it in my consideration of this appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal site and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a detached bungalow (the host property), set back from the road. The area to the front of the property is predominantly hard-surfaced and currently used for vehicle parking. The host property is located behind an existing hedgerow. The site is bordered on each side by a neighbouring bungalow and a mobile home, which are both set back from the road in a broadly similar manner to the host property.
5. On the opposite side of Lodge Road is a modern housing estate comprising a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties, which are predominantly two-storey. These properties are typically orientated such that they are closer to the highway than the host property. Nonetheless, the front gardens and driveways of these neighbouring properties are generally free from development.
6. The proposed development is a triple car port, which would be located to the front of the host dwelling, adjacent to the boundary of the property. Whilst the existing hedgerow would partially screen the proposed development from the surrounding area, the roof and upper structure of the car port would be visible

when approaching the appeal site in either direction along Lodge Road. The host property and adjacent dwellings are set in relatively spacious plots and the introduction of a car port in this location would jar with this existing character. The development would also be out of keeping with the character of residential properties on the opposite side of Lodge Road, which do not typically comprise development between the primary elevation and the street. As such, the car port would appear as an incongruous feature in the street scene. A condition to ensure that the hedge is retained would not be sufficient to overcome the harm identified, given that the existing hedge would not sufficiently screen the development from view.

7. The appellant has provided various examples of development in the surrounding area, including a summer house on Lodge Road and other detached garages within the nearby housing estate. However, the precise circumstances of each of these cases are not before me, including whether they were subject to planning permission, the development plan context at the time of any grant of permission and any other case-specific circumstances. As such, the examples provided of development elsewhere do not justify the visual harm that the development would cause in this case. Furthermore, the examples provided are sporadic, such that they do not form the predominant character of the surrounding area.
8. The appellant has indicated that they would be willing to consider a smaller car port. However, no amended plans have been provided with this appeal. As such, it is not possible to consider the acceptability of amended plans or compliance with the relevant development plan policies.
9. Whether or not there were neighbour objections or support for the proposed development is not a consideration which has any bearing on the level of visual harm which the development would cause. In addition, the timeliness and detail of correspondence provided by the Council during the consideration of the planning application is a procedural matter, which has no bearing on the level of harm caused by the proposed development.
10. The proposed development would not be in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As such, it would conflict with Core Strategy¹ Policy DM3, which requires in part that the design of new development is appropriate to its setting.
11. The proposed development would also conflict with the Design Guide², which states that buildings in the front gardens of detached properties will only be acceptable where such buildings form part of the existing character. The Design Guide also states in part that garages should not be intrusive in the street scene.
12. The proposed development would also conflict with Framework Paragraph 130, which requires in part that development is in keeping with local character. In addition, the relevant development plan policies set out sufficient clarity on design, in accordance with Framework Paragraph 127.

¹ Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009)

² Central Bedfordshire Design Guide – A guide for designing high quality new development (2014)

Conclusion

13. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no other considerations raised which would outweigh this conflict. As such, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Luke Simpson

INSPECTOR