



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 December 2021

by Sian Griffiths BSc(Hons) DipTP MScRealEst MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17TH January 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/D/21/3285852

259 Kimbolton Road, Bedford MK41 8AF

- 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 Upadhyay against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01878/S73A, dated 2 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 10 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as single storey rear and side extension, two storey front extension, first floor extension with balconies and erection of outbuilding to form gym/office.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. At the site visit I could see that the outbuilding forming part of the proposals had been erected and that the application to which this appeal relates was submitted retrospectively. In addition, the appellant has supplied a document titled 'Planning Discrepancies' setting out that the single storey rear extension and outbuilding have since been approved under prior approval and as permitted development.
3. I have dealt with the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. Kimbolton Road is a predominantly suburban residential avenue situated to the north east of Bedford. It is characterised by generally detached dwellings on good sized plots, set back from the main road behind generous front gardens. There are a number of significant trees lining the street and separating the individual plots along the road adding an open and verdant feel to the character of this part of the town.
6. Dwellings along the street are generally of an individual design but many have a variety of features common to inter-war housing such as dormer and bay windows, hipped roofs, covered pitched roof porches and mock Tudor detailing.

7. The appeal property, No 259, is a 1.5 storey brick built bungalow with large front garden and driveway which runs down the side of the house to the generous rear garden. It is flanked by two storey houses also on large plots. First floor windows appear in the rear elevation of the bungalow.
8. The appeal proposals would result in a significant increase in the size of the host dwelling from the front, adding a second storey together with side and front extensions.
9. Policies 28S (Place making) and 29 (Design Quality and Principles) of the Bedford Borough Local Plan (2020) (LP) both seek to secure high quality new development which has a 'positive relationship' with its surroundings, integrating and complementing local character.
10. Policy 30 (The impact of development – design impacts) of the LP identifies that as well as its impact on local character, design quality of new development will be assessed in terms of scale, density, massing, height, materials and layout and that development proposals will be refused where they do not improve the character and quality of an area.
11. Design Criteria E1 (Basic Shape and Scale) and E2 (Detailed Character) of Part 1 the Residential Extensions, New Developments and Small Infill Developments design guide (2000) (RENDSID) provides specific design guidance for residential extensions. It sets out that stepping extensions down and back from the original or 'host' dwelling to reflect the existing character is preferable and that character within the existing street scene should be considered.
12. I have considered the overall height of the proposed development and conclude that whilst this element is not particularly at odds with its surroundings, the overall impact of the dwelling will be exacerbated by the poor roof design. I note the appellant's submission that the proposed crown roof is required as a result of the size of the extensions to the host dwelling and I would not be opposed to this solution *per se*. However, the overall effect of the shallow roof pitch against the expanse of built form of the frontage would give the scheme a monolithic quality, resulting in a negative impact on the street scene.
13. I accept the use of 'Juliet' balconies within the front elevation may afford the development more natural light, but I could not see how such features would add to or reflect the existing character as they are not common to the area.
14. I note the narrow two storey front projection that has presumably been designed to provide some visual interest, but it appears awkward and unbalanced, particularly against the proposed significant width and flat appearance of the principal elevation of the dwelling. I accept the point that a projecting porch already exists and that there would be a first floor 'extension' above this, but to me it would have an incongruous appearance.
15. I therefore find that the proposals would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area, contrary to LP policies 28S, 29 and 30 as well as Design Criteria E1 and E2 of the RENDSID.

Other Matters

16. I have considered the evidence of roof design, size and materials at other properties within the locality provided by the appellant's agent in their evidence. However, I am without the same level of detail for each of these

properties to be able to make a clear comparison with the appeal site. In any case I am obliged to determine this appeal on its own merits.

17. I have considered the points made by the appellant and council in respect of the proposed materials. The council could control these through the use of a planning condition. However, this alone would not overcome the harm to character and appearance I have identified as a result of the proposed design.

Conclusions

18. For the reasons set out above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude the appeal is dismissed.

Sian Griffiths

INSPECTOR