



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 February 2022

By A. J. Boughton MA (IPSD) Dip.Arch. Dip.(Conservation) RIBA MRTPI
an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9th March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/D/21/3288401
216 Spring Road, Kempston, BEDFORD MK42 8ND

- 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 J Chander against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/02567/FUL, dated 22 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 3 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is demolition of garage and conservatory and part one and part two-storey side and rear extension and changes to external wall finishes.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of garage and conservatory and part one and part two-storey side and rear extensions and changes to external wall finishes at 216 Spring Road MK428ND in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/02567/FUL, dated 22 September 2021, and the plans submitted with it, 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 plans: Proposed Plans and Elevations Ref: EP3310 PL01-2B and EP3310 PL01-3B
 - 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 or those for which details have been previously submitted in writing to, and thereafter approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed two-storey side and rear extension on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. 216 Spring Road is a semi-detached dwelling in a busy suburban road lined with a mix of housing types dating from the mid twentieth-century. Although some semi-detached pairs retain original linking garages and side access gates, overall, incremental change to many of the dwellings nearby and the blocks of

flat-roofed housing opposite present a poorly-related mix of building form and materials in the street which, overall, defies characterisation.

4. The proposal would replace the rear conservatory and side garage of the house with a deep two-storey extension to the rear and, at the side, two storey accommodation filling the width of the plot to within 1m of the side boundary. There would also be a small porch projection.
5. Taken together, the relevant policies of the adopted Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 (BBLP), 29 and 30 seek to ensure development is of high quality, recognising the character of, and retaining a positive relationship with, the surrounding area, looking to reinforce or retain local distinctiveness through high quality design. The Council indicate that examples quoted by the appellant pre-date the now-adopted design guidance Residential Extensions New Dwellings and Small Infill Developments 2000 (RENDSID) which stipulates the retention of gaps between buildings amongst other factors. However, design guidance is to be purposed according to each case and, as I have explained, the area surrounding the appeal site is notable for its lack of visual coherence in built form. The proposed development would not, from my observations, be unduly obtrusive and consequently I must attach very little weight to this aspect of policy.
6. The resultant dwelling would be larger than its neighbour, but not all other dwellings nearby, and whilst the proposal would unbalance the residual symmetry of the dwelling pair, the street scene has a wide range of dwelling types including those with extensions that defy the criteria sought by the Council's design guidance. For that reason, although there would be change, harm to the character of the appearance of the area resulting from the proposal would be very limited and on balance, insufficient to outweigh the benefit of providing additional living accommodation in this location. I therefore conclude, taking all matters raised into account, the proposal would not conflict with the development plan taken as a whole.

Conditions and Conclusion

7. The standard time limit and a condition specifying the approved plans are required to provide certainty. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, a condition is also necessary requiring external materials used in the construction of the proposed extension should either match those used in the existing building or be approved for such use.
8. For the reasons given, the appeal should be allowed subject to the conditions above.

Andrew Boughton

INSPECTOR