



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: 10th March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/D/22/3290142
34 The Buntings, BEDFORD MK41 7LA

- 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 M Ali against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01801/FUL, dated 25 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 30 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side/rear extension with single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. 34 The Buntings is found within a group of semi-detached houses which retain mid-twentieth century appearance, grain of built form and materials/detailing. A particular characteristic of the row of dwellings is the retention of intervening ancillary garages and side access gates behind a single-storey brick screen which visually links the two-storey dwellings, but in an insubstantial way.
4. Uniquely amongst the immediate grouping which otherwise retains these original characteristics, 30 The Buntings has been recently extended at the side. However, there are important differences with the appeal proposal. Notwithstanding a visually contrived forward projection of its garage, the full-height flank wall of No. 30 is fully inset from the boundary with a set-back from the façade. Together with characteristic box-eaves detailing, that development successfully supports the original built form and its contribution to the street scene despite its extended status, retaining side gap of around 1.0m
5. In response to the Council's concerns as to spacing and appearance, the appellant has modified earlier proposals at the appeal site for a full-width side extension by inseting the upper storey of the proposed side extension, building on the boundary line for the lower storey only. However, the resultant built-form would lack space for characteristic eaves detailing on the boundary, and together with the narrow side roof which relates poorly to the simple forms of the original house, the side extension would appear contrived and visually

clumsy, emphasising, notwithstanding the upper-storey indent, the incongruent plot-filling nature of the proposal.

6. The appellant has drawn attention to appeal decisions where specified side separation distances were not attained, however, the significance of such factors may be outweighed by how the proposal affects the prevailing character and relates to surrounding development which is the case in this appeal.
7. Taken together, 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's design guidance for Residential Extensions New Dwellings and Small Infill Developments (RENSID) supports this approach by showing how such development can retain the sense of space around buildings in suburban locations such as the appeal site.
8. The proposed extensions, for the reasons explained, would not meet these objectives. I therefore conclude that the development would fail to enhance the character and appearance of the area, fail to accord with relevant policies and therefore conflict with development plan taken as a whole. In reaching my decision I have had regard to the appellant's comments, however, for the reasons given, these do not change my conclusion which is that whilst parts of the proposals are acceptable, that cannot alter my view that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew Boughton

INSPECTOR