



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 April 2022

by J Somers BSocSci (Planning) MA (HEC) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4TH May 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/D/22/3293064

235 Ampthill Road, Kempston Hardwick, Bedford MK45 3JE

- 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 T. Kaylan against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/02594/FUL, dated 14 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 22 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as a one and two storey front, side and rear extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the dwelling.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies on a private road from the B530 which accesses the appeal site (No.235) and the remaining half of the semi-detached dwelling (No.234). The pair of semi-detached dwellings are positioned between a railway line and the B530 and situated within a relatively remote location with no neighbouring residents other than this pair of semi-detached dwellings. The pair of semi-detached dwellings appears to have been constructed in the late nineteenth century and has a symmetrical composition with a pitched and gabled roof with each dwelling having two small protruding gables breaking through the eaves and leading to the ground floor. Large chimney stacks are to the centre and end (albeit 235 is shorter) and to the rear there is also a projecting rear wing with gable end that is shared by both dwellings. Whilst both dwellings have undergone alterations, their general form, design and massing maintains a strong element of symmetry between the dwellings which is a positive contribution to their character, appearance and local distinctiveness.
4. Extensions to existing dwellings are assessed against the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 (LP) Policy 28S (which seeks that development contribute to good place making, and high quality in terms of design and promoting local distinctiveness); LP Policy 29 (which sets a number of design principles such as contributing positively to the areas character and identity and respecting the surrounding context); LP Policy 30 (i) and (ii) (which seeks that development have a good relationship to the context in terms of scale, density and height amongst others); and LP Policy 66 (which provides specific design criteria of

extensions to dwellings in the countryside). The Council has also adopted the Residential Extensions, New Dwellings and Small Infill Developments Design Guidance (DG) which supports these policies and at Design Code E1 gives guidance to ensure that the scale, massing, and proximity of extensions are appropriate to the existing building and its context.

5. Both parties have drawn my attention to a planning appeal¹ whereby an Inspector valued the shared symmetrical rear elevation with gable end as an important feature of the character and appearance of both dwellings. I too share this opinion, that whilst modest in design, there is a strong association and symmetry in both semi-detached dwellings and this should influence the design of any proposed scheme. I too do not share any concerns with the proposed front elevational treatment, with matters in dispute between the Council and applicant arising as a result of the rear extension to which I will turn to now.
6. In the current application for the rear extension, the depth of the first floor has been reduced just behind the end of the rear gable but would still cover the entire width of the rear façade of the dwelling. The gabled profile of the roof to match No.234 has been indicated as a small protrusion, but has the appearance of 'facadism' as the rear gable would instead be part of the large extension at first floor level which projects across the rear façade and not be subservient to it. As the rear elevation is quite functional in appearance, the addition of another gabled roof form does not reduce the amount of visual bulk, but adds further visual clutter and overcomplicates the rear façade to the detriment of the symmetry and functional appearance of both buildings when experienced together.
7. Having visited the site and reviewed the appeal documents, I am not convinced that the proposed scheme in terms of the rear façade has overcome concerns raised by the previous Inspector or by the Council with regards to a proposed extension. The extension at first floor level would be very deep and wide and have an awkward juxtaposition between the existing and proposed components that would negatively affect the local character and distinctiveness of this pair of semi-detached dwellings.
8. Taking the above into account, and in conclusion of this matter, the proposed design of the extension would have an excessive form and massing that would not be in keeping with the existing pair of semi-detached dwellings. Consequently, the proposal would be contrary to the LP Policies 28, 29, 30, and 66 which are supported by the DG as described previously.

Other Matters

9. I note correspondence from an interested part to the original application which has concerns regarding a shared wall, structural implications as a result of the extension, sewerage capacity, and access to a drain. These matters are not planning related and therefore cannot be considered as part of this appeal. I also note comments relating to a rooflight which according to the plans appears to be for the purpose of illuminating the stairwell rather than as an additional room as suggested.

¹ Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/D/21/3270323, Dated 19 May 2021

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

J Somers

INSPECTOR