



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 January 2023

by D Wilson BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/W/22/3305407

3, The Glen, Bedford, Kempston MK42 7EL

- 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 Hugh Vintner against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00804/FUL, dated 6 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 1 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is the existing previously converted garage to be used as separate dwelling, with a new car parking area for both the existing house and proposed one bedroom dwelling
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area,
 - the effect of the proposal on highway safety,
 - the effect of the proposal upon the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers with reference to disturbance and availability of on-street parking.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. No. 3, The Glen is a semi-detached property located in a suburban area of Kempston. The Glen is made up of semi-detached properties of a similar style and size with most of which having attached garages which results in a linear and uniform appearance. The appeal site is located at the end of the close at a turning head which is predominantly being used for parking.
4. The appeal relates to a detached garage to the side of the property which was previously being used as ancillary accommodation for an elderly relative. I note that planning permission has been granted for the garage itself however this was based on it being used for ancillary purposes and as a result would have had a clear connection with No.3 as a single-family unit.
5. The proposal would result in the garage being used as an independent dwelling and require the subdivision of the existing property to create private amenity space. Further changes would be required such as windows, doors, fencing and

the creation of an access to the car parking area for the properties. This would result in a clear change from a single-family unit to 2 separate units.

6. Due to the style and size of the houses located on the Glen, a detached garage being used as a dwelling would stand out and appear at odds when compared with the predominantly semi-detached dwellings. The prominence would also stand out further due to the location of the garage being forward of the existing house which does not follow the existing linear street pattern. Furthermore, the introduction of an uncharacteristic parking area between the garage and No.3 would result in an incongruous development.
7. I therefore find harm to the character and appearance to the area. Accordingly, I find conflict with Policies 28S, 29 and 30 of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 adopted January 2020 which amongst other things, seek to ensure development integrates well and complements the character of the area, be of high-quality design and reinforce local distinctiveness.

Highway safety

8. The houses on the Glen have limited parking due to there being limited driveway space as well as the road itself being very narrow. Access to the Glen is via Campbell Close which is also narrow and provides limited parking space.
9. The Council's Parking Standards for Sustainable Communities Supplementary Planning Document 2014 (SPD) requires one parking space for a 1-bedroom dwelling and two parking spaces for a 2/3-bedroom dwelling.
10. Whilst three spaces are shown, it is noted on the proposed plans, particularly the Proposed Floor Plan and Elevations 427 / 03 Revision E that the single space for the proposal is not contained within the red line. It is therefore not shown how the required 1 space can be provided and as such I find that the required number of spaces required by the SPD are not being provided.
11. A turning space is shown within the site however it is a small space which combined with the tight parking spaces, bordered by boundary treatment would provide inadequate space to manoeuvre safely and leave in a forward gear. This is particularly important due to the turning head on The Glen being used for parking which will make it difficult to manoeuvre once on the road.
12. I therefore find harm to highway safety contrary to the SPD and Policy 31 of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 adopted January 2020 which seeks to ensure development does not have any significant adverse impact on access to the public highway.

Living conditions

13. It is noted that visitors to both properties will need to park on the street which will most likely be on The Glen, nearest to the proposal. As this is already a narrow road with limited parking, it will result in the availability of on-street parking reducing.
14. The ancillary occupation provides a degree of independence as the occupier could still have access and use of a car to come and go as well as have visitors. However, the provision of an independent dwelling would likely increase trip rates to and from the dwelling and therefore result in disturbance to residents nearby.

15. The site is also located off a turning head which will mean that any further parking will further reduce its availability and likely cause a nuisance and disturbance to users of the highway.
16. I therefore find that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the living conditions of neighbours as a result of disturbance and the reduction in on-street parking. Contrary to Policy 32 of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 adopted January 2020 which seeks to ensure disturbance as a result of development is minimised.

Other Matters

17. My attention has been drawn to planning permissions nearby however, from the limited details before me, it appears to me that the merits and context of these are different to those of the appeal proposal.
18. I have no reason to disagree with the Council's assessment that the proposal provides sufficient amenity space for future occupiers and that the proposal does not result in any loss of light or outlook for neighbouring residents however these matters do not outweigh the harm I have identified.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons set out above, and having had regard to the development plan as a whole and all other material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

D Wilson

INSPECTOR