



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 April 2023

by S Lo LLB M.SRA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/D/23/3316672

57 Wingfield Road, Bromham, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK43 8JY

- 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 Mrs S Kaur against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/02404/FUL, dated 1 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 6 February 2023.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side/rear and single story rear extension including front porch
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a semi-detached gabled roof dwellinghouse situated within a row of residential houses. The area is characterised by elongated garden plots and soft landscaping with trees and other vegetation. The spaces between the pairs of semi-detached dwellings provides a visual break in built form, especially at the first floor level, thereby allowing views to the verdant rear gardens. As such, the distanced arrangement of the dwellings is characteristic for the open design of the overall area.
4. The properties along Wingfield Road and the surrounding area are similar in overall design. While side extensions are present at other properties, they are not a common feature and many of these are single storey. Regarding the small number of two-storey extensions, they are often set back from the front aspect, which serves to retain a spaciousness which reduces the overall visual impact.
5. In comparison with No 55 Wingfield Road, the proposed development would not be set back from the front building line and only marginally set down from the main ridge height. Moreover, as a two storey extension in a tightly developed area, the proposal would not be set 1.5m away from the side boundary, contrary to E3 of the Residential Extensions, New Dwellings & Small Infill Developments (2000) Supplementary Design Guidance. Therefore, even with similar materials to the existing dwelling, the side extension would elongate the proportions of the dwelling, disrupting the open character of the area and reducing the spaciousness between neighbouring dwellings.

6. Despite the hipped roof, the side extension would still result in a narrow gap which would erode the feeling of spaciousness from the front aspect. Consequently, even though the porch would break up the overall flat appearance of the frontage, the height and bulk of the side extension would remain a visible and discordant presence in views from surrounding properties and the public highway. This would be at odds with the prevailing pattern of built form.
7. In reaching this view, I have considered the fact that the distance between the proposed development and the boundary of 55 Wingfield Road is variable, due to the orientation of the extension and large size of the garden. As such, the separation distance would increase towards the rear garden. Nonetheless, it would still present as a narrow gap which would erode the feeling of spaciousness from the front aspect. As such, the proposed development would appear as a prominent and discordant feature which would be out of keeping with, and harmful to, the appearance of the property and the wider terrace.
8. The appellant points out that planning permission has been granted for similar extensions along Wingfield Road to the proposed development. No 42 is located adjacent to a larger open grassed area, which preserves a considerable amount of space between it and the next property. No 61 is adjacent to a path, which gives it a greater level of separation from the next pair of properties. As such, these are materially different to the appeal site.
9. The extension at No 31 has similar proportions to the proposed development, however, the appeal decision (APP/K00235/D/17/3170560) has limited relevance, due to the duration of time that has passed since that appeal was determined in 2017 and the adoption of a new Local Plan in 2020. While I have considered the need for the appellant to obtain more living space for their family, this would not overcome the issues I have identified above. In any event, I must consider the appeal scheme on its own merits, and in the context of the current policy regime which requires such additions to respond to local distinctiveness.
10. In conclusion, the proposed development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area and would therefore not comply with the requirement for development to complement the character of the area and be of the highest design quality, contrary to policies 28S, 29 and 30 of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 (as adopted in 2020). It would also fail to harmonise with the local setting and would erode the general character of the street scene, contrary to Design Code E1 and E3 of the Residential Extensions, New Dwellings & Small Infill Developments (2000) Supplementary Design Guidance.

Conclusion

11. I have found that the appeal scheme conflicts with development plan policy. No material considerations have been demonstrated which would outweigh the development plan conflict. Therefore, for the reasons set out above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Lo

INSPECTOR