The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 June 2023

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date:31 July 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/D/23/3321411
2 Greenkeepers Road, Great Denham, Bedford MK40 4GJ

- 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 Nichola Lancaster against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
- The application Ref 22/02713/S73A, dated 14 December 2022, was refused by notice dated 9 February 2023.
- The development proposed is erection of a metal bike shed on gravel and grid hardstanding and formation of a parking space (development already carried out).

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of a metal bike shed on gravel and grid hardstanding and formation of a parking space (development already carried out) in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 22/02713/S73A, dated 14 December 2022, subject to the following condition:

   1) The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the following approved plans: 22-01 and 21-02 (both dated November 2022) and 'Gladiator Plus 2 (High Security) Garden Shed'.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the local area, in terms of the provision of landscaped open space next to the residential properties.

Reasons

3. 2 Greenkeepers Road sits in a prominent corner position near the entrance to this modern residential estate, which has been formally designed with closely spaced houses interspersed with open landscaped areas. No 2 has public open space to the front and side with a footpath route running through. The proposed parking space, bike shed and hard standing sit to the front and side of the house, in areas that I understand to previously have had landscape planting that supplemented the adjoining planting in the public open space.

4. The Council's concern is that the proposal has resulted in the loss of part of an area of landscaping that contributes positively to the character of the area, resulting in the proposal being prominent in the public realm. The developments have taken place within the ownership and curtilage of the property. To the side of the house, the shed and hard standing are located within existing boundary railings, which form a continuous line with railings running further alongside the public open space, to the front of other houses. It is therefore the loss of landscape planting and general openness rather than any loss of public open space which is at issue.

5. The shed is a very low structure, painted dark green. Both it and the hard surfaced side path are already well screened by the maturing landscaping within the public open space. Space has been left to the side of both for boundary planting, which has been carried out recently. To the front of the house, the additional car parking space is highly visible, but merely matches and continues the frontage parking provided at neighbouring houses. It therefore does not look out of place and is visually insignificant to the front of this substantial 2.5 storey detached house.

6. None of these very minor developments detracts significantly from the general openness of the area, its landscaping or the use and enjoyment of the public open space. The personalisation of garden spaces over time can benefit local character as part of the natural evolution of residential estates like this. No precedent would be set as each case like this falls to be determined on its own merits. I conclude that the proposal preserves the character and appearance of the local area. It accords with the shared aims of Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 policies 28S,29 and 30 and the National Planning Policy Framework, to promote high quality design that contributes positively to an area's character, identity and landscape quality.

7. I impose a condition specifying the relevant plans to provide certainty. I agree with the Council that no other conditions are necessary. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR