



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 July 2023

by J N Seymour BA (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28th September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/D/23/3321611

13 Dorchester Way, Elstow, Bedford, MK42 9FF

- 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 J Masih against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: 23/00016/FUL, dated 5 January 2023, was refused by notice dated 2 March 2023.
 - The development is described as: 'Two storey side extension and garage conversion'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side extension and garage conversion at 13 Dorchester Way, Elstow, Bedford, MK42 9FF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 23/00016/FUL, dated 5 January 2023, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: P1 V01, P2 V02, P3 V03, P4 V04, P5 V05, P6 V06 and the Design and Access Statement, P7 V07.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the external surfaces of the building shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue of the appeal is the effect the proposed development would have on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site comprises a detached dwelling near the end of a residential cul-de-sac. There is a small, grassed area that separates the side of the dwelling from the pavement. There is also a timber fence and gate allowing side access to the rear garden, which would be removed to accommodate the proposed side extension. The grass verge continues along the southern boundary of the appeal site eventually adjoining the neighbouring property to the east at number 11 Dorchester Way.
4. The Council has deemed that the extension would result in the loss of this area to the side of the dwelling that acts as a landscape buffer making a positive

contribution to the local distinctiveness of the area. From my site visit, I did not consider the location of the proposed extension to be particularly distinctive and whilst it does perform a function in providing soft landscaping, it is very modest in size and it is mostly within the appellant's private garden, rather than being part of a publicly landscaped area. Most of the grass verge on this part of the cul-de-sac would remain in place and only the part immediately to the side of the dwelling that would be utilised for the extension. I do not consider the loss of this small area of land to the side of the dwelling to cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. There is no reason why a suitably designed extension cannot have a positive relationship with the surrounding area.

5. The extension has been designed in a subservient manner as it would be set back from the principal elevation and its roof structure set down from the ridge line of the main dwelling. The application form and design and access statement confirm matching building materials are to be used, which will be conditioned for completeness. The design of the extension and use of matching materials would ensure the extension would integrate with the host building and the context in which it would be placed. Consequently, I consider the extension complies with the design-related aims of policies 28S, 29 and 30 of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 (Local Plan).
6. The Council has also raised concerns with the proposed replacement of garage doors with glazed doors, describing this alteration as incongruous. Whilst the garage doors on other dwellings in the cul-de-sac remain mostly unchanged, this does not necessarily preclude this type of alteration. I do not consider additional glazing at ground floor level to be particularly incongruous in this context as many of the dwellings in the cul-de-sac feature bay windows at ground floor level and some dwellings benefit from two sets of ground floor fenestration. Therefore, I consider the introduction of additional ground floor fenestration in this context also complies with policies 28S, 29 and 30 of the Local Plan.

Conditions

7. Having regard to paragraph 56 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the conditions set out above are necessary to ensure that the development is carried out within the statutory time period, in accordance with the approved plans and constructed with building materials to match the existing dwelling.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

J N Seymour

INSPECTOR