



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 January 2025

by **Eleni Marshall BSc (hons) MSc FRICS FAAV MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Y0435/D/24/3352486

4 Station Road, Bow Brickhill, Milton Keynes, MK17 9JW

- 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 Gelder and Miss Gallavan against the decision of Milton Keynes City Council.
 - The application reference is 24/01015/HOU.
 - The development proposed is demolition of the existing detached garage and the erection of part first floor front extension, two storey side extension with saltbox roof and first floor front gable dormers, new front veranda, and expansion of driveway to the front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I have utilised the Council's description of the development as per the decision notice as I feel it more concisely describes the development.
3. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was revised on 12 December 2024 since both the determination of this proposal and the submission of this appeal; however, the key changes are not considered to impact upon the determination of this appeal in relation to the main issues noted below.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the impact of the proposal upon the existing dwelling as well as the character and appearance of the street scene.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is a two storey, semi-detached, dwelling which also benefits from a detached garage located off Station Road. The proposal seeks to demolish the existing detached garage and construct extensions to the host property. As outlined above in the development description, with the two-storey side extension protruding in the region of 4.05 metres in depth and 7.59 metres in maximum height which would align with the east ridge of the host dwelling from the rear elevation. The part first floor front extension would connect the two-storey side extension with two front gable dormers and a new front veranda, featuring a saltbox style front roof with materials to match the host dwelling.
6. At the time of my site visit I found that the surrounding area is characterised by a mix of different types of dwellings including, within the immediate vicinity, symmetrical sets of terraced dwellings and semi-detached dwellings which are relatively similar in design along Station Road. The appeal site is highly visible due

to its positioning in comparison to (forward of) the adjacent row of terraced dwellings with the siting of the proposed extension being fully visible from the side, and front on the approach from Greenways as well as there being views through the site, between the host property and the adjacent terraced row, which contribute to an overall open feeling around the appeal site. The existing pair of dwellings, which the appeal site is a part of, are well balanced and symmetrical in their overall appearance within views from Station Road.

7. It is stated, by the appellant, that the Council have granted planning permission for 46 dwellings (22/02477/FUL) opposite to the appeal site and whilst screen shots, of street scene plans, have been included no further documentation or copies of plans from that application have been provided. I note that it is stated that the approved dwellings have been approved with dormer features, but even if I had found that dormers were, or would be, characteristic of the immediate locality this would not overcome overall concern with bulk, scale, and massing of the proposal itself.
8. The proposed extensions would significantly increase the overall scale of the host dwelling to an extent which I would consider inappropriate in the context of the host dwelling itself as well as taking into account the adjoining neighbour and the immediately surrounding area. At the moment the existing set back at first floor level to the current second bedroom (as labelled on the existing plans), as a result of the flat roofed area, results in the principal part of the dwellings being visually dominant by design as a pair. The two-storey extension would align with the east ridge; however, the proposed front veranda and overall roof design would not appropriately integrate with the existing dwelling and overall, the width of the extension I find would result in a visually disproportionate proposal significantly unbalancing the pair of semi-detached properties.
9. The increased massing, combined with the design features outlined, I find would appear incongruous and not appropriately respond to the host dwelling. The overall appearance of the proposal would present as unsympathetic to the host dwelling and would result in unacceptable harm to the overall appearance of the building and character of the surrounding area which would be visually exacerbated by what I find to be a highly prominent location, widely visible within the immediate street scene.
10. At the time of my site visit I did not find that, within the vicinity, that there were examples of properties which have been extended in such a manner which could be said to be comparable to the proposal in terms of design. I note that the appellant outlines that the saltbox roof would still maintain a hipped roof arrangement, not resulting in a true saltbox roof, and whilst it is stated that there are examples of saltbox roofs evident on Station Road and Greenways, as well as verandas, I do not find that such examples are visually prominent within the locality as would be the case with the proposal that is before me.
11. I noted two of the examples, provided in figure 3, as part of my site visit when driving down Station Road, however, I found these to be some distance away, the other end of Greenways, and the proposals before me would not be viewed in the context of such examples at the other end of Station Road. It is stated that the examples are by no means exhaustive examples in the locale, however, no further information has been provided and whilst I do have examples from my site visit, and the appellant's submissions, of two verandas and one saltbox roof, I do not find that such examples could reasonably be described as a strong characteristic within

the vicinity of the appeal site which is before me nor would they be viewed in the same context as the appeal site.

12. I note the two examples of extensions provided by the appellant within figures 5 and 6 respectively of their statement of case. Whilst permission is stated to have been granted for the extensions in question no further detail has been submitted. The presence of extensions, within the vicinity of the appeal site, is acknowledged including those outlined in purple on figure 1 within the aerial view of the immediate environment. Whilst some of these are noted to have lost symmetry, in the case of the semi-detached dwellings, I do not find that they have resulted in such a significant imbalance in design terms as would occur in the event the proposal before me was allowed.
13. The extension, highlighted within figure 6, is noted as being at the other end of Greenways and whilst its size is not insignificant, I find that the balance of the semidetached dwellings has, to an extent, been retained as a result of the extension having a setback beyond the principal elevation of the pair. This is a contrast to the proposal which I find presents as a disproportionate extension with the combination of roof forms, and dormer windows, being highly visible as a contrast to the host dwelling from the side elevation.
14. I do not consider that the report is contradictory in terms of its statements made as to limited harm to adjoining neighbouring properties. An assessment as to impact upon neighbouring residential amenity relates to neighbouring occupiers and is separate to amenity of the surrounding area in terms of character and appearance and the matters discussed in the context of the main issue of this appeal. Whilst the Case Officer summarises the impact on residential amenity in the context of Plan: MK 2016-2031 Policy D5, this policy is not stated as a basis for refusal albeit I acknowledge Policy D5's reference to the street scene. Even if I had found the proposal consistent with Policy D5 this would not override the conflict with the remaining policies which have been stated within the refusal reason.
15. I note that the appellant outlines that significant weight in the planning balance should be given to what could be erected under permitted development in this position/location without the requirement for planning permission. The presence of a fallback position can be a material consideration, however, the appellant has not outlined or demonstrated in this case, what could be erected beyond the control of the Council to enable any weight to be attributed to this within the determination of this appeal. It is not within the scope of this application, as a full (householder) proposal to determine what may, or may not, be possible under permitted development as a comparison to the proposal that is before me.
16. The proposal is not one which falls to be considered on balance. The starting point for determination of applications is the Local Plan in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. I have considered the proposal before me based upon its own merits and a proposal that is inappropriate as a result of bulk, scale, massing and design for the reasons outlined would fail to meet the environmental objective of sustainable development which seeks to protect and enhance the built environment with the planning system's three overarching objectives needing to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.
17. The proposal would be contrary to Policy D1 which requires that proposals respond appropriately to the site and surrounding context, Policy D2 which requires the

massing/scale of a development and appearance of buildings to exhibit a positive character or sense of place for a development and Policy D3 which requires that the proposed scale and design of extensions to existing buildings relate well to the existing building and do not detract from the character of the existing building and the surrounding area.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons outlined above, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Eleni Marshall

INSPECTOR