



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 August 2025

by **Victor Callister BA(Hons) PGC(Oxon) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/D/25/3367891

38 Marriotts Close, Felmersham, Bedford MK43 7HD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Donald Stevenson against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00808/FUL.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a detached combined pergola and carport located in the front garden.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. As the description of the proposed development varies between the submitted documents, I have used that from the Council's decision notice as this is an accurate and concise description of the proposal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and that of the local area.

Reasons

4. The appeal dwelling is a mid-20th century two storey detached house with front garden with driveway and a larger rear garden. It is located in an area made up of similar detached houses of the same period. Although there have been some alterations and additions to properties in the area, they do not appear to have detracted from the original design of properties, which lends a strong cohesive quality to the street scape and makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the area.
5. The set back of the houses from the street, with mature trees and hedges and the general absence of boundary walls and fences at the front of the houses in the wider local area, affords an open and spacious quality to the streetscene. I note, however that there is a tall fence above ground retaining gravel boards on the boundary of the front garden of the appeal dwelling with the neighbouring property at 40 Marriotts Close (No.40), which appears as a discordant element within the otherwise open and spacious streetscene of this part of Marriotts Close.

6. The proposed combined pergola and carport would be open to all sides with a pitched roof. It would be approximately 5.3 metres long, 4.8 metres wide and 3.8 metres in height, with an approximate height to the eaves of 2.5 metres. It would be located in the front garden and positioned close to the front porch of the house and the boundary with No.40. It would be orientated to sit orthogonally with the appeal dwelling, with its long sides nearest to the house and highway. This would place the proposal approximately 1m from the boundary of the appeal site with the footway to Marriotts close.
7. Although with open sides, the proposal would have a large, pitched roof with fascias. Due to the scale of the proposal, especially the apparent bulk of the roof, as well as its position directly adjacent to and in front of the porch to the appeal dwelling and its proximity to the highway and neighbouring boundaries, it would appear as a dominating and overly prominent addition to the appeal property. In wider views from the street, the scale and mass of the proposal and its positioning within the front garden would appear as a bulky, discordant, enclosing and incongruous imposition into the otherwise open and spacious streetscene of the local area.
8. Therefore, the proposal would not accord with Sections E1 and E2 of the design guidance set out in Bedford Borough Council Residential Extensions, New Dwellings and Small Infill Development Supplementary Planning Document (2000). These collectively advise that extensions to dwellings reflect the detailed character and scale of the original building and harmonise with the street or setting, which, for the reasons given, the proposal fails to do.
9. Although there are examples for some front extensions to houses in the local area, none of these are as large as the proposal and, from observations on my site visit, appear to sit harmoniously with their host property. Further, I find that these extensions do not sit as close to the highway boundary of their respective hosts as the proposal would. As a result, I find that these front extensions do not appear to encroach on the open and spacious quality of the streetscene of the area, and do not therefore provide an exemplar with any great similarity to the appeal proposal.
10. Although the appellant has stated in their appeal statement that the proposal would have a painted metal frame with timber fascias, the planning application form states that the proposal would have fascias and posts in timber painted dark brown. Given the dark brown finishes evident on the main elevations of the appeal dwelling, I find that the dark brown finish to either metal or timber would appear complimentary to that of the appeal dwelling. The visual difference between painted metal or timber would be minimal in this instance and I am satisfied that the specification of material and finish could be satisfactorily dealt with via a condition on a planning permission. In this instance lack of harm with regard to materials and finishes is a neutral factor in my considerations
11. The appellant has brought to my attention a recent planning approval¹ in the Council area for a detached car port, although I have been provided with the Council's decision notice and officer's report, no plans of this approved car port were provided by the appellant, however, the Council provided drawings in response to the appellants submission. The officer's report and drawings show that the proposal, in that instance, was for a carport to be located on a generous plot, that would not be positioned directly in front of the associated dwelling and would not be readily visible

¹ Planning Ref: 25/00676/FUL

from the public domain. Whilst this approval indicates that carports have been approved elsewhere in the council area, the context and circumstances in this instance differ significantly from that of the appeal proposal, which would have been considered on its own individual merits. I have done likewise with the proposal, which is a main tenet of the planning system.

12. For the reasons given above, the proposed development would result in substantial harm to the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and that of the local area. This would conflict with Policies 28S, 29 and 30 of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 (2020) and policy FR5 of the Felmersham and Radwell Neighbourhood Plan 2030 (2022). Amongst other matters, these collectively seek development that is of high design quality in terms of scale, density massing and height and layout, and that respects the context within which it sits and contributes positively to the area's character and identity.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given, the appeal is dismissed.

Victor Callister

INSPECTOR