
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 April 2017

by Mr C J Tivey BSc (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 27 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J0350/D/17/3168496

65 Richards Way, Slough SL1 5TD

- 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 Kashmir Rana against the decision of Slough Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/16780/000, dated 24 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 22 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is for a double storey rear, single storey front and loft conversion, first floor side extension and roof alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a double storey rear, single storey front and loft conversion, first floor side extension and roof alterations at 65 Richards Way, Slough SL1 5TD in accordance with the terms of the application Ref P/16780/000, dated 24 October 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 2. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1522/1, 1522/2, 1522/3, 1522/4, 1522/5 and 1522/6.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal, and specifically the first floor side extension/roof alteration and two storey rear extension upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is situated within a modern residential estate, the immediate locality in which it is located comprises detached houses in a range of designs and forms, including hipped and gable roofs. The subject dwelling has a catslide hipped roof to its northern elevation, which is clearly visible from both the private drive from which the site is accessed and from Richards Way, where it curves around the rear of the site.

4. As it stands, I find that the catslide roof form, with a vast unbroken stretch of tiled roof, appears as a rather incongruent feature in the street scene, as it is overly subservient to the dwelling. I also noted on my site visit that 63 Richards Way has been extended to the rear with a two storey hipped roof, and that 67 Richards Way on the other side has a gable end adjacent to the appeal site.
5. The first floor side extension and alterations to the roof as covered by the second and third reasons for refusal within the Council's decision notice are essentially one and the same. In relation to these elements, the Council's Residential Extensions Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document adopted January 2010 (SPD) in Policy EX13 sets a minimum requirement of a set back of the first floor front wall by at least 1m behind the main front wall; and a subordinate pitched roof with first floor side extensions being set down below the ridge line of a detached house by a minimum of 0.5m.
6. This aspect of the proposal would be set considerably further back than the main front gable elevation of the host dwelling, although I accept that the roof would constitute an extension of the existing ridge line. I acknowledge that SPD paragraph 5.8 states that a set down in the roof when combined with a set back at first floor level on the front elevation would ensure that an extension appears subordinate to the main house, and helps to reduce the 'terracing' effect on the street scene. However, I find that the front elevation of the dwelling, as extended, would be in proportion and there would be no danger of a terracing effect being created with no67 adjacent. I note that SPD paragraph 5.9 stipulates that the requirement for a minimum of 0.5m set down from the existing ridge will only be relaxed if it can be demonstrated that it is not feasible due to technical constraints, and no such constraints have been advanced by the appellant in this case.
7. Nonetheless, I find that the proposed first floor side extension and hip to gable enlargement, including a change in the shape of the roof, whilst not necessarily appearing subservient would appear as a seamless addition that would respect the appearance, scale and overall form of the original dwelling. I accept there would be a change in character to the dwelling, although it would not be too dissimilar to the similar extensions at 59 Richards Way and to other properties within the locality which have been extended since originally built. The proposed roof, whilst at variance to the dwelling as originally constructed, would be respectful of its overall character.
8. The proposed two storey rear extension would extend across the width of the host dwelling. Policy EX21 of the SPD highlights that the maximum permitted depth for a two storey rear extension will generally be 3.3m, this is to ensure that an extension is not too overbearing and to ensure that neighbours maintain a reasonable outlook from their property. However, it goes on to state that deeper extensions may be allowed where site circumstances allow, such as detached dwellings on large plots with good separation from neighbouring dwellings.
9. This element of the proposal would extend beyond the rear elevation of no67 to the north, but I consider that the existing spaciousness of the surrounding built form would not be unduly harmed by this element of the proposal. Therefore, I find that the plot of no65 is large enough to accommodate the dwelling as

proposed to be extended to the rear, with it being viewed within the context of the built form on both sides.

10. I note that the Council makes reference to Policy DP3 of the SPD which highlights that extensions should be designed to be subordinate to and in proportion to the original house. I also note that it states that the widths of extensions should be no more than 50% of the width of the original dwelling, especially in the case of two storey extensions, although it is not clear whether this applies to all forms of two storey extensions or just side extensions. Nonetheless, when viewed from the rear, I consider that the dwelling and its resulting elevation as extended would consist of a good degree of articulation, composed through a number of component parts. Consequently, I consider that the two storey rear extension, designed with a roof pitch and form that would harmonise with the existing dwelling would, by reason of its overall scale, be acceptable in design terms and respectful, not only to the character and appearance of the host dwelling, but also to the wider area.
11. Whilst not included within the Council's decision notice, I also note that reference is made within the Officer's Report to the front extension. SPD Policy EX1 highlights that front extensions will only be permitted if it is considered that they respect the character of the street scene and the design and appearance of the original house. This policy highlights that front extensions shall be single storey and normally restricted to front porches only. The extension would provide a modest front extension to the garage, but overall the width of this element would be approximately half that of the total front elevation of the dwelling as extended. SPD paragraph 3.1 highlights that some relaxation may be acceptable, usually in the case of large detached individually designed properties which are set back at a distance from the nearest highway or other public vantage points. Further, they will only be permitted if it is considered that they respect the character of the street scene and the design and appearance of the original house. I find no direct conflict between the proposal and this advice.
12. Therefore, in conclusion on this matter, I find that the proposal would protect the character and appearance of the area and would comply with the general spirit of the SPD, as well as fulfilling the requirements of Core Policy 8 of the Slough Local Development Framework, Core Strategy 2006 – 2026, Development Plan Document, December 2008 (DPD) and Policies H15, EN1 and EN2 of the Adopted Local Plan for Slough 2004 (LP). These require all development to improve the quality of the environment in a manner that respects its location and surroundings, and where concerning proposals for extensions to existing buildings to be compatible with the scale, materials, form, design, architectural style and proportions of the original structure. This is in addition to the complying with one of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework') which states that planning should always seek to secure high quality design.

Other Matters

13. An issue has been raised by the occupants of no67 regarding the proposal and the effect that it would have upon the light received by their house and garden. The submitted Site Plan identifies a 45° line drawn from the nearest habitable room window on the rear elevation of no67 and I note that the Council states

that the proposal complies with policies in terms of the impact on residential amenities of neighbouring occupiers. I have been given no substantive evidence to come to a different view on this matter.

14. In addition, I note that the Council state that the proposal complies with its car parking standards, and I am satisfied that the provision of an additional bedroom will not materially increase the demand for car parking from the appeal dwelling as extended, either now or in the future.

Conclusion and Conditions

15. Therefore, for the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

16. In addition to the standard time limit condition the Council has suggested a condition requiring external materials to be used in the construction of the extensions to match those of the existing building. In the interests of the character and appearance of the surrounding area, this is an appropriate condition. In addition, for the avoidance of doubt, a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans is also imposed.

C J Tivey

INSPECTOR