
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 August 2017

by Robert Fallon B.Sc. (Hons) PGDipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 8th September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J0350/D/17/3174221
43 Marlborough Road, Slough SL3 7JW

- 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 Ms Uma Sharma against the decision of Slough Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/16863/000, dated 23 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 21 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side and rear extension, single storey rear extension and front porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area
 - living conditions, with specific regard to Nos 41 and 45 Marlborough Road.

Reasons

The appeal site

3. The area is characterised by 2-storey semi-detached dwellings with hipped roofs set on spacious plots. A particularly strong characteristic is the symmetrical elevations of each pair of semi-detached dwellings and the regular open gaps between them, which are typically used for private driveways and garages.

Character and appearance

4. The proposed 2-storey side and rear extension would sit flush at first floor level with the front elevation of the house, extend into the open gap to the side almost up to the boundary with No 41 Marlborough Road and also project out to the rear. This would significantly increase the bulk and scale of the host dwelling and substantially erode the gap between it and No 41. As a consequence, the development would unbalance the existing pair of semi-detached dwellings (Nos 43 and 45) and not appear subservient to the host dwelling.
5. The proposed single storey front extension, which incorporates a new front porch and part of a ground floor study room, would extend across a significant proportion of the front elevation, with it stopping just before the bay window. Its form and scale would dominate the host dwelling and further undermine the symmetry and balance of the existing pair of semi-detached houses.

6. As a consequence, the 2-storey side and rear extension and single storey front extension would be harmful to the architectural character of the host dwelling and wider area. The public views of the development and its relationship with neighbouring dwellings would be clearly visible when approaching from both directions on Marlborough Road, which would intensify this harmful impact.
7. In view of the above, the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area. The development would not therefore comply with Policy 8 of the Core Strategy¹ and Policies H15, EN1 and EN2 of the Local Plan² and the Residential Extensions Guidelines³ which cumulatively require a high standard of design that is in keeping with existing buildings and respects the character of the area.

Living conditions

8. The proposed two storey side and rear extensions have a significant number of windows at ground and first floor that directly face Nos 41 and 45 Marlborough Road, which would compromise the privacy of their occupiers. However, I am satisfied that it would be possible to neutralise this impact by imposing a condition to ensure that these windows were all obscure glazed and non-opening.
9. Although the proposed single storey rear extension would project approximately 12m from the rear of the house, the existing garage which it would replace already extends a significant distance from the rear elevation and in any case, it would be mostly screened from No 41 Marlborough Road by its garage. Although the single storey extension would be higher than the existing garage as a result of its pitched roof, I am satisfied that there would be no harm to the outlook of Nos 41 and 45 Marlborough Road because of the intervening distances, the garage at No 41 and the dividing boundary fences.
10. In view of the above, I have concluded that subject to the imposition of conditions, the proposal would not be harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of Nos 41 and 45 Marlborough Road. This aspect of the development would therefore comply with Policy 8 of the Core Strategy and Policies H15, EN1 and EN2 of the Local Plan and the Residential Extensions Guidelines which cumulatively seek to prevent significant harm to the privacy and visual outlook of occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Other matters

11. The appellant has referred to other dwellings in the area that have been subject to similar developments. However, I am not aware of the particular circumstances where planning permission was granted for these and in any event, I must consider the appeal scheme on its own merits. The existence of these other developments does not therefore justify the harm I have identified.

Conclusion

12. I have found that the appeal proposal would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, subject to the imposition of conditions. This does not, however, outweigh the harm that I have found to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area. The imposition of conditions would not overcome this. In view of this and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Robert Fallon

INSPECTOR

¹ Core Strategy Development Plan Document (December 2008), Slough Local Development Framework

² The Local Plan for Slough, adopted 22 March 2004

³ Residential Extensions Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document, adopted January 2010