
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 August 2019

by Penelope Metcalfe BA(Hons) MSc DipUP DipDBE MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/J0350/D/19/3230965

1 Millington Close, Slough, SL1 5FY

- 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 Costanzo against the decision of Slough Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/16694/001, dated 27 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 6 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is roof extension with loft conversion and rear dormer, relocation of front door to side elevation and front kitchen extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of roof extension with loft conversion and rear dormer, relocation of front door to side elevation and front kitchen extension at 1 Millington Close, Slough, SL1 5FY, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref P/16694/001, dated 27 March 2019, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not 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: 438/18/FUL/PL1001, 438/18/FUL/PL10.00 and 438/18/FUL/PL20.00.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building.
 - 4) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no windows, other than hereby approved, shall be constructed on the south elevation of the development hereby permitted.
 - 5) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no additional extensions or outbuildings, other than hereby authorised or already existing, shall be erected.

Main issues

2. I consider that the main issues in this case are its effect on the character and appearance of the area and on the living conditions of residents.

Reasons

3. 1 Millington Close is a semi detached two storey house in a small cul-de-sac of eight properties within a wider established residential area. The two semis (Nos. 1 and 2) are unique in the Close in that they share a hipped pyramid form of roof rising to a central point. The other houses have a variety of roof forms, including mansard and gabled roofs and three have front dormer windows. Nos. 1 and 2 stand alone on the west side of the street, with the other houses along a staggered building line on the east side. The wider area is characterised by a wide variety of house styles, including detached, semi detached and terraced housing with both gabled and hipped roofs.
4. I consider that the relevant policies in this case include Core Policies 8 and 9 of the Slough Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2006-2026 (the Core Strategy) which require, among other things, all development to be of a high quality of design, to respect its location and surroundings and provide appropriate amenity space. Policies EN1 and H14 of the Local Plan for Slough 2004 (the local plan) also require that development, including residential extensions, is of a high quality of design and provides an appropriate level of amenity space. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document *Residential Extensions Guidelines* 2010 (the SPD) provides additional detailed advice.
5. The proposal would include the alteration of the hipped roof to a gable end facing south and the construction of a pitched roof dormer window facing west at the rear in order to convert the loft into additional living accommodation.
6. The alteration of one half of a pair of semi detached houses from a hipped to a gable roof would not normally be acceptable in terms of design, since it would unbalance the symmetry of the original design and this view is implicit in the advice in the Council's SPD. However, in this instance, I consider that, although the proposed alteration would have a significant impact on the appearance of the building, this would not necessarily be unacceptable. The asymmetry would only be apparent from a short stretch of the Close immediately in front because of the steep angle of the roof and because each half of the building obscures views of the other from either side.
7. The main long view of the building is from the approach into the Close from Lower Cippenham Lane where it appears as a clear vista stop. I consider that the proposed gable end would have a similar impact as a focal point and would reflect the white rendered gabled elevations of No. 8 on the opposite side of the road. Similarly the dormer window at the rear, with its pitched roof, would not appear out of keeping with the various gables and dormers elsewhere in the Close. Although it would not be in proportion with the original roof, the dormer would meet the size criteria set out in the SPD in relation to the new roof.
8. On balance, I find that the limited views of the altered symmetry of the building render the proposal acceptable in terms of its scale, height, design, materials and visual impact and that it would be in keeping with the form and style of the immediate surroundings.

9. The Council has raised no objection to the single storey front extension. I consider that this small addition allowing for the enlargement of the kitchen would be acceptable.
10. I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area and in this respect, it is consistent with Core Policies 8 and 9 of the Core Strategy and policy EN1 of the local plan.
11. The proposal would enlarge the house from three bedrooms to four. Council policy requires all development to provide appropriate amenity space and the SPD sets out minimum guidelines for usable rear garden area. The existing rear garden is approximately 52sqm which is just above the minimum size for three bedroom houses. It falls short of the 100 sqm recommended for four bedroom houses. In my opinion, it seems somewhat excessive to recommend a garden twice the size of that for a three bedroom house simply because of the addition of one bedroom. The garden has a small shed in one corner and appeared on my visit to be a convenient and usable space which would be adequate for most purposes. In view of the proximity of the extensive public open space at Cippenham Green, I consider that the shortfall in the size of the rear garden is acceptable.
12. The occupiers of the adjoining property have expressed concerns that the proposal would result in them feeling an additional sense of being "hemmed in". Their rear garden is small and already affected by an overgrown tree in a neighbouring garden. However, I consider that the proposed dormer would not result in a greater level of overlooking or loss of privacy than exists at present in this fairly densely built up area.
13. I conclude that the proposal would not harm the living conditions of the occupiers of either the appeal property or the adjoining one and that in this respect it is consistent with Core Policies 8 and 9 of the Core Strategy and H14 of the local plan.
14. Residents have also raised concerns regarding the rules relating to the joint ownership and maintenance of the public areas. This is not a planning matter and is not for me to determine.
15. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed.

Conditions

16. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council, having regard to the tests set out in the Framework. A condition detailing the plans is necessary to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and for the avoidance of doubt. A condition relating to the materials is necessary in order to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development.
17. Conditions restricting the formation of additional windows in the flank (south) elevation and the construction of additional extensions or buildings or enclosures in the rear garden are necessary and reasonable to protect the privacy of neighbouring occupiers and to ensure the provision of adequate amenity space for existing and future occupiers of the appeal property.
18. The condition requiring the new windows in the flank elevation to be non-opening and fitted with obscure glass is unreasonable and unnecessary since there is an existing window at first floor level facing the nearest properties at a

distance of over 20m and the proposal would not result in any greater level of overlooking than exists at present.

PAG Metcalfe

INSPECTOR