



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 June 2020

by Rachael Pipkin, BA (Hons), MPhil, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3rd July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/J0350/D/20/3247278

28 Huntercombe Lane North, Slough, SL6 0LG

- 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 Jerry Singadia against the decision of Slough Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: P/06671/003 dated 2 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 28 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'loft conversion through the formation of side roof dormers and front and rear roof lights, with removal of rear extension tiled roof to a flat roof.'
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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 property and surrounding area; and
 - the living conditions of occupants of 26 Huntercombe Lane North, with particular regard to privacy and outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. Number 28 (No. 28) is a modestly sized, detached bungalow positioned at the corner of Huntercombe Lane North and Clare Road. The surrounding area is residential in character with a mix of single and two-storey properties some with accommodation within the roof space. Bungalow development prevails along the south side of Clare Road along which the appeal site has a long frontage.
4. The side dormer extensions due to their size and position, despite being set between the front and rear hipped roofs and below the ridge, would dominate the host property, appearing as incongruous and overly large additions that would fail to integrate with the traditional design of the bungalow. Both the hipped roof features and the symmetry of the existing building would be retained. However, the height and length of the dormers, would make them appear as bulky and disproportionate additions to the roof slopes that would sit

- awkwardly on the roof of the bungalow. The proposed materials and windows would match the existing building, however, whilst providing a consistent appearance, they would not disguise the large size of the dormers.
5. Whilst the property, being single storey and enclosed by a high hedge and fence, is relatively unobtrusive the roof is visible and prominent above the hedge and fence particularly as No. 28 sits forward of the building line along Clare Road. The addition of two large dormers to both main roof slopes would be very prominent on this corner plot, particularly the dormer on the Clare Road frontage which would be widely visible from the surrounding area. Whilst No. 28 has its principle elevation to Huntercombe Lane North, it is nevertheless visible within the street scene of Clare Road and consistent with the bungalow development characteristic of this street. In the context of this road, the roof dormers would be a jarring and incongruous element in the street scene.
 6. The surrounding development is not uniform in terms of design or height. The appeal property is different from those within the immediate vicinity along Huntercombe Lane North including Numbers 24, 26 and 30. However, with the exception of No. 26, these properties do not have prominent dormer roof extensions like the appeal proposal. No. 26 is a bungalow with an unusual asymmetric roof shape and a single side dormer. However, this is positioned significantly below the ridge and does not appear overly large in comparison to the property. Furthermore, it is not prominently visible from the surrounding area. These surrounding developments are not therefore directly comparable to the appeal scheme before me.
 7. I conclude that the proposed development would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with Core Policy 8 of the Slough Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2008 (Core Strategy) and Policies EN1, EN2 and H15 of the Local Plan for Slough 2004 (Local Plan). These policies, together and amongst other things, seek a high-quality design which respects its location and surroundings and is compatible with the existing building. It would also not comply with the guidance set out in the Residential Extensions Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document 2010 (SPD) which requires side dormers to be well designed and not compromise a street's character.

Living conditions

8. The side dormer facing towards No. 26 would be directly opposite an existing rooflight in the steep roof slope of this property. It would be possible for people looking out of the dormer to gain a view directly into the neighbouring property which is only a short distance away. Whilst there is often a degree of overlooking within suburban settings, the proximity of the proposed windows to the window in No. 26 would result in an intrusive form of development and an unacceptable loss of privacy to this neighbour. The sloping nature of this window would not restrict views into this window.
9. The appellant has indicated that he would be willing to obscurely glaze these windows to overcome this harm if considered necessary. Given that the proposed bedrooms in the roof space would have an alternative outlook towards Clare Road, the use of obscured glazing would overcome the harm arising from any overlooking and I would have imposed a condition to secure this had the proposal been acceptable in other respects.

10. Whilst the proposed dormer would add to the bulk of the roof, the space between it and the rooflight to No. 26 would be sufficient to ensure that it would not have an overbearing impact on this neighbour.
11. The lack of objection from the adjoining neighbour cannot automatically be assumed to demonstrate support for the scheme and does not justify the proposal. I therefore give this no weight.
12. I conclude that the proposed development would not harm the living conditions of occupants of No. 26 with particular regard to privacy and outlook. It would therefore accord with Core Policy 8 of the Core Strategy and Policies EN1, EN2 and H15 of the Local Plan. These policies, together and amongst other things, seek a high-quality design which respects and does not adversely affect the amenities of adjoining occupiers. It would also comply with the guidance set out in the SPD which sets out that window positions should not be overbearing and should avoid direct overlooking of neighbouring properties.

Other Matter

13. The appellant has indicated that a fall back position exists in the form of permitted development rights which would allow him to build one of the proposed dormers or, alternatively to construct two smaller ones. Whilst this may be the case, any such scheme as outlined by the appellant would need to be smaller than the appeal proposal before me and would be likely to have a lesser impact on character and appearance than the scheme before me. I therefore give this very little weight.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

14. The proposal would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers at No. 26. However, I have found that it would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of both the host property and the surrounding area. I attach significant weight to this finding which is not altered or outweighed by my conclusions on the other issues. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Rachael Pipkin

INSPECTOR