
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 August 2020

by J P Longmuir BA (Hons) DipUD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/J0350/W/20/3248833
28 Shaggy Calf Lane, Slough SL2 5HH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr T Macpherson against the decision of Slough Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/17350/003, dated 15 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 20 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is 4 no two bed houses fronting Shaggy Calf Lane, following demolition of the existing property at 28 Shaggy Calf Lane.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for 4 no two bed houses fronting Shaggy Calf Lane, following demolition of the existing property at 28 Shaggy Calf Lane, Slough SL2 5HH in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/17350/003, dated 15 May 2019, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions in the schedule of conditions at the end of this decision.

Procedural Matters

2. The appellant's appeal statement explains that plans PT/1577/2 Rev A and PT/1577/3 Rev A were submitted as revised plans to the Council on September 2019. However, they were not listed in the informative of considered plans on the decision notice but have now been confirmed as those considered. These plans reduce the footprint of one pair of semi-detached dwellings by 1.2m and I have considered the appeal on this basis.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The site is on the corner of Shaggy Calf Lane and Grasmere Avenue. The former is lined by trees and has a grassed open space opposite the site. The lane has a discernible building line whereby the houses are set back allowing parking on the frontage. There is also some consistency in the houses with gables in the eaves, plain tiled and hipped roofs and curved arched doorways. The Council suggest that the area has an arts and crafts influence. Grasmere

Avenue appears to be more reflective of 1970s style housing and is more varied in house types and form.

5. The site has a single dwelling which is currently vacant and boarded up. The garden has been cleared. The appeal site together with land to the south along Grasmere Avenue was granted planning permission for redevelopment. Two of these houses, on Grasmere Avenue have been built, but a permitted single new house fronting Shaggy Calf Lane has not been built.
6. The two new houses to the rear, off Grasmere Avenue, have closed off any outward view across the site and similarly the neighbouring dwelling to the east. Consequently, the proposal would not curtail any views.
7. The proposed 4 houses would front Shaggy Calf Lane, in alignment with the neighbouring houses, thereby maintaining the building line. Car parking would also be on the frontage which is again characteristic of the area. Similarly, the proposed semi-detached dwellings would also be reflective of the area
8. I observed on my site visit that there is a variety of the sizes of the gaps between the side of dwellings. Moreover, the lane is not overtly characterised by its residential frontage as the open space opposite the site draws the eye away from the buildings and the houses as are also set back so they are not particularly dominant.
9. The appellant states that there would be a 2.7m gap between the pair of semi-detached buildings. There would be a similar gap to the neighbour to the east. These gaps are sufficiently spacious so that the proposal would not appear cramped. Furthermore, fully hipped roofs would be used which would help the perception of space.
10. The dwellings would have a narrow frontage, emphasised by being limited to a door and window. Consequently, they would be perceived as small.
11. The dwellings would have rear gardens commensurately sized with most modern new housing and there would also be adequate space to the front for car parking. These aspects would also indicate that the development is not cramped, and the proposed 4 houses could be accommodated on the site without harming the area.
12. The proposed detailing of the dwellings would also be significant. Firstly, the fenestration of each semi is orientated towards the centre of the building, which helps break up its form. Secondly the proposal would give a symmetrical arrangement of the doors and windows which would make a simple harmonious appearance. Thirdly, the detailing would reflect the characteristics of the area; curved door arches, and window/wall ratio. The proposed hipped roof and eaves line dormers would also reflect the current building on the appeal site. The proposal would not therefore undermine the coherency of Shaggy Calf Lane.
13. From Grasmere Avenue the proposal would be prominent. However, the new houses would complete the frontage which would otherwise appear discontinuous for no apparent reason. The proposal helps to provide a logical and discernible frontage.
14. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area. Policy 8 of the Slough Local Development Framework

Core Strategy supports proposals which are respectful to the area, The Local Plan for Slough Policy EN1 provides criteria for general design, whilst Policy H13 allows for small scale residential development which is sympathetic to the area. National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) paragraphs 127 - 130 promote quality design in conjunction with The National Design Guide. The proposal would not be contrary to these policies.

Other matters

15. Third parties raise concerns about traffic, but the proposal would not significantly usage of the lane. The site would have good visibility and it would be possible to turn within the site boundary. Privacy is also raised but the dwellings would be within the building line and the new house to the south of Grasmere which backs on to the appeal site has a blank gable. Disturbance during construction has also been raised but the site would be big enough to accommodate building operations and hours of work and noise would be within other controls.

Planning balance

16. Both parties agree that the Council is not meeting its residential land supply requirements. The shortfall in land supply means that there is no presumption in favour of the Development Plan under section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Paragraph 11 (d) of the Framework applies, and criterion (ii) questions whether the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole. Paragraph 8 of the Framework defines the 3 dimensions of sustainable development as an economic, social and environmental role, which in accordance with paragraph 9 should be determined through the application of policies in the Framework.
17. The nature of the proposal would accord with the Framework, and the principle of the new housing here and the detailed proposal would not conflict with any Local Plan policy.
18. The 4 houses here would be significant to help ease the housing land supply shortfall. Indeed, the appeal site is an accessible location being close to everyday community facilities, public transport and employment opportunities. The proposal would bring social and economic benefits.

Conditions

19. The Council recommends conditions which are accepted by the appellant. The Framework at paragraph 55 and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provide the tests for conditions. The standard time and approved plans are helpful for clarity. Materials are important to the character of the area and therefore a condition is necessary. Parking and waste provision are important for the functioning of the development. Conditions to remove permitted development for alterations to houses and outbuildings are suggested. However, the proposed dwellings would be within a building line and would have reasonable garden space, which suggests that there should be scope within the parameters for reasonable alterations; the PPG also states that this is only warranted in exceptional circumstances.

Conclusion

20. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

John Longmuir

INSPECTOR

-----Schedule of conditions-----

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within three years of the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall only be implemented in accordance with the following plans and drawings hereby approved: PT/1577/1 rev G, PT/1577/2 Rev A, PT/1577/3 Rev A, PT/1577/4, PT/1577/5.
- 3) Samples of the walling and roofing shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing prior to the commencement of any external walling. The walling and roofing shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved samples.
- 4) The waste/recycling and parking/turning facilities as shown on the approved plans shall all be provided prior to the occupation of the development and retained as such thereafter.