
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 February 2021

by Adrian Hunter BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/J0350/W/20/3261882
18, Willoughby Road, Slough, SL3 8JH

- 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 WIL Developments Ltd against the decision of Slough Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/03099/003, dated 20 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 19 October 2020.
 - The development proposed is construction of a pair of semi detached houses with parking.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by WIL Developments Ltd against Slough Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. For reasons of precision and clarity, I have taken both the site address and the description of development from the Council's Decision Notice.

Main issues

4. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - The effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the area;
 - Whether the proposal makes adequate provision to reduce the potential for crime and anti-social behaviour; and
 - Whether the proposal makes adequate provision for on-site car parking.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal site comprises a large detached property and its associated substantial rear garden area. The surrounding area is predominately residential, with nearby properties comprising a mix of detached, semi-detached and terrace properties, with a mix of design styles. Properties are generally set within relatively long plots, with the dwellings located to the front of the plot, where they follow a discernible building line. Car parking is predominately on-street, although there are a few instances where off-street

parking is provided. Opposite the appeal site, properties are served by garages at the rear, accessed via a lane.

6. The proposal would introduce a pair of semi-detached properties to the rear of the existing dwelling. The dwellings would be accessed via a driveway in the existing open gap to the side of the host property. Car parking spaces would be provided directly to the front of the units, with each dwelling having a separate garden at the rear. The appeal site would be further sub-divided to provide a new, separate garden area for the host property.
7. The introduction of new development to the rear of the existing properties would be contrary to the well-established pattern of development in the area. As a consequence, it would introduce a form of development that would fail to respect and respond to the established street pattern. It would appear as an incongruous form of development, that would harm the character and appearance of the area. Furthermore, due to the sub-division of the plot, there would be less generous spacing between each dwelling and, consequently, it would appear as a cramped form of development, indicative of over development of the site.
8. For the above reasons, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area and, in this respect, would be contrary to Policies 1, 4 and 8 of the Slough Core Strategy (CS), Policies H13, EN1 and EN3 of the Slough Local Plan (LP) and Paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). These policies, amongst other things, seek development to be of a high-quality design that respects its location and surroundings.

Security

9. Policy 12 of the CS requires all new development to be laid out and designed to create safe and attractive environments. Policy EN5 of the LP requires new schemes to be designed so as to reduce the potential for criminal activity and anti-social behaviour.
10. In their appeal submissions, the appellant has stated that they would intend on providing a secured gated access. Whilst details of the proposed security gates are not shown on the submitted appeal drawings, nor are elevational drawings provided, there would appear to be sufficient space to make provision for gates to create a safe and secure environment. Considering this, I am of the opinion that the matter can be adequately addressed through the provision of a suitably worded planning condition.
11. For the above reasons, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would make adequate provision to reduce the potential for criminal activity and anti-social behaviour and, in this respect, accords with Policy 12 of the CS, Policy EN5 of the LP and Paragraph 127 of the Framework.

Parking

12. Policy 7 of the CS seeks to ensure new development is sustainable and located in the most accessible locations, thereby reducing the need to travel.
13. From the information before me, it would appear that a number of the proposed parking spaces would fall short of the dimensions required to meet the Council's parking space standards. That said, there would appear however

to be sufficient space available within the site, to allow for the provision of sufficient spaces of the required size to accord with standards. On this basis, I consider that the matter could be addressed through an appropriately worded condition, requiring the submission of a parking scheme.

14. For the above reasons, I therefore conclude that the proposal would make adequate provision for off-road car parking spaces and, in this respect accords with Policy 7 of the CS and the Framework.

Other Matters

15. I have been referred to a number of other developments, which the appellant submits are similar to the appeal proposal and provide a precedent to justify the development. I have however not been provided with full detail and background on these proposals, however having reviewed the evidence before me, I find their circumstances to be different from the appeal proposal. In any event, I am required to consider the appeal scheme on its merits.
16. The appellant has referred to the location of the site in relation to local services and facilities. I do not seek to bring this into question, however I do not consider that the benefits of the location of the site are sufficient to outweigh the harm I have found.
17. I note the Council raise no issues in relation to design, bio-diversity, trees or flooding, amongst other things. However, as these are requirements of policy and legislation, the absence of harm in respect of these matters are neutral factors that weigh neither for nor against the development.
18. Residents of neighbouring properties have raised concerns associated with their living conditions, noise and highway issues. However, these matters do not alter the main issues which have been identified as the basis for the determination of this appeal.

Conclusion

19. Although I have found no harm in terms of the impact of the proposal upon crime and anti-social behaviour and parking provision, this would be outweighed by the harm from the other main issue. Therefore, for the above reasons and having considered all matters, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Adrian Hunter

INSPECTOR