



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 November 2024

by Hannah Guest BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/J0350/W/24/3347612

21 Langley Road, Slough SL3 7AE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Sufian Jabbar against the decision of Slough Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is P/00047/001.
 - The development proposed is described as “to part demolish and replace existing dwellinghouse to an 8 bed, 6 bath, double breasted residential dwelling house with a mansard style roof and 6 parking spaces”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The first reason for refusal on the Council’s Decision Notice refers to the appellant having failed to provide plans and elevations for the existing dwelling. I have before me the following plans: 01ELF, 02ELF, 04ELF, 05ELF, 06ELF, 07ELF and 08ELF, which relate to the existing dwelling and include both elevations and floor plans. These plans are listed on the Council’s Decision Notice and within the Officer’s Report as drawings that the application was refused in line with. For the avoidance of doubt, I have determined the appeal based on these submitted plans, as well as my observations on site.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this appeal are the effect of the proposal on:
 - the character and appearance of the appeal property and wider area; and
 - the living conditions of the occupants of the neighbouring properties, with particular regard to privacy and outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. Langley Road comprises primarily of large, detached houses on generous plots. The houses vary in their style and overall dimensions. Nonetheless, the scale of the houses is more consistent, with most being two storeys, some with rooms in the roof. While there is a variety of roof forms, the majority are centred on a traditional pitched or hipped main roof. Gable ends projecting from the front elevation of the houses are also a prevalent feature.
5. The houses are set back from the highway with driveways and parking to the front. There is a mixture of front boundary treatments, including walls,

hedges, and gates. Trees and other planting within the frontages of the houses add verdancy to the street scene.

6. Overall, the variety in the style, form and features of the houses provides visual interest, while the regularity in the scale and set back of the properties, together with the frontage planting creates a spacious and verdant character.
7. Policy H12 of the Local Plan for Slough (2004) (Local Plan) defines 11 to 23 Langley Road as a Residential Area of Exceptional Character. This includes the appeal property. The policy seeks to protect these areas from development proposals that would have a detrimental impact upon the character and amenity of the residential units, including, among other things, as a result of extensions that would change the scale of the property.
8. The appeal property is a reasonably large four-bedroom house with a simple two storey form and a hipped roof. The proposal would significantly change the size, scale, and form of the appeal property. The resulting house would be considerably deeper and taller, and would also appear wider, given that some of the space currently occupied by modest, single storey, flat roofed garages would be replaced with three storeys of accommodation. By virtue of its size, the proposal would not appear as a subordinate extension.
9. The hipped roof of the appeal property would be replaced by a mansard style roof form with a much steeper pitched lower slope and flat top. This allows for a second floor within the roof space. The change in roof form, despite it being reduced 35% in size compared to previous designs, would add a lot of bulk to its profile and, by virtue of its expanse, particularly its height, it would dominate the dwelling, with the ground and first floors appearing squat in comparison. This would be exacerbated by the substantial glazing on the front elevation, which would span the first and second floors, making the resulting house appear top heavy.
10. Accordingly, despite the alterations made to the proposal to address concerns raised in the pre-application advice, it would have a detrimental impact on the character and amenity of the appeal property and would therefore conflict with Policy H12 of the Local Plan. The proposal would also conflict with Policies EN2 and H15 of the Local Plan. These seek to ensure that proposals for extensions of existing dwelling houses are of a high quality of design and are compatible and in keeping with the existing property.
11. Even if the proposal was considered to comprise a replacement dwelling rather than a series of extensions. Policy H12 of the Local Plan would only permit this where the new dwelling is of the same scale as that originally built. Thus, the proposal would still conflict with this policy.
12. The appellant contends that the proposal reflects other houses on Langley Road and is consistent with the current architectural trends in the area. I saw on my visit that there are some recently developed houses on Langley Road of a similar size to the proposal, as well as a few that are bigger. However, irrespective of the overall dimensions of their roofs, none of these houses have such a dominant roof form as that proposed. The slopes of their roofs are not as steep as the proposal and are broken up by forward projecting gable ends. In addition, all the houses have hierarchical patterns of fenestration, with the windows serving the roof space, if any, being smaller in their overall size than those on the floors below. The proposed glazing spanning the first and second

floors of the resultant dwelling, would not only exacerbate the dominance of the roof form but would not be in keeping with this existing pattern of fenestration.

13. Accordingly, the proposal, by virtue of its dominant roof form and the glazing spanning the first and second floors, would appear incongruous in the street scene and would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with Policies EN1 and H15 of the Local Plan and Core Policy 8 of the Slough Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2006 – 2026 (2008). These seek to ensure that development proposals reflect a high standard of design which is compatible with and/or improves and respects their location and surroundings. Also, that extensions to existing dwelling houses do not have a significant adverse impact on the existing street scene.
14. There appears to be a lack of clarity over the materials that would be used for the proposal, with some discrepancies between what is set out in the application form and the Design and Access Statement. Nonetheless, had I been allowing the appeal I would have imposed a condition to address this. In this case, there is a fundamental issue with the proposed roof form and glazing spanning the first and second floors of the resultant dwelling. This would not have been addressed by a specific palette of materials.

Living conditions

15. I saw on site that the appeal property and both the neighbouring properties already have some windows in their flank elevations that directly overlook one another. However, most of these windows are small and some appeared to be obscure glazed. Thus, the privacy of both sets of occupants is not currently compromised to an appreciable degree.
16. The dwelling resulting from the proposal would have significantly more windows in its flank elevations, particularly serving the second floor. These windows would be reasonably large and would serve a variety of rooms including bedrooms.
17. Most of the additional windows would directly overlook sections of the neighbouring properties flank elevations that are currently blank. Nonetheless, I saw on my visit that the proposed first and second floor windows to the rear of the resulting dwelling, which would serve Bedroom V, including a second floor living space, would afford views over the ground floor accommodation of No. 23 Langley Road, allowing direct overlooking of the rear garden space serving this dwelling. This is because the first and second floors of the resultant dwelling would project past the first floor of No. 23 Langley Road.
18. This would introduce a new relationship of overlooking, which would compromise the privacy of the occupants of No. 23 Langley Road, detrimentally affecting the utility and enjoyment of the garden space close to the rear of the dwelling.
19. Notwithstanding this, the resultant dwelling would be set in 1.2 metres from the boundaries with Nos. 19 and 23 Langley Road. Therefore, while it would be noticeable from the first-floor rear windows of these properties, given the resultant dwelling would only project a modest distance past the first floors of the neighbouring houses, even at two storeys it would not be overly dominant or overbearing. Nos 19 and 23 Langley Road have reasonably deep and wide

rear gardens and the proposal would affect only a very small part of the outlook from the first-floor rear windows. Therefore, although there would be a change in outlook, it would not be to such a degree that it would harm the living conditions of these occupants.

20. Accordingly, for the reasons above, the proposal would not harm the living conditions of the occupants of the neighbouring properties with regards to outlook. However, it would compromise the privacy of the occupants of No. 23 Langley Road, which would result in moderate harm to their living conditions. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policies EN1, H12 and H15 of the Local Plan in this regard, which seek to ensure that proposals for extensions do not result in a significant adverse impact on the amenity of adjoining occupiers.
21. In terms of living conditions, Policy EN2 of the Local Plan deals with loss of sunlight and overshadowing rather than privacy or outlook. It is therefore not applicable in this regard.

Other Matters

22. I note the Council's concern regarding the two mature trees that have been removed from the frontage of the appeal property during the application process. While these trees are not shown on any of the submitted plans, it appears that they were removed to facilitate the installation of a new frontage as part of the appeal proposal. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that some harm has arisen from their removal as a result of the appeal proposal. Nonetheless, while I sympathise with the Council, the appellant did not require permission to remove these trees. In this case, I am dismissing the appeal for other reasons, and I have not considered the harm arising from the removal of these trees as part of the planning balance.

Conclusion

23. Overall, I have found that the proposal would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupants with regards to outlook. Nevertheless, it would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area. It would also result in moderate harm to the living conditions of the occupants of No.23 Langley Road with regards to privacy.
24. The proposal would have some modest benefits arising from the improved living space within the dwelling. However, these benefits would neither outweigh nor address the harm I have identified. The proposal would therefore conflict with the development plan read as a whole.
25. Having had regard to all relevant material considerations, it has not been demonstrated that there are any of sufficient weight to indicate a decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with it. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Hannah Guest

INSPECTOR