



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 January 2025

by **John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J0350/D/24/3352055

22 Maryside, Slough, SL3 7ET

- 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 Zaid Al-Juboori against the decision of Slough Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is P/20520/000.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a part rear infill ground-floor extension, part rear first-floor extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. There is a discrepancy between the planning application form and the appeal form over the spelling of the appellant's name. I have recorded it in the banner heading above as it was spelt on the application form. I am satisfied that this is merely a typographical error and that the applicant and appellant are one, and the same, person.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effects of the proposal upon: - (i) the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area, (ii) highway safety and free flow of traffic with regard to parking provision, and (iii) the living conditions at the appeal property with regard to amenity space provision.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal property is a mid-terrace, two-storey dwelling set within a wider residential neighbourhood which includes other similar style and aged terraces. The plot backs on to a rear service road and garage parking forecourt. The terrace is staggered such that the attached property at 20 Maryside is stepped back in relation to the appeal property, which in turn aligns with the attached property to the other side at No 24. No 22 has an existing single-storey rear extension across its full width. This has a step to its rear elevation, projecting deeper along the shared side boundary with No 24. The proposal seeks to square the ground floor extension by infilling the corner of the existing adjacent to No 20, and constructing a shallower first-floor extension above, across the full width of the property.

5. The Council's *Residential Extensions Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD) was adopted in 2010. Its stated purpose is to principally provide additional guidance on how to interpret and implement Core Policy 8 (*Sustainability and the Environment*) of the Slough Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2006 – 2026 (CS), adopted in 2008, when assessing extensions to residential properties. SPD paragraph 1.2.6 states that the ultimate aim of the guidance is to ensure that the residential areas within Slough remain good places to live and are not adversely affected by inappropriate extensions. Specifically, Design Principle 3 (DP3) advises that extensions should be subordinate to and in proportion to the original house. It goes on to state that they should not dominate the original building and that this can be achieved by, amongst other things, reducing the width of extensions to typically no more than 50 percent the width of the original dwelling, especially in the case of two-storey extensions.
6. The SPD deals with two-storey/first-floor rear extensions at section 7.0. Its detailed design guidance at EX26, EX28 and EX29 states between them, amongst other things, that two-storey and first-floor rear extensions should be subordinate to the original dwelling, that they should respect the original form of the house, and that flat roofs will not be acceptable.
7. The ground floor extension would merely square the existing building's footprint, creating a more uniform addition at this level. The depth of the proposed first-floor addition would be reasonably shallow. However, it would span the full width of the property such that the combined extensions would subsume and obscure the entirety of the dwelling's original rear façade. Having regard also to its flat roof and incongruous angled side elevation, deliberately chamfered to avoid any unacceptable impact upon the outlook from No 24, I find the proposal would be neither subordinate, proportionate to, nor respectful of the original dwelling's form. As such it would represent a form of development the SPD specifically advises against. As a typical terraced house amongst many similar properties in the immediate locality, I can see no specific reason the Council's guiding principles should be set aside in this instance.
8. Additionally, whilst situated to the rear, the first-floor extension would not be out of sight but openly visible in views from the adjacent service road, which is publicly accessible, as well as from adjoining rear gardens.
9. Overall, I find that the first-floor extension would be seen as a dominant and unsympathetic addition that would be visually intrusive and harmful to the character and appearance of the appeal property, the terrace, and the wider area. By failing to follow the SPD's guiding principles, the proposal would not display the quality of design needed to appropriately reflect the local distinctiveness of the area. As such it would conflict with Part 2 of Core Policy 8. For the same reasons there would be conflict with Policies H15 (*Residential Extensions*), EN1 (*Standard of Design*) and EN2 (*Extensions*) of The Local Plan for Slough (LP), adopted in March 2004, as well as the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) for achieving well-designed places.

Highway Safety

10. The appeal property is an existing three-bedroom dwelling with forecourt hardstand to the front sufficient to accommodate two parallel parked cars. The appeal proposal shows the property extended to a four-bedroom dwelling. The Council's

car parking standards require three parking spaces for a four-bedroom dwelling within a predominantly residential area. The extended property would thereby fall short of the Council's normal parking requirements.

11. During my visit I observed some capacity on the surrounding roads and designated parking areas for sensible and safe parking. I also observed space on many private forecourts, where they existed. Whilst just a snapshot in time, it is reasonable to assume that many other cars returning to their home destinations during the evenings would use legitimate parking spaces where available. I have noted the Council's suggestion that parking occurs on pavements and street corners, however I have been provided with no substantive evidence to support this, or to show that it is both prevalent and hazardous. I am mindful also of the flexibility built into the Council's standards where LP paragraph 8.62 states that relaxations may be allowed where dwellings are being extended to a size that would normally require an additional space.
12. When all of this is considered, and also taking into account that the appeal may theoretically create need for only one additional parking space to be accommodated, I find on balance that the proposal would not result in any impact that would be harmful to highway safety or to the free flow of traffic. As such, there would be no conflict with CS Core Policy 7 (*Transport*), LP Policy T2 (*Parking Restraint*), or the Framework which between them seek to ensure that highway safety is secured for users of new and existing development. I am also satisfied that there would be no adverse visual impact from vehicles parked on the road upon the environment and residents' amenities, which Policy T2 also seeks to protect.

Living Conditions

13. Section 11.0 of the SPD deals with garden space and boundary walls. Its detailed design guidance EX48 states that rear extensions will not be permitted unless, for four-bedroom + houses, the usable retained rear garden has a minimum depth of 15m, or where that cannot be achieved, a garden size 100sqm or above.
14. The Council points out that the appeal property has an existing usable rear garden space that measures just 29sqm. This is already below the minimum size of 50sqm required by the SPD for a three-bedroom property. The extension would erode the overall size of the garden further, albeit by just a small margin, whilst at the same time expanding its bedroom capacity to four. Once more, the proposal would represent a form of development the SPD specifically advises against.
15. Although the garden would be regular in shape, it would be very small when judged against the Council's standards and when compared with the garden sizes of other similar properties in the area. In my assessment, its restricted size would severely impact its function as a meaningful and useful outdoor amenity area that would be suitable to serve a family sized dwelling.
16. Overall, I find the reduced and restricted size of the rear garden resulting from the proposed extension combined with the increased size of the dwelling unit would be harmful to the living conditions of future occupiers at 22 Maryside. By failing to follow the SPD's guiding principles, the proposal would not display the quality of design needed to provide a practical and attractive living environment. As such it would conflict with Part 2 of Core Policy 8. For the same reasons there would be

conflict with LP Policy H14 (*Amenity Space*) as well as the Framework's aims and objectives for achieving well-designed places.

Other Matters

17. I have noted the concern expressed by an adjoining occupier. Notwithstanding my findings with regard to the outward appearance of the proposal, in terms of their depths and heights there would be compliance with the SPD's detailed guidance for both single-storey and first-floor extensions. I share the Council's view that there would be no harm to the living conditions of any adjoining occupiers.
18. I note the appellant's willingness to amend the proposal but I am required to determine the appeal based upon the plans that were submitted to and determined by the local planning authority. I have had regard to the appellant's assertion that the increased living space would contribute to a housing need for family accommodation, but any advantage there may be from this is outweighed by the harms that I have identified.

Conclusions

19. Notwithstanding my findings with respect to highway safety, I find the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of 22 Maryside and the wider area, and to its occupants' living conditions. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR