



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: 13th February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J0350/D/24/3352064

34 Mendip Close, Slough, SL3 8UB

- 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/20542/000.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single-storey rear extension 4m depth, and 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) the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers at Nos 33 and 35 Mendip Close, with particular regard to visual impact, privacy and light, and (iii) highway safety and free flow of traffic with regard to parking 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 terrace is staggered such that the attached property at 33 Mendip Close is stepped back in relation to the appeal property, which in turn aligns with the attached property to the other side at No 35. The proposal seeks to erect a single-storey, flat roof extension and a shallower first-floor flat roof 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 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 single-storey rear extensions at section 6.0. Its detailed design guidance at EX20 and EX21 states between them that the maximum depth for a single-storey rear extension on a terraced house, as measured from the rear main wall of the original house, is 3.65m, and that the maximum height for a flat roof extension abutting a residential boundary is 3m. 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 project 4m from the rear wall of the dwelling, exceeding the Council's normal guidelines. The depth of the proposed first-floor addition would measure 3m. Although this would comply with the maximum depth permitted by SPD detailed design guidance EX27, 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 35, 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 be openly visible from the public domain in oblique views across the rear gardens of the terrace from Mendip Close to the west and Cheviot Road to the east, as well as from adjoining rear gardens.
9. Overall, I find that the combined ground and 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 National Planning Policy Framework's (the Framework) aims and objectives for achieving well-designed places.

Living Conditions

10. Due to the staggered relationship between the appeal property and No 33, neither the ground nor first-floor parts of the extension would project far beyond the rear elevation of this neighbouring property. The depths of each part would comply with the Council's normal guidelines as far as they seek to minimise any potential impact on neighbours due to bulk and impact on light.
11. The chamfered flank wall of the first-floor extension adjacent to No 35 would enable a technical compliance with the SPD's 45-degree code when projecting a line on the horizontal plane from the neighbour's nearest habitable window. However, by exceeding the normal permitted depth of 3.65m, I consider that the ground floor extension would unreasonably impose itself as having a visually dominant and overbearing presence when seen in the outlook from the neighbouring original rear facing, ground floor windows, and from within the lightweight glazed conservatory extension that I saw added to the rear.
12. I am not persuaded by any evidence that levels of daylight or sunlight to any habitable spaces or the garden at No 35 would be affected to any significant degree. However, due to the depth and proximity of the single-storey extension, I find the proposal would appear visually intrusive and harmful to the living conditions at No 35. To determine if a single-storey extension could be constructed to this depth as permitted development, an application would need to be made to the local planning authority to see if prior approval would be required. I am not aware of any such application being made.
13. No windows are proposed to the flank elevations of the proposal. As such, any outlook from the extension would be directed over the appeal property's rear garden and only obliquely across neighbouring plots. This would not generate any additional overlooking beyond the existing arrangement and what is normal in a typical residential environment.
14. Overall, the harm that I have identified means that there would be conflict with LP Policies EN1 and EN2 as far as they seek to ensure that new development safeguards the amenity of adjoining occupiers.

Highway Safety

15. The appeal property is an existing three-bedroom dwelling with a forecourt hardstand to the front for a single parked car. The appeal proposal shows the property extended to a four-bedroom dwelling. The Council's car parking standards require two parking spaces for a three-bedroom dwelling and three spaces for a four-bedroom dwelling within a predominantly residential area. The proposal would normally require the provision of an additional parking space, with the extended property overall falling short of the Council's normal parking requirements by two spaces.
16. 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 been provided with no evidence from the Council to suggest that the area suffers from unreasonable parking stress that affects highway safety or the free flow of traffic,

either from the existing parking shortfall at No 34, or more generally. 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.

17. 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 beyond the existing arrangement, 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 saved 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.

Other Matters

18. I note the appellant's apparent 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 34 Mendip Close and the wider area, and to the living conditions at No 35. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR