# Slough residents protest after Planning Inspectorate overturns council on care home loft conversion



Residents of a quiet residential area in Slough have expressed outrage following the Planning Inspectorate's decision to approve retrospective planning permission for a loft conversion that many locals believe is out of character for the neighbourhood. The property, which is currently operated as a care home, underwent significant modifications that were previously rejected by Slough Council. This approval has ignited concerns about future developments and the implications for local planning regulations.

In October, Slough Council had denied the application for several extensions, deeming them 'detrimental to the character, appearance and visual amenities of the surrounding area.' The council's stance was rooted in the concerns that the alterations would disrupt the aesthetic unity of the residential zone, particularly as Slough is home to areas designated as Residential Areas of Exceptional Character (RAEC). These classifications aim to preserve the unique architectural qualities of such communities, often restricting developments that may disturb the visual landscape.

Despite these initial refusals, owners Macadamia Support appealed the decision. The Planning Inspectorate ultimately sided with the applicants, arguing that the modifications did not significantly harm the property's visual coherence with the broader environment. The inspector stated that the changes constituted merely an 'alternative amalgam' of prior permissions granted for the property, highlighting that the final structure maintained significant features of a traditional residential home despite its altered silhouette.

However, local residents are far from convinced. Many describe feeling watched and disturbed by new side dormer windows that overlook their properties, disrupting their privacy and peace. One neighbour passionately articulated their frustration, stating, "The frequent switching of lights during the evening hours disrupts my sleep when my bedroom doors are open." This sentiment echoes throughout the community, with concerns surfacing about noise levels and general disturbances associated with the care home's operations.

Critics of the decision fear it sets a troubling precedent for the area. One local expressed the worry that this case will encourage other homeowners to bypass planning regulations, leading to uncontrolled developments and a degradation of the residential environment. "It's the precedent that it sets," they remarked, underscoring the collective apprehension among neighbours that the integrity of their community could be compromised.

The planning debate highlights broader issues within Slough's regulatory landscape. Earlier cases of planning enforcement have shown a reluctance from the council to permit retrospective adjustments without prior approvals, as illustrated by other residents who have faced legal action for unapproved extensions. In one instance, a homeowner was fined over £40,000 for illegally constructing an extension and subsequently renting it without necessary permissions. Such enforcement has often led to significant financial penalties and legal complications, raising questions about fairness in how planning applications are adjudicated.

As discussions continue, the Slough Borough Council has publicly expressed disappointment with the Inspectorate's ruling. A spokesperson stated, "The council is always disappointed when a Planning Inspector finds differently to the council’s planning decisions." This reflects a growing tension between local governance and overarching planning bodies that challenge community consensus on property developments.

Residents are now left grappling with the implications of this decision, questioning the effectiveness of local planning regulations and their capacity to manage development in a way that respects the character of their neighbourhood. With planning appeals becoming a common feature in Slough, the community anxiously watches as the evolving landscape of their homes continues to change in ways they feel are out of their control.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14687821/Our-neighbour-built-extension-without-permission-allowed-people-want.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.slough.gov.uk/news/article/121/illegal-extension-fine-for-homeowner> - In September 2021, Terence Hunt was fined £6,000 and ordered to pay £1,535 in costs after failing to comply with a planning enforcement notice for an unauthorised first-floor extension in Cippenham. The council had advised that the extension breached planning control and was unlikely to receive retrospective permission. Despite an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate, the enforcement notice was upheld, requiring the demolition of the extension and reinstatement of the property to its original state. Magistrates emphasized the homeowner's responsibility for the case and the associated costs.
3. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cdxvl822xgeo> - In October 2024, Slough councillors approved retrospective planning permission for extensions to the Wexham Road home of Ejaz Ahmed, a Slough councillor and cabinet member. The extensions deviated from the original approved plans and included an outhouse not in the initial scheme. The council had issued an enforcement notice, and Ahmed applied for retrospective approval. Due to his position, the decision was made by the planning committee, which voted to approve the application, acknowledging the deviations and the need for retrospective permission.
4. <https://www.sloughobserver.co.uk/news/19602820.illegal-extension-costs-slough-homeowner-thousands-pounds/> - In March 2022, Saghir Malik was fined over £40,000 after illegally building and renting out an extension in Slough. Malik constructed the extension without planning permission and rented it as a separate dwelling. After being served a planning enforcement notice in October 2018, Malik appealed, but the appeal was rejected. In March 2022, he pleaded guilty to failing to comply with the enforcement notice and was ordered to pay £31,914.35 under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, a £6,000 fine, and £4,000 in costs.
5. <https://www.sloughobserver.co.uk/news/24657879.defeat-slough-plan-extensions-terraced-home/> - In October 2024, a property owner in Slough faced a setback when their plans for extensions to a terraced home were rejected. The council's planning department initially refused the application, citing concerns that the proposed extensions would not fit into the character of the area and could lead to parking issues. The owner appealed the decision to the government's planning inspectorate, but the appeal was dismissed. The inspector concluded that the rear extension would be an unsympathetic addition, harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
6. <https://www.sloughobserver.co.uk/news/24615767.government-overturns-slough-borough-council-planning-refusal/> - In October 2024, a government planning inspector overruled Slough Borough Council's refusal of planning permission for a two-storey house behind 47 The Myrke in Datchet. The council had previously rejected the application, stating it would be cramped and overdeveloped. However, the inspector found that the revised design, which reduced the house's length and width, provided a larger buffer between the proposed dwelling and neighboring properties, ensuring it would not appear cramped. The inspector concluded that the proposal would sit comfortably within the plot and not represent overdevelopment.
7. <https://www.sloughexpress.co.uk/news/planning/199258/owners-of-controversial-six-storey-flat-block-appeal-councils-demolition-order.html> - In December 2024, the owners of a controversial six-storey flat block in Slough appealed a council order to demolish the building, which had been constructed without planning permission. Slough Borough Council had issued an enforcement notice demanding demolition, but the owners appealed to the Planning Inspectorate. The council expressed confidence in defending its decision, stating that the appeal would fail. The Planning Inspectorate was set to make a final decision after a hearing scheduled for the following year.