

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 January 2022

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/D3640/D/21/3287644

25 Castle Road, Camberley, Surrey GU15 2DS

- 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 Mr Massimo D'Antonio against the decision of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref. 20/128/FFU, dated 24 December 2020 was refused by notice dated 3 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is a double storey side extension; double storey extension above garage; single storey side extension, and single storey rear/side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a double storey side extension; double storey extension above garage; single storey side extension, and single storey rear/side extension at 25 Castle Road, Camberley, Surrey in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. 20/128/FFU, dated 24 December 2020 and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development to which this permission relates shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this decision;
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development shall be carried out in full accordance with the Arboricultural Method Statement ('the AMS') dated 6 July 2021 and the following approved plans including all notes and annotations thereon: Drawing No. Series 1431: Plan Nos: 100; 111; 112A; 115A; 116A; 120; 121; Arboricultural Impact Assessment: Arbtech AIA 01; Tree Protection Plan: Arbtech TPP 01.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are (i) the effect of the proposed extensions on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, its setting and the Castle Road street scene, and (ii) the effect on protected trees.

Reasons

3. On the first issue, the Council's concern is one of the proposed first floor extension's lack of subservience to the host dwelling and a loss of spaciousness
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to the overall appearance of the plot from Castle Road. At first sight the submitted plans might be construed as illustrating an extension clearly too large for the house. However, the plans and in particular the elevations provide a false impression.

4. This is not a result of the drawings being of a poor standard or being incorrect, indeed they are of a good quality and accurate. However, due to a combination of a significant proportion of the first floor extension being behind the existing dwelling's main front elevation and the inevitable limitations of two dimensional drawings, the visual impact of the proposal from the public realm would be far less than it ostensibly appears. Even in private views, the proposed front elevation as drawn would not be seen in the form it appears on the submitted plans.
5. In these circumstances a CGI would have been appropriate, but the much more limited impact is in fact demonstrated by the appeal document's photograph of the building's front elevation annotated by a red line showing the extent of extension as it would be seen from Castle Road. And essentially the addition would do little more than add a first floor to the existing ground floor footprint, which for the most part currently accommodates a family room and double garage.
6. The ridge would be set down from the host dwelling to achieve an element of subordination. Moreover, whilst in most settings the extension's angle relative to the house might well be regarded as being unacceptably contrived, the proposed addition's position tight to the rear boundary of an area with mature trees on private land would effectively disguise the variation from the more conventional perpendicular addition to achieve an L - shaped building.
7. The siting close to the boundary would also prevent the development resulting in a noticeable loss of spaciousness on the plot. And whilst I note the Council's objection to the external staircase, this means of escape is by no means an uncommon feature on large dwellings in large plots, and I do not regard its visual impact as having any significance. I additionally note the appellant's point that permission was granted for an above-garage extension of not dissimilar size to a dwelling of the same design at No. 29, and that this would be more prominent in views from Castle Road than the appeal scheme.
8. On the first issue, the deciding factor is that when seen from Castle Road and the plot entrance, the first floor extension would not draw the eye as looking out of place. It would appear as being both proportionate and of an appropriate design in relation to the host dwelling. There would therefore be no adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, its setting and the Castle Road street scene.
9. Turning to the second issue of the effect on trees, I have noted the comments of the Council's arboricultural officer. However, there are no new foundations to be dug and provided the appeal scheme is carried out in accordance with the details and constraints shown in the AMS and on Drawings Arbtech AIA 01 and Arbtech TPP 01, I do not consider that the proposed tree works would noticeably harm amenity.
10. Similarly, in respect of any future pressure for tree work, this is unlikely to significantly increase as the proposal consolidates rather than extends the

footprint of the existing built form. In relation to other specific concerns of the Council, the amenity of this low-density area is in large part afforded by the particularly verdant landscape. In my view this would not be materially altered by the proposal's effect on the trees.

11. On a final point I am satisfied that given the position of the extension on the plot and the surrounding tree and hedge cover, there would be no loss of privacy for occupiers of the nearby houses.
12. For these reasons my overall conclusion on the proposal is that I see no harmful conflict with Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012; the principles of the Western Urban Area Character SPD 2012 & the Surrey Heath Residential Design Guide 2017, and Section 12: 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.
13. I shall therefore allow the appeal. A condition to secure external matching external materials will safeguard visual amenity, whilst a condition stipulating that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans is needed for the avoidance of doubt and is in the interests of proper planning. This condition will additionally serve to safeguard the nearby trees and, as in the case of the materials, maintain the amenity of the site.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR