



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 June 2022

by Rebecca Thomas MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/D3640/D/22/3294123

Heather Hills, New England Hill, West End, Woking GU24 9PY

- 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 Peter Wynter Bee against the decision of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/1177/FFU, dated 27 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 21 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is Provision of new double garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and permission is granted for provision of new double garage at Heather Hills, New England Hill, West End, Woking GU24 9PY in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 21/1177/FFU, dated 27 October 2021, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 2101/200, 201, 202, 204, 205.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the area, in particular with regard to the impact on (i) the existing building and (ii) a non-designated heritage asset.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is an existing parking and undercroft storage space associated with the main house, Heather Hills. The existing storage space is a red brick building set in the slope of the hill, with green painted timber detailing which matches that of the main house. There is a side stair access to the ground level where the garage access would be provided. The existing ground floor level consists of red brick pillars to two sides with close board fencing between. The aspect facing the lane is open, although the rear brick pillars and fence can

- be seen across the courtyard parking area. The development would infill these spaces with red brick to match, and cover over the existing parking space, providing a flat roof with two timber garage doors and a personnel door.
4. Heather Hills is located off Red Road, accessed via an unmade rural lane through woodland. There are a number of detached dwellings in the immediate vicinity and the area is characterised by the cluster of residential dwellings, many which include ancillary buildings and garages. Indeed, the appeal site includes the existing undercroft storage area. The provision of a covered garage at the existing parking spaces would require the increase in height of the existing structure, however the single storey proposal as seen from the lane would not result in a dominant or incongruous development.
 5. The Council raises concern about the size of the proposed garage, however the plans show that this can be retained within the existing footprint of the existing piers and fencing and storage building below. There would be an increase in brick wall as seen from the eastern elevation, however this would only be glimpsed from the lane. In addition to this, the proposal would add interest and continuity through the provision of the timber windows, as well as parapet coping details to match those at the existing house. The function of the building would be clearly legible as seen from the lane as a result of the garage doors, and proximity to the main house. Whilst I accept that the setting is rural and set within woodland, the context of the development alongside an existing dwelling, in a location with other dwellings and associated outbuildings would not harm the character and appearance of the local area.
 6. For the reasons set out above I conclude that the proposed development would not result in an incongruous feature and would not detract from the rural appearance and character of the area. Accordingly I find no conflict with Policy DM4 of the Core Strategy¹ which expects, (amongst other things) that development would not have a detrimental impact on the rural character through siting or design and should not be disproportionate in scale to the original dwelling. The development would also accord with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), relating to achieving well designed places.

Non-designated heritage asset

7. The building has been identified by the Council as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA). The Framework is clear that the effect of an application on the significance of a NDHA must be taken into account and that a balanced judgement will be required with regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.²
8. The Framework advises that applicants should be required to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. The appeal documents include a Heritage Impact Assessment and the conclusions on this are not disputed by the Council. Nonetheless the Council concludes that the proposed development would result in a structure which would be prominent on the approach to the dwelling from Red Road and would contrast with and detract from the setting of the existing house.

¹ Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (February 2012)

² Paragraph 203

9. Whilst I accept that the appeal property has architectural interest, and indeed the appellant has provided a little of the history and origins of the house, the proposal would be an addition to the existing modern structure which exists. I have concluded above that the proposal would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the main house and the local area and as such would not result in harm to the significance of the heritage asset or its setting. With the above in mind, the characteristics and the appearance of the NHDA would be preserved. The proposal would therefore accord with Policy DM17 of the Core Strategy which confirms that regard will be had as to whether a heritage asset is a Designated Heritage Asset or a Local Heritage asset in assessing impacts of any proposed development.

Conditions

10. As well as the time limit condition, I have specified the approved plans for certainty. In the interests of the character and appearance of the NDHA, I have imposed a condition requiring that all external facing materials match the existing.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above and subject to the conditions attached, I allow the appeal.

Rebecca Thomas

INSPECTOR