

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 October 2022

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28TH November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/D3640/D/22/3303846

1 Habershon Drive, Frimley, Camberley GU16 9TN

- 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 Alex Constantine against the decision of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref. 22/0103/FFU dated 4 February 2022 was refused by notice dated 11 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is demolition of garage; erection of detached garage; two storey side and rear extension and new vehicular access.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the streetscene.

Reasons

3. I saw on my visit that the host dwelling is a corner property and on a triangular shaped site, with not only the front garden but also the large side garden contributing to the open plan design of the estate development which forms part of 'Contemporary Paved Estate' Housing Character Area as outlined in the Council's Western Urban Area Character SPD 2012 ('the WUAC').
 4. In my view, the combination of these factors forms a significant constraint on the potential for an extension to meet the space needs of the appellant's family. However, those needs rather than the limited capacity of the plot appear to be the major determinant of the design and scale of proposed two storey extension. In particular, the extension would appear as being 'tacked on' to the host dwelling rather than properly integrated with it.
 5. The harmful effect of this awkward juxtaposition between the existing building and the addition would be increased by the inconsistent roof design, including the dormer element to the front. I acknowledge that the dormer would line in with the existing first floor windows but the extension's significant set-back precludes the addition being read with the dwelling as a visually coherent entity.
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6. Furthermore, whilst I acknowledge that the ridge and eaves of the extension have been set down in the design to achieve an element of subservience, the size of the footprint and the massing of the two storey addition would run counter to this. The outcome would be an extended building of a poor design that would appear not only somewhat contrived and too large for the host dwelling, but would also harmfully erode the open character of this prominent part of the estate.
7. These outcomes would be in clear contravention of a number of important principles in both the aforementioned WUAC and the Council's Residential Design Guide 2017 ('the RDG'). In the former, Guiding Principle CP1 says that new development should pay particular regard to the maintenance of space between and around buildings and CP2 advises that the erosion of existing gaps that help give an open feel and appearance to the estate will be resisted. In the RDG, Principles 10.1 & 10.3 have very similar objectives.
8. I have carefully considered the grounds of appeal and the appellant's personal statement. As regards the former, although other extensions nearby have been cited as precedents, the site characteristics are not the same as in this case and I also do not necessarily agree that they are examples that should be followed. In respect of the statement, I do recognise that the existing house is of a modest size and that there are good reasons why the family wish to stay in the area, thereby supporting the argument for extra living space. However, I do not regard this case as being sufficiently finely balanced for these considerations to prevail over a development that in my view would draw the eye as being clearly inappropriate for its setting.
9. Overall, I conclude that the appeal proposal would have an unacceptably adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the streetscene. This would therefore conflict with Policy D9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document 2021; the Council's RDG, and Section 12: 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' of Government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.
10. For these reasons the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR