

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 October 2023

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

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 12 December 2023**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/D3640/D/23/3326239**

**6 College Close, Camberley, Surrey GU15 4JU**

- 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 H Garrick against the decision of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
  - The application, Ref. 23/0111/FFU, dated 1 February 2023 was refused by notice dated 22 May 2023.
  - The development proposed is a double storey side extension.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a double storey side extension at 6 College Close, Camberley in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. 23/0111/FFU, dated 1 February 2023 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 development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Scheme Ref. AD4771: Sheet 1: Location Plan; Existing Floor Plans and Elevations; Sheet 2 Rev. C: Site Plan; Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations.
  - 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 and shall be first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
  - 4) Before first occupation of the development hereby approved, the first-floor window in the rear elevation serving the en-suite shall be completed in obscure glazing; shall not include any opening below 1.7m above the finished floor level, and thereafter retained as such at all times. No additional openings shall be created in this elevation.

## Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the two-storey side extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings.
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## Reasons

3. The appeal dwelling is a hipped roof, detached two storeys building on the eastern side of the cul-de-sac of College Close in Camberley. There is an attached garage to the side and the appeal scheme, as amended, includes a proposal for the garage's demolition and the construction of a full depth, 3.2m wide side addition with an eaves height and hipped roof to match that of the existing building.
4. The Council's objections are twofold. Firstly, the design of the two-storey extension is considered harmful by its failure to be set back from the existing front elevation and set down from the ridge. As a result, it is considered the scheme would fail to read as a subservient addition to the host dwelling and would thereby have an adverse impact on its character, contrary to the Council's Residential Design Guidance ('the RDG').
5. The principle of a two-storey side extension being both setdown and set back is well-established and almost certainly included in the residential design guidance of all local planning authorities. However, it is equally correct to observe that such guidance needs to recognise (as does the RDG in paragraph 1.10) that *'the principles set out ..... may not be applicable in all situations.*
6. The appeal scheme is in my view a case in point, because the appearance of the elevations (and necessarily the more important front elevation) would be read as comprising a coherent visual entity similar to that of an original house design of some merit, rather than - as the Council alleges - an unsympathetic enlargement to a smaller building. This is the result of the combination of the double floor bay, the unifying effect of the horizontal tiled projection, the central position of the recessed porch, and the symmetry of the proposed first and ground floor front windows.
7. The merits of the Council's second objection are more apparent because College Close is a suburban residential road where the openness of the street scene is in part a result of the space around the detached buildings. And in combination with the greenery of the good-sized front gardens and the mature trees to the rear it is important that the gaps between the houses are not subject to an unacceptable cumulative terracing effect as a result of side extensions.
8. However, the grounds of appeal point out that a number of similar additions to the appeal scheme have been permitted by the Council over the last couple of decades or so. And notwithstanding the evolution of policy referred to in the officer's report, this has somewhat changed the character of College Close compared with the original C20th street scene. With that said, the proposal would in any event leave a gap of 2m to No. 4 and the development would be confined to increasing the built form above the existing garage rather than extending the existing footprint.
9. As such, the development would be in keeping with the other extended houses in the cul-de-sac but in my view, it would have an additional advantage. No. 4 has a flat roof extension extending to eaves level. And in contrast to the likely effect of the appeal proposal, it draws the eye because of its non-compliance with design guidance principles. However, by infilling some of the space

between Nos. 4 and 6, the first-floor side extension would to some degree reduce the prominence of the adjacent extension and improve the street scene.

10. Overall, on the main issue I find that the development would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings. Accordingly, there would be no conflict with Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and Section 12: 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

### **Other Matter**

11. As part of the application process an objection was received on behalf of the occupier of No. 4 College Close as regards the effect of the development on their light and privacy. However, I note that the matters raised have been dealt with in detail by the officer's report and I agree with the conclusion that there would be little if any impact on the living conditions for existing and future occupiers of No. 4.

### **Conclusion**

12. For the reasons explained the appeal is allowed. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is needed for the avoidance of doubt and is in the interests of proper planning. A condition stipulating matching external materials will secure a harmonious form of development, whilst a condition precluding views from the rear ensuite window will safeguard privacy.

*Martin Andrews*

INSPECTOR

