



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 January 2025

by Elaine Benson BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D3640/D/24/3348668

105 Mitcham Road, Camberley, Surrey GU15 4AW

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Matthew Allnut against the decision of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/0260/FFU.
 - The development proposed is first floor side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Council described the proposal as 'first floor side extension to include a rear raised platform with balustrade to access external staircase, and insertion of 2 new windows'. I consider that this wording more accurately describes the proposed works, and the appeal proposal has been determined on this basis.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property (No 105) stands on a triangular plot at the end of a row of similar terraced houses within a post war housing estate. A path at the side of the house between No 105 and No 103 leads to Esher Road behind. This area contains a parking area, the rear gardens of other houses and blocks of flats. Beyond the road is a woodland area which is part of the designated 'Countryside Beyond the Green Belt' and the 'Penny Hill Conservation Site'.
5. The proposed extension would be narrower at the front of the house due to the shape of the plot and would continue the lines of the host dwelling and the terrace. Given the arrangement of the housing around the bend of Mitcham Road and the pathway to the side of No 105, the wedge-shaped design of the extension would not be apparent in the oblique view from Mitcham Road.
6. The gap between No 105 and No 103 is formed principally by the pathway running between them and its width would be retained. As the space above the existing garage would be developed, there would be some loss of openness at first floor level. However, due to the orientation of the properties, the loss of the first-floor gap

would not have a significant impact on the openness of the area at the front of No 105. I am satisfied therefore that there would be no conflict with the Council's aims to retain space between properties and their boundaries. Moreover, the proposal would not unbalance the appearance of the terrace as a whole as it has no particular symmetry, having regard to the shape of the appeal plot, No 105's front extension and its garage.

7. However, at the rear, the extension would extend across the width of the garden and would more than double the width of the existing property. The disproportionately large extension would appear out of keeping within its context. It is also proposed to add a balcony-like platform and an external staircase, both of which would appear incongruous. The area to the rear of the appeal site provides clear views of the back of No 105 from the public realm. Within this context, the rear of the extension would harm the appearance of the host property and its wider setting. The appellant states that the external staircase would provide a good access whilst also serving as an alternative fire escape. It is not entirely clear why this would be required for this householder development, but it is nevertheless insufficient justification for a development of unacceptable design.
8. The appellant considers that other developments in the locality have considerably more impact on the street scene than the appeal proposal and that they set a precedent for the proposal. However, I saw nothing that resembled the appeal proposal and, in any event, poor design is not a sufficient justification for allowing further unacceptable development that would further contribute to this harm. The appeal proposal has been determined on its individual merits.
9. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the proposed development would harm the appearance of the host dwelling and would appear incongruous within the context of the rear of the site. The appeal proposal therefore fails to comply with the design principles of Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012, which, in summary and of relevance to this appeal, requires the design of development to respect its local character. There would be further conflict with the aims of principles 10.1 and 10.3 of the Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2017 which, in summary, require extensions to be subordinate and consistent with the design characteristics of the host building and which indicate that over-dominant and out-of-keeping developments are to be resisted. Furthermore, the proposal would not comply with the aim of guiding principle PC1 of the Western Urban Area Character Supplementary Planning Document 2012 which requires development to respect the simple architecture of the post-war Council estates. Of the policies referred to by the Council, I consider these are the most relevant to the appeal proposal.
10. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

Elaine Benson

INSPECTOR