



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 February 2025

by **John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D3640/D/24/3353232

122A Hurstwood Manor, Upper Chobham Road, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 1EJ

- 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 Tal Belnik against the decision of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/0545/FFU.
 - The development proposed is described as '*Construction of 2 storey side extension, pool house and car port*'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for Costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Tal Belnik against Surrey Heath Borough Council. This is the subject of a separate decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the appeal property and wider area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a detached dwelling set on a large irregular-shaped plot and positioned at the end of a private access which leads south from Upper Chobham Road and which is shared with two other detached houses on similarly large plots to the north-east, and the grounds and buildings of Carwarden House Community School to the south and west. The site lies within the Western Urban Area (WUA) of the borough and is part of the Wooded Hills Housing Character Area (WHHCA) as defined within the *WUA Character Supplementary Planning Document* (Character SPD), adopted in 2012. The immediate setting of the appeal property reflects the semi-rural appearance of the wider WHHCA as described within the Character SPD and identified to be derived from key character features, including the area's winding narrow roads, its low-density development with large irregular plots, vegetated front, rear and side gardens, and a dominance of dense and mature vegetation which imposes an overall soft and green character.
5. Due to the topography of the area, the appeal property is split level, with accommodation arranged over four floors including at a lower ground floor level and a loft storage area at second-floor level with two rear facing dormer windows. The dwelling's front elevation appears conventionally two-storey, with a single-

storey, double-width garage attached to the side. With land levels falling steeply away from the dwelling to the rear, the rear façade is exposed as a three-storey elevation. The proposal would effectively project the existing form of the dwelling sideways, over and beyond the attached garage, which would be engulfed by an extension that would provide accommodation over four floors. The lower ground floor would have internal access to the existing lower ground floor space and would be linked to a single-storey swimming pool extension that would project deep into the rear garden to create a new L-shaped floorplan for the dwelling overall. New ground floor accommodation would have its own front entrance but would be linked internally with the existing dwelling. New accommodation at first and second floor would be contained within and accessed exclusively from the extension. The *Planning Statement* which accompanied the application described the proposal as creating a four-bedroom annex. A treble width car port is also proposed towards the front corner of the site nearest to the boundary with the neighbouring school grounds.

6. The appeal property is a large, contemporary dwelling set within a fairly secluded, but by no means remote location, and which sits comfortable on its plot with space to the side, not only between the flank wall of the attached garage and the side boundary with the school to the south-west, but also at first-floor level over the garage to the side of the dwelling's main bulk. The openness and sense of space that is created by the dwelling's existing size and position is observed in the vista along the approach road leading from the busy Upper Chobham Road, where a strong verdant backdrop of mature trees is fully appreciated, achieving an important balance for the site between its natural and built forms. These combine to reflect the low density and wooded character of the WHHCA more widely.
7. The extension would be undeniably large, adding considerable sprawl and significant bulk to the existing plot. Whether it could be considered to be a clearly subordinate addition is moot. Regardless, it would create a remodelled dwelling which would span the significant majority width of its plot at full height. Although existing boundary vegetation would be unaffected, when viewed on the approach from the main road, a vast expanse of solid built form would become visually dominant in the view, with an obvious erosion of the void to the side of the existing dwelling. This would noticeably detract from the area's spacious and verdant qualities. The absence of any meaningful gap between the sides of the dwelling and the plot's boundary means that the building would also appear cramped in its setting and out of keeping with the recognised and established low density character of the area.
8. I am not persuaded that the second front entrance would give the impression of a semi-detached pair, or that the annexed form of the accommodation proposed would affect how the extended building would be perceived. The pool extension would be large and deep, but it would be low rise and set at a low level, largely out of sight from beyond the enclosed confines of the site, with ample garden space surrounding it. I also agree with the Council's view that the car port would be visually acceptable in its setting.
9. Nevertheless, by reason of the side extension's height, width and overall scale and bulk, the proposal as a whole would result in a loss of space to the side of the dwelling. As a result, it would fail to maintain the spacious and verdant qualities of the site and wider area. This would be contrary to the prevailing development

pattern of detached homes in generous plots with large side gardens, and harmful to the area's distinctive character and appearance. The proposal would represent a type of residential development guiding principles WH1 and WH2 of the Character SPD, along with the similar guiding principles 10.1 and 10.3 of the Council's *Residential Design Guide* SPD, adopted in 2017, all advise against. Consequently, the proposal would not display the quality of design that Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy & Development Management Policies 2011-2028, adopted in February 2012, requires in order for it to respect or enhance the local and natural character of the environment. For the same reasons there would be conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework's objectives for achieving well designed places.

10. The appellant has pointed to examples in the area where properties have been extended or redeveloped and makes judgements upon their suitability and compliance with local and national planning policies and guidance. However, I have been presented with little or no information relating to any of these examples and am therefore unable to draw any comparisons with the appeal proposal, which in any event has been considered on its own merits.
11. I appreciate that the proposal would make space to accommodate the appellant's extended family. However, there is no information before me to suggest that the scale or nature of the development proposed would be the only means of achieving this. Neither this, nor the absence of any objections from interested third parties alters my findings.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR