



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 April 2025

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D3640/D/25/3361961

57 Queensway, Frimley Green, Camberley, Surrey, GU16 6QB

- 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 Robin Fairclough against the decision of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/1001/FFU.
 - The development proposed is described as 'proposed studio for use by the main house'.
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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 area.

Reasons

3. The appeal concerns a detached, two-storey dwelling located in a road comprising similar dwellings. It is located in a triangular shaped plot, with a garden to the rear and a large triangular shaped garden to the side. There is a high, mainly beech hedge with a 1.8m high closed boarded fence on its inside, running along most of the boundary of the site with Queensway. The large side garden of the dwelling contributes to the spatial and landscape quality of the area.
4. The proposed outbuilding would provide accommodation for a family member. The building would be positioned within the side garden and would sit on higher ground than the existing dwelling. It would be sited forward of the main dwelling, with a set back from the front boundary of the site by about 0.5m.
5. The proposed building would be partly screened by the existing hedge, particularly when the leaves are fully out during summer months. However, with an eaves height of about 2.25m and a ridge height of around 3.5m, the building would be of a bulk and scale that would be clearly visible from Queensway and from the dwellings on the opposite side of the road, through and above the existing vegetation.
6. Whilst it is not unusual for ancillary outbuildings to be provided within side or rear gardens, and indeed I observed that there are others in the local area as highlighted by the appellant, the proposed building would be particularly large in size and scale, with a length of about 9.9m, taking up a significant proportion of the side garden and running parallel with the front boundary of the site.

7. As a result of a combination of its length, height, and siting significantly forward of the principal elevation of the main dwelling, the proposed building would appear as an unduly prominent and incongruous addition to the street scene. Furthermore, as a result of its overall size and prominence, it would detract from the contribution the side garden of the dwelling currently makes to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. This would be contrary to guiding principle PO1 of the Council's Western Urban Area Character Supplementary Planning Document 2012 (the Western Urban Area Character SPD) and the objectives of principles 10.1 and 10.2 of the Council's Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017) (the Residential Design SPD).
8. I acknowledge that the outbuilding would be used as accommodation for a family member and the importance of this to the appellant and his family. The proposal would also enable the family member's existing two storey home to be used by a family which is a positive aspect of the proposal. However, these considerations do not outweigh the harm that the current proposal would cause to the character and appearance of the area.
9. Furthermore, I do not consider that the adverse effects of the proposed building on the street scene could be adequately mitigated through additional planting owing to the proposal's proximity to the front boundary of the site and lack of space for meaningful planting.
10. For the above reasons I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would be contrary to Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and Policy DH1 of the emerging Local Plan 2019-2038. Together, and amongst other things, these policies seek high quality design and for development to respect and enhance the local, natural or historic character of the environment, paying particular regard to scale, materials, massing, bulk and density. It would also be contrary to the guidance set out in the Western Urban Area Character SPD and the Residential Design SPD.

Conclusion

11. For the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Davis

INSPECTOR