

Conservation and Design Comments	
Application Ref:	21/00031/FUL
Address:	1 Burgh Heath Road Epsom Surrey KT17 4LW
Proposal:	Change of use of existing Care Home (Use Class C2) and creation of 11 new flats (Use Class C3) including extensions to the existing building.
Case Officer:	Euan Cheyne
Date:	24 February 2021
Consultee:	Lance Penman

Context:

1 Burgh Heath Road is in the Burgh Heath Road Conservation Area. It faces into the junction with Downs Road and the surrounding buildings are predominantly late C19 and early C2, mostly substantial detached or semi-detached Edwardian red brick houses. In this context the building is part of the historic character of the conservation area and is therefore part of its significance. It is identified as a positive building in the conservation area on the conservation area appraisal map, as are all but one of the buildings on this junction.

Though this area has had a number of properties converted to more commercial, it is still primarily of residential character relating to other developments in the Burgh Heath Road Conservation Area. This is in contrast to the more commercial, public buildings as well as some houses and the Church in the Church Street Conservation Area and closer into the Epsom town centre. It is therefore important that development at this junction relate to the existing character and not take this as an opportunity to extend the character of development to the north.

Comments:

The proposed development will significantly extend the massing of the existing Edwardian building and the new addition to the Northwest would add greater bulk than the existing building itself, which would not be subordinate to it. But the link between the new and old parts is narrow and extends to the top of the building resulting in the two parts appearing as one asymmetric buildings with the historic part as subordinate.

The scale of the two elements of the building both the existing and the proposed are too great for the street pattern and the gaps between them and their neighbours and between each other undermines the street pattern. These gaps are very small and cramped for buildings on the frontage of this streetscape of substantial detached and semi-detached well-spaced villas.

The South-eastern extension onto the original house is too close to the neighbouring property and the new block is much too close to the

neighbouring 67 Church Street. It is also considerably taller, the front of No. 67 is a small gabled bay that is lower than the rest of the pitched roof behind it, all of which is lower than this proposed development that is not taller closer to the street at its highest and in very close proximity to its existing neighbour. This step up would result in an unsympathetic skyline.

The proposed extension is wider than the existing house undermining any possibility of repeating the rhythm of the frontage. It is slightly forward of the building line of both the existing house and 67 Church Street. The single and more repetitive façade would give it a dominating and monolithic presence on the street which is not a part of the more varied and changing articulation of this street. This would all result in the main extension being an excessively dominant frontage.

Except for the red brick the extension does not relate to the adjacent buildings or others nearby. And despite the central set back this connects directly with the front face of the top floor undermining the visual separation of the existing building with the extension is insufficient to street pattern and clear building width to relate to the street pattern of the rest of Burgh Heath Road.

Recommendation

Because of the excessive scale, relative height of the roofline next to 67 Church Street, the forward alignment and repetitive design, this proposal would be harmful to the significance of the conservation area. It fails to conserve and enhance the conservation area as required by policy DM8, does not make a “positive contribution to the Borough’s visual character and appearance” (policy DM9). and is unsympathetic to the:

- “(i) prevailing development typology, including housing types and sizes;
- (ii) prevailing density of the surrounding area;
- (iii) scale, layout, height, form (including roof forms), massing;
- (iv) plot width and format which includes spaces between buildings;
- (v) building line” (policy DM10).

As the proposal is not subordinate to the existing building its scale and relationship should stand in its own right not to overwhelm this building of historic significance, but it is not satisfactorily detached from it or related to it in scale or design. And therefore recommend that the application is refused on design and conservation grounds.