



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 August 2025

by **B Astley-Serougi BA(Hons) LLM MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/D/25/3367584

Long Ridge, Arrow Lane, Hartley Wintney, Hook, Hampshire RG27 8LR

- 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 & Mrs Dineen against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00258/HOU.
 - The development proposed is erection of an oak framed three bay garage with office within the roofspace.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Applications for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr & Mrs Dineen against Hart District Council. This application is subject to a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. I have used the description of development contained within the appeal form and Decision notice in the banner heading above for clarity.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and
 - the effect of the proposed development on trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

5. The proposed development would be located in the front garden of Long Ridge, which is a large detached residential dwelling. The front garden is slightly elevated when compared to the level of the public highway. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character with many of the dwellings set back considerably from the road.
6. Due to the set back of many of the dwellings on Arrow Lane, there is a clear building line. The proposed development would be considerably forward of the building line and therefore would be a conspicuous addition when viewed in the streetscape.

7. Furthermore, the appeal scheme would be relatively large in scale and massing, especially given the proposed dormers for the office space. This would be exacerbated given the slight elevation of the garden land from the road. Consequently, despite the mature hedgerow and boundary treatment as well as the choice of generally sympathetic external materials, it would remain an overly dominant addition.
8. I do not know the full circumstances of other structures such as garages on Arrow Lane that are set forward from the building line of the main residential dwellings and therefore cannot be certain that they are wholly comparable to the appeal scheme before me. Notwithstanding this, the garages are generally perpendicular and close to the main dwelling, whereas the appeal scheme would be parallel to the main dwelling and sited close to the front boundary. Consequently, the other structures referred to by the appellant do not justify the harm I have identified associated with the appeal scheme.
9. Given all of the above, the appeal scheme would result in harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with Policy NBE9 of the Hart Local Plan Strategy and Sites 2032 (the HLPSS) and Policy GEN1 of the Hart Local Plan (replacement) 1996-2006 Saved policies (the HLP). These Policies seek, amongst other things, to ensure developments are of a high-quality design and assimilate with the local character of the area.

Trees

10. Two of the trees (referred to as T4 and T6) are located in the front garden of Long Ridge and are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's). Whilst the removal of T4 would not result in unacceptable harm given its limited contribution to visual amenity, T6 is proposed for retention.
11. The submitted Arboricultural Development Statement dated April 2025 including a Tree Survey Report dated February 2025 (the ADS) highlights that approximately 35m² or 18% of the theoretical root area would be impacted by the proposed development. Proposed mitigation outlined in the ADS includes specialist low-impact foundations, fit-for-purpose ground protection and supervised construction within the Root Protection Area. Furthermore, that the health of T6 would not be compromised by the proposed development.
12. Based on the evidence before me, I am satisfied that the proposed mitigation measures would be sufficient to prevent unacceptable harm to T6. It therefore would comply with Policies GEN1 and CON8 of the HLP and Policy NEB2 of the HLPSS insofar as they seek to ensure that developments do not harm trees.

Other Matters

13. Whilst I acknowledge that the appellant wishes to have an enclosed garage to store their classic vehicles due to the overhanging protected TPO trees in the neighbouring property which pose a risk from falling limbs, this is the appellant's personal preference and does not justify the appeal given the harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
14. A lack of objections from the occupants of neighbouring dwellings or local residents is a neutral factor in this case.

15. I note the appellant has suggested that they are willing to reduce the height of and design of the upper floor of the appeal scheme. There are no plans before me adequately demonstrating an alternative design for the appeal scheme. Nevertheless, the procedural guide for planning appeals advises that the appeal process should not be used to evolve a scheme as it is important that what is considered by the Inspector at appeal is essentially the same scheme that was considered by the local planning authority and by interested parties at the application stage.
16. Regarding the informal pre-application advice received by the appellant in 2024, the Council is not bound to abide by the advice, nevertheless I have assessed the appeal on the evidence before me.

Conclusion

17. Whilst I have found the proposal to not harm trees and in particular T6, it remains that the appeal scheme would result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Thus, the proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

B Astley-Serougi

INSPECTOR