
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 August 2025

by **E Catcheside BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D3640/W/24/3357813

14 Tekels Park, Camberley, Surrey GU15 2LF

- 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 Quintessentially Surrey Ltd against the decision of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/1276/FFU.
 - The development proposed is demolition of bungalow to be replaced by 4 bedroom dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal documents include a bat survey report (BSR) which was not before the Council when it determined the application. During the appeal process, the Council consulted with Surrey Wildlife Trust and has subsequently confirmed that it agrees with the findings of the BSR and that it no longer contests the second reason for refusal. The BSR does not alter the scheme proposed and I am satisfied that no prejudice is caused in me accepting and taking account of the BSR in my decision. Based on the evidence presented, I find no grounds to conclude that the appeal scheme would result in harm to bats. Accordingly, I have determined the appeal on the basis that reason for refusal 2 is no longer applicable.
3. The emerging Surrey Heath Local Plan 2019 - 2038 has been submitted for examination, and it is therefore at an advanced stage of preparation. However, the examination hearings have not yet commenced which leaves considerable uncertainty as to the status of any unresolved objections and the degree to which the emerging policies may change. I have not been directed to any particular circumstances that indicate there are emerging policies that would fundamentally change the approach to the main issue in this appeal. Consequently, I have considered the proposal with regard to the statutory development plan.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. 14 Tekels Park is one of a small number of dwellings accessed via a narrow track from Tekels Park. Like other properties along the track, the existing dwelling is sited within a large, irregularly shaped, and heavily wooded plot with extensive

undeveloped space around the building. The narrowness of the track, combined with the mature tree coverage and loose grain of the dwellings, contributes to the distinctively verdant and semi-rural character of the area, which is typical of the Wooded Hills Character Area (CA) as it is described in the Western Urban Area Character Supplementary Planning Document (May 2012) (WUAC).

6. The Council does not oppose the delivery of a contemporary style replacement dwelling on this site, and I see no reason to disagree given the wide variety in building styles in the area. However, the two-storey building proposed would be significantly larger than the existing bungalow, introducing substantial additional built form at both ground and first floor levels across most of the width of the site. Although the site boundaries are not marked by fencing, the existing dwelling and its garden and driveway areas are well defined by woodland and protected trees, most of which would be retained. The increased scale and proportions of the replacement dwelling would significantly reduce the space between the building and those trees than exists at present, and it would bring the built form closer to neighbouring properties to the north and east. As such, the proposal would fail to accord with the Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (September 2017), which expects new development to reflect the spacing, height, and footprint of existing buildings.
7. The site does not lie on a public through-route or footpath. However, notwithstanding its proposed materials, the new dwelling would appear unusually prominent in views through the trees from the access track and neighbouring properties due to the combined effect of its width, height, bulk, and overall massing. By occupying space that currently allows for views through the site towards trees and garden areas, the building would diminish the verdant character that is distinctive to this location. Moreover, the absence of views from public vantage points does not negate the need to secure a design that is sympathetic to local character, as this is a clear requirement of the development plan as well as the National Planning Policy Framework, the National Design Guide, and the Planning Practice Guidance.
8. During my site visit, I observed the relatively tight-knit developments that have become established near to the site on Texels Avenue, Dunmar Gardens and Walled Garden, and I have had regard to those developments insofar as they form part of the character of the wider area. I have also taken account of the data and mapping information provided that shows some nearby dwellings, including 6 Tekels Park, and 22 and 24 Tekels Avenue, have less side or rear space than the proposed development would provide. However, the same information also shows that the total side space that would be retained on the appeal site would be significantly less than most properties in the immediate area, and it would be substantially reduced from the current scenario.
9. Moreover, and notwithstanding the layout and density of nearby developments, the appeal site continues to make a positive contribution to the Wooded Hills CA and shares many of its defining features including its spacious plot. The erosion of these features would run contrary to the guiding principles for the CA as outlined in the WUAC. Whilst the application of the WUAC principles is not a mandatory requirement, the principles are nonetheless relevant considerations, particularly given that Policy DM9 of the Core Strategy & Development Management Policies 2011–2028 (Adopted February 2012) (CSDMP) requires development to reflect

and incorporate design and character measures that are set out in either general or area-specific supplementary planning documents.

10. Overall, I conclude that the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, there would be conflict with Policies CP2 and DM9 of the CSDMP which expects development to be of a high-quality design that respects and enhances local character and the quality of the built environment.

Other Matters

11. Since the planning application was determined, the Council has provided pre-application advice and has considered a subsequent application for a replacement dwelling on the site. The evidence suggests that the other schemes considered by the Council are not directly comparable to the appeal proposal including in terms of its footprint and scale. Therefore, I do not find them to be pertinent to my decision.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.

E Catchside
INSPECTOR