



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 October 2025

by **R Sabu BA(Hons), MA, BArch, PgDip, RIBA, ARB**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/25/3370868

15 Copse Hill, Purley, Croydon CR8 4LL

- 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 Caphall Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref is 25/00846/FUL.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage, erection of detached bungalow at rear with access path, associated parking and cycle and refuse stores/presentation area.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. As the appeal form states that the description of development has changed from that stated on the application form, I have taken the description from the appeal form in the banner heading above.

Main Issues

3. During the appeal, the Council confirmed that it no longer contests the reasons for refusal relating to protected species and Biodiversity Net Gain. Therefore, the main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area; and
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area with particular regard to the trees subject of a provisional Tree Protection Order (TPO).

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. Copse Hill is a residential street comprised primarily of two storey detached dwellings in generous plots. The dwellings in the area have varied forms in predominantly traditional styles. Backland development and tandem development may be a feature of suburban areas. However, the prevailing pattern of development in the area surrounding the site is linear with ample gardens and spacing such that the area has a pleasant spacious and verdant feel.
5. The proposal is for a single storey dwelling at the rear of No 15 Copse Hill (No 15). The resulting plot at the rear of No 15, and the remaining plot at the existing dwelling would both be significantly smaller than the surrounding properties. As

such, both dwellings would appear overly large for the size of the plots, harmfully departing from the prevailing linear and spacious pattern of development. The scheme would therefore unacceptably diminish the spacious character and appearance of the area.

6. There would be limited views of the single storey building from the street scene. The proposed parking would be at the front of No 15 and the proposed bungalow would be smaller than No 15 and some distance from the rear of the existing house. However, the proposed dwelling would be significantly larger than common outbuildings in the wider area and would be visible from the rear of other properties. Therefore, the proposal would harmfully detract from the spacious quality of the surrounding area.
7. Consequently, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, it would conflict with Policies D3 and D4 of The London Plan The Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London March 2021 (London Plan) and Policies SP4 and DM10 of the Croydon Local Plan 2018 (LP) which together seek, among other things, high quality design and proposals that respond to the existing local character.

Trees

8. The site and adjacent woodland is covered by a provisional Tree Protection Order. A Beech tree noted as T7 in the Tree Constraints Plan (TCP) stands alone on a grassed area within the rear garden of No 15. It is a significant height and appears to be in good condition. Therefore, given its size, health and position, it provides a significant contribution to the visual amenity of the area.
9. A number of trees within the woodland lie near the boundary with the site such that their canopies and Root Protection Areas (RPAs) extend into the site. The trees are generally a significant height and are in good health such that they provide a pleasant verdant character to an otherwise suburban setting. As such they provide a significant contribution to the visual amenity of the area.
10. No trees are proposed to be removed as part of the scheme. However, a number of concerns were raised by the Council regarding the effect of the construction phase of the proposal on the retained trees.
11. The location of underground services has not been confirmed. The likely route of underground utilities may fall within the RPA of a number of trees including tree T19 which lies near the boundary. No detailed mitigation has been proposed to alleviate the risk of damage to trees in this respect. Therefore, in the absence of evidence to demonstrate otherwise, the proposal would result in harm to the trees and visual amenity of the area. As such, the character and appearance of the area would be adversely affected by the proposal.
12. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment indicates that, during construction, material would be stored on ground protection boards within the RPA of the Beech tree within the site. However, there is also a site storage and working area at the front of the site and parts of the site that do not lie within the RPA of trees. Accordingly, I see no reason why a suitably worded condition relating to further construction details could not mitigate any risk to the tree in this particular respect during the construction phase.

13. Given the limited scale of the existing garage, its removal could be carried out without harming nearby trees and could be secured via a suitably worded condition.
14. The front elevation of the proposed dwelling would be in close proximity to the RPA of tree T7. Accordingly, it is likely that works to construct the front elevation would include activity within the RPA. The use of ground protection boards has been proposed that may partially alleviate this risk. The front elevation would fall outside the RPA of the tree and the canopy of the tree would be some distance from the proposed front elevation. Therefore, I see no reason why a suitably worded condition could not secure additional mitigation measures to further alleviate any risk of harm to the tree.
15. The trees in the woodland generally have canopy areas at the boundaries of the site and the Beech tree on the site leaves a substantial proportion of the proposed garden space free of tree canopy. Therefore, the pressure to prune trees would not be to such a degree that the visual amenity of the area would be unduly affected.
16. Consequently, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area with particular regard to the trees subject of a provisional TPO. Therefore, it would conflict with London Plan Policy G7 and LP Policies DM10 and DM28 which together seek, among other things, to retain existing trees of value where they make a contribution to the character of the area.

Other Matters

17. The proposal would contribute a dwelling to the local housing supply and there would be some temporary economic benefits during the construction phase. I also note evidence regarding local need for family homes. Given the limited scale of the proposal, I attribute limited weight to these matters. The proposal would include Biodiversity Net Gains in excess of statutory requirements which carry moderate benefit. However, given the unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area as identified above, these matters do not alter my overall decision.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above, the proposed development would conflict with the development plan as a whole and in the absence of material considerations to indicate otherwise, the appeal is dismissed.

R Sabu

INSPECTOR