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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2026

by **Barry John Lomax MPLAN (Hons) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd January 2026

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**Appeal Ref: APP/C1435/D/25/3376324**

**Rystwood Cottage, Hartfield Road, Forest Row RH18 5LZ**

- 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 Duncan Hamilton against the decision of Wealden District Council.
  - The application Ref is WD/2025/1570/F.
  - The development is described as Proposed detached 2 bay garage with store over.
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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

#### *Character and Appearance*

3. The appeal site is located within the settlement of Forest Row, within the High Weald National Landscape. It lies within a residential area and is accessed from Hartfield Road. Hartfield Road exhibits two distinct character areas. To the south, which is where the appeal site is located, properties are generally large, set within spacious plots and positioned well back from the highway. Substantial mature vegetation and boundary treatments provide a high degree of screening, resulting in these properties being largely obscured from public vantage points. In contrast, properties to the north of Hartfield Road are typically smaller, set closer to the highway, and although some boundary planting is present, it affords noticeably less screening. Consequently, development on the northern side is considerably more prominent in views along Hartfield Road than that to the south.
4. The proposal seeks the erection of a two-bay garage with a first-floor store served by two dormer windows. The building would be positioned in the northeast corner of the appeal site, forward of Rystwood Cottage and adjacent to the boundary with the highway.
5. The garage would be readily visible from Hartfield Road. While existing vegetation would provide some degree of screening, the scale of the structure and its prominent siting would result in it appearing dominant in views from the highway.

6. While additional planting could be secured by condition, the garage, due to its siting and scale, would remain visually prominent and readily perceptible and as a result introduce an urbanising element into an otherwise verdant street scene. It would therefore represent an incongruous and jarring form of development
7. The appellant has referred to a number of outbuildings and garages located to the front of properties along Hartfield Road. From my site visit, it was evident that the majority of these structures are located to the north of Hartfield Road and appear consistent with the prevailing character and appearance of that area. The outbuilding visible to the south of Hartfield Road at a neighbouring property, while occupying a broadly similar position to that of the appeal proposal in terms of proximity to the highway, it was notably smaller in scale and well screened. As such, the developments referenced are not comparable to that before me and do not justify the proposal.
8. In conclusion, the development would be unduly harmful to the character and appearance of the area and would fail to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald National Landscape. It would therefore conflict with Policies EN6, EN27 and HG10 of the Wealden Local Plan 1998, and Policies SPO1, SPO13 and WCS14 of the Core Strategy Local Plan 2013.

#### **Other matters**

9. The appellant has drawn my attention to a recent planning permission. However, I have not been provided with any details relating to this and thus cannot come to any view as to whether it is relevant with the appeal proposal. Accordingly, it has carried no weight in my decision.

#### **Conclusion**

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Barry John Lomax*

INSPECTOR