



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 September 2025

by A Oyebade MSc FCILT

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/R0335/W/25/3368650

Woodside, 8 Cornwall Close, Warfield, Bracknell, Bracknell Forest RG42 3UH

- 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 W Tempest against the decision of Bracknell Forest Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00121/FUL.
 - The development proposed is change of use of amenity land to enable a proposed extension to existing detached single-storey garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character, appearance and visual amenity of the area.

Reasons

3. This area is characterised by modern detached suburban family homes, built predominantly in the early to mid-1990s, displaying a consistent architectural style and occupying a variety of plot sizes. Properties along this cul-de-sac typically sit on generous plots and benefit from private gardens, garages, and associated driveways. The hard-landscaped space that forms the site of the proposed development adjoins the public footpath leading to Westmorland Park located directly behind the host property. The outlook toward the skyline along this route, as viewed from the side of the host dwelling, provides a pleasant backdrop to the street scene and contributes to a sense of spaciousness within the area. When leaving the park and moving along the public footpath in the opposite direction, this space also allows views of neighbouring dwellings beyond the host property as they recede toward the horizon. Collectively, these qualities create a gentle and inviting transition into the adjoining green space and reinforce the overall streetscape character.
4. The appeal proposal seeks to double the size of the existing garage, extending it over most of the open hard-landscaped area described above and close to the public footpath. This would eliminate this amenity land and the soft landscaped area separating the existing garage and the boundary wall from the public footpath. This expansion would also obstruct views of the park and skyline when approaching from the pedestrian route beside the host property, and it would also interrupt the outward views toward neighbouring dwellings as they recede into the horizon when travelling along the same route in the opposite direction.

5. The appellant contends that larger garages are a prevalent feature within the locality, noting that several nearby dwellings incorporate garages of a greater scale than that proposed. This set back of the garage from the rear of the host dwelling would ensure that the proposed garage is subservient in scale and massing to the host dwelling. Furthermore, views of the garage are restricted due to the layout and orientation of neighbouring dwellings and further screening is provided by natural vegetation. They also indicate that the proposed extension would replicate the design and roof form of the existing garage. It is further stated that the use of matching materials would assist in integrating the development with the host dwelling and in limiting its overall visual impact, thereby maintaining an appropriate relationship with the established character of the area.
6. However, the garage and its associated boundary fence would be extended to a more prominent and visually exposed position within the streetscene and alongside the public footpath, resulting in the loss of the remaining strip of amenity land. Moreover, the Council submits that the disposition of house types, boundary treatments, and landscaping formed part of a coordinated design approach for the wider scheme. The landscaped strips between residential plots and the highway were intentionally incorporated to soften the visual impact of the built form, safeguard the visual amenity of the development, and, in turn, maintain a sense of openness and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the streetscene.
7. The existing garage, constructed in 1994, is said by the appellant to be no longer capable of accommodating a modern vehicle owing to the increase in car sizes over recent decades. The appellant further explains that incidents of vehicle theft from driveways within Cornwall Close and the wider Warfield area have prompted a wish to provide a secure, enclosed parking space. While I have had regard to the personal and security issues raised by the appellant, these are factors to which I attribute little weight. The development would extend into an area of amenity land that presently contributes to the openness and visual quality of the streetscene.
8. The appellant also refers to a previous permission at the property for the enlargement of the driveway, which the Council partly supported on the basis that it would help to alleviate on-street parking pressures (LPA Ref: 18/00454). However, that scheme is not directly comparable to the current proposal, as it concerned the change of use of amenity land to an open driveway and the construction of a low-level retaining wall to provide additional on-site parking. The Council further advises that, should additional garage accommodation be required, this could be achieved by extending the existing structure rearwards into the garden, thereby retaining the landscaped buffer adjacent to the public footpath.
9. The appellant submits that, in respect of visual amenity, an adequate separation distance would be retained between the proposed garage and the adjacent public footpath. It is argued that this spacing, together with the modest height of the structure, would preserve the existing sense of openness. Reference is also made to the presence of established, dense tree planting situated closer to the public footpath than the proposed extension. On this basis, the appellant contends that the retained gap would ensure the garage remains subordinate in scale and massing to the host dwelling.
10. Notwithstanding these points, the proposed development would materially reduce the existing openness by bringing the garage extension and its associated

boundary wall significantly closer to the public footpath. This would create a more enclosed and visually constrained environment along the route leading to Westmorland Park. The scheme would also result in the loss of an area of amenity land that currently provides an open green buffer between the public footpath and the property's boundary wall, thereby diminishing the visual relief and spatial quality that this land presently affords.

11. The appellant maintains that the amenity land is no longer maintained by the Council and has become noticeably overgrown and untidy. On this basis, they argue that the loss of a very small portion of the land would not materially affect the experience of those accessing Westmoorland Park from Cornwall Close. They further contend that, as Policies LP44 and LP45 of the Local Plan, which collectively seek to safeguard community facilities, including play space, open space and sports provision, were not cited in the decision notice, the site was not regarded as forming part of a community facility, given its limited scale and functionality. The appellant also points to the private ownership of the land and asserts that, due to its limited utility, the area is prone to littering, which the proposal would help to reduce.
12. While the Council acknowledges these points, it maintains that responsibility for the upkeep of the amenity land rests with the appellant and that it can be suitably maintained. In any event, the rationale for retaining this land, as set out above, remains an important consideration.
13. Having regard to the particular circumstances of this case, I find that the development would result in harm to the character, appearance and visual amenity of the area and that such harm would be enduring. Therefore, the proposed development would not comply with the spatial strategy and design principles set out in Policies LP28 and LP50 of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan (Adopted March 2024).

Conclusion

14. The appeal scheme conflicts with the development plan as a whole. No other material considerations have been advanced that would justify a decision other than in accordance with the plan. For the reasons set out above, the appeal should be dismissed.

A Oyebade

INSPECTOR