



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 February 2026

by R Standfield BSc(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/25/3376727

Walden Cottage, Bull Lane, Chalfont St Peter, Buckinghamshire SL9 8RY

- 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 John Knapp against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council – East Area (Chiltern).
 - The application Ref is PL/25/2745/FA.
 - The development is described as proposed detached double garage and alterations to existing garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the area, including the Austenwood Established Residential Area of Special Character (ERASC).

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within a residential area of semi-rural character associated with Austenwood Common. It comprises a large, detached dwelling with accompanying detached double garage fronted by an extensive open gravelled area. This is typical of the wider locality which is characterised by large front gardens featuring mature vegetation and is representative of the Austenwood ERASC within which the site is located.
4. The host dwelling displays form and elevation details consistent with the early suburban approach to architectural detailing in this ERASC, notably gable features, red brick and hung tile decoration. The existing garage is positioned in line with the dwelling and is reflective of its host. The neighbouring property of Little Brampton, which would partially provide a visual backdrop to the development, also features consistent form and detailing.
5. The site boundary to Bull Lane consists of a red brick wall which recesses to form an entrance area secured by black painted solid timber gates. This is supplemented by hedging which helps to soften the visual impact of the wall in an otherwise green and muted roadside. The recessed section of brick wall does not benefit from planting and is distinctly noticeable due to its colour within the context. Notwithstanding the boundary wall and gates, the site is clearly visible from the lane.

6. The development would introduce a detached double garage positioned to the front of the existing garage, significantly closer to Bull Lane. The crown roof design does not reflect the host buildings, nor its neighbours. Its purpose is presented as reducing the visual prominence of the garage, however, the roof structure would remain clearly visible above the brick wall and, as a discordant element within the near street scene, would be highly noticeable. The size and siting of the garage would detract from the existing spacious feel to the front of the property.
7. The proposed use of natural oak cladding, whilst muted in colour, would also be at odds with the context of the site. Both the side and front elevations of the proposed garage would be visible from the street, being highly visible when the timber gates are open, as they were during my site visit. Consequently, because of its siting and design, the proposed double garage would be prominent, discordant and visually intrusive within the street scene at this location. The street scene would be experienced from passing vehicles and by pedestrians alongside the edge of Austenwood Common. At this location, the only footpath is on the opposite side of Bull Lane and is elevated above the road height. As such, visual impact to the pedestrian would be greater over that offered from a vehicle.
8. The appellant contends that the building will be subordinate in scale, set back from the highway and with design and materials to minimise impact. He also highlights that changes have been made in comparison with a previous scheme which was dismissed at appeal (Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/24/3344704). However, I find that the measures employed would not be sufficient to address the material harm arising from the building and its siting for the reasons I have set out above.
9. The appellant has also provided details of a detached garage block at The Priory, Bull Lane, which is presented as setting a precedent for forward projecting garages within this street scene. Notwithstanding that the design of the detached garage more closely reflects the host dwelling and relates to the adjacent St Josephs Roman Catholic Church which sits at the front of its plot; the positioning is set much further back from the highway, and the boundary treatment of mature vegetation is higher and more substantial. The Priory is not within the designated ERASC. The circumstances at The Priory are therefore materially different and the proposed development there does not justify harmful development at the appeal site.
10. Other references to addresses with forward projecting garages do not visually relate to the street scene currently being considered. Ashlea, in neighbouring Lewins Road, is at the end of a cul-de-sac which enables the garage to be sited so as to not be prominent within the street scene. Clowance House, further along Bull Lane, benefits from substantial distance from the highway coupled with mature trees which effectively limit visual prominence. These examples are therefore afforded limited weight.
11. Overall, I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area, including the ERASC, conflicting with Policy CS20 of the Local Development Framework: Core Strategy for Chiltern District (2011), and saved Policies GC1 and H20 of the Chiltern District Local Plan (1997 - adopted with alterations May 2001, consolidated September 2007 and November 2011). Taken together, these policies require a high standard of design reflecting and respecting local character within the ERASC and specifically

requiring new buildings to be well integrated and complementary to neighbouring built form.

Other Matters

12. I note that the occupiers of Little Brampton have written in support of the proposed development however the comments which they make do not address the harm that I have found.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, the proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations that indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. As such, the appeal is dismissed.

R Standfield

INSPECTOR