



## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 February 2026

by **S McIntyre BSc (Hons), CEng, MICE, MCIHT**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 March 2026

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### Appeal Ref: 6001867

### Woodpeckers, Hangersley Hill, Hangersley, Hampshire BH24 3JN

- 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 T Davies against the decision of New Forest National Park Authority.
  - The application Ref is 25/00655FULL.
  - The development is a boundary fence.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matters

2. Reference to “retrospective” in the description of the development proposed is not a form of development, therefore I have removed the reference to this in the banner heading above. However, the planning application form confirms that the development has been completed, and I was able to view the boundary fence on my site visit.
3. The site is located within the boundary of the New Forest National Park (NP) where there is a statutory duty on decision-makers to seek to further the purposes of designation. The primary purpose in respect of the New Forest is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park.

### Main Issues

4. The main issue is the effect of the appeal development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, including on the significance of the nearby 2009 Western Escarpment Conservation Area (WECA), a designated heritage asset, through development within its setting.

### Reasons

5. The appeal site is located close to, and immediately south of, Hangersley Hill, just outside the WECA, the boundary of which runs along the south side of Hangersley Hill.
6. Hangersley Hill is rural in character, with occasional entrances to detached houses that are set back from the road and screened by vegetation. Boundary treatments are typically hedges, low post and rail fences or other open fencing. There are some close-boarded fences along the road, these are generally a smaller scale than the appeal proposal and often screened by vegetation. They are not a common feature and do not detract from the prevailing green and rural appearance of the area.

7. Although the appeal site is not within the WECA it contributes to the setting of the conservation area. The WECA Character Appraisal acknowledges that boundary treatments, within the Highwood and Hangersley area, are generally of a traditional nature and are hedgerows or low picket style fencing but notes that modern fences are beginning to creep in. It also refers to the presence of trees and scrub to the edges of the lanes.
8. The scale and appearance of the appeal development, having regard to height, length and impermeability, combined with its location close to Hangersley Hill, results in the fence being a prominent feature along the road. This results in a more urban appearance, when compared to the predominant rural character of Hangersley Hill. Therefore, the appeal development is harmful to the character and appearance of the area and to the significance of the setting of the WECA.
9. There is a section of close-boarded fence adjacent to the appeal site, at Springfield House, that is a similar height to the appeal development. This fence is located on the opposite side of Hangersley Hill to the appeal site and is located within the WECA. While much of this fence is screened by vegetation, a section is not screened. Although this section of fence is set back further from Hangersley Hill than the appeal site, it is prominent, and results in a more urban appearance than the predominant rural character of the road.
10. The fence at Springfield House has eroded the character of Hangersley Hill and is typical of the sort of development which is identified in Part 5 of the WECA Character Appraisal, as an alien feature, detracting from the historic character of the area. However, in the context of Hangersley Hill as a whole, and other parts of the WECA, the fence at Springfield House, in itself, is an isolated incident. Its presence does not alter the general character of the area so as to justify further development which is harmful.
11. The appellant's statement of case accepts that close-boarded fencing has a greater visual impact on the street scene, when compared to alternatives such as post and rail or estate fencing, but that this should be balanced against reasonable security requirements.
12. "Hampshire Crime Maps for September 2025" are provided in the appellant's statement of case but are not referenced in the text. A map labelled as showing burglary offences shows 1 burglary on the A31 at the eastern end of Hangersley Hill, but no further context is provided.
13. Policy R7, of the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan, 2024 (the Neighbourhood Plan), states that additional security should be achieved by planting unless otherwise justified by historic character. The use of close-boarded fence in this instance has not been justified.
14. The appeal development would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and the significance of the WECA through development within its setting. In the light of this finding, and by virtue of its location in the NP, the appeal development is also harmful to the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the protected landscape. Therefore, the development is contrary to policies DP2, DP18, SP7, SP16 and SP17 of the New Forest National Park Local Plan (2019) and Policy R7 of the Neighbourhood Plan. These policies require that new development enhances local character and protects the historic environment and

does not result in an erosion or gradual urbanising effect within the NP.  
Furthermore, boundary treatments are required to be appropriate to their settings.

15. The development also fails to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the NP.
16. For the same reasons, the development does not comply with the New Forest National Park Design Guide (2022) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which seeks to avoid the introduction of close-boarded fencing, and the National Planning Policy Framework, which requires that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks and to the historic environment.

### **Conclusion**

17. The appeal development conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it.

*S McIntyre*

INSPECTOR