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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 October 2025

by **C Cooper-Young MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 November 2025

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### Appeal Ref: 6000649

### Thatchby Oak, North Weirs, Brockenhurst SO42 7QA

- 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 and Mrs Gurnhill against the decision of New Forest National Park Authority.
  - The application Ref 25/00269FULL, dated 8 March 2025, was refused by notice dated 11 July 2025.
  - The development proposed is 'single storey extension; removal of conservatory; side porch.'
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for single storey extension; removal of conservatory; side porch at Thatchby Oak, North Weirs, Brockenhurst SO42 7QA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/00269FULL, dated 8 March 2025, subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

### Preliminary Matters

2. A revised description of development has been agreed, as confirmed in the Authority's letter to the appellant dated 20 March 2025. I have therefore used the revised description in the header above, rather than the wording that was used in the original application form.

### Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
  1. whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Weirs Conservation Area; and
  2. the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the New Forest National Park.

### Reasons

#### *Effect on heritage assets*

4. Thatchby Oak is a large, detached dwelling set within the Weirs Conservation Area (CA). The significance of the CA is mainly derived from its medieval land patterns, natural features, historic development and architectural diversity. The CA is comprised of two distinct areas, North Weirs and the South Weirs, Burley Road and Furzey Hill character areas. The appeal site lies to the west extent of the North Weirs character area and is bounded to the east and north by later 20th century estate type developments and open Forest to the west and south.

5. S72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.
6. The New Forest National Park Authority (the Authority) raise no objection to the proposed removal of the existing conservatory or the rear porch. However, the Authority consider the proposed extension to be an incongruous, unsympathetic and a bulky box addition to the host dwelling, contrary to the New Forest National Park Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2022) (the Design SPD).
7. The concerns of the Authority are noted, however during my visit I observed that development within the immediate locality is varied. Surrounding properties differ in both size, design, spacing and orientation extensively. There is also a broad contrast of building materials within the area, which adds to the varied character of these properties.
8. Views into the site from the North Weirs access track were intermittent due to the mature trees and natural growth. In terms of the wider CA impact, any view of the proposed extension would be significantly constrained owing to the limited way in which the host building can be viewed. In addition, because the open forest setting and boundary features would remain unaffected by the proposal, the setting of this part of the CA would not be eroded.
9. The evidence before me outlines that the host building has been subject to a number of alterations and extensions, these additions are noted to be sympathetic to the appearance of the core dwelling and its historic character. The proposed extension, although of a contemporary design, would be subservient and in proportion to the host dwelling and the character of the original building would be preserved. Whilst the Design SPD outlines that flat roofed extensions, where possible, should be avoided, it goes on to add that extensions of an exemplary modern design may be acceptable.
10. Although the proposed extension will not strictly comply with this advice, the SPD is guidance. Overall, my assessment leads me to conclude that the proposed development would preserve the character and appearance of the Weirs Conservation Area.
11. Accordingly, there would be no conflict with Policies DP2, DP18, DP36 and SP16 of the New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036 (August 2019) (LP), which seek to ensure that new development would be of high-quality design and construction to enhance local historic character and distinctiveness, and would be of suitable scale and sympathetic appearance.

*Non-designated heritage asset*

12. Thatchby Oak is a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA) contributing positively to the significance of the CA through its historic interest by virtue of its period of construction (1922), and its architectural interest of local significance.
13. The proposal would sit to the rear and side of the dwelling, some distance behind the expansive front façade of the host building which would continue to be its most prominent feature. Extending the house as proposed would have no impact on this view of the dwelling in the wider landscape and the appeal building would retain its historic character.

14. The Design SPD provides that an exemplary modern design may be acceptable form of extension in order to illustrate the progression of a building over the years. It is evident that the proposal makes no attempt to mimic the existing arts and crafts style of the house due to its contemporary design and use of materials. I find that the contrasting form of the proposal and its modern appearance would result in the historic context of the original house remaining clearly legible.
15. The proposal has been designed to take account of the advice contained within the Design SPD, thus it would relate well to the scale of building around it and use traditional materials, albeit in a modern form. The extension would be subservient to the existing dwelling and would sit appropriately within its curtilage and setting.
16. I therefore conclude on the first main issue that the proposal would not undermine the relevant aims and objectives of Policies DP2, DP18, DP36 and SP16 of the LP, which seek to ensure that new development would be of high-quality design and construction to enhance local historic character and distinctiveness, and would be of suitable scale and sympathetic appearance.

### *Effect on National Park*

17. Section 15, Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The LP seeks to protect the National Park's special qualities, whilst meeting the needs of its communities. Development within the National Park should seek to further its statutory purposes of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area and promoting opportunities of the understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities by the public.
18. The proposed extension would be subservient to the host building, the design and use of materials would complement the appearance of Thatchby Oak, which would retain its rural character.
19. During my site visit I observed that due to the topography and natural landcover, the appeal site was not prominent in wider views from the open Forest (Whitemoor Pond Inclosure, Whitefield Moor). As such, the proposal would likely be imperceptible from these wider public vantage points.
20. Having had regard to the valued attributes of the locally defined character area, the overall effect of the development on the National Park's special qualities would consequently be neutral.
21. For the reasons above, I conclude on the second main issue that the proposed development would not erode the National Park's local character or result in any meaningful gradual suburbanising effect within the National Park, which Policy SP17 of the LP seeks to address. Thus, the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the locally distinctive character of the built environment of the New Forest. The landscape and scenic beauty of the National Park would also be conserved in accordance with the aims of Policy 7 of the LP.

### **Other matters**

22. The proposal includes the removal of the conservatory which, other than the low wall and framework is comprised of clear glazing. The evidence submitted helpfully

provides an assessment of the areas of the glazed elements of the existing conservatory and those of the proposal.

23. Based on the figures provided the glazed elements of the proposed building reduces the opportunity for light pollution impacts. In this regard, I find that the development would not conflict with the requirements of Policy SP15 of the LP.
24. To conclude, the proposal therefore complies with the provisions of Policies DP2, DP18, DP36, SP7, SP15, SP16 and SP17 of the New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036 (August 2019).

## **Conditions**

### *Conditions imposed*

25. I have imposed a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the plans, together with the standard time limit condition. In the interest of the character and appearance of the area, it is necessary to impose a condition requiring roofing materials to be submitted for approval. To help protect wildlife, I have imposed a condition to ensure that all materials, machinery and any resultant waste materials or spoil are stored within the red line of the application site. To protect heritage assets and the character and appearance of the area, there is a condition restricting certain permitted development rights. Finally, in order to promote dark skies, there is a condition relating to external lighting.

## **Conclusion**

26. For the reasons given above, having considered the development plan as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

*C Cooper-Young*

INSPECTOR

## Conditions Schedule

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
  - 0076-450 250306 Proposed Front (West) Elevation.pdf
  - 0076-453 250306 Proposed South Elevation.pdf
  - 0076-452 250306 Proposed Rear (East) Elevation.pdf
  - 0076-252 250306 Proposed Second Floor Plan.pdf
  - 0076-251 250306 Proposed First Floor Plan.pdf
  - 0076-200 250319 Proposed Site Plan.pdf
  - 0076-253 250306 Proposed Roof Plan.pdf
  - 0076-451 250306 Proposed North Elevation.pdf
  - 0076-250 250306 Proposed Ground Floor Plan.pdf
- 3) No development shall take place above slab level until samples or detailing of the roofing materials to be used in the construction of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the New Forest National Park Authority. The development shall only be carried out in accordance with the details approved and retained thereafter.
- 4) All materials, machinery and any resultant waste materials or spoil shall be stored within the red line application site unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.
- 5) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) England Order 2015 (or any re-enactment of that Order) no extension (or alterations) otherwise approved by Classes A, B or C of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Order shall be erected or carried out without express planning permission first having been granted.
- 6) No external lighting shall be installed on the development unless details of such proposals have been submitted to and approved in writing by the New Forest National Park Authority.

## End of Conditions Schedule