Character and appearance of the area

The appeal site is at the southern end of Park Road close to its junction with Hursley Road. This part of Hursley Road accommodates a local commercial centre of Chandlers Ford. Park Road is residential and of mixed domestic character travelling north along its length. In the vicinity of the appeal site there is a very distinct difference between those properties on the north western side and south eastern side of the road. The appeal site and its neighbours are generally substantial houses set in reasonably sized curtilages. They are well screened from the road by a belt of well established hedges containing a large number of mature trees, many of which are the subject of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). This boundary screening affords a considerable benefit to the visual amenity of the road as well as providing a high level of privacy to these properties. By contrast properties opposite are generally more modest in size, comprising both houses and bungalows. They sit in smaller curtilages with shallow front gardens having relatively low walls, fences and hedges that create a sense of openness and exposure of the dwellings.



Photograph 1. *Road frontage to the appeal premises*



Photograph 2. *Road frontage to No.8 and beyond*



Photograph 3. *Properties opposite appeal premises, 13-23 Park Road*

The appeal premises

6 Park Road is a substantial property dating from the late 19th century. In keeping with the character of what would have been a lightly developed area at the time, the house was sited relatively centrally within an extensive curtilage. Notwithstanding part of the garden having been sold and developed at some time in the past, the house is still surrounded by a good sized garden, sitting well back from the road. A substantial hedge running along part of the southern boundary; a dense hedge and tree screen along the northern boundary; and the mature hedge containing a variety of trees along the road frontage, together create a strong sense of enclosure screening the property from the road. It is only through the entrance gateway that the whole of house's main facade and drive way may be seen with any clarity.



Photograph 4. *Entrance to the appeal premises*

The Proposal

Permission is sought to erect a three bay garage/car port of traditional timber construction. (There is a need for extra garaging as my three daughters are now driving and require their own cars.) The garage would be sited forward of the house and linked to the existing drive area. It would sit on a concrete raft at ground level. With a wall plate level of just over 2.1m and a ridge height of 3.85m the majority of the garage structure would be screened from the road and housing opposite. The use of hipped gables would further reduce any perceived prominence of the building close to the boundary and from the house itself. With only a modest area of roof visible over the hedge and the taller screening afforded by the various

trees , together with the muted colouring of its wooden shingle covering, I am of the opinion that it would not have any significant impact on the character and appearance of the immediate locality or the area as a whole.

With regard to its relationship with the house I consider that with its open bay design, modest height and use of traditional oak construction, the building would appear to sit lightly on the site. The ridge line of the garage would be below the top of a ground floor window nearby. This relatively low height would ensure that the garage's mass and scale would be respectful to that of the house and would be subservient in its appearance. Apart from replacing a modest area of grass, the new building would not affect mature planting within the garden, neither would it compromise the trees the subject of TPOs. With the benefit of a spacious frontage I do not believe that the garage would appear cramped or out of place. In fact it was not unusual for houses of this size and period to be served by ancillary buildings, such as small stables, in close proximity. It would neither look out of place nor detract from the pattern of development within the locality. In my view the alternative of siting the garage in line with the front of the house would be much less satisfactory. Not only would it break up the garden but it would tend to form a band of development akin to terracing that would reduce the spacious visual qualities of the property.



Photograph 5. *Site of proposed garage across the end of the drive.*



Photograph 6. *Site of proposed garage across front of the drive.*

The Inspector's attention is drawn particularly to an example of a similar garage/car port by the same manufacturers, differing only in that it is a two bay variant, at 119 Park Road. This example is also sited forward of the dwelling on a much smaller curtilage. It gives a good indication of the modest scale and appearance of the structure. I would also like to draw attention to another example of a substantial garage forward of the dwelling at 33 Lakewood Road a short distance to the north of the appeal site.



Photograph 7. *Two bay version of the appeal garage at 119 Park Road*

Conclusions

For all these reasons I am of the opinion that the proposed development by virtue of its screening and sympathetic relationship with the host dwelling, would neither compromise the quality and appearance of the appeal premises nor that of the local environment. I therefore consider that the proposed development would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would be in accord with (saved) Policy 59.BE of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review (2001-2011) and Policy DM1 of the Submitted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011-2029.

I therefore respectfully request that the appeal be upheld and permission granted for the development.