

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: H/22/93219

Site Address: Hawthorn House, Botley Road, West End, Southampton, SO30 3HA

Case Officer: Summer Sharpe

Description: Loft conversion to form habitable accommodation with dormer windows at the front and rear.

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
- Within urban edge - Surface water flooding		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Planning App no.	Proposal	Decision
O/08/61960	Outline: Creation of 2 no. flats within, and alterations to existing dwelling. Construction of 3no. 2 bed dwellings. Alterations to access with widening of footpath & provision of car parking & bin storage	Refuse (7 July 2008)
O/11/69087	Outline: Construction of a terrace of 3no. 2 bed dwellings, conversion & alteration of existing dwelling to create 1no. 1 bed and 1no. 2 bed flats, provision of ancillary cycle & bin store, car parking & boundary treatment, following demolition of existing outbuildings and part demolition of Hawthorn House (Reserved Matters for consideration - access & layout)	Refuse (24 February 2012)
H/17/82032	Single storey side and rear extension, loft conversion with dormers front and rear including rear balcony, alterations to rear first floor fenestrations and addition of porch.	Refuse (23 January 2018)
H/21/90084	Erection of single-storey rear extension incorporating a flat roof and 3no. lantern roof lights plus installation of 2no. roof lights in existing side extension	Permitted (11 May 2021)
H/21/91967	Retention of boundary fence.	Refuse (10 January 2022)

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	<u>1no. Objection has been received, summarised as:</u> (a) the rear dormer would overlook neighbours rear garden, (b) would result in the loss of privacy, and (c) aware there are some rear dormers within the vicinity however none are at this height, creating a 3 storey building, next to a bungalow.		
Parish Council:	No objection.		
Ecology:	There are records of bats nearby, so close up photos of the roof, soffits, fascia and flashing around any existing windows are needed. I also need to check photos of the inside of the loft.		
Countryside & Trees:	None received.		

Policy:
National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Development Plan:Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036

Policies: S1 (Delivering sustainable development), DM1 (General development), DM11 (Nature Conservation), and DM14 (Parking).

Supplementary Planning Documents:

Quality Places; and Residential Parking Standards.

Site Visit**Yes** ☒**No** ☐

30 June 2022.

Assessment:Site & Surroundings

The application site comprises a two-storey detached dwellinghouse located to the south of Botley Road. The dwellinghouse is set back from the road and is bound by a brick wall, and gates, which conceals vehicular hardstanding to the frontage. The dwellinghouse itself is finished in red facing brick work, white upvc fenestration and a pitched tiled roof.

The wider surroundings comprise residential properties and some industrial/ commercial usages. The residential properties to the south of Botley Road are generally detached and are set back from the main road. Most of these properties are served by low level brick walls fronting the pavement and main highway. The properties themselves vary, to the east of the application site properties are two-storeys or more. To the west, properties are bungalows and one and a half storey which then increase to two-storeys.

To the north of the application site Noyce Court and Bamber Close form part of the Moorgreen Hospital housing estate. This development has a strong sense of cohesion and uniformity, by the materials used and style of properties. It is noted that some of these properties include dormers, however these are not prolific and are of a modest size.

Proposal

The application proposes front and rear dormers to create an additional bedroom in the roof. There would be 2no. front dormers which would project approx. 2.8m from the northern roof slope. These would measure approx. 2.6m in width and approx. 2.4m in height (with a pitched roof), with eaves which would measure approx. 1.8m. The proposed rear dormer would project approx. 3.8m from the southern roof slope. This would measure 8.6m in length and 2.4m in height (with a flat roof). The proposed dormers would be finished in materials to match the existing.

Principle

The application site falls within the urban edge, whereby alterations or extensions to, or within the curtilage of residential dwellinghouses are considered to be acceptable in principle, however, would be subject to the following considerations.

Design

Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) stipulates that all new development should respect the character and appearance of urban areas, take full and proper account of the context of the site including the character, appearance and land uses of the locality or neighbouring, and be compatible in terms of mass, scale, layout density, design and siting.

The application proposes the addition of front and rear dormers. From a site visit it was noted that there was a variance of properties within the streetscene, however there were

limited examples of front dormers. The only examples which were readily visible from Botley Road were those to the north of the application site, along Bamber Close and Noyce Court. It was noted that there was only 1no. dormer per property, of a modest size and situated above 1no. window fairly close to the eaves of the respective host dwelling. This is considered to be distinctive of the character of this specific development, as this key characteristic is not reflected within the wider surroundings.

Whilst there is little to no uniformity along the south of Botley Road, with properties varying in terms of their storeys, and styles, it is noted from a review of the streetscene and a history search that there are no front dormers along this stretch of Botley Road. Therefore, the introduction of this type of development would appear alien and uncharacteristic of the surroundings. Further, it is noted that the neighbour to the west of the application site is a bungalow, therefore the addition of dormers would result in the application site being more prominent and visually intrusive, especially when read within this immediate context. Whilst the front dormers would align with fenestration at first floor level, it is considered that their addition would appear as incongruous and discordant features to not only the host dwelling, but also when viewed within the wider surrounding context.

Turning to the rear dormer, it is noted that this would be of a large size and would be constructed of materials to match the existing. This element could, however, benefit from permitted development. Therefore, and whilst the rear dormer is not considered to be of the best design, given the permitted development fall-back position, a reason for refusal on this basis could not be sustained.

Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states '*development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance documents*'. To conclude, the proposed front dormers by reason of their scale and siting, are considered to be contrary to the abovementioned policy. In accordance with Paragraph 134 of the NPPF this development is not considered well designed, nor does it reflect local design policies or the surrounding vicinity, thus warranting refusal.

Impact upon Neighbouring Amenities

Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) amongst other matters, stipulates that all new development should not have an unacceptable impact upon residential amenities of both new and existing residents.

The proposed 2no. dormer windows located on the northern elevation would facilitate 1 no. bedroom, with the windows specifically serving an en-suite and wardrobe. Due to the size of the proposed dormers and rooms they would serve, combined with the separation distance between other dwellings to the north (with Botley Road in between), it is not considered that this would pose any significant concern of overlooking.

The rear dormer proposes 2no. windows which would serve the bedroom. To the south is David Lloyd Leisure Centre, which is separated and screened by vegetation, to such an extent that the proposal would not have an adverse impact. It is noted that the neighbouring properties either side (east and west) would be impacted, however it is considered this would be limited as result a of the size and scale of the proposal. Further, this type of relationship is not uncommon within urban areas. In addition, this type of development could also be considered 'permitted development'.

Overall and to conclude, the proposals are not considered to have an adverse impact upon the amenities of the neighbouring properties and would therefore be acceptable in this regard.

Highway Safety & Parking

Policy DM14 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) requires residential development to provide off-highway parking which is adequate in terms of highway safety / traffic management. The Residential Parking SPD sets out the relevant parking provisions for dwellinghouses, which are dependent upon the amount of bedrooms.

The application site is currently a 3no. bedroom dwellinghouse, which requires 2 no. off-street parking provisions. The property benefits from a driveway to the frontage and to the western side of the dwellinghouse, thus being able to provide the necessary parking provisions.

The proposed floor plans show an additional fourth bedroom in the roof, thus would increase the off-street parking provisions to 3. The parking arrangements would remain unchanged as a result of the proposals, and therefore the proposals are considered to be in accordance with the abovementioned policies and would be acceptable.

Ecology

Policy DM11 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) stipulates that the Borough Council will work with statutory and voluntary agencies and developers to; protect, conserve and enhance areas subject to international, national and local nature conservation designations, and promote the net gain of biodiversity on all sites through the protection, enhancement and connection of existing provisions and new habitats and features compatible with the native biodiversity characteristics of the Borough.

The Council's Ecologist has advised that there are records of bats nearby, thus they requested up close photos of the roof, soffits, fascia and flashing around any existing windows, as well as internal photos of the loft. This information was requested 8 July 2022 and has not been provided.

However, as noted above, the proposed rear dormer could benefit from 'permitted development (PD)'. The applicant would be advised that the works, regardless of whether they were being undertaken via 'PD' would still need to accord with The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). As such, if a bat roost is present and is; obstructed, damaged or destroyed, this would be a criminal offence.

An informative will be imposed to advise the applicant of these matters.

Equalities Act:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2021 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:

- A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - a. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

When making policy decisions, the Council must take account of the equality duty and in particular any potential impact on protected groups. It is considered that this application does not raise any equality implications.

Climate Change:

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed, among other things, to: (a) put in place measures to ensure the Council's

own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality by 2025; (b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; (c) ensure that the Councils procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of its primary considerations; and (d) recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change in every decision taken by the Council. This is underpinned by the Climate and Environment Emergency Strategy 2020-2030 and the supporting Climate and Environmental Emergency Action Plan – Update June 2020.

The declaration of the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency demonstrates a strong commitment from the Council to achieve net zero. The NPPF and development plan do not set this as a specific target, but it is a material consideration to be considered alongside all other material considerations. In any case addressing climate change is a core part of the NPPF and Local Plan policy. The need to support the economy is part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Local Plan, as is an assessment of climate impacts.

The NPPF aims for the need for housing to be met, and Policy S2 of the Local Plan sets a target for 14,580 dwellings to be provided by 2036. The NPPF and Policies, S1, DM2, and DM3 of the Local Plan and energy and water elements of the adopted Environmentally Sustainable Development SPD require development to be sustainable in terms of resource use, climate change and energy use. When considering the impact of climate change, the proposed development is expected to be resilient to the potential effects of climate change and is expected to limit impacts on climate emissions as a result of the development or its use.

Conclusion:

Reason for Refusal:

The proposed front dormers by reason of their scale, size and siting would result in a visually intrusive form of development, which would appear as incongruous and unduly dominant roof features that would fail to relate appropriately to the host dwelling and would also have an adverse impact upon the surrounding streetscene. The proposals would therefore be contrary to Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036), Quality Places SPD (2011), and the contents of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☐

REFUSE ☒