

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Written Representations:

**Appellants Statement of Case for 24 Grange
Road, Hedge End, Southampton, SO30 2FB**

Appellant: Mrs K Young

Local Planning Authority: Eastleigh Borough Council

May 2023

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Appendices [As separate attachments]

Appendix 1 – Site Location Plan

Appendix 2 – Decision Notice

Appendix 3 – Officer's Delegated Decision Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This appeal statement is made pursuant to Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 and is made on behalf of the appellant Mrs Young against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council Local Planning Authority (LPA) to refuse planning permission for application H/23/94848 in relation to the retention of partly reinstate boundary wall, add an additional return wall and roof to create carport. Carry out works to driveway, grading surface and the entrance. Installing permeable paving/stone the driveway. Installation of gates (Part Retrospective) at 24 Grange Road, Hedge End, Southampton, SO30 2FB

2.0 The appeal site and surrounding area

- 2.1 Hedge End is a pleasant suburban area but has a very mixed appearance owing to its significant expansion since the 1960's. Hedge End is dissected by several busy roads including the B3036 (Lower/Upper Northam Road) and the A334 (Grange Road) that historically connected the villages of Bitterne with Botley. The appeal site is located on the A334 which has increasingly become a very busy main road.
- 2.2 The appeal site, as illustrated in Image 1 is located within the defined urban edge, approximately 850m northeast of the centre of Hedge End and on the edge of a primarily residential area.



Image1: Broad Location

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- 2.3 The appeal site was previously modest and run down. Since its purchase by the appellant, it has been substantially extended and renovated to create a modern two storey white rendered house with a grey coloured roof tiles and matching grey fenestration and rainwater goods. The dwelling is set centrally within the plot and so has a generous open frontage that due to the topography falls away from the road. To the rear is an equally generous private garden area.



Image 1: Ariel of appeal site



Image 2: Appeal property



Image 3: Appeal property and frontage prior to renovation

- 2.4 The appeal site, as illustrated in images 4 and 5, is located on the eastern side of Grange Road within a row of large, detached properties of varying appearances - many have recently been modified and modernised. The properties on the eastern side of Grange Road, due to the topography are set on lower ground and have deep setbacks from the road. Front boundaries are mixed with a tendency to be located immediately abutting the pavement and consist of 1.2-1.8m fencing or brick walls. Some properties have landscaping within their private frontages, but many are hardstanding for the parking of vehicles.

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Image 4: Appeal site and neighbouring properties to east



Image 5: Appeal Site and properties to the west

- 2.5 The western side of Garage Road also has a mixed appearance with a 1960 housing estate and associated garage blocks located opposite the appeal site, as shown in image 6.



Image 6: Housing estate opposite the appeal site

- 2.6 Beyond the appeal site to the west, properties again become larger and similarly to the appeal site have deep setbacks and hard boundary treatments abutting the pavement.



Image 7: Dwellings to the west of the appeal site

3.0 The proposed development

3.1 The appealed scheme proposes several interlinked elements, some of which are retrospective, that are detailed below and shown in image 8.

- Reinstatement of the front boundary wall – the original wall can be seen in image 3 above. Creation of a return wall and flat roof to create a carport. The carport has been designed to match the dwelling and so will be white rendered on two sides, open on the remaining 2 sides and with a grey flat roof (retrospective).
- Carry out works to driveway to create a graded surface that slopes gradually from the front boundary towards the dwelling. The driveway will be constructed of paving and appropriate drainage either in the form of gravel areas or a soakaway.
- Installation of 1.6m high gates.

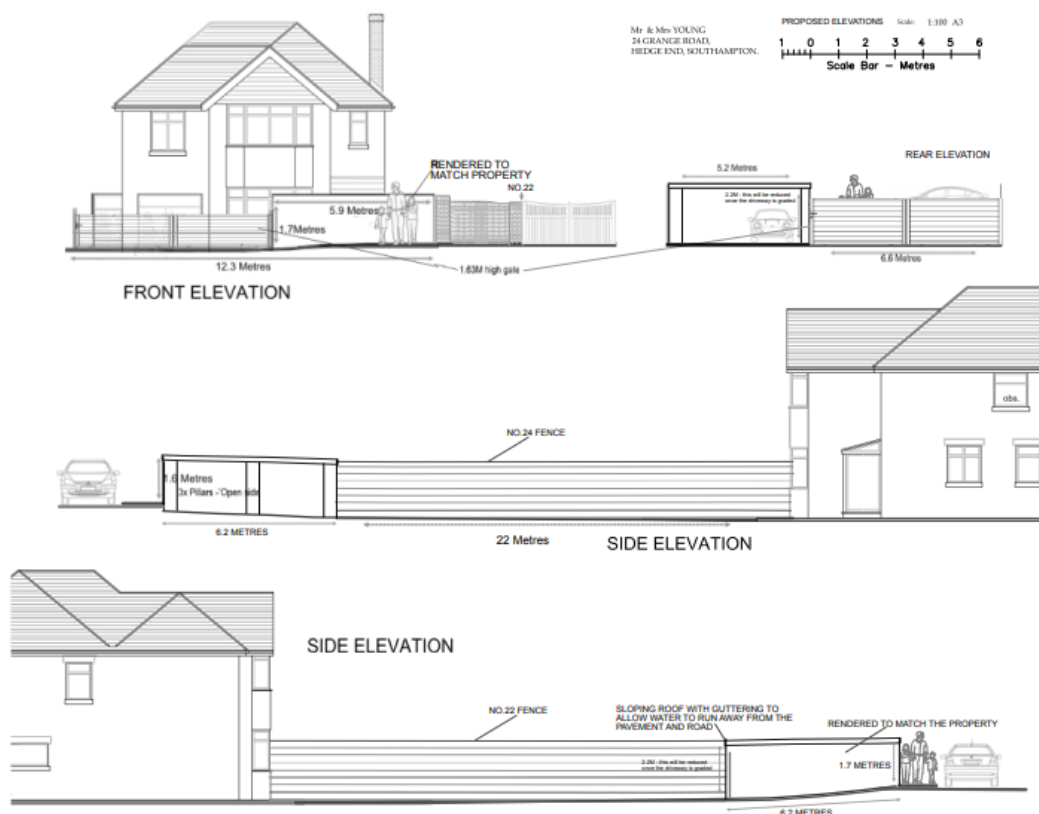


Image 8: Proposed scheme

4.0 Reason for Refusal

- 4.1 The LPA in their refusal notice dated 2nd May 2023 (see Appendix 2) have sited the following reason for refusal:

The carport, by reason of its size, prominent siting and utilitarian appearance, results in a visually oppressive and intrusive form of development, that is incongruous and has an adverse impact upon the character of the surrounding street scene. Furthermore, the removal of the hedgerow represents a loss of biodiversity. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies DM1 and DM11 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036), the Council's Supplementary Planning Documents 'Quality Places' (2011), Character Area Appraisal for Hedge End, West End and Botley (2008) and the contents of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

5.0 Statement of Case

- 5.1 This section sets out the appellant's case in detail.

Principle

- 5.2 The appeal site is within the urban edge and within an existing residential area where the principle of development is accepted by LPA. The LPA has however refused the application on the basis of the carports perceived "utilitarian" nature and its "oppressive, intrusive and incongruous" impact on the character of the surrounding street scene and its perceived lack of conformity with the requirements of adopted Policies DM1, DM11 and the Council's Supplementary Planning Documents 'Quality Places' (2011), Character Area Appraisal for Hedge End, West End and Botley.
- 5.3 The reason for refusal suggests that the principle of development is acceptable and the reason for refusal only relates to the carport. This statement of case therefore focuses on the perceived unacceptable scale, form, and design of the carport and not other elements of the proposal unless directly related to our case.

Scale, mass, and design of the carport

- 5.4 The LPA have indicated that the proposal has an unacceptable impact on the street scene particularly having regard to the Character Area Appraisal for Hedge End, West End and Botley however the context of Grange Road has changed since its adoption in 2008. The below images show the street scene in 2008 at adoption of the guidance.

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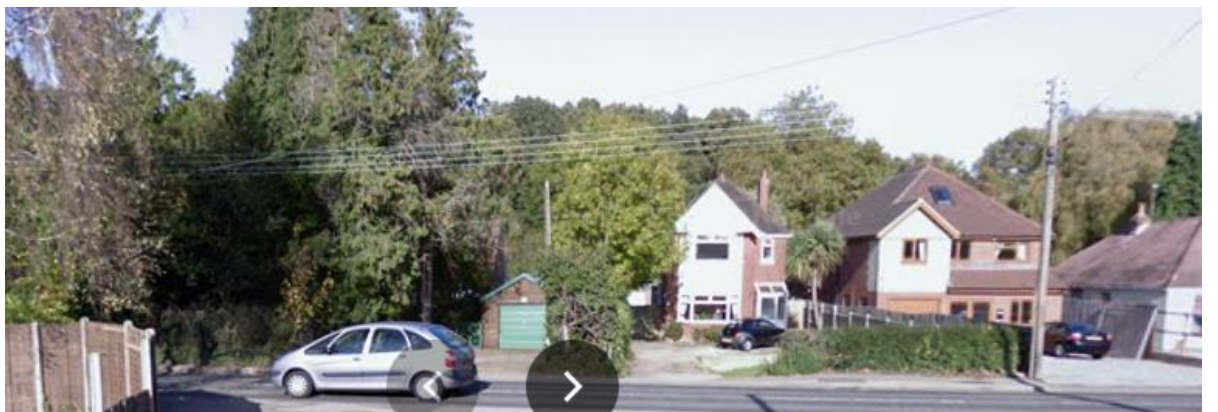


Image 9 & 11: Street scene in 2008

- 5.5 The below images of the the same sections of street scene were taken in March and May 2023. These images illustrate that the street scene has, through the granting of various permissions allowed alterations to boundary structures and treatments and that the permitted schemes do not confirm with the councils guidance. The images show boundary treatments of varying heights and materials and most include the removal of front gardens and associated landscaping. The current day frontages although different to 2008 are attractive in their own right and are appropriately more robust to withstand the heavily trafficked A334 Grange Road. These frontages are still relatively low and open in their nature allowing good levels of intervisibility between the dwellings and the woodland beyond.

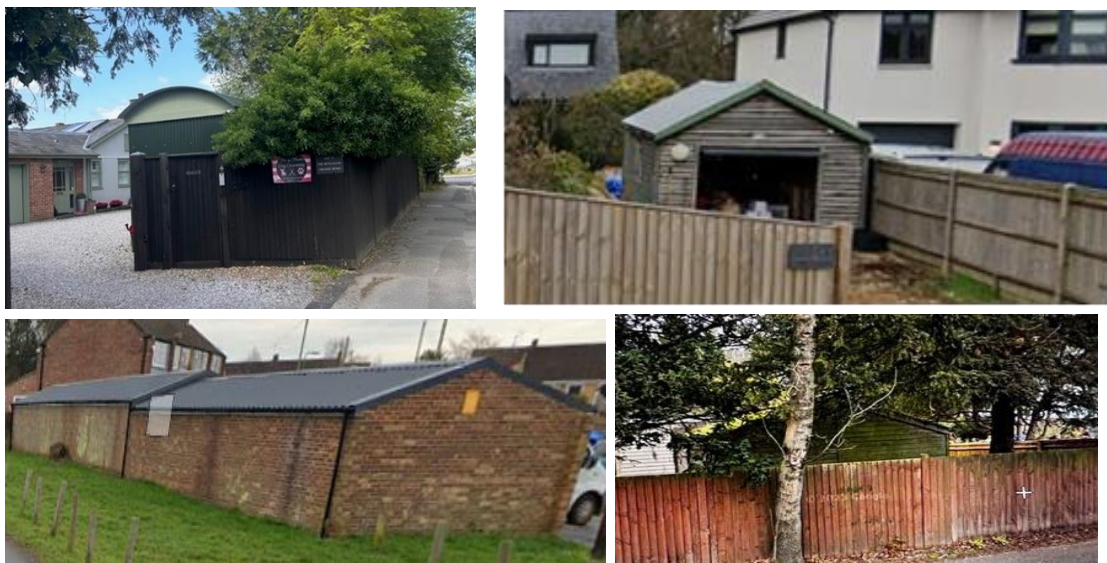


Images 10-13: Street Scene March and May 2023

- 5.5 The proposed boundary and return wall, forming part of the carport takes design queues from the neighbouring properties in both scale, form and design. The boundary wall is inset to allow highway visibility for the neighbouring property, ensuring highway safety on what is a very busy road.
- 5.6 The boundary wall is only 1.7m in height adjacent to the pavement similar to or lower than others in the locality. The return wall (which will reduce slightly in apparent height once the driveway is re-graded) utilises the sites falling levels to create a car port that appears to be set into the ground. The clever use of the topography coupled with the proposed flat roof give the carport a modern appearance but also avoid any unnecessary bulk being added. The design also continues to allow intervisibility over, around, and towards the host dwelling and woodland beyond.

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- 5.7 The proposal has purposefully matched its materials to the host dwelling to ensure a strong affiliation. The white render, grey roof, and rainwater goods will match the host property and give a comprehensive modern (not utilitarian) appearance to the site.
- 5.8 Whilst the proposal has been specifically designed with a modern appearance, that utilises the existing topography and assimilates well to the host property and its surroundings we cannot deny that it also serves a practical purpose. The creation of a car port and other security features recently installed were recommended by the police after a spate of car thefts. The police recommend "hiding" items of value from view to try and deter theft. The proposal will accommodate a car and help screen other vehicles on the driveway from direct view. The LPA in their delegated report suggest that a "simple boundary wall and gate can achieve a similar aim" with regards to safety however we would disagree as a wall would need to be much taller and finished with coping stones resulting in a much more imposing structure. Furthermore, a boundary wall would still require a return for stability and to affix a gate that would need to be located at least 5m from the highway – the minimum distance required for highway safety. It is our view that the proposal achieves a simple and clean appearance that has a positive impact on the street scene whilst achieving security for the appellant and their property.
- 5.9 Finally, we would observe and draw the inspector's attention to some examples of other frontage structure within the immediate vicinity of the site. It is considered that the proposal is far more sympathetic in scale, form, and design.



Images 14-17: Garage structures adjacent to and opposite the appeal site



Images 18-19: Garage structures beyond the site to the south

Loss of biodiversity

- 5.10 The LPA's reason for refusal cites the removal of the hedgerow to represents a loss of biodiversity. The boundary wall and associated landscaping were however removed back in 2016 and these works did not require planning consent. The frontage of the site has therefore not offered any biodiversity value for over 7 years and should not form part of the reasons for refusal. Although the front boundary due to its compact nature and proximity to the public footpath could not accommodate any landscaping, the appellant would be happy to landscape the western boundary of the car port to provide some softening and biodiversity value. This could be conditioned should the inspector feel it reasonable and necessary.

Consultation

- 5.11 It should be noted that whilst the LPA have refused the application, they did undertake a statutory consultation during the application process and no neighbour or local community representations/objections were made. This indicates the LPA decision is not locally supported.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 The appealed proposals are not considered to conflict with the requirements of Policy DM1, DM11 the Council's Supplementary Planning Documents 'Quality Places' (2011), Character Area Appraisal for Hedge End, West End and Botley (2008) and the contents of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) in so far as these intend to ensure development is appropriate and in context with its surroundings and avoids harm.
- 6.2 Contrary to the LPA's justification and reason for refusal the appellant would contend that the proposals accord with policy in that they have taken full and proper account of the context of the site and its locality and created a visually appealing form of development that is in no way utilitarian, oppressive, intrusive or incongruous.
- 6.3 The Planning Inspector is therefore respectfully requested to allow this appeal and grant planning permission with any necessary and reasonable conditions imposed.