

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: H/23/95626

Site Address: 27 HOCOMBE ROAD, CHANDLER'S FORD, EASTLEIGH, SO53 5SN

Case Officer: Claire Campbell-Best

Description: Retention of 2m boundary fence (facing Kingsway)

Particular Site Constraints	Yes ☒	No ☐
Within Urban Edge Within Built Up Residential Area Tree Preservation Order – 252-E Great Crested Newts – Red Zone		

Planning History	Yes ☒	No ☐
Reference	Description	Decision
H/23/95674	Construction of outbuilding to provide a home office	Concurrent application under consideration
F/17/80304	2m high replacement fence and wall along northern boundary, single storey side extension	Permit – 31/08/2017
Z/12017/002/00	Two storey side extension and erection of detached double garage	Permit – 21/12/2000

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	<u>1no. objection from 54 Nichol Road (summarised):</u> - Fence is highly visible between Hocombe Road and Kingsway - Out of keeping with the local area - Replaced a hedge that was well established and supported the habitat of wildlife - Will create a precedent to permit retrospective fence applications in the vicinity - Does not comply with the special area supplementary planning guidance <u>1no. letter of support from 25 Hocombe Road:</u> - A green fence does not look unsightly and is a sensible alternative to the continual harassment by the County Council to trim one's hedge. LPA Note: The Hiltingbury and Hocombe Park Special Policy Area has not been included in the Adopted Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan (2016-2036) and this policy cannot be used in the assessment of this application. The site is adjacent to the Chandlers Ford and Hiltingbury Character Area Appraisal (Kingsway) and this Supplementary Planning Document has been considered as shown in the assessment section below.		
Chandlers Ford Parish Council:	Objection as fencing is not in keeping with other properties along Kingsway		
Ecology:	This site is in a red impact risk zone for great crested newts with nearby records of bats, hedgehogs, and stag beetles. Any closed board fencing must have at least 2 openings (13 x 13 cm minimum) in the base boards to allow free passage of small animals		

	such as hedgehogs. If these are already in place, please provide photos. Biodiversity enhancements are also required. Information on biodiversity enhancements is available at: https://sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/discover/in-your-garden/article/31, planting for bats https://www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-03/WAG16/20Bats/20updated/202022/20WEB.pdf - Stars of the Night guide to attract bats into your garden https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/conservation-biodiversity/wildlife/plants-for-pollinators https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/bat-boxes https://www.hampshireswifts.co.uk/nesting https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/how-you-can-help-birds/nestboxes/nestboxes/for-small-birds https://www.swift-conservation.org/OurLeaflets. https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/help-hedgehogs/hedgehog-homes
Trees:	We do not normally object to the installation of fencing because the nature of the discrete posts, which are often hand dug, means that any impact is minimal. This case appears to be the same and no significant trees have been removed to facilitate installation. Therefore, we raise no arboricultural objection to its retention.

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: Site visit carried out 12/09/2023		

Policy:
National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance Development Plan: The <u>Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036</u> The most relevant policies are Strategic policies S1 and S2; and Development Management policies DM1, DM2, DM11 and DM14. Supplementary Planning Documents: Quality Places; Residential Parking Standards; Chandlers Ford and Hiltingbury Character Area Appraisals.

Assessment:
<u>Site and Surroundings</u> The application site contains a two storey detached dwelling set within a good size corner plot situated on the junction of Hocombe Road and Kingsway. Due to the corner plot location, the site has a private amenity space that wraps around the side of the property. As a result, the eastern boundary treatment (the subject of this application) facing Kingsway encloses this amenity space. The surrounding area features detached two storey dwellings in spacious plots, the front boundary treatments seen along this section of Kingsway is a mixture of mature hedging and low level brick walls and fencing. <u>Proposal</u>

This application seeks approval for the retention of a 2m high boundary fence along the eastern boundary facing Kingsway. The fence is 27m in width and comprises of timber fence posts and timber feather edge board fencing and is painted green.

Principle

The development is considered acceptable and complies with policies DM1, DM11 and DM14 from the 2016-2036 local plan, in that the development is within the urban edge of Chandlers Ford where the principle of development is acceptable.

The site is also adjacent to the character area appraisal of Chandlers Ford and Hiltingbury (Kingsway) which provides guidance on development proposals:

- Sufficient garden depth and area is retained by existing or replacement dwellings, commensurate with their size and character, which can accommodate appropriate tree planting in keeping with the character of existing plots.
- No healthy or mature trees would be felled or likely to be damaged
- The design of new building work, including extensions, is compatible with the character of good quality adjacent properties and fits well into the overall street-scene.

Character and Appearance

The majority of the boundary treatment along Kingsway is predominately mature hedging, the properties are also well set back from the highway. As a result, there is an open, green character along this section of Kingsway.

It is acknowledged that while the boundary fence is not ideal, it was noted upon the site visit that the fence has been painted green and mature trees and hedging are still present directly behind this fence, which helps to soften its overall appearance. Additionally, it is considered the fence encloses a side garden which does not form part of the frontage to the site. As noted, the properties along Kingsway have mainly open frontages which sets the context for the character area. As the fence does not enclose a frontage along Kingsway, it is considered the street scene would remain open and spacious with the fence in situ. Overall, it is considered the fence does not detrimentally detract from the open, green character of the area and does not appear as an incongruous feature that would warrant refusal on character and appearance grounds.

Concerns have been raised that the fence would create a precedent for potential replacement boundary treatment in the local vicinity. All planning applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis and on their own merit. Should any subsequent fencing applications be submitted, they will be assessed accordingly in line with national and local planning policies as well as guidance advised in supplementary planning documents.

Ultimately, on balance, the fence still respects the character of the locality and on this basis, the boundary fencing is considered acceptable.

Residential Amenity

Owed to the nature of the development and the separation distances from neighbouring properties, the fence is not considered to cause a significant harmful impact on the amenity of any neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light, outlook, privacy or overbearing.

It was noted when looking at previous photos of the hedge that there were gaps in between the hedging and the applicants were also experiencing littering from vehicle users and pedestrians. It is considered the boundary fencing will provide a more robust level of security to the property and private amenity space.

Ecology

Due to the nature of the works, Ecology were consulted upon. The Council's Ecologist initially queried if the fence had openings within the baseboards for the passage of small animals. Upon the site visit it was noted there were no openings. As such, these openings will be recommended along with further biodiversity enhancements by way of informative.

Other Material Considerations

There will be no adverse impact upon trees or other natural features worthy of retention and there are no likely significant impacts on the SPA.

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 Council's 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, development plan and adopted local plan policy 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 adopted 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, 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 reduce/limit impacts on climate emissions as a result of the development or its use.

Equalities Implications:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 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

Conclusion: On balance, given the above considerations, this application is recommended for approval

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒

REFUSE ☐