

Urban and Landscape Design team comments on F/22/94422: 63, Underwood Rd
12.06.23

The Quality Places SPD states in relation to rear garden sizes, that;

'For houses, the absolute minimum for private amenity space of at least 60% of the floor space will be required. This minimum may be reduced in urban areas when the dwelling is within 100m (by safe and convenient route) of a public open space. The size will need to increase where: • the local context requires it (i.e. in more suburban, 'leafy' areas)'

Whilst I suspect that the application probably meets the 60% size standard in the guide, garden space should also be configured in a way that allows for a variety of uses. The proposal indicates a garden that is not configured in a way which creates a reasonable area of open space in one place which would be flexible for a variety of uses for a family house. In addition, the garden will be heavily shaded. Being aimed primarily at larger sites the Quality Places guide doesn't specifically address the issue of gardens being shaded by existing trees. However, there is a section in the guide referring to the need for north facing gardens to be an extra 2m long (12m instead of 10m) to allow for sufficient sunlight to reach the end of the garden. Whilst this garden isn't north facing, it is only around 4m deep and will therefore be heavily shaded by trees from the wood in the morning and by the house itself in the afternoon. It does not therefore meet the intent and spirit of the guidance in respect of the provision of garden space with reasonable access to direct sunlight.

Mainly because of the inadequacy of the garden, but also because of apparent over-development so near the wood, we'd prefer a smaller extension, perhaps extending to 5 m from the southern boundary. This would then provide a well configured and very sunny garden space to the south of the extension.

On a positive note, the building line is well respected by the proposal and the general position of the development (if not it's full extent) is acceptable.

Should the case officer be minded to approve the application, we'd recommend the following conditions to mitigate the effects on the landscape and townscape;

1. The front garden of the new property should only have hard paved surface for a maximum of 40% of the area. The front garden of the existing house number 63 should only have hard paved surface for a maximum of 55% of the area. For the purpose of this gravel will be considered as a hard surface. **Reason:** to mitigate the impact on the ecological and landscape value of the curtilage landscape of the woodland and to minimise the urbanising effect on the streetscape.
2. The existing unsightly and extensive close boarded fencing to the side of the property should be removed and replaced with low walls to match the general existing character. The boundary line to the rear of number 65 to the south may have a taller brick wall to maintain privacy. This could change to a close boarded fence in line with the extension frontage and to the woodland boundary. **Reason:** to mitigate the urbanising effect of this very large extension and improve design quality.
3. **No development shall start** until a landscape design scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall cover all hard & soft landscaping including trees, boundary treatments, landscape buffer planting along the east boundary fence and shall provide details of timings for all landscaping and any future maintenance. The design should have information detailed as per the SPD Landscape Checklist for New Development on the council's website. It should include a detailed written specification for the soft landscape and establishment maintenance over the first three

years. It should also include construction details for the boundary walls and fences visible from the public realm. The applicant's landscape architect could consider planting a *Trachycarpus* in one of the front gardens to reinforce the emerging landscape character. In any case, the front gardens should have a minimum of 4-7 trees spread over the two front gardens, depending on the species selected by the landscape architect. The eastern boundary with the wood shall include a 600 mm wide line with triple rows of staggered whips at comprised of a mix of native hedging species planted at 300mm centres within each line. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and to the appropriate British Standards.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity, the visual amenity of the locality and to safeguard the amenities of neighbouring residents in accordance with policies DM1 and DM11 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036).