

Urban Design Comments:

F/23/96152 – Cherry Court, Salterns Lane, Bursledon

From: Urban & Landscape Design Team to Development Management

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Planning Officer: Gary Osmond

Date: 13 December 2023

Proposal: Construction of five-bedroom detached dwelling over three levels, together with topographical changes to the rear garden, following demolition of existing dwelling

Summary:

- The existing building lacks architectural merit therefore there is an opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the area.
 - The design does not adequately take into account the site context or its immediate surroundings.
 - Consider reducing the bulkiness of the building and create opportunity for appropriate landscape.
 - More consideration should be given to distant views from the eastern bank of the river across the marina.
 - More consideration should be given to sustainable measures.
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These comments are made in relation to the amended plans dated 29 November and should be read in conjunction with comments from the Landscape and Ecology Officers.

1. Site context

The site lies within Bursledon Conservation Area and as such any scheme proposed would need to be respectful to the character of the area and the site's immediate surrounding context, as well as be of a high-quality design.

A Design and Access Statement has been submitted; however, more information is required in terms of contextual analysis of the area to help inform the design. This should be supported by a robust character and context studies to illustrate how it has informed the design, including the massing, heights and the building character and appearance. For instance, there appeared to be no detailed justification as to why the scheme presented should be considered as an enhancement of the conservation area. The implied presumption that the existing 1960/70s dwelling was not worth retaining was not explained and it appeared that no research into its history has been undertaken.

The existing residential properties around the site consist in detached and semi-detached buildings of 1 and 2 storeys, sit within large plots and each has generous front and rear gardens.

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The principle of replacing the existing dwelling with a dwelling of an elegant modern design or to its general position within the plot, is acceptable. Critical to the success of the scheme is the fact that its design doesn't seem to be informed by the context or that the overall scheme is landscape led. This would mean that the dwelling should sit seamlessly and comfortably within its conservation and landscape character setting when viewed from the eastern bank of the river across the Marina and from further afield.

Also, there was no evidence presented showing the visual impact from across the river. An analysis of longer views from the south needs to be done to determine the impact that the 3 storeys' building, its continuous parapet line and the extensive areas of glazing will have when set within the existing context.

2. Layout

The submitted DAS doesn't really elaborate or justify how the context have informed the proposed design. The large footprint is leaving too little around the site and potential interfere with the root protection of the existing trees putting pressure of those trees.

Also, we haven't seen evidence that alternative layouts were explored. It would be of a good approach to address how the design evolved, by showing alternative arrangements and why they were discounted, hence, an alternative layout should be explored to create more opportunities to reduce the mass of the building.

Further work is required to ensure that the site layout and form of buildings works with the site's topography.

3. Height, Form, Scale & Mass

Local Plan Policy will only permit extension to an approximately 25% increase of the floorspace of the existing dwelling. The additional floorspace proposed amounts to approximately 182 sq.m, more than 67% the size of the existing dwelling. This seems like an excessive increase of floorspace in this location.

It is felt that the scale and mass of development should be revisited to allow for a slightly more relaxed scheme with greater emphasis on achieving a well-designed place and create a positive contribution to the enhancement of the conservation area.

4. External Appearance

It is acknowledged that the proposed scheme is seen from the Marina across the river and from the vehicular access onto the site and that there is an opportunity to develop a contemporary design. However, there is lack of information to understand the rationale behind this proposal.

The flat roof boxy form is not in keeping with the character of the locality and this concern is exacerbated by the fact that it will be visually prominent on distant views and total length of the building increased comparing to the existing one.

The appearance of the building results on an awkward juxtaposition of materials and forms placed onto the 'front' of an otherwise dull box. Whilst this may work in a much more urban context, here, the building will be visible from both sides, meaning that it must try to address each in a manner which is appropriate to its setting and the wider context. As it stands, it

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appears that the building has been dropped into the site from elsewhere, rather than designed to work with it.

Whilst a couple of precedent examples were shown on the DAS, these were quite different in character and appearance to each other and different again to that proposed which does not achieve the same quality.

It was considered that the design quality of that presented does not meet the standard of that expected within a conservation area, or for such a wonderful site and setting. That proposed fails to adequately take into account the opportunities for a building which complements its setting and interacts with the landscape. It is felt that a fresh look at the opportunities of the site is required in order to achieve a scheme which is worthy of the site and its setting.

5. Sustainability

No mention is made, or details provided in relation to sustainability measures such as the orientation of dwellings to maximise solar gain; increased insulation; energy and water saving features; PV or solar water heating panels; sustainable drainage; electric charging points for cycles and cars; green infrastructure or biodiversity enhancements; etc. This is disappointing and should not be considered as an afterthought but be part of the design from the start.

To support the Council's commitment to mitigate climate change:

- Provide minimum parking provision
- Provide charging points for electric vehicles, Ebikes and other forms of micro-mobility
- Consider introducing green and blue roofs and walls to reduce hard surfaces and control water at source
- Include additional trees and soft landscape to reduce hard surfaces, slow surface water run-off, provide shade and create habitats / corridors for biodiversity
- Incorporate permeable surfaces and multi-functional SuDS in accordance with advice from Landscape and Ecology Officers
- Consider installation of photovoltaics
- Reduce levels of CO2 emissions via energy efficiency and choice of materials
- Incorporate efficient mains water consumption measures
- Orient buildings to maximise solar gain and provide natural surveillance of surrounding street and spaces to encourage active travel
- Include measures to provide outdoor shade and minimise indoor heating
- Ensure habitable rooms enjoy dual aspect to maximise solar gain, improve ventilation and maximise overlooking of surrounding streets and spaces