

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: H/25/99960

Site Address: 8 WATERBEECH DRIVE, HEDGE END, SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 4SH

Case Officer: Dorothy Hei-Tung-Hoh

Description: Part retrospective application for the demolition of the former conservatory and erection of a pergola

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Within the Urban Edge • Within Established Residential Area • Within Built-up Area Boundary		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• H/21/90893 - Single storey front extension - Permit - 14/09/2021		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	Two objections have been received from the neighbouring properties, raising the following concerns: • The pergola is visually intrusive, with a harsh and dark appearance; • The structure is considered overly high in relation to the boundary fence; • Concerns regarding overlooking and loss of privacy; • The structure has been built close to the boundary, affecting the ability to access and maintain the fence; • The depth of the structure is considered excessive compared to neighbouring development.		
Parish Council:	No objection.		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 4 th February 2026.		

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; Character Area Appraisal for Hedge End, West End and Botley (HEWEB 67)

Assessment:

Site context and surroundings

The application site comprises a two-storey semi-detached dwelling located at the end of a cul-de-sac at 8 Waterbeech Drive. It is understood that the property originally featured a rear sun lounge (conservatory-style structure). However, during the site visit, it was observed that this structure had already been removed and replaced with the pergola, which is the subject of the current retrospective application. At the time of the site visit, the pergola was not fully completed. The surrounding area is residential in nature, characterised by a mix of semi-detached and terraced dwellings, predominantly two-storey in scale.

Proposal

The application seeks part retrospective planning permission for the erection of a pergola to the rear of the dwelling. The structure is not yet fully completed at the time of assessment.

The pergola is positioned on an existing patio area and partially projects beyond the side elevation, such that it is sited close to both shared side boundaries. The overall width measures approximately 7.3 metres. The structure has an uneven depth, extending approximately 3.4 metres from the rear wall on the side adjacent to No. 6 and approximately 2.6 metres on the opposite side adjoining the attached neighbour at No. 10. The height of the structure above the patio is approximately 2.7 metres. The pergola is intended for use as an outdoor sitting area.

The pergola comprises a grey aluminium frame with partial enclosure to the side elevations. The rear elevation (facing the garden) remains largely open, with sections incorporating a glass balustrade. The roof consists of adjustable aluminium louvred panels.

Policy and Principle

- The application site lies within an urban edge where the basic principle of development is acceptable, with any formal approval being based upon the exact nature, design, and impact of that proposed being considered acceptable and in accordance with the relevant policies within the adopted local plan and supplementary planning guidance.
- It is noted that the application is submitted on a part retrospective basis. However, this does not alter the assessment of the proposal, which must be considered on its planning merits.

Layout, design, and impact upon the character of the area

- 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 neighbourhood, and be compatible in terms of mass, scale, layout density, design, and siting.
- In terms of its design, the structure comprises a modern aluminium frame with a louvred roof form. Whilst the use of grey aluminium and solid panel sections introduces a more contemporary appearance that does not directly reflect the traditional brick-built character of the host dwelling or surrounding properties, the development is situated within a private rear garden and is not readily visible from public vantage points, particularly given the site's location at the end of a cul-de-sac.

- The pergola projects from the side elevation and, due to its proximity to the shared boundaries and the relatively low height of the boundary fence, appears as a relatively substantial structure when viewed from neighbouring properties. The use of aluminium panels contributes to a more prominent and visually heavier form than would typically be expected of a pergola. However, it is noted that the overall scale, depth, and height of the structure are broadly comparable to those of a typical single-storey rear extension commonly found within residential areas. Whilst the materials and form result in a less visually lightweight structure, the pergola remains a domestic scale addition within a rear garden setting.
- On balance, although the design is not considered to be of particularly high quality and appears somewhat utilitarian in form, the limited public visibility and domestic rear garden context mean that the proposal would not result in a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, in accordance with Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016–2036).

Impact on residential amenity

- Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) amongst other matters, stipulate that all new development should not have an unacceptable impact upon residential amenities of both new and existing residents.
- It is acknowledged that the design and materials, particularly the use of dark aluminium panels, result in a more visually prominent and solid appearance when compared to a traditional domestic extension or a more open pergola structure. However, the assessment must consider whether this results in a level of harm sufficient to justify refusal.
- The concerns raised by the neighbouring occupiers have been fully taken into account. Photographic evidence provided from within the neighbouring gardens confirms that the pergola is visible above the boundary fence and presents as a relatively solid structure. Nevertheless, it is noted that the overall scale and height of the development are broadly comparable to those of a typical single-storey rear extension.
- In respect of the adjoining neighbour at No. 6, whilst the structure is positioned close to the shared boundary, there remains a reasonable separation between the pergola and the main rear elevation of the neighbouring dwelling. On this basis, it is not considered to result in an unacceptable sense of enclosure or overbearing impact when viewed from the neighbouring garden or main habitable rooms.
- With regard to the adjoining semi-detached neighbour at No. 10, it is noted that this property also benefits from a single-storey rear extension of a comparable depth. The pergola projects approximately 2.6 metres along this boundary, which is similar in scale to the existing built form at No. 10. As such, the resulting impact is considered to be relatively limited and not materially harmful to the occupiers of that property.
- In respect of overlooking and loss of privacy, the pergola does not introduce any internal accommodation. Whilst the rear elevation of the structure is largely open, and it is acknowledged that some degree of intervisibility may occur, this is typical of urban garden environments and is not considered to give rise to an unacceptable level of overlooking.
- Concerns relating to access for the maintenance of the boundary fence are noted. However, this is a private civil matter between the respective landowners and does not fall within the remit of the planning system.

- Overall, whilst the development is not considered ideal in design terms and results in a more visually prominent structure than would typically be expected, it is not considered to give rise to a level of harm to neighbouring amenity that would warrant refusal. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016–2036).

Highways and 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 proposal relates to the erection of a pergola within the rear garden of an existing dwelling and does not result in the creation of additional habitable accommodation. As such, the development would not generate additional parking demand and would not impact upon the existing parking provision serving the dwelling.

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; (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. 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:

The concerns raised by neighbouring occupiers are acknowledged, and it is accepted that the pergola is not ideal in design terms and appears visually prominent when viewed from adjoining properties. However, having regard to its overall scale, height, design and relationship with neighbouring dwellings, the development is not considered to result in a level of harm to residential amenity or the character and appearance of the area sufficient to warrant refusal. On balance, the proposal is therefore considered acceptable and complies with Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016–2036).

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒**REFUSE** ☐