

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: H/23/96592

Site Address: 10 KNOWLE LANE, HORTON HEATH, EASTLEIGH, SO50 7DZ

Case Officer: Dorothy Hei-Tung-Hoh

Description: Single storey rear extension and two storey side extension (AMENDED DESCRIPTION)

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Outside built-up Area Boundary • Outside of the urban edge – Countryside		

Planning History?	Yes ☐	No ☒
No planning history relating to the application site.		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	No comments were received.		
Parish Council:	No objection.		
Ecologist:	A preliminary bat roost appraisal is required, to include an internal inspection of the loft. The ecologist can also recommend the most appropriate biodiversity enhancements for this site.		
Tree Consultant:	No arboricultural objection to the proposed development.		
Landscape Consultant:	In principle, no landscape objection to the proposal but it is recommended to ask for more detail on the notional strip of planting shown in front of the fence. This planting is important to soften the fence in keeping with the character along Knowle Lane. This hedge should be a mix of native species planted at 5 plants per linear meter and at min. 60-80cm high. The planting should be spread with medium grade bark mulch. Two trees should be planted either side of the double gates within the new hedge planting. I recommend 1 Acer campestre and 1 Sorbus aucuparia, although other native species can be considered. The trees can be planted as 6-8cm girth, light standards.		
HCC Highways:	No objection to the proposals from a highway perspective. The only concern is in regard to landscaping / bushes shown on plans, described as 'Proposed Fence Elevation'. Whilst shown as low level, if they were to grow up and outwards over time, they could eventually obstruct the visibility splay. As such, it would be requested that a condition is applied.		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 11 th January 2024		

Policy:
National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Practice Guidance

Development Plan:

The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 The most relevant policies are Strategic policies S1, S2 and S5; and Development Management policies DM1, DM2, DM11 and DM14.

Supplementary Planning Documents:

Quality Places; Residential Parking Standards; Character Area Appraisals.

Assessment:

Site Description and Surroundings

10 Knowle Lane is a two-storey 3-bedroom semi-detached dwelling with a white render finish. The property is characterised by its relatively open setting, marked by a wood rail fence along the front boundary. Occupying a substantial plot, the property features spacious side and rear gardens. The wider surroundings are designated as countryside. Surrounding the property to the south, west and north are residential dwellings, while to the east of the site is open green field.

Proposal

The proposed scheme has undergone several design revisions since its initial stage. The applicant has confirmed on 07/02/2024 that the application now solely proposes a single storey rear extension and a two-storey side extension. Given that the revised design is not considered to have additional impacts on neighbouring amenities, re-consultation with adjacent neighbours and internal consultees was deemed unnecessary.

Background

In addition to the single storey rear extension and two storey side extension, the original scheme presented in the current application included a 2m high front boundary fence with setback gate access.

Pre-application advice was previously provided on 06/11/2023, offering recommendations to mitigate potential adverse impacts, especially concerning the two-storey side extension and the front boundary fence. However, it was noted that the original scheme did not appear to have incorporated those suggestions, as there was little variation from the proposal submitted in the pre-application stage. The only alteration was the addition of landscape features along the proposed front boundary fence. As such, the original scheme was considered unacceptable.

Following extensive discussions with the applicant and agent, and after several amendments, the applicant opted to remove the proposed front boundary fence and entrance gate from the proposal. Additionally, the front gable element within the proposed two-storey side extension was replaced with a front dormer window.

Principle

- Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) stipulates that all new development should respect the character and appearance of the area, 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.
- The application site lies outside the urban edge within designated countryside. Here the basic principle of development is not usually considered acceptable unless for justifiable agricultural, horticultural, or recreational purposes. Strategic

policy S5 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) also restricts development in the countryside principally in order to maintain its rural character and to limit urbanisation. However, Policy DM26 of Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) allows extensions to existing dwellings in the countryside that are not subject to an agricultural occupancy condition and are not likely to result in the subdivision of the plot. The policy requires that new extensions do not result in the dwelling becoming disproportionate in size to its plot and neighbouring dwellings.

Character and Design

The current application comprises two main elements: a two-storey side extension and a single storey rear extension. The single storey rear extension is designed to expand the existing lounge and introduce an additional dining area on the ground floor level. Featuring a proposed flat roof design with two rooflights, it would measure approximately 4.0m in depth, 8.0m in width, and 2.7m in height. This rear extension is considered a modest addition to the host dwellinghouse, particularly as it would not protrude beyond the existing side wall. As such, its visibility from Knowle Lane would be minimal, ensuring no adverse impact on the current street scene. Additionally, it is noted that the adjacent semi-detached neighbour at 9 Knowle Lane also features a flat roof rear addition, contributing to visual balance and harmony.

In terms of the two-storey side extension, it is intended to accommodate an additional office, WC, and coat area on the ground floor, along with an additional bedroom and en-suite facility on the first-floor level. It is worth noting that the application property and its semi-detached neighbour currently maintain a well-balanced relationship, featuring the same symmetrical design. Therefore, the proposed side extension, measuring approximately 4.0m in width and 6.0m in depth, would enlarge almost half of the width of the original building and elongate the host dwellinghouse, thus resulting in a larger dwelling that disrupts the existing balance of the semi-detached houses. Additionally, the inclusion of the proposed front dormer window would further contribute to the overall bulkiness of the two-storey side extension. Policy DM26 of Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) requires that the new extensions in countryside to not result in the property being disproportionate to both neighbouring properties and the plot itself. Considering the importance of preserving the rural character and visual amenities of the designated countryside, it is important to ensure that any proposed development at the application site is high-quality design and would be compatible with its surroundings.

Furthermore, the proposed two-storey side extension would not be set down from the existing ridge line or set back from the principal wall to display a level of subservience, which is considered to detract from the character and appearance of the host property. The side extension, continuing the existing ridge line, also raises concerns about potential mismatches in roof tiles, resulting in a less ideal appearance of the resulting dwelling. It would have an adverse impact upon the street scene.

While it is acknowledged that the proposed design mirrors the two-storey side extension of 7 Knowle Lane, it should be reiterated that each application is determined based on its own merits. During the site visit, it was observed that the application site is fairly open, resulting in any developments to the property's side being highly prominent from the street scene. In contrast, 7 Knowle Lane is set back from the road and enjoys natural screening from tall hedges, rendering the two sites incomparable. Additionally, the semi-detached neighbour of 7 Knowle Lane features a front dormer, allowing its two-storey side extension to contribute to a balanced appearance with its pair. However, there are no front dormer window in the adjoining semi-detached neighbouring property of 10 Knowle Lane. Overall, the example at 7 Knowle Lane cannot serve as a precedent and is challenging to compare with the current application.

Paragraph 139 of the NPPF states 'development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance documents. To conclude, the proposed two-storey side extension, due to its design, scale, and siting, is considered lack subservience to the host dwellinghouse and unbalance the

semi-detached pairs, thereby impacting the overall street scene. As such, the proposal cannot be reasonably supported.

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.

The proposed rear extension, being single storey, is not considered to cause adverse impacts on the adjacent neighbour, particularly given that 9 Knowle Lane also features a single-storey rear addition.

Regarding the proposed two-storey side extension, it would be positioned at a sufficient distance from neighbouring properties, mitigating concerns regarding potential impacts on neighbour amenities such as loss of light, overshadowing, and loss of outlook. Furthermore, the presence of open field land behind the application site means there are no rear neighbours. Therefore, the additional rear windows in the proposed side extension would not pose privacy issues.

Ecology

Policy DM11 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) stipulates that the Borough Council will work with statutory and voluntary agencies and developers to; protect, conserve and enhance areas subject to international, national and local nature conservation designations, and promote the net gain of biodiversity on all sites through the protection, enhancement and connection of existing provisions and new habitats and features compatible with the native biodiversity characteristics of the Borough.

The Council's Ecologist has advised that there are records of bats very close to the application site and there are few gaps in the roof tiles on the front elevation towards the gable end and gaps in the roof tiles on the side porch. As such, a preliminary bat roost appraisal is required, to include an internal inspection of the loft. Had the application have been considered acceptable in other regards this information would have been requested, and biodiversity enhancements could have been secured via condition.

Trees and landscaping

The application site does not contain any trees offered protection by a tree preservation order. The Council's Tree Consultant raised no arboricultural objection to the proposed development.

The Council's landscape consultant has also commented on the application but given that the removal of the proposed front boundary fencing, the concerns raised by the landscape consultant are no longer applicable.

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 scheme has been amended during the course of the application process whereby the proposed front boundary fencing and entrance gate have since been removed from the proposal. Comments from the HCC Highways are noted within the consultation section of this report, however since the fencing and entrance gate have been removed, the comments would no longer be relevant.

Regarding parking provision, ample space is available in the side garden, mitigating any concerns regarding parking availability.

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 Environment 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, 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.

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:

Reasons of refusal

1. The proposed two-storey side extension, due to its design, scale, and siting, is considered to lack subservience to the host dwellinghouse and unbalance the semi-detached pairs. As such, this would have an adverse impact upon the street scene and the character of the surrounding countryside. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy DM1 and DM26 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036), Quality Places SPD (2011), and the contents of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).
2. The proposal involves extensive works to the existing roof which has potential to support bats, which are protected by virtue of the Habitats and Species Regulations (2019). Insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that bats are not likely to be affected by the works, and therefore the works are unlikely to be granted a license by Natural England. The proposal would therefore be likely

to result in an offence under the Habitats and Species Regulations (2019). The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy DM11 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036), and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☐

REFUSE ☒