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Our ref
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Date
Direct line
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Email

JGR/HXC/00262917/1

14 February 2024

Dear Ms Martin

Letter of Objection

15 Crowsport, Hamble-le-Rice, Southampton – application no. H/24/96692

Please accept this letter as an objection to the above application, which seeks consent to erect a new first floor provided with roof terrace and parapet walls along with a single storey side extension with internal alterations throughout, and replacement of the rear timber terrace with block paved terrace provided with glass handrails.

We act for the owner of no. 22 Crowsport, which is a neighbour to the application site.

Crowsport is a small, 1935 estate comprising a mixture of single storey and two-storey buildings uniform in the art deco style. It is within the Hamble Conservation Area and therefore there is a duty under S72(1) of the Listing Building Act 1990 for any such development to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of that conservation area.

Despite it being a local validation requirement, the application is not supported by a Heritage Statement and there appears to be very little in the supporting Design, Sustainability and Access Statement that makes direct reference to any form of contextual analysis being carried out, other than a list of recent planning applications for the area. No reference to paragraph 200 of the NPPF 2023 (December) which requires the applicant to describe the significance of the affected heritage asset and the contribution made by their setting.

The Heritage Statement should describe the following:

- The significance of the heritage asset and the contribution to the setting.
- The impact of the development on the significance of the heritage asset and/or its setting. Specifically, how the development will sustain or enhance the heritage asset; any harm to a heritage asset would require clear justification.
- Any necessary steps which are to be taken to minimise or negate any negative impact upon the significance of the heritage asset and/or its setting.

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The Hamble Conservation Area Character Appraisal (Appendix 2) deals exclusively with the Crowsport estate. It notes that there have been a number of inappropriate additions including those at first floor level that have resulted in the erosion of the “purity and simplicity” associated with the Art Deco style. This document sets out specific guidance for Crowsport to preserve the unique style of the estate, including:

- *i. roof forms that are flat with parapets*
- *ii. walls that are of white render*
- *iii. Windows that are of a simple rectangular form without glazing bars*
- *iv. First floor extensions that do not exceed 50% of the area of the ground floor.*

It is recognised that the application proposals seek to echo some of the well-establish design principles of the estate. Many of the properties at Crowsport have been extended at two storey height with varying degrees of success. This proposal, however, lacks some of the elegance and articulation associated with the more successful examples on the estate. This is highlighted by the glass to void ratio, particularly on the proposed east elevation, which is dominated by full height glazed doors with little relief in the way of the characteristic white rendered walls between. This is also reflected in the prominent chimney flue and the pv panels which sit on the highest part of the roof with the potential to be prominent on views from higher ground into the Crowsport Estate.

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) recognises the importance of the protection of heritage assets primarily through policies S8 and DM12. Relevant extracts of those policies are produced below with relevant sections highlighted in bold:

Strategic policy S8, Historic Environment

1. The Borough Council will **continue to conserve and/or enhance the Boroughs heritage assets** in a manner appropriate to their significance. **This includes all heritage assets including listed buildings and structures, Conservation Areas** as designated on the policies map, landscapes and archaeology.

*This will be through the preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans and other strategies and in the **determination of planning applications for new development** (see policy DM12). This will involve:*

- c. **restricting development likely to harm them or their settings** through management of development proposals; and*
- d. **encouraging development that enhances** them, ensures their long-term management and maintenance and where possible, enables public enjoyment and the interpretation of the asset.*

Policy DM12, Heritage Assets

1. Development of a heritage asset or within its setting will be permitted provided **it does not harm or detract from the significance or special interest of the asset, and sustains and enhances its special character and qualities**. The more important the asset, the greater the weight that should be accorded to this criterion. Permission for development which results in substantial harm to, or loss of, designated assets of the highest significance will be wholly exceptional. Development which involves the demolition or destruction of any part of other heritage assets will not be permitted unless its removal or replacement would enhance or better reveal the significance of the asset. In these circumstances, the developer will be required to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost, in a manner appropriate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence publicly accessible.

- b. **It achieves a high standard of design which respects and complements the character and qualities of the heritage asset(s);***

The proposal fails to conserve or enhance the conservation area and therefore does not comply with the requirements of both national policy in the form of the NPPF and local policy advice as set out in policies S8 and DM12. The proposal results in harm the setting of the conservation area (S8) and fail to provide a high standard of design (DM12) and should be resisted.

The proposal will result in harm to neighbouring properties contrary to policy DM1 and the Council's Quality Places SPD which requires that all new development does not result in unacceptable impact upon the amenities of existing residents by way of loss of light, outlook or privacy. Whilst the occupants of no. 22 are unlikely to be materially affected by the proposal in this regard, it is clear that the proposal will have a harmful impact on the private amenity of the occupants of nos. 15 and 24.

In particular, the rear garden of no. 15 will be significantly overlooked by the proposed roof terrace and first floor accommodation. Notwithstanding the amended plans, there is no privacy screening provided on the first floor east elevation which allows those using the terrace uninterrupted views of the neighbouring garden. This is further compounded by the drop in levels between the two sites.

The proposal therefore results in unacceptable harm to the residential amenities of neighbouring properties and fails to comply with policy DM1 and the Quality Places SPD.

The Council's biodiversity officer notes that there are records of bats (European Protected Species) using the area and recommends the installation of a bat brick/box. However, section 12 of the DS&AS refers to the use of artificial lighting around the property and in particular external lighting of sections of the first floor terrace. This would seem incompatible with the provision of ecological mitigation on the site. Ill-considered and poorly positioned external lighting above ground has the potential to impact negatively on these protected species, particularly at first floor height. Similarly, it has the potential to further compromise the privacy and enjoyment of the neighbouring properties. The proposal therefore fails to comply with policy DM11 in that the provision of external lighting particularly at first floor level has the potential to have a direct or indirect adverse impact on protected species.

The application fails to demonstrate that the design has been informed by a detailed contextual analysis of the Crowsport Estate conservation area. Whilst the principle of first floor extensions is well established in the area, national and local policies require that any development conserves and/or enhances the heritage asset. This assessment is absent from the application. The introduction of first floor external lighting has the potential to impact on protected species. Furthermore, the proposal will result in unacceptable harm to the private amenity of neighbouring properties.

The proposed development is therefore clearly contrary to local plan policy and guidance as set out in the Quality Spaces SPD and should be refused on this basis.

Yours sincerely

Jane Rarok

Principal Planning Consultant

For and on behalf of Paris Smith LLP