

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/23/96608

Site Address: 25 CLIFTON GARDENS, WEST END, SOUTHAMPTON, SO18 3DA

Case Officer: Dorothy Hei-Tung-Hoh

Description: Single storey front extension, single storey side extension, roof alterations involve raising the roof and adding front dormer to facilitate first-floor accommodation.

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

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Z/13803/001/00 - Ground floor rear extension - Permit - 17/05/1982 • H/23/95358 - Side extension inclusive of existing conservatory area. Upgrade of existing garage. - Permit - 17/08/2023 • F/23/96096 - The construction of two additional storeys and front and rear dormers. - Refuse Planning Permission For - 06/12/2023		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	4 objection letters have been received, each expressing various concerns regarding the proposed developments. These concerns primarily include issues related to the potential impacts on the character of the area, overdevelopment, overlooking, loss of light, and loss of privacy. Furthermore, issues such as the potential impact on existing trees, as well as practical concerns such as obstruction during the construction period, noise, and dust, have also been raised.		
Parish Council:	Councillors would like a condition of this to be that there be no further permitted development.		
Ecologist:	Do not see any potential bat roost features visible. There is a pond in the back garden, however it does not look suitable for use by great crested newts and there is not any vegetation in or around the pond. There are no records of amphibians near this site.		
Tree Consultant:	No arboricultural objection to the proposal.		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 19 th October 2023		

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 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 57)

Assessment:

25 Clifton Gardens is a detached bungalow which features a carport and a detached garage on one side, with several outbuildings in the rear garden. The surrounding area is primarily residential, with a mix of property types including detached, semi-detached, and terraced houses. Clifton Gardens is a cul-de-sac that slopes gently from south to north. The application seeks planning approval for the addition of a single storey front extension, aimed at filling the void in the front elevation to achieve a more uniform and squared appearance. Additionally, the proposal includes the construction of a single storey side extension, intended to expand the existing kitchen and dining area, while also accommodating a new utility room. Furthermore, roof alterations are proposed, involving the raising of the eave and ridge heights, as well as the addition of a front dormer to facilitate the creation of first-floor accommodation. After reviewing the plans, it is considered that the proposal cannot be supported for several reasons, which will be elaborated on in the following sections.

Principle

The application site lies within an established residential area 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.

Character and Design

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.

The application property is one of four identical bungalows situated along Clifton Gardens, a road characterised by a gentle downward slope when approached from the north. Given that the neighbouring bungalows adjacent to the application property are generally consistent in height, this means they generally achieve a coherent roof topography that follows the downward gradient of the road. This consistent roof topography contributes positively to the street scene.

The proposed development involves raising the eave and ridge height of the application property. This increase in height would cause the roof to exceed the heights of neighbouring properties, consequently disrupting the stepped roof topography prevalent among dwellings along this side of the Clifton Gardens. As a result, the altered roofline would stand out prominently within the street scene, creating a noticeable visual contrast with the cohesive roof lines shared by its nearest neighbours.

Moreover, the additional height would elevate the application property much higher than 24 Clifton Gardens to the north. Given the natural gradient of the road, the application property already occupies a higher position than No.24, the proposed height increase would further exacerbate this existing disparity between the two properties. As a result, No. 24 would appear dwarfed in comparison to the application property, which would once again detract from the overall harmony of the street scene.

The proposals would also involve a significant extension of the roof, both to the rear and to the front, along with the addition of a front dormer. It is considered that the enlarged roof form would be overly prominent and incongruous, resulting in unattractive side profiles that are discordant with the appearance of the group of bungalows to which the application property belongs. Additionally, the proposed single storey side extension is considered a disjointed addition that fails to relate appropriately to the host dwelling due to its design and position, further exacerbating the adverse impacts on the street scene.

During the site visit, it was noted that the spacing between dwellings is one of the notable features of this stretch of Clifton Gardens, with houses typically not extending across the entire width of their plots, and no attached side extensions observed along the road. Therefore, apart from the additional height of the roof, the combination of the roof extension and the side extension would also result in an incongruous dwelling among the group of identical bungalows, thereby adversely affecting the character and appearance of the area.

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 combination of the proposed roof alterations, single storey front extension and single storey side extension would render the application property incongruous within the street. This would disrupt the established character of the area and adversely impact the street scene, thus warranting refusal.

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.

In terms of potential impacts on neighbouring amenity, the proposed side facing rooflights are not considered to cause any issues regarding overlooking or loss of privacy to adjacent neighbours, given their nature, height, and placement. Similarly, regarding the new front dormer windows, they would only overlook spaces already open to the public, thus raising no concerns.

However, for the proposed first-floor rear windows, it's important to consider the current relationship between the application property and its nearest adjacent neighbours (24 Clifton Gardens and 26 Clifton Gardens), all of which are bungalows without first-floor rear facing windows. Currently, all properties enjoy a high level of privacy in their rear gardens. The addition of rear facing first-floor windows could disrupt this harmonious arrangement, potentially allowing views into neighbours' rear gardens and therefore diminishing their enjoyment of private amenity space.

Additionally, it is worth noting that the application property already sits at a higher position than 24 Clifton Road due to the topography of the road. This elevation difference will make the proposed developments appear larger when viewed from No.24. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed roof alteration could create a sense of enclosure, potentially causing the neighbouring properties to feel overbearing and experience a loss of light.

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.

There are records of bats very close to the application site. Therefore, the Council's Ecologist has been consulted as part of this planning application.

After reviewing site photos, no potential bat roost features were identified. While there is a pond in the rear garden, it appears unsuitable for great crested newts due to the absence of vegetation. Although the application does not involve removing the pond, it is advised that precautions must be taken to avoid harming any animals that might be utilising it. In such a case, the pond water must not be discharged into other water bodies, and any animals, such as frogs or newts, should not be handled but carefully relocated using a bucket or net to ensure their safety.

Trees and landscaping

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

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.

There is parking available at the front for up to three cars, which meets the maximum parking requirement. Therefore, there are no parking concerns.

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 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.

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 for Refusal

1. The combination of the proposed roof alterations, single storey front extension and single storey side extension, due to their height, scale, bulk, design, and siting, would render the application property incongruous within the street, disrupting the established character of the area and adversely impact the street scene. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036), Quality Places SPD (2011), and the contents of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).
2. The proposed roof alterations, due to their increased height, scale, and elevated position in relation to the neighbouring property to the north, would create a sense of enclosure and potentially cause a loss of light. This would have an unacceptable and overbearing impact on the amenities of the occupant of 24 Clifton Road. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036), Quality Places SPD (2011), and the contents of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).
3. The proposed first-floor rear facing windows, due to their positioning, would result in overlooking and loss of privacy, thereby adversely impacting the amenities of the adjacent neighbours. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036), Quality Places SPD (2011), and the contents of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☐

REFUSE ☒