

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: H/24/97517

Site Address: TALL OAKS, 25 COMPTON CLOSE, EASTLEIGH, SO50 4RE

Case Officer: Dorothy Hei-Tung-Hoh

Description: First-floor side extension. Two-storey rear extension. Garage conversion.
Alterations to fenestration (AMENDED DESCRIPTION)

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

Planning History?	Yes ☐	No ☒
There does not appear to be any planning history relating to the site, however it is noted that there have been applications for work to TPO's trees.		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	Two representations were initially received regarding the proposed developments. One objection and one comment were submitted. The objection raised concerns that the proposed developments would result in a congested form of development, negatively impacting visual amenity, and creating an overbearing sense of enclosure. Additionally, concerns about dust and noise during construction were highlighted. The comment from another neighbour did not focus on the proposal itself but instead raised issues about the existing trees and bushes along the shared boundary, which cause a loss of sunlight. Following the submission of the amended scheme, one further objection was received from the same neighbour. This reiterated all the previous points, stating that the amendments were insufficient to address their concerns. Additionally, the neighbour stated that the proposal was out of character and scale for the area and would have negative impacts on local wildlife.		
Parish Council:	No objections.		
Tree Consultant:	We raise no arboricultural objection, subject to the condition.		
Ecologist:	From the photos of the front of the building I don't see any potential bat roost features. Given the age, construction, and condition of the building it is probably safe to just use an informative unless there are potential roost features on the rear elevation.		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 5 th July 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 and S2; and Development Management policies DM1, DM2, DM11 and DM14.

Supplementary Planning Documents:

Quality Places; Residential Parking Standards; Character Area Appraisal for Eastleigh (ELAC 30)

Assessment:

Tall Oaks (25 Compton Close) is a two-storey, five-bedroom detached dwelling located on the north-western edge of Eastleigh. Access to the property is via a shared driveway. The property itself is brick-built with a stepped appearance, where the left half of the house has a lower ridge height and is not flush with the rear elevation. The existing garage has an even lower ridge height and is set further back from the rear wall of the main house. To the rear of the property is an enclosed garden with a pergola.

Proposal

The application seeks planning approval to erect a first-floor side extension, a two-storey rear extension, and to convert the existing garage. Initially, the original proposal intended to square off the host dwelling completely, infilling all existing voids in the footprint and maintaining a continuous ridge height. However, this design was considered not subservient and would have entirely closed the openness between the host dwelling and the neighbouring property to the left. In response to these concerns, the agent agreed to amend the design. The revised plan reduces the ridge height of the development closest to 24 Compton Close, trying to retain the stepped appearance of the main house.

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.

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.
- It is acknowledged that the application property has an identical appearance to the neighbouring property at 26 Compton Close. However, it is noted from the site visit that this style of house design is not a uniform characteristic in the area. The properties in this vicinity display a diverse mix of designs and materials. Therefore, it is considered that modest changes to the appearance of the application property would not adversely impact the character of the area. The revised proposal, which retains the stepped appearance of the house, is expected to ensure that the resultant dwelling does not appear out of place or overly prominent within the street scene.
- Additionally, as the application property is tucked away down a shared drive, it is not situated in a prominent location. Therefore, the proposed changes to the host dwelling are not expected to affect the street scene to a degree that would warrant refusal.

- Although the proposal will reduce some of the space and gap between the application property and 24 Compton Close, the hipped roof design, rather than a full gable, will help to limit its dominance when viewed from the front elevation. The inclined angle of the roof, combined with the revised design that includes a lower ridge height for the section closest to 24 Compton Close, will further reduce its visual impact.
- The design essentially infills the existing voids without extending the principal and rear walls of the property. As such, it cannot be considered overdevelopment, as the site will still retain a good-sized amenity space.
- The proposed materials and fenestration will match the existing elements of the house, which will help the extension to integrate well with the host dwelling and maintain the overall aesthetic cohesion.

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 neighbour's concerns regarding the proposed developments being overbearing and creating a sense of enclosure have been noted. While it is acknowledged that the proposed developments will be in close proximity to the neighbouring property at 24 Compton Close, it is important to note that the wall and roof of 24 Compton Close closest to the proposed development do not have windows and rooflights. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposal will affect this neighbour in terms of loss of light, outlook, or overshadowing.
- Additionally, since the rear wall of the property will not be extended, the neighbour will not have a direct line of sight to the proposed developments, thereby mitigating feelings of enclosure and overbearing.
- Concerns regarding dust and noise are noted; however, these issues are not material planning considerations and are therefore civil matters that cannot be taken into account in the planning assessment.

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 no potential bat roost features visible from the site photos. Given the age, construction, and condition of the building, it is likely safe to proceed with an informative unless potential roost features are present on the rear elevation.
- The extension will be able to accommodate a swift brick and a bat brick as biodiversity enhancements on the west side elevation, provided they are not placed too close to each other. Alternatively, a bat box or swift nest box could be located on the eastern elevation. Built-in bat roosts or swift bricks are preferred because they do not require maintenance and cannot fall off.

Trees and landscaping

- There are several oak trees to the rear of the dwelling that are subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). In addition, there is a protected oak tree at the front of the property. While these trees should not be directly influenced by the proposal, there is potential for them to be harmed during the construction phase of the development. Therefore, the council's tree consultant requires a Tree Protection Plan to demonstrate that the trees can be successfully retained. This will be secured by condition.

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.
- Although the proposed garage conversion will result in the loss of one parking space, it is considered that the existing driveway at the front of the property can accommodate three vehicles. Therefore, the parking provision is deemed acceptable.

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:

- Permit subject to conditions.

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒

REFUSE ☐