

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: H/24/97589

Site Address: 70 FREEGROUNDS ROAD, HEDGE END, SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 0JA

Case Officer: Dorothy Hei-Tung-Hoh

Description: One and a half storey rear extension with roof alterations including additional fenestration and erection of summer house.

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

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• H/23/96420 - Single storey rear extension. Roof alteration to enlarge first-floor accommodation. - Permit - 11/01/2024 • H/24/97368 - Single Storey 6m rear extension with roof alteration – Refuse Planning Permission For - 16/07/2024		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	No comments were received.		
Parish Council:	No objection.		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 21 st June 2024		

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 30)

Assessment:
<u>Site context</u>
The application property is a 4-bedroom detached bungalow with a hipped roof form. It is situated in a residential street and forms part of a group of bungalows of similar age and appearance. The bungalow has a front garden and a side driveway leading to a detached garage and rear garden.

Proposal

The application seeks planning approval for a one and a half storey rear extension and roof alteration at 70 Freegrounds Road. The proposed development includes an 8.0m rear extension, which requires the demolition of the existing garage. The ground floor of the extension is intended to serve as an open-plan kitchen, lounge, and dining area, while the expanded first floor will accommodate an additional bedroom with a walk-in wardrobe and en-suite facilities. Additionally, solar panels are proposed to be installed on the south-east roof slope. The proposal also includes a flat-roof summer house at the bottom of the rear garden, measuring approximately 12m in length, 6.0m in width, and 3.0m in height. After careful consideration of the submitted plans and an on-site assessment, it is concluded that the proposed extensions and outbuilding are excessively large and would visually dominate the existing property and its plot. As such, the application cannot be supported, as will be further explained below.

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.
- The site is also part of the character area of Hedge End, West End and Botley (HEWEB 30) which provides the following guidance on developments and that they should ensure that:
 - i) Retain the grass verges.
 - ii) Maintain the predominant plot widths and continuity in building line.
 - iii) Maintain a uniformity in building heights within each street.

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.
- The properties along this section of Freegrounds Road are characterised by a staggered alignment, where the property to the left of the application site is set further forward than the property on the right-hand side. The introduction of an 8.0m rear extension, combined with the additional bulk created by the roof alteration, would disrupt this established pattern. While it is acknowledged that a 6.0m rear extension was previously approved under application H/23/96420, the current proposal extends 2.0m beyond that, and this seemingly minor increase is in fact significant. The additional 2.0m would exacerbate the disruption to the staggered alignment, making the bungalow appear bulkier than its neighbouring properties. Although the rear extension may not be prominently visible from public viewpoints along Freegrounds Road, its impact would be conspicuous to the adjoining properties, thereby affecting the established rhythm of development in the area.
- Moreover, the proposal would effectively double the amount of accommodation currently available within the bungalow. While it is recognised that the size of the plot could accommodate a dwelling of this increased size, any additions or alterations should be respectful to the scale and form of the existing dwelling. The proposed scheme fails to achieve this, as it results in a substantial increase in mass and bulk that overwhelms the modest proportions of the original bungalow.

The extension does not appear as a sympathetic addition but rather as an overbearing development that is out of scale with the existing dwelling.

- The proposed summer house, measuring approximately 12m in length, 6.0m in width, and 3.0m in height, is considered excessive in both size and scale. It would occupy nearly the entire rear boundary. While this structure would not be visible from Freegrounds Road, its presence would be prominent when viewed from Cortina Way, the residential street located behind the application site. Currently, there are trees along the rear boundary of the site that provide some screening and a sense of greenery to the residents of Cortina Way. It is anticipated that the construction of the summer house would require the removal of these trees, resulting in the loss of greenery and exposing the large structure to the view of residents on Cortina Way. The height and length of the summer house would be particularly conspicuous above the boundary fence, detracting from the visual amenity of the area. While it is acknowledged that a similar outbuilding was approved at the neighbouring property at 66 Freegrounds Road, it is important to note that the approved structure was smaller in size and scale and did not dominate the entirety of the bottom of their rear garden. The approved outbuilding at 66 Freegrounds Road was considered to integrate more effectively within its surroundings, in contrast to the current proposal at 70 Freegrounds Road. Therefore, this example is not directly comparable to the current application.
- NPPF states 'development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance documents. In conclusion, the proposed extensions and roof alterations would substantially increase the bulk and size of the host dwelling, to the detriment of the modest original bungalow. The proposal fails to respect the scale and form of the existing property and would disrupt the established pattern of development along Freegrounds Road. Additionally, the proposed summer house is excessively large and would have adverse impacts on the visual amenity of Cortina Way. For these reasons, the proposal cannot be reasonably supported and is recommended for 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.
- Both adjacent neighbours at 68 and 72 Freegrounds Road will be directly affected by the proposed development. No. 68 shares a closer relationship with the application property, while No. 72, being positioned further forward, will have a clearer view of the proposed extensions. In the previously approved application (H/23/96420), the 6.0m extension was deemed the threshold of acceptability. The additional bulk introduced by the current proposal, extending a further 2.0m, would be visually dominant and intrusive. This increase in size will create an oppressive outlook for the neighbouring properties, particularly No. 68, resulting in a significant loss of outlook and an overbearing effect on the occupants.
- The agent has argued that a similar development was approved at 66 Freegrounds Road. While there are some similarities between the approved development at No. 66 and the current proposal for No. 70, it is crucial to recognise that each case must be judged on its own merits. No two sites are identical, and what may be deemed appropriate and acceptable for one may not be suitable for another. Specifically, it was noted that the adjacent neighbour (64 Freegrounds Road) of No. 66 had already extended their property several years ago, resulting in a longer dwelling. Consequently, the 8.0m rear extension approved at 66 Freegrounds Road did not protrude significantly beyond the neighbour's rear wall, thereby minimising any adverse impact. In contrast, neither of the adjacent neighbours to the application site has undertaken similar extensions. As a result, an 8.0m rear

extension at No. 70 would be far more prominent and likely to cause greater harm to the neighbouring properties, particularly No. 68. This property, being situated between 66 Freegrounds Road and the application site, would experience a significant sense of enclosure if an 8.0m rear extension were approved for No. 70 as well. This could lead to a substantial loss of outlook and a potential reduction in light, severely impacting the living conditions of the occupants at No. 68.

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 dwelling will increase from a four to a five-bedroom property, 3 off-road car parking spaces are the maximum number that is required under the SPD requirements. Accordingly, the parking arrangement would remain unchanged, the proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact in terms of parking provisions.

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 of refusal

1. The proposed rear extension, combined with the roof alteration, due to their combined size, mass, and scale, would be to the detriment of the modest original bungalow, disrupting the established pattern of development along Freegrounds Road, and result in unacceptable harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties. 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 summer house, due to its excessive size, scale, height and position, is considered overbearing and visually intrusive. It would result in unacceptable impacts on the visual amenity of the surrounding area, particularly when viewed from Cortina Way. 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 ☒