

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: H/24/98411

Site Address: 4 HARLAXTON CLOSE, EASTLEIGH, SO50 4QX

Case Officer: Dorothy Hei-Tung-Hoh

Description: First-floor side and rear extension, with alterations to exiting fenestration (Amended description)

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Within the Urban Edge • Within Established Residential Area • Within Built-up Area Boundary • Adjacent to Boyatt Wood SINC		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
J/16/78733 - Single storey rear extension - Depth 4 metres, overall height 3.6 metres, eaves height 2.4 metres, width 8 metres - Prior Approval Not Required - 15/07/2016		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	None received.		
Parish Council:	None received.		
Ecologist:	<u>02/12/2024</u> I have reviewed the additional site photos. The woodland edge appears to be set back from the rear fence, so I don't think any significant additional shading will result from the proposal. I remove my previous objection to this application. A bat box must be added to the gable end of the southern elevation. A swift nest brick must be built into the gable end of the northern or western elevation. This can be conditioned, with photos provided upon completion of building works. <u>21/11/2024</u> This site is adjacent on the west to Boyatt Wood SINC which is designated as Ancient Woodland, Other woodland where there is a significant element of ancient semi-natural woodland surviving and other semi-natural woodland if they comprise important community types of restricted distribution in the County. I raise an objection to this application due to unacceptable impact on Ancient Woodland priority habitat. If the extension was only to the rear of the house and not over the garage this would not be an issue. There are records of bats very close to this house. If the application is going to progress, photos of the rear elevation would be required to determine whether a bat survey would be required. Light spill into the ancient woodland would be a concern		
Asset Management:	No response is required from Asset Management Consultations for planning application (H/24/98411).		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒
No ☒	
Details: 29 th November 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 Eastleigh (ELAC 30)
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Assessment: <u>Site context and surroundings</u> The application property is a two-storey 3-bedroom link-detached dwelling situated at the northwestern edge of Eastleigh, positioned at the end of a cul-de-sac within Harlaxton Close. The property is finished in yellow brick with tile-hanging detailing on parts of the upper portion of the front and side elevations. An attached garage to the side of the property connects with the garage of 5 Harlaxton Close. A single-storey extension is located at the rear of the dwelling, leaving very limited outdoor space between the rear boundary and the host dwelling. Therefore, the primary amenity area is situated in the side garden to the southwest of the property. The surrounding area is residential in character, comprising similarly styled two-storey brick-built properties. <u>Proposal</u> The application seeks planning permission to construct a first-floor side extension above the existing attached garage and a first-floor rear extension above the existing rear extension. Additionally, the proposal includes alterations to the existing fenestration. Originally, the submitted drawings indicate that the proposed first-floor rear extension incorporates a gable roof design, while the first-floor side extension features a pitched roof to harmonise with the existing roof profile. Following discussions with the agent, revisions were made to the first-floor side extension, including adjustments to the roof design and a slight reduction in its height to ensure it appears more subservient to the host dwelling. <u>Principle</u> 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. <u>Layout, design, and impact upon the character of the area</u> 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,
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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 is prominently situated at the end of a cul-de-sac, making it a highly visible feature within the street scene. The proposed first-floor side extension above the existing garage is particularly noticeable due to this positioning. Concerns were initially raised regarding the potential reduction in the gap between the application property and its neighbour, which could diminish the sense of openness in the area. However, given the openness on the opposite side of the property and the modest scale of the side extension, the impact on the street scene is not considered significant enough to justify refusal.
- The set-back position of the proposed first-floor side extension from the principal elevation is also considered to reduce the extension's visual prominence and ensures it appears subservient to the host dwelling. Additionally, the use of matching materials, including tile hanging on the front elevation in the same colour as the existing dwelling, enhances the integration of the extension with the main building, contributing to a more cohesive overall appearance.
- Although the introduction of a first-floor side extension may establish a precedent, the careful design and use of matching materials ensure it is respectful of the character of both the host dwelling and the surrounding area. Furthermore, it should be emphasised that each planning application is assessed on its own merits. Future proposals of a similar nature would need to be evaluated individually, taking into account their specific context and design quality.
- With regard to the proposed first-floor rear extension, its position at the rear of the property significantly limits its visibility from public vantage points, thereby minimising its visual impact.

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 property most likely to be affected by the proposal is 5 Harlaxton Close, due to its close proximity to the application site. However, the separation created by 5 Harlaxton Close's garage is considered sufficient to mitigate the potential for the proposed extensions to appear overbearing or to cause significant overshadowing of the neighbouring dwelling or its rear garden. Furthermore, the primary amenity space for 5 Harlaxton Close is understood to be situated on the north side of the property, away from the proposed extensions, further reducing the likelihood of any adverse impact on their outdoor living area.
- The replacement of the existing side window on the north elevation with a larger window is not expected to lead to increased overlooking, as a window has been present in this location for a considerable time. Additionally, as there are no properties to the rear, the introduction of a new first-floor rear window on the west elevation is unlikely to have any effect on neighbouring dwellings.
- Regarding the additional first-floor side window serving bedroom 2 on the south elevation, this is not considered to cause any undue harm. This elevation already contains two first-floor windows, and the inclusion of a third is unlikely to result in any notable impact on the privacy or amenity of the adjacent neighbours.

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 application site lies adjacent to Boyatt Wood, a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) designated as Ancient Woodland. Therefore, the council's ecologist was consulted. It was noted that the existing house is positioned approximately 2.5 metres from the woodland edge, which is significantly closer than the 20-metre buffer typically recommended to protect Ancient Woodland habitats. Moreover, the proposed development includes an extension above the existing garage, which follows the established building line but has the potential to increase shading of the woodland edge.
- Initially, the ecologist raised an objection, expressing concerns that the proposal could have an unacceptable impact on the Ancient Woodland priority habitat. However, after reviewing additional site photos, the ecologist withdrew their objection regarding shading impacts, concluding that the woodland edge is sufficiently set back from the proposed extensions to avoid significant additional shading.
- While the objection was withdrawn, the ecologist emphasised several measures to minimise potential ecological harm and support biodiversity. They highlighted the presence of gaps and lifted tiles on the northern elevation, which could provide access for roosting bats. As a precaution, any works involving the hanging tiles should be undertaken outside the active bat season, which runs from May to September. Operatives must be briefed to handle situations where bats or evidence of bats are encountered during construction, ensuring compliance with relevant wildlife legislation.
- The ecologist also recommended incorporating biodiversity enhancements as part of the development. These include the installation of a bat box on the southern gable end and a swift nest brick on the northern or western elevation, positioned at suitable heights to maximise their effectiveness. The inclusion of these features would align with Local Plan Policy DM11 and the NPPF, which encourage the enhancement of biodiversity through development.
- To further safeguard the adjacent woodland, the ecologist advised that no construction or garden waste should be deposited into the woodland, and measures must be taken to prevent light pollution. Windows on the western elevation should be covered at night to reduce light spill, and no exterior lighting should be directed towards the woodland to preserve its ecological integrity.

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 proposed development includes the addition of two bedrooms at the first-floor level, increasing the property from a three-bedroom to a five-bedroom dwelling. In accordance with the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

on Residential Parking Standards, a minimum of three on-site parking spaces is required for a five-bedroom property.

- During the site visit, it was observed that the property benefits from a large gravel parking area at the front, in addition to the existing driveway and garage. It is considered that the site can accommodate at least three vehicles, meeting the requirements set out in the SPD.

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 ☐