

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: H/25/98822

Site Address: 13 ST AUSTELL CLOSE, BISHOPSTOKE, EASTLEIGH, SO50 6GQ

Case Officer: Charlie Vallis

Description: Retention of single storey rear extension

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Within the urban edge • EBC sold land • Within Public Right of Way 25m buffer • Adjacent to Stoke Park Wood - ancient woodland and SINC (Site of Importance for Nature Conservation)		

Planning History?	Yes ☐	No ☒
• No relevant history		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☒	Newspaper ☒
Representations:	None were received		
Parish Council:	No objection		
Tree Officer:	To the rear of the property there is a woodland. We understand that there may be some ecological issues regarding the woodland's designations, but from a purely arboricultural perspective, we consider that the individual trees are a suitable distance from the proposed development area. Therefore, we raise no arboricultural objection.		
Hampshire Countryside Service:	There are specific legislative requirements for the Highways Authority, Planning Authority, Developers and Landowners with respect to the PROW network. Where no changes are proposed to Public Rights of Way, we request that the applicant is made aware of its requirements through informatives where appropriate.		
Ecology:	<u>24/4/25:</u> I have reviewed the site photos which show that the building is in progress with a traditional foundation and the garden has been cleared to bare earth in many areas. Biodiversity enhancements must include planting for pollinators, especially along the SINC boundary fence and either a bat box or swift nest box on the main house (depending on the aspect, see details below). Additional bird boxes can be added to the garden if suitable locations are available. <u>20/3/25:</u> There are records of bats near this site. To determine whether further surveys will be required I need to review close-up photos taken in good light of the rear elevation affected by the proposal and any potential gaps or openings. Photos of any areas of the garden affected by the proposal are also required and the boundary with the SINC. Stoke Park Wood ancient woodland and SINC is located along the eastern boundary of the site. The house is currently 15.5 m from the SINC boundary. Building an 8m extension as proposed will leave only 7.5m between the house and the SINC boundary. Government guidance on ancient woodland recommends a minimum buffer zone of at least 15 metres from the boundary of the woodland to avoid root damage, light spill, noise and other impacts on the woodland. Ecology raises an objection due to potential impact on the ancient woodland SINC.		

	We understand that there are other buildings already within this buffer zone in other gardens nearby which may have been built under permitted development. The impact of this single storey extension containing an accessible bedroom and wet room may be able to be reduced and all possible mitigation should be explored to reduce potential impact. The option of permitted development could be explored but due to minimum size requirements for wheelchair access this may not be possible. If it is decided on balance to grant permission, we recommend the following measures by way of mitigation:- - It may be possible to build the extension using building techniques suitable for building near trees, such as a floating foundation. - Curtains on the rear window would reduce the impact of light spill into the woodland at night. - Noise and incursion of the garden into the woodland from the property are not likely to be an issue. Biodiversity enhancements will be required in accord with Local Plan policy DM 11 and NPPF (December 2024) paragraphs 187d and 192b. A bat box and a swift nest box may be appropriate for this building.
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Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 23/04/2025		

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, DM11 and DM14. Supplementary Planning Documents: Quality Places; Residential Parking Standards; Character Area Appraisals (BIFOHH – 9).

Assessment:
The application site contains a two-storey semi-detached dwelling, finished in a mixture of grey brick, white render and buff brick. The site is located in the northwest corner of St Austell Close and shares a rear boundary with Stoke Park ancient woodland and SINCC. The development is considered acceptable and complies with policies DM1, DM11, DM13 and DM14 from the 2016-2036 local plan, in that: <u>Principle:</u> • The application site is within the urban edge where the basic principle of development is acceptable, and any formal approval is based upon the exact nature, design and impact of the proposal being considered acceptable and in accordance with the relevant policies of the adopted local plan and supplementary planning guidance. • Policy DM1 states “all new development should: (a) not have an unacceptable impact on, and where possible should enhance residential amenities of both new and existing residents; the character and appearance of urban areas; ... (c) 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 with adjoining uses and be well integrated with these in terms of mass, scale, materials, layout, density, design and siting”

Design and layout:

- The positioning of the extension to the rear of the host dwelling and its modest height ensures that the development is not overly noticeable within the street scene.
- The use of buff brick would be acceptable as, although differing slightly from the existing brick, it is not in a prominent location from the street scene.
- Under the prior notification scheme for larger householder extensions a single storey extension of 6m in depth can be constructed. Given that neighbouring properties have not objected to the proposal, this would form a material consideration for the assessment of this application, with the proposal representing an additional 2m beyond what could be built under this scheme.
- The development encroaches into the host dwelling's rear garden, however, the property continues to benefit from side access and retains an area of approx. 66% its total internal floorspace as rear amenity space. This is above the minimum requirements outlined in the 'Quality Places' SPD and is therefore not considered to represent overdevelopment of the site.
- The development is therefore considered to accord with policy DM1 (Local Plan 2016-2036) in that the extension is appropriate to the locality in terms of its scale and positioning.

Residential amenity:

- No.15 St Austell Close forms the other half of the host dwelling's semi-detached pair and is therefore the property most likely to be affected by this development. However, due to sufficient distancing from the extension, coupled with its single storey nature, the development is not likely to result in significant impacts to their light and outlook.
- There is 1no. side-facing window shown on the extension's north elevation. As the window is at ground floor level and would face no.15's existing rear extension (approx. 3m in depth) this is not likely to result in unacceptable overlooking.
- No.11 St Austell Close is unlikely to be significantly affected by the development, due to the asymmetric layout of properties along St Austell Close and sufficient distancing from the host dwelling.
- The development is therefore considered to accord with guidance set out in the 'Quality Places' SPD in that there would be no likely unacceptable impacts on the amenity of the neighbouring properties in terms of loss of privacy, light or outlook.

Highway safety and parking standards:

- Currently a three-bedroom dwelling, the rear extension would provide one additional bedroom. The property does not benefit from on-site car parking provision; therefore, requirements under the Residential Parking Standards SPD would not be met by this application, with three on-site car parking spaces required for a four-bedroom dwelling.
- In the surrounding area, there are four off-street parking bays to the northwest of St Austell Close and aside from the junction onto St Austell Close, there are no single or double yellow lines on the street. The carriageway is considered sufficient in width to accommodate kerbside parking on one side of the road, whilst driveway parking is not common in the locality meaning that kerbside parking is not likely to result in issues of highway safety through blocking off private driveways.
- Therefore, given that reliance on on-street parking is not a new situation for the host dwelling and given the available parking provision, the additional parking pressure caused by the requirement of one additional car parking space is not considered sufficient to warrant refusal in this instance.

Impact on SINC:

- Government guidance recommends a minimum buffer of at least 15m from a SINC to avoid root damage, light spill, noise and other impacts on the woodland.
- Although within its 15m buffer, the council's tree officer has raised no objection from an arboricultural perspective, confirming that the individual trees within Stoke Park

Wood are suitably distanced from the development. Equally, the extension is within an existing domestic garden and is therefore unlikely to result in increased noise or incursion into the SINC, with a degree of separation remaining between the woodland and domestic garden.

- Despite concerns raised by our Ecologist regarding potential light spill from the rear window of the extension, it is not considered reasonable to condition that curtains are installed. The proposed windows are relatively modest in size and at ground floor level where the majority of light spill would be shielded by a rear boundary fence.
- On balance, the recommended biodiversity enhancements in the form of a bat or swift brick/box are considered adequate to compensate for potential adverse impacts of the development on the adjacent SINC, whilst planting for pollinators shall be included as an informative.

Other matters:

- There are no likely significant impacts on the SPA.

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.

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:

Recommendation:	PERMIT ☒	REFUSE ☐
Comments ...		