

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: H/25/99771

Site Address: 7 FREEGROUNDS CLOSE, HEDGE END, SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 0HJ

Case Officer: Gina Aftanas

Description: Single storey front extension and the installation of new ramp to front door.

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Within the urban edge Great Crested Newts IRZ – amber zone Bats recorded in the area Character Area Appraisal HEWEB 30		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Reference	Description	Decision
Z/29950/000/00	Erection of single storey rear extension and first floor front extension	Permit – 10/02/1988
Z/29950/001/00	Construction of rear conservatory	Permit – 12/08/1996

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	<u>Support:</u> 11a Freegrounds Close: We fully support this planning application. <u>Object:</u> 8 Freegrounds Close: Thank you for bringing this planning application to our attention, as we were unaware of it beforehand. Although we have sympathy for the need for an easily accessible bedroom and bathroom, we feel that there are alternatives which do not require an extension. Our issues with this proposal are: OVER DEVELOPMENT (a)The original chalet bungalow has been extended three times already. We feel that this new extension will cut even more light from our dining area (where we eat all our meals). Light levels here are already poor. The proposed extension and recent (2021) rear extension will increase the run of brick walls outside our window by 75%, over the length of the original wall. (b) We will have a greater feeling of being further enclosed and hemmed in. We will also be cut off from the front of our house. Maybe trivial, but we do make use of our current view when watching out for delivery/workmen, van/lorry arrivals, etc. We won't be able to see anything at all, except a brick block. APPEARANCE When these chalet bungalows were built, they were designed to be 'sympathetic' to the other bungalows in the area. Other		

	extensions/developments built in this Close have been done with some thought to aesthetics and are generally to the rear. This, however, will be a flat-roofed cuboid on the front of the house. ALTERNATIVES We can see alternative solutions to the problem, which would not involve any external enlargement. There is already a sufficient footprint for reconfiguration, especially as the proposal states that the garage is not used for a car. There is also the possibility of installing a lift, which could have a seat or contain a wheelchair.
Parish Council:	No Comment Received
Ecology:	No Objection subject to the inclusion of a bat protection and precautionary working method informative and biodiversity enhancement measures

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: Site visit carried out 12/08/2025 – photographs on file		

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 HEWEB 30. Guidance in the character area appraisal states: • Retain the grass verges • Maintain the predominant plot widths and continuity of building line • Maintain a uniformity in building heights within each street

Assessment:
<u>Site and Surroundings</u> The application site comprises a two-storey detached dwelling located within the cul-de-sac of Freegrounds Close, west of Freegrounds Road, Hedge End. The property is set back from the road via a driveway and the surrounding area is residential in nature featuring similar style house-types within differing frontages. <u>Proposal</u> The application seeks approval for the construction of a single-storey front extension and access ramp. The proposed extension features a flat roof design, with a height of approximately 3.2m, a width of 3.4m and a depth of 2.5m, utilising materials that match the host dwelling. The proposed ramp element of this application measures approximately 1.3m in height, 2.41m in width, and 1.25m in depth. It will be constructed using matching brickwork and will include handrails and steps for accessible entry. The existing window is proposed to be retained and incorporated into the new extension, while the front door will be relocated from its current position on the northwest elevation to the principal (front) elevation of the property. Additionally, a new ground-floor obscured glass window is proposed on the southeast elevation.

Design and Layout

The development is located within the urban edge where the principle of development is considered acceptable. The design of the extension is suited to the host dwelling in terms of its form and appearance by use of subservient design and matching materials. The development would not be an overdevelopment of the site as plenty of amenity space would be retained with the development in place.

The inclusion of a flat roof element to the front of the property is consistent with existing features in the area. For instance, number 10 Freegrounds Close already incorporates a similar design, and there is a general variation in frontage treatments within the close. As such, the proposal is not considered to have a harmful impact on the overall street scene.

As the location of the extension is to the front of the property, it will be seen from the street scene. However, as the design is modest in size, will infill the current space and utilise matching materials, the proposal is considered to be in compliance with Policy DM1. The application also complies with Character Area Appraisal HEWEB 30, as it maintains the existing building line and does not affect the overall height of the property.

Residential Amenity

The neighbour concerns raised regarding potential overdevelopment and visual impact have been carefully considered. As the proposed extension is to be located adjacent to the neighbouring property's garage and features a single-storey, flat-roof design, it is unlikely to result in any significant overshadowing. During the site visit, it was noted that the side elevation of No. 8 Freegrounds Close was already in shadow. This side of the property features a window facing the application site and given the positioning of the property, the window's outlook and natural light levels are already limited. As such, the proposed modest extension is unlikely to result in any significant additional impact.

The additional window on the southeast elevation is not likely to cause any overlooking to the neighbouring property at number 6 Freegrounds Close, due to its ground floor placement, use of obscured glass and the established boundary treatment.

The development accords with guidance set out in the 'Quality Places' SPD in that there will be no unacceptable impact on the amenity of the neighbouring properties in terms of loss of privacy, light or outlook.

Ecology

The Council's Ecologist was consulted on this application due to recorded bat activity in the area. Following their assessment, they raised no objection to the proposal, subject to the inclusion of the following informatives within the decision notice.

- In the unlikely event of any bats being found during demolition or construction, all work must stop immediately, and Natural England must be informed.
- Biodiversity enhancements will be required in accord with Local Plan policy DM 11 and NPPF (December 2024) paragraphs 187d and 192 b. A bat box and a swift nest box may be appropriate for this building.

Other Material Considerations

- There will be no adverse impact upon trees or other natural features worthy of retention.
- 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: This application is recommended for approval

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒

REFUSE ☐