
Site Address: 1-14 Farm View; 1-10 Hedgerow Gardens; 11-19 (odds) and 30-52 (evens) Helston Drive; 534-548 (evens) Southleigh Road, Emsworth.

Proposal: Alterations of the external elevations to insulated rendered walls to all elevations of the properties.

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

Application No: APP/23/00494 Expiry Date: 01/09/2023

Applicant: Mr Martin
Defence Infrastructure Organisation

Agent: Mr Richard Parker Case Officer: Denise Sheath
Vivo Defence

Ward: Emsworth

Recommendation: **GRANT PERMISSION**

1 Site Description

The properties subject to this application are No.'s 1-14 Farm View; 1-10 Hedgerow Gardens; 11-19 (odds) and 30-52 (evens) Helston Drive; 534-548 (evens) Southleigh Road, Emsworth. These are two storey properties all except two which are detached within Hedgerow Gardens. The existing materials to the properties at present consist of a mixture of finishes and pallets including brick , clay tile hanging, render and decorative brick

2 Planning History

None relevant

3 Proposal

Installation of external wall insulation to external elevations.

4 Policy Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework
Havant Borough Council Borough Design Guide SPD December 2011
Havant Borough Council Parking SPD July 2016

Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) March 2011

CS11 (Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough)
CS14 (Efficient Use of Resources)
CS16 (High Quality Design)

Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) July 2014

AL1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)

Emsworth Neighbourhood Plan Post Examination Version 2020

ENP_D1 (General Design Policy)

ENP_D2 (Height, Mass & Materials)

ENP_D6 (Resource Efficiency)

Listed Building Grade: Not applicable.

Conservation Area: Not applicable.

5 Statutory and Non Statutory Consultations

Councillor Grainne Rason

No comments received

Councillor Lulu Bowerman

No comments received

Councillor R Kennett

No comments received

Developer Services, Southern Water

Southern Water would have no objections to the above proposal.

It is possible that a sewer now deemed to be public could be crossing the development site.

Therefore, should any sewer be found during construction works, an investigation of the sewer will be required to ascertain its ownership before any further works commence on site.

For further advice, please contact Southern Water, Southern House, Yeoman Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN13 3NX (Tel: 0330 303 0119).

Website: southernwater.co.uk or by email at:

SouthernWaterPlanning@southernwater.co.uk

Ecologist, Planning Policy Team - 1st Comment - Further Information Required

The application is not accompanied by any ecological information. I have therefore carried out my own non-exhaustive desk-based assessment using the application documents, online sources and GIS mapping. Whilst I would not expect these dwellings to be of significant ecological value it is not currently possible for me to provide a definitive view on ecological value. There are records of nesting bird species Starlings and House Sparrows within dwellings in this area and I have been contacted by a local resident to inform me of the presence of nesting Starlings and House Sparrows within several dwellings. In addition, a number of the dwellings exhibit sections of hanging tiles which may provide opportunities for roosting bat species. In summary, the proposed works have the potential to impact legally protected bird and bat species. Common Swifts may also occur and should be considered.

On that basis, I consider that further consideration of this matter is required. I would recommend that the applicant provides a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) considering identified impacts to protected species, to be provided by a qualified ecologist. The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) (www.cieem.net) holds a database of suitably qualified ecologists.

A preliminary ecological appraisal will determine whether there is any evidence of protected species, and whether the proposed works are likely to result in impacts to those species. Unless the qualified ecologist can conclude that there is no reasonable likelihood of protected species being present (due to negligible potential) or that if present they are not to be impacted by the works, it is likely that further ecological survey work (Phase 2 survey) will be required prior to determination of the application. The results of any further surveys should be used to provide an assessment of the likely ecological impacts of the proposed works and to inform any mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures.

An ecological assessment should identify the presence of nesting bird species ? ideally providing an accurate count of nest site locations ? as well as an assessment of bat roosting potential. Ultimately, following suitable assessment by an ecology professional, the solution here is to ensure that the refurbished dwellings incorporate an appropriate, evidence-based number of external nesting boxes for bird species as well as, where necessary, external bat roosting units. These features are inexpensive and are proven to benefit the target species.

NPPF, Circular 06/2005 and Natural England Standing Advice, require that planning decisions are based on full, up-to-date ecological information and it is essential that all necessary survey, assessment and mitigation information is available to the Local Planning Authority prior to determination, particularly in the case of protected sites, habitats and species, which are a material planning consideration. This will enable the Local Planning Authority to determine the application on the basis of full knowledge about the potential ecological impacts of the proposal and to ensure that any impacts can and will be mitigated.

Ecologist, Planning Policy Team - Final Comments

The application is now accompanied by a Bat Roost Assessment and Bat Emergence / Return Survey Report (Vivo Defence Services/Tetra Tech, August 2023). The report details an assessment of bat roosting potential and further bat surveys conducted between December 2022 and June 2023. Of the 48 buildings included within the assessment, a total of 24 were considered to offer some potential for roosting bats and were subject to further survey works. No bats were observed roosting within these dwellings and it is therefore concluded that roosting bats are not currently a constraint. Given the potential for roosting bats to occur at any time, I would urge caution during any works to ensure that impacts continue to be avoided. I would very strongly recommend that a suitably licensed ecologist is present during works.

On the subject of nesting birds, no bespoke assessment has been carried out. As noted previously, there are confirmed (not simply anecdotal) records of nesting bird species. Starlings and House Sparrows within dwellings in this area and there is much potential for inadvertent impacts to nesting bird habitat. Whilst I welcome the intention to carry out works outside the main nesting bird season (provided that this takes account of the full nesting season for the species likely to be present, assessed by a suitably qualified person), it is not clear whether any of the buildings to be refurbished currently support nesting birds. On that basis, we do not know the potential impact of the proposed works on nesting birds ? how many of the refurbished dwellings currently support nesting birds. However, I welcome the installation of new boxes for nesting birds, but would highlight that boxes for Common Swift (as proposed) are only suitable for Starlings where the nest hole entrance is of sufficient size.

If each dwelling is to have one nesting feature installed, these should be externally mounted Swift boxes with large diameter entrance holes. The boxes should be installed in a suitable location, normally beneath a soffit at eaves height.

If you are minded to grant permission, can I suggest that the careful timing of works to avoid the bird nesting season, and the provision of nesting boxes, are secured by condition.

Birds' nests, when occupied or being built, receive legal protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Works to the dwellings should be undertaken outside the bird nesting season, which extends from March to the end of August, although may extend longer depending on local conditions. An assessment of nesting bird presence should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist prior to works commencing, and works adapted to ensure impacts are avoided. If occupied nests are present then work must stop in that area, and works should only recommence once nesting activity has concluded naturally.

At least one bird nesting box should be installed on each refurbished dwelling, providing a minimum total of 48 boxes. These entrance holes on these boxes should be of sufficient diameter to allow Common Starling access. Boxes should be installed as per manufacturer's instructions and retained in situ permanently. A plan showing the location of each nesting box should be provided to the Local Planning Authority upon completion of installation.

Reason: to protect and enhance biodiversity in accordance with the Environment Act 2021, NERC Act 20226, NPPF and Policy CS 11 of the Havant Borough Core Strategy March 2011.

Officer Comment: *Recommended Conditions 3 and 4 below have been agreed with the Council's Ecologist*

Emsworth Residents Forum

We fully support the proposal to improve the insulation of these properties but believe that the external finish of the houses could be improved to give some variety of appearance. The current proposal is for all the properties to be of the same colour, but this would lead to them appearing somewhat institutional. Using different coloured finished would be aesthetically much more acceptable, along with some variation in doors and windows.

Could this application be referred to an architects panel to advise of this aspect of the application?

Officer Comment: *The Council does not have an Architects Panel to refer applications to. However, the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area has been assessed by officers as set out under Section 7 below.*

Environmental Health Manager, Community Group

No comments received

6 **Community Involvement**

This application was publicised in accordance with the Council's Code of Practice for Publicity of Planning Applications approved at minute 207/6/92 (as amended), as a result of which the following publicity was undertaken:

Number of neighbour notification letters sent: 75

Number of site notices: 4.

Statutory advertisement: Not applicable.

Number of representations received: 7

7No. Objections Received (2No. from same property). Therefore 5No. objections in total. - 2 In favour

Objection Summary:

- Detrimental visual impact in terms of design and overall appearance
- Out of keeping with surrounding properties
- External installation does not weather very well and can look dirty.
- Other forms of insulation would be better suited and would not alter the external appearance i.e. cavity wall and loft insulation, replacement windows and doors - *Application has to be considered on its merits*
- House Sparrows and Starlings nest in the eaves of the properties. The loss of nests would impact the local population of these species - Nest Boxes would help with this issue.
- Devaluation of properties - *Not a material planning consideration*

7 **Planning Considerations**

7.1 Having regard to the relevant policies of the development plan it is considered that the main issues arising from this application are:

- (i) Principle of development
- (ii) Appropriateness of design and impact on the character of the area
- (iii) Effect on neighbouring properties
- (iv) Impact on Ecology

(i) Principle of development

7.2 The application site is located within the defined urban area, therefore development is considered acceptable in principle subject to development management criteria.

(ii) Appropriateness of design and impact on the character of the area

7.3 The main reason for the proposed rendering of the properties is to improve their energy efficiency. This would be achieved by the insulation of the exterior of the property which would then be rendered, which would improve the quality of living standards for the occupants.

- 7.4 As to the first part of the proposal this seeks to insulate and render all the elevations to all of the properties within Farm View (No.s 1-14 inclusive), and Hedgerow Gardens (1-10 inclusive). The proposed external render will be off white in colour. It is acknowledged that the proposed rendering of these properties would alter the visual appearance to the whole streetscene of Hedgerow Gardens and Farm View rather than individual properties. Therefore, it is considered that as the whole visual appearance of the streetscene would be altered in an appropriate manner the proposal is deemed to be acceptable.
- 7.5 The second part of the proposal is to insulate and render all the elevations to the following properties No.s 11-19 (odds) and 30-52 (evens) Helston Drive; 534-548 (evens) Southleigh Road, Emsworth. It is acknowledged that the proposed rendering of these individual properties would alter the visual appearance of the locality creating a more diverse character to the existing streetscenes of Helston Drive and Southleigh Road. The varied design within Helston Drive would add to the diverse appearance within the locality instead of adversely impacting the street scene. It is noted that such a diversity of design is already existing within . Southleigh Road..
- 7.6 The proposal would secure energy efficiency for the properties in accordance with the aims of Policy CS14 of the Core Strategy and D6 of the Emsworth Neighbourhood Plan 2019 - 2036, with the design and appearance of the proposal deemed appropriate in context to the buildings and is therefore considered to be acceptable, meeting the requirements of Policy CS16 of the HBLP (Core Strategy) & Policy D1 of the Emsworth Neighbourhood Plan 2019 - 2036. It is considered that the scheme would result in a limited and acceptable impact on the visual amenity of the locality.

(iii) Effect on neighbouring properties

- 7.7 It is considered that the proposed change of the external material to render would not appear overbearing or lead to a loss of light, outlook or privacy and would therefore have a limited and acceptable impact on the properties immediately adjacent to the application sites and the properties opposite or to the rear, meeting the requirements of Policy CS16 of the HBLP (Core Strategy).

(iv) Impact on Ecology

- 7.8 The Council's Ecologist was consulted as part of the application who raised concerns regarding the impact upon House Sparrows and Starlings nesting within the eaves of the properties within the area and the potential for bat roosts within the buildings. Following the submission of a preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Bat Emergence/Return Survey Report which found no evidence of bats the Council's Ecologist raised no objection subject to conditions should planning permission be granted to ensure that no works are carried out during the bird nesting season, and that details for the provision of nesting boxes are provided prior to commencement of development. Such conditions are recommended which the applicant's agent has confirmed agreement with.

8 **Conclusion**

- 8.1 The proposed development is acceptable in principle improving the energy efficiency of the properties, is appropriate in terms of design and its impact on the character of the area and would have a limited and acceptable impact on the neighbouring properties. The proposal is also acceptable in ecology terms. On this basis the proposal accords with the development plan as a whole and conditional planning permission is recommended.

9 **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Head of Place be authorised to **GRANT PERMISSION** for application APP/23/00494 subject to the following conditions

- 1 The development must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Application Form - Received 03 July 2023
Bat Roost Assessment and Bat Emergence/Return Survey Report - Received 14 September 2023
Base Bead Detail - Received 03 July 2023
Material Details - Received 07 July 2023
Location Plan - Received 03 July 2023
Block Plan - 1 of 2 - Received 03 July 2023
Block Plan - 2 of 2 - Received 03 July 2023
Examples of Existing Elevations - Received 07 July 2023
Proposed External Finish Example - Received 03 July 2023

Reason: To ensure provision of a satisfactory development.

- 3 The external materials used shall be as indicated on the submitted forms and hereby approved plans, or shall match, in type, colour and texture, those of the existing building so far as practicable.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area and having due regard to policy CS16 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 4 Prior to the commencement of works an assessment of nesting bird presence should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist, and works adapted to ensure impacts are avoided. Where active nests are present, and works are likely to result in impacts, then work must stop in that area, and should only recommence once nesting activity has concluded naturally, as confirmed by a suitably qualified ecologist.

Reason: To protect and enhance biodiversity in accordance with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, The Environment Act 2021, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy CS11 of the Havant Borough Core Strategy March 2011.

- 5 At least one bird nesting box should be installed on each refurbished dwelling, providing a minimum total of 48 boxes. The entrance holes on these boxes should be of sufficient diameter to allow Common Starling access. Boxes should be installed as per manufacturer's instructions and retained in situ permanently. A plan showing the location of each nesting box should be provided to the Local Planning Authority upon completion of installation.

Reason: To protect and enhance biodiversity in accordance with the Environment Act 2021, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, National Planning Policy Framework and Policy CS11 of the Havant Borough Core Strategy March 2011.