



Planning Committee

Lodge Park Ward

3rd November 2009

**2009/206/RC3 ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENTS (PART RETROSPECTIVE)
HIMBLETON CLOSE, LODGE PARK, REDDITCH
APPLICANT: MR K STOKES, REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXPIRY DATE: 27 NOVEMBER 2009**

The author of this report is Ailith Rutt, Development Control Manager, who can be contacted on extension 3374 (e-mail: ailith.rutt@redditchbc.gov.uk) for more information.

Site Description

(See additional papers for Site Plan)

New Town residential area in Lodge Park, with dwellings facing outwards onto estate roads and rears of other rows of dwellings, or into parking courtyards. Two storey housing, some with flat roofs and some with pitched roofs. Most of surrounding spaces are hard surfaced, or contain terraces of garages. Area has unkempt appearance, but does contain some grassed verges and amenity strips.

Proposal Description

The application proposes the demolition of four rows of existing garages located to the front of dwellings whilst the concrete bases are being replaced as parking areas and being surfaced with tarmac. Further parking spaces will be created on existing grass amenity areas, with footpaths extended to lead to the spaces. This application is part retrospective, as demolition and surfacing work has already begun in this Close.

The application is supported by a Design & Access Statement.

Relevant key policies:

All planning applications must be considered in terms of the planning policy framework and all other relevant material considerations (as set out in the legislative framework). The planning policies noted below can be found on the following websites:

www.communities.gov.uk

www.wmra.gov.uk

www.worcestershire.gov.uk

www.redditchbc.gov.uk

National planning policy

PPS1 (& accompanying documents) Delivering sustainable development
PPG13 Transport

Regional Spatial Strategy

QE3 Creating a high quality built environment for all
QE4 Greenery, urban greenspace and public spaces
T7 Car Parking standards and management

Worcestershire Country Structure Plan

T4 Car parking
SD2 Care for the environment

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

B(BE).13 Qualities of Good Design
S.1 Designing out Crime
B(NE).1a Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
R2 Protection of incidental open space

SPDs

Encouraging Good Design.
Designing out Crime

Relevant Site Planning History

None

Public Consultation responses

One letter of objection has been received raising issues of:

- Destruction of landscaping for no purpose
- Safety

Other issues which are not material planning considerations have been raised, but are not reported here as they cannot be considered in the determination of this application.

Consultation period expires on 29 October, and any further representations received before the Committee meeting will be reported on the Update paper.

Consultee responses

County Highway Network Control

No comments received

Worcestershire County Council

No comments received

Again, any further comments received will be reported to Committee on the Update Paper.

Procedural matters

Permission is required for the demolition of the garage blocks and for the surfacing works proposed, as neither benefits from permitted development rights under the legislation in this case.

Retrospective applications should be considered as if the work has not commenced, and if consent is not forthcoming, then enforcement action should be considered in respect of the unauthorised development that has occurred. Thus the fact that this application is partially retrospective should not be given weight in the consideration of this application.

Assessment of proposal

The key issues for consideration in this case are the effect of the loss of the garages on residential and visual amenity, the loss of the incidental grass amenity areas and the overall impact on the provision of parking spaces for the close as a whole.

Loss of garages

The garage blocks in this area appear to attract a range of undesirable behaviour, and have not been well maintained to an extent that they are both detrimental to the visual amenity of the area and detrimental to the security and safety of local residents. Their removal is therefore welcomed, as Officers consider that in policy terms this would improve the safety and security of the Close and its residents and visitors, as well as improving their visual amenity, which is compliant with policy objectives.

Loss of grass amenity areas

Whilst policy seeks to protect incidental amenity grass spaces, some would remain in this Close, and in considering the benefit of the proposed parking arrangements, this should be weighed against other benefits and disbenefits, when considering the overall proposal here.

Overall parking provision in the Close

The proposal would result in 120 spaces in total in the Close, to serve 42 properties, which works out at an average of 2.9 spaces per dwelling. This is considered to be a good balance between a realistic level of provision for this location, and a sustainable number that should still encourage other methods of travel and thus sustainability. It is therefore considered by Officers to be broadly in compliance with Policy requirements.

Sustainability

In line with current and emerging planning policy guidance, any hard surfacing to be provided should be permeable or include a Sustainable Urban Drainage system, and thus it is recommended that a condition be imposed to this effect.

Other issues

No other issues have been raised at this stage. Should any others be raised, they will be reported and addressed in the Update Paper.

Conclusion

On balance, Officers consider that the proposals here would result in an improved residential and visual amenity in this Close, and the loss of the small grassed areas is therefore considered to be outweighed by these benefits.

Recommendation

That, having regard to the development plan and to other material planning considerations, it is recommended planning permission be granted subject to conditions and informatives as summarised below:

1. Development to commence within three years
2. Surfacing to be permeable wherever possible for sustainability reasons
3. Details of finishes of surfaces to be submitted and agreed prior to commencement on site, and implemented as agreed
4. Approved plans specified

Informatives

None considered necessary in this case