



**Creation of driveway and associated works
and landscaping**

**78 Hemdean Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4
7ST**

Planning Statement

Introduction

Studio Charrette has been commissioned to prepare a planning application for the creation of driveway including a dropped kerb, an electric vehicle charging point, a 1m high fence on the southern boundary, a bin store and associated landscaping at 78 Hemdean Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7ST.

This application is supported by the following documents:

- Planning application form;
- Correct fee;
- Planning Statement (this document);
- Site location plan reference:
- Existing and proposed drawings references:

Figure 1: Site Photograph



Application Site

The application site is a semi-detached 2 storey house fronting Hemdean Road. The front garden currently comprises a stepped pedestrian access on the northern boundary and the remainder is covered by lawn and shrubbery. The boundary consists of a red brick wall to the front of the property, a fence on the northern boundary and an open boundary to the south with just a rough line of informal planting marking the boundary between the two semi-detached properties. On-street parking is currently available in front of the property.

Hemdean Road is identified as a traffic sensitive road and so any changes to vehicular access require planning permission.

While the site is located in Flood Zone 1, with low chance of flooding, it has been identified as a location with potential for surface water flooding.

Figure 2: Site Location Plan

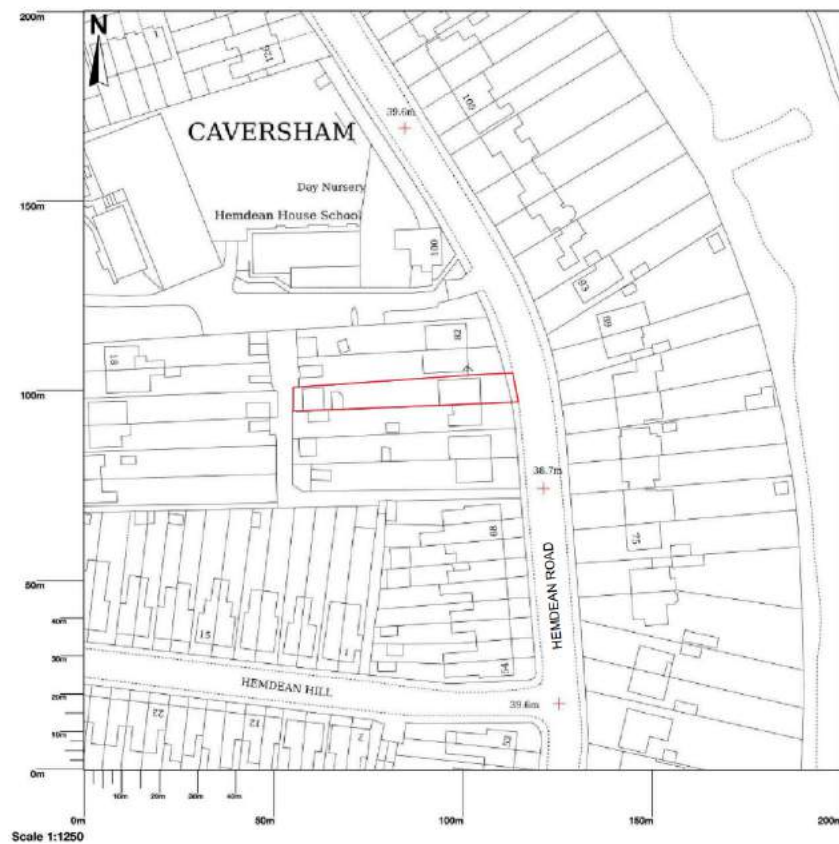


Figure 3: Site Photographs





Planning History

There have been no previous planning applications on the site to restrict the proposed development.

The Proposal

The applicant is seeking full planning permission for the creation of a driveway providing space for two parked cars, a dropped kerb, an electric vehicle charging point, a 1m high fence on the southern boundary, a bin store and associated landscaping.

Design and landscaping

The proposed driveway has been sensitively designed to respect the local character and vernacular.

The main change to the appearance of the property will be the removal of the wall and posts to the front of the property to open up the driveway. There are a variety of different treatments to front gardens and front boundaries on the street, with a number of them having an open driveway, as is proposed in this location.

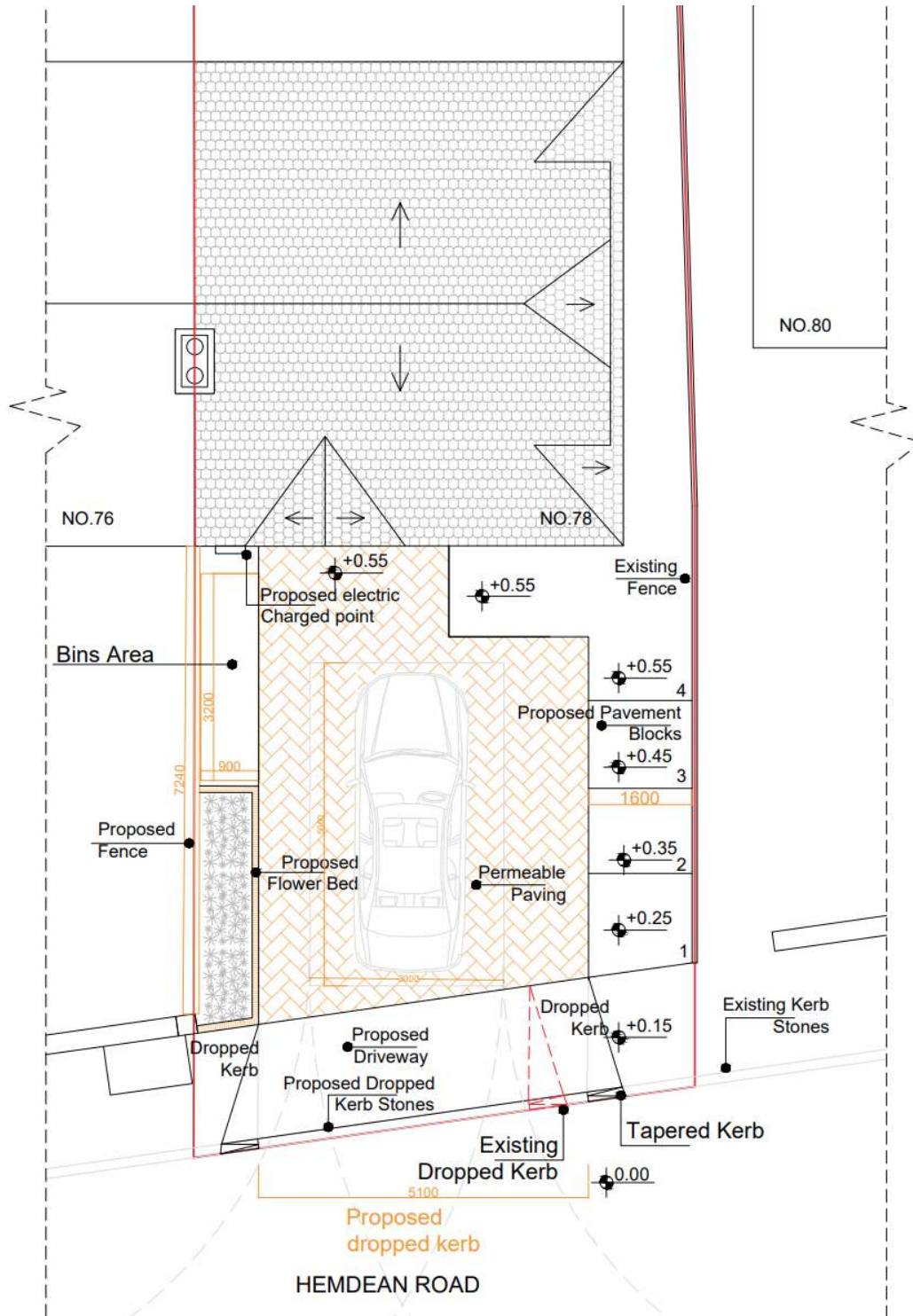
The existing steps on the northern boundary will be replaced with solid pavement block steps. A border will be provided for low level planting to define the boundary between the driveway and the neighbouring property.

The driveway area will retain the existing grassed appearance by being covered with a tough and robust grass grid that can comfortably withstand vehicles including cars and vans while also allowing for a neat grass finish. The design of the grid structure provides extra walls of stability and prevents lateral and downward migration and disruption of the soil and seed whilst in its growing phase. Once the grass grows it will knit around the grids, and at that stage the ground and grass will be extremely durable. It will stay green even in the winter wet months. The retention of grass in this area will retain some water storage on site reducing the impact on drains and potential for flash flooding in the area.

A new wooden fence will be located on the southern boundary of the driveway providing separation between the two front gardens of the semi-detached houses. A new freestanding wooden structure will be placed on the southern boundary, providing an enclosure for the waste bins. This provides a tidy solution for storing and concealing the necessary wheelie bins at the front of the property.

Finally a new electric charging point will be provided. This will be attached to the front of the property, close to the southern boundary.

Fig 2: Proposed plans



Access and parking

A dropped kerb with an appropriate crossover will be provided to allow access to the new driveway.

One on-street parking space will be lost, but this will be compensated by the creation of two off-street parking spaces.

Assessment

The following policy and guidance documents are recognised as primary considerations for the decision of the associated application at the site location:

National Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance

Adopted Local Plan Policies:

The current Local Plan for Reading is the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). The policies relevant for considering this application are as follows:

- CC7 Design and the Public Realm
- CC8 Safeguarding Amenity
- TR1 Achieving the Transport Strategy
- TR3 Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR5 Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Principle of development

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has a general presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF notes that sustainable planning includes *“a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations”*.

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF confirms that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that development that accords with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Para 11 of the NPPF (and footnote 8) also advises that where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, permission should be granted unless there are specific policies in the NPPF that indicate that development should be restricted.

The proposal is located in an urban location, which is appropriate for development. It has been sensitively designed in consideration of sustainable construction materials and a grass grid has been selected for the driveway rather than hardstanding to retain the green appearance in front of the property and reduce the impact on surface water drainage.

Design and appearance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) supports development that is visually attractive and sympathetic to the surrounding area (see Para 130). It places significant weight on design quality (Para 134) and states that proposals should take into account local planning policy.

Policy CC7 requires new development in the borough to be of a high standard and respond positively to the local context.

The main change to the appearance of the property will be the removal of the wall and posts to the front of the property to open up the driveway. There are a variety of different treatments to front gardens and front boundaries on the street, with a number of them having an open driveway, as is proposed in this location.

The materials used for the new driveway and landscaping will have an overall positive impact on the appearance of the property and will not result in any harm to the local character.

Policy CC8 seeks to ensure new developments do not have a negative impact on neighbouring amenity, including harm to outlook and visual amenity. The proposal has been sensitively designed to ensure it enhances the appearance of the property. Furthermore, the provision of a new bin store provides a tidy solution for storing and concealing the necessary wheelie bins at the front of the property.

Impact on highway safety in relation to the proposed access arrangement and parking provision

Policy TR1 seeks to ensure all new development provides appropriate access. The proposed development will provide secure parking spaces for the property in a safe location.

Policy TR3 requires new development to ensure it does not have a detrimental impact to the functioning of the highway network. The proposed dropped kerb is at a location on Hemdean Road identified as appropriate for car parking, with existing parking lines set out. It has good sight lines and is not located close to a junction or pedestrian crossing. It therefore will not have an impact on highways safety and will not affect the function of the road.

Policy TR5 requires all new houses to have electric vehicle charging points which demonstrates there is general support for the provision of these units on houses in the borough.

Conclusion

Following a review of the proposals applicable policy and material considerations it is of our view that the development is in general conformity with all applicable policies as previously illustrated.

We see no reason for the council to refuse our request for planning approval and kindly request for a timely decision to be made in line with applicable guidance of the NPFF.