

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Battle

App Ref: 190489/FUL

Address: 62 Tilehurst Road, Reading RG30 2JH

Proposals: Provide a new access off of Western Elms Avenue and block off existing access on Western Elms Avenue

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes

Applicant: JMC Designs

Date received (valid from): 1 April 2019

Target Decision date: 12 June 2019

Site Description and Surrounding Area

The application site consists of a detached 4 storey property consisting of 4 flats, with garages and parking area to the front and side of the building and gardens to the rear. It is situated next to St Edwards Preparatory School, on the corner of Tilehurst Road and Western Elms Avenue. There are trees in the rear garden that are subject to a Tree Preservation Order.

A section of Western Elms Road along the perimeter of 62 Tilehurst Road forms part of the Council's Residential permit scheme where parking is restricted and monitored. There are time restricted parking bays along the top part of Western Elms Avenue (towards Tilehurst Road) which can be used by non-permit holders.

Proposal

The proposal is to provide a new access off of Western Elms Avenue further away from the junction with Tilehurst Road and for the existing access to be made redundant and fenced over with a close boarded fence. No details of the proposed fence height were provided. The proposal consists of the replacement parking for 4 cars, 1 works van, 1 motorcycle and 4 bicycle spaces via a new access in the garden at the rear of the property.

Plans considered

Buy a plan location plan

Block plan

As received on 1st April 2019

MC/1000/01 Existing access arrangements

MC/1000/02 Proposed access arrangements

As received on 27th April 2019

Relevant Planning History

None

Consultations

A site notice was displayed at the property.

Development Control Transport - Failure to demonstrate that the proposal would not detrimentally impact the local areas as the new access would result in:

- The reduction of the 30 minute parking bays along Western Elms Ave.
- Relocation position of telegraph pole.
- Removal of bollards located on the public footway.
- Relocation of the public bin located on the public footway (Not illustrated on plan)
- Relocation of parking signage. (Not illustrated on plan)

- Reinstatement of original access point from Western Elms Avenue to a close boarded fence.

The proposed new access does not demonstrate visibility splays of 2.4m x 70m on the drawings, which are required as it is on a classified road.

The proposed width of access is wider than the required 4.1m. Transport would not support the loss of parking within the parking bay without evidence of its current usage.

Natural Environment Trees - Objected due to the loss of vegetation and impact on TPO trees as the proposal is contrary to CS38. The proposed plot has previously been verdant, informally maintained with mature trees and shrubs.

Notwithstanding the comments from Transport, the Natural Environment officer objected due to the proposed impact on the protected trees in the garden due to the proposed works and any changes to the ground surface to provide access and the proposed parking spaces.

Ecology had no objections.

Legal and planning policy context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008)

CS1 Sustainable Construction and Design

CS3 Social Inclusion and Diversity

CS4 Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

CS7 Design and the Public Realm

CS20 Implementation of The Reading Transport Strategy (Local Transport Plan 2006-2011)

CS22 Transport Assessments

CS24 Car/Cycle Parking

CS36 Biodiversity and Geology

CS38 Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012)

SD1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

DM4 Safeguarding Amenity

DM9 House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

DM10 Private and Communal Outdoor Space

DM11 Development of private residential gardens

DM12 Access, Traffic & Highway-Related Matters

DM18 Tree Planting

SPG/SPD

- A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG

RBC Supplementary Planning Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

Appraisal

In the assessment of this the following has been considered.

The main issues are:

- i. Plans, Amenity, Impact on the Character of the Area and Street Scene
- ii. Siting, Access and Transport issues
- iii. Natural Environment
- iv. Other matters - Ecology

Photos

The proposed location of the new access



i. Plans, Amenity, Impact on the Character of the Area and Street Scene

The proposed access would reduce the size of the garden amenity provision for 62 Tilehurst Road.

The trees that line the verdant boundary with Western Elms Road provide a positive impact on the boundary treatment along the road and positively enhance the local environment in accordance with Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy 2008 (altered 2015).

The proposal fails to provide accurate plans or drawings. There is an inconsistency in the size of the access on the proposed Block plan and proposed access arrangements plan. Objects such as the telegraph pole, parking signage and waste bin were omitted from the proposed plans and no elevations were provided in relation to the proposed boundary treatment. No cycle storage or car parking spaces were indicated.

No information has been provided for the proposed materials, height of the close boarded fence, parking area surface and boundary treatment. It does not comply with Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy 2008 (altered 2015) by failing to demonstrate that the design of the new access would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area and street scene and resulting in a reduction of the amenity for 62 Tilehurst Road, Policy DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012).

ii. Siting, Access and Transport issues

Western Elms is a classified road C408. The site is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD, in accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. The site itself is located at the junction of Western Elms Avenue and Tilehurst Road. Current access to No 62 Tilehurst Road is via an existing dropped kerb on Western Elms Avenue. Parking spaces have been illustrated.

52 Tilehurst Road is located next to St Edwards School. The flats have experienced problems with the existing drive being blocked by parents dropping off children to school, despite double yellow lines. There are a range of bus services that provide a good access into Reading. The dwelling is also accessible by walking and cycling into Reading and Tilehurst.

If the access is moved along the road, it would not necessarily resolve the parking issues. It would remove a section of the short stay parking provision along Western Elms Road and result in a decrease in parking provision for parents dropping of their children to school, which could lead to an increase in parking problems and congestion. The existing access at 62 Tilehurst Road provides sufficient parking and an area of hardstanding suitable for parking, adjacent to the dwelling. Transport would not support the loss of parking within the bay unless a survey was undertaken showing usage.

Any proposed new access will require alterations within the public highway including the relocation of a telegraph pole, bollards on the public highway, parking signage and reduction of the 30 minute parking bays and dropping of the kerb, therefore, the Council's Highways section will need to be contacted to agree access construction details and to grant a licence before any work is carried out within the highway.

Plans will need to be submitted illustrating the proposed access point including visibility splays of 2.4m x 90mg and including the objects and street furniture omitted from the plans submitted.

Access will need to be designed in accordance with Reading Borough Councils Geometric Design Guidance for residential Accesses on to Classified Roads.

The proposed width of the access is considered excessive in size compared to the existing provision for the same number of proposed vehicles and in excess of the required 4.1m.

In accordance with the Council's Parking Standards and Design SPD, secure cycle storage for 2 cycles per dwelling should be provided; this can be in the form of a garden shed for residential houses and will need to be illustrated on plans.

The applicant has failed to demonstrate that the development would enable the highways, traffic and transportation implications, including access arrangements, visibility splays, use of the parking bays of the proposed development to be fully assessed. From the information submitted, it is considered that additional parking problems and traffic congestion likely to be generated by the proposal would adversely affect the safety and flow of users of the existing road network within Reading, contrary to Policies CS4, CS20 and CS22 of the Adopted Reading Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies document Policy DM12.

iii. Natural environment

The garden of 62 Tilehurst Road provides a green corner to Western Elms Avenue; the boundary consisting of a mix of Yew, Holly and Sycamore with other species being present further into the site. Whilst the Proposed Access Arrangement Plan shows the location of trees, no details are provided, e.g. species, Root Protection Areas.

The site is subject to TPO 29/03 which includes 2 Yew trees on the Western Elms Avenue boundary. These will have to be removed in order to allow for the access indicated on the proposed plans.

It is not clear how the Sycamore (non-TPO) immediately north of the proposed access could be retained.

It appears from the Proposed Access Arrangement Plan that the new access will turn to lead onto the current parking area on the corner of the site. The access into the site will therefore require hard surfacing to be constructed and vehicles passing within the Root Protection Area of further TPO tree, in particular the Cedar (T3 of TPO; T9 on Proposed Access Arrangement Plan) resulting in harm to the rooting environment for this tree and potential direct harm during construction of the access into the site. This has not been addressed in the submission.

Insufficient information has been submitted with the planning application to enable the protection of TPO trees to be fully assessed. From the information submitted, it is considered proposal results in the removal of two trees protected by Tree Preservation Order 29/03. Any resurfacing and parking provision would also impact any remaining trees. The lack of full tree survey information in accordance with BS5837:2012 and lack of Arboricultural Implications Assessment results is a failure to demonstrate how other TPO and non-TPO trees will be protected from harm in the construction of the new access and associated driveway, contrary to Policies CS38 of the Adopted Reading Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies document Policy DM10, DM18.

iv. Other Matters - Ecology

The proposals are unlikely to affect protected species, and there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

CONCLUSION

No pre-application planning advice was sought in advance of the application. The proposal seeks permission for replacement car parking spaces although the proposed area for parking would be substantially enlarged.

The proposed new access is considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings and would have a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties and local amenity. Although the access would be located further away from the junction with Tilehurst Road and Western Elms Avenue, many other factors have to be taken into consideration.

The proposal is considered to cause a significant detrimental impact to the property's amenity and character of the street in terms of loss of trees and garden amenity, increased congestion and parking problems. The impact of the proposal in respect of access arrangements and visibility splays has not been demonstrated based on the original plans submitted and therefore it cannot be considered acceptable. There is a failure to demonstrate that the TPO trees would be protected. As such this would be contrary to Policies CS38 of the Adopted Reading Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies document Policy DM10, DM18.

The applicant has failed to demonstrate that the development would enable the highways, traffic and transportation implications, including access arrangements, visibility splays, use of the parking bays of the proposed development to be fully assessed. From the information submitted, it is considered that additional parking problems and traffic congestion likely to be generated by the proposal would adversely affect the safety and flow of users of the existing road network within Reading, contrary to Policies CS4, CS20 and CS22 of the Adopted Reading Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies document Policy DM12.

No information has been provided for the proposed materials, height of the close boarded fence, parking area surface and boundary treatment. It does not comply with Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy 2008 (altered 2015) by failing to demonstrate that the design of the new access would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area and street scene and resulting in a reduction of the amenity for 62 Tilehurst Road, Policy DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012).

As such the proposed works are not considered to be in accordance with the above relevant policies and permission should be refused.

Equality Act

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence (including

from consultation on the current applications) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

Application Refused