

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL
PLANNING CONTROL BOARD
27th JULY 2000
REPORT OF THE CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER

PCB 27.07.00
PART I
ITEM NO
FOR DECISION
CPO

S6/2000/605/FP
FORMATION OF NEW ACCESS AT 55 HIGH ROAD, ESSENDON

APPLICANT : A Omatseone

(Hatfield East)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application site is located on the western side of High Road, within the Essendon Conservation Area and an Area of Archaeological Significance.

1.2 The application premises comprise a semi-detached white rendered house with front dormers. The front of the property is approximately 8 metres back from the site frontage which is formed by a white picket fence with a single pedestrian gated access. Listed Buildings exist to the north and south of the application site at 57 High Road and The Limes. To the north 57 High Road has vehicular access onto High Road. To the south vehicular access exists serving The Limes, The Vines and High Road.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

2.1 It is proposed to provide a new access onto High Road from the centre of the site frontage of 55 High Road. It is proposed to provide a hammerhead turning head within the existing front garden of 55 High Road such that cars can access and egress the site in a forward gear.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

3.1 No policies of the District Plan deal specifically with the creation of new vehicular accesses.

4.0 OBSERVATIONS RECEIVED

4.1 This application was publicised by the direct notification of neighbouring properties by letter.

4.2 No neighbour letters were received in response to the consultation process. However, the application was submitted with a petition signed by 103 people who expressed their support for the application.

4.3 BEAMS commented that it would be keen to keep the access as minimal as possible, no concrete kerbs or edging materials used in construction, hard surfacing in sympathetic material and the remaining land is landscaped.

- 4.4 The County Archaeologist indicates that the proposed development is unlikely to have any significant archaeological impact.
- 4.5 County Highways recommend that permission be refused in the interest of highway safety. This is on the grounds that the visibility from the proposed access along High Road cannot be achieved.
- 4.6 Essendon Parish Council support the application subject to Police and Highway Authority.

5.0 **DISCUSSION**

- 5.1 The main issue in this case is whether a new vehicle access onto High Road is acceptable in terms of highway safety.
- 5.2 The property is located on High Road, Essendon, which is a Classified B road for which the County Council have responsibility is highway authority. As indicated above the County Council recommends that planning permission should be refused due to restricted visibility. To comply with the requirements of the County Council, an uninterrupted visibility splay must be provided along the highway in each direction of at least 60 metres measured from the centre of the proposed access, at a point 2.5 metres back from the kerb
- 5.3 The proposed access point by reason of its location on the inside of a bend in the road can achieve a distance of less than 30 metres uninterrupted visibility along the Highway in a northerly and southerly direction.
- 5.4 As indicated above access points exist along the same side of the road as the proposed access in close proximity to the application site. These accesses at 57, 59 and the side of 53 High Road also have restricted visibility. The applicant, in support of her application, advises that there have been no recorded accidents as a result of vehicles using the two access/egress points to those properties either side of 55 High Road. However, as a result of parking on the highway, the applicant's own vehicle was involved in a road traffic accident and the subsequent police report is submitted as supporting information. Currently parking on the highway is the only option available to the applicant and she considers that the proposed access will not only relieve parking problems but reduce the potential for accidents involving cars parked on the highway. Furthermore the application has submitted a petition in favour of the application which indicates the support from other residents within Essendon Village.
- 5.5 The existing accesses at 53, 57 and 59 High Road are however, very long standing and appear to predate planning restrictions, and the highway standards that are now enforced to cater for modern day traffic. As existing there are no parking restrictions along High Road, therefore, on street parking cannot be controlled. Planning permission is required to create a new access onto the Classified Road however and the key issue in this case is whether the proposed access would prejudice highway safety. It is clear that the visibility attainable in this case is substantially below that required by current highway standards to achieve safe access and egress and the highway authority has confirmed that this shortfall would result in detriment to highway safety.

6.0 **CONCLUSION**

6.1 In the light of the advice of County Council , it is clear that the proposed access would have an adverse impact on highway safety and that planning permission should be refused.

7.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

7.1 I recommend that planning permission be refused in respect of application no : S6/2000/605/FP, for the following reason :

Inadequate visibility exists in a northerly and southerly direction from the proposed access point such that the use of the access by vehicles entering and leaving the application site would have a detrimental impact on highway safety

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