

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

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| APPLICATION No: | W6/2010/1331/EM |
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DESCRIPTION OF SITE:

1 Bushey Green is two storey end of terrace property located in the Howlands area of the town. It is located within the Welwyn Garden City Estate Management Scheme.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

This application proposes to install an area of hardstanding within the front garden of the property. The area of proposed hardstanding would measure 4.5 metres in length and 2.4 metres in width.

RELEVANT HISTORY:

None

POLICIES:

1967 Leasehold Reform Act – Estate Management Scheme

Estate Management Scheme Policies October 2008:

EM4 – Hard Landscaping

REPRESENTATIONS:

The application was advertised by way of neighbour notification letters, no representations have been received.

DISCUSSION: The main issues are:

- 1. Does the proposal maintain or enhance the amenity and value of the property and surrounding area**
- 2. The impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings**
- 3. Other material considerations**

1. Policy EM4 states that proposals for hard surfacing, for the parking of private vehicles in front gardens will only be allowed where the works would retain an appropriate balance between hard and soft landscaping and do not result in the loss of any existing hedgerows or landscaping along the boundary, other than the minimum required to access the hardstanding, that would be harmful to the amenities and values of the street scene in which it is located.

The frontage of 1 Bushey Green has retained a degree of soft landscaping, it also features a narrow concrete access path that crosses an area of Council land to reach the front door. The modest front garden is dominated by a large Pampas Grass although some other varieties of potted garden plants are also present. The application proposes an installation of hardstanding to accommodate one vehicle that would measure 4.5 metres in length by 2.4 metres in width, totalling approximately 11.25 metres squared. This would result in approximately 56.25% of the property frontage being hard surfaced.

Whilst the accompanying guidance for Policy EM4 states that a maximum of 50% soft landscaping should be retained it is considered that this figure alone should not be the only consideration in this particular application. The orientation of the property at the entrance to the street has resulted in a front garden that is smaller than any other in Bushey Green with an area of Council verge directly alongside. This verge is laid to lawn and would remain so should this application be approved. Although this land is Council-owned it appears as though it forms a part of the application property, particularly as the front path runs through it. The result is that the area of hardstanding approved would actually constitute less than 50% of the land to the front of the property even though technically it would exceed 50% of the residential curtilage at the front of number 1 Bushey Green.

The impact that the proposal would have on the amenity and values of the surrounding area would be negligible, particularly considering the hardstandings already present on the street. The properties at numbers 2, 4, 5 and 7 Bushey Green have both installed hardstandings that range from approximately 60% to 100% of the frontages.

Consequently, it is considered that this development would have no effect on the amenity and value of either the property itself or the area in general.

2. The impact of the proposal on neighbouring properties should be measured in terms of access to daylight, overshadowing and any potential for loss of privacy. This proposal would not result in any impact on any of these issues.

3. None.

CONCLUSION:

It is considered that the proposed development would maintain the quality and appearance of the street scene and would sufficiently maintain the amenity and value of the surrounding area and the neighbouring dwellings.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

CONDITIONS:

1-5. EM01a

6. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details:

1:1250 Location plan of site & 1:200 Block plan of site received and dated 20/04/2010 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council.

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved drawings and any changes must be agreed in advance in writing by the Council.

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:

It is considered that the proposed development does not have an unacceptably harmful impact on the residential amenity or the character of the area in which it is located. It is therefore in compliance with the Estate Management Scheme.

Signature of author..... Date.....