

**4/03662/15/FHA - CONVERSION OF GARDEN TO HARDSTANDING FOR PARKING PURPOSES.**

**30B ALEXANDRA ROAD, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, HP2 5BS.**

**APPLICANT: MR HALE.**

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[Case Officer - Martin Stickley]

### **Summary**

The application is recommended for approval.

The principle of residential development is considered acceptable in the site's location within a residential area. The proposed works would not have any adverse impact on the appearance of the dwelling and would not cause serious harm to the streetscene. The development would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties. The scheme would increase the amount of off-street parking. Therefore, the proposal is acceptable in accordance with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework; Policies CS4, CS11 and CS12 of the Core Strategy and saved Policies 58, and saved Appendices 5 and 7 of the DBLP.

### **Site and Surroundings**

The application relates to a piece of land fronting Alexandra Mansions, a council owned mansion block of four flats. This piece of land is part of the leasehold of 30B Alexandra Road. The Victorian building fronts Alexandra Road, Hemel Hempstead, near to the town centre.

### **Proposal**

The application seeks to convert a small area fronting Alexandra Mansions into a driveway for the use of the tenants at 30B Alexandra Road. The land in question is enclosed by a small (0.5m) wooden fence and gate. The grass area would be covered with hard standing and the kerb would be dropped, removing one on-street parking space but replacing it with two off-street spaces.

### **Referral to Committee**

The application is referred to the Development Control Committee due to the fact that the land is owned by DBC.

### **Planning History**

None relevant.

### **Relevant Policy**

National Planning Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Dacorum Borough Core Strategy 2006-2031

NP1 - Supporting Development

CS4 - The Towns and Large Villages  
CS10 - Quality of Settlement Design  
CS11 - Quality of Neighbourhood Design  
CS12 - Quality of Site Design  
CS29 - Sustainable Design and Construction  
CS31 - Water Management  
CS32 - Air, Water and Soil Quality

#### Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1999-2011

Saved Policy 58 - Private Parking Provision  
Saved Appendix 5 - Parking Provision  
Saved Appendix 7 - Small-Scale House Extensions

### **Summary of Representations**

#### **Local Residents**

28 Alexandra Road, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 5BS

In principle I have no objection to this however I do have concerns about some of the details of current plans.

##### 1. Parking

At busy times, there is limited residential parking and it is not clear whether the access (dropped kerb) for the hard standing will take one or two of the current parking spaces. If it is just one space next to the current access for number 30a (as identified in option 1) then it is not a concern.

##### 2. Extent of hard standing

The current plans show a boundary with number 28 but don't show the building which forms about 2m of the 6m boundary. If the hard standing comes right up to the boundary this will mean that cars could be parked alongside the living room window and immediately under the bedroom of number 28. An appropriate gap or continuation of the proposed hedge along this boundary would address this concern.

##### 3. Relocation of bins

At the moment the bins for 30b, c, and d are kept alongside the fence boundary with number 28. There is no mention of a place for all these bins on these plans. There has been a suggestion that these bins be placed next to the sheds behind number 28. However this is not a communal area; residents of number 30 only have access to the sheds and gardens along the path beside number 28.

30D Alexandra Road, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 5BS

As leaseholders of the above property we wish to state our objections.

Alexandra Mansions is an established and attractive Victorian building, much of which would be lost if vehicles were parked to the front.

The bedroom windows of our property would be directly above the proposed parking area. The bedroom would suffer from noise and unhealthy emissions. Lights from vehicles driving on and off would cause disturbance to sleep and relaxation.

## **Consultees**

### Hertfordshire Highways

Notice is given under article 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that the Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission.

The proposals are not considered to result in any adverse impact on the public highway and are considered acceptable to the Highway Authority as properties either side have off street parking.

Highway Informative:

The Highway Authority require the construction of or alterations to the vehicle crossover to be undertaken such that the works are carried out to their specification and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. The applicant will need to apply to the Mid West Hertfordshire Highways Area Office (Telephone 01727 816000) to arrange this.

Storage of materials AN\*) Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

Obstruction of the highway AN\*) Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to willfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

General works within the highway (simple) - construction standards AN\*) Construction standards for works within the highway: All works to be undertaken on the adjoining highway shall be constructed to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, by an approved contractor, and in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's publication "Roads in Hertfordshire – Highway Design Guide (2011)". Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300

1234047.

Rights of Way AN\*) The Public Right of Way should remain unobstructed by vehicles, machinery, materials, tools and any other aspects of the construction during works. The safety of the public using the route and any other routes to be used by construction traffic should be a paramount concern during works, safe passage past the site should be maintained at all times.

The condition of the route should not deteriorate as a result of these works. Any adverse effects to the surface from traffic, machinery or materials (especially overspills of cement & concrete) should be made good by the applicant to the satisfaction of this Authority.

All materials should be removed at the end of the construction and not left on the Highway or Highway verges. If the above conditions cannot reasonably be achieved then a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order would be required to close the affected route and divert users for any periods necessary to allow works to proceed. A fee would be payable to Hertfordshire County Council for such an order.

### **Considerations**

The main issue of relevance to the consideration of this application relates to the impact of the works on the on the character and appearance of the dwellinghouse and streetscene in accordance with Policies CS11 and CS12 of the Dacorum Borough Core Strategy and saved Appendix 7 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan (DBLP). Other issues of relevance relate to the impact of the proposal on the amenities of the neighbouring properties (Policy CS12 and saved Appendix 7) and the impact on car parking/highway safety (saved Policy 58 and saved Appendix 5 of the DBLP).

#### Impact on Appearance of Building and Street Scene

An assessment of the impact of the proposed works has considered the impact on the appearance of the building and street scene. The proposal would not have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the property or the wider street scene. The works would be situated to the front of the property and would result in the loss of a small patch of grass. However, this grassed area is enclosed by fencing and is viewed as a minor attribute to the general aesthetics of the streetscene. The flower bed directly next to Alexandra Mansions would be retained. It should be noted that a number of other properties along the street have converted their front gardens into parking areas, including the neighbours at No. 26 and 30A. Overall, it is not considered that the proposed works would significantly detract from the character of the streetscene or the appearance of the dwelling in accordance with Policies CS11 and CS12 of the Core Strategy.

#### Impact on Amenity of Neighbours

Consideration has been given to the impact that the proposal would have on the adjoining neighbours. Policy CS12 states that regarding the effect on the amenity of neighbours, development should avoid visual intrusion, loss of light and loss of privacy. The application has received two objections (see above). The main issues of concern are listed and addressed below.

- Negative impact on visual amenity/appearance of the building and streetscene.

Issues regarding the visual impact on the streetscene have been discussed in the section above (Impact on Appearance of Building and Streetscene). It is felt that the proposal would integrate satisfactorily within the streetscene.

- Increased noise/emissions.

The proposal would install two parking spaces fronting Alexandra Mansions. Due to the limited size of the proposed hardstanding (serving just two cars), it is considered that the vehicular usage of the driveway would be fairly minor. The driveway is therefore unlikely cause any serious harm with regards to increased noise and emissions. It should be noted that the existing parking bays on the road are only 7-8 metres away (approx.).

- Relocation of bins.

Both of the objectors have commented on the relocation of their bins. Presently, the bins for 30B, 30C and 30D Alexandra Road are kept alongside the fence boundary with No. 28. The bins are currently stored on land owned by No. 30B with the consent of the applicant. However, he is well within his rights to remove the bins if he chooses. Leasehold Services informally responded to the bin situation by stating: *"Currently the bins for 30B, 30C and 30D are standing in Mr Hale's private garden (which he is tolerating for the meanwhile). This is not a shared area. The only shared area is the front path, or the path at the rear, where the sheds are located."* This is not a matter for consideration as part of this application.

There would be no significant harm to the residential amenities of the neighbouring properties as a result of this proposal. The proposed hardstanding would not impact the neighbouring properties in terms of visual intrusion, loss of light and loss of privacy in accordance with Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy and saved Appendix 7 of the DBLP.

#### Access, Car Parking and Highway Safety

With regards to access and car parking, the proposal is deemed as acceptable in accordance with Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy and saved Policy 58 of the Local Plan. Hertfordshire Highways did not object to the application and stated *"the proposals are not considered to result in any adverse impact on the public highway and are considered acceptable to the Highway Authority as properties either side have off street parking."* They provided a number of informative's and advisory notes to ensure the works would not impact the surrounding highway or cause any safety issues. If the application is approved, this information would be added to the decision notice as an informative.

#### Drainage

Sufficient methods should be taken to ensure that any issues to do with surface water run-off are mitigated. Either the hard standing should be made of porous materials, or provision should be made to direct run-off water from the hard surface to a permeable or porous area or surface within the curtilage. The applicant has stated that he would

be using the appropriate ACO Drainage System in the application form. If approved, further details on this would be requested by condition.

**RECOMMENDATION** - That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:-

- 1 **The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.**

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 (1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 **No development shall take place until full details of the on-site surface water drainage mechanisms have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Drainage shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to use.**

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory disposal of surface water in accordance with Policy CS31 of the Dacorum Borough Core Strategy.

- 3 **The car parking spaces shall have minimum dimensions of 2.4m by 4.8m. Such spaces shall be maintained as a permanent ancillary to the development and shall be used for no other purpose.**

Reason: To ensure the adequate provision of off-street parking in order to minimise the impact on the safe and efficient operation of the adjacent highway in accordance with Policy CS8 (h) and CS12 (b) of the Dacorum Borough Core Strategy.

- 4 **The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:**

**AH01**

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

**Article 35 Statement**

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2012.

**Highways Informatives:**

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specification and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. The applicant will need to apply to the Mid West Hertfordshire Highways Area Office (Telephone 01727 816000) to arrange this.

Advisory Note 1:

Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

Advisory Note 2:

Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.