

**4/03720/15/FHA - REPLACEMENT FRONT WALL, ENTRANCE PILLARS AND PAVING (RETROSPECTIVE).
24 CHARLES STREET, BERKHAMSTED, HP4 3DG.
APPLICANT: MRS JANE FETHNEY.**

[Case Officer - Martin Stickley]

Summary

The application is recommended for approval.

The proposed works would not have any adverse impact on the appearance of the dwelling and would not significantly detract from the streetscene. The development would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties. The access and car parking would not be affected by the proposal. Therefore, the proposed is considered acceptable in accordance with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework; Policies CS4, CS11, CS12 and CS27 of the Core Strategy and saved Policies 58 and 120, and saved Appendices 5 and 7 of the DBLP.

Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises a four-bedroom detached property, identified as an un-designated heritage asset (locally listed building). The property falls within the urban area of Berkhamsted and within the Conservation Area. The site also falls within the Queens Road Character Area (BCA5).

Proposal

The application seeks planning permission for the retention of entrance pillars, walls (with a wooden picket) and paving. The works are located to the front of the property.

Referral to Committee

The application is referred to the Development Control Committee due to a Councillor living in the property.

Relevant Planning History

None.

Site Constraints

Conservation Area
Area of Archaeological Importance

Relevant Policy

National Planning Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Dacorum 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
CS27 - Quality of the Historic Environment

Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011

Policy 58 - Private Parking Provision
Policy 120 - Development in Conservation Areas
Appendix 5 - Parking Provision
Appendix 7 - Small-scale House Extensions

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Area Based Policies (May 2004) - Residential Character Area [BCA5: Queens Road]
Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Policy Statements: Development
Residential Areas Berkhamsted

Summary of Representations

Berkhamsted Town Council

Concern.

This is a locally listed building in the conservation area. The intention was to renew an existing wall which had fallen into disrepair, and install crazy paving. The work was undertaken prior to the planning application being made. In order to conserve and enhance the CA the Council would wish to see the use of wrought iron rather than picket fencing; and full slabs laid rather than crazy paving.

Natural, Historic and Built Environment Team

In this instance I consider that the scheme is unlikely to have an impact upon significant heritage assets. I therefore have no specific comment to make upon it.

Local Residents

No comments.

Considerations

The main issues of relevance to the consideration of this application relate to the impact of the works upon the character and appearance of the dwelling and the Berkhamsted Conservation area in accordance with Policies CS12, CS13 and CS27 of Dacorum's Core Strategy. Other issues of relevance relate to the impact of the proposed additions and alterations on the character and appearance of the streetscene, the impact on neighbouring properties and the impact on car parking.

Visual Impact on Building, Streetscene and Conservation Area

No adverse impacts.

An assessment of the impact of the proposed works has considered the effect of the works on the appearance of the building. There will be particular consideration to the collective role that the appearance of the dwelling serves in the character of the conservation area. Dacorum's adopted Core Strategy, Policy CS27 (Quality of the Historic Environment), states that "development will positively conserve and enhance the appearance and character of conservation areas". This is reinforced by saved Policy 120 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

An informal meeting with our Conservation and Design Officer revealed that the proposal would preserve the character of the building, streetscene and conservation area. Low walls and brick pillars are typical of this era and although metal railings would have been more in-keeping than wood picket, it is felt that the proposal is acceptable in terms of maintaining the visual appearance of the property and wider locality. With regards to the streetscene, the surrounding properties generally have lower walls and wrought iron railings. However, 24 Charles Street is fairly unique within the streetscene, being detached when the majority of properties are terraced. The property is also covered in a light pink render and has architectural details that emphasise its appearance within the streetscene. Considering the contrast the property brings to the street, it is not felt that a slight deviation from the standard type of enclosure would be detrimental to the appearance of the area. It should also be noted that there is a large amount of panelled fencing along this side of the street, which helps to assimilate the proposed wooden picket within the streetscene. Overall, what has been erected is viewed as a visual improvement by the Conservation and Design Officer and therefore deemed acceptable in accordance with the local and national policies listed above.

Impact on Amenity of Neighbours

Consideration has been given to the impact that the alterations 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. There would be little or no harm to the residential amenities of the neighbouring properties as a result of this proposal. The proposal would not impact the immediate 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 Dacorum Borough Local Plan.

Impact on Access and Parking

No adverse impact.

The proposal would not increase demand for vehicles to access the site or impact the existing parking arrangements. It follows that the parking arrangements are acceptable in accordance with Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy and saved Policy 58 and saved Appendix 5 of the Local Plan.

Pedestrian Safety

Although the walls and picket fence are taller than the surrounding properties, there is

need for additional safety on the property frontage. The ground slopes sharply away from the road, leaving a drop of 2-3 metres to the dwellings basement area. The original low-lying walls offered little protection for passing pedestrians. Therefore, considering pedestrian safety, the proposal is extremely beneficial.

RECOMMENDATION - That planning permission be **GRANTED** for the reasons referred to above and 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 **The development hereby permitted shall be constructed in accordance with the materials specified on the approved application form.**

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the un-designated hertiage asset and in the interests of the visual amenities of the Conservation Area in accordance with Policy CS27 of the Dacorum Borough Core Strategy and saved Policy 120 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan.

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

Proposed Elevation (no reference - received 20th November 2015)

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

Article 35 Statement

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. 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) Order 2015.