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Response to Planning application from Hertfordshire County Council (T and CP GDP Order 2015)

Director of Planning

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
The Campus
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL8 6AW

District ref: 6/2022/2559/FULL
HCC ref: WH/15642/2023
HCC received: 6 February 2023
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Senober Khan

Location

20 GREAT NORTH ROAD WELWYN GARDEN CITY AL8 7TH

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

Installation of a dropped kerb to facilitate a carriage driveway

Recommendation

Notice is given under article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority recommends that permission be refused for the following reasons:

Highway comments:

The application is for a new dropped kerb to facilitate a 5m wide carriage driveway and it would appear widening the existing vehicle dropped kerb to 5m.

The applicant has submitted a hand drawn scaled drawing showing the proposed forecourt layout, however the drawing is inaccurate not to scales consequently not acceptable as representative of the true layout and dimensions of the forecourt.

The HA will not normally approve a second dropped kerb if the property already has a dropped kerb, unless there is sufficient space within the boundary of the property with minimum measurement requirements of 11m width by 4m depth to drive a vehicle on and off your driveway in forward gear and in one continuous movement. Application will be refused if the forecourt does not have sufficient space to do this.

The above property has an existing vehicle access/dropped kerb, but it also has a forecourt width (scaled off google maps) that meets the requirement of 11m width by 4m depth and so is compliant with the HCC residential dropped kerb guidance to get a second dropped kerb/vehicle access.

For pedestrian safety reasons, at all new vehicle accesses, it is necessary to maintain within the site triangular areas known as pedestrian visibility splays measuring 2m by 2m, with no obstruction to visibility between 0.6m and 2m above the carriageway, on both sides of where the vehicle accesses meet the back edge of the footway, within which unobstructed visibility is available for drivers to see and be seen by pedestrians on a footway to avoid a potential hazard in time. The splays must be wholly within the site's curtilage and should be physically protected (dwarf wall, pedestrian gate, etc) to stop them from being driven over thereby undermining their necessity and provision, therefore the applicant is required to show the physical measures on the deposited plans.

The applicant is required to submit a technical and detailed scaled amended plan showing all required dimensions (pedestrian visibility splays, forecourt width, vehicle access, etc) to show the new vehicle access with pedestrian visibility splays and suitable dropped kerb widths for both vehicle accesses that meet the Dropped Kerb Terms and Conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

Until the above is submitted, I am not in a position to determine the suitability or otherwise of the development. However, if a decision is required then in view of the above comments the HA would object to this application.

Informatives:

HCC Highways Dropped Kerb Terms and Conditions state:

If you are applying for a new dropped kerb, you will be provided with a maximum of 4 flat kerbs (3.6m). You will also be provided with one or two ramped or tapered kerbs depending on your property. We will not install any more than 4 flat kerbs. Please do not apply for a dropped kerb wider than this as it will be refused.

If your property already has a dropped kerb, we will only extend the existing dropped kerb up to a maximum of four flat kerbs which equates to 3.6m. An extended dropped kerb will be no wider than four flat kerbs. This is the widest dropped kerb that we will allow. You will also be provided with one or two ramped or tapered kerbs depending on your property. Please do not apply for a dropped kerb wider than this as it will be refused. We will refuse applications for widened dropped kerbs if it will result in the loss of on-street parking provision.

The above relates to a new single access per property, as the properties in question are neighbouring dwellings HCC Highways could provide a double width VXO which will be up to a maximum of 7.2m (including the tapered kerbs). However, the existing dropped kerbs may be altered or removed to achieve this.

Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan seeks to ensure that access arrangements are safe and suitable for all people, built to an adequate standard, adhere to the county council's Highway Design Standards and reflect the LTP Transport User Hierarchy. Guidance set out in Roads in Hertfordshire Highway Design Guide states that the number of crossovers should be kept to a minimum to reduce conflict with and discomfort for footway users. The widths of drives and lengths of dropped kerbs should be sufficient to allow vehicles to manoeuvre into and out of the property but unnecessarily long crossovers should be avoided to minimise inconvenience to pedestrians.

The county council's Terms and Conditions for dropped kerbs can be found using the link below:
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Highways-roads-and-pavements/Changes-to-your-road/Dropped-kerbs/Dropped-kerbs.aspx>

Signed

Senober Khan

27 February 2023