Expiry Date - 16/10/2024

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1085/24 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 15 Bulkington Avenue Worthing West Sussex BN14 7HH

Proposal: Replace existing boundary fence on driveway to match the height of newly installed driveway gates.

Date of site visit: Previous site visit

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises a detached rendered house with attached garage on the south side of Bulkington Avenue. The property has a good sized front garden primarily laid to hardstanding. There is an existing vehicular access to the eastern side of the property. There is a brick wall on the frontage, with brick end detail with pillars either end and to a wooden gate pedestrian access.

To the eastern side the properties mainly have open frontages with no boundary walling to the frontage.

To the western side properties tends to have walling to the frontage but of different heights and brick materials. The walls are generally low without vehicular gates.

To the northern manor of the properties have brick and flint walls some with gated accesses.

The site is not within a conservation area.

Proposal

The current application is for the proposed replacement fence along the east and west boundaries of the front garen. The proposal involves a replacement of all fence panels. They intend part of the fence as it meets the wooden post being installed to secure the left hand gate opening and right hand post to be the same height as the wooden post at approx. 1.7m and the post approx. 1.8m. The fences which will be concaved will range in height from approx. 1.5m to 1.7m in height.

Relevant Planning History:

AWDM/0064/24- Driveway and Pedestrian gates, plus metal railings. APPROVED

AWDM/0662/24-Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a proposed replacement fence along driveway- REFUSED

Consultations:

WSCC Highways

I actually undertook a site visit last week (05/11/2024).

So I can appreciate that the installation of the proposed gates may have reduced visibility slightly for the neighbouring property. However, having looked at the site, I wouldn't anticipate that this would give rise to a severe safety concern in practice. Much of Section 10.6.1 of Manual for Streets 2 (MfS2) can be applied here, which states the absence of wide visibility splays at minor accesses will encourage drivers to emerge more cautiously and similarly to how vehicles emerge onto the highway when visibility along the carriageway is restricted. Section 10.6.2 also states that the frequency of vehicular movements should also be taken into account – given this is an access serving a single dwelling, vehicular movements are not anticipated to be high and therefore, the access arrangements as proposed are unlikely to result in detrimental impact.

Finally, the footway at present is considered to be of sufficient width to allow an oncoming pedestrian to anticipate a car manoeuvring from the parking area. There are similar accesses along Bulkington Avenue, and I have reviewed five-year accident data which found no recorded injury accidents attributed to use of existing vehicular access points.

Therefore, I would not raise any highway safety objections to the proposals.

Representations:

11 Bulkington Avenue

The proposal to replace the existing 4 ft fence with a closed panelled fence to match the height of the newly installed boundary post/gates (6 foot 6 inches) will completely block any view of pedestrians when exiting our driveway. This will further reduce safety and increase the risk of accidents. The newly installed gates are solid panels, blocking any view of pedestrians walking eastwards. However during the day when they are left open there is a helpful 3.5 inch wide gap between gate and the post from the top to the existing fence height. Whilst not ideal, this provides us with a small 'window' to check for any pedestrians when leaving our driveway. This is especially helpful at daily peak times (schools, office workers, commuters) Coupled with now reversing onto our driveway, we are trying to mitigate the risk of accident and

address the significant reduction of safety. Raising the height of the fence will block the view of this gap.
For the record the earlier planning application for the newly installed 6 foot 6inch gates and post (AWDC0064/24) was submitted after we had gone away several weeks. Had we had the opportunity to comment on the proposed design we would have raised the issue of safety and visibility of pavement users at that time.
Hopefully the Planning department are in a position to give feedback to the architect of these plans pointing out safety/ visibility issues for any future designs for customers so no one else has to deal with this nightmare

Relevant Planning Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2023)
National Planning Practice Guidance
SPG 'Extending or Altering Your Home' (WBC)

Worthing Local Plan

DM5- Quality of the Built Environment

Planning Assessment

There is no objection in principle to extensions and alterations to residential dwellings within the built-up area. The key considerations are the effects on the visual amenities of the locality and residential amenity.

Visual amenity

The property is situated in a street of mixed dwelling types, ages and design, apart from the eastern side of the site, the character of the area is for frontage walling.

Although the majority of walling is relatively low approx. 1.2m-1.5m in height there are examples of higher walls, fences and hedges to the frontages of the properties, over 1.5m in height. These tend to be off the back of the pavement.

Planning permission has been granted for the front walling, the additional impact on the street scene is therefore the slight increase in height of the scalloped fencing to the side boundaries to the front garden. Although it will enclose the property further, in view of the existing and approved fencing and walls to the boundary and the street scene in general it is not considered that the new scalloped fencing which would still allow glimpses of the property to remain would have a detrimental impact on the street scene and the character of the property.

Residential Amenity

The neighbouring property at 11 Bulkington Avenue has raised concerns regarding the increased height of the fence and visibility of pedestrians when exiting their driveway.

Whilst it is appreciated that increasing the fence could have an impact on visibility for viewing pedestrians using the footpath whilst existing the drive during the consultation of the previous application for gates, walling and fencing to the frontage, the LHA were consulted. Although as set out above they appreciate that the proposed gates may have a reduced visibility slightly for the neighbouring property given this access is an access serving a single dwelling, vehicle movements are not anticipated to be high and therefore the access arrangements as proposed are unlikely to result in detrimental impact.

Bulkington Avenue is a residential street and although it is appreciated that there will be pedestrians using the footpath, it is considered to be of sufficient width to allow an oncoming pedestrian to anticipate a car manoeuvring from the parking area. It is not considered that a refusal of the application on this basis could be sustained.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? Y

Case Officer: Jackie Fox Date: 12.11.24

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 13/11/24