



Formation Of Vehicular Access, Dropped Kerb And Permeable Driveway

2 Avenue Cottages, Porton, Salisbury, SP4 0NR

Planning Statement

Introduction

This Planning Statement accompanies an application for householder planning permission for the formation of a vehicular access, dropped kerb and permeable driveway at 2 Avenue Cottages. The proposal is required to provide safe and convenient off-street parking close to the dwelling for a disabled resident.

This application is supported by the following documents:

- Planning application form
- Correct fee
- Planning Statement (this document)
- Site location plan
- Site block plan
- Pre-existing and proposed floor plans

Application Site

The application site comprises a semi-detached dwelling on the north side of Tidworth Road (A338), close to its junction with The Avenue. The A338 is a classified road and provides the only practicable means of vehicular access to the property.

The dwelling is set behind a front garden containing grass, a concrete pedestrian approach and entrance steps. A hedge encloses part of the road frontage. The side garden is presently laid mainly to grass and is enclosed along its eastern boundary by close-boarded fencing. A small outbuilding stands within the front garden.

A footway runs along the site frontage. A bus shelter is located immediately to the east of the property, adjoining the side boundary. This serves very infrequent buses and has limited use. The site is more than 10 metres from the junction with The Avenue.

The property is not listed and is not within a conservation area.

Planning History

No previous planning applications have been registered on the property.

There are no known planning obligations or conditions on the property to preclude the proposed development.

The Proposed Development

Planning permission is sought for a new vehicle crossing and driveway serving the existing dwelling. This includes:

- a new section of dropped kerb with transition kerbs, constructed to the highway authority's specification;
- removal of the existing front hedge and concrete entrance steps where necessary to form the access;
- a permeable-paved driveway extending into the side garden, with a turning head adjacent to the dwelling;
- Driveline Priora or equivalent permeable block paving, using charcoal-grey blocks for the parking area and contrasting light-grey blocks;
- surface-water disposal within the site through the permeable paving, avoiding discharge onto the highway;
- retention of the bus shelter and the boundary treatment separating the driveway from it; and
- visibility splays derived from a point 2.4 metres back from the carriageway and extending 43 metres along the carriageway, as annotated on drawing SC/26/674-201.

The arrangement has been designed to provide an off-street parking space and an area in which a vehicle can turn, so that entry to and exit from the A338 can take place in forward gear.

The driveway and dropped kerb are required to meet the access needs of a disabled resident. Reliance on an available on-street parking space may leave the resident an uncertain distance from the dwelling and require movement beside or across a classified road. A dedicated space within the curtilage would provide a reliable, shorter and more manageable route between the vehicle and the home.

The accessibility benefit is not simply a matter of general parking convenience. It is the purpose of the scheme and should be afforded substantial weight in the planning balance. The proposal represents a modest and permanent adaptation of an existing home, allowing the dwelling to better meet the needs of its occupant.

The Council must exercise its planning functions consistently with the public sector equality duty in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This requires due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity for disabled persons. It does not displace highway-safety requirements, but it requires the accessibility need and the scope for a safe, reasonable solution to be considered conscientiously.

Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework promotes inclusive, safe and accessible places. It also provides that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Decision-making should secure safe and suitable access for all users and take account of the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility.

The Wiltshire Core Strategy is the principal component of the adopted development plan. Core Policy 57 requires development to achieve a high standard of design, respond positively to local character and provide appropriate arrangements for access, parking and servicing. Core Policy 60 supports a sustainable and safe transport system. Core Policy 61 requires new development to be capable of being served by safe access to the highway network and to take account of the needs of all users. Core Policy 62 seeks to ensure that development does not have a detrimental impact on the safe and efficient operation of the transport network.

The application should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The resident's disability-related access needs, the design of the proposed access and turning area, and the limited scale of the development are important material considerations.

Assessment

Principle of Development

The principle of adapting an existing residential curtilage to provide accessible off-street parking is acceptable. No change of use is proposed and the works would remain ancillary to the dwelling. The scheme would materially improve access to the home for a disabled resident and would support the objective of creating inclusive places that can respond to occupants' changing needs.

Character and Appearance

The works are small in scale and confined to the front and side garden. Some hedge removal is necessary to provide the required access and visibility. The driveway would be finished in good-quality permeable block paving in muted grey tones. The dwelling itself would be unaltered, while the front garden and outbuilding would remain legible. The proposal would not appear incongruous in a residential setting where domestic accesses and hardstanding are commonplace.

Highways, Parking and Accessibility

The proposal has been designed in recognition of the site's position on the A338. The access is located more than 10 metres from the junction with The Avenue. The plans identify adequate visibility splays using a 2.4-metre setback and a 43-metre distance.

A turning head is incorporated within the curtilage. Its purpose is to allow a domestic vehicle to turn clear of the highway and leave in forward gear, thereby avoiding reversing movements to or from the A338. The parking and turning areas will be retained unobstructed for those purposes.

The bus shelter is an important existing feature and its close relationship to the access has been carefully considered. The access is positioned to the west of the shelter, with the existing eastern boundary fence retained. The shelter serves a relatively infrequent bus service and consequently experiences a low level of passenger activity. Vehicles would enter and leave the site in forward gear, with good visibility of the footway and surrounding highway. Drivers would cross the footway at low speed and give priority to pedestrians.

The proposal serves one existing dwelling and would generate only normal domestic vehicle movements. It would not materially increase traffic on the A338. It would also replace uncertain on-street parking with a dedicated space, reducing the need for the resident to board or alight from a vehicle at the roadside.

Conclusion

The proposal would deliver a clear and important accessibility benefit by providing a disabled resident with reliable parking close to the dwelling. This weighs substantially in favour of permission and accords with the objectives of inclusive design and equality of opportunity.

The scheme responds to the site's highway context through the provision of visibility splays, removal of the obstructing frontage hedge, permeable surfacing and an on-site turning head intended to enable forward-gear access and egress.

When the accessibility benefits are weighed alongside the limited scale and acceptable design of the works, the proposal accords with the development plan taken as a whole. There is no evidence that it would cause an unacceptable impact on highway safety. Planning permission should therefore be granted, subject to appropriate conditions.