

EXMOUTH LITTLEHAM
(Exmouth)

08/1058/COU

Target Date: 11.06.2008

Applicant:

EDDC Housing Services

Location:

Land Adjacent To The Green, Lestock Close, Exmouth

Proposal:

Change of use of amenity land to residents parking area

CONSULTATIONS

County Highway Authority

Recommends that the following conditions shall be incorporated in any grant of permission:-

The proposed parking areas shall be properly consolidated and surfaced (not loose stone or gravel). The parking areas shall be laid out in accordance with the submitted plan. A lamp column will require repositioning to a location to be agreed by the County Council's Lighting section.

(Reason - To ensure the provision of adequate facilities within the site for the traffic generated by the development.)

In accordance with details that shall previously have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, provision shall be made within the site for the disposal of surface water so that none drains on to any County Highway.

(Reason - In the interest of public safety and to prevent damage to the highway.)

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL

No objection in principle but is considered that 17 spaces could be achieved if 3 disabled car parking spaces were turned around to achieve 5 spaces (photo attached).

WARD MEMBER(S)

The initial comments of the Ward Member(s) are –

Councillor Mark Williamson

I object to this application which misses several opportunities to provide safer parking facilities in an area where there was a tragic accident in 2007. The scheme submitted is too minimalist in its response and is acceptable neither to residents nor to Ward Members. Additional vertical parking could be provided on the opposite side of the hammerhead turning bay in The Green. At the entrance to Village Close, again a vertical parking scheme would provide more places while still providing for disabled parking in wider bays. I strongly urge the Planning Department to revisit the scheme originally submitted by Housing.

In the event that this application comes to Committee I would reserve my position until I am in full possession of all the relevant facts and arguments for and against.

REPRESENTATIONS

Objections

3 letters have been received raising the following points:

- Proposals reduce already inadequate parking opportunities both on and off road
- Problems of parking will be transferred to adjacent areas
- Scheme does not eliminate roadside parking and the risk of the repetition of a recent serious accident
- Works represents a knee jerk reaction following an accident on the Green
- Improved supervision of children playing may avert such problems
- Scheme provides no additional parking, but reduces amenity land
- By widening the road, traffic speed will be increased and therefore placing children at greater danger

Support

No letters have been received raising the following points:

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

App.No:	Proposal	Decision	Date
08/0387/COU	Change of use of amenity land to residents parking area	Withdrawn	26.03.2008

PLANNING POLICIES

Government Guidance

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable development

Devon Country Structure Plan (2001-2016)

Policy ST1 (Sustainable development)
 Policy ST5 (Development Strategy)
 Policy C01 (Landscape character and Local Distinctiveness)
 Policy TR10 – Strategic Road Network

East Devon Local Plan (1995-2011)

Policy S4 – Development within built up area boundaries
 Policy D1 – Design and Local Distinctiveness
 Policy TA7 (Adequacy of Road network and site Access)

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The application affects land to the west of the Green in Littleham Exmouth, which is currently open grassed areas, used for amenity purposes of local residents. There are a few scattered young trees within this area which is generally set at a higher level than the road. Dissecting this parcel of land is Lestock Close which comprises a short residential cul de sac and a hammerhead turning facility before a series of semidetached and terrace properties in Lestock Close which are served from a footpath. There is current informal parking within the hammerhead turning area.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application proposes the formal creation of 9 car parking spaces within this area. Four spaces would be formed along the side of The Green in a parallel arrangement and a further five would be formed in Lestock Close itself, all located on the northern side of the hammerhead and the access approach road. In addition a low timber barrier would be erected 300mm behind the kerb line. As part of the work to provide formal spaces along The Green a lamp column would need to be repositioned.

This application follows a previous submission which was withdrawn as concerns regarding the layout in terms of highway safety and the impact on the character of the area had been expressed. A copy of this scheme is appended to this report.

CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

The application comes before the Development Control Committee because the application has been made by Housing Services. In this instance the main issues revolve around the need for the car parking facilities, its impact on the character and appearance of the area, and the highway safety of the facility.

Need

It is recognised that parking is always a locally contentious issue and this area is no exception. In this location, there is some evidence that at weekends, parking occurs on verges surrounding the site and that as a result, the verges and small banks are eroded. National policy seeks to limit the provision of additional parking facilities to try and reduce car dependency and increase the use of public transport. Only in exceptional circumstances should additional parking be permitted and this needs to be fully justified. In this instance the application site is adjacent to a local bus route, providing connections to Exmouth Town and the shops services and alternative means of transport found there. In this instance with on street parking found locally, it is not considered that there is an overwhelming need for significant numbers of additional spaces. However it is recognised that there is public concern following an accident last year when a child ran out into the road between parked cars. In this instance it is recognised that to formalise parking provision within the area may be acceptable subject to this having an impact on the character area.

Character

In terms of the impact on the character and appearance of the area, careful assessment of the local environment has been undertaken. In this instance and despite on street parking being both available and utilised, the local area is characterised as a green open and pleasant space. This space therefore sets the tone for the quality of the local environment and should be protected and retained. The proposal to decrease this space and provide for additional, replacement, or formalised parking that is off road and therefore reduces congestion, is recognised but is not considered significantly harmful. The arrangement that is proposed with the current application sees the parking along the side of the green moved into the edge of the green amenity land, while the 5 spaces provided to the north of Lestock Close would be cut into an existing bank. Both these measures have been incorporated into the scheme to limit the visual harm that would result from the development while still providing formalised and safer parking arrangements. Such development should not be seen as a precedent for such green spaces around the District but is only suitable here given the topography of the area and the aim for action following the accident.

Highways

The Local Highway Authority have advised that they have no principle objection to the formation of off street parking and now consider the proposed arrangement to be

acceptable. This provides for suitable visibility and protection in and around the road junctions. They have however sought the imposition of conditions concerning drainage and surface treatment. These are reasonable and can be imposed as a condition.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the limited policy basis for the provision of additional car park facilities within such locations, it is considered that the proposal formalises existing parking making the space safer and access easier. In addition the position and location of the parking, is such that it should have only a limited impact on the character of the area and not be significantly harmful.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE subject to the following planning conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission and shall be carried out as approved.
(Reason - To comply with section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
2. The proposed parking areas shall be properly consolidated and surfaced (not loose stone or gravel). The parking areas shall be laid out in accordance with the submitted plan. A lamp column will require repositioning to a location to be agreed by the County Council's Lighting section.
(Reason - To ensure the provision of adequate facilities within the site for the traffic generated by the development.)
3. In accordance with details that shall previously have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, provision shall be made within the site for the disposal of surface water so that none drains on to any County Highway.
(Reason - In the interest of public safety and to prevent damage to the highway.)
4. Before the development hereby permitted is first commenced, details of the low timber barrier to be erected around the amenity land shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The work shall be undertaken in accordance with the agreed details prior to the first use of the car parking spaces
(Reason - To ensure that the fence is appropriate for the character and appearance of the area.)

Reasons for approval

The proposal complies with the Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016 policy TR10 (Strategic Road Network).

The proposal complies with the Adopted East Devon Local Plan 1995-2011 policy TA7 (Adequacy of Road Network and Site Access).

The proposal does not adversely affect the privacy and/or amenity of neighbouring properties.

List of Background Papers

Application file, consultations and policy documents referred to in the report.