

Ditton **571487 158007** **19 January 2009** **TM/08/03519/FL**
Ditton

Proposal: Four new lock-up garages at the end of an existing rank
Location: Land North Of 62 Pear Tree Avenue Ditton Aylesford Kent
Applicant: Studland Properties

1. Description:

1.1 This full application proposes the construction of a block of four prefabricated garages measuring in total approximately 10.7m by 5.05m on an area of hardstanding to the west of the existing garages. The garages would be served by the existing access from Pear Tree Avenue. The garages proposed are 0.5m shallower than the adjacent units to compensate for the reduction in width towards the entrance with Pear Tree Avenue and still enable manoeuvring space. No alterations are proposed to the landscaped verge to the west of the application site or the footway to the south.

2. Reason for reporting to Committee:

2.1 The application is reported to Committee due to the level of public interest in the proposal.

3. The Site:

3.1 The site is currently a hard surfaced open area for informal parking to the west of the existing row of 14 garages. The site slopes down from east to west with the garages stepped to compensate for the hill.

4. Planning History:

TM/90/10141/FUL Refuse 31 July 1990

Block of 4 garages.

TM/90/10781/OLD planning application not 25 September 1990
required

Section 53 Determination: Enclosure of open area with a one metre high chain fence.

5. Consultees:

5.1 PC: Objects to this application as a further four garages in this area would lead to restricted access to the existing residents garages. This is a very narrow road and the entrance to the Primary School is situated before you turn towards the

proposed site so additional traffic in this area would be both dangerous and cause more parking problems. The existing garages have been cause for concern to the local police as vandals regularly use the roofs as an escape route from behind the shops at Woodlands Road so to extend the garages could increase the vandal problem.

5.2 KCC (Highways): No objections.

5.3 Private Reps: 6/0X/14R/0S + Art 8. 14 letters of objection received raising the following issues:-

- Problems with vandalism and people gaining access to surrounding gardens from the roof of the existing garages.
- Loss of privacy from people standing on top of the garages looking into adjacent houses and garages.
- Increase in antisocial behaviour.
- Increase in traffic on a narrow road and in close proximity to the school access.
- Garages would be used for business purposes rather than for private parking.
- Existing garage owners have a legal obligation to maintain the roadway to the garages and it is unlikely that this obligation would be passed to the new occupiers.
- Restricted access to the site.
- No information about why the applicants wish to put garages up.
- Potential for removal of vegetation on the landscaped verge to the west of the site.
- Design does not match the existing garages.
- Existing garages are an eyesore and are not used on a day to day basis.

6. Determining Issues:

6.1 The site is within the urban confines of Ditton and is currently hard surfaced and available as an informal parking area adjacent to a block of 14 lock up garages. Given the existing use of the site it is considered that there are no objections in principle to the construction of garages on an existing parking area.

- 6.2 The principal considerations with the application are therefore considered to be the impact of the garages on the character of the street scene and the surrounding properties, the impact on highway safety and the potential for anti-social behaviour as a result of the development.
- 6.3 The garages proposed would be precast concrete with white doors. Although the existing garages are brick it is not considered that the materials would be unacceptable in this location. As the garages are proposed on top of the existing hardstanding it is not proposed to remove any of the surrounding verge or vegetation. The proposed development would therefore not be detrimental to the character of the street scene.
- 6.4 The development itself would not have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of the surrounding properties. The area can already be used as parking for four vehicles and this would not change as a result of the application. The use of the garages can also be controlled by condition so that they can only be used for domestic parking rather than for any trade or business.
- 6.5 The garages proposed are not as deep as the existing ones adjacent. The depth would still be sufficient to park a vehicle in and would allow greater manoeuvring space to the front of the site. The lack of manoeuvring space was the reason for refusal on a similar application on the site in 1990. No objections have been raised by KCC Highways regarding the current proposal with the increased manoeuvring space. The works would not lead to an increase in traffic generation as the overall number of parking spaces has not been changed.
- 6.6 Concerns have been raised by local residents regarding the fact that the development would result in increased vandalism and anti-social behaviour. The Council is obliged to consider potential crime and disorder implications in determining planning applications. Whilst it is noted that there is a problem with anti-social behaviour in the area, it is not considered that the garages would exacerbate the issue as the development would not result in the enclosure of areas not visible from the street and would also reduce the area on the corner of Pear Tree Avenue for people to congregate. With regard to the need for the garages, as the local concern is that few of the existing are used on a day to day basis, the applicant has stated that they wish to provide additional covered parking for local residents to rent and to reduce the number of cars parked on the road.
- 6.7 On balance the proposal is considered to be acceptable.

7. Recommendation:

- 7.1 **Grant Planning Permission** in accordance with the following submitted details: Letter dated 21.11.2008, Location Plan dated 21.11.2008, Proposed Plans and Elevations dated 21.11.2008, Photographs dated 21.11.2008, Letter dated

19.01.2009, Design and Access Statement dated 19.01.2009, Site Plan dated 19.01.2009, Photograph dated 19.01.2009, Proposed Plans and Elevations LBA04ERISPF259500 dated 19.01.2009, and subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. All materials used externally shall accord with the approved plans, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not harm the character and appearance of the existing building or visual amenity of the locality.

3. The garages shall not be used for any other purpose than the accommodation of private vehicles and no trade or business shall be carried on therefrom.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities and interests of the occupants of other property in this residential area.

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