

12 BEECHGROVE GARDENS, ABERDEEN

PROPOSED GARAGE AND DRIVEWAY

For: Mrs Betty Calder

Application Ref.	: P120152	Advert	:
Application Date	: 02/02/2012	Advertised on	:
Officer	: Sheila Robertson	Committee Date	: 22 March 2012
Ward: Midsocket/Rosemount (B Cormie/J Laing/J Corall)		Community Council	: No comments



RECOMMENDATION: Refuse

DESCRIPTION

The application property comprises a 1.5 storey detached dwelling house built of traditional materials located on the west side of Beechgrove Gardens at its junction with Mid Stocket Road. The northern boundary of the property aligns with Mid Stocket Road and is currently bounded by a 1.5 metre high granite rubble wall located approximately 3.5 metres from the side elevation of the dwelling house. The existing front garden is approximately 4.8 metres in depth, currently planted with grass and flower beds with a low granite wall to the street elevation. The current site coverage is 35%.

HISTORY

The former Beechgrove Church, which lies to the immediate rear (west) elevation of the application property, was granted planning permission in 2009 for conversion to 15 residential units and the formation of a semi underground car park to the east elevation of the church which involved incorporation of a strip of rear garden ground pertaining to 12 Beechgrove Gardens, utilisation of their existing pavement crossing accessing Mid Stocket Road and demolition of their single garage located within the south west corner of their original garden ground. The area of rear garden ground transferred to permit access to the new underground parking was approximately 4 metres wide and 14 metres long. The reduction of useable garden ground and proposed removal of the garage at 12 Beechgrove Gardens, and thus the off-street parking for that property, was considered to be acceptable in this instance as on-street parking was available in the immediate area.

A previous application for a similar proposal (110291) to build a replacement garage and construction of a new access to the garage from Beechgrove Gardens was withdrawn by the applicant following discussions regarding the proximity of the proposed access to the road junction, inadequate depth of front garden available for construction of a driveway, position of the proposed garage forward of the established building line and proposed finishing materials. Objections were received from the Roads Section regarding the proximity of the new access to the road junction and inadequate depth of front garden to allow safe manoeuvrability in and out of the driveway, both contrary to the interests of road users and pedestrians. Concerns were also expressed regarding the proposed materials and position of the garage forward of the established building line on Mid Stocket Road.

PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought to (a) build a replacement garage varying in length between 6.45 and 5.96 metres, 3.5 metres wide with a flat roof 3 metres in height, to be located within the north west corner of the curtailed rear garden, the length running parallel with Mid Stocket Road and abutting the north west corner of the dwellinghouse, and (b) construct a new driveway with access from Beechgrove Gardens to the new garage, entering at the south east corner of the front garden, traversing across the front garden parallel to Beechgrove Gardens thereafter a sharp right angled turn to enter the garage. The nearest point of the proposed driveway would be located approximately 12 metres from the junction with Mid Stocket Road. The new garage would be constructed in blockwork with a white/grey render finish to the south facing elevation, the public elevations finished with salvaged granite. The proposed driveway would be lockblocked, with granite piers at either side of the new driveway. Other alterations would

include reduction in height of the boundary wall adjacent to Mid Stocket Road to 900mm and the installation of 900mm high cast iron railings above the reduced boundary wall. The only difference between the current and previous application is the proposed use of finishing materials to the garage.

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO PLANNING SUB COMMITTEE

The application has received an objection from the Roads Section and therefore is required to be determined by the sub committee.

CONSULTATIONS

ROADS SECTION – Object to the proposal. Concerns raised relate primarily to the proximity of the proposed driveway access to the road junction, which could result in a road safety hazard to other road users and pedestrians.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – Response received. No observations.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL – No response received.

REPRESENTATIONS

No objections have been received.

PLANNING POLICY

Aberdeen Local Plan 2012

Policy D1 - Architecture and Placemaking

To ensure high standards of design, new development must be designed with due consideration for its context and make a positive contribution to its setting. Factors such as siting, scale, massing, colour, materials, orientation, details, the proportions of building elements, together with the spaces around buildings, including streets, squares, open space, landscaping and boundary treatments, will be considered in assessing that contribution.

Policy H1 - Residential Areas

Within existing residential areas (H1 on the Proposals Map) and within new residential developments, proposals for new residential development and householder development will be approved in principle if it:

1. does not constitute over development;
2. does not have an unacceptable impact on the character or amenity of the surrounding area;
3. does not result in the loss of valuable and valued areas of open space.
4. complies with Supplementary Guidance on Curtilage Splits: and
5. complies with Supplementary Guidance, in this instance the guidance relating to House Extensions and Transport and Accessibility.

EVALUATION

The application shall be determined in accordance with development plan policy, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Aberdeen Local Plan 2012 is of specific relevance in determining the application in terms of the associated Supplementary Guidance relating to Transport and Accessibility. Consideration should also be given as to whether the design and location of the proposed garage complies with Policies D1 and H1 of the Aberdeen Local Plan 2012, its impact on the existing character and appearance of the surrounding neighbourhood, residential amenity and the setting of a precedent.

The application site lies at the immediate junction of Beechgrove Gardens with Mid Stocket Road. The driveway would be accessed from Beechgrove Gardens, approximately 12 metres from the junction with Mid Stocket Road. There would be a small turning area, with the main drive being parallel to Mid Stocket Road. The Roads Section has objected to the location of the proposed driveway in such close proximity to the road junction and the resultant road safety implications. The supplementary guidance states that driveways should not be located within 15 metres of a road junction, in order to achieve adequate road and pedestrian visibility. It is also considered that there is insufficient depth of front garden ground available to permit sufficient turning space adequate to allow a car to enter and exit in a forward gear, the vehicle would also be unable to enter or exit the driveway at right angles, entering the driveway at an angle across the footpath, therefore causing an additional road safety hazard in close proximity to a road junction.

The proposed driveway is considered to be detrimental to road safety within the area, due to the substandard level of visibility available at the proposed access, and thereby contrary to the Council's Transport Supplementary Guidance where there is a presumption of refusal if the proposal does not conform to road safety criteria. Given the above, the proposed driveway is considered to be contrary to the supplementary guidance contained in the Aberdeen Local Plan 2012.

With regard to the proposed garage, its size, scale, design and amended finishing materials are considered to be appropriate, its site coverage, which would rise to 42%, is acceptable within the context of the surrounding area, and its relationship to the associated dwelling house and is therefore compliant with policies D1 and H1 of the Local Plan. However the proximity of the garage's longest elevation in a prominent location abutting the heel of the pavement and located forward of the formal building line on the northern boundary facing Mid Stocket Road, is considered to be inappropriate and intrusive to the streetscape and further emphasises its inappropriate siting. It is considered that the development would look out of context in the neighbourhood and would adversely impact on the existing character of the surrounding residential area, contrary to Policies D1 and H1 in the Aberdeen Local Plan. There are no material considerations that justify a departure from the Development Plan. The proposals, if implemented, would set an unacceptable precedent for developments of a similar nature, particularly on exposed corner sites, leading to an unacceptable erosion of existing residential character and amenity.

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse for the following reasons:

- 1) That the driveway, if approved, would be contrary to the Council's Transport Supplementary Guidance contained in the Aberdeen Local Plan 2012 and would, if implemented, result in an unacceptable impact on road safety and the free flow of traffic due to its close proximity to a road junction and would result in an undesirable precedent, leading to possible future applications which the Council would find difficult to refuse.
- 2) That the location of the proposed garage would be unsympathetic to the character and appearance of the existing streetscape, in particular its inappropriate siting forward of the established building line, adversely affecting the existing residential character of the surrounding area and setting an

undesirable precedent for developments of a similar nature which in aggregate would further erode the established character of the area, all contrary to Aberdeen Local Plan 2012 Policies H1 (Architecture and Placemaking) and H1 (Residential Areas).

Dr Margaret Bochel

Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.