

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 01 DECEMBER 2021

Ward: Southcote

App No: 211321/REG3

Address: 6 Circuit Lane, Reading, RG30 3HA

Proposal: Single storey side extension (Amended Description)

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Date validated: 11/08/2021/

Target Date: 06/10/2021

Extended target date: 03/12/2021

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives.

Conditions to include:

1. Time Limit (Standard)
2. Approved plans
3. Materials - to match
4. Obscure glazing
5. Ancillary domestic use only

Informatives to include:

1. Terms and conditions
2. Positive and Proactive
3. Building Regulations
4. Encroachment
5. Access construction

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At your November meeting, consideration of this householder planning application was deferred in order to seek additional information on the policy for consideration of applications for new vehicle crossings and dropped kerbs where grass highway verges would be removed.

2. VEHICLE CROSSING POLICY

- 2.1 The assessment of dropped crossings is undertaken against the Reading Borough Council's Vehicle Crossing Policy with the latest version being adopted at the Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport (SEPT) Committee in November 2018. This clarifies the amount of grass verge that would be an 'acceptable loss' and what construction detail would be required for each scenario. This ensures that a consistent approach in assessing dropped crossings can be taken by officers.

3. CONSISTENT APPROACH OF THE VEHICLE CROSSING POLICY

3.1 Officers have reviewed various recent planning applications in the Southcote Lane/Circuit Lane area, post the introduction of the Crossing Policy in 2018, in the interests of consistency:

- 99-101 Southcote Lane: loss of 25 sqm was considered harmful. Over 25 sq.m. of verge was involved, 10m in depth, as there is a very deep, characteristic verge in this area. Appeal dismissed and the Inspector agreed with the Council's reason for refusal.

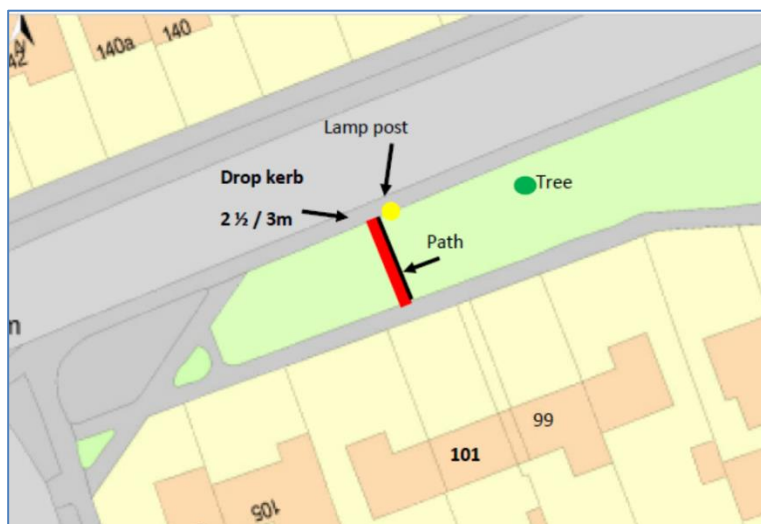


Fig 1. Extract from block plan - Application 181506, 99-101 Southcote Lane



Fig 2. Photo of location of proposed access, 99-101 Southcote Lane

The following planning applications are also relevant:

- Application number 180247 - 117 Southcote Lane: loss 12 sqm of verge was not considered harmful
- Application number 182036 - 214 Southcote Lane: loss of ca. 10 sqm of verge was not considered harmful
- Application number 171676 - 231 Southcote Lane: 10 sqm of verge was not considered harmful
- Application number 190775 - 240 Southcote Lane: 12 sqm of verge was not considered harmful

4. REASON FOR DEFERRAL

- 4.1 With regards to the proposed development sought under application 211321 there is currently a driveway on site with double gates, however, there is no direct crossing or dropped kerb to provide access to it. There is however, a crossover which crosses the verge to the driveway of the adjacent, non-attached semi, No. 4. The proposed site plan for the current planning application indicates a widened dropped kerb from this existing crossover and the removal of part of the grass verge to provide access to the driveway at No. 6.
- 4.2 Regarding the effect on the verge, it would be continuing (widening) the dropped kerb from No. 4. The loss of grass verge outside 6 Circuit Lane would be 15.4m² in area, as measured from the proposed site plan (fig 3 below). This area is only slightly bigger than the area of a parking space. It is acknowledged that the loss of grass verge proposed at 6 Circuit Lane is 0.4m² above 15m² and would therefore necessitate the surface to be of a porous tarmac. There is, however, scope for the amount of grass verge lost to be reduced, as Transport Officers have confirmed that the dropped kerb shown is in fact wider than what is required for the site.

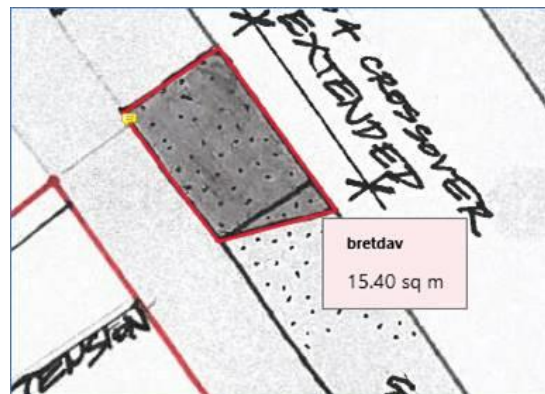


Fig 3. The proposed area of grass verge to be removed, as measured from drawing CIR-SP2 A



Fig 4. Extent of grass verge lost would be approximately the width indicated by the wooden poles



Fig 5. Circuit Lane, with various crossovers in place

5. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The above discussion indicates that a consistent approach is being applied to the consideration of loss of grass verges, with input via RBC Transport with the Council's Vehicle Crossing Policy. Officers continue to recommend approval of the application.

Case Officer: David Brett