

<b>APPLICATION NUMBER</b>	<b>CB/10/03733/FULL</b>
<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>1 - 23 Osborn Crescent, Shefford</b>
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>Full: 19 No Driveways to houses and flats.</b>
<b>PARISH</b>	<b>Shefford</b>
<b>WARD</b>	<b>Shefford</b>
<b>WARD COUNCILLORS</b>	<b>Cllr Lewis Birt &amp; Cllr Tony Brown</b>
<b>CASE OFFICER</b>	<b>Clare Golden</b>
<b>DATE REGISTERED</b>	<b>21 October 2010</b>
<b>EXPIRY DATE</b>	<b>16 December 2010</b>
<b>APPLICANT</b>	<b>Aragon Housing Association</b>
<b>AGENT</b>	<b>Aragon Housing Association</b>
<b>REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE</b>	<b>Central Bedfordshire Council own part of the land within the application site and an objection has been received from the Occupiers of a neighbouring property.</b>
<b>RECOMMENDED DECISION</b>	<b>Full Application - Granted</b>

**Site Location:**

The application site is located within the town of Shefford, in a residential close known as Osborn Crescent which is just off George Street and south of Ampthill Road, the main route through the town to the north. The site comprises the front gardens of No.s 1-23 Osborn Crescent a group of 1950s two storey semi-detached and terraced dwellings constructed of brown/red brick under concrete tiled roofs. The front gardens are between 6-8metres deep and enclosed by a 1metre hedge along four of the properties with individual timber posts to the front of No.s 17-23.

The dwellings are owned and managed by Aragon Housing Association and form a group of residential closes of similar dwellings owned by Aragon.

The site is located within the settlement envelope for Shefford.

**The Application:**

This application seeks permission for a dropped kerb and the construction of 19 new parking bays to be created on part of the land presently used as front gardens to No.s 1 and 23 Osborn Crescent. The parking spaces are required to ease the on-street parking congestion along Osborn Crescent.

Planning permission is required because the dwellings include flats which do not benefit from permitted development rights for dropped kerbs. The application is to be determined at the Development Management Committee because Central Bedfordshire Council own part of the land included within the red line of the application site and an unresolved planning objection has been received against the proposal.

**RELEVANT POLICIES:****National Policies (PPG & PPS)**

**Core Strategy/Development Management Policies that supersede the Saved Local Plan Policies**

DM3: Protection of Amenity

CS4: Linking Communities – Accessibility and transport

**Supplementary Planning Guidance**

'Design in Central Bedfordshire'. Adopted SPD Design Guide, 2010: DS7: Movements, Streets and Places

'Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention, 2004.

**Planning History**

None relevant.

**Representations:  
(Parish & Neighbours)**

**Shefford Town Council** No objection.

**Neighbours** One letter has been received from the occupier of No. 17 Osborn Crescent who have raised the following points:

- Support the proposal to provide individual driveways for the residents
- Concern that double yellow lines will be added to both sides of the road so that no one will be able to park at the kerbside, causing further problems with parking which could lead to people parking on the grassed area opposite the flats.
- Concern that opening up the front gardens to hard standing will result in the properties becoming vulnerable to burglary and car crime.

**Consultations/Publicity responses**

**Highways** No objection subject to conditions relating to surfacing,

**Site notice posted on** No representations received.

**17.11.10**

**Determining Issues**

The main considerations of the application are;

- 1. Impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area**
- 2. Impact on the residential amenity of surrounding properties**
- 3. Other matters considered relevant to the proposal**

**Considerations**

## **1. Impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area**

The character of the area is influenced by semi-detached and terraced dwellings set within generous plots with front and rear gardens surrounded by grassed amenity space. The highway is a relatively narrow estate road which is also used for on-street parking which leads to parking congestion problems. Many other properties in the surrounding area have converted their front gardens into driveways, including some in George Street.

The proposed parking spaces would be created on land presently used as front gardens to No.s 1-23 Osborn Crescent. This would result in a loss of much of the grassed area to the front of these dwellings, however the dwellings, which also comprise of flats, benefit from a good amount of surrounding grassed amenity space to the side and rear. The proposal is considered to be a purposeful use of space in accordance with Policy DM3, by using land efficiently which is reinforced by both PPS1 and PPS3. Furthermore, it is not considered the proposal would have an unacceptable, detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area.

## **2. Impact on the residential amenity of surrounding properties**

The proposal seeks to improve the current parking arrangements on the site to provide formal parking spaces, thereby avoiding on-street parking along the grass verge. This will help reduce the amount of traffic congestion along Osborn Crescent to the benefit of users of the highway and occupiers and visitors to neighbouring properties using the spaces. The proposal will have no impact on surrounding properties in terms of privacy, daylight or outlook.

The proposal is considered to preserve the residential amenity of surrounding properties in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Adopted Core Strategy.

## **3. Any other considerations relevant to the application**

### *Highway Safety:*

Concern has been raised that the proposal will remove the opportunity for on-street parking and that the number of parking spaces proposed will not cover the number of vehicles parked on the road, and that consequently, people will park cars on the surrounding grassed amenity areas.

Presently, there is very limited parking available to the adjacent dwellings. The proposal will result in the new parking spaces being used by the occupiers of No.s 1-23, and their visitors only, and not for wider public use. This is because the new spaces would be created within the front gardens of the existing dwellings. In terms of a short fall in parking spaces, it would still be possible to park on the road, although in some cases involving visitor parking, cars would be parked behind the cars in the marked bays. Should cars park on the surrounding grassed areas, this could be managed by the erection of bollards preventing parking on the space. It is not considered that the proposal would result in a shortfall of potential parking spaces to the detriment of highway safety or to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposal would instead, improve the present parking arrangement, significantly reducing the amount of

on-street parking to the benefit of the occupiers of these and surrounding properties. The proposal will therefore not cause harm to the safety of the highway in accordance with Policies DM3 and CS4 of the Adopted Core Strategy.

*Community Safety:*

Concern has also been raised about opening the front garden area up to hard standing and the potential for this to increase the vulnerability of the properties to burglary and car crime.

Underused spaces are vulnerable to crime, whereas functional, purposeful spaces have a clear role within the built environment and help create activity within the streetscene. Parking in front of dwellings in particular, can help create activity within the street, promoting natural surveillance and helping to deter potential criminal activity. The proposal is therefore considered to fully accord with the aims of Policy DM3 in respect of point 6 which seeks to enhance community safety.

## **Recommendation**

The proposal is in conformity with Policies DM3 and CS4 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies, Central Bedfordshire (North), November 2009 and the Adopted Design Guide SPD, 'Design in Central Bedfordshire, Supplement 7: Movement, Streets and Places' as the proposal is appropriate in terms of siting, use and scale, does not seriously harm the amenities of neighbours and there is no unacceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the street scene or general locality or on highway safety.

That Planning Permission be **Granted** subject to the following:

- 1 The development hereby approved shall be commenced within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which is designed to ensure that a planning permission does not continue in existence indefinitely if the development to which it relates is not carried out.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers 01/01/14 and 01/01/05.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

- 3 Before any of the accesses are first brought into use, a triangular vision splay shall be provided on each side of the 3 new accesses and shall be 2.0m measured along the back edge of the highway from the centre line of the anticipated vehicle path on the nearest parking bay to a point 2.0m measured from the back edge of the highway into the site along the centre line of the anticipated vehicle path. The vision splays so described and on land under the applicant's control shall be maintained free of any obstruction to visibility exceeding a height of 600mm above the adjoining footway level.

Reason: To provide adequate visibility between the existing highway and the proposed accesses, and to make the accesses safe and convenient for the traffic which is likely to use it.

### **Reasons for Granting**

The proposal is in conformity with Policies DM3 and CS4 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies, Central Bedfordshire (North), November 2009 and the Adopted Design Guide SPD, 'Design in Central Bedfordshire, Supplement 7: Movement, Streets and Places' as the proposal is appropriate in terms of siting, use and scale, does not seriously harm the amenities of neighbours and there is no unacceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the street scene or general locality or on highway safety.

### **Notes to Applicant**

1. The applicant is advised that no works associated with the construction of the vehicular access should be carried out within the confines of the public highway without prior consent, in writing, of the Central Bedfordshire Council. Upon receipt of this Notice of Planning Approval, the applicant is advised to write to Central Bedfordshire Council's, Technology House, 239 Ampthill Road, Bedford, MK42 9BD quoting the Planning Application number and supplying a copy of the Decision Notice and a copy of the approved plan. This will enable the necessary consent and procedures under Section 184 or similar of the Highways Act to be implemented. The applicant is also advised that if any of the works associated with the construction of the vehicular access affects or requires the removal and/or the relocation of any equipment, apparatus or structures (e.g. street name plates, bus stop signs or shelters, statutory authority equipment etc.) then the applicant will be required to bear the cost of such removal or alteration.