



Planning Statement

Retrospective Planning Application for Block Paved Parking Areas at 4 & 5 Beacon Rise, East Grinstead, West Sussex

Application Reference: [to be confirmed]

Applicant: [Client's names]

Site Address: 4 & 5 Beacon Rise, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 [postcode]

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a retrospective planning application for the retention of block paved areas to the front and side of Nos. 4 and 5 Beacon Rise, East Grinstead. The areas, previously soft landscaping, have been replaced to provide much-needed on-plot parking for these five-bedroom dwellings.

This statement will set out the background to the development, the reasoning for the works undertaken, and justification for the retrospective consent, including reference to local and national planning policy, as well as practical considerations relating to parking provision within the development.

2. Site and Context

Beacon Rise is a small residential development of 20 dwellings constructed by Linden Homes under planning permission reference 08/04025/FUL. The development is situated approximately two miles from the centre of East Grinstead, in a predominantly residential area with no direct bus route serving the site, the nearest public transport links being located at the town's main bus station.

Nos. 4 and 5 Beacon Rise are substantial five-bedroom detached houses, originally constructed with a single driveway parking space and a single garage per property. The entire development was allocated only two visitor parking spaces.

This level of provision falls significantly below current parking standards as outlined by West Sussex County Council's Residential Parking Demand Calculator and Guidance Note, which stipulates a requirement of at least 2.5 spaces per five-bedroom property. The deficiency in parking provision has led to practical issues for residents and visitors alike.

3. Planning History and Condition 7

Condition 7 attached to the original planning consent (ref. 08/04025/FUL) reads as follows:

"Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 or as amended in the future, no gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure or hard standing shall be erected or constructed in front of the forward most part(s) of the proposed building(s) which front(s) on a highway unless planning permission is specifically granted by the Local Planning Authority."

The reason for this condition was:

"In order to safeguard the character and visual amenities of the locality and to accord with Policy B1 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan and Policy DEV1 of the adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016."

Since the granting of consent, the policy basis for this condition (DEV1 and B1) has been replaced by the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The continued application of this restrictive condition is now considered overly onerous in light of the practical requirements of modern family homes and changing transport patterns.

4. Justification for Retention of the Works

a. Inadequate Original Parking Provision

At the time of construction, the parking provision for five-bedroom properties fell significantly below current standards. The single driveway space and garage per unit, supplemented by only two visitor spaces for the entire development, is inadequate. According to the West Sussex County Council's current parking guidance, 5-bedroom dwellings should be served by a minimum of 2.5 spaces per unit.

The absence of adequate parking on the site has led to congestion issues, with residents and visitors frequently parking on pavements, obstructing pedestrian routes, and creating safety concerns for residents, especially those with limited mobility or children in pushchairs.

b. Precedent Within the Development

It is important to note that other properties within the Beacon Rise development have introduced additional parking areas or widened existing driveways without any apparent recourse or enforcement action being taken. This suggests an inconsistency in the

application of planning controls within the development and highlights the need to regularise the applicants' position through this retrospective application.

c. Impact on Visual Amenity

The block paving undertaken at Nos. 4 and 5 has been carried out to a high standard, using materials that complement the existing built environment. The works are not visually intrusive and do not detract from the character of the streetscene, particularly given the scale and suburban nature of the development where off-street parking areas are a common feature.

d. Removal of the Onerous Restriction

Given the shortfall in parking provision, changing family and vehicle ownership patterns since the original consent, and the precedent set by other properties within the development, it is considered unreasonable to continue enforcing the restrictive elements of Condition 7 in this instance. The NPPF (2023) promotes development which meets the needs of communities and supports the efficient use of land, provided it is sympathetic to local character, a balance which this proposal achieves.

5. Impact on Pedestrian and Highway Safety

The lack of adequate on-plot parking has resulted in displaced parking on pavements and verges, obstructing pedestrian access and compromising highway safety. By providing additional off-street parking, the applicants have directly contributed to easing this problem, reducing the risk of obstruction to footways and improving safety for pedestrians, including children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

This aligns with both local and national policy objectives to promote safe, accessible, and inclusive environments.

6. Conclusion

This application seeks retrospective consent for the retention of block paved areas for vehicle parking at 4 and 5 Beacon Rise. The justification for this proposal is clear:

- The original parking provision is inadequate by current standards.
- The restrictive condition is now onerous and out of step with contemporary guidance and the needs of the development's residents.
- Similar alterations have been made elsewhere within the development without objection or enforcement.
- The works have improved the parking situation on-site, helping to alleviate problems of obstruction and pedestrian safety on the public footway.

- The visual impact of the works is limited and sympathetic to the character of the locality.

In light of the above, it is respectfully requested that the Local Planning Authority grants retrospective planning permission for the works.

GRM/0925/C01 : April 2025