

# Epsom Civic Society

shaping the future, safeguarding the past

Viv Evans  
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council  
Town Hall  
KT18 5BY

4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Viv

## **Ref - 38 The Ridings Planning Application 21/00064/FLH Objection**

The Epsom Civic Society are very concerned at this application for a new vehicle access, involving a drop kerb, new hardstanding, soft landscaping and tree felling. The property is located within the Downs Road Conservation Area.

This Conservation Area is noted for its exceptional sylvan character and landscaping. The CA is a leading example of what Epsom is noted for ie the delightful landscaping including the trees and grass verges. The estate's landscaping was originally designed by Derek Lovejoy and has since won national design awards.

The proposed new vehicle access from Milburn Walk cuts across the verge and pavement and forms a 2 car wide hardstanding in the garden with trees having to be felled in the garden. Unfortunately, no level datums have been shown on the plans, so we are unable to see if the garden levels are reduced or if the hardstanding is formed at the present garden level? Both cases are unacceptable but if the levels are to be reduced then retaining walls would be required.

The 2010 Article 4 (2) section (v) of the Conservation Area appraisal covers 'The provision of a hardstanding (ie Parking area) within the curtilage of the house'

The CA appraisal recommends that the sylvan character of the CA should be protected from tree felling and that any diseased trees should be promptly replaced. Also, it states that Open spaces in public/private ownership should be carefully maintained. The open lawn frontages of the houses typify the estate and should be protected. This application does not meet the requirements of the CA appraisal.

Core Strategy CS6 states that the Council will seek to protect and enhance the Borough's heritage assets including the Conservation Areas. This application is a prime example of where we can protect this delightful asset.

Our current Local Plan (2000) requires that any planning applications do ‘not involve damage to or loss of open areas, gardens, vegetation, walls or other structures which contribute to the character, appearance and setting of the Conservation Area’ This application clearly damages the setting of the CA.

The ECS suggest that if this scheme was approved and constructed then it would set a very dangerous precedent for other house owners to follow suit and turn their front gardens into car parks. This has already happened throughout our borough but not within our protected Conservation Areas.

The ECS objects to this application and remains committed to protecting our Conservation Areas and keeping Epsom green and an excellent place to live

Yours Sincerely,

The Epsom Civic Society (Bob Hollis)

