

48A Lauder Road EH9 1UE

Planning Application 19/02010/FUL

LBC Application 19/02011/LBC

OBJECTION from Grange Association

31 May 2019

The Grange Association has reviewed applications 19/02010/FUL and 19/02011/LBC and lodges this objection, taking into account the setting within the Grange Conservation Area of 48A Lauder Road and its C-listed status. The proposal follows the rejection on 21 March 2019 of the earlier application for a vehicle run-in as part of 19/00459/FUL. This revised application is to replace the soft landscaping in front of the main door to the property with 7m x 3m hard-standing. This will require the felling of a mature birch tree which contributes much to the streetscape of the northern end of Lauder Road. The tree is shown in the centre of the streetview below.



48A Lauder Road: Streetview June 2014

Objection

We object to the proposed loss of the mature tree, the hedge and the soft landscaping, and the consequent loss of the visual amenity that the front garden currently contributes to the Conservation Area. Lauder Road is characterised by substantial detached and semi-detached villas, most of which retain well-kept green front gardens that add significantly to the amenity of the Grange Conservation Area. This streetscape is wholly consistent with the Grange Conservation Area Character Appraisal (CACA). For example: *“Generous private gardens and mature trees create green character”* (page 17). The CACA refers to the pressure from proposals for development within villa grounds (page 32): *“This type of development may also risk the creation of uncharacteristic expanses of hard-landscaping and parking, and the loss of green landscaping and trees.”* ... *“The green character of front and side gardens should remain dominant where additional on-site parking is proposed.”*

LDP policies

The **Local Development Plan** includes policies:

DES 12: *Planning permission will be granted for alterations and extensions to existing buildings which.....*

c) will not be detrimental to neighbourhood amenity and character.

ENV 6: *Development within a conservation area or affecting its setting will be permitted which.....:*

a) Preserves or enhances the special character or appearance of the conservation area and is consistent with the relevant conservation area character appraisal.

b) preserves trees, hedges, boundary walls, railings, paving and other features which contribute positively to the character of the area

This proposal is contrary to both Des 12 and Env 6. It would be detrimental to neighbourhood character and does not preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area, as evidenced by the risks cited on page 32 of the CACA. By removing a landmark tree, and removing part of the hedge, the proposal would damage the appearance of this characterful street.

Moreover, the application is contrary to the Householder Guidance (March 2018) (page 19) which states:

“Parking in front gardens will not normally be allowed.....in conservation areas or listed buildings, where loss of original walls or railings and the creation of a hard surface would have an adverse effect on the character and setting of the area, or a listed building”

Materials

The earlier application 19/00459/FUL was for a tarmac surface. The current proposal is silent on the proposed materials for the hard-standing. The non-statutory Householder Guidance states (page 19): *“Materials must be of high quality and appropriate for the house and the area. The paving must be porous or combined with a soakaway with the site”*. If the application were to be approved, it should be a requirement that this guidance is applied.

Siting of charging points

The Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas guidance sets out (page 28) conditions for gas and electricity meter boxes and pipework. We consider that this guidance should apply to charging points for electric vehicles, including *“...boxes should not be fitted to the front or any conspicuous elevation of buildings.”* If the application were to be approved, the charging point should be fitted to a side elevation, not the front.

Other matters: On-street parking and electric charging points

Lauder Road is within Controlled Parking Zone S1 and has residents' parking bays and shared use bays. These are very thinly used and there is rarely any shortage of parking spaces on the street for vehicles that can fit within these parking bays. We contest the requirement for off-street parking in this application.

This application differs from the earlier 19/00459/FUL application in including an electric vehicle charging point. We maintain that this should make no difference to the assessment of this application. Our Association supports a city-wide approach to the provision of on-street vehicle charging points. However, we do not consider that a request for off-street charging should facilitate any change in the assessment of applications to convert soft landscaping and gardens into off-street parking bays.

We request that this application be refused.

Grange Association

31 May 2019