

**PLANNING PERMISSION: 99/00772/FUL,
36 HOCKLEY ROAD, RAYLEIGH,
CONDITION 8: RETENTION OF FRONT AND SIDE
HEDGES.**

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report relates to a condition attached to a permission granted in February of this year which required the retention of front and side hedges on a site, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The applicant has requested that consent to remove these hedges now be given. This has been considered by Officers but the conclusion remains that the hedges should be retained. The applicant has now approached Members on the matter and a Member has asked that a report be submitted to the committee for consideration. The Officers recommendation is that the front hedge should continue to be retained.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The principal of erecting a detached single storey property on this site was first established by OL/279/98/ROC. As part of the approval this application sought to retain the two hedges in addition to a tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order. It transpired that it would not be possible to develop on this site in the proposed manner without removing this tree.
- 2.2 In permitting the erection of the detached bungalow under 99/00772/FUL it was agreed to allow the removal of the protected tree. However, to compensate for the loss of the tree it was deemed appropriate to continue to retain the two existing hedges at the front and side, in addition to requesting a landscaping scheme for the site to be submitted before the commencement of development. This would show details of replacement planting to compensate for the loss of the TPO tree. At the time of writing no such scheme has been received.
- 2.3 In response to the applicant's request to give consent to remove the hedges, the Council's Woodlands and Environmental Specialist paid a further visit to the site. On examining the two hedges he advised that they are both healthy and viable, with no arboricultural reasons existing for their removal. In addition he advised that the front hedge plays an important role with reference to visual amenity, whilst the side hedge affords some privacy for both occupants of the new development and the sheltered housing scheme adjacent. He concluded that the loss of the side hedge would have less implications than the loss of the one at the front hedge.

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- 2.4 The applicant requests the removal of the hedges as the purchaser of the property is an elderly disabled person who would have great difficulty in personally attending to them and managing them. He also argues that alternative treatments, such as a wall, are less prone to anti social behaviour such as rubbish dumping and easier to keep in a clean and presentable manner.
- 2.5 If members are minded to agree to the hedges being removed it would appear appropriate to consider what alternative boundary treatments may be considered as appropriate. To date no details of alternative boundary treatment to the hedges have been received, although the applicant has indicated that a low wall and railings would be the proposed replacement.
- 2.6 Having considered the matter again, it is still felt that the frontage hedge does provide a valuable element in the appearance of the street scene at this point. Notwithstanding the arguments put forward by the applicant it is considered that, at the least, the frontage hedge should continue to be retained. Given the background, it is not considered that this is an unreasonable decision on this matter.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES** that the applicant be Informed that:

Having considered the request of the applicant to give consent for the removal of the hedges, required to be retained by virtue of condition 8 attached to Planning Permission 99/00772/FUL, it is the view of the Local Planning Authority that the frontage hedge should continue to be retained (in the interests of visual amenity) but that consent is hereby given for the removal of the side (southern boundary) laurel hedge. (AHPS)

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