
SUBJECT **DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION REPORTS** **ITEM 7**
REPORT OF Head of Planning & Building Control

APPLICATION NO. P07/E0052

APPLICATION TYPE FULL

REGISTERED 11.01.2007

PARISH THAME

WARD MEMBER(S) Mr David Dodds

 Mrs Ann Midwinter

APPLICANT James Stanley

SITE Thame One Stop Auto Centre, 54A East Street Thame

PROPOSAL Demolition of existing garage and associated buildings. Erection of 2 x 1 bedroom dwellings and 2 x 3 bedroom dwellings, off street parking and landscaping

AMENDMENTS As amended by drawing nos.349/2B, 349/3A and 349/4A accompanying letter from Agent dated 7 February 2007.

GRID REFERENCE 471097/205613

OFFICER Mrs A.M. Fettiplace

APPLICATION NO. P06/E1280/CA

APPLICATION TYPE CONSERVATION AREA

REGISTERED 11.01.2007

PARISH THAME

WARD MEMBER(S) Mr David Dodds

 Mrs Ann Midwinter

APPLICANT Mr James Stanley

SITE Thame One Stop Auto Centre, 54A East Street Thame

PROPOSAL Demolition of existing garage and ancillary building.

AMENDMENTS None

GRID REFERENCE 471097/205613

OFFICER

Mrs A.M. Fettiplace

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 These applications are referred to Planning Committee because the officer recommendation conflicts with the view of Thame Town Council.
- 1.2 The site, shown on the **attached** OS extract, extends to approximately 0.08 ha and lies between East Street and Park Street with access off East Street. The site currently accommodates a utilitarian industrial building together with a large shed that extend to some 240 sq metres, have a maximum roof height of 6.5 metres and provide the only covered premises for Thame One Stop Centre, a tyre and exhaust specialist business.
- 1.3 The site lies within the Thame Conservation Area and is surrounded by residential properties.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The applications seek firstly conservation area consent for the demolition of the existing garage and associated buildings and secondly full planning permission for the erection of two 1 bedroom dwellings and two 3 bedroom dwellings together with 7 off street parking spaces and landscaping.
- 2.2 The new dwellings would be erected using red brick for the external walls together with slate for the roofs. They would have a maximum roof height of some 8 metres, would have simple, traditional proportions and elevations and would incorporate cat slide roofs with rooflights to the rear elevations to prevent overlooking of neighbouring properties.
- 2.3 In support of the application, the agent has submitted a design and access statement together with an Environmental Impact Statement and copies of both of these documents are **attached** to the report.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 Thame Town Council - Objection – Access and egress: a mixture of vehicular and pedestrian traffic with a very narrow entrance, traffic generation, parking and safety.
- OCC (Highways) - No objection. Visibility at the existing access that serves the site meets the required standards used by the Local Highway Authority. The proposed four residential units will generate less movements than the site's current use i.e. garage, which will be a benefit to highway safety.

The proposed off-street parking levels meet the required standards; the proposed layout includes a turning facility which is essential. The access road/driveway surface requires improving/repairing as the surface is the access/crossway on East Street. It should be noted East Street has traffic restrictions improved (majority on opposite side from site).

- 1) That prior to the occupation of the proposed dwellings,

the existing means of access onto East Street shall be improved, laid out and constructed to the approval of the Highway Authority strictly in accordance with the highway authority's specifications and that all ancillary works specified shall be undertaken.

2) Before the development is first occupied, the parking and manoeuvring areas shall be provided in accordance with the plan (349/2) hereby approved and shall be constructed, laid out, surfaced (bound material), drained and completed, and shall be retained unobstructed except for the parking of vehicles at all times.

- Thames Water - Comments. There are public sewers crossing the site and no building works will be permitted within 3 metres of the sewers without Thames Water's approval.
- Environmental Health - No objection subject to a contamination condition.
- Conservation - In general terms the scale and proportions look appropriate. The design could be improved. (Original plans).
- No objection to amended plans.
- Forestry - No comments to date.
- Public Amenities - Refuse/recycling facilities will need to be provided.
- Neighbour letters (3) - The main comments are as follows:-
- i) Mature trees should be retained.
 - ii) Disruption and noise caused by buildings works.
 - iii) Possible overlooking.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 P72/M1136 Replacement of existing motor repair workshop with new building for same use.

Approved January 1973

P87/N0798 Use of land in conjunction with Thame One Stop Centre.
Approved December 1987.

5.0 RELEVANT POLICY GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016 Policies:-

G1 - Sustainable development

G2 - Design and scale

G6 - Energy efficiency

H1 - Housing

H3 - Housing density

5.2 Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan Policies:-

G2 - Protection of the environment

G5 - Best use of land and buildings within settlements

G6 - Design and scale

CON6 - Demolition of buildings in Conservation Areas

CON7 - New development in Conservation Areas

D1 - Good design

D2 - Parking

D3 - Private

D4 - Privacy

D6 - Crime reduction

D8 - Energy efficiency

D10 - Waste management

H4 - Development in the towns

H7 - Housing mix

H8 - Housing density

PPG1 - General Policy and Principles

PPG3 - Housing

6.0 PLANNING ISSUES

- 6.1 The main issues to consider in the determination of the planning application are as follows:-
- i) Whether the principle of residential development on what is currently an employment site is acceptable in terms of planning policy
 - ii) Whether the form and appearance of the proposal is acceptable and would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of Thame Conservation Area
 - iii) Whether the proposed density and housing mix is acceptable in policy terms
 - iv) Whether there is any objection to the proposal regarding access and parking
 - v) Whether the proposal would be unneighbourly
- 6.2 In respect of the application for Conservation Area consent, the only issue to consider is whether the loss of the building(s) would adversely affect the character of the area
- i) Whether the principle of residential development on what is currently an employment site is acceptable**
- 6.3 Policy E6 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan states that:
- “Proposals for the redevelopment or change of use of redundant land or buildings in employment or service trade use to non-employment uses will be permitted if:
- (i) the site is less than 0.25 ha and buildings under 500 sq.m. and in the towns of Didcot, Henley, Thame, or Wallingford; or
 - (ii) the existing use is no longer economically viable and the site has been marketed at a reasonable price for at least a year for that and any other suitable employment or service trade uses.”
- 6.4 The application site lies within the built up area of Thame and extends to some 0.08 ha with the existing buildings comprising some 240 sq metres. It therefore falls below the size identified in Policy E6 and the principle of the loss of the employment use is acceptable.
- ii) Whether the form and appearance of the proposal is acceptable and would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of Thame Conservation Area**
- 6.5 The proposed scheme comprises the erection of a pair of one bedroom dwellings and a pair of three bedroom dwellings with parking to the front. The scheme provides private garden areas which meet the Council’s standards and retains a substantial forecourt area for manoeuvring of vehicles.
- 6.6 At the request of your officers, amended plans have been submitted that largely address the comments made by the Council’s Conservation Officer in terms of the design and energy efficiency of the new dwellings (an environmental impact statement is **attached** to the report). The new dwellings have a simple, traditional appearance incorporating steeply pitched roofs, timber sliding sash windows and chimneys.

Officers consider that the form and appearance of the dwellings is broadly in line with the advice set out in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and furthermore that the demolition of the existing buildings on the site and the erection of the proposed dwellings would enhance the character and appearance of the Thame Conservation Area.

iii) Whether the proposed density and housing mix is acceptable in policy terms

- 6.7 Policy H7 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan requests that on all sites capable of accommodating 2 or more dwellings, 45% of the development provides small two bedroom units. In this case, 50% of the development are one bedroom units and 50% three bedroom units and officers consider that this housing mix is acceptable.
- 6.8 Policy H8 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan requires a net density of some 40 dph in town centre locations where such a density would be appropriate to the character of the area. The proposed scheme is slightly in excess of 40 dph and therefore accords with the relevant policy guidance.

iv) Whether there is any objection to the proposal regarding access and parking

- 6.9 Oxfordshire County Council as Highway Authority are not raising an objection to this application and their comments are set out in full in paragraph 3.1 of the report. In essence, the Highways Liaison Officer takes the view that the proposed 4 dwellings will be likely to generate less traffic than the existing commercial use and the proposal will therefore result in a benefit in terms of highway safety. In addition parking and turning provisions meet the County Council's standards. Conditions are suggested relating to improvements to the existing access and retention of parking spaces.

v) Whether the proposal would be unneighbourly

- 6.10 The proposed new dwellings all back onto existing residential gardens in Wykeham Park and Park Street at distances varying between 6.5 metres and 9.5 metres. In order to ensure that the new dwellings do not overlook existing dwellings and gardens to the rear the scheme proposes the use of first floor rooflights. In the case of the one bedroom dwellings, the two rooflights would serve bathrooms and therefore can be conditioned to be obscure glazed and so retained. In the case of the three bedroom units there are two proposed rooflights to serve each dwelling, one of which would serve a bathroom and can be conditioned to be obscure glazed. The proposed bedroom rooflight can be conditioned to ensure it is at least 1.8 metres above finished first floor level to ensure that any overlooking would be minimal. Having regard to the design of the new dwellings, officers do not consider the scheme to be unneighbourly.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The application proposes a modest development of small dwellings. Officers take the view that the removal of the existing commercial buildings will positively enhance the character and appearance of the Thame Conservation Area. Furthermore the proposed new dwellings accord with advice contained in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide, have acceptable garden areas, provide adequate parking spaces and are not unneighbourly. The applications are therefore recommended for approval.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 P06/E1280/CA

That Conservation Area Consent be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Conservation Area Consent – commencement 3 years**
- 2) Materials from demolition be removed from the site**

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That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Commencement 3 years**
- 2) Samples of all materials**
- 3) Windows, external doors and rainwater goods to specification**
- 4) Tree protection**
- 5) Landscaping scheme**
- 6) Improve existing access**
- 7) Parking and manoeuvring to be as shown on drawing 349/2**
- 8) Refuse/recycling facilities to be approved**
 - 9) Boundary treatments to be approved and any damage to neighbouring sheds etc to be made good**
- 10) No increase in level of access**
- 11) Exclude permitted development – all classes**
- 12) Contamination study to be approved**
- 13) First floor rear bathroom rooflights to be obscure glazed and so retained**

14) First floor rear bedroom rooflights to be 1.8 metres above finished floor level

Author Mrs A Fettiplace
Contact No. 01491 823734
Email Add. planning.east@southoxon.gov.uk