

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

APPLICATION NO. P07/W0237
APPLICATION TYPE FULL
REGISTERED 20.04.2007
PARISH DIDCOT
WARD MEMBER(S) Mr Lyndon Elias
 Ms Jane Murphy
APPLICANT Mr B MacCormick
SITE 73 Mereland Road Didcot
PROPOSAL Single storey extension to front and rear elevations and two storey side extension to form separate dwelling.
AMENDMENTS
GRID REFERENCE 452667/189258
OFFICER Mrs S Crawford

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application has been referred to the Committee because the recommendation conflicts with the views of the Town Council.

1.2 The site is currently a two storey, semi-detached dwelling in an established row of similar dwellings in the centre of Didcot. It is constructed in brick under a corrugated, concrete, roof tile. 73 is a wide plot with a single storey flat roofed outbuilding to the side that also links to 75 (technically the property is part of a terrace as it has a continual built up frontage and party walls with the properties to either side). The whole frontage of the site is laid to hardstanding for the parking of vehicles. The site has no special designation.

1.3 The site is identified on the Ordnance Survey Extract **attached** at Appendix 1.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 The application, as amended, seeks full planning permission for a two storey side extension to provide a two bedroom dwelling. A lounge, kitchen and W/C would be provided at ground floor with two bedrooms and a bathroom at first floor. A single storey extension to provide a new kitchen and extended lounge for 73 is also proposed with porches for both dwellings. The application also proposes breaking the existing single storey link to 75 by creating a 1m gap between the new dwelling and 75 Mereland Road. Reduced copies of the amended plans together with the design and access statement are **attached** at Appendix 2.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 OCC No comments to date
(Highways)
Town Refuse, out of keeping with street scene; lack of parking and for
Council manoeuvring in and out of access onto a narrow and busy road with a
 leisure centre and school in close proximity and limited off road
 parking.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 None.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 Adopted SOLP Policies

G2 – Protection of District’s resources, G6 – Quality of design and local distinctiveness, C1 – Landscape character, EP6 - Surface water drainage requirements, EP7 – Ground water resources, D1 – Principles of good design, D2 – Parking for vehicles and cycles, D3 – Provision of private amenity areas, D4 – Privacy for new dwellings, D8 – Conservation and efficient design, D9 – Renewable energy, D10 – Management of waste, H4 – New housing within larger villages, H7 – Mix of units, H8 - density, H9 – affordable housing, T1 – Transport requirements for new development

South Oxfordshire Design Guide

PPS1 – Delivering sustainable development

PPS3 – Housing

PPG13 – Transport

PPS22 – Renewable Energy

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main issues in this case are;

- Whether the principle of development is acceptable
- H4 Criteria
- Plot coverage, density and provision of gardens
- Mix of units
- Sustainable design issues

6.2 **Principle.** The site lies within the built up limits of Didcot where the principle of new housing is acceptable subject to the criteria set out in Policy H4. These criteria are considered in detail below.

6.3 **H4 criteria issues.**

- i. That an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost;

The site forms part of the garden for 73 Mereland Road, which is an established line of semi-detached properties. It is a wide plot but presents a brick wall across the full frontage of two storey house and single storey outbuilding and this prevents any views in to the site. As such the space to the side of the dwelling does not represent an open space.

- ii. Design, height and bulk in keeping with the surroundings;

The new dwelling has been designed to look like a two storey side extension to 73 and follows the Design Guide advice for such extensions. No 73 is already, technically, a terraced house because it has a built form across the full width of the site and shared party walls with both neighbouring properties. The proposal would sub-divide the existing link with 75 to provide a 1 metre gap for rear access but a terraced form would be continued as a new dwelling would be created. The amended plans have increased the set back of the new dwelling from the frontage and this has further helped to provide a subservient form of building with satisfactory detailing at the junctions between new and old.

- iii. Amenity, environmental or highway objections; and

Highway issues. The proposal would involve an increase in the use of the existing access as the number of dwellings on the site would increase from one to two. There are no turning facilities on the site and there would be some reversing movements onto the highway into or out of the site. Visibility in either direction is good and there are traffic calming measures in force along the road in the form of

speed humps.

Parking provision. The whole of the existing frontage is laid to hardstanding for the parking of vehicles and this proposal does not involve a change to the frontage. Whilst the Design Guide does not encourage a design dominated by the parked car a refusal of planning permission on these grounds alone would not be justified because the existing arrangement would not be changed in that respect.

Neighbour impact. Impact of dwelling on 75. Both 73 and 75 benefit from unusually wide plots such that a 1 metre gap to the boundary would be created to provide access to the rear of the new dwelling. Given the location of the outbuilding at the side and the siting of sheds and other outbuildings to the rear the proposed new dwelling would have a limited impact on 75. A new window in the side elevation is proposed but this would serve a bathroom. A condition is recommended to ensure that this window is obscure glazed. Due to the style of the window, which only has a top vent, even if the window were open there would not be any overlooking.

Impact of dwelling on 73. The proposed new dwelling would have a two storey rear wing that would project back some 4.5 metres from the existing rear wall of 73. However, the proposal also includes a single storey extension to the rear of 73 that would project out 3 metres, the rear wing on the new dwelling would only project out a further 1.5 metres and the impact on the ground floor accommodation would be acceptable. The impact on the first floor accommodation would be minimal as the nearest window to the boundary serves a bathroom and is obscure glazed.

Impact of extension to 73 on 71 Mereland Road. The single storey rear extension on 73 extends out some 3 metres from the rear of the building along the shared boundary with 71; this is within design guide recommendations and is acceptable.

iv. Backland development issues

Not applicable.

6.4 Plot Coverage, density and provision of gardens. Minimum standards for new residential development are recommended in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and in policies D3, H7 and H8 of the Local Plan.

- **Provision of garden areas.** The Design Guide seeks to provide a minimum of 100 square metres of garden for 3 bedroom dwellings and 50 square metres for 2 bedroom dwellings. In this case, the rear garden of 73 is very generous at some 300 square metres and can easily meet this provision. At present the proposal would provide a separate dwelling for a family member and a subdivided garden is not required. If however, the dwelling is sold off at

a later date a condition is recommended to ensure that the minimum provision, at least, is made for a garden, prior to the occupation of the new dwelling.

- **Plot coverage.** The Design Guide specifies a standard for plot coverage of 50% for terraced properties or 40% if the property is semi-detached. In this case the plot is some 462 square metres in size and the footprint of the buildings is 117 square metres and this equates to a plot coverage of approx 25% which is well below the standard but reflects the very generous size of the rear garden.
- **Density.** PPG3 seeks to ensure that proposals for housing are provided at a density of 40 dwellings or more per hectare (dph) within towns and this is reflected in Policy H8 of the local plan. In this case the density is approx 40 dph and complies with this policy.

6.5 Mix of units. Policy H7 of the adopted Local Plan 2011 requires an acceptable housing mix to ensure a steady provision of small two bedroom properties. On all sites that are capable of accommodating two or more dwellings, 45% of the development shall be two bedroom units unless this provision for small dwellings would adversely affect the character of the area. In this case, the proposal would retain the existing 3 bed dwelling and provide a new 2 bed dwelling and would meet the aims of this policy.

6.6 Sustainable design issues. Policy D8 of the adopted Local Plan seeks to encourage the use of sustainable materials and forms of buildings that incorporate design solutions to increase water and energy efficiency. The applicant's agent has made the following case for sustainable features. The site is close to the town centre and easily accessible by foot, bicycle or bus. The build carbon footprint as yet has not been fully calculated, but it can be said to improve the adjoining dwelling footprint by reducing the heat path through the new Jack wall. Water capturing systems will be considered, as will low energy sources for water and heating. The site is a brown field site and the type of housing stock being proposed for the purpose reduces the burden on this type of dwelling, which is in such short supply to the area. The new dwelling will also house an elderly family member and this reduces the burden on other services.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 Officers recommend that planning permission is granted because Didcot is a town that can accommodate growth and the site is large enough to provide adequate standards of parking and private amenity area. The new dwelling has been designed to look like a two storey side extension to this dwelling and is consequently in keeping with its character and scale and would not be unneighbourly. As such the proposal would accord with the Policies of the Development Plan and is acceptable.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Commencement 3 years**
- 2. Matching materials - walls and roof**
- 3. Provide parking and manoeuvring**
- 4. Garden provision**
- 5. Bathroom window in side elevation of new dwelling to be obscure glazed**

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