

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

APPLICATION NO. P07/W0532
APPLICATION TYPE FULL
REGISTERED 21.05.2007
PARISH DIDCOT
WARD MEMBER(S) Mr Colin Daukes
 Captain John Flood
APPLICANT Syrell Limited
SITE 1 Manor Crescent Didcot
PROPOSAL Erection of 10 dwellings (10 no. of 2 bed flats). Relocation of existing access.
AMENDMENTS
GRID REFERENCE 451688/189964
OFFICER Mrs K Gould (W)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application is before the Planning Committee because the officer recommendation conflicts with the views of the Didcot Town Council.
- 1.2 Planning permission was granted in January 2006 on appeal for the demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuilding and the erection of 8 no dwellings (2 no 2 bed houses and 6 no 2 bed flats) within 3 no 2 storey buildings and provision of 12 car parking spaces and landscaping (planning ref. P04/W0970). A copy of the decision notice is **attached**.
- 1.3 The site extends to some 0.128 hectares and lies to the west side of Manor Crescent. It is triangular in shape with a narrow frontage to Manor Road. The bungalow which previously occupied the site has been demolished and the site cleared. Along the northern boundary of the site lies no 3 Manor Crescent, a detached bungalow, to the west is land belonging to Didcot Girls School which is used for parking and to the south are commercial premises which front onto Wantage Road.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission to erect 10 dwellings consisting of 10 2 bed flats and to relocate the existing access. The proposed access remains in the same position as in the approved scheme P04/W0970. This represents an increase of an additional 2 units from the 2006 planning permission. The scale of development is similar to that previously approved on this site. The properties are two storeys in height with varying ridge heights between 7.8m to 8.0m. The proposed materials are brick, render and tiled roofs with brick lintels.
- 2.2 Cycle parking and bin storage have been included in the proposal. These two facilities were not provided in the originally approved scheme. Amenity space of some 270sqm is proposed together with a landscaping area to the front of the site to take the form of a wide hedge. A copy of the submitted plans, including an OS extract, together with the Design and Access Statement is **attached**.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 OCC (highways) – No Objection subject to the same conditions as specified by the Planning Inspectorate and Section 106 legal agreement contributions

Monson Engineering Ltd. – Details of the drainage for the proposed roof, road and parking areas should be approved prior to the commencement of development.

Environmental Health – No objection subject to conditions regarding contamination investigation.

Didcot Town Council – Refuse – Overdevelopment of site, impact on traffic. Full response from Didcot Town Council is **attached**.

Neighbour Objectors (3) – Manor Crescent is now main entrance to Didcot Girls School therefore increasing traffic – added to increase in parking spaces from 12 to 15, overdevelopment of the site, overlooking to no 5 Manor Crescent, 26 Wantage Road, insufficient parking on the site. Development out of keeping with the surrounding area, dangerous bend close to access, Bin and recycling enclosure would be better placed away from neighbours boundary fences.

Public Amenities - Further consideration of location of bin stores required.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 P04/W0970 – Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuilding – erection of 8 dwellings – refused. **Allowed on appeal.**

P02/W0780/O – Three starter homes in garden of 1 Manor Crescent – withdrawn prior to determination.

P81/W0475 – Porch extension – permission granted.

P80/W0312 – Erection of detached garage for storage – permission granted.

P65/R3278 – Proposed site for a dwelling – planning permission refused.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 Oxfordshire Structure Plan

G1 Sustainable development

G2 Scale and design

EN1 Environmental impact

EN4 Local Landscape character

H1 Main locations for housing

Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan

G2 Protection of the environment

- G5 Making the best use of land
- G6 Promoting good design
- D1 Good design and local distinctiveness
- D2 Vehicle and bicycle parking
- D3 Plot coverage and garden areas
- H4 Housing in towns and larger villages outside the Green Belt
- H7 Range of dwelling types and size
- H8 Dwelling densities
- R2 Formal recreation
- T1 Transport requirements for new developments
- T2 Transport requirements for new developments

South Oxfordshire Design Guide

PPS 3 - Housing

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Planning permission has been granted for 8 dwellings on this site and that permission remains extant. The principle of redeveloping this site for residential use has therefore been accepted. The main consideration of this current application for 10 dwellings is therefore whether the proposal accords with the criteria set out in Policy H4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan.

- i. Is the mix and density acceptable
 - ii. Whether the form of development proposed is acceptable in terms of its impact on the character and appearance of the area
- iii. Whether the proposal would be unneighbourly
- iv. Whether the proposals are acceptable in highway terms
- v. Contributions towards infrastructure

6.2 **Is the mix and density acceptable?**

Policy H7 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan seeks to secure a mix of dwelling types and sizes in new residential developments. The explanatory text states that the Council will seek to ensure that at least 45% of dwellings built for sale on the open market on sites suitable for 2 or more dwellings should be 2 bedroom dwellings unless it would adversely affect the character of the surrounding area.

6.3 The application proposes the erection of 10 no 2 bed flats. Although there is not a variety of house types, the proposal is addressing the shortfall of 2 bed accommodation within the District which is acknowledged in the Local Plan. As such the type of accommodation is acceptable.

6.4 Policy H8 of the SOLP seeks densities of 40 dwellings or more per hectare in the town centre locations unless such densities would have an adverse effect on the character of the area. The density proposed is 78 dwellings per hectare. Although this is above the indicative band of 30 -50 dwellings per hectare in PPS3, the guidance also encourages greater intensity of development in places with good public transport accessibility and more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the

environment. The site is well located in terms of public transport and accessibility to Didcot town centre and therefore capable of accommodating high density development. There is an extant permission for a development of 63 dwellings per hectare on this site. The increase of 2 units would not result in an unacceptably high density of development or harm to the surrounding development and accords with policy H8 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan.

The Inspector in allowing the appeal said “ While this may not be in the commercial centre of the town, I consider that it has the accessibility

6.5 characteristics of a town centre location, and that a density of 40 dph or more is justified in terms of emerging policy H8. I also consider it to be a location where PPG3 would encourage densities of more than 50dph “Paragraph 10 of appeal decision.

The Town Council has raised concerns regarding the overdevelopment of the site. 6.6 It also raised this objection with the original planning application. The South Oxfordshire Design Guide recommends that in the case of flats where individual private gardens is not appropriate, a communal garden area should be provided on the basis of 25sqm per unit. This development provides some 270sqm for the 10 units which exceed the guidance set out in the SODG. In addition, the layout of the site is very similar to that which was allowed on appeal. In you Officer’s opinion the proposal does not constitute overdevelopment of the site.

Impact on character and appearance of the area

6.7

The application site is part of a small area of single storey dwellings along Manor Crescent but is located directly behind 2 storey buildings fronting onto Wantage

Road. In allowing the appeal for 8 dwellings on the site the Inspector concluded that “ the existing small enclave of single storey buildings in this immediate locality is not typical of the primarily 2 storey development in the wider area and I see no objection to 2-storey development on the site”

- 6.8 The approved scheme consisted of 3 separate blocks of accommodation on the site. The current proposal mirrors this pattern of development. The layout of the two schemes can be seen **attached**. Although there are minor differences between the 2 schemes in terms of fenestration details and differences in siting of the blocks within the site, these do not constitute major changes sufficient to warrant a refusal of planning permission.

Whether the proposal would be unneighbourly.

- 6.9 In terms of privacy, the scheme has been designed so that first floor windows face away from adjoining properties or their private garden areas. Flats do not have the benefit of permitted development rights and therefore a condition which requires no additional windows to be inserted without planning permission being obtained is not necessary in this particular case. As such the proposed development would not be unneighbourly. Unit 9 of the proposed scheme would be 0.8m closer to no 3 Manor Road than units 7 and 8 of the approved scheme. A gap of 1.7m would be retained to the boundary between these 2 properties and a distance of 3.1m would be retained between the rear elevation of unit 9 and the side elevation of no 3 Manor Road. As such the proposed development would not be oppressive to the occupiers of this property and the material change in circumstances between the extant permission and the proposed development is not sufficiently harmful to warrant a refusal of planning permission.

Highways

- 6.10 Notwithstanding that no objection was raised by OCC (highways) on the previous planning application, permission was refused because “the proposal would generate additional turning movements to and from Manor Crescent, close to a junction on a road which is used as a rat run by through traffic and which becomes congested at school picking up and dropping off times. This would cause hazard to drivers and pedestrians and impeding the flow of traffic to the detriment of users of the highway”.
- 6.11 In allowing the appeal , the inspector stated that “ I have seen at my visits to the site that the morning and afternoon school starting and finishing times do result in a great deal of activity in that part of Manor Crescent to the north of the site. However, that period of intense activity is quite short and I am not sure that any additional traffic movements from this proposal would particularly add to or alter this existing situation”.
- 6.12 The Highway Authority has no objection in respect of road safety, and I have seen nothing to persuade me against this view.” In addition, the appellant was awarded costs against the Local Planning Authority for refusing the application on highway grounds when no objection was raised by the Highway Authority and no highway evidence was produced for the appeal.

6.13 With regards to this current application, the Highway Authority has again raised no objection. A copy of their views is **attached**. An additional 2 units of accommodation would not result in a materially different traffic generation to warrant a refusal of planning permission. The Town Council have suggested that since the appeal was determined, there has been a material change in circumstances regarding the flow of traffic in Manor Road since the sole entrance/ exit to Didcot Girls School is via Manor Road. This has been taken into account by the Highway Authority in assessing the current application and no objection to the proposal is being raised on highway grounds.

Infrastructure

6.14

A section 106 legal agreement to secure contributions of £20,300 towards infrastructure improvements is being sought from the County Council. In addition a contribution of £5,000 towards play equipment at Edmonds Parks is being sought from the District Council .Your Officers will verbally update you with the progress of these agreements at the Planning Committee meeting.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The principle of redeveloping this site for residential use was agreed by the granting of planning application P04/W0970 which remains extant. The increase of units by 2 is not considered by your Officers to have such a material impact on the neighbouring properties, the highway network or the locality generally to warrant a refusal of planning permission.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 That planning permission be granted subject to the completion of a Section 106 agreement to secure contributions for infrastructure improvements and the following conditions:

1. Commencement 3 years

2. Sample materials to be submitted

3. Details of hard and soft landscaping works to be submitted

4. Landscaping to be carried out in accordance with the approved details

5. Details of surface water drainage to be submitted

6. Parking provision to be as shown on drawing reference 070201

7. Details of access to be submitted

8. Prior to the first use of the new access, the existing access shall be closed and the verge, kerbline and footway reinstated

9. An investigation for contamination to be carried out

10. If contamination is found, further works to be carried out before any development takes place.

11. Provision of bin store to be agreed prior to occupation.

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