

## REPORT 2

**APPLICATION NO.** P07/E0530  
**APPLICATION TYPE** FULL  
**REGISTERED** 11 June 2007  
**PARISH** SONNING COMMON

**WARD MEMBER(S)** Paul Harrison and Alan Rooke  
**APPLICANT** Mr & Mrs Dunne  
**SITE** Burwood Farm, Kennylands Road, Sonning Common  
**PROPOSAL** Demolition of bungalow and erection of replacement two storey dwelling  
**AMENDMENTS** None

**GRID REFERENCE** 471189/179132

**OFFICER** Paul Lucas

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application is reported to the Planning Committee as a result of a conflict between the Planning Manager's recommendation and the views of Sonning Common Parish Council.

The application site is shown on the OS extract attached as **Appendix 1**.

1.2 Burwood Farm is a 2-3 bedroom detached bungalow with a floor area of 108 square metres, situated at the south-western edge of Sonning Common. It sits on a spacious plot of approximately 2.5 hectares located some 100 metres behind an established row of frontage properties on Kennylands Road. The north-eastern site boundary adjoins the rear gardens of these two storey houses, the remaining site boundaries are with open countryside. Access to the site is provided by an existing driveway from Kennylands Road located between No's 108 and 110 Kennylands Road. This driveway is also part of Sonning Common Footpath 14, which continues along the northern boundary of the site. The site contains some outhouses in the north-eastern corner and contains a number of trees, including a copse in the eastern most part of the site and a line of mature and semi-mature trees.

### 2.0 THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing bungalow and its replacement with a two storey 4-bedroom house in broadly the

same position, but reoriented to provide better views of the countryside. The area of the house would be 230 square metres. The volume of the dwelling would be increased by 120% from 420 cubic metres to 925 cubic metres. The main two storey part of the house would be sunk approximately 1 metre below the ground level of the eastern end of the house. The house would be T-shaped, 15 metres in depth and width. It would be 7.8 metres to the ridge height when measured from the rear and 6.5 metres to the ridge height when measured from the front. The house would be constructed from brick and flint walls up to lower window cills with shiplap cedarwood panelling up to the eaves of a pitched plain clay tiled roof. It would have two chimney stacks. The property would continue to use the existing driveway, with it being extended closer to the house to provide additional parking and turning areas.

## 2.2

The applicant's supporting letter is attached as **Appendix 2**. The plans of the proposed development are attached as **Appendix 3**.

## 3.0 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 **Sonning Common Parish Council** – The application should be approved.

**OCC Highways** – No objection.

## 3.2

**Forestry Officer** – Insufficient details have been submitted to demonstrate that

3.3 trees in and around the site and access would not be harmed by the proposed development.

3.4 **Public Amenities** – A condition requiring refuse, recycling and composting provision is required.

3.5 **OCC Footpaths Officer** – Informatives required on any permission in relation to obstruction or damage to public footpath during the proposed development.

3.6 **Building Control Surveyor** – Elements of the proposal fail to comply with Parts B, L, M and a site investigation report for contamination and subsoil conditions/foundation design should be provided.

3.7 **Neighbours** – One letter from an owner of the access – Certificate B served. No planning issues raised.

## 4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 P03/E0340 & P04/E0726 – Planning applications for a new access to the site across the open countryside to the south were refused planning permission in 2003 and 2004 respectively. The second refusal was upheld at appeal in 2005.

Two applications for the erection of one and two bungalows on the site were  
4.2 refused planning permission and appeals dismissed in the mid 1970's.

## 5.0 POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Adopted Structure Plan 2016 Policies:

- G1 – General Policies for Development
- G2 – Improving the Quality and Design of Development
- G3 – Infrastructure and Service Provision
- T8 – Development Proposals
- EN1 – Landscape Character
- H1 – The Amount and Distribution of Housing
- H3 – Design, Quality and Density of Housing Development

5.2 Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 Policies:

- G2 – Protection of the Environment
- G4 – Development in the Countryside and on the Edge of Settlements
- G6 – Promoting Good Design
- C1 – Landscape Character
- C4 – The Landscape Setting of Settlements
- C9 – Landscape Features
- D1 – Good Design and Local Distinctiveness
- D2 – Vehicle and Bicycle Parking
- D3 – Plot Coverage and Garden Areas
- D4 – Privacy and Daylight
- D8 – Energy, Water and Materials Efficient Design
- D10 – Waste Management
- H12 – Replacement Dwellings
- T1 – Transport Requirements for New Developments

5.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance:

- South Oxfordshire Design Guide – Sections 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5.
- South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment – Character Area 10.

5.4 Government Guidance: PPS1, PPS3 and PPS7.

## 6.0 PLANNING ISSUES

6.1 The site is considered to lie outside the built-up limits of the large village of Sonning Common, as it is located behind a sporadic ribbon of frontage development and is bordered on three sides by open countryside. In a recent appeal decision, an Inspector found that the Abbeycrest Nursing Home site, on the opposite side of Kennylands Road was outside the built-up area of Sonning Common. In the light of this, it is appropriate to consider the application against Policy H12 of the adopted Local Plan and the planning issues that are relevant to

this application are whether:

- The use has been abandoned;
- The existing dwelling is not listed, or of historic, visual or architectural interest;
- The proposed dwelling is not materially greater in volume than the existing dwelling (taking account of permitted development rights);
- The overall impact would not be any greater than the existing dwelling on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area;
- The siting, design and materials are in keeping with the locality;
- The living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers would be compromised and the development would provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers; and
- The development would not result in an unacceptable deficiency of off-street parking spaces for the resultant dwelling or other conditions prejudicial to highway safety;
- The trees on the site would be adequately protected; and
- The proposal would incorporate sufficient sustainable development measures.

#### Abandonment

6.2

The property is still in use as a dwelling and criterion (i) of Policy H12 is therefore met.

#### Historic Value

6.3

The bungalow is not listed and is of no particular architectural merit as such criterion (ii) would be complied with.

#### Volume

6.4

Criterion (iii) of Policy H12 specifies a limit of 10% for increases in volume for replacement dwellings. The applicant states that the volume of the existing bungalow is 420 cubic metres and that the proposed house would have a volume of 925 cubic metres. This would equate to a 120% increase in volume. The 10% limit would clearly be exceeded. Consequently the proposal would fail to comply with the above criterion and there is no overriding reason why a larger increase should be acceptable in this particular instance.

#### Character and Appearance + Design

6.5

Criteria (iv) and (v) of Policy H12 are concerned with the impact of a replacement dwelling on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and that the design would be appropriate. The size of the proposed house would be significantly larger than the existing bungalow in terms of depth, width and height, with the ridge being some 2.6 metres higher. Whilst the bungalow is not a dwelling that fits in with the local vernacular, it is low key and well screened by the existing foliage. The proposed dwelling would be much more prominent and its additional height and bulk would make it more visible, particularly in views from the public footpath across the open countryside to the north and west. Whilst the existing trees would provide some screening, the proposed dwelling would be significantly

more prominent in the winter months. The increased prominence would be exacerbated by the complex roof form of the proposal. It incorporates several roof slopes and dormers and two large chimneys, whereas the existing bungalow has a simple ridge. Although the applicant points out that many of the frontage dwellings are large two storey structures, these are some 100 metres from the application site and the proposed dwelling would be much closer to the open countryside. In light of this assessment, the proposed dwelling would fail to comply with the above criteria.

#### Living Conditions

6.6

In spite of the significant increase in size, the proposed development would not lie closer to the dwellings to the north than the existing bungalow. Any first floor windows facing these properties would be some 60 metres from the closest boundaries and this would prevent any direct overlooking. The use of the access would not be materially increased. Consequently, there would be no loss of light, outlook or privacy to nearby dwellings in compliance with criterion (vi).

#### Highways

6.7

Although the access arrangements are not ideal, the level of use would remain as existing. The site is capable of accommodating at least 4 vehicles off-street to meet parking standards and a new turning area is proposed to avoid excessive vehicle movements. The Highways Authority has raised no objection to the proposal. The development would therefore not give rise to conditions prejudicial to highway safety in compliance with criterion (vii).

#### Trees

6.8

Policy C9 of the adopted Local Plan seeks to ensure that landscape features are protected from development. The Council's Forestry Officer is concerned about the removal of some trees, protection of trees on site before, during and after construction works, compaction of ground that may be used for planting as part of landscaping works and damage to low branches of neighbouring trees and along the access drive and oak at entrance to site at end of access drive from construction vehicles. The application does not contain sufficient detail in order to fully determine the implications for these trees (a tree survey, tree constraints plan and arboricultural method statement [including details of tree planting, removal and pruning] and a tree protection plan – in accordance with BS: 5837-2005). This lack of information is contrary to the requirements of Policy C9.

#### Sustainability Measures

6.9

Policy D8 of the adopted Local Plan requires proposals to incorporate sustainability measures in terms of energy, water and materials efficient design. The proposal would involve a low energy building with sustainable carbon emissions, assisted by the south-facing aspect of windows serving the principal habitable rooms. The choice of cedarwood panelling is a sustainable external wall finish and space is set aside for horses and bicycles to encourage alternative forms of transport. Although no recycling or composting facilities are shown, there would be sufficient room for these to be provided via a planning condition. Considering a dwelling already exists on the site, the proposal would be broadly in compliance with Policy D8.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The application proposal would fail to accord with the Council's volume requirements for replacement dwellings and it would be of greater prominence in views from the surrounding countryside. There is insufficient information accompanying the application to ensure that existing trees would be protected by the development. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the Development Plan and advice set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance and Government Guidance.

## 8.0 RECOMMENDATION

### 8.1 Refuse Planning Permission

- 1. The proposed replacement dwelling would be significantly greater in size than the existing dwelling and appear more prominent in views from the surrounding countryside having an excessively bulky appearance and a complicated roof form. It would therefore be contrary to criteria (iii), (iv) and (v) of Policy H12 and Policies G2, G4, C1 and C4 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 and advice set out in Section 4.4 of the South Oxfordshire Design Guide.**
- 2. That the application contains insufficient information to enable the Council to ascertain whether the proposal would result in unacceptable harm to the numerous trees on the site that are considered to contribute to the visual amenities of this part of the open countryside. The proposal would therefore be contrary to adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 Policies G2 and C9.**

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