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**SUBJECT**            **DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION REPORTS**            **ITEM 8**  
**REPORT OF**        Head of Planning & Building Control

**APPLICATION NO.**            P07/E1093  
**APPLICATION TYPE**        FULL  
**REGISTERED PARISH**        28 AUGUST 2007  
     WOODCOTE  
**WARD MEMBER(S)**            Robin Pierce  
**APPLICANT**                    Mr C Thompson  
**SITE**                                Mallorns, South Stoke Road, Woodcote  
**PROPOSAL**                    Erection of detached two-storey 4-bedroom dwelling and detached double garage to side of existing house  
**AMENDMENTS**                Alterations to garage and surfacing, inclusion of level access, refuse and recycling storage and provision of street scene drawing  
**GRID REFERENCE**            464106/182236  
**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 Woodcote Parish Council.
- 1.2 The application site is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix 1. Mallorns is a two storey detached house situated at the western edge of Woodcote, in a substantial plot. Mallorns is an attractive dwelling set back from the road with most of the garden to the rear and western side of the house. The main materials are painted brick with double roman concrete interlocking tiles on the roof and white window frames. The house is served by an access onto South Stoke Road with an existing gravel driveway leading to a hardstanding in front of the house. The site contains significant mature trees and shrubs, particularly along the eastern and southern boundaries, which help to screen the existing property in public views.

The land also slopes slightly downwards from east to west. Although a number of trees have been recently removed from the front garden, these were not protected by any special designation. The site is bordered to the west by open countryside and Woodcote Footpath No.8 runs along the field side of this boundary. The northern side of the boundary is formed by South Stoke Road and the southern and eastern boundaries are with existing residential plots. There are buildings opposite and these continue in both directions along the northern side of South Stoke Road. There is a range of building styles typical of several eras and using a variety of materials, both along the road and in the surrounding area generally. A modern development to the east of the site, at Dean Wood Close, contains several detached garages set forward of the host dwellings. The site lies in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which washes over Woodcote as a whole.

## 2.0

### **THE PROPOSAL**

#### 2.1

The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a two-storey four-bedroom detached dwelling and a detached double garage. The dwelling would be located to the east of the existing, being positioned some 20 metres back from the road. The main front wall would be roughly level with the front of Mallorns, with a part gable, part catslide element projecting 3.5 metres further forward. There would be a gap of approximately 6 metres between the two dwellings and the new dwelling would be in the region of 3.5 to 4 metres away from the western boundary. The dwelling would measure 13.7 metres wide and the two storey element would be a maximum of 9.6 metres deep. There would be a pitched roof single storey element at the rear that would project out a further 4.3 metres from the part of the rear elevation closest to Mallorns. The main roof would be hipped with a ridge running from east to west at a height of 7.8 metres and the two storey gable would be 6.7 metres to the ridge. The eaves would be at a height of 4.9 metres. There would be a dormer on the front catslide roof and a chimney on the western elevation. The materials would comprise red clay plain tiles, red multi-stock brick, timber white painted window frames, orange /red rubber brick for quoins and window features, flint panels to front gable, black downpipes and gutters and ebony stained eaves, fascia and barge boards.

#### 2.2

The detached garage would be positioned in front of the house, at a distance of 13 metres from the road, using the existing access and a continuation of the existing driveway with a resin bonded surfacing. The garage would measure 5.4 metres wide and 5.4 metres deep and 5.1 metres high. The double garage doors would be positioned on the eastern elevation and would be side hung. It would have a simple pitched roof, with gables on northern and southern elevations. There would be two dormer windows in the western roof slope, a window in the northern elevation and an external staircase on the southern elevation allowing access to a workshop area above the parking spaces. It would be constructed from

timber cladding and natural oak with plain clay roof tiles.

2.3

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 **Woodcote Parish Council** – Comments on original plans: The application should be refused due to ridge height of the proposed building being higher than Mallorns. The size of the property is excessive and dominates Mallorns, which is one of the nicer houses on the street. The garage is also thought to be too big. In 1995, the Inspector turned down a previous appeal to build this property due to the increased danger of the access. The property cannot accommodate sufficient car space and needs to be further back away from the road to avoid parking in a rather narrow lane. A site visit is recommended. Any comments on amended plans will be verbally reported to the Planning Committee.

3.2 **OCC Highways** – The hedge bordering the highway could be cut back by around 300mm and this would enable visibility splays of 2m x 60 metres to be achieved, which would meet current standards. Parking arrangements for both existing and proposed dwellings would be acceptable. No objection subject to standard conditions.

3.3 **Forestry Officer** – Comments on original plans: the garage should be repositioned to give a minimum of 2 metres clearance from the western boundary hedge. Standard tree protection condition required to safeguard retained trees and hedging. Any comments on amended plans will be verbally reported to the Planning Committee.

3.4

**Public Amenities** – Comments on original plans: refuse, recycling and composting should be shown on the plans. (This has been incorporated on the amended plans).

3.5

**Building Control** – Level access and platform at entrance not shown and external surface, setting down space and route to entrance to be firm surfaced and not gravel (This has been incorporated on the amended plans).

3.6

**OCC Footpaths** – Standard informative required to prevent obstruction to footpath during construction.

### 3.7

**Neighbours** – One representation of objection to the original plans from a nearby resident raising the following points:

- Change in visual aspect from Austwick House
- Height of new house greater than existing house, potentially obscuring sunlight from Austwick House
- Overlooking and loss of privacy to Austwick House
- Garage out of character with housing along South Stoke Road including staircase on front elevation (amended plans have repositioned this to the rear)
- Increase in buildings and traffic would change environment
- No need for additional 4-bedroom housing in the village
- Extension of development beyond the built-up limits of the settlement
- Development should be restricted in the AONB

## 4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 P94/S0608 – Planning permission was refused in March 1995 for the erection of new dwellinghouse and double garage and alteration and extension to existing house for the following reason:

*“That the proposal would result in the intensification of use of a substandard access lacking adequate visibility. Inadequate land is available within the application site, the highway or any other land owned or controlled by the applicant to provide adequate visibility to the west from this access point. As such, the development would be detrimental to the safety and convenience of users of the highway. Relocation of the access to the east would result in the loss of mature trees to the detriment of the visual amenity of the locality.”*

### 4.2

This decision was challenged at appeal, where the Inspector found that the proposed dwelling would be located within the built-up limits of Woodcote and would not harm the immediate surroundings or the Chilterns AONB. However, it was found that the proposed access arrangements were substandard for the proposed house, when assessed against the prevailing standards at that time. The appeal was dismissed in September 1995. A copy of the appeal decision is **attached** as Appendix 4.

### 4.3

P04/E0033 – Planning permission was granted at appeal in January 2005 for an infill dwelling at Hedges, on the opposite side of the road to the west of the application site, with the Inspector concluding that the site was within the built up area of Woodcote. A revised dwelling was granted planning permission (P06/E1361) by the Planning Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2007.

### 4.4

P07/E1094 – A planning application for a detached garage in the front garden of Mallorns was submitted concurrently with this application. This falls outside the 'Minor' category and as such can be dealt with under delegated powers. At the time of writing this application is awaiting determination.

## **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
- 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
- C2 – Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- 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
- D7 – Access for All
- D8 – Energy, Water and Materials Efficient Design
- D10 – Waste Management
- H4 – Towns and Larger Villages Outside the Green Belt
- H7 – Housing Mix
- T1 – Transport Requirements for New Developments
- T2 – Transport Requirements for New Developments

### **5.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance:**

- South Oxfordshire Design Guide – Sections 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5.

- Chilterns Building Design Guide – Chapter 3.
- South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment – Character Area 8.

#### 5.4 Government Guidance:

- PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPS3 – Housing
- PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
- PPG13 – Transport

### 6.0 PLANNING ISSUES

6.1 In the light of both appeal decisions at this site and more recently at Hedges, where both sites were found to be located within the built up area of Woodcote, the principle of residential development on this site is accepted and it is appropriate to consider the application against Policy H4. The planning issues that are relevant to this application are whether:

- The development would not result in the loss of an open space or view of public, environmental or ecological value;
- The size and appearance of the proposal would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area;
- The living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers would be compromised and the development would provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers;
- The development would result in an unacceptable deficiency of off-street parking spaces for the resultant dwelling or other conditions prejudicial to highway safety;
- The proposal would incorporate sufficient sustainability measures; and
- There would be any other material planning considerations.

#### 6.2

##### Loss of Open Space

Criterion (i) of Policy H4 of the adopted SOLP 2011 requires that an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost, nor an important public view spoilt. The site is already occupied by a dwelling and although the proposed dwelling would be larger and the garage would constitute a third building on the site, the site is reasonably well screened and has no special public, environmental or ecological value. This criterion would therefore be

6.3 satisfied.

## Character and Appearance

Criteria (ii) and (iii) of Policy H4 of the adopted SOLP 2011 seeks to ensure that the design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development is in keeping with its surroundings and that the character of the area is not adversely affected. The proposed house would be a substantial building, but this would be in keeping with the scale and proportions of Mallorns and would be located at a similar distance from the road. The street scene elevation shows that the proposed dwelling would be only 0.4 metre higher than Mallorns and it would be almost 1 metre narrower in width. The additional height would be borne out of a desire to use plain clay tiles, which require a steeper roof pitch than concrete tiles, the former being more appropriate to the local vernacular. The size of the plot is large in comparison with surrounding plots and the spacing between the two dwellings would enable them to both sit comfortably on their resultant plots. The design of the dwelling was formulated having regard to the nearby buildings and traditional materials would be used. Given that the surroundings are very mixed in character,

6.4 the design of the proposed house would be acceptable. The level of existing mature tree and hedge planting, which could be retained via a planning condition and supplemented with a landscaping condition, would provide some screening of the new dwelling in views along South Stoke Road and from the public footpath and would help to assimilate it into its surroundings. In wider public views, it would be visible against the backdrop of existing dwellings to the north, south and east.

Section 4.3 of the SODG advises that normally, the erection of garages in front of dwellings would be resisted. However, in this locality there are already several other examples of forward garages of similar size and appearance. The proposed garage would be relatively simple and the workshop element would be served by two small dormers that would appear as minor incidents in the roof slope. The external staircase has been relocated on the amended plans to be on the side facing the proposed dwelling. It would be constructed from traditional materials and would incorporate side hung timber doors. The garage would still be set back

6.5 some distance from the main road, indeed further back than many of the dwellings along South Stoke Road. As such, it would benefit from the existing and proposed natural screening as mentioned above, especially due to its lower ridge height than the main house and would be sufficiently discreet. In most public views, it would be visible against the backdrop of the proposed dwelling. The changes to the driveway would have limited visual impact.

6.6

The proposed dwelling would not be unduly prominent in the street scene and would be in keeping with the wider character of the surroundings, preserving the natural beauty and landscape quality of the Chilterns AONB. In light of this

assessment, it would broadly comply with the above criteria.

### Living Conditions

6.7 Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the adopted SOLP 2011 explains that there should be no overriding amenity objections. The proposed house would be broadly in line with the rear elevation of Mallorns and due to the spacing between the two dwellings and the orientation, the single storey projection to the rear would not materially impact upon the light, outlook or privacy currently enjoyed by the occupiers of Mallorns. The proposed house would be some 30 metres from the dwellings to the rear of the site and over 50 metres from the nearest dwellings on the opposite side of the road. As such, the living conditions of other nearby occupiers would not be affected. The proposed room sizes, internal layout and amount of outdoor amenity space (for both the proposed house and Mallorns) would all comply with the standards set out in the SODG. On the basis of this assessment, the impact on the residential amenity of adjoining residents and future occupiers would not be compromised in conformity with the above criterion.

### Highways and Parking

6.8 Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the adopted SOLP 2011 requires that there are no overriding highway objections. The proposal would make use of the existing access arrangements via the extension of the driveway. The current vision splays for the access are substandard being only 2 metres x 20 metres. The applicant has relied on the recent government publication "Manual for Streets" in this submission, but it is the Highway Authority's opinion that this is not applicable to South Stoke Road, which is a classified unnumbered road. From measurements on site, vision to the west and east of the access is currently obstructed by the site's front boundary hedge-line. To achieve the required visibility splay to the west, the hedge-line must be cut back so that the highway verge is 2.2 metres (measured from the back-edge of the carriageway) in width along the site's frontage. This cutting back would provide a vision splay of 2 metres x 60 metres, which is acceptable and would overcome the highway safety concerns previously sustained at appeal. To further improve vision, it would be possible to trim back the hedge-line overhanging onto the public highway on the corner of South Stoke Road (and this has already been agreed with the Highway Authority). Vision to the east would be acceptable with the trimming back of the hedge-line of around 300mm. Consequently, the Highways Authority have raised no objections to the proposal subject to conditions requiring access works, visibility splays and parking and manoeuvring areas to be provided prior to occupation of the dwelling and retention of garages for parking. The proposal would accord with adopted



standards and satisfy the above criterion.  
6.9

### Sustainability Measures

Policy D8 of the adopted SOLP 2011 requires proposals to incorporate sustainability measures in terms of energy, water and materials efficient design. The application refers to sustainable design in that measures from the Code for Sustainable Homes would be incorporated. The applicant has been asked to provide some information on this matter, which will be verbally reported to the Planning Committee. Recycling and composting facilities have also been shown and this can also form the basis of a planning condition to ensure implementation in accordance with Policy D10, thus making a contribution to the objectives of Policy D8.

### Other Material Considerations

Policy H7 of SOLP 2011, relating to housing mix is only relevant to residential development proposals where there is a net gain of 2 or more dwellings. As such, Policy H7 is not relevant to this particular application.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

7.1 The application proposal would comply with the relevant Development Plan policies and it is considered that, subject to the attached conditions, the proposed development would not materially harm the character and appearance of the area, the living conditions of nearby residents or result in conditions prejudicial to highway and pedestrian safety.

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATION**

### **8.1 Grant Planning Permission**

**Subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. Standard 3 Year Time Limit**
- 2. Samples of Materials**
- 3. Details of Hard and Soft Landscaping and Tree Protection Prior to Commencement**
- 4. Details of Vision Splays Prior to Commencement**
- 5. Access alterations and Parking and Manoeuvring Prior to Occupation**
- 6. Retention of Garaging for Parking of Vehicles**
- 7. Removal of PD Rights for Extensions, Openings in the First Floor,**

**Rooflights and Porches**  
**8. Refuse and Recycling Storage and Composter implemented Prior to Occupation**

Author : Paul Lucas

Contact no : 01491 823434

Email : [Planning.east@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:Planning.east@southoxon.gov.uk)