
APPLICATION NO.	P08/E0538
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL
REGISTERED	30.04.2008
PARISH	WOODCOTE
WARD MEMBER(S)	Mr Robin Peirce
APPLICANT	Mr & Mrs Gurney
SITE	31 Wayside Green Woodcote
PROPOSAL	Single storey rear conservatory extension.
AMENDMENTS	As clarified by drawing number 31WS.SP01 accompanying letter from applicant dated 5th June 2008
GRID REFERENCE	464072182130
OFFICER	Mr P.Brampton (E)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application has been referred to the Planning Committee, as the owner of a neighbouring property, Robin Peirce is both a Ward Member and a Member of the Planning Committee.
- 1.2 Wayside Green forms part of a large 1970s housing estate on the northwestern outskirts of Woodcote. The area is characterised by a variety of dwelling types set well back from the road in long narrow plots. No.31 is a brick built detached property. Like many of the properties in Wayside Green, it has an area of hardstanding to the front, which serves an integral garage, and the main garden area is located at the rear.
- 1.3 The house has been previously extended at the rear by means of a two-storey extension. A single storey element links the property to No.33 Wayside Green. The site of the application is identified on the Ordnance Survey extract **attached** at Appendix 1.
- 1.4 Wayside Green falls within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a rear conservatory to the property. This will be a typical UPVC framed, brick and glazed structure built alongside the existing rear extension. The dimensions of the proposal measure approximately 3.8 metres wide by 7.2 metres deep, reaching a height of 3.25 metres at the ridge of the pitched roof. The conservatory will project 1.95 metres beyond the rear building line of the extension, with access to the garden being maintained by French doors in the south facing side elevation.
- 2.2 An amended block plan has been submitted as additional information in support of the application. This is in part a response to some of the representations made during the processing of the application and shows the relationship between the proposed conservatory and the adjoining property, No.33 Wayside Green.
- 2.3 A copy of the submitted plans and the supporting statement from the applicant is **attached** at Appendix 2.

3.0 **CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **Woodcote Parish Council** – Recommend refusal – Areas of concern are light pollution to the neighbouring property, proximity to a shared boundary and the overbearing and bulky nature of the structure.

Forestry – No objections to the removal of the trees identified on the submitted plans.

Neighbouring Representations – One letter of objection received from owner of No.33 Wayside Green. Areas of concern are:

- Proximity to shared boundary will make maintenance of conservatory difficult
- Conservatory would reduce daylight to a side obscure glazed window
- The glazed roof nature of the conservatory will also cause significant light pollution to ground and first floor windows at the rear of the property
- Concerns over increased noise
- Overlooking would be possible from eye-level glazing in side elevation
- The conservatory will affect the privacy and enjoyment of the rear garden by projecting 2 metres beyond existing rear building line
- Whilst the two trees to be removed currently do give rise to significant overshadowing, their removal will result in a further loss of privacy
- The conservatory is a significant and bulky proposal that would represent an overdevelopment of the site

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 P83/S0488 – Alteration and extension to provide bedroom and dressing area to No.31. Porches to Nos. 31 and 33 – Approved November 1983.

P73/H0449 – Proposed extension to form dining/living room – Letter confirming extension was permitted development sent May 1973.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan – Policies G2, G6, C2, C9, D1, D4 and H13

South Oxfordshire Design Guide (SODG) 2000 – Section 4.6

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main issues in this application are:

Whether the scale and design of the proposal is in keeping with the character of the dwelling and the site.

The impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties.

Whether the scale and design of the proposal is in keeping with the character of the surrounding Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The impact of the proposed removal of a nearby tree.

Design Issues

6.2 Criterion (ii) of Policy H13 states that extensions to dwellings will be permitted providing the scale and design of the proposal is in keeping with the character of the dwelling and the site. In addition, Criterion (v) states that adequate parking and amenity space should be provided for the extended dwelling.

- 6.3 The proposed conservatory is quite a large structure that will sit alongside and project beyond the existing two-storey rear extension and will provide over 21 square metres of additional floorspace. However, at 3.25 metres high, the conservatory will appear as a single storey subservient structure. The property itself is typical of its era and has already been heavily extended from its original form. Officers do not consider that the conservatory would represent an overly dominant feature that would detract from the appearance of the property. A UPVC framed conservatory is a relatively typical method of extending properties of this type and Officers consider, subject to a condition relating to the brickwork, that the conservatory would not detract from the character of the property.
- 6.4 The conservatory would mainly be built over a patio immediately at the rear of the house, although a small area of the garden beyond would be lost. The SODG advises that a property of this type should have at least 100 square metres of amenity space. No.31 Wayside Green sits in a well-sized plot with over 400 square metres of garden space and the remaining area will continue to provide an amenity space well in excess of the SODG requirement. The parking for the property, as discussed, is solely located to the front of the site and will be unaffected by the development.
- 6.5 One of the objections raised by the Parish Council and a neighbour is that they consider the conservatory would represent a bulky overdevelopment of the site. Given the conservatory would sit alongside the 1980s extension, this proposal would result in extensions stretching right across the rear elevation of the original building. However, from observations on site, the vast majority of properties in the vicinity have been heavily extended, often across their entire width, so the principle of extending properties in Wayside Green in this manner has already been established. Similarly, although the SODG advises that extensions should leave a gap of 1 metre to the side boundary of the plot, No.31 Wayside Green has already built up to the shared boundary with No.33 through previous extensions and Officers consider this guideline cannot be strictly enforced in this instance. Given these factors, and the overall amount of amenity space that would be left to serve the extended dwelling, Officers do not consider that the conservatory would represent an overdevelopment of the plot and that the character of the site and general area would still be preserved.
- Impact on neighbouring occupants**
- 6.6 Criterion (iii) of Policy H13 states that an extension to a dwelling will be permitted providing the amenity of occupants of nearby properties be not materially harmed. A number of objections have been raised by the owner of No.33 Wayside Green, the property immediately to the north of the application site and some of these are shared by Woodcote Parish Council. The conservatory would be built immediately adjacent to the shared boundary between Nos, 31 and 33 and Officers consider the impact on the amenity of the occupants of No.33 to be the key issue.
- 6.7 No.33 Wayside Green benefits from a single storey flat roof extension that spans across the entire rear elevation. From observations on site, this extension projects to approximately the same building line as the 1980s rear extension at No.31. In light of the representations made in response to the application, Officers requested an amended block plan to accurately demonstrate the relationship between the proposed conservatory and the extended No.33 Wayside Green. This block plan forms part of the plans **attached** at Appendix 2. The main concerns raised by the neighbour relate to the overshadowing of a side window in their extension, increased overlooking and the loss of privacy to their rear amenity space.

- 6.8 Taking these points in turn, the side window in question is a high-level obscure glazed window, which is not the primary source of light to the room it serves. Furthermore, given this window faces directly towards the existing extension at No.31, the light received by it is already quite limited. Officers do not consider the presence of the conservatory will significantly alter this situation.
- 6.9 Regarding overlooking, there is a strip of windows in the side elevation of the proposed conservatory that would be positioned at eye level. The shared boundary between the two properties is defined by a typical 6-foot panelled fence, but these windows could still potentially allow a limited amount of direct overlooking of the rear amenity space of No.33. However, the applicants have confirmed their intention to glaze these windows with obscure glass and Officers are satisfied this will satisfactorily address this issue.
- 6.10 Policy EX5 of the SODG advises that single storey extensions built on or near shared boundaries should not exceed more than 3 metres. At 7.2 metres deep, the conservatory, taken on its own, significantly exceeds this guideline. However, the amended block plan clearly shows that, given the neighbouring extension, the conservatory will, in fact, project only around 2 metres beyond the long established rear building lines of both properties. On this basis Officers do not consider the depth of the extension to be excessive.
- 6.11 Officers acknowledge that, given the proximity of the conservatory to the shared boundary, some sunlight will be lost to the rear, primary, ground floor windows of No.33, particularly in mid to late afternoon. However, the glazed roof nature of the conservatory would still allow some light through and any loss of light would not be so significant that it would justify a reason to refuse planning permission.
- 6.12 One of the other main concerns of the neighbour is the light pollution caused by the conservatory, particularly at night. They feel this would negatively affect on both ground and first floor windows. There are no specific guidelines for light pollution in domestic extensions, although Policy D4 states that development will not be permitted if it would unacceptably harm the amenity of neighbouring properties through a loss of privacy. Given the densely populated nature of the estate, some light pollution between properties is inevitable. Officers do not consider that any light pollution from the conservatory that may take place during hours of darkness would have a significant impact on the enjoyment of No.33.
- 6.13 Further objections raised include that the excessive projection of the conservatory would enclose the rear garden of No.33 reducing the privacy of this area currently enjoyed by the occupants. Officers acknowledge the rear patio of No.33 would feel somewhat enclosed by a conservatory in such close proximity. However No.33 is a similarly spacious plot to No.31 and that the majority of the amenity space would not be affected by the development. The potential for increased noise has also been identified, but it seems unlikely that the noise generated from a conservatory would be any greater than that which could be generated from the area's current use as a patio. Finally, maintenance of the conservatory is not a planning issue that can be considered here.
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**
- 6.14 Policy C2 states that development that will harm the beauty or distinctiveness of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) will not be permitted. The rear of No.31 is surrounded by neighbouring gardens to the north and south, with open field beyond to the west. A public footpath does run along the rear boundaries of this part of

Wayside Green, but standard boundary treatments including mature planting mean there are no clear views into the rear of the site. As discussed, the principle of extending properties in the immediate area is now well established and Officers consider this proposal is consistent with previous developments. Thus, Officers consider the proposal will not significantly affect the character and appearance of the surrounding AONB.

Tree Issues

- 6.15 The applicants have identified a small shrub and a mature Sycamore tree that will require removal to implement the scheme. The owner of No.33 has raised concern this will result in a further loss of privacy. The site does not fall within a Conservation Area and the Sycamore is not protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Thus, consent is not required to remove this tree and this could occur regardless of the outcome of this application. Furthermore, the Council's Forestry Officer has stated the tree is of low arboricultural value and has no objection to its removal. The applicants have stated their intention to replace this tree with one of a more appropriate size for the site.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The proposal complies with the relevant Development Plan policies and it is considered that, subject to the attached conditions, the proposed development would be acceptable in terms of its relationship to the character of the existing building and its site, in terms of its impact on neighbouring properties and in terms of its impact on the surrounding Area of Outstanding Natural beauty.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **Planning Permission subject to:**

1. **Commencement three years**
2. **Matching brickwork – conservatory plinth wall**
3. **Obscure glazing – north facing windows in side elevation**

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