

whilst considering its landscape context and location within Southend. The contemporary approach incorporates sustainable technologies. The building layout is based around a central stair and hall accessed via the western elevation. The north facing walls have minimum openings to reduce heat loss and to reduce the impact on the neighbouring property. The south and east elevations are heavily glazed to take advantage of solar heat gain and the attractive outlook from the site. A copy of the submitted drawings is **attached**. In addition a number of sustainable features are incorporated within the proposed new dwelling. These are set out in full in the design and access statement which is **attached**.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 OCC (Highways) - No objection. The application utilises an existing access and would not significantly intensify its use. Appropriate provision should be made within the site for parking and turning. There are no highway objections to the application subject to the provision and subsequent retention, unobstructed except for vehicles, of the parking and turning areas as shown on the submitted plans.
- Conservation Officer (SO) - Objection – Surrounding development in this rural location takes a linear form fronting onto Southend and is a mix of one and two storey dwellings which are modest in scale and positioned in good size plots. The proposed dwelling is a strikingly contemporary building that would be very imposing in this location owing to its scale, mass and design. The west elevation fronting onto the street extends nearly 20m across the width of the plot and, whereas the existing bungalow sits on top of the gradient, a full two storey building is created by the excavation of the front garden. The combination of size and excavation will greatly increase the prominence of the building in the street scene, and is likely to dwarf the adjacent property. The side elevation extends 23m and is extensively glazed, and while partially built into the hillside, will also be intrusive visually in the landscape.
- Environmental Health - No objection subject to conditions relating to potentially contaminated land.
- Garsington Parish Council - Approve – The amended plans represent a satisfactory response to concerns raised by others during the consultation process.
- Neighbour Supporters (1) - The site is not within the Green Belt and therefore constraints do not apply. The use of ground source heat pumps, water recycling and other eco initiatives is to be welcomed.

- Neighbour Objectors (15 letters received on original plans) - 18 letters received on amended plans) overbearing, unconventional appearance, out of character, loss of privacy to neighbours, appear as a commercial building, dwarfs neighbouring property, loss of privacy, need for a levels drawing, disproportionate in size to its plot size compared to other dwellings in Southend, contrary to Green Belt policy, size, design, would set precedent for more inappropriate development, fails to reinforce local distinctiveness, fear of subsidence on neighbouring dwellings following excavation works.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 P06/W1321/O Erection of replacement chalet bungalow – Approved 17 April, 2007.

Scale, means of access and layout were considered at this outline stage with all other issues to be reserved for consideration at the reserved matters stage.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan
- G2 Protection and enhancement of the environment
 - G6 Promoting good design
 - GB2 New buildings in the Green Belt
 - GB4 Visual amenity
 - D1 Good design and local distinctiveness
 - D9 Renewable energy
 - H5 Larger villages within the Green Belt
 - T1/2 Transport requirements for new developments

South Oxfordshire Design Guide

PPS3 Housing

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The principle of a replacement dwelling has been approved on this site under planning ref P06/W1321/O. The main considerations in the determination of this planning application are:

- i. Whether the sites lie within the built up limits of Garsington.
- ii. Impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- iii. Whether there are any overriding amenity environmental or highway objections.
- iv. Impact of the proposed development on the character of the surrounding area.
- v. Sustainable features.

Whether the site lies within the built up limits of Garsington.

- 6.2 The entire village of Garsington lies within the Oxford Green Belt. The site, whilst being located at the very end of a ribbon of development along the eastern side of Southend, is considered, by your officers, to be on the very edge but within the built up limits of Garsington as the ribbon of development which runs from the heart of the village southwards towards the B480 is a continual line of development on the eastern side of the road. As the site lies within the built up limits of the village, policy H12 of

SOLP which deals with replacement dwellings on sites which are within the Green Belt but outside the built up limits of settlements is not appropriate in this case. As such, the 40% restriction which accompanies this policy is not relevant.

- 6.3 Policy H5 of SOLP which deals with housing proposals within the larger village within the Green Belt is the appropriate housing policy for this application. Policy H5 of SOLP allows for infill development providing a number of criteria are met. The criteria which are relevant in this particular proposal are considered below.

Impact of the proposed development on the character of the surrounding area.

- 6.4 In assessing the impact of the proposed new dwelling on the character of the area, it is important to consider the site in the context of its surroundings. The site is elevated on an escarpment and is surrounded on 2 sides by open countryside. The site occupies a sensitive edge of settlement location which is clearly visible when approaching the village from the B480 and from the adjacent public footpath which runs down the southern boundary of the site.
- 6.5 Southend has a variety of house types and styles with no particular one dominating the local character of the area. Surrounding development takes a linear form fronting onto Southend and is a mix of one and two storey houses. The existing dwelling on the site is a brick bungalow with concrete tiled roof and is of no particular architectural or historic merit. The neighbouring property at no 113 Southend is a detached, cream rendered bungalow of modest proportions with windows to bedrooms, dining room and conservatory located within 1.4 -1.8m from the joint boundary. Other surrounding properties are generally vernacular in style and appearance and of brick and tile construction located in good sized plots.
- 6.6 The proposed dwelling is strikingly contemporary in design with large amounts of glazing and a flat sedum roof. Whilst there is no objection in principle to a contemporary styled dwelling on this site, given the variety of house styles in the vicinity of the site, it is the size and scale of the proposal which is considered, by your officers, to be inappropriate in this location. Although the size of the plot is large, it is not overly wide and the proposed dwelling extends to nearly 20m across the width of the plot with relatively little space to either side. In this context, the development lacks setting and is disproportionate to its plot size. In your officer's opinion it would appear overly prominent and imposing and out of character in this sensitive edge of settlement location. Fifteen letters of objection have been received relating to this application. Nearly all of them relate to the adverse impact of the proposed development on the character of the surrounding area.

Any overriding amenity, environmental or highway objections.

- 6.7 The proposed dwelling requires a large amount of excavation at the front of the site to create the lower ground floor and parking area. This excavation will increase the prominence of the building in the street scene and will appear overly large compared to the modest adjoining property at no 113 Southend. Although the overall height of the proposed dwelling is less than the existing dwelling, the flat roof design of the dwelling results in a higher eaves height than the existing. The effect of this together with the increase in depth of the dwelling over and above the existing dwelling, will result in an oppressive and unneighbourly form of development which would adversely affect the residential amenity of the occupier of the neighbouring dwelling.
- 6.8 The proposed dwelling has a glass access door from the utility area in the northern elevation facing the side of no 113 which would sit above ground level and lead from the side of the dwelling to the rear garden. The neighbouring dwelling has a number of windows along this elevation to a dining room and to bedrooms. This doorway and

access path would, in your officer's opinion, be unneighbourly. In addition the eaves height of the proposed dwelling being a flat roof structure are higher than those on the existing dwelling. Although the overall height of the proposed new dwelling is less than the existing bungalow, the higher eaves would result in an oppressive and overbearing development which would adversely affect the residential amenity of the occupiers of No. 113 Southend. A copy of the letter of objection from the occupier of this property is **attached**.

- 6.9 OCC (highways) has not raised any objections to the proposal on highway or parking grounds providing that the parking and turning areas shown on the submitted plans are retained unobstructed. As such, the proposal is acceptable on highway grounds.

Impact on the openness of the Green Belt

- 6.10 Although the volume restrictions set out in policy H12 of SOLP do not apply, (see paragraph 6.2 above) the impact of the proposed development on the openness of the Green Belt remains a material consideration in the determination of this planning application. The current bungalow on the site has a relatively large footprint but is broken up on the site and is not prominent in the street scene. There is a relatively large gap to the southern side of the plot which abuts the public footpath. The proposed dwelling has a larger footprint and has a southern elevation which is some 23m deep. Although this elevation has been broken up and is staggered, it will be very prominent when viewed from the public footpath and from the south travelling from the B480. The white render and the large areas of glazing will exaggerate the visual prominence of the building on this elevated site and will have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Sustainable features

- 6.11 A copy of the Design and Access statement which accompanied the application is **attached** and sets out in section 4.0 the sustainable design principles. The sustainable features to be incorporated within the development can be summarised as:

- Achieving a sustainable rating equivalent to Code level 3 for Sustainable Homes
- Passive environmental Controls
- Ground source heat pump
- Water resource efficient design to reduce consumption
- Provision of on site renewable energies generation
- Habitat creation to promote bio diversity

Although these features are welcomed and are sought in the newly adopted Design Guide, they do not outweigh the concerns and objections relating to size, scale and amenity which have been outlined in this report.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The principle of a replacement dwelling is acceptable. However, the development as proposed would appear incongruous in the streetscene given its sensitive edge of settlement location, would be unneighbourly and would harm the openness of the Oxford Green Belt.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 That planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

- 1. That, having regard to the scale, mass and design of the proposed development , in particular its width, depth and degree of excavation, the new dwelling would be overly prominent in the street scene and visually intrusive in this edge of settlement location contrary to policies G2, G6, D1 and H5 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan.**
- 2. That, having regard to the scale and mass of the proposed dwelling in relation to the modest neighbouring property at number 113 Southend, the development will result in an oppressive and incongruous form of development contrary to policies G2, G6 and H5 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan.**
- 3. That, having regard to the excessive depth of the proposed dwelling on the very edge of the settlement, the development would harm the openness of the Oxford Green Belt contrary to policies G2 ,GB2 and GB4.**

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