
APPLICATION NO.	P08/E0320
APPLICATION TYPE	Full
REGISTERED	12 th May 2008
PARISH	Rotherfield Peppard
WARD MEMBERS	Paul Harrison Alan Rooke
APPLICANT	Greenland Limited
SITE	Land at rear of Satis House, Rotherfield Peppard
PROPOSALS	Erection of 3 two bed and 1 three bed semi-detached dwellings with new vehicular access
AMENDMENTS	Drawings 01B; 014A; 015A; 017A; 012B; 013B; and 018A.
GRID REFERENCE	471093/181695
OFFICER	Tom Wyatt

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application is referred to Committee as the Officer’s recommendations conflict with the views of the Parish Council.
- 1.2 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A), comprises part of the large rear garden of Satis House, which is one of several large detached dwellings fronting Church Lane in Rotherfield Peppard. The surrounding area is dominated by residential development of varying size, age and design between the open land at Peppard Common and All Saints’ Church, which forms the focal point at the end of Church Lane. Peppard Primary School lies immediately to the south of the application site.
- 1.3 Whilst Satis House falls within the Rotherfield Peppard Conservation Area, the application site largely falls outside this area, although, like the rest of the settlement, the site does lie within the Chilterns AONB.

2.0 **THE PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application seeks approval for the construction of four dwellings consisting of two pairs of semi-detached properties. Plots 1 and 2 combined would have a width of approximately 19 metres, depth of 7.5 metres and height of approximately 10 metres. Plots 3 and 4 would have a width of approximately 14.5 metres with the depth and height being essentially the same as Plots 1 and 2. Plots 1, 3 and 4 would be two bed units, whilst Plot 2 would be a three bed unit. The two pairs of dwellings would sit opposite each other on the site with a separation distance of approximately 14 metres. Private rear gardens would be provided for each dwelling.
- 2.2 Access to the site would be via Dray’s Lane through the eastern boundary of the site, and at least two car parking spaces would be provided for each dwelling. The site would be separated from the remaining garden area of Satis House through a combination of fencing, and existing and proposed soft landscaping.
- 2.3 A copy of the plans and design and access statement accompanying the application are **attached** as Appendix B. It should be noted that the plans have been amended from the original submission to address concerns regarding the impact of the development on existing trees.

3.0 **CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 **Rotherfield Peppard Parish Council** – The application should be refused due to an overdevelopment of the site, poor quality of design that is out of keeping with the area, and concerns about traffic movements along Dray’s Lane. However, the Parish Council support the sustainability objectives of the proposal.
- 3.2 **OCC Highway Liaison Officer** – The applicant has provided an appropriate speed survey and it is apparent that the visibility at the Church Lane junction is adequate. No objections subject to conditions.
- 3.3 **Forestry Officer** – No objections following receipt of the amended plans subject to landscape conditions.
- 3.4 **Environmental Health Officer** – No objections subject to conditions regarding external lighting and contaminated land.
- 3.5 **Conservation Officer** – No objections as the development would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the adjacent conservation area as the development would be well screened in views from the Common to the west.
- 3.6 **Waste Management Officer** – The provision for refuse and recycling is sufficient.
- 3.7 **Neighbours** – Thirteen letters of objection have been received raising the following concerns:
- impact on highway safety and congestion, particularly given the proximity to the school and related school traffic.
 - out of character with the surrounding built form and an overdevelopment of the site.
 - impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area
 - removal of trees and impact on local wildlife
 - poor design
 - precedent for the development of other garden areas
 - overlooking of school grounds
 - impact on neighbouring amenity
 - poor local infrastructure and difficult access to public transport
 - disturbance from construction

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 There is no relevant planning history to this proposal.

5.0 **POLICY AND GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 Adopted Structure Plan 2016 Policies:
-G1, G2, G3, G6, T1, T2, T8, H1, H3, EN2, EN4, EN9
- 5.2 Policies of the Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP):
-G1, G2, G3, G6, C1, C2, C4, C8, C9, CON7, EP2, EP8, D1, D2, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7, D8, D10, H1, H4, H5, H7, H8, T1, T2,
- 5.3 Government Guidance:
-PPS1, PPS3, PPS7, PPG13, PPG15, PPS23
- 5.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance
-South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008 (SODG)

6.0 **PLANNING ISSUES**

- 6.1 The planning issues that are relevant to this application are:
1. The principle of the development
 2. The impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area
 3. The impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers
 4. Highway considerations
 5. Impact on trees
 6. Sustainability issues
 7. Other material considerations

The Principle of the Development

- 6.2 The site represents previously developed land and lies within the main built up area of Rotherfield Peppard. As such the principle of additional residential development is broadly acceptable having regard to Policy H5 of the SOLP, which states that development of ‘up to four small terraced or semi-detached dwellings’ is acceptable. Government guidance contained within PPS3 is also relevant in relation to the objective of providing housing in suitable locations, ‘which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure’ (Para. 10), and to provide for the effective and efficient use of land.

i) Housing Mix

- 6.3 The proposal is for four units, comprising three 2 bed units and one 3 bed unit. Guidance within PPS3 advocates the creation of mixed and inclusive communities. A mix of housing is very important in achieving this through providing housing of mixed tenure, size and price. Policy H7 of the SOLP takes the national guidance to a local level and is based upon a needs approach in relation to the type of housing required across the District. Specifically there is an identified shortfall in two bed units, and in this regard it is expected that approximately 45% of dwellings within developments of 2 or more units should be constructed as two bed units. Three of the units are two bed, representing 75% of the development. As such the proposal meets the thrust of the requirements of PPS3 and Policy H7 in relation to housing mix.

ii) Housing Density

- 6.4 Guidance within PPS3 seeks to ensure that land is used in the most effective and efficient way in relation to new housing. At Paragraph 47, PPS3 advises that a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare net (dph) should be achieved, and a density of less than this would need to be justified through, for example, seeking to protect the character and appearance of the area. Policy H8 of the SOLP flows from Government guidance and seeks to provide densities of at least 40 dph in town centre locations and 30 dph elsewhere. In this case, the site is approximately 0.19 hectares, therefore, the proposal represents a density of approximately 21 dph. In this case Officers consider that this lower density is appropriate given the generally spacious character and appearance of the site and its surroundings, including the conservation area.

iii) Affordable Housing

- 6.5 Having regard to Policy H9 of the SOLP there is no requirement for affordable housing provision in relation to the development as, due to the constraints of the site, there is not a strong case to be made that the site could support a net gain of 5 or more dwellings.

The Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Site and Surrounding Area

- 6.6 Satis House is one of several large detached dwellings fronting Church Lane and open common land on the opposite side of this narrow road. The Primary School lies immediately south of the site where it also fronts Church Lane. Further to the south and east of the site there is further residential development comprising detached, semi-detached and small groups of terraced dwellings. This development includes a group of six bungalows granted planning permission in 1967 in Dray's Lane. Immediately to the north of the site lies a small area of open and undeveloped land to the rear of the neighbouring property, Cranford, which appears to retain its status as agricultural land.
- 6.7 The site is surrounded by development on three sides and is clearly within the main built up area of the village. The dominant residential built form varies between large, spacious, and verdant plots such as Satis House and adjoining development to the north and to the south between Springwood and Church Lane, and the more dense built form to the east along the north side of Church Lane, Grange Avenue and particularly Dray's Lane. The edge of the built form is dominated and characterised by open common land that lies either side of the B481 (Peppard Hill).
- 6.8 The dwellings fronting Church Lane, which lie opposite the common, and the common itself, are included within the Rotherfield Peppard Conservation Area. The common makes an important and very positive contribution to the landscape setting of the built form along Church Lane, and the wider settlement. The application site is part of the rear garden of Satis House, however, the main part of the site is outside of the Conservation Area and is well screened from views from the common and Church Lane to the west by Satis House and Cranford in particular and by mature vegetation within the grounds of these properties, As such the proposed development, whilst visible from land to the west, will not have a significant visual impact in views from this direction.
- 6.9 From other directions, the site is also well screened by existing development and boundary vegetation. In particular, mature evergreen vegetation is present on the eastern and southern boundaries of the site, which offer all year round screening. This vegetation will continue to screen and soften the development in views from adjacent land despite the loss of a small section of vegetation due to the proposed access off Drays Lane.
- 6.10 In light of the above, Officers do not consider that the development will be unduly prominent in public views from adjacent land and will not have a significant impact on the landscape setting of the settlement or the landscape character in general. As such the proposal will preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and landscape qualities of the wider Chilterns AONB, and so complies with Policies C1, C2, C4 and CON7 of the SOLP.
- 6.11 The proposed dwellings are of an unusual and individual design. Particular features of note are the multi-gabled design of the proposals with double gables to the front and rear, and single gables to the side of each pair of semi-detached dwellings. Although unusual for relatively small dwellings, historically there are several examples of multi-gabled buildings and the design is therefore based on historical and traditional forms. The use of the gables, window design, relatively narrow widths and depths and higher than average height of the individual dwellings gives the development a vertical emphasis, which is somewhat at odds with the general design of the existing built form in the locality. However, there is considerable variety to the local built form, and there would be little justification for requiring the development to follow a particular design approach.

- 6.12 The scale, height and general massing of each of the pairs of semi-detached dwellings would be comparable, and in keeping with these characteristics of the dwellings to the west and north, which front Church Lane, whilst the density and type of development and more modest size of the dwellings would respect the existing dwellings within Drays Lane, and on the north side of Church Lane to the south of the site. The site is sandwiched between these two distinct areas of the settlement and by incorporating elements of each of these areas of built form, Officers consider that the proposal would be in keeping with the surrounding built form.
- 6.13 At a density of approximately 21 dph, the proposal would have a similar, but lower, density to elements of the surrounding built form. For example 1-4 Church Lane has a density of 23 dph, and 1-4 Drays Lane has a density of approximately 35 dph. The proposed dwellings would have rear garden depths in excess of 10 metres and garden areas well in excess of 100m², and existing mature vegetation on the boundaries would be retained. In light of the above, Officers do not consider that the proposal would represent an overdevelopment of the site and the figures also demonstrate further that the development would be in keeping with surrounding built form.

The Impact on the Amenity of Neighbouring Occupiers

- 6.14 The site only shares one common boundary with an adjoining residential property, which is Satis House immediately to the west. The site currently forms part of the rear garden of Satis House but even after the loss of the site to development, the rear garden of Satis House would be over 20 metres in depth. The side elevations of Plots 2 and 3 would be a further 6 and 10 metres from the shared boundary respectively. As such a separation distance of over 30 metres would exist between the rear elevation of Satis House and the nearest part of the proposed development. Furthermore, the shared boundary is formed by mature vegetation, which provides a good screen between the two sites. There are also no windows in the side (west) elevation of Plots 2 or 3 that would overlook the remaining rear garden of Satis House.
- 6.15 Cranford lies to the north of Satis House, and the closest part of the development to this dwelling would be almost 40 metres away. The north elevations of Plots 1 and 2 would face onto undeveloped and non-residential land and any views towards the rear garden of Cranford would be oblique and again screened by mature vegetation.
- 6.16 The Primary School, including a play ground area, lies immediately south of the site. The south elevations of Plots 3 and 4 would be over 10 metres away from this boundary, and whilst there would be some overlooking to the school from upper floor windows, such overlooking would not be detrimental to the amenity of the school. Again, there is screening vegetation on the southern boundary of the site.
- 6.17 To the east of the site lies Dray's Lane with single storey residential development. These bungalows are located over 20 metres away from the proposed dwellings, and again the physical impact of the development will not cause detriment to the occupiers of these properties. Apart from where the proposed access is located, the eastern boundary of the site is also thickly marked with mature vegetation. The main impact on the immediate occupiers, particularly in relation to the school and Dray's Lane is in relation to the proposed access. Highway considerations regarding this access are outlined below. The access is off an existing road, and will not pass directly alongside any of the neighbouring properties. The number of units proposed will also not generate levels of traffic that would cause undue disturbance to neighbouring occupiers.

Highway Considerations

6.18

Much concern has been expressed through letters of objection in relation to the additional traffic movements associated with the development, and the impact on highway safety, particularly having regard to the adjacent school. The applicant submitted a Transport Assessment Report (TA) with the original application submission, and subsequently a traffic survey has been undertaken following concerns expressed by the Highway Authority in relation to additional traffic at the junction of Dray's Lane and Church Lane.

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Based on the TRICS database, the TA calculates that the proposal will result in 21 two way traffic movements per day. The TA advises that the local roads generate relatively low vehicle numbers and speeds as the roads in the vicinity of the site terminate locally and thus are not used by through traffic. Given that the proposal will generate relatively few additional traffic movements, the main concern is whether the local roads are such that there would be a detrimental impact on highway safety, particularly in respect of the Dray's Lane/Church Lane junction. During the term time, the area around this junction has parked cars from school employees that effectively make the road single carriageway. According to the author of the TA this has the effect of providing obstacles in the road that will mean that drivers will approach the area more carefully. However, many of the movements associated with the proposed development, such as commuting, are likely to be outside of the core school hours in any case.

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Following additional information provided in relation to the speed survey, the Highway Authority has accepted that the visibility at the Dray's Lane/Church Lane junction is of an appropriate standard and has also accepted that many of the trips associated with the development will be outside of the school hours. As such, there are no objections from the Highway Authority in relation to the impact of the development on highway safety or any other highway matter.

6.21

The proposal includes parking space for at least two cars for each of the dwellings. This is acceptable given the size of units, and will ensure that vehicles associated with the development will not need to park on the local roads around the site, which do suffer from some congestion. There is also sufficient turning area within the site.

Impact on Trees

6.22

There are several large mature trees on the east, south and west boundaries of the site, including oak, maple, sycamore, laurel and douglas fir. These trees make an important contribution to the character and appearance, and environmental quality of the area and are important to help soften and screen the development from adjacent land. With regard to the original plans, the Forestry Officer raised concern regarding the impact on several of the trees. Subsequently, additional information in the form of an Arboricultural Impact Appraisal and Method Statement has been submitted and amended plans have been received to omit single storey structures attached to the dwellings that would have affected the root protection zones of adjacent trees.

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The additional information and amendments has satisfied the Forestry Officer that the development can proceed without a detrimental impact on the existing trees. As such the development will allow for the retention of the many trees that contribute so positively to the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area, and therefore, the proposal complies with Policy C9 of the SOLP.

Sustainability Issues

6.24

In accordance with Policy D8 of the SOLP and having regard to guidance contained within Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change- Supplement to PPS1, development should demonstrate high standards in the conservation and efficient use of energy, water and materials. Guidance within the recently adopted SODG sets a benchmark of Code Level 1 for developments of between 1 and 4 dwellings.

6.25

The applicant has advised that the style of the dwellings is partially driven by the use of an energy efficient double gable roof shape, which allows a greater surface area for the capture of rainfall and sunlight through photovoltaic cells. Electricity from the solar panels will be used to run a heat pump and the pump for the proposed underfloor heating, whilst rainwater will be harvested and stored within the roofspace and used

6.26

within the dwellings. The building would be largely constructed off site and brought to the site in modules, which is more energy efficient. Further measures include the use of sheep wool insulation and low energy appliances. Ground or air source heat pumps are also being considered. The proposal outlines a number of water and energy saving measures, and Officers consider that it complies with the broad thrust of PPS1 and Policy D8 of the SOLP.

7.0

CONCLUSION

7.1

The application proposal is in accordance with the relevant development plan policies and national planning policy, as, subject to conditions, the proposal would not cause any significant harm to the character and appearance of the site or adjacent conservation area, the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, and would not be prejudicial to highway safety.

8.0

RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1

That planning permission be granted, subject to the following conditions:

1. **Commencement 3 years**
2. **Samples of materials to be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of development**
3. **Hard surfacing details to be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of development**
4. **Fencing and other means of enclosure to be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of development**
5. **Soft landscaping to be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of development**
6. **Tree protection measures to be carried out in accordance with approved details**
7. **Any lighting to be provided in accordance with details to be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of development**
8. **Details of finished floor levels in relation to existing and proposed ground levels to be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of development**
9. **Details of cycle storage to be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of development**
10. **No occupation until the parking and turning areas are constructed. These areas shall thereafter be retained unobstructed for use in connection with the development**
11. **Formation of access prior to occupation**
12. **Phased contaminated land risk assessment to be carried out and approved prior to the commencement of development**

- 13. Unsuspected contamination to be remediated in accordance with details to be approved prior to occupation.**
- 14. Refuse and recycling provision to be provided in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the units and thereafter retained.**
- 15. All dwellings designed and constructed to meet Code 1 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.**
- 16. No windows in side (west) elevations of Plots 2 and 3.**
- 17. No extensions or outbuildings within planning permission (withdrawal of permitted development rights).**

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