
APPLICATION NO.	P08/W1237/O
APPLICATION TYPE	OUTLINE
REGISTERED	24.11.2008
PARISH	GORING
WARD MEMBER(S)	Mrs Ann Ducker Mrs Pearl Slatter
APPLICANT	Mr & Mrs S. G. Hunt
SITE PROPOSAL	Ross Acre Ridgeway Goring-on-Thames Erection of a detached two storey dwelling house and a detached tandem double garage. (Outline) (As amended by Agents letter and drawings PVD/226/A003 9, PVD/226/A204 2a received 20th January 2009).
AMENDMENTS	
GRID REFERENCE	460158/181547
OFFICER	Miss J.E.Randle

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 At the meeting on 11 March 2009 this application was deferred for a site visit.
- 1.2 This application is referred to Planning Committee as the officer recommendation conflicts with the views of the Parish Council. A similar application P08/W0094/0 was refused by Planning Committee at the meeting on 23 July 2008.
- 1.3 The application site is part of the garden of a residential property Rossacre. The application site lies within Goring on Thames as shown on the attached location plan. The site lies within the Chilterns AONB. The railway embankment forms the east boundary of the site. A location plan at 1:1250 scale is **attached**.

2.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 2.1 P97/W0192/0 Outline planning permission for a new house and garage on land adjoining Ross Acre – informal hearing – appeal dismissed 1998
- P08/W0094/0 Erection of single dwellinghouse with garage-refused. This application was refused by Planning Committee on 23 July 2008 as being unneighbourly to adjacent properties and undesirably consolidating ribbon development and harming the spacious landscape setting of Goring village.

3.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

- 3.1 Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan Policies:

Towns and larger villages outside Green belt H4
Locations where houses will not be permitted H6
Protection of countryside and settlements G2
Protection of countryside G4
Enhancement of landscape C1
Landscape setting C4
Energy efficient design D8
Conserve and enhance AONB C2

Parking T1
 Privacy for dwellings D4
 PPS3 Housing
 PPS23 Contaminated land
 PPS24 Planning update
 PPG25 Flooding
 South Oxfordshire Design Guide

4.0 **CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 4.1 Parish Council Object – would set a precedent for further building including ribbon development, along the Ridgeway, an historic bridlepath which is an important recreational amenity in this AONB.
 Amended plan – object; consider Policy H6 is relevant, development on edge of village will not normally be allowed because it would extend the built up area, encroach upon surrounding countryside and spoil the landscape setting of the settlement contrary to Policy C4.
- Forestry Officer No objection – trees within the site are not the subject of a TPO and are not within a Conservation area. Suggest conditions.
- OCC Rights of Way Officer Goring bridleway is well defined and runs concurrent with the access and to the north of the property. No materials, plant or temporary structures should be deposited on or adjacent to the path that may obstruct the public from using the route.
- Highways Officer No objection subject to conditions.
- Neighbours 6 letters of objection – would be a precedent for future development along bridleway, would overlook properties to the south, suggests conditions if allowed; increase in traffic at junction with Mill Road. Amended plan – 3 letters of objection.
- Countryside Officer No objection.
- Monson Details of foul drainage prior to commencement.

5.0 **THE APPLICATION**

- 5.1 This is an outline application for a detached two storey dwelling with a detached tandem double garage. Access and layout of the house and garage are part of the application as indicated on Drawing PVD/226/A003-8. A site section Drawing A004-3 shows the position of the new house in relation to levels and adjacent houses. Amended drawing PVD/226/A003-9 resites the garage further forward and drawing PVD/226/A204- 2A shows the internal layout of a two storey house with no first floor windows in the flank elevations. The agents supporting 'Planning Design and Access statement' is available to be viewed on the Council's web site.
- 5.2 In 2008 a similar outline application was refused as being an edge of settlement H6 site where a new house would undesirably alter the character of the area and the elevated position of Rossacre would create undesirable levels of amenity for the new house. The orientation of the new house previously proposed would have overlooked

Temple Gardens to the south. This current application seeks to remove the latter objection by orientating the house to face west/east towards the Ridgeway. The site access gateway onto the Ridgeway exists.

5.3 The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are as follows:

- Whether the site is within the built up area of Goring –H4 or H6.
- Effect of the development on the character and appearance of area including AONB
- Impact on adjacent dwellings and living conditions
- Highways
- Sustainable design measures

Housing policy - H6 or H4 site

5.4 The settlements of the District have been categorised by the services and facilities they have and a hierarchy of policies has been established on this basis. This framework ensures that development takes place in sustainable locations and is in accordance with Structure Plan policy. Goring on Thames has been classified as a larger village outside the Green Belt where Policy H4 is applicable. Policy H4 indicates that proposals for new houses will be permitted provided a number of criteria are met, if amongst other matters, the character of the area would not be adversely affected and there would be no overriding amenity, environmental or highway objections.

5.5 Policy H6 of the SOLP indicates locations where new housing will not be permitted. It advises that planning permission will not be given for new houses on the edge of settlements where the built up area would be extended. The supporting text to H6 indicates that –

‘ Development on the edge of towns and villages, including consolidating ribbon development, will not normally be allowed because it would extend the built up area, encroach upon the surrounding countryside and spoil the landscape setting of the district’s settlements, contrary to Policy C4.’

5.6 In accordance with the above housing policies, whether a site is within the built up area depends on the specific circumstances of each case.

5.7 In considering the previous application for a house in July 2008, I concluded that the site was an H6 location and an edge of settlement site.

5.8 The site lies in the southern part of the large garden to Rossacre which is a large detached house with its main aspect facing south. The site lies on the edge of Goring and is approached from the north along the Ridgeway which has the character of a rural lane. Land to the west drops down a wooded bank to the River Thames. Houses to the south of the site, including Temple Gardens are more compact in character and development is at a higher density. In dismissing an appeal for a house on a smaller plot in 1998 (copy **attached**) the Inspector considered that the gaps between houses to the north of the wall (southern site boundary) are important features in the character and appearance of Goring and the AONB. He argued that the house would appear cramped in the street scene and out of keeping with the spacious character of this part of the AONB and that there is a transition between denser housing to the south and the more open character of development to the north.

5.9 I consider that this change in character is a crucial point as to whether development on this site is acceptable in principle. There is no doubt that the site lies in a

transitional area where the character changes from higher density to the south to lower density development to the north. The application now proposed would maintain a significant gap between Rossacre and the new house and between that house and Temple Gardens to the south. The siting of the house as indicated on site plan PVD/226/A003-9 would involve a development which would maintain the spacious character of the area. The subdivision of the plot into two reasonable sized plots of 1515 square metres would still be in character with the density of development in this area.

- 5.10 I have concluded that although this development would consolidate existing development along the Ridgeway and impact on the character of the area, it would not be a sufficiently harmful impact to warrant a refusal of this proposal.
- 5.11 There have been several appeal decisions in Goring where the Inspector has not agreed with SODC's view that the site was outside the built up area of Goring. These include Haydown (P07/W0653), The Red House (P08/W0330) and Cleeve Firs (P08/W1300). In these cases the Inspector concluded that the sites fell within the built-up area of the village and should be assessed as H4 sites. Although each application is assessed on its own merits, it is appropriate that officers take note of these appeal decisions when considering future applications.
- 5.12 In the light of the above and recent appeal decisions where the Council has not been successful in defending edge of settlement arguments, I have concluded that this site lies within the built up area of Goring and that the proposal should be assessed against Policy H4. Goring Parish Council has concluded differently and consider that this is an H6 site.
- Effect of development on character of and appearance of area including AONB**
- 5.13 Whilst a new house could be physically accommodated on this site I consider that the gaps between the houses are an important part of the spacious character of this part of Goring.
- 5.14 I consider that the site in itself does not have a rural character as it appears as part of the garden to Rossacre. However the position of the site in this transitional area is such that any development to fill this gap needs careful treatment to retain the character of the area and relationship with adjacent houses. I have previously concluded that a new house could be physically accommodated on this site with an appropriate plot size and the current submission confirms this. This application although still in outline now includes the layout of a modest 3 bedroom house with garage as indicated on the attached floor plans. The plot size for the existing house would be 1515 m², the same size as the new plot which is considerably larger than the plot size of development to the south.
- 5.15 As such the subdivision of the plot as proposed would create a reasonable plot which is not out of character with development in the area in accordance with H4 of the Local Plan. I have also concluded that this proposal will not detract from the natural beauty of the AONB and is of a scale and type appropriate to the area in accordance with Policy C2 of the Local Plan and would not extend the built-up area of development along this rural lane.
- 5.16 **Impact on adjacent dwellings and living conditions**
- 5.17 The 2008 application indicated a house with a south facing orientation which would have undesirably overlooked Temple Gardens. This application provides more detail of how a new dwelling could be accommodated on this site.

- 5.18 The amended drawing indicates a house designed with an east west orientation with no first floor windows in the northern or southern flank elevations as indicated on Drawing A003-9. The dwelling would have a height to the ridge of between 6.5-7.5 metres with gabled projections to front and rear. The previous application indicated a height of 8.5 metres to the ridge. There is a distance of some 15 metres between the new house and Temple Gardens such that there would be a reasonable separation distance between the dwellings.
- 5.19 I conclude that this scheme would not harm the living conditions of adjacent dwellings and would not conflict with Policy D4 or advice in section 3.0 of the SODG. Rossacre has all its main windows and patio area facing towards the site. However, as there is a distance of some 21 metres between the new house and Rossacre and the position of the garage secures a private garden for the new house, the amenity provided for both dwellings is not in conflict with Policy D4 or advice in section 3.0 of the SODG. The proposal satisfies Policy D3 by providing garden areas for both properties well in excess of Council standards.

Highways

- 5.20 There is an existing gateway in the south west corner of the site which will provide vehicular access onto the bridleway which is a private road of single width. The highway officer previously raised concern that additional traffic will add to the potential conflict between vehicles and other users of the bridleway and that visibility at the Mill road junction is substandard. However this objection was not supported at the appeal subject to the provision of a passing place to reduce the impact on highway safety.

Sustainable design measures

- 5.21 Although this is an outline application, the agent has confirmed that the house is to be constructed to Code Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. A condition will secure this.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Since the previous refusal in July 2008, officers have had regard to recent appeal decisions in Goring where the Council has not been successful in defending edge of settlement arguments. Previously I concluded on balance, that this was an edge of settlement H6 site and I now consider that it should be considered as an H4 site within the built up area of Goring village. The details provided now indicate that a three bedroom dwelling can be accommodated on this site without adversely affecting the living conditions of properties to the south. Although Rossacre has an imposing position on the site, any purchaser of the new house would be aware of the site circumstances and the layout of the new garage enables sufficient privacy to the rear garden of the new dwelling. Whilst the concern about precedent expressed by the Parish Council and neighbours is appreciated, this application has to be assessed on its own planning merits.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 **That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. Commencement three years**
- 2. Landscaping**
- 3. Tree protection**
- 4. Foul drainage prior to development commencing**
- 5. Reserved matters – external appearance, access**

- 6. Use of sustainable measures as specified**
- 7. Sample materials**
- 8. No first floor side (north/south elevations) windows**

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