
APPLICATION NO.	P09/E0308
APPLICATION TYPE	Full
REGISTERED	02.04.2009
PARISH	Shiplake
WARD MEMBERS	Mr Malcolm Leonard Mr Robert Peasgood
APPLICANT	Mr Nigel Offley
SITE	House by the Water, Bolney Road, Lower Shiplake
PROPOSALS	Demolition of existing two storey house and garage and erection of a new three storey house and garage.
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	477678/180070
OFFICER	Mr T 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, is one of several residential plots extending between Bolney Road and the River Thames. Bolney Road is generally characterised by large detached dwellings set within spacious plots. The spaciousness of the built form, the abundant vegetation and the river setting have resulted in the built form having a very attractive semi-rural character and appearance.
- 1.3 Unlike the majority of the plots within Bolney Road, the application site is very narrow and is currently occupied by a relatively modest two storey dwelling fronting the River Thames and an associated double garage fronting Bolney Road.
- 1.4 This application follows on from a previous proposal (P08/E0314), which was refused at Planning Committee on 29th October 2008.

2.0 **THE PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 This application seeks planning permission for the construction of a new dwelling and double garage to replace the existing buildings. The proposed dwelling is of a unique, contemporary design. The dwelling consists of a central core with a large rooflight to provide natural light deep into the building. The remainder of the dwelling lies to the east and west of the core and would display a varied building line. The roof of the building would have a single ply membrane over a wave form, which turns up at either end of the building and over the central core.
- 2.2 The dwelling would be on a very similar footprint to the existing dwelling with its main orientation running east to west due to the constraints of the narrow plot. The length of the building would be very similar to that of the existing dwelling at approximately 30 metres whilst at its widest point the dwelling would approach 7.5 metres. Due to the central core element and wave form roof, the height of the dwelling would vary between 7 and 8.5 metres.

- 2.3 The main structure of the house would consist of a timber post and beam frame. Externally the walls would be clad with western red cedar whilst the central core would be rendered. In the use of the materials and through the general design approach to the development, the dwelling would perform well in relation to the conservation of energy and water. Indeed, a pre-assessment under the Code for Sustainable Homes indicates that the dwelling would achieve Code Level 3.
- 2.4 The proposed garage would continue the general design approach of the main dwelling and would be constructed on a similar building line to the existing garage building. The building would be approximately 9.5 metres in depth, 5 metres in width and 4.3 metres in height.
- 2.5 The overall design concept of the proposed dwelling has not altered from the previous proposal, however, alterations to the design have been made to try and address the previous reasons for refusal. These alterations are outlined below.
- The footprint of the building has been reduced with most of this reduction being due to a reduced width, particularly where adjacent to the boundary with Little Grebe
 - The footprint of the basement has been reduced from 77.1m² to 70.9m².
 - The wet cut now occupies the same position as the existing
 - The entire dwelling has been moved 0.5 metres from the boundary with Little Grebe.
 - The east part of the ground floor element has been moved to the south.
 - The total first floor area has been reduced from 142.4m² to 127.5m².
 - The master bedroom at the eastern end of the dwelling has been moved to the north.
 - The first floor laundry room on the north side of the proposed dwelling has been omitted.
 - Overall the floor area of the dwelling has been reduced from 360.4m² to 338.7m².
- 2.6 A copy of the proposed plans is **attached** at Appendix B whilst other documents relating to the application can be found on the Council's website, www.southoxon.gov.uk A copy of the plans relating to the previous application, P08/E0314, is **attached** at Appendix C.
- 3.0 **CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**
- 3.1 **Shiplake Parish Council** – Objects due to 'overdevelopment of the site, not sympathetic with neighbouring properties; does not complement the riverscape; good design wrong location; suggest modify roofline'.
- 3.2 **Highway Authority** – No comments received, however, the Highway Authority had the following comments in respect of the previous application, 'No objections. The development is located on a long private street with speed calming measures. There are no highway consequences as a result of the development.' This revised proposal does not materially alter the validity of these comments in relation to the current scheme.
- 3.3 **Environment Agency** – No comments received, however, again the comments in relation to the previous application continue to apply, which are: 'No objections subject to conditions'.
- 3.4 **Forestry Officer** – No objections subject to a condition requiring tree protection measures to be agreed and implemented during the course of the development. The

siting of the garage closer to the southern boundary compared to the previous proposal will cause some foreseeable damage to conifer trees in the neighbouring garden. However, these trees are of low arboricultural value and should not be regarded as a constraint to the development.

- 3.5 **Countryside Officer** – The bat surveys and proposed mitigation measures are sufficient to ensure the protection of an existing bat roost. Conditions should be attached to any permission.
- 3.6 **Environmental Health Officer** – No objections.
- 3.7 **Contaminated Land Officer** – Conditions requiring the investigation and, if necessary, remediation of any contamination are recommended.
- 3.8 **CPRE** – Objects due to the design being out of keeping with the surrounding built form and the impact on the character of the River Thames.
- 3.9 **Wokingham Borough Council** – No objections
- 3.10 **Neighbours** – Nine letters of objection have been received, including eleven repeat objections following the receipt of amended plans. The objections are summarised as follows:
- The current scheme has not addressed the reasons for refusal laid down in respect of the previous proposal.
 - Impact on neighbouring amenity through overbearing effects and overlooking
 - Overdevelopment of the site
 - Size of the replacement garage is excessive and may contain additional living accommodation
 - Large increase in height and overall size compared to the existing dwelling
 - Design is not in keeping with the character and appearance of the surroundings.
- 3.11 Three letters of support have also been received, which can be summarised as follows:
- The existing dwellings needs to be replaced
 - The proposed dwelling would be 'beautiful' and would improve the impact on the environment compared to the existing
 - Innovative and efficient design
 - Would add to the range of building styles and materials on this part of the River
- 4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**
- 4.1 P08/E0314 - Demolition of existing house and erection of a new house and garage. Refusal of planning permission on 29th October 2009.
- 4.2 P07/E0507 - Demolition of existing house & erection of a new house. Withdrawn prior to determination on 6th July 2007.
- 4.3 P91/S0295 - Change of existing orchid house into domestic accommodation and forming extension/link to existing dwelling. Planning Permission granted on 20th August 1991.
- 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

- T1 – Sustainable Travel
- T2 – Car Parking
- T8 – Development Proposals
- EN1 – Landscape Character
- EN2 – Biodiversity
- EN9 – Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage
- H3 – Design, Quality and Density of Housing Development
- R3 – The River Thames

5.2 Policies of the Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP):

- G1 – General Restraint and Sustainable Development
- G2 – Protection and Enhancement of the Environment
- G6 – Promoting Good Design
- C1 – Landscape Character
- C3 – The River Thames and its Valley
- C4 – The Landscape Setting of Settlements
- C8 – Species Protection
- C9 – Landscape Features
- EP5 – Flood Risk
- EP8 – Contaminated Land
- D1 – Good Design and Local Distinctiveness
- D2 – Vehicle and Bicycle Parking
- D3 – Plot Coverage and Garden Areas
- D4 – Privacy and Daylight
- D8 – Energy, Water and Materials Efficient Design
- D10 – Waste Management
- H4 & H5 – Larger Villages within the Green Belt and Smaller Villages elsewhere throughout the District.
- T1 & T2 – Transport Requirements for New Developments

5.3 Government Guidance:

- PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
- PPS9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
- PPG13 – Transport
- PPS23 – Planning and Pollution Control
- PPS25 – Development and Flood Risk

5.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance

- South Oxfordshire Design Guide July 2008 (SODG)
- South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment

6.0 **PLANNING ISSUES**

6.1 The planning issues that are relevant to this application are:

1. Whether the revised scheme has addressed the reasons for the refusal of the previous application P08/E0314.
2. Other material considerations

6.2 Planning application P08/E0314 was refused for the following two reasons:

1. The proposed development, due to its siting, design, height, size, bulk and massing, would have an overbearing effect on the neighbouring property to the south, Little Grebe. As such the proposal would be detrimental to the amenities of the occupiers of this adjoining residential property and would be contrary to Policies D4 and H4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011

and guidance contained within the South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008.

2. The application site comprises a narrow residential plot located in a prominent position fronting the River Thames. The proposed replacement dwelling, due to its siting, size, height, design, bulk and massing would result in a cramped form of development that would fail to respect the character and appearance of the surrounding built form and the landscape character of the River Thames. As such the proposal would be contrary to Policies G2, G6, C1, C3, C4, D1 and H4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 and guidance contained within the South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008 and PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, PPS3: Housing and PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.
- 6.3 The current proposal has not altered the overall design of the dwelling or garage to any significant extent compared to the previous scheme. The main alterations are in respect of changes to the footprint and siting of the various elements comprising the three floors of the proposed dwelling. These changes, despite the overall reduction in floor area and volume, have a minimal effect in terms of the appearance of the development from the River Thames or Bolney Road. The reduction in the width of the dwelling by little more than 500mm is not sufficient to address the contention that the development would result in a cramped form of development, and overall the scheme would still have the same impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding built form and landscape character of the River Thames.
 - 6.4 The first refusal reason relates solely to the impact of the development on Little Grebe, a detached property lying to south of the application site. The wording in the refusal reason refers to the siting, design, height, size, bulk and massing of the dwelling all contributing to the overbearing effect on the neighbouring property. It is these factors in combination that cause the harm and not necessarily their individual impact. For example if the development is resited it may be that the original height and size would then be acceptable or it may be that if the height and size is reduced but the development stays in the same position that its impact would still cause significant harm.
 - 6.5 The entire length of the southern (side) elevation of the dwelling has been moved so that it is at least 500mm from the boundary with Little Grebe. However, the east section of the south elevation of the dwelling for a length of 11.5 metres has moved 2 metres closer to the shared boundary. It should be noted that at the present time the boundary between the site and Little Grebe is essentially formed by the wall associated with the south elevation of the existing dwelling.
 - 6.6 The ground floor has moved to fill the gap provided as part of the previous scheme between the eastern part of the south elevation of the proposed dwelling and Little Grebe. This gap would have been used as a terrace area in relation to the previous proposal and would have resulted in mutual overlooking between this area and the existing raised terrace at Little Grebe. The resiting of the ground floor results in the omission of the terrace area on the south side of the proposed dwelling and therefore removes the issue of overlooking between the external areas of the two properties. The ground floor terrace for the new property would now be located in the gap created alongside the northern elevation where there would be no overlooking of the adjoining property, Heyeswood House.
 - 6.7 Despite moving to within 500mm of the boundary with Little Grebe, the repositioned ground floor element would not have a significant impact on the amenity of Little Grebe. This element has a height of 4.5 metres, whilst the existing dwelling has an almost

identical eaves height and is 500mm closer than the proposed dwelling. As such I consider that the eastern section of the ground floor element of the proposed dwelling will have a lesser impact than the corresponding part of the existing dwelling.

- 6.8 The eastern most section of the first floor has been moved away from the boundary with Little Grebe compared to the previous scheme so that this part of the building is now between 1.5 and 2.5 metres away from the boundary. It should also be noted that like the previous scheme the first floor has been moved 3.6 metres away from the boundary of the site with the River Thames compared to the existing building. This set back of the eastern elevation as well as the removal of the overhanging part of the existing first floor area would afford the occupiers of Little Grebe more extensive views looking northwards along the River than is currently possible. The resiting of the first floor further away from the boundary with Little Grebe has meant that the majority of the first floor of the development would be further away from the boundary with Little Grebe than the existing side elevation and pitched roof of the existing property and therefore will have a lesser impact. This is illustrated in drawing number 08.227.PL.115 **attached** at Appendix B.
- 6.9 The position and design of the building in respect of the ground and first floor elements of the remaining length of the southern elevation (approximately 18 metres) has not altered, apart from in respect of the 500mm set back from the boundary with Little Grebe. As before, where the proposed dwelling projects beyond the front (west) building line of Little Grebe, it has been designed so as to be set away from the boundary at first floor level in respect of the west elevation such that this element of the dwelling would be over 2.5 metres from the boundary and would not have an overbearing impact on the west elevation of Little Grebe. The ground floor element would be slightly further away from the boundary with Little Grebe than the existing and would not be significantly greater in height.
- 6.10 The part of the proposed dwelling that lies parallel with the closest part of the side elevation of Little Grebe (for a length of approximately 10 metres) is 500mm further back than the existing dwelling and although this appears to be a relatively small setback it makes a significant difference in terms of the impact on Little Grebe. Drawing 08.227.PL.115 indicates the additional impact of the proposed dwelling compared to the existing. Where it lies adjacent to the main side elevation of Little Grebe, the main impact is concentrated on the loss of light to a small downstairs utility room and two dormer windows relating to bathrooms. At ground floor level, Little Grebe has a relatively open layout which is well lit through large areas of glazing in its east and west elevations. Officers therefore do not consider that the overshadowing of a small utility room window would result in any significant loss of amenity, particularly given that the utility room is already overshadowed as it lies below the eaves level of the existing dwelling. Furthermore, the additional overshadowing of the bathroom dormer windows would also not result in a significant loss of amenity as these windows relate to secondary accommodation and are north facing.
- 6.11 Overall Officers consider that the current proposal, due to the set back away from the boundary with Little Grebe by 500mm and the resiting of the ground and first floors of the property in the eastern section of the proposed dwelling, has addressed the main areas of concern in respect of the previous application. Furthermore, the current scheme does not significantly alter the impact of the development on the amenity of the occupiers of Heyeswood House, and as such this impact is acceptable. It should also be noted that the current proposal, like the previous scheme, would not result in any significant overlooking of either Little Grebe or Heyeswood House. There are several windows, including one relating to a covered balcony area, in the south elevation of the existing dwelling that allow overlooking of the side and terrace areas of Little Grebe.

The removal of such overlooking windows would be a significant gain to the amenities of the occupiers of Little Grebe.

- 6.12 The proposed garage, despite being repositioned very close to the southern boundary of the site with Little Grebe, would not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity.

Other Material Considerations

- 6.13 This revised application does not result in any material change in terms of the impact on protected and non-protected trees on and adjacent to the site or in respect of any highway considerations such as parking and highway safety. Like the previous scheme, the current application is accompanied by a pre-assessment report indicating that the proposed dwelling would achieve Code Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, which is greater than the level required having regard to the SODG. As such, the proposal complies with Policy D8 of the SOLP in relation to the efficient use of water, energy and materials.
- 6.14 A Flood Risk Assessment accompanies the application and this indicates that the development is acceptable in terms of flood risk.

7.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

7.1 **That planning permission be refused for the following reason:**

- 1. The application site comprises a narrow residential plot located in a prominent position fronting the River Thames. The proposed replacement dwelling, due to its siting, size, height, design, bulk and massing would result in a cramped form of development that would fail to respect the character and appearance of the surrounding built form and the landscape character of the River Thames. As such the proposal would be contrary to Policies G2, G6, C1, C3, C4, D1 and H4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 and guidance contained within the South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008 and PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, PPS3: Housing and PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.**

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