
APPLICATION NO.	P09/W0204
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL PLANNING PERMISSION
REGISTERED	27.03.09
PARISH	SOUTH STOKE
WARD MEMBER(S)	Mrs A Ducker Mrs P Slatter
APPLICANT	SOHA Housing Ltd
SITE	Land to rear of 5 - 9 Wallingford Road, South Stoke
PROPOSAL	Demolition of existing garages and construction of 2 no. two bedroom flats with access from Wallingford Road (As amended by amended version of Design & Access statement accompanying letter from Agent dated 17 April 2009).
AMENDMENTS	Amended version of Design & Access statement received on 17 April 2009 and Design & Access statement received 24 April 2009 & amplified by additional information from Agent dated 27 April 2009
GRID REFERENCE	460317/183863
OFFICER	Miss G Napier

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application has been referred to the Planning Committee because the officer recommendation conflicts with that of the Parish Council.
- 1.2 The application site is shown on the OS plan **attached** at Appendix 1. The site lies within South Stoke and is located to the rear of the ribbon of residential development on the eastern side of Wallingford Road. There is an existing terrace of three properties to the rear of No's 13 and 14 Wallingford Road. The site is currently occupied by 12 garages which are in three blocks. SOHA held pre-application discussions with South Stoke Parish Council in 2008.
- 1.3 The site lies within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The development proposes the demolition of the garages and the erection of 2no. two bedroom flats with associated parking . The flats would be offered under a shared ownership scheme by SOHA. Access to the flats would be from Wallingford Road. Accompanying the application is a Design and Access Statement that includes a Code for Sustainable Homes pre assessment estimator. This indicates that the new flats will reach Code level 3 star for the Code for Sustainable Homes. A copy of the plans is **attached** at Appendix 2, the supporting information is available on the Councils website.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 South Stoke Parish Council

- Recommends refusal - The existing entrance is narrow and often obscured by cars parked on the road. The line of sight to the north is very limited. The garages are not associated with the residential properties on the site and many are not used. Concerns that allowing the development will set a precedent for a number of other plots on the edge of the village. No assurance has been given by SOHA that the homes will be for local people on the housing register. It is therefore considered that the application is a commercial development and will not meet a local need for Affordable Housing.

3.2 Highway Authority

- No objection but a condition is recommended.
- Access to highway is via a narrow private drive however, as the proposal includes the demolition of 12 garages there would not be any intensification of use of this access, indeed its use may be reduced.
- An appropriate level of off-street parking, in accordance with standards, would be provided for the proposed flats.

3.3 Thames Water

- There are public sewers crossing the site and no building works are permitted within 3 metres of the sewers without Thames Water's approval.

3.4 Environmental Services – Environmental Protection

- The proposed residential use of the site would be sensitive to any contamination and as required by PPS23 a precautionary approach should be adopted
- Therefore a condition is recommended requiring an investigation for contamination is carried out before development commences

3.5 Environmental Services – Health and Housing

- No objection but conditions are recommended:
- Hours of operation – construction/demolition sites
- External lighting – protection from light pollution

3.6 Neighbour Representation

- 1 Objection.
- The development could set a precedent for further social housing to be built in South Stoke which could have a detrimental effect on a small village.
- There is the potential for loss of privacy.
- The design of the new development is lacking consideration on: Garden and parking space, noise, dust and pollution disruption during construction, the introduction of 2 new households could disturb the peace.

3.7 Countryside Officer

- No objection. The garages do not appear to be suitable for roosting bats and there is no evidence of bats (droppings or staining) around the exterior of the garages.

3.8 Forestry Officer

- No comments to date

3.9 **Thames Valley Police Design Advisor**

- No objection. The Design and Access Statement advises that the applicant intends to achieve the Secured by Design Award for these two properties.

3.10 **Housing**

- Supports the affordable housing on this site

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 P68/H0295. Erection of 12 garages with bases and forecourts and improvement to junction. Planning Permission on 21 June 1968.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 **Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011, policies:**

- C2 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- G1 General restraint and sustainable development
- G2 Protection and enhancement of the environment
- G5 Making the best use of land
- G6 Promoting good design
- D1 Good design and local distinctiveness
- D3 Plot coverage and garden sizes
- D4 Privacy and daylight
- D6 Design against crime
- D8 Energy, water and material efficient design
- D10 Waste management
- H4 Housing in the towns and larger villages outside the green belt
- H5 Larger villages within the Green Belt and smaller villages throughout the district
- H7 Range of dwelling types and size
- H8 Dwelling densities
- T1 Transport requirements for new development
- C9 Landscape features

Planning Policy Statement 1
Planning Policy Statement 3
Planning Policy Statement 23

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

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

1. Principle of development
2. Development density
3. Parking and amenity
4. Sustainability
5. Housing mix

1. Principle

- 6.2 The principle of new housing development in South Stoke is acceptable under Policy H5 of the Local Plan as it is a sustainable location where services and facilities are available. Limited infill and backland development is permitted within the village, provided that it meets with the criteria of Policy H4. Your Officers consider that the development complies with the criteria under this policy for the reasons set out below.
- 6.3 The information accompanying the application advises that only 6 of the 12 garages are currently used. Three garages are used by the occupants of properties on Wallingford Road that have on plot driveways and garages and others are licensed to people living in Woodcote and Goring. The supporting information also states that

there are many other garage courts in the area that have vacancies and your officers therefore consider that the loss of the garages is acceptable.

6.4 i) **Loss of open space**

The existence of the garage blocks means that this is not an important open space which would be lost as a result of the proposed development.

6.5 ii) **Design and Scale**

The properties in the surrounding area are two storey semi-detached and terraced properties and as such the two storey flats which have a modest footprint (some 10.3 m X 7.8 m) are considered to be in keeping with the form and scale of existing development in the area. The flats would be constructed in facing brickwork with a concrete tile clad pitched roof and white Upvc windows. The surrounding properties are constructed in red brick, some are fully rendered whilst others are partially rendered. Some properties have hipped roofs, others have pitched roofs and many have Upvc fenestration. Your officers therefore consider that the design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development are in keeping with its surroundings in accordance with criteria (ii) of Policy H4.

6.6 iii) **Character of the area and Impact on the AONB**

The character of the surrounding area comprises semi-detached and terraced properties which are likely to have been built during the 1930's and early 40's. This part of Wallingford Road is a ribbon of development along the eastern side of the B4009 and the properties front on to the highway. There is one terrace of three properties located to the rear of the main building line which fronts on to the garage court. The area around the site is very open due to the low level boundary fences which surround the gardens. There are open fields immediately to the rear of the site.

6.7 The dwellings that surround the garage court are prominent in long distance views on the approach in to South Stoke from Wallingford and Woodcote. As a result of their single storey scale however, the garages themselves are not particularly prominent within the landscape.

6.8 The density of the development that is proposed is higher than that in the surrounding area due to the size of the plots and large gardens at existing properties. Although the new flats would be more prominent in long distance views than the existing garages, they would be read in the context of the surrounding dwellings and would not have a detrimental impact on the special landscape quality and distinctiveness of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Your Officers consider the development of this site for housing, replacing the 1960's garage block will be an improvement to the character of the area in accordance with criteria (iii) of Policy H4 and with Policy C2 of the Local Plan.

6.9 iv) **Impact on neighbour amenity**

Neighbour concerns relate mainly to the potential that this could set a precedent for further development in South Stoke and the loss of privacy due to overlooking from the new properties.

6.10 Section 3.2.6 of the South Oxfordshire Design Guide recommends a distance of 25m between the backs of properties; this is in order to maintain privacy. The proposed flats are approximately 40m from the rear of the houses along Wallingford Road and the side elevation of the flats is some 22 metres from the front elevation of the terrace at the rear. Only one first floor window is proposed within the side (south) elevation of the flats and this serves a landing.

- 6.11 The gardens belonging to No's 10 – 12 Wallingford Road are located at the front and all of the properties have low boundary fences surrounding their gardens. As such, none of the gardens are very private and can be seen clearly by users of the garages and are overlooked by the occupants of many of the neighbouring properties.
- 6.12 Although the flats are within a backland location, having regard to the distance between them and the existing dwellings and to existing levels of privacy as well as to the careful design and sympathetic location of new openings, your officers consider that the proposed flats would not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of the occupants of neighbouring dwellings in accordance with criteria (iv) and (v) of Policy H4.
- 6.13 **Highway Issues.** The information accompanying the application advises that only a small number of garage users will be displaced as a result of their demolition and as such your officers do not consider that the development will result in an increase in on-street parking to the detriment of highway safety.

The Highway officer has commented on the narrowness of the drive which provides access to the garage court from Wallingford Road. However, the demolition of the garages and their replacement with two flats is likely to reduce the intensification of use of the access. Your officers therefore consider that the proposal accords with criteria (iv) of Policy H4.

- 6.14 **2. Development Density**
The site measures some 0.049 hectares and as such, the density of the development is some 40 dwellings per hectare. This is relatively high in a village location but given the local requirement for affordable housing it is considered that this density is acceptable. It also complies with government guidelines of between 30 – 50 dwellings per hectare as specified in PPS3.
- 6.15 **3. Parking and amenity.** Three parking spaces would be provided for the new flats and the Highway Authority is satisfied with this level of provision.
- 6.17 The amenity areas for the new flats measure some 30 sq m. This is below the South Oxfordshire Design Guide requirement for a two bed property (50 sq. m) but there is a large recreation field providing play provision for the whole village within 500 m of the site.
- 6.18 **4. Sustainability.** The proposed flats include a number of sustainable design features; this includes solar panels on the front elevation. From the supporting information submitted with this application the Design and Access Statement states that Code Star 3 level of the Code for Sustainable Homes will be achieved. This complies with Policy D8 of the adopted Local Plan and exceeds the requirements in section 4.4.1 of the South Oxfordshire Design Guide.
- 6.19 **5. Housing mix.** Policy H7 of the Local Plan seeks a housing mix on all developments of 2 or more dwellings. The application proposes the provision of 2no. 2 bed dwellings and a need for two bed properties was identified by the South Stoke Rural Housing Needs Survey which was completed in July 2008. The proposal therefore meets local need and the proposed mix is acceptable.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 This scheme will provide 2no. two bed flats on a brownfield site in a sustainable village location. The proposal is not considered to cause any significant harm to the special landscape quality of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the

amenity of nearby neighbours or highway safety and parking. It is therefore recommended that planning permission is granted subject to appropriate conditions.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

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

1. **Commencement within 3 years**
2. **Sample materials (all)**
3. **Sustainable methods of construction in accordance with the submitted Code for Sustainable Homes pre assessment**
4. **Contaminated land survey**
5. **Parking and manoeuvring area as plan**
6. **Hours of operation – construction and demolition**
7. **External lighting specification**

N.B Safe removal of Asbestos

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