
APPLICATION NO.	P09/E0710
APPLICATION TYPE	Full
REGISTERED	20 July 2009
PARISH	Chinnor
WARD MEMBER(S)	Mr Geoff Andrews, Mr Christopher Hood
APPLICANT	Millbrook Land Planning and Dev. Ltd.
SITE	Middle Farmhouse, Crowell Road, Chinnor.
PROPOSAL	Proposed residential development consisting of 2x2-bedroom dwellings and 2x3-bedroom dwellings and associated garages at Middle Farmhouse, Crowell Road, Chinnor with access from Crowell Road and Greenwood Avenue(as amended by drawing nos.MFH/1A, MFH/2B, MFH/6A and MFH/8A acc email from Agent dated 11 August 2009).
GRID REFERENCE	475050/200230
OFFICER	Mrs H Moore

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application is referred to Planning Committee because the Officer recommendation differs from the Parish Council's views.
- 1.2 The site lies within the main confines of Chinnor. It fronts onto the B4009 and lies adjacent to the Conservation Area. Development in the area is characterised by residential properties, mainly two storey. The site lies between housing to the west and east, and has open land to the rear. It is served by two vehicular accesses and the trees along the front of the site are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. The existing house on the land, Middle Farmhouse is a mature two storey dwelling with a large garden to the side and rear of the property.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is to retain Middle Farmhouse on the land, to erect 3 new dwellings with garages on the side garden, and one new dwelling with garage to the rear. A new double garage is proposed to serve the existing farmhouse. The houses proposed on the side garden comprise one 3 bed dwelling, and two semi-detached properties each with two bedrooms. The proposed property to the rear is a three bed dwelling. The properties on the side garden are proposed in red brick with natural slate roofs, and the property to the rear in red brick with a tiled roof. The new house at the northern end of the site (plot 1) would use an existing access, which exits onto Greenwood Avenue. The remainder of the dwellings, 4 in total, would use the existing access which exits onto the B4009. That access is proposed to be widened to serve the increased number of dwellings.
- 2.2 Amended plans have been submitted which show the re-siting of one garage, the lowering of garage roofs and insertion of side windows to take into account comments from the Crime Prevention Officer.
- 2.3 A design and access statement and a sustainability statement accompany the application, full details of which can be viewed on the Council's web site www.southoxon.gov.uk In brief, the agent points out that the site lies within Chinnor, a

large village with a range of services and facilities. The development of the site complies with Government guidelines to make the best use of land within settlements. A mix of dwelling types and sizes are proposed in line with the Council's policies. The agent considers that the houses have been designed to respect the privacy of adjoining properties and to fit in with the character of surrounding properties in terms of design and materials. The scheme retains the protected trees along the frontage of the site, and is in accordance with the advice received from the Highways Officer. The agent confirms that the houses would be built to a high specification of energy saving and environmental sustainability.

2.4 A location plan and details of the proposals are **attached** at Appendix 1.

3.0 **CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **Chinnor Parish council** – Objection raised. The proposals represent an overdevelopment of the site and an unneighbourly form of development. Access to the site is poor and the designs of the dwellings are unsatisfactory.

OCC Highways – No objection raised subject to imposition of conditions requiring access alterations to be carried out as proposed, provision of parking and turning areas and retention of garages as such.

Forestry officer – There are 4 maple trees on the front of the site covered by a tree preservation order. The scheme shows satisfactory retention of the trees. No objection raised subject to imposition of conditions requiring tree protection measures to be put in place and the submission of a landscaping scheme.

Countryside officer – No objection. The on-site provision of nest boxes, bat boxes and a pond is recommended. An informative should be added to any permission concerning nesting birds.

Environmental protection officer – The site may have been subject to contamination. A contamination investigation and remediation condition should be imposed on any planning permission.

Police Crime Prevention Design Service – No objection, subject to the imposition of an informative concerning security. Guidance is provided concerning side windows and security.

Neighbour responses – Comments and objections have been received from three properties. The objections raised include the following matters –

- This is a large development on previously open land. The proposals represent overdevelopment, very dense and out of keeping with the character of the area.
- This development would create a precedent for additional development towards Chinnor Cement works.
- The proposal is unsatisfactory adjacent to a Conservation Area.
- There are serious traffic implications in an area already clogged with parked cars, with added complications with the one way section of Greenwood Avenue.

One neighbour has responded raising no objection to the proposals.

Any additional comments received in relation to amended plans will be reported verbally to the Committee.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 In the 1970's and 1980's there have been refusals of planning permission for

development on land to the rear of Middle Farmhouse, extending out into the open countryside.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP) – Policies G1, G2, G5, G6, C9, EP8, CON7, D1, D2, D3, D4, D6, D8, D10, H4, H7, T1, T2.
South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008.
Government Guidance – PPS1, PPS3, PPS23.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 The proposed development would be located within the main confines of the village of Chinnor which is a settlement where residential development is acceptable in principle. Development proposals are assessed against the criteria of Policies H4 and H7 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan. The planning issues that are relevant to this application are:

- Whether the development would result in the loss of an open space or view of public, environmental or ecological value;
- Whether a mix of dwelling types and sizes is provided.
- Whether the size and appearance of the proposals would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area;
- Whether the living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers would be compromised and the development would provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers;
- Whether the development would result in an unacceptable deficiency of off-street parking spaces for the resultant dwellings or other conditions prejudicial to highway safety; and
- Whether the proposal would incorporate sufficient sustainability and waste management measures.

6.2 Loss of open space.

Criterion (i) of Policy H4 of the SOLP requires that an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost, nor an important public view spoilt. The site forms part of the side and rear garden of the frontage property. The site is largely enclosed by the trees along the frontage which are proposed to be retained. Whilst there would be some loss of views through the site to open land to the rear, much wider attractive open views are available on exit into the nearby open countryside. In terms of ecology, important trees on the site will be retained, as discussed in subsequent paragraphs. As such, Officers consider that the proposed development of the site would not involve the loss of a valuable public space or trees of high amenity value.

6.3 Mix of dwelling types and sizes.

Policy H7 of the SOLP requires that a mix of dwelling types and sizes are provided to meet the needs of current and future households in the district. This development provides 2x3 bed and 2x2 bed dwellings, in accordance with the Council's policies and to reflect the acknowledged shortage of 2 bed dwellings in the district.

6.4 Character and appearance

Criteria (ii) and (iii) of Policy H4 of the SOLP seek to ensure that the design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development are in keeping with its surroundings and that the character of the area is not adversely affected. In terms of scale and height, the height of the proposed dwellings on the site frontage have been kept low, to just over 7m in height, to reflect the fact that adjoining dwellings to the east are similarly

low level. In addition, the proposed house to the rear is chalet style with restricted height to minimize intrusion into open landscape. In terms of scale, the depths of the houses are reasonable, resulting in modestly proportioned dwellings. The roofs of the garages have been reduced in height to give views through the site between the houses. In terms of appearance, traditional materials of red brick, natural slates and tile are proposed for construction. Whilst the Parish Council are concerned about the design of the dwellings, the cottage style properties incorporate simple cottage windows with brick arches over, traditional dormer windows and porch detailing. In these circumstances, the appearance of the properties is considered by Officers to be acceptable.

6.5 In terms of the pattern of development, whilst objections have been raised locally to what is perceived to be an overdevelopment of the site, the proposed development is not a dense scheme in terms of Government Guidance. However, this relatively low density of development does reflect the character of the surrounding area. Also in terms of the pattern of development, two tier development has been permitted to the east of the site (Hillside and Chiltern View). Accordingly, the erection of a new dwelling to the rear of Middle Farmhouse would be in keeping with the character of surrounding development. Trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order lie along the frontage of the site, and the proposed development has been designed to ensure that these prominent frontage trees are retained. Accordingly, Officers consider that the erection of four additional dwellings on the site would maintain, and be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area, and would preserve the setting of the adjoining Conservation Area.

6.6 Living conditions.

Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the SOLP requires that there are no overriding amenity objections. Criterion (v) explains that if the proposal constitutes backland development, it should not create problems of privacy or access. In terms of the relationship with adjoining dwellings, the proposed dwellings on the frontage have been designed so that the main windows face down their own gardens. There is significant screening along the eastern boundary of the site which should protect the privacy of adjoining properties. The garage of plot 1 has been moved back to ensure that it doesn't obscure the window of the adjoining house. With regard to the proposed dwelling to the rear of Middle Farmhouse, this involves the formation of an access drive into the rear garden. A 1.8m fence is proposed between the proposed drive and the adjoining property to the west, together with additional planting. The windows of the new dwelling essentially face front and back so that adjoining properties should not suffer from any significant overlooking. Whilst the Parish Council has expressed concern about unneighbourliness, the scheme has been designed to minimise intrusion to neighbours, and none of the occupiers of directly adjoining properties have raised objection to the proposals. Each of the proposed dwellings would benefit from a garden and parking provision which meets the Council's standards. Each dwelling would provide good living conditions for future occupiers. As such, Officers consider that the proposed dwellings would not significantly adversely affect the amenity of adjoining dwellings and would provide good living conditions for future occupiers.

6.7 Highways and parking.

Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the SOLP requires that there are no highway objections, as does criterion (v) in relation to backland development. The proposal is to use the existing vehicle accesses to serve the existing and proposed properties. The County Council's Highway Officer has commented –
'The proposal utilises two existing vehicular accesses. Access to plot 1 would be via the existing access to Greenwood Avenue; whilst this access is close to a junction and has the potential to cause conflict between highway users, it would not be subject to any

intensification of use and so would not present any greater hazard than currently exists. Access to plots 2,3 and 4 would be via an existing altered access to Crowell Road. Visibility at the access would meet recognised guidance and the proposed alterations would allow two cars to pass on egress and ingress. The Local Highway Authority considers the access arrangements are appropriate and would not be detrimental to the safety and convenience of highway users'. Each property would be provided with a garage, parking spaces and manoeuvring areas, all in accordance with the Council's standards. Accordingly, notwithstanding concerns expressed locally, Officers consider that the access and parking arrangements are acceptable.

6.8 Sustainability and waste management.

Information submitted with the application confirms the measures that would be put in place to ensure that the new dwellings would meet Code Level 1 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. These include, for example, rainwater harvesting, energy efficient light fittings, high degree of insulation, A+ rated white goods and composting provision. Provision for waste and re-cycling will also be provided on site.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The proposals would comply with the relevant Development Plan Policies, and it is considered that, subject to the attached conditions, the proposed development would not materially harm the living conditions of nearby residents or the character and appearance of the area, and the setting of the adjoining Conservation Area.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

That planning permission be granted subject to the imposition of the following conditions:

1. **Commencement detailed 3 years**
2. **Sample of all materials to be submitted and agreed**
3. **No garage conversion into accommodation.**
4. **Construction and retention of driveway, parking and turning.**
5. **Tree protection measures to be put in place in accordance with details to be provided.**
6. **Access alterations to be undertaken prior to occupation of any new property.**
7. **Landscaping scheme.**
8. **Contamination investigation.**
9. **Sustainability measures to be incorporated.**

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