
APPLICATION NOS.	P09/E0940 and P09/E0941/LB
APPLICATION TYPE	Full and Listed Building
REGISTERED	01.10.2009
PARISH	Mapledurham
WARD MEMBERS	Mr Robert Peasgood Mr Malcolm Leonard
APPLICANT	Mr William Lewis
SITE	The Old Laundry House, Main Street, Mapledurham
PROPOSALS	Restoration and conversion to holiday cottage
AMENDMENTS	Further information received on 10 November 2009
GRID REFERENCE	467030/176741
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 is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A. The Old Laundry is a Grade II listed building that is currently empty and in a poor state of repair. The building is small in size being single storey and only comprising two rooms, however, it has a large open area contained behind the Grade II listed walls surrounding the property. The front elevation of the building forms part of the boundary walling fronting the highway as does the side (south west) elevation of the building, which fronts onto the adjacent car park serving St Margaret’s Church. The church is Grade I listed as is the nearby Mapledurham House. The site is also within the Mapledurham Conservation Area.

1.3 The listing description of the Old Laundry and its walls, including those surrounding the church car park is repeated below:

‘Wash house and attached walls. Probably early C19. Red brick with random flared headers; slate hipped roof with lead ridges; brick centre ridge stack. Single storey, 2-bay range. 4-panel door to right. Blind window to left. Interior not inspected. Subsidiary attached walls. Probably built at the expense of William IV for his son Lord Augustus Fitzclarence as part of the Vicarage complex (q.v.). Part of the complex of garden walls at Mapledurham. Included for group value.’

2.0 **THE PROPOSAL**

2.1 The applications seek to convert the existing building into a holiday cottage. The building would not be extended but would need extensive refurbishment to bring it into this, or indeed any other use. The works to the building include re-instating a window opening in the south west elevation, replacing existing windows and installing a new bathroom through reversible stud partitioning. Extensive repair works to the walls and roof of the building are also required. The extensive grounds of the building would be laid out as a garden area for the cottage.

2.2 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.

3.0 **CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 **Mapledurham Parish Council** – The planning application should be refused due to the lack of off-street parking provision and the listed building application should be refused due to inappropriate replacement joinery.
- 3.2 **Conservation Officer** – Supports the proposal subject to conditions.
- 3.3 **OCC Highways** – Objects due to the lack of parking provision and the consequences for highway safety and congestion.
- 3.4 **OCC Archaeology** – No comments
- 3.5 **Environment Agency** – No comments. The Environment Agency’s Standing Advice should be followed. This can be accessed through the following link, ...
- 3.6 **Contaminated Land Officer** – Conditions should be imposed on any permission to investigate for and, if necessary, remediate any contamination on the site.
- 3.7 **Monson (Drainage Consultants)** – The EA’s Standing Advice is relevant. Details of foul drainage should be agreed prior to any development.
- 3.8 **CPRE** – Objects due to the lack of parking and the impact on the infrastructure of the village.
- 3.9 **Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society** – Objects due to the proposed works to the listed building and the lack of parking.
- 3.10 **Neighbours** – One letter of objection received raising the following concerns:
- lack of parking provision and impact on highway congestion and safety
 - lack of control over use of the property as a holiday cottage
 - difficulties in securing water supplies and providing for foul drainage

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 P05/E1018 - Layout hard tennis court and convert former laundry building to changing rooms and pavilion. Planning Permission granted on 16th November 2005. This permission has now lapsed.
- 4.2 P06/E0293 - Erection of a single storey side extension with glazed link, provision of new access via Church car park and conversion of existing building to residential use. Refusal of Planning Permission on 5th September 2006. This application was refused by the Planning Committee for the following reason:

“The proposed development, due to the extent and location of the proposed works, would fail to respect the character and special historic and architectural qualities of the Grade II listed building and attached walling. Furthermore, the site lies in Mapledurham Conservation Area, and the proposed development, particularly in relation to the opening within the wall of the site to form the vehicular access would detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. As a result the proposal is contrary to guidance contained within Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment, which seeks to ensure that development respects the character, appearance and setting of the historic environment and is contrary to Policies G2, G6, C2, D1, E8, CON2, CON3, CON4, CON5 and CON7 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011.”

It should be noted that this proposal did include off-street parking provision.

- 4.3 P06/E0294/LB - Erection of a single storey side extension with glazed link, provision of a new access via Church car park, construction of a mezzanine floor, insertion of one new rooflight and works associated with conversion of the property to residential. Refusal of Listed Building Consent on 5th September 2006. This application accompanied the above application for planning permission and was refused for the following reason:

“The proposed development, due to the extent and location of the proposed works, would fail to respect the character and special historic and architectural qualities of the Grade II listed building and attached walling. As a result the proposal is contrary to guidance contained within Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment, which seeks to ensure that development respects the character, appearance and setting of the historic environment and is contrary to Policies CON2, CON3 and CON4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011.”

- 4.4 P07/E1031 – Change of use to bakery. Planning Permission granted on 30th July 2008. This proposal did not include any off-street parking provision.
- 4.5 P08/E0245/LB - Conversion of The Old Laundry to use as a bakery, works to include rebuilding of chimney, repair of sash windows, repair of door frames, plastering of internal walls, connection of services, fitted kitchen, floor coverings and heating. Listed Building Consent granted on 29th July 2008.

5.0 **POLICY AND GUIDANCE**

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

-G1, G2, G4, G6, C1, C2, C4, CON2, CON3, CON4, CON5, CON7, EP4, EP6, EP7, EP8, D1, D2, D3, D4, D6, D7, D8, D10, H6, E8, TSM5, T1, T2

- 5.3 Government Guidance:

-PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
-PPS3 – Housing
-PPS5 – Planning for the Historic Environment
-PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
-PPS23 – Planning and Pollution Control
-PPS25 – Development and Flood Risk
-Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism

- 5.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance

-South Oxfordshire Design Guide July 2008 (SODG)

6.0 **ISSUES**

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

1. The principle of the change of use
2. The impact on the listed structures
3. The impact on the Mapledurham Conservation Area
4. The impact on the Chilterns AONB.
5. The impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers
6. Highway considerations
7. Other material considerations

In respect of the listed building the only issue is the impact of the work and use on the building's special historical and architectural qualities.

The Principle of the Development

- 6.2 The application site is located in Mapledurham, which is a village deemed incapable of supporting new residential development with regard to Policy H5 of the SOLP. Indeed new residential development would be generally assessed under Policy H6 of the SOLP, which states that new houses will not be permitted in the countryside or in settlements not listed as being capable of supporting new housing. The proposal consists of the conversion of the existing building, and although Policy H6 restricts new residential development in Mapledurham, Policy E8 of the SOLP relates to the reuse of existing rural buildings. Therefore, conversion of a building to a residential use may be acceptable under Policy E8. Compliance with Policy E8 is subject to several criteria, including the need for other uses of the building to be explored and found to be unacceptable in planning terms.
- 6.3 Planning permission did exist for the use of the building as a pavilion/changing rooms in connection with the tennis court approved within its grounds and does still exist for the use of the building as a bakery. These uses have been found to be suitable, however, there is no indication that the extant permission for the bakery will be implemented and as such this permission cannot be relied upon to allow for the upkeep of the building. A residential use of the building would necessitate the complete restoration of the building to bring it up to a standard capable of supporting such a use. A residential use of the building and the associated grounds is also likely to be continuous and, as a result the building is likely to be better maintained. The building could be used for a commercial use such as a small office, workshop or storage facility. In terms of Policy E8 such a commercial use would be more acceptable than a residential use, but again a commercial use is more subject to market conditions and the viability and requirements of the user of the building. Thus, when compared to a residential use, a commercial use is less likely to ensure the long term future of the building, and this is clearly a pressing issue given the deterioration of the building and the importance of its long term retention. Whilst Officers consider it has not been established that a residential use of the building would be the only appropriate use for the building, the benefit of the proposal to the listed structures forming the application site is a material consideration of some weight.
- 6.4 As outlined above, a residential use of the building would secure the short term and, in all likelihood, the longer term future of the building. Furthermore, the associated use of the land as residential garden would also help to ensure the upkeep of not only the building but also the grounds, including the listed walling. The building is clearly in need of substantial work and investment and this application represents a good opportunity to secure the future of the listed building and the listed walling around the boundaries of the site. In light of this it is considered that the proposal complies broadly with the advice contained within PPS5, which includes an objective wherever possible to ensure that, 'heritage assets are put to an appropriate and viable use that is consistent with their conservation' (Para. 7).
- 6.5 The most recent application for a residential use of the building (P06/E0293) was only refused due to the impact on the listed structures and character and appearance of the Conservation Area. As such the principle of the conversion of the building to a residential use was established despite this refusal, and there have been no material changes to planning policy since this time. Indeed, the further deterioration of the building places a greater emphasis on finding a viable use to secure its upkeep.
- 6.6 Policy TSM5 of the SOLP relates to self catering holiday homes and states that such proposals should be considered in relation to the housing policies of the SOLP and

Policy E8 in relation to the conversion of rural buildings, which have been discussed above. Guidance contained within PPS4 is also relevant to this proposal, particularly at Para. EC7.1, which states, 'local planning authorities should support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit rural businesses, communities and visitors and which utilise and enrich, rather than harm, the character of the countryside'. Further advice at Para. EC12.1 states 'Re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations and for some types of building.' Many of the existing dwellings within Mapledurham provide tourist accommodation, and this site is suitable for this type of accommodation bearing in mind the landscape and heritage of the area. Furthermore, the building is domestic in character and lends itself to a residential use with minimal alterations beyond restoration works. The use would also help to ensure the long term upkeep of the listed building.

The Impact on the Listed Structures

- 6.7 The existing building and the attached walling are Grade II listed and as such the upkeep and long term sustainability of the listed structures is a material consideration of significant weight. The building contains several structural defects and without proper maintenance it is likely that the condition of the building will worsen significantly. It is acknowledged that the Local Authority could carry out urgent works to the building itself or require the owner to carry out works to ensure the preservation of the building. The works required under these powers are restricted to either emergency works to the building such as making it water tight in relation to urgent works, or to works to provide for the proper preservation of the building.
- 6.8 However, despite the benefits of securing the future of the listed structures in the long term, the impact of the proposed works on the listed structures requires careful consideration having regard to Policies CON3 and CON4 of the SOLP in particular. Policy CON3 requires that any alteration does not diminish the building's special historical or architectural qualities and Policy CON4 seeks to ensure that any change of use of a listed building protects the character and historic and architectural interest of the building.
- 6.9 Unlike applications P06/E0293 and P06/E0294/LB, this proposal does not involve an extension to the building or an opening through the boundary wall. The proposed works are largely limited to those of restoration with new works including reversible stud partitioning to form a new bathroom. The applicant has outlined a schedule of works to address the Conservation Officer's initial concerns, which included concerns regarding the proposals to remove the stone flag floor and install a chemical damp proof course. The applicant has addressed all the Conservation Officer's concerns and the Conservation Officer has confirmed that the proposed works are acceptable.
- 6.10 In view of the fact that the building is in much need of restoration and that the proposed works to the building will preserve the historic and architectural interest of the listed building, the proposal complies with Policies CON3 and CON4 of the SOLP.

The Impact on the Mapledurham Conservation Area

- 6.11 Policy CON7 of the SOLP seeks to ensure that the character and appearance of conservation areas is preserved and where possible enhanced. The sympathetic restoration of the building will enhance its appearance and its positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Unlike the 2006 applications, there are no material changes to the appearance of the building that would detract from the Conservation Area, and Officers consider that the proposal complies with Policy CON7.

The Impact on the Chilterns AONB

- 6.12 Again due to the restoration of the building and the limited visual impact of the proposals, Officers do not consider that the proposal would harm the special landscape qualities of the Chilterns AONB. As such the proposal complies with Policy C2 of the SOLP.

The Impact on the Amenity of Neighbouring Occupiers

- 6.13 The restoration of the building and its grounds should provide some benefit to the local community in terms of providing an active use of the site and reducing the likelihood of crime and antisocial behaviour that could be encouraged by the deteriorated state of the site as existing. The site lies close to neighbouring residential properties, and the use of the building as a holiday cottage is appropriate. The use of the building would not give rise to any harmful impacts to the detriment of the surrounding occupiers.

Highway Considerations

- 6.14 The proposal does not include any parking provision. The site has large grounds and there would be space for parking within the site, however, as found with the 2006 applications, a proposal to form a vehicular opening within the listed wall would be likely to be detrimental to the listed structure. There is space on adjoining land for the parking of vehicles, however, this is in private ownership and there is no indication or reasonable likelihood that parking would be permitted on this land. Therefore, it has to be assumed that the proposal would not have the benefit of any off-street parking. In addition, there are parking restrictions on the highway in the vicinity of the site.
- 6.15 The Highway Authority has objected to the application due to the lack of parking. The site is not in a sustainable location and there is little opportunity for travelling to and from the site by means other than private car, cycling or walking. The nearest services and public transport nodes are some distance away. Therefore, the proposal would conflict with Policies D2 and T2 of the SOLP, which seek to ensure that adequate parking is provided for development. Clearly this is a significant objection and would usually be sufficient to justify a refusal of planning permission. However, this issue has to be balanced with other material considerations, the main one being the benefit to the listed building.
- 6.16 The building is deteriorating and in order to secure its longer term future it is important that a viable use is found for the building. Any proposed independent use of the building is likely to generate vehicular trips to the site, including the extant planning permission for the use of the building as a bakery, and there is no indication that parking provision for the site will become available. The use of the building as a holiday cottage is unlikely to generate more than one vehicle at any one time, and potential occupiers of the building should be made aware of the lack of parking at the site in order to make alternative arrangements to travel to the site such as by taxi or bicycle. The site lies within an attractive area of countryside and close to the amenities offered by the River Thames. The site would be a good base for walkers and cyclists in particular, and the use of a private car would not be so essential in connection with the short term residential use of the building for holiday use.
- 6.17 In light of the proposed use of the building for holiday accommodation and the need to secure the longer term future of the building and the wider site, Officers consider that there are sufficient grounds to justify the grant of planning permission despite the lack of parking provision.

Other Material Considerations

- 6.18 The proposal does not include any sustainability measures for the conservation of water or energy as sought by Policy D8 of the SOLP. Opportunities are limited as the proposal relates to the conversion of a small listed building, nevertheless details to secure any reasonable sustainability measures should be secured by condition.
- 6.19 The site lies within Flood 2 where the Environment Agency's standing advice is that the floor levels are set 300mm above general existing ground levels or that they are set 600mm above the 1 in 100 probability river flood. The building is listed and long established. The floor level is raised above the public highway to the front and the adjacent car park to the south west. However, due to the listed nature of the building there are no realistic opportunities to raise the floor level of the building. Furthermore, the building is long established and no extensions are proposed. Therefore, the proposal is considered acceptable in relation to flood risk.

7.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

1. **Commencement – 1 year**
2. **Use for self-catering holiday accommodation only with a maximum stay of one calendar month and no return within one calendar month.
Owner/occupier to keep a register of all occupiers.**
3. **Landscaping scheme including hardsurfacing**
4. **Details of foul and surface water drainage to be submitted and approved**

That listed building consent be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. **Commencement of works (1 year)**
2. **All new works and works of making good to match the existing**
3. **Detailed drawings and information in respect of the following to be submitted and approved**
 - a. **structural survey**
 - b. **schedule of works including works to boundary walls**
 - c. **reconstruction of chimney stack**
 - d. **type and location of roof insulation**
 - e. **new windows in the south elevation**
 - f. **flues, vents or extracts**
4. **Sample panel of proposed lime mortar pointing to be provided on site and approved**
5. **New rainwater goods to be cast iron painted black**

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