
APPLICATION NO.	P10/E1245
APPLICATION TYPE	Full
REGISTERED	12 th November 2008
PARISH	Henley-on-Thames
WARD MEMBERS	Mrs Elizabeth Hodgkin Ms Roswitha Myer
APPLICANT	Hamilton Properties
SITE	15 Cromwell Road, Henley-on-Thames
PROPOSALS	Replacement of an existing dwelling with a pair of semi-detached dwellings.
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	476059/181523
OFFICER	Tom Wyatt

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application is referred to Committee as the Officer's recommendations conflict with the views of the Town Council.
- 1.2 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) is occupied by a 1960s bungalow, which appears to have been altered very little since its original construction. This bungalow is flanked by a detached two storey dwelling to the north, and a modern three storey end of terrace dwelling to the south. Cromwell Road, in common with many of the surrounding streets, such as Belle Vue Road and Western Road, consists of a linear form of residential development of varying age and design but with commonalities in terms of the building lines of the development and the relatively large plots. In addition the majority of dwellings are two storey and detached or semi-detached.

2.0 **THE PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application seeks permission for the construction of two semi-detached dwellings on the site, facilitated through the demolition of the existing dwelling and its garage. The proposed dwellings are traditional in design and finish and would be sited in a similar position to the existing bungalow. The size of the development would be approximately 12 metres in width, 10 metres in depth and 8.5 metres in height. The dwelling to the south of the plot would be set slightly higher than its adjoined neighbour to reflect the difference in levels across the site. Two off street parking spaces served by separate accesses would be provided to the front of each dwelling.

- 2.2 A copy of the plans accompanying the application are **attached** as Appendix B. Documents relating to the application can be found on the Council's website, www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 **CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 **Henley-on-Thames Town Council** – Objects: 'overintensive, bulky, and would create additional on-street parking problems'
- 3.2 **Henley Society** – Concerns expressed regarding the three storey nature of the development; a two storey building would be more appropriate.
- 3.3 **OCC Highway Liaison Officer** – No objections subject to conditions.

3.4 **Neighbours** – Four letters of objections received, which raise the following concerns;

- Semi-detached housing is out of keeping with the development would be overintensive
- Overbearing on neighbouring properties due to increased height
- Exacerbate on-street parking problems
- Overdevelopment of the site impact on neighbouring amenity through overlooking and overbearing effects
- Overlooking from second floor windows in rear elevation

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 P61/H0815 - Erection of dwelling and garage with access. Planning permission granted on 7th December 1961.
- 4.2 P61/H0640 - Erection of pair of semi-detached houses with pedestrian accesses and provision for future vehicular accesses. Refusal of Planning Permission on 24th October 1961.
- 4.3 P61/H0577 - Building of one house only within the land. Planning Permission on 31st August 1961.
- 4.4 P49/H0202 - House and vehicular access. Planning Permission on 15 July 1949.

5.0 **POLICY AND GUIDANCE**

- 5.2 Policies of the Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP):
- G1, G2, G6, EP8, D1, D2, D3, D4, D6, D8, D10, H4, H7, H8, T1, T2
- 5.3 Government Guidance:
-PPS1, PPS3, PPG13, PPS23
- 5.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance
-South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008 (SODG)

6.0 **PLANNING ISSUES**

- 6.1 The planning issues that are relevant to this application are:
1. The principle of the development
 2. The impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area
 3. The impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and future occupiers of the development
 4. Highway considerations
 5. Other material considerations

The Principle of the Development

- 6.2 The site lies within the main built up area of Henley-on-Thames, and as such the principle of additional residential development is broadly acceptable having regard to Policy H4 of the SOLP, which recognises Henley as a sustainable location for new housing development.
- 6.3 As the proposal is for a net gain of one dwelling, the requirements of Policy H7 in relation to securing housing mix, particularly in relation to the provision of two bedroom units are not relevant. As such, the principle of providing two 3 bedroom units is acceptable. In addition, the proposal does not result in any requirements for affordable housing.

The Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Site and Surrounding Area

- 6.4 The application site occupies a relatively prominent position fronting onto Cromwell Road. The surrounding area is entirely dominated by residential built form developed over the last century. There is a wide variety of housing in terms of age, size, and general design reflecting the different periods during which it was constructed. However, the individual plot sizes are relatively consistent and the majority of dwellings are detached and two storey.
- 6.5 The existing property on the site is of no particular architectural merit and its demolition would not be to the detriment of the appearance of the area. The existing house is a modest chalet bungalow set between a detached two storey dwelling to the north and a three storey development to the south, and as a result the existing building appears somewhat squat within the street scene, with its height being lower than the buildings to either side despite the land rising relatively steeply from north to south. The proposed development would be substantially higher than the existing building but would effectively split the difference in height between 13 Cromwell Road and 17a Cromwell Road by being approximately 2 metres higher than 13 Cromwell Road and 2 metres lower than 17a Cromwell Road. This would help to ensure greater consistency between the topography and the height of development within this part of the street scene.
- 6.6 Although the majority of housing in the road is detached there are also several existing examples of semi-detached properties. These include Numbers 24 and 26 and Numbers 30 and 32 Cromwell Road, which are located almost opposite the site. There is also a terrace of three dwellings located immediately to the south of the site (Numbers 17a, 17 and 19 Cromwell Road). As such the provision of semi-detached dwellings would not be out of keeping with the grain of surrounding development.
- 6.7 The design of the dwellings is traditional and features of the dwellings such as bays, hipped gables and dormer windows are already found within Cromwell Road. The scale and height of the development is largely that of a two storey building and the third storey is largely contained within the roof space of the building. A second floor window would be apparent in the front elevation and two second floor windows are proposed in the rear elevation. Again there are examples of this in the street, most notably 17a Cromwell Road, which is a three storey dwelling. These examples along with the considerable variety of building design, type and scale within the street mean that the proposed development would not be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding built form.
- 6.8 The development would be similar in width to the existing bungalow and would retain reasonable gaps to both its side boundaries. This would preserve the spacing between

the development and the neighbouring buildings, and would ensure that the development would not appear cramped in the street scene. It is regrettable that the existing front boundary hedge would be removed as part of the development to provide access to the proposed parking spaces. The parking spaces would be visually prominent in the street scene but officers do not consider that their appearance would cause sufficient harm to justify refusal of the application. There are several other examples of front gardens being set aside for parking provision within the area.

- 6.9 In light of the above considerations, the proposal broadly complies with Policy H4 of the SOLP.

The Impact on the Amenity of Neighbouring Occupiers and Future Occupiers of the Development

- 6.10 The application site immediately adjoins 13 Cromwell Road to the north, 17a Cromwell Road to the south and 28 Western Road to the east.
- 6.11 17a Cromwell Road is a substantial dwelling in terms of height and depth. The proposed development will remain substantially lower than this property and a gap of over 5 metres would be retained between the respective side elevations. The development would project no more than a metre beyond the rear elevation of 17a and would not have an overbearing impact or result in any significant loss of light to 17a, particularly as this property lies to the south of the application site.
- 6.12 28 Western Road is located immediately to the rear of the application site, and the increased height, and the first and second floor windows would be apparent from the rear of this neighbouring property. However, there is good boundary screening between the two properties and the distance between the rear elevations of the proposed dwellings and 28 Western Road would be over 35 metres, which is significantly in excess of the minimum distance of 25 metres recommended within the SODG between facing habitable rooms. As such the proposal would not result in a harmful level of overlooking towards the rear of 28 Western Road.
- 6.13 13 Cromwell Road is the most affected by the development due to being sited on lower ground and to the north of the application site. The development would be sited approximately 1 metre further away from the boundary with the neighbouring property than the existing dwelling resulting in a gap of approximately 3.25 metres between the respective side elevations. The facing side elevation of Number 13 does not contain any openings and the front elevation of the development would be in line with that of Number 13, therefore, any loss of light would be in respect of openings on the rear elevation of this neighbouring property.
- 6.14 Like the rear elevation of the existing chalet bungalow, the rear elevation of the development would project beyond the rear building line of Number 13 by approximately 3.5 metres. However, the deepest part of the development is closer to the boundary with Number 13 and the development is higher and of a greater bulk than the existing. Nevertheless, the applicant has taken account of the neighbouring property and the proposed development, and has designed the rear elevation of the developed with a low eaves level and a hipped gable to the side. This, along with the gap between the properties, has the effect of reducing the potentially overbearing effects of the development to an acceptable level. There would be some loss of light to the rear of Number 13 but this would not be so harmful as to justify the refusal of the application.

- 6.15 The garden areas of the proposed dwellings would be approximately 18 metres deep and over 100m² in area. As such the garden areas would be of a sufficient size with regard to guidance contained with the SODG and Policy D3 of the SOLP.

Highway Considerations

- 6.16 The development would include off street parking for two vehicles to the front of each dwelling. To facilitate this the existing access on the southern side of the site would be widened and a new access formed on the northern side of the site. A boundary wall would separate the two areas of parking. The proposed parking meets the council's parking standards and the Highway Liaison Officer has raised no objections to the proposal in terms of the parking arrangements and general highway safety.

Other Material Considerations

- 6.17 A sustainability statement has been submitted with the application and this makes reference to Code Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. This is in compliance with the thrust of guidance contained within the SODG and Policy D8 of the SOLP. A condition is proposed to ensure that the sustainability measures are incorporated into the development.
- 6.18 A contaminated land questionnaire has been submitted with the application, and this indicates that the land has not been subject to contamination. As such there is no conflict with Policy EP8 of the SOLP.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The application proposal is in accordance with the relevant development plan policies and national planning policy as, subject to conditions, the development would respect the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area, the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and would not be prejudicial to highway safety.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. **Commencement – 3 years**
2. **Development in accordance with approved plans**
3. **Samples of materials to be approved**
4. **Details of hardsurfacing to be approved**
5. **Details of fencing/means of enclosure to be approved**
6. **Proposed floor and ground levels to be approved**
7. **Permitted development removed for extensions**
8. **Sustainability measures to Code Level 3 to be implemented in accordance with approved details**
9. **Provision and retention of parking and turning areas**
10. **Working hours restriction**
11. **Windows/doors to meet Secured By Design Standards**

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