
APPLICATION NO.	P10/W1395
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL
REGISTERED	20.09.2010
PARISH	LONG WITTENHAM
WARD MEMBER(S)	Mrs Celia Collett
APPLICANT	K & J Manclark
SITE	Land at Footbridge Cottage High Street Long Wittenham
PROPOSAL	Erection of a two storey, three bedroom dwelling and footbridge.
AMENDMENTS	As amended by drawing no. 1052-SU04 accompanying Agent's letter dated 15 October 2010 and as clarified by Agent's letter dated 27 October 2010 with accompanying photographs.
GRID REFERENCE	454532193680
OFFICER	Mrs S Crawford

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The application has been referred to the Committee because the recommendation conflicts with the views of the Parish Council.

1.2 The site forms part of the side and rear garden area to Footbridge Cottage; it benefits from a road frontage onto High Street and it backs onto Fieldside; a single track road. Views into the site are limited by the existing outbuildings onto Fieldside and by existing vegetation on High Street.

Footbridge Cottage is a relatively small scale, thatched cottage with a brick and tile, two storey extension on the front, it not a listed building. One of the outbuildings on Fieldside was used as an artist's studio by the illustrator and author, Robert Gibbings up until his death in 1958.

May Tree Cottage, the neighbouring property to the west, is a grade II listed building. A water course runs along the High Street frontage and the site lies within the Long Wittenham Conservation Area.

1.3 The site is identified on the Ordnance Survey Extract **attached** at Appendix 1.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the subdivision of the existing plot for Footbridge Cottage and the provision of a two storey, traditionally designed, three bedroom dwelling. Shared access, parking and garaging for the new house and Footbridge Cottage would be provided to the rear off Fieldside from an existing access point. Pedestrian access to High Street would be provided via a footbridge over the brook on the High Street. Reduced copies of the plans accompanying the application are **attached** at Appendix 2. The documents submitted with the application and full details of the representations are available for viewing on the Council's website at www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 Long Wittenham Parish Council Refuse.
Adverse impact on character and setting of adjacent listed building.
Design and scale is unsympathetic and will detract from the character of the conservation area.
Would destroy the cottage garden and studio – locally important as the former home and studio of Robert Gibbings.
The plot is too small and development will be cramped, the development will overlook and impact on light and privacy.
Access is unsafe and the development will involve the loss of parking spaces for Footbridge Cottage
Forestry Officer Subject to no development occurring within the root protection areas of the trees on the boundaries, no objection. Tree protection condition recommended
OCC (Archaeology) The site is sensitive archaeologically. No objection subject to a condition to require an archaeological watching brief during the course of construction.
Thames Water No objection subject to conditions and informatives
OCC (Highways) This application was subject to a site visit and on that basis as well as a review of the submitted drawings and maps of the area is judged not to have any adverse highways impacts subject to the suggested conditions and informatives.
Neighbour Objectors (8) Difficult access, house is modern, adverse impact on conservation area, undesirable infill leaving footbridge cottage with no garden, uninspired design, loss of light to neighbouring property, detracts from setting of surrounding listed buildings. The development constitutes garden grabbing.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 No applications of relevance.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Adopted SOLP Policies
G2 – Protection of District’s resources, G3, proximity of new development to existing services and links to public transport, G6 – Quality of design and local distinctiveness, C1 – Landscape character, C8 – development affecting protected species, EP1 – adverse affects of development, EP3 – proposals for external lighting, EP4 – Protection of water resources, EP5 – Flood risk impact, EP6 - Surface water drainage requirements, EP7 – Ground water resources, EP8 – Contaminated land, CON5 – setting of listed buildings, CON7 – development in a conservation area, D1 – Principles of good design, D2 – Parking for vehicles and cycles, D3 – Provision of private amenity areas, D6 – design against crime, D8 – Conservation and efficient design, D9 – Renewable energy, D10 – Management of waste, H4 – New housing within larger villages, H5 – new housing in smaller villages, T1 - transport.
South Oxfordshire Design Guide

PPS1 - Delivering sustainable development
PPS3 - Housing
PPS5 - Planning for the Historic Environment
PPS7 - Sustainable Development In Rural Areas

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main issues in this case are;

- Whether the principle of development is acceptable
- H4 Criteria
- PPS5 issues
- Setting of adjacent listed building
- Provision of garden areas
- Tree issues
- Sustainable design issues

6.2 **Principle.** The site lies within the built up limits of Long Wittenham; one of the smaller villages in the district where the principle of infill or backland residential development is acceptable (Policy H5 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan). Policy H5 refers to the criteria in Policy H4; development must comply with all the criteria of Policy H4 to be acceptable.

6.3 **H4 criteria issues.**

- i. That an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost;

The site lies within a conservation area where open spaces are as important as buildings in contributing to the character and appearance of an area. There is no conservation area character appraisal for Long Wittenham and important landscape and character features that should be retained have not been specifically identified. However, there have been a number of appeals on other sites in the High Street and Fieldside, where great weight has been attached to the importance of the spaces between buildings and their contribution to the rural character of the village.

Your officers have looked very carefully at this site; there is mature planting along the frontage onto High Street, much of which is to be retained, and views into the site are limited at the front and rear. The site sits behind a deep grass verge on High Street and there would be a gap of approximately 11 metres between May Tree Cottage and the new dwelling and a gap of approximately 10 metres between the new dwelling and Footbridge Cottage. Given the relatively enclosed nature of the site and the characteristics of the surrounding area, Officers do not consider that it this an important open space in the conservation area. Given the spaces between Footbridge Cottage, the new dwelling and Maytree Cottage, the development would not look cramped in this situation. The rural, spacious character of the village and the conservation area would not be harmed as a result of the development.

- ii. Design, height and bulk in keeping with the surroundings;

The application proposes a modest three bedroom, brick and tile dwelling that is in keeping with the scale and proportions of Footbridge Cottage and other surrounding buildings (particularly French's Cottage opposite). The design is traditional and follows advice contained in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide.

- iii. That the character of the area is not adversely affected;

Whilst the new dwelling would occupy an existing gap in the High Street, generous spaces between buildings would still be retained in the region of 11 metres between May Tree Cottage and the new dwelling and approximately 10 metres between the new

dwelling and Footbridge Cottage.

iv. Amenity, environmental or highway objections; and

Highway and parking issues. The parking provision of two spaces per dwelling would be provided on site together with a turning area which complies with the council's standards. In addition the access onto Fieldside allows clear views in both directions along a single track road where speeds are generally low, as such the development will not cause a hazard to users of the public highway.

Neighbour impact. The relationship between Footbridge Cottage and Greenways to the south is unusually cramped but this is an existing situation. The new dwelling would be sited to the north west of Greenways and given this orientation the new dwelling would not block direct sunlight to Greenways. The main body of the proposed dwelling would be some 14 metres from Greenways and the rear wing would be some 12 metres away. The angle between the two buildings is oblique with the east elevation presenting its side to the boundary with Greenways. Openings in the east elevation have been kept to a minimum with the utility room door and a small WC window at ground floor and a single rooflight to an ensuite bathroom at first floor. Given these details the impact on the amenity of the occupants of Greenways is acceptable in your officers view. A condition is recommended to prevent the addition of further windows or openings in the east elevation.

v. Backland development issues

Not applicable

- 6.4 **PPS5 implications.** Policy HE6 of PPS5 requires applicants to give sufficient information to assess the impact of the development on any heritage asset affected by the development. Heritage assets can be designated assets such as listed buildings and conservation areas etc or non designated assets such as areas of local or artistic interest. The impact of the development on the designated assets, the conservation area and the setting of listed buildings are considered at paragraphs 6.3 and 6.5. As a result of the application being submitted it has come to light that an additional heritage asset has to be considered, namely the fact that the artist, novelist and illustrator Robert Gibbings (1889 – 1958) lived at Footbridge Cottage and used one of the outbuildings as his studio. Robert Gibbings book "Till I end my Song" (1957) describes his wood engraving, life and times in Long Wittenham. The applicant's agent has provided additional information and photographs in respect of this outbuilding. The outbuilding has been used as a garage since the current owners bought the site and probably before that date. The outbuilding is of no particular merit in terms of its construction and materials and suffers from rain penetration. In recognising the historic, local and artistic interest of the building, the proposal maintains the building as one open space and the agent has offered to make enquiries to English Heritage to see if it is eligible for a blue plaque. Objections have been received on the grounds that development within the garden of Footbridge Cottage would dis-associate the house from the studio. Also residents consider the subdivision and use of the studio as a garage for Footbridge Cottage and the new dwelling would destroy the integrity of the building. In your officer's view the association of Footbridge Cottage, its garden and the outbuilding are not so important to prevent this development and the association of the outbuilding and Footbridge Cottage would not be lost altogether because the building would still be used in part for garaging and parking. A condition is recommended to retain the building as one open space to protect its integrity as a studio space.

- 6.5 **Setting of adjacent listed building.** The new dwelling would be some 11 metres from the modern extensions to Maytree Cottage and there is mature planting along the whole shared boundary which would be retained. Given the spacing involved, the boundary screening and the appropriate design and scale of the proposed building the impact on the setting of the adjacent listed building is considered acceptable.
- 6.6 **Provision of garden areas.** Minimum standards for new residential development are recommended in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and in policy D3 of the Local Plan. A minimum of 100 square metres of private garden area is required for three bedroom dwellings or larger dwellings. There would be 100 square metres of garden area retained to the side of Footbridge Cottage and an area in excess of 100 square metres for the new dwelling.
- 6.7 **Tree issues.** An amended plan has been provided showing that development will not impinge on the root protection areas of important trees. A condition to ensure that trees are protected during the construction works is recommended.
- 6.8 **Sustainable design issues.** Policy D8 of the SOLP seeks to ensure that all new development demonstrates high standards in the conservation and efficient use of energy, water and materials. The applicant has agreed to achieve Code 3 of the Code for Sustainable homes.
- 7.0 **CONCLUSION**
- 7.1 The principle of residential development on this site is acceptable and the site does not constitute an important open space that should be retained. The traditional design and proposed materials are in keeping with the character of the area and sufficient space would be provided between buildings so that development would not appear cramped. As such the development would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and would not detract from the setting of the adjacent listed building. The building has been designed and sited to minimise neighbour impact and would not cause danger to users of the public highway. In your officer's view the proposal accords with the Development Plan Policies and planning permission should be granted subject to the conditions recommended below.
- 8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**
- 8.1 **That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:**
1. **Commencement 3 years**
 2. **Compliance with approved drawings**
 3. **Sample materials required all**
 4. **No additional windows, doors or openings in east elevation**
 5. **Parking and manoeuvring areas retained**
 6. **No surface water drainage to highway**
 7. **Tree protection**
 8. **Retain and maintain the outbuilding onto Fieldside**

Author: Sharon Crawford
Contact No: 01491 823739
Email: planning.west@southoxon.gov.uk