
APPLICATION NO.	P10/E1633
APPLICATION TYPE	Planning permission
REGISTERED	5 November 2010
PARISH	Rotherfield Greys
WARD MEMBER(S)	Mrs Nimmo Smith
APPLICANT	Ms Woodford
SITE	Greys Cottage, Greys Green
PROPOSAL	Construction of new two-storey dwelling following demolition of existing dwelling (as amplified by Site Plan received 6 December 2010).
GRID REFERENCE	471925/183069
OFFICER	Mrs Moore
APPLICATION NO.	P10/E1646/CA
APPLICATION TYPE	Conservation area consent.
REGISTERED	5 November 2010
PARISH	Rotherfield Greys
WARD MEMBER(S)	Mrs Nimmo Smith
APPLICANT	Ms Woodford
SITE	Greys Cottage, Greys Green
PROPOSAL	Demolition of existing dwelling
GRID REFERENCE	471925/183069
OFFICER	Mrs Moore

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The applications are referred to planning committee as the recommendations differ from the views of the Rotherfield Greys Parish Council.

1.2 The site lies directly adjacent to the village green within the centre of Greys Green, within the Conservation Area and within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The property is constructed in brick with clay tiled roofs. Access to the property is via a lane which also serves as Rotherfield Greys Public Footpath 1.

1.3 Greys Cottage is recorded as a building of local importance. The oldest part of the house, which is the central portion of the front of the house, is of unknown age, and it has been extended many times to the side and to the rear.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposal is to demolish the existing property and to erect a replacement dwelling. The replacement dwelling is proposed to be erected in red brick and plain clay tile, of the same colour type and texture as the materials used in the construction of the existing dwelling.

2.2 Planning permission was granted in 2010 for demolition of the rear extensions to the property and erection of replacement extensions under applications P10/E0680/CA and P10/E0679. The proposed replacement dwelling is designed to replicate the size and detailing of the existing property and the approved extensions.

2.3 An additional plan has been provided showing the position of services in relation to existing trees on the site.

- 2.4 The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, Condition Survey Reports, an Ecological Assessment, a Sustainability Statement and a Tree Protection Plan. Full details of the reports can be viewed on the Council's web site www.southoxon.gov.uk
- 2.5 The documents advise that following the grant of planning permission for the demolition of existing extensions and the erection of new extensions, a detailed structural survey was undertaken of the portion of the building to be retained, and ivy and wisteria were removed from the front of the building. The survey report that the structural problems revealed are considerable and include the following defects –
- Significant bowing of the front wall. Any insertion of a steel restraining system would be hampered as the individual panels along the length of the front elevation do not course through.
 - A number of fairly sizeable cracks have been identified, particularly in the 1960's extension. Foundations would need to be underpinned and a similar restraining system installed.
 - Damage caused to the face of the bricks, particularly in the oldest portion of the house, is so extensive that less than 10% remains undamaged. Complete rebuilding of the front wall of the oldest part of the house would be required.
 - At least 30% of the 1960's extension would also have to be rebuilt due to face brickwork damage and cracking.
 - Due to the deterioration of the front wall, there is significant damp penetration.
 - The existing roof tiles have come to the end of their life and therefore the whole of the existing roof will have to be re-tiled.
 - All gutters, down pipes and fittings have come to the end of their useful lives and need to be replaced.
 - Between 10-20% of all existing roof and floor structures will need to be replaced.

Due to the structural problems identified, the agent advises that, effectively, the works required to renovate the property would result in completely new elevations being constructed as all brick and tile elements would need to be replaced.

- 2.6 The agent advises that the key design principle for the rebuilding of the replacement dwelling is that the original building should be reproduced as closely as possible to ensure that the impact on the conservation area is kept to the minimum. The extensions to the rear would be as approved in 2010.
- 2.7 The plans **attached** at Appendix 1 show the location of the site and details of the proposals.
- 3.0 **CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS IN RESPECT OF BOTH APPLICATIONS**
- 3.1 Rotherfield Greys Parish Council – Objection raised. Comment –
'This is an important and attractive historical listed building within a conservation area and plays a significant part in the beauty of the area. The part of the house for which demolition has not already been given planning permission, should be preserved at all costs.
Allowing a house of such historical value to be knocked down in its entirety, will set a worrying precedent for the area; and the cost of remedial work required to the property, does not in itself justify the demolition proposed.'

- 3.2 Conservation Officer – Following a detailed site inspection I have concluded that in these very particular circumstances, the demolition and reconstruction with a design as close as possible to the existing, matching local materials and detailing, is considered acceptable. The proposed replacement design will preserve the character and appearance of the Greys Conservation Area in accordance with CON6 of the Local Plan. Additional comments are included in the main body of the report.
- 3.3 Forestry Officer – The trees within the site are not the subject of a tree protection order, but they are within a conservation area and therefore protected. Following the submission of additional information, no objection is raised subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.
- 3.4 Countryside Officer - No objection subject to the imposition of informatives concerning the protection of bats.
- 3.5 Health & Housing - Env. Protection Team – Conditions should be imposed requiring the contamination investigation, and if necessary, remediation works to be undertaken. OCC Countryside Service – Rotherfield Greys Footpath 1 runs concurrent with the access to the property. The applicant should ensure that the footpath should not be blocked or damaged during construction works.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 P52/H0001 – Extension for staff accommodation and nursery. Approved.
P64/H0870 – Two storey extension. Approved.
P10/E0680/CA – Demolition of existing rear extensions. Approved.
P10/E0679 – Construction of part two storey and part single storey extensions following the demolition of rear extensions. Approved.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 Policies:
G6 – Promoting good design.
C2 – Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
C8 – Species protection
C9 – Landscape features
CON6 – Demolition of buildings in a Conservation Area.
CON7 – Development within a Conservation Area.
D1 – Good design and local distinctiveness
D2 – Vehicle and bicycle parking
D3 – Garden areas
D4 – Privacy and daylight
D8 - Energy, water and materials efficient design
H12 – Replacement dwellings
H13 – Extensions to dwellings
R8 – Public rights of way
T1 – Vehicle access
South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008.
PPS5 – Planning and the Historic Environment.
PPS23 – Planning and Pollution Control.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 Policy H12 of the SOLP confirms that proposals for the replacement of dwellings outside the main confines of the towns and larger villages of the District will be permitted subject to compliance with certain criteria. In this instance, the principal issues to be considered are –
1. Whether the use of the property as a dwelling has been abandoned.

2. Whether the demolition of the property would result in the loss of a dwelling of historic, visual or architectural interest, and if so whether there are any specific reasons why demolition could be acceptable.
3. Whether the proposed dwelling is materially greater in volume than the existing dwelling, taking into account permitted development rights.
4. Whether the overall impact, including the proposed siting of the new dwelling, design and materials would be in keeping with the locality.
5. Whether the impact on trees, protected species and public rights of way would be acceptable.

Use of the existing property

- 6.2 Whilst the existing property is currently empty, it has been lived in until relatively recently, and the use of the property as a dwelling has not been abandoned.

Historic, visual or architectural interest

- 6.3 Policy CON6 of the SOLP states that :
'Consent to demolish a building in a conservation area will be granted only if the loss of the building would not adversely affect the character of the area and, where appropriate, if there are detailed and acceptable plans for the redevelopment of the site'.
- 6.4 The Government's Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5) sets out policies on the conservation of the historic environment. Policy HE9.5 of PPS5 requires that local planning authorities should take into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the Conservation Area as a whole. Policies HE9.1 and HE9.4 of PPS5 advise that there should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets and the loss of such an asset should require clear and convincing justification.
- 6.5 Although Greys Cottage is not a statutory listed building, it is considered to be a 'Building of Local Note' and one of the former Grade III listed buildings, being identified as such in the Greys Green conservation area appraisal. The map forming part of the appraisal also identifies outward views from the Green as being important to the conservation area, including views towards Greys Cottage. Accordingly, in these circumstances, there would have to be clear and convincing justification to allow demolition of such a building.
- 6.6 The conservation officer and planning officer have visited the site and undertaken a thorough investigation of the building. The only part of the existing building of any historic interest is the front section. That front section has been constructed in four phases, the central two sections in the 18th century, and the outer two sections in the early 20th century. Internally, the extension of the property in four phases has resulted in a row of rooms each connected to the next in a different way. Little historic fabric remains beyond the front elevation, and there is evidence of a very significant renovation of the property having occurred in the early 20th century with the majority of floor joists and ceilings dating to this time.
- 6.7 A combination of the submitted Condition Survey and a thorough site inspection makes it clear that in order to retain the historic front elevation, not only would the entirety require thorough re-pointing and structural strapping, but a number of bricks would be lost due to holes which have appeared in a number of the brick faces. These works, in themselves, would significantly alter the existing character of the front elevation, and could result in a poor patch-work effect which would diminish the

contribution which the current building makes in the Conservation Area.

- 6.8 The roof structure as a whole is currently at risk due to dampness, beetle attack and the need for timber replacement. Existing tiles would have to be removed, are in a poor condition and are not re-useable. A significant proportion of the roof timbers would have to be replaced.
- 6.9 Officers consider that the current building's contribution to the Greys Green conservation area is derived from its use of local traditional materials, its simple fenestration style, and its overall simple built form to the front elevation. Whilst there is a presumption to conserve buildings of interest, in these very particular circumstances, as outlined above, officers consider that the demolition and reconstruction with a design as close as possible to the existing, matching local materials and detailing, is considered acceptable. Sufficient justification for demolition has been provided in accordance with Government Guidance set out in PPS5, and officers consider that the proposed replacement design will preserve the character and appearance of the Greys Green Conservation Area in accordance with Policy CON6 of the SOLP.
- 6.10 The concern from Rotherfield Peppard Parish Council that the demolition of this building would set an undesirable precedent is appreciated. If retention of the older part of the building would result in the saving of a good quality historic building, then the proposals would not be recommended for approval. However, such extensive works, rebuilding and patching of the front of the building, the only historic part of the structure, would be required that it would effectively result in a re-building of the property. It is only in these particular circumstances that the proposal is recommended for approval.

Size of replacement dwelling

- 6.11 Policy H12 of the SOLP allows for the replacement of dwellings which are not materially greater in size than the existing property, taking into account permitted development limitations.
- 6.12 Under applications P10/E0679 and P10/E0680/CA, planning permission and conservation area consent were granted for the demolition of extensive additions to the rear of the property, and construction of replacement extensions. The approved demolition works amounted to some 60 % of the property, and the approved replacement extensions were some 11% greater in volume, in accordance with the Council's policies.
- 6.13 The proposed replacement dwelling is the same size as the extended dwelling approved under application P10/E0679, and therefore accords with the limitations set out in the replacement dwellings policy.

Overall impact, siting, design and materials

- 6.14 The proposed replacement dwelling would be constructed on the footprint of the existing dwelling plus approved extensions. The key design principle for the rebuilding of the replacement dwelling is that the original building should be reproduced as closely as possible to ensure that the impact on the conservation area is kept to the minimum necessary. Therefore, the proposals show the replacement of the oldest parts of the existing building with matching elevations utilising face brickwork selected to reflect the existing colour and texture of the existing brickwork including the burnt headers and brick arches. The roof would be laid with a similarly matching handmade

plain clay tiles, and the roof lines, eaves details and fenestration have all been designed to replicate the existing property. The rear section of the building would be constructed in accordance with the plans approved earlier in the year.

- 6.15 Accordingly, officers consider that the replacement dwelling would replicate as far as is possible the design and appearance of the older part of the dwelling plus approved extensions. As such, officers consider that the proposed replacement design will preserve the character and appearance of the Grey Green Conservation Area in accordance with Policy CON6 of the SOLP and will preserve the landscape quality of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 6.16 In terms of impact on adjoining properties, the property is situated in extensive grounds, and the proposed replacement dwelling should not adversely affect the amenity of any other property.

Impact on trees, protected species, public rights of way, contamination, sustainability.

- 6.17 The site lies within the Rotherfield Greys Conservation Area and the trees on the site are, therefore, protected. The information concerning tree protection measures which has been submitted is satisfactory to a large extent, but does not address the installation of new services to the replacement dwelling. Accordingly, any permission should be subject to a condition requiring additional information concerning the installation of service runs relative to the position of trees on the site.
- 6.18 With regard to protected species, an informative should be added to any consent advising of the law relating to the protection of species.
- 6.19 The access to the site runs concurrent with Rotherfield Greys public footpath number 1. An informative should be imposed on any permission requiring the footpath to be retained unobstructed and informing that any damage caused would be the responsibility of the applicant.
- 6.19 Residential development is regarded in PPS23 as a particularly sensitive use to any land contamination. For this reason, PPS23 requires a precautionary approach to be adopted and for the developer to conduct adequate contaminated land investigations to ensure that the land is safe and suitable for the intended use. Accordingly, a suitable condition should be imposed on any planning permission.
- 6.20 Policy D8 of the SOLP requires that all new dwellings demonstrate high standards in the conservation and efficient use of energy, water and materials used in their construction. In the sustainability statement accompanying the application, the agent has advised that construction methods and insulation will all be in accordance with the latest building regulations. In addition, lighting and appliances will be low energy and rainwater will be stored and used on the garden.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal complies with the relevant Development Plan Policies and it is considered that, subject to the attached conditions, the demolition of the existing dwelling and the construction of the replacement dwelling would preserve the character of the Conservation Area and the landscape quality of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and would not materially harm the living conditions of nearby residents.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 That planning permission be granted for the development contained in planning application P10/E1633 subject to the following conditions –

- 1. Commencement 3 years – planning permission**
- 2. List of approved drawings**
- 3. Sample panel of all materials to be used to be constructed on site**
- 4. Detailed specification of all windows (traditionally side hung timber casements featuring leaded lights) and external doors**
- 5. Joinery details for new porch**
- 6. Eaves and window arches to be replicated**
- 7. Rainwater goods to be metal painted black**
- 8. Removal of permitted development rights for extensions and roof extensions**
- 9. Implementation of tree protection measures**
- 10. Submission of proposed service runs and methods of installation in relation to trees**
- 11. Contamination investigation, and if necessary, remediation works to be undertaken**
- 12. Incorporation of sustainable design features**
Imposition of informatives concerning European law relating to the protection of bats, and concerning the protection of public rights of way.

8.2 That Conservation Area Consent be granted for the demolition of the existing house, as set out in application P10/E1646/CA, subject to the following conditions –

- 1. Commencement 3 years - Conservation Area Consent**
- 2. List of approved drawings**
- 3. Demolition not to commence until a contract for the redevelopment of the site in accordance with a planning permission has been entered into**
- 4. Full photographic record to be made prior to demolition to be deposited with the local authority and Historic Environment Record**

Author: Mrs H Moore
Contact No: 01491 823732
Email Add: planning.east@southoxon.gov.uk