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<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	P11/E0164
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	Full
<b>REGISTERED</b>	17 February 2011
<b>PARISH</b>	Watlington
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Rodney Mann and Angie Paterson
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Mr P Rockall
<b>SITE</b>	54 Love Lane, Watlington
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Demolition of existing house and garage and erection of 4 x 2-storey, 2-bedroom dwellings and 1 x 2-storey, 3-bedroom dwelling, incorporating new vehicular access and a three bay carport and parking.
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	Two – access arrangements altered and trees retained.
<b>OFFICER</b>	Paul Lucas

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1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This application is reported to the Planning Committee as a result of a conflict between the officers' recommendation and the views of Watlington Parish Council.

1.2 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract as **Appendix 1**) comprises a residential plot containing a detached two storey house and garage, located within the built-up area of the village of Watlington. The plot faces onto a junction between Love Lane, the access to Icknield Community College, Watlington Primary School and a nursery and the access to the village allotments. The school is located to the west of the site, the allotments border the site to the north and there is mid-1900s housing located to the east and south of the site. No.54 pre-dates the nearby housing on Love Lane, which are mostly semi-detached dwellings. It was originally a pair of cottages, which was converted into a single dwelling and then extended in an unsympathetic manner in the 1960s. It is located parallel to the road, with the attached garage adjacent to the roadside boundary. Access to the garage is from the west, with a small hardstanding in front. The remainder of the site boundary is formed by a mixture of hedges and shrubs. There are a few semi-mature trees located within the site. A footpath runs along part of the front boundary of the site. The access to the allotments passes along the western boundary of the site. There is also a footpath leading to the allotments, which runs between the eastern site boundary and No.48, the adjacent dwelling to the east. The site is largely flat and has no special designations.

2.0 **THE PROPOSAL**

2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of five two-storey dwellings. The dwellings would be arranged in a terrace of 3 x 2-bedroom dwellings at the eastern end of the site and a pair of semis incorporating one 2-bedroom dwelling and one 3-bedroom dwelling towards the western end of the site. The existing access point would be stopped up and a new access formed further to the east, which would serve all of the dwellings. It would lead to a three-bay carport at the rear of the site, located between the dwellings with 3 parking spaces in front. There would also be 4 parking spaces located in front of the terrace.

- 2.2 The terrace would have a hip roof with a front gable. The pair of semis would have gable ends, also with a front gable. The 2-bedroom dwellings would be about 8.8 metres in depth and 4.5 metres in width. The 3-bedroom dwelling would be about 10 metres in depth and 6.8 metres in width. All of the dwellings would have a ridge height of around 8.6 metres. The terrace would be approximately 10 metres from the front roadside boundary and the semis would range from 6 to 10 metres from this boundary. The boundary hedge would be retained along the north, east and west boundaries. Along the southern boundary, it would be removed and replaced with a new boundary hedge to make room for the vehicular access and the pedestrian access in front of the terrace. The carport would measure 9.2 metres wide by 5.3 metres deep and would have a hip roof with a ridge height of 4.6 metres. The dwellings would have solar panels attached to the south-facing roof slopes and the materials would consist of brick and clay tiles, timber painted windows and doors and block paving and bound gravel. The plans also show alterations to the highway in front of the site to form alterations to the kerb and extension of the footpath so that it would run across the entire southern boundary of the site and connect with the footpath in front of the houses to the east and would narrow the carriageway on the bend.
- 2.3 A copy of the plans accompanying the application are shown as **Appendix 2**. Other documents associated with the proposal can be viewed on the council's website, [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk)
- 3.0 **CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**
- 3.1 **Watlington Parish Council** – Original and amended plans – The application should be refused due to:
- Five new dwellings and additional vehicle access resulting in extra traffic movements in this already dangerous vicinity, creating additional hazard adjacent to the intersection of the Primary and Secondary School main exits, an entrance and exit of the Nursery School and the entrance and exit to the Allotments.
  - Overdevelopment of the site.
  - Major loss of green space and mature fruit trees with landscape value.
  - Loss of existing building of historical interest which is the last remaining 18<sup>th</sup> Century building in this location.
- 3.2 **OCC Highways** – The development constitutes a net gain of 4 dwellings. The plans are consistent with respect to the adopted parking standards of SODC. The proposed footpath alterations, associated with the access would be excessively pitched and therefore constitutes an irregular highway feature. It is required that a smooth transition is built across the frontage and the tapers on each side of the build-out incorporating a highway geometry consistent with prevailing design standards. This can be secure through a planning condition alongside the standard highway conditions.
- 3.3 **Health and Housing (Contamination)** – No objection subject to standard Contaminated Land Statement condition and standard informatives.
- 3.4 **Health and Housing (Environmental Protection)** – No objections.
- 3.5 **Countryside Officer** – No objections provided the recommendations of the ecological report are followed.

- 3.6 **Forestry Officer** – Comments on original plans: T1 and T9 should be retained – these are shown to be retained on the amended plans.
- 3.7 **Waste Management** – Plans seem to have locations detailed for bin storage for each dwelling. Bins will need to be presented for emptying at Love Lane.
- 3.8 **Conservation Officer** – I consider that the conclusions of the Heritage Assessment are correct in as far as the historic integrity of the building and its setting has been compromised by 20th century alterations and developments. This building is clearly not of sufficient merit to be considered for inclusion on the statutory list. I have also reviewed the merits of the building against the selection criteria presented in the English Heritage draft consultation document Good Practice Guide for Local Listing: Identifying and Managing Significant Local Heritage Assets (February 2011). Although of some interest in terms of materials and layout, 54 Love Lane matches very few of these criteria and is therefore not considered to be of sufficient merit to be included in the SODC Local List. It is regrettable that this building is proposed for demolition but it is not of sufficient merit to be considered for statutory or local listing and is not located within a conservation area.
- 3.9 **Crime Prevention Design Adviser** – Alterations to position and type of boundary treatment recommended and development should achieve Secured by Design accreditation.
- 3.10 **Neighbours** – seven representations of objection/concern, summarised as follows:
- Additional dwelling with new access, lack of turning space, no visitor spaces, leading to additional traffic and on-street parking adding to congestion and increased risk to pedestrian safety, especially schoolchildren.
  - Loss of green space, there should be fewer houses proposed.
  - Loss of fruit trees, which are good for wildlife.
  - Loss of a unique historic property.
  - New houses too expensive for local families.
  - Future expansion possible through loft conversions.
  - Query about location of bin collection point.
  - Disruption from construction traffic
- 4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**
- 4.1 Extensions and garage approved in the 1960's and 1970's respectively.
- 5.0 **POLICY AND GUIDANCE**
- 5.1 Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 Policies:
- G2 – Protection of the Environment
  - G5 – Making Better Use of Land
  - G6 – Promoting Good Design
  - C6 – Biodiversity Conservation
  - C9 – Landscape Features
  - EP2 – Noise and Vibrations
  - EP6 – Surface Water Protection
  - EP8 – Contaminated Land
  - D1 – Good Design and Local Distinctiveness
  - D2 – Vehicle and Bicycle Parking
  - D3 – Plot Coverage and Garden Areas
  - D4 – Privacy and Daylight
  - D6 – Design Against Crime
  - D8 – Energy, Water and Materials Efficient Design
  - D10 – Waste Management

D11 – Infrastructure and Service Requirements  
H4 – Towns and Larger Villages outside the Green Belt  
T1 – Transport Requirements for New Developments  
T2 – Transport Requirements for New Developments

5.2 Supplementary Planning Guidance:  
South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008 – Sections 3, 4 & 5.

5.3 Government Guidance:  
PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development  
PPS3 – Housing  
PPG13 – Transport  
PPS23 – Planning and Pollution Control

## 6.0 **PLANNING ISSUES**

6.1 The application site is in a location within the built-up limits of Watlington and consequently the proposal falls to be assessed against the criteria of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011, which sets out a presumption in favour of residential development, subject to several impact-based criteria. The planning issues that are relevant to this application are whether the development would:

1. result in the loss of an open space or view of public, environmental or ecological value;
2. be in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area in terms of design and scale;
3. safeguard the living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers and provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers;
4. result in an unacceptable deficiency of off-street parking spaces for the resultant dwellings or other conditions prejudicial to highway safety;
5. provide an acceptable mix of housing types;
6. incorporate sufficient sustainability measures; and
7. Any other material planning considerations.

### Open Space

6.2 Criterion (i) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 requires that an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost, nor an important public view spoilt. The site is relatively noticeable in public views. However, it is largely seen against the backdrop of existing buildings, the school to the west, the housing to the east and south. The Council's Countryside Officer is content that there would be no ecological implications arising from this proposal. This criterion would therefore be satisfied.

### Character and Appearance

6.3 Criteria (ii) and (iii) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 explain that the design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development should be in keeping with its surroundings and the character of the area is not adversely affected. The Council's Conservation Officer considers that it is regrettable that No.54 is proposed for demolition but it is not of sufficient merit to be considered for statutory or local listing. The proposed development would involve a significant increase in the number of dwellings on the site. The density of development would be higher than the established dwellings, but this would be mainly due to there being less space to the rear of the proposed plots, which would be difficult to perceive in public views. The width of the site would be comparable to the space taken up by two pairs of semis elsewhere on Love Lane. The position of the dwellings would be consistent with the building line of established dwellings on the north side of Love Lane.

- 6.4 The form and design of the proposed dwellings would also be generally in keeping with the visual appearance of the established dwellings. The majority of the parking would be provided towards the rear of the site. Where there is frontage parking provided, there would be a hedgerow screening it. As well as the majority of the hedgerow, some of the existing trees would be retained and there would be scope for landscaping to help the development blend into its surroundings. Tree protection and landscaping conditions could be applied accordingly. In the light of the above assessment, the proposal would comply with the above criteria.

Living Conditions

- 6.5 Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 requires that there are no overriding amenity objections. Policy D4 seeks to ensure that all new dwellings should be designed and laid out so as to secure a reasonable degree of privacy for the occupiers and to prevent development that would unacceptably harm the amenities of neighbouring properties through loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight. The proposed dwellings would be in line with others to the east. The relationship with No.48 would be acceptable with a 10 metre gap between this neighbouring dwelling and Plot 1, with only a landing window on the eastern elevation at first floor level. There are no other immediately adjoining neighbours who would be affected in terms of light, outlook or privacy. The garden areas for the proposed dwellings would comply with the recommended standards. On the basis of the above assessment, the proposal would comply with the above criteria.

Highways and Parking

- 6.6 Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 also requires that there would be no overriding highway objections. Although there are several objections to the proposed development from Watlington Parish Council and local residents on highway and pedestrian safety grounds, the Highway Liaison Officer is satisfied that the number of parking spaces and turning area within the site would comply with adopted standards. The final details of the improvements to the footpath could be secured through a planning condition and would be given weight as a benefit of the development. Additional conditions relating to the retention of parking and turning areas and cycle parking are also recommended. As such, the proposal would be in accordance with the above criterion.

Housing Mix

- 6.7 Policy H7 of the SOLP 2011 requires a suitable mix of housing to be provided and the sub-text indicates that the Council will seek to ensure that developments of a net gain of two or more dwellings would contain 45% 2-bedroom dwellings. This is based on the District's Housing Needs Survey which was last updated in 2010, where there is greatest need for two-bedroom dwellings across the District. The proposal contains four 2-bedroom dwellings, which would consequently comply with the objectives of this policy.

Sustainable Measures

- 6.8 Policy D8 of the SOLP 2011 requires proposals to incorporate sustainability measures in terms of energy, water and materials efficient design. Section 3 of the SODG 2008 recommends that developments of up to 5 dwellings reach at least Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application sets out a few measures with a view to achieving Level 3. A planning condition is recommended requiring a more comprehensive list of measures to be submitted and implemented prior to occupation. An appropriate location for refuse, recycling and composting collection could also be secured via a planning condition in accordance with Policy D10.

Other Material Planning Considerations

- 6.9 Contaminated land issues could be dealt with by a planning condition (Policy EP8). Boundary treatment could be achieved to an acceptable standard through a landscaping condition (Policies C9 and D1).

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The application proposal would comply with the relevant Development Plan Policies, Supplementary Planning Guidance and Government Guidance 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 or result in conditions prejudicial to highway safety.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1 **Grant Planning Permission subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Standard 3 year time limit**
2. **Approved plans condition**
3. **Details of levels prior to commencement**
4. **Schedule of materials prior to commencement**
5. **Removal of Permitted Development Rights for extensions, roof extensions, porch, outbuildings**
6. **Details of Code Level 3 sustainable measures implemented prior to occupation**
7. **Details of refuse, recycling and composting collection point prior to commencement**
8. **Parking and turning to be provided prior to occupation and retained as such**
9. **Implementation and retention of cycle parking facilities**
10. **Details of footpath alterations prior to commencement**
11. **Details of hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatment prior to commencement**
12. **Details of tree protection prior to commencement**
13. **Details of Contaminated Land Statement prior to commencement**
14. **Development to achieve Secured by Design accreditation**

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