
APPLICATION NO.	P10/E1951
APPLICATION TYPE	Full
REGISTERED	1 st February 2011
PARISH	Chinnor
WARD MEMBERS	Geoff Andrews Christopher Hood
APPLICANT	Mr Frank Groves
SITE	1 Lime Grove, Chinnor
PROPOSALS	Demolition of existing bungalow and garage. Erection of 4 bedroom house and 2 two bedroom apartments. Provision of 5 parking spaces and integral garage to house. Utilisation of existing access.
AMENDMENTS	Yes
GRID REFERENCE	475565/200889
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 Parish Council.
- 1.2 Lime Grove is a small cul-de-sac within the built up area of Chinnor. With the exception of the bungalow on the application site, the housing within the road comprises two storey development of similar design and it is evident that the development was constructed contemporaneously during the inter-war years. Lime Grove also leads to Leverkus Court, which comprises a terrace of houses and block of flats dating from the 1970s and typical of the architecture of this period. The flats lie immediately adjacent to the south west boundary of the application site and also front Church Road.
- 1.3 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) sits in a prominent position at the junction of Church Road and Lime Grove. At the present time, the site is bounded by mature hedging whilst Lime Grove is lined by protected lime trees on either side giving the road an attractive verdant appearance.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks permission for the erection of a two storey building containing 1 four bedroom dwelling and 2 two bedroom flats. Access to the site would be via the existing access off Lime Grove. Five outside parking spaces would be provided and there would also be an additional garaged space for the dwelling.
- 2.2 Following the receipt of amended plans the proposed building would be approximately 19 metres in width, 7.3 metres in depth and 7.4 metres in height. The basic form of the building is traditional but the detailing of the elevations and the use of facing materials would give the building a contemporary appearance.
- 2.3 This application follows the refusal of an earlier scheme for the redevelopment of the site (P08/E1400/O) to provide 6 flats.

2.4 A copy of the plans accompanying the application are **attached** as Appendix B. Other documents associated with the application can be viewed on the council's website, www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 **CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **Chinnor Parish Council** – Objects due to 'overdevelopment of land, unsuitable parking, size of parking spaces too tight for being realistic, overflow parking will be main road and as Lime Grove is too narrow to take more cars this is unsuitable. Design not in keeping, obtrusive to Church Road'.

3.2 **OCC Highway Liaison Officer** – No objections as the intensification of the use of the access does not lead to sustainable highway objections in this location. Parking provision is sufficient but ideally the width of the proposed garage should be increased to the adopted standard of 3 metres.

N.B The garage has been increased in width to 2.75 metres, which is considered sufficient.

3.3 **OCC Archaeologist** – The site lies within an area of some archaeological interest within the historic core of the town. An archaeological watching brief, which can be secured by condition, should be maintained during the period of construction.

3.4 **Contaminated Land Officer** – An investigation for contamination should be carried out and any contamination should be remediated prior to the occupation of the development.

3.5 **Forestry Officer** – No objections subject to tree protection during the course of development.

3.6 **Countryside Officer** – No objections

3.7 **Thames Water** – There are public sewers crossing or close to the development. Thames Water's approval is required if development is within 3 metres of the sewer. General advice has been provided in respect of surface water drainage and there are no objections in relation to water infrastructure.

3.8 **Monson (Drainage Consultants)** – The route of the public sewer should be indicated and surface water drainage details should be agreed prior to the commencement of development.

3.9 **Neighbours** – Thirteen letters of objection received, which raise the following concerns:

- Insufficient parking provided on the site so additional on-street parking will occur
- highway safety concerns due to additional traffic and the location of the site close to the junction with Church Road
- Impact on highway convenience due to access and manoeuvring difficulties
- The development due to the design and materials is not in keeping with the surrounding built form
- The proposals represents an overdevelopment of the site
- The development will be unneighbourly
- There is no need for additional housing in the village

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 P08/E1400/O – Outline planning permission refused on 7th April 2009 for the demolition of the bungalow and the construction of 6 flats. The application was refused for the following reasons:

1. Impact on the character and appearance of the surroundings due to the size, design, siting and bulk of the development
2. Impact on neighbouring amenity due to overbearing and overlooking effects
3. Impact on the protected lime trees

An appeal against this refusal was dismissed on 17th August 2009 and the site plan, elevations, and the Inspector's decision notice associated with this application are **attached** at Appendix C.

5.0 **POLICY AND GUIDANCE**

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

- G1, G2, G6, EP2, EP8, CON7, CON11, CON12, CON13, D1, D2, D3, D4, D6, D8, D10, H4, H7, H8, T1, T2

5.2 Government Guidance:

- PPS1, PPS3, PPS5, PPG13, PPS23

5.3 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 built up area of Chinnor where the principle of new residential development is acceptable having regard to Policy H4 of the SOLP. The development comprises one 4 bed house and two 2 bed flats. There is an identified shortfall in two bedroom units across the district having regard to the Housing Needs Survey and the proposal would help to address this shortfall in line with Policy H7 of the SOLP.

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

6.3 The area surrounding the site is dominated by two storey development of varying age and design, although the majority of the development within Lime Grove itself appears to be in the form of 1920s semi-detached dwellings of similar design, and size. There is currently a relatively consistent building line to the built form in respect of Church Road with a reasonable distance being retained between the street and individual buildings. Indeed, in the case of the current bungalow, the building has a low visual impact when viewed from Church Road due to its low height, the screening effects of boundary vegetation and its set back from the road.

6.4 The front of the application site can be seen from beyond the junction of Church Road with Station Road to the south west and from beyond St Andrews Church along Church Road to the north east. Views from the Church are from within the Conservation Area. In these views, the existing bungalow is not a prominent feature of the street scene as it is well screened and dominated in scale by the adjoining two storey developments, particularly Leverkus House to the south west.

6.5 The previous scheme on the site was partly refused due to the cramped nature of the development, which was particularly evident with the building lines of the development coming closer to the boundary of the site with Church Road and Lime Grove than those of the adjoining properties, Leverkus House and 2 Grove Road. In dismissing the appeal, the Inspector stated:

In terms of its design, I consider that the building would not appear unattractive nor out of place in this location. It would, however, stand well forward of the existing dwellings in both Church Road and Lime Grove, making it visually more dominant, and more cramped in its appearance, than neighbouring development. This effect would not be mitigated by the relative bulk of the long Church Road elevation of Leverkus House as that building is set some 3m further back from the road and at a lower level. The eight car parking bays and associated turning space would dominate the Lime Grove frontage, adding to the cramped appearance.

6.6 Therefore, the Inspector's concerns, which mirrored those of the council, in respect of the visual impact of the development primarily related to the siting of the building. In this regard the previous scheme projected approximately 3.5 metres to the front of the Church Road elevation of Leverkus House and approximately 7 metres to the front of the front elevation of 2 Lime Grove. By contrast the current proposed has been reduced substantially in terms of its footprint so that it would project no more than 1.3 metres beyond the building line of the front elevation of Leverkus House and no more than 2 metres beyond the front elevation of Lime Grove. The proposal therefore respects the building lines of adjoining development within both Church Road and Lime Grove to a much greater degree than the previous scheme and allows for spacious gaps to be retained between the building and these two roads thereby reducing the cramped appearance of the development.

6.7 The design of the development is more traditional than the previous scheme with a simple rectangular form with a central gable to the front to reflect the design of the semi-detached dwellings within Lime Grove, and traditional roof pitches. The height of the building at approximately 7.5 metres is in keeping with that of the adjoining buildings and overall the general form and scale of the building are in keeping with the surrounding built form. However, despite the relatively traditional form of the building, its design is somewhat unusual in terms of the asymmetric roof form, projecting gables to rear, window positions and palette of materials, which would comprise render, and timber clad walls under a slate roof. The previous proposal was for also for a more contemporary design in terms of styling and materials, and in dismissing the appeal against the refusal of this previous scheme the Inspector stated:

The building proposed would be 'T' shaped on plan, two storeys high and essentially modern in concept. Both the plan and the elevations would be well articulated, incorporating a number of design features including small gabled projections, first floor Juliet and full balconies, and exposed chimney stacks. Facing materials would comprise a combination of limestone render, natural oak boarding and metal windows and balcony balustrades, all beneath a series of standing seam zinc pitched roofs of consistent pitch but varied height...In terms of its design, I consider that the building would not appear unattractive nor out of place in this location.

- 6.8 With regard to the current scheme the same modern design concept has been adopted and Officers consider that this is acceptable in this location, particularly in light of the siting, scale and height of the building. Therefore, overall Officers consider that the proposal complies with Criteria (ii) and (iii) of Policy H4 of the SOLP, which require that the design, height, scale and materials of proposed development is in keeping with its surroundings and that the character of the area is not adversely affected.
- 6.9 The site is far enough from St Andrews Church, a Grade I listed building, and with intervening development so as not to adversely affect its setting in accordance with Policy CON5 of the SOLP. Policy CON7 of the SOLP states that proposals for development outside of a conservation area that would have a harmful effect on the conservation area will not be permitted. In this regard the reduction in the scale of the development compared to the previous scheme along with its more sympathetic siting and the retention of the vegetation around the site would ensure that the Conservation Area would not be harmed.

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

- 6.10 The application site adjoins a block of flats to the south west (Leverkus House) and a semi-detached two storey dwelling to the north west (2 Lime Grove). The north east elevation of Leverkus House is approximately 4 metres from the boundary with the application site and contains ground and first floor windows that look towards the site. At the present time, much of the boundary is formed by a high and thick conifer hedge that provides a very good screen between the two sites. However, this hedge does not extend all the way along the boundary but stops short so that the gable forming the south east corner of Leverkus House is open from the application site.
- 6.11 The proposed building would be approximately 9 metres from the boundary with Leverkus House with Leverkus House itself approximately 13 metres away. At this distance the development would not cause any significant loss of light or overbearing effects on the outlook when viewed from the closest windows of Leverkus House. Overlooking towards Leverkus House would be insignificant as all first floor windows in the rear elevation of the development would be glazed with obscure glass. The council also refused the previous application due to the impact on the amenity of the neighbouring properties, including Leverkus House. However, the Inspector did not support the council on this issue and he stated:

There are windows in the eastern flank elevation of Leverkus House facing directly towards the appeal site. They are separated from the existing bungalow by a distance of about 10m although there is a tall evergreen hedge within the appeal site extending along much of the shared boundary so that the outlook from these windows is significantly constrained. The proposal is to retain this hedge, which could be secured by condition, and although the proposed building would be about 3m closer to the windows than is the present bungalow, and a storey taller, I consider that the occupiers of Leverkus House would experience no material loss of outlook as a result of the development.

- 6.12 It should be noted that the current scheme is now further away from the boundary with Leverkus House and is smaller in size than the previous scheme.
- 6.13 The proposed development would be considerably closer to the boundary of the site with 2 Lime Grove than the existing bungalow. There would be a distance of only one metre to this boundary, however, the side elevation of Number 2 is over 7 metres from

the boundary and the gable facing Number 2 is approximately 7 metres deep and broadly in line with the building lines of Number 2. As such the development will not give rise to any significant overbearing or overshadowing impacts. It should be noted that this relationship with the neighbouring property is broadly the same as with the previous scheme, and no objections were raised in this regard. The closest first floor window facing Number 2 will be obscure glazed and a facing window from the projecting dormer on the rear elevation would be over 7 metres from the shared boundary and is unlikely to cause any significant overlooking of the adjoining property.

- 6.14 The development would not directly affect other neighbouring occupiers in the area. Lime Grove with its protected lime trees, and the distance between the north east elevation of the development and Number 14 Lime Grove would prevent any significant impact on this property.
- 6.15 The development would provide for good sized private garden areas, which would be sufficient for the occupiers of the proposed development.

Highway Considerations

- 6.16 The vehicular access into the site would remain as existing and six parking spaces with turning areas would be provided for the three units. This meets the parking standards set out in the SOLP and although concern has been expressed locally about the level of parking provision given the congestion on local roads, particularly in respect of Lime Grove, Officers do not consider that any refusal reason in relation to lack of parking can be sustained. The Highway Liaison Officer has raised no objections to the proposal, and amended plans have been received to increase the width of the garage to 2.75 metres, which will provide sufficient space for a car to park. A condition should be placed on any permission to ensure that the garage is retained for parking only.

Other Material Considerations

- 6.17 The previous scheme was also refused due to the impact on the protected lime trees to the front of the site. The Inspector agreed with the council's concerns regarding the proposal for a new access and car parking in close proximity to the lime trees and the likely impact on the long term sustainability of the trees. The current scheme does not propose to alter the existing access and the parking areas are located further from the trees, and on this basis Officers consider that the proposal has addressed this previous refusal reason and the Inspector's concerns. The Forestry Officer has raised no concerns subject to a tree protection scheme being agreed by condition.
- 6.18 Taking the precautionary approach as outlined in PPS23, the Contaminated Land Officer has recommended that a condition be imposed on any permission to investigate for and to remediate any contamination on the site. This is in line with Policy EP8 of the SOLP.
- 6.19 The site lies close to an area where Roman deposits were recorded in 1999. As such there is a reasonable prospect that archaeological finds will occur during the redevelopment of the site. In light of this the County Archaeologist has requested that an archaeological watching brief be the subject of a suggested condition. This is line with Policies CON11, CON12 and CON13 of the SOLP.
- 6.20 Limited information has been provided with the application to demonstrate how the development would provide for the efficient use of energy, water and materials in line with Policy D8 of the SOLP. A condition is recommended to ensure that sustainability measures are carried out as part of the scheme.

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 to be carried out in accordance with approved plans**
3. **Samples of materials to be submitted and approved**
4. **Details of hardsurfacing, new planting and fencing to be submitted and approved**
5. **Floor levels to be submitted and approved**
6. **Tree and hedge protection measures to be agreed**
7. **Sustainability measures to be implemented in accordance with details to be submitted and approved**
8. **Drainage details to be submitted and approved**
9. **Archaeological watching brief to be submitted and approved**
10. **Findings of the watching brief to be submitted**
11. **Contaminated land assessment to be carried out**
12. **Permitted development removed for extensions**
13. **First floor windows in south west elevation (and facing south west) to be obscure glazed and fixed shut**
14. **No additional windows at first floor or roof level in south west elevation**
15. **Cycle parking provision to be approved**
16. **Provision and retention of parking and turning areas**
17. **Garage to be retained for parking only**
18. **Windows/doors to meet Secured By Design Standards**
19. **Bin stores**
20. **Cycle store/stand**

Author: Mr T Wyatt
Contact no: 01491 823154
Email: planning.east@southoxon.gov.uk