
APPLICATION NO.	P11/E0877
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL
REGISTERED	02.06.2011
PARISH	HENLEY-ON-THAMES
WARD MEMBERS	Will Hall and Jennifer Wood
APPLICANT	Chesterton Commercial
SITE	Grovelands, St Andrews Road, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 1PG
PROPOSAL	Erection of detached two-storey 4-bedroom dwelling with attached garage and alterations to driveway.
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	475702/181552
OFFICER	Mr Peter Brampton

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee because of a conflict between the Officers' recommendation and the views of Henley-on-Thames Town Council.

1.2 Grovelands is a large detached property set within the built up residential limits of Henley. The property is set slightly back from the road in a spacious plot of just over 2,000 square metres. Residential properties along Blandy Road and Manor Road surround the rear of the application site. Immediately to the east of the site runs a public footpath, bounded by mature trees that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

1.3 The application site is shown on the OS extract **attached** at Appendix 1.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 In February 2011, the Planning Committee granted planning permission for the erection of a single detached dwelling on the southernmost portion of the rear garden of Grovelands. The applicant now wishes to amend that approved scheme to add a conservatory to the rear of the property and provide a link between the house and the previously detached garage. This link will provide a utility room, whilst the garage itself and the basement below the main house have been reduced in scale.

2.2 It is important to note that the dimensions of the main two-storey element of the house remains as approved. These are approximately 11.5 metres wide by 9.1 metres deep, reaching a height of 6.8 metres at the peak of the half-hipped roof.

2.3 The conservatory to be added to the rear elevation measures approximately 5.3 metres wide by 4 metres deep, reaching a height of 2.65 metres at the peak of the glazed roof.

2.4 The single storey link and garage, located on the eastern side elevation, has approximate maximum dimensions of around 5.9 metres wide by 5.8 metres deep, reaching a height of 4.8 metres at the peak of the roof.

2.5 In all other respects, this application remains as approved, including the demolition of the existing integral garage to Grovelands to create a new driveway along the eastern boundary of the plot.

2.6 The plans of the proposed development are **attached** as Appendix Two.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 **Henley-on-Thames Town Council** – Recommends refusal. Reiterates views previously expressed in respect of the previous application for this site. The development is over-intensive, backland development and it would adversely affect the privacy of neighbours. Also concerned about the risk to trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders and the impact of increased traffic.
- 3.2 **The Henley Society (Planning)** – Objection received. Application represents an attempt to gain permission for a new building even larger than the one approved recently, despite local objections. The present application would have a greater impact on the appearance of the surrounding area.
- 3.3 **Forestry Officer** – No objections subject to conditions from previous permission being carried over to this proposal.
- 3.4 **Waste Management Officer** – Property will need space for storage of 3 wheeled bins and the occupants will need to be able to present these bins adjacent to the public highway
- 3.5 **Thames Water Development Control** – No objections
- 3.6 **OCC Highways Liaison Officer** – No objections, conditions relating to turning and parking areas, cycle parking and gates requested
- 3.7 **Neighbour Representations** – Six letters of objection received. Objections can be summarised thus:
- Increase in footprint of dwelling is significant, making this a substantially different scheme so whole proposal needs to be reassessed, particularly in terms of neighbour impact
 - Increased footprint leaves dwelling out of character with neighbouring properties and the size of its own plot
 - Phased approach to the submission of applications is undesirable
 - Heavily glazed conservatory takes away the privacy of neighbouring properties
 - Increased overlooking from new conservatory of neighbouring properties
 - Increase in footprint reduces garden size for new occupants
 - Light pollution from new conservatory
 - Reduction in parking for Grovelands itself will cause a risk to road safety
 - Concerns over working hours and observation of conditions attached to previous consent

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 P10/E1281 - Proposed new dwelling to land at rear of Grovelands – Approved
P09/E1142 - Proposed new dwelling to land at rear of Grovelands – Refused
P03/E0565 - Erection of two detached houses in rear garden and construction of new access and garage – Refused and dismissed on appeal

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 Policies:
G2 – Protection and enhancement of the environment
G6 – Promoting good design
C8 – Development affecting protected species
C9 – Protection of landscape features
EP8 – Contaminated land

- D1 – Good design and local distinctiveness
- D2 – Vehicle and bicycle parking
- D3 – Plot coverage and garden areas
- D4 – Protection of privacy and daylight
- D8 – Energy, water and materials efficient design
- D10 – Incorporation of waste management provision
- H4 – New housing in the towns and larger villages
- H13 – Erection of extensions and outbuildings at residential properties
- T1 – Transport requirements for new developments
- T2 – Transport requirements for new developments

Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – Appendix 5 – Parking Standards

South Oxfordshire Design Guide (SODG) 2008

Government Guidance:

- PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPS3 – Housing
- PPS9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 Policy H4 outlines the considerations for applications for new housing in Henley and more specifically allows for the erection of new housing in the town subject to the following:

- i) An important open space of public, environmental or ecological value should not be lost, nor an important public view spoilt
- ii) The design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development must be in keeping with the surroundings
- iii) The character of the area should not be adversely affected
- iv) There should be no overriding amenity, environmental or highway objections and;
- v) If the proposal constitutes backland development, it should not create problems of privacy and access

Other considerations relevant to this proposal are:

- Whether the health of nearby protected trees would be affected by the new house and access
- Whether the proposal would incorporate appropriate sustainability and waste management measures
- Whether the habitats of protected species would be adversely affected by the development
- Whether there are any issues regarding land contamination

As this proposal is for a net gain of one dwelling, policies regarding housing mix are not relevant.

The principle of development

6.2 The application site lies well within the built up limits of the town and so, in accordance with the overall thrust of PPS3, the principle of a new dwelling on this site is acceptable. The coalition government amended PPS3 in 2010 to require the council to place a greater emphasis of the impact of this proposal on the character of the site and surrounding area. Officers discuss these issues below.

Siting Issues

- 6.3 There are limited views into the rear of Grovelands from nearby public vantage points. Residential gardens surround the application site to east, west and south. The public footpath running to the east of the site is on a noticeably lower level than the rear of Grovelands. Mature planting, including a hedge and protected trees, define the boundary between the footpath and the application site and offers excellent screening.
- 6.4 Officers are satisfied the amendments proposed here would not make the new house significantly more prominent from the public realm and so officers remain of the opinion the proposal would not spoil an important view nor would it cause the loss of an important open space.

Design Issues

- 6.5 The immediate area surrounding the application is characterised by housing estates dating from the 1960s and 1970s. There is a mixture of housing sizes and styles across these estates, meaning there is no distinctive character to the area for this proposal to follow.
- 6.6 In determining the previous application, Officers concluded that the height, scale and massing of the property was appropriate and that the design and materials were not out of keeping with surrounding houses given the variety of dwellings in the area.
- 6.7 The amendments proposed under this application do not change this conclusion. Given the reduction in the size of the garage itself, the link and garage to the side of the property represents an appropriately sized single storey element to the main part of the dwelling. It is well set down from the main ridge of the building and appears as a subservient addition. The hipped roof is a good match for the rest of the building and generally, Officers consider this side element appears as a natural continuation of the dwelling.
- 6.8 At 2.65 metres in height, the conservatory appears as an appropriately subservient single storey addition to the rear of the dwelling. It sits neatly below the eaves and its fenestration matches up well with the windows and doors proposed for the rest of the dwelling. Officers consider the overall increase in footprint to be relatively minimal and are satisfied the conservatory is also a reasonable addition to the approved scheme.

Character of the site and area

- 6.9 Neighbour objections contend the increase in the footprint associated with this proposal, over the approved scheme, represents an overdevelopment of the site. However, as outlined in paragraph 1.2, Grovelands sits in grounds of over 2000 square metres.
- 6.10 Thus, even when the increase in footprint of the dwelling itself is calculated, around 650 square metres of amenity space will still be available to the occupants of the new property. The SODG advises that 100 square metres will normally be required for a 4-bed dwelling and so this proposal significantly exceeds the minimum standard. Officers remain satisfied that the building will sit comfortably within its plot.
- 6.11 Despite the smaller garage, which can now only accommodate one car, the site will also offer a level of off-street parking comfortably in excess of the requirements of Appendix 5 of the Local Plan.

- 6.12 As discussed in Para 6.4, the opportunity for a clear view of the house from any public vantage point will be extremely limited.

Neighbouring Amenity, Backland Development and Privacy Issues

- 6.13 Prior to approving the previous application, committee members visited the site and Nos. 1 and 3 Blandy Road, who are the two neighbouring properties most affected by this proposal. No.1 Blandy Road is a bungalow property to the west that has a relatively shallow rear garden and the new house is positioned approximately in line with the rear of this neighbour. No.3 is a two-storey property to the southwest with a larger rear garden that wraps around the rear of the application site.
- 6.14 The owners of these properties objected strongly to the previous application, and they have objected to this fresh application. However, Officers are satisfied this proposal does not materially change the relationship the new house will have with these properties. It is important to reiterate the committee, following the site visit in February 2011, considered this relationship acceptable.
- 6.15 Turning first to the impact on No.1, the western side elevation of the house is a one ½-storey element, with an eaves height of 5 metres that is not excessive. This elevation will be around 20 metres away from the rear of No.1, which is marginally further than the approved scheme. Officers consider this distance reasonable, whilst the half-hipped design of the roof also reduces the bulk of the building. The new link and garage, and conservatory, are on the far side of the building, well away from No.1 and will have a minimal impact on the rear garden of this neighbour.
- 6.16 Overall, in terms of a loss of outlook or being overbearing, Officers consider this amended proposal has a slightly more favourable relationship with No.1 than the approved scheme and so conclude it is again acceptable.
- 6.17 The two-storey element of this amended proposal maintains an almost identical relationship with No.3. The distance between the new house and the rear garden of No.3, and the oblique relationship between the two will mean that concerns regarding harm to outlook, and the overbearing impact on the garden of No.3 are not significant. The owners of No.3 will continue to enjoy an open view across their rear garden.
- 6.18 However, Officers do accept that this amended proposal will still result in some clear overlooking of the rear garden of No.3. The orientation of the house means that first floor rear facing windows will allow views of the bottom portion of this garden, at a distance of around 13-14 metres. This relationship will have some impact on the enjoyment of this area of the garden, but Officers remain of the view this harm is not sufficient to warrant a refusal of planning permission.
- 6.19 A number of objections have been received to the new conservatory, contending it will increase light pollution and overlooking. Officers do not agree with this assessment. There is reasonable screening surrounding the rear of the application site, and a typical landscaping condition can be imposed to secure further enhancements to this. As such, anyone standing in the conservatory would not have a clear view of any neighbouring garden. This screening will also mitigate any light pollution, although officers do not consider a single conservatory would create in an undue amount of light spill.
- 6.20 Objections have also again been received from properties along Manor Road to the east of the application site. However, taking into account the distances involved and the mature planting along the footpath, which provides excellent screening during the summer months, the new dwelling would not be overbearing, nor would it result in a

significant loss of light.

- 6.21 The new link and garage would not be any closer to Manor Road than the previously approved detached garage, and so this relationship remains largely as approved.
- 6.22 Officers remain satisfied that, due to the distances involved, overlooking from the front of the new house to No.69 St Andrew's Road and Grovelands itself would not be significant.

Highway Safety Issues

- 6.23 The amendments proposed with this proposal do not have any significant impact on highway safety. The new access and driveway remains as approved, whilst the car parking and turning areas are largely as before and the OCC Highways Liaison Officer has confirmed no objections to the new arrangement.

Tree Issues

- 6.24 During the determination of the previous application, the council's Forestry Officer identified two Oaks along the eastern boundary and a Monterey Cypress within the garden. TPOs protect these trees and the Forestry Officer was concerned about the impact of the scheme on the long-term health of these important trees, particularly from the new driveway.
- 6.25 Officers subsequently secured amendments to the path of this driveway to mitigate this concern and these approved arrangements are carried over to this fresh application. The new conservatory, link and garage do not affect these important trees and so Officers remain satisfied the impact of this proposal on trees is, on balance, acceptable.

Sustainability and Waste Management

- 6.26 The applicant's supporting statement indicates the new dwelling would incorporate a reasonable extent of sustainable measures for a single dwelling and a condition can ensure their implementation in the final build.
- 6.27 Whilst there is no information with the application regarding provision for bin storage and recycling within the site, the council's Waste Management Officer is satisfied this can be accommodated and again a condition can control this element of the scheme.

Protected Species

- 6.28 As before, two surveys support this application, a protected species walk over survey of the site of the proposed dwelling and a bat assessment of Grovelands itself. The council's Countryside Officer has confirmed these were conducted in accordance with best practice and this proposal is unlikely to have any significant ecological impacts.

6.29 Land Contamination

In accordance with the requirements of Policy EP8 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan, a full land contamination investigation is required.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The principle of a dwelling is acceptable in this location, and the amendments to the approved scheme proposed with this application do not significantly change the acceptable relationship the proposed dwelling has with Grovelands, the site and the character of the wider area. It would not result in the loss of an important open space or public view. Its impact on neighbouring properties is also considered acceptable, with the amendments having little impact on the relationship with properties along Blandy and Manor Road.

7.2 Furthermore, subject to the relevant conditions, the proposal would not adversely affect highway safety or the health of nearby protected trees, affect the habitats of protected species and it would incorporate appropriate sustainability and waste management measures.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 Planning Permission granted subject to:

- 1. Commencement Three Years**
- 2. Approved Plans**
- 3. Levels for new development, relative to fixed datum point outside site, to be agreed**
- 4. Samples of all materials to be agreed**
- 5. Turning Area and Car Parking to be provided as on approved plans**
- 6. Cycle Parking Facilities to be agreed**
- 7. Sustainable Design Features to be incorporated into new dwelling as per Sustainability Assessment**
- 8. Waste and Recycling Facilities to be agreed**
- 9. Tree Protection Scheme, including no dig construction method for driveway, to be agreed**
- 10. Landscaping Scheme to be agreed**
- 11. Contaminated Land Investigation to be carried out and agreed**
- 12. Permitted Development Rights restricted for alterations and extensions to the new property**

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