
APPLICATION NO.	P11/E1136
APPLICATION TYPE	Minor
REGISTERED	15 July 2011
PARISH	CHECKENDON
WARD MEMBER	Judith Nimmo-Smith
APPLICANT	Mr and Mrs Collins
SITE	Barn Cottage, Exlade Street Checkendon, RG8 0UA
PROPOSAL	Replacement of chicken rearing unit with a stable block
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	465844/182062
OFFICER	Mrs Charlotte Brewerton

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application is referred to Planning Committee as the Officer's recommendation conflicts with the views of the Parish Council.
- 1.2 Barn Cottage is located within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the settlement of Checkendon. A location plan is **attached** at Appendix A.
- 1.3 The site, which comprises an orchard, is fairly large and extends beyond the end of the garden associated with the applicant's dwelling. There is an old chicken rearing coop on the land situated in the south east corner of the site.
- 1.4 The applicants also own a paddock immediately adjoining the application site to the west which has vehicular access from Exlade Street some 200m from the entrance to Barn Cottage. A further paddock is also in their ownership and is located approximately 150m to the east of the entrance to Barn Cottage.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This application seeks planning permission to remove the dilapidated chicken coop and replace it with a stable block. The existing chicken coop measures 5.5m wide, 12.3m deep and has a height of 3.5m. Electricity is already connected to the chicken coop.
- 2.2 The proposed stable would measure 5m wide, 21.6m deep and would stand at 3.4m in height. It would consist of 4 stables, a tack room, a hay feed store and a covered wash down area, extending the northern end of the stable block to 8.5m wide. The building would be situated around a gravel courtyard and fenced off from the orchard by a timber post and rail fence. The proposed stable will measure 84 square metres in total size.
- 2.3 The proposed materials comprise shiplap boarding which will be stained black with a corrugated cement fibre sheeting roof in rustic red colour to match the roof of the existing barn on site.
- 2.4 Lighting will be provided by an incoming power supply to each individual stable with lights under the walkway canopy. Muck heap disposal is to be controlled under best practise management and will be removed by an agricultural contractor at regular intervals.

2.5 Proposed plans are **attached** at Appendix B whilst other documentation associated with the application can be viewed on the council's website, www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 Checkendon Parish Council – Recommend refusal in its current form. The street lies within a valley and four stables could cause environmental problems if the air becomes stagnant.

3.2 Forestry Officer – The trees within the site are not the subject of a tree preservation order or within a Conservation Area. The proposed barn is within the edge of the root protection area of the adjacent mature oak tree, however the oak is in decline due to a fungal infection, and is therefore not a constraint. Basic tree protection measures should be applied if permission is granted.

3.3 Countryside Officer – The habitat surrounding the site has some potential to be used by bats. The building itself has windows along both sides which would provide a light interior, the roof appears to be constructed of sheet asbestos style materials and I would classify the building as having only low potential to be used by bats. As a result I would recommend that an informative is used.

3.4 Health & Housing Officer (Contaminated Land) - No comments.

3.5 Health & Housing Officer (Air Quality) – No objections to the application.

3.6 2 Neighbour Objections – The footprint significantly extends the risk of use for commercial livery, noise and smell, traffic constraints to the site.

1 letter of support and 1 letter confirming no objections have also been received.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1

- None

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP)
Policies G2, G6, C2, C8, C9, R10, EP1, EP2, EP8

5.2 South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008 (SODG)

5.3 Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (PPS7)
Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control (PPS23)
Planning Policy Statement 24: Planning and Noise (PPS24)

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application are;

- Principle of Development
- The impact upon the wider surrounding area and the AONB
- The impact on neighbouring amenity
- Other considerations

6.2 The principle of keeping horses falls under the criteria of Policy R10 of the SOLP which states that proposals involving or connected to the keeping of horses will be permitted provided that the following criteria can be met:

(i) The proposed development would not be visually intrusive or damage the appearance and character of the area and the landscape.

- 6.3 The proposed stable would be located in a similar location as an existing redundant chicken coop. Access to the site is via a small orchard which is to remain, as are the other trees surrounding the immediate area. The Forestry Officer has advised that none of the trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) nor would they be considered a constraint to development in accordance with Policy C9 of the SOLP. A general tree protection condition has been suggested to protect those which are to remain onsite which would screen the majority of the proposal from surrounding vantage points.
- 6.4 The existing trees screen the chicken coop from the surrounding properties, Barn Cottage and the wider surrounding countryside. The proposed stable would have a larger footprint than the existing chicken coop, however, it would have a similar width and height upon the site. From surrounding properties the additional depth would not be readily prominent or result in a significant change in terms of outlook, especially considering the amount of screening onsite and given the rise in the land. The proposal would result in an improved external appearance, which will appear in keeping with the existing barn on site at Barn Cottage, and would enhance the surrounding AONB. I am satisfied that given its suitable design, height and scale the proposed building would not appear overly prominent within the surrounding area. It would be stepped in from the adjoining boundaries and kept relatively low in terms of its height on an elevated piece of land having little additional impact upon surrounding views.
- 6.5 There are open fields beyond the application site however there are no footpaths which would lead to the stable being overly prominent in public views within the wider surrounding area. The adjacent paddock to the application site is owned by the applicant. There would be some views from this paddock towards the development, however again given the amount of screening from the fruit trees this would be minimal. Given its suitable design and screening I am satisfied that there would be little visual harm from the proposed development upon the surrounding landscape or AONB.

(ii) The proposed development would not conflict with the overriding objective in the Green Belt to maintain the open nature and rural character of the land.

- 6.6 The site is not located within a Green Belt.

(iii) The proposed development would not damage the amenities of the area in terms of traffic, excessive bridleway use, noise, smell or other disturbances.

- 6.7 There have been some neighbour concerns that the size of the stables and the increased use of the site could result in increased air pollution given its location in a valley which receives little air movement. The Parish Council also share these views and have recommended refusal of this application.
- 6.8 The applicant has advised that muck heap disposal will be controlled under best practise paddock management and that accumulations will be removed by agricultural contractors at regular intervals as are already taking place from the adjacent paddocks.

- 6.9 The council's Environmental Health Officer has no objections to the proposal based on the information submitted in terms of contaminated land issues and air quality control. I am satisfied that the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact upon noise and smell in accordance with Policies EP1, EP2 and EP8 of the SOLP.
- 6.10 Concerns have been raised by neighbours as to the amount of stables on the site which could lead to a commercial business. The owner has confirmed that the stabling will be for personal use only with stabling for horses belonging to the owners of Barn Cottage. Officers are satisfied that if permission is granted, given the location of the proposed stables, a condition that restricts commercial use would be considered reasonable in this instance.
- 6.11 The applicants currently own the land edged blue on the application plans which includes a paddock to the north west of the application site. This will remain unchanged with only additional use of the land edged red. All traffic movements will remain similar to those at present. Any additional horse movements will be through the yard at Barn Cottage or from the paddock entrance as existing. Muck disposal will remain similar to the current arrangements and will be accessed via the paddock entrance or Barn Cottage entrance having little increased impact upon adjacent dwellings.
- 6.12 I am of the opinion that there will be no significant increased impact with regard to traffic movement to surrounding properties from the present situation compared to that proposed. Although the use of a stable at the end of Barn Cottage Garden would be intensified the amount of screening and low key nature of the use should ensure an acceptable impact upon the amenities of adjoining properties.
- 6.13 Based on the information submitted with the application Officers are satisfied that there would be little increased harm to adjacent amenity in terms of excessive traffic use, noise or smell from the stables in accordance with Policy R10.

Other Considerations

- 6.14 The Countryside Officer has advised that given the roofing material of the run down chicken coop it would lead to only a low potential of bats being present. The Countryside Officer is therefore of the opinion that an informative should be included on any permission to make the owners aware of the potential of bats in accordance with Policy C8 of the SOLP.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposed development would be acceptable in terms of the impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and the amenity of neighbouring properties in accordance with the relevant Development Plan Policies.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

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

1. **Commencement of 3 years**
2. **Planning condition listing the approved plans**
3. **Sample materials required for walls and roof**
4. **Tree Protection (general)**
5. **No Commercial Use**

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