

APPLICATION NO.	P16/S2224/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	6.7.2016
PARISH	GREAT HASELEY
WARD MEMBER(S)	Stephen Harrod
APPLICANT	Lexham Property Developments Ltd
SITE	The Nursery School, Rectory Road, Great Haseley, OX44 7JP
PROPOSAL	Conversion of the Old School building to dwelling and erection of a new detached dwelling within the grounds of The Old School, Great Haseley. The proposal includes for the demolition of the single storey flat roof extensions, lean-to conservatories and a prefabricated outbuilding
AMENDMENTS	As amended by plans ref PS1010 A, PE1010B, PP0010 B and PP1030 B which alters the south facing dining room extension by reducing its length, increasing the amount of glazing and lowering the roof profile).
GRID REFERENCE	464076/201879
OFFICER	Kim Gould

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee because the recommendation conflicts with the views of Great Haseley Parish Council.

1.2 The application site which is some 0.095 hectares, is located within the built up limits of Great Haseley in the conservation area. Mature hedging runs along the southern boundary of the site with Rectory Road. Back Way runs along the northern boundary of the site. An Ordnance Survey extract showing the site's location is **attached** at Appendix 1

1.3 The Old school is a detached single storey building built in the early 1900s The original school comprised two dual pitched buildings linked with flat roof structures situated at the north western corner of the site, together with a second dual pitched structure formerly used as the infant's school on the north-east corner of the site. The buildings are currently vacant.

1.4 More recently the buildings have been extended by way of flat roof single storey projections and lean to conservatories. The infant's school does not form part of this planning application.

1.5 This application follows pre-application advice correspondence under references P13/S1615/PEM and P14/S2224/FUL.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

2.1 This application seeks full planning permission to convert and alter the Old School building to create a 4 bed dwelling (plot 1). In addition, the application seeks full planning permission to remove the existing pre-fabricated building and replace it with a new 1.5 storey, three bedroom, detached dwelling (plot 2) with on-site parking and amenity provision for both dwellings. Since being submitted the application has been

amended at the request of the council's conservation officer. These amendments include an amended south facing dining room extension replacing a visually lightweight solution with a more heavily glazed solution with a lower roof profile. The length of the extension has been shortened slightly to accommodate a canopy which is designed to provide solar shading.

2.2 Both plots would have 2 off street parking spaces and private rear gardens in excess of the council's standard of 100sqm.

2.3 Copies of the submitted plans are **attached** at Appendix 2. A full set of the application plans and supporting information can be seen on the council's website at www.southoxon.gov.uk

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Great Haseley Parish Council – Object Poor design, not in keeping or in sympathy with the area, inappropriate scale and bulk for the site and inappropriate materials

OCC (Countryside Access) - No objection

OCC (Archaeology) - There are no archaeological constraints to this scheme. No objection.

Conservation Officer - No objection subject to conditions relating to materials

Health & Housing - Env. Protection Team – No objections subject to conditions in respect of hours of construction and noise and dust.

OCC (Highways) - No objection subject to conditions relating to access, parking, visibility and SUDs compliant parking areas

Neighbour Objections (3) cramped, damage to attractive educational building, inadequate parking spaces, dangerous access, poor design of new dwelling.

Countryside officer - no objection subject to a standard condition and informative being added to any planning permission.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P14/S0612/PEM](#) - Reply (03/04/2014)

Re-development of the site for residential use.(Follow up letter to P13/S1615/PEM)

[P13/S1615/PEM](#) - Reply (20/06/2013)

Re-development of the site for residential use (5/6 Houses)

[P00/N0572](#) - Approved (29/11/2000)

Remove existing outbuildings and redundant boiler house. Replace with two conservatories for use by school.

[P90/N0885](#) - Approved (27/03/1991)

Conversion of former infant school room for use as B1(a) and (b) (office, research and development)

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy policies

CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CSEN3 - Historic environment
CSQ3 - Design
CSR1 - Housing in villages
CSS1 - The Overall Strategy
CSH4 – Mix of dwellings

5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 policies;

CON7 - Proposals in a conservation area
D1 - Principles of good design
G2 - Protect district from adverse development
H4 - Housing sites in towns and larger villages outside Green Belt
CF1 - Loss of community facility
C8 – Species protection

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008

5.3 National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main issues to be considered in the determination of this planning application are:

- Whether the principle of residential development is acceptable in this location
- Policy H4 criteria
- Housing mix
- Loss of community facility
- Garden sizes
- Bats
- CIL

6.2 **Whether the principle of residential development is acceptable in this location.**

Policy CSR1 of the SOCS allows for infill development within the smaller villages of the District such as Great Haseley and for the redevelopment proposals in all categories of settlements provided that they are in line with other policies in the Development Plan. As such, the principle of residential development on this site is acceptable. Assessment of the proposal in relation to policy H4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan must be made.

6.3 **Policy H4 Criteria**

Policy H4 of the SOLP allows for residential development within the towns and villages within the District providing the development accords with the following criteria:

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

In relation to this proposal, criteria ii,iii and iv are the most relevant and are examined

below.

6.4 ii Design, height and scale of materials

In this part of Great Haseley there is a variety of house types constructed using a varied pallet of materials. Plot 1 involves converting an existing school building. Although the development will involve the removal of some modern additions to the building and some single storey extensions, there will be no increase to the overall height of this building and it will continue to be an attractive feature of this part of Great Haseley. The proposed new dwelling has been designed to be in keeping with the surrounding established character of the area. It will be constructed using good quality traditional materials and will replace an unattractive pre-fabricated classroom building which currently appears out of keeping in the locality.

iii Impact on the character of the area

The site lies within the Great Haseley conservation area. At present it is vacant and appears neglected which detracts from the character of the conservation area. The proposed conversion of the school building will ensure the building's longevity and the amended plans considered acceptable and appropriate by the council's conservation officer. Internal divisions retain the historic interest of the building. The proposed new dwelling will be of a traditional vernacular form constructed of traditional materials which respects the local vernacular style of the architecture within the vicinity which although varied is generally simple in form. It is your officers' opinion that the proposed development will preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Great Haseley conservation area.

iv Neighbour impact

The site for the proposed new dwelling is situated east of The Old school with access off Backway. The proposed front elevation of the new dwelling will be set back from Backway by approximately 2 metres to provide visibility for the two access points located on both sides of the proposed dwelling. An enclosed private, south facing garden is provided to the rear of the proposed dwelling. To avoid overlooking there are no first floor windows on the two flank elevations. The owners of The Old School House which lies north of the application site, have objected to the proposal on the grounds that the proposed new dwelling will overlook their garden. This property sits in a large plot with gardens surrounding the house on all sides. It is accepted that there will be first floor windows in the new dwelling which will look towards The Old School House. However, this will be across Back Way and the windows will not overlook the most private part of the rear garden to this property which is directly behind the main dwelling. Such a relationship of having first floor windows facing the front of other properties across a road is not unusual and is typical in the built up areas of villages. No 30 Rectory Road lies to the south of the site and has a long side garden which extends along the southern boundary of the site. First floor windows of the new dwelling will look towards the eastern end of the rear garden of no 30. It is not considered that the proposed windows would overlook the most private part of this garden.

The existing school building is to be converted and extended. It is an "L" shape with eastern elevation facing the proposed new dwelling. However, it is single storey only and therefore there will not be any direct overlooking. The high level windows in the eastern elevation of the building to allow light into the building only and are not to serve a first floor. In the western elevation which faces School House, there are high level windows only and a single conservation style roof light. As such there will be no direct overlooking from this development. The extended building will extend further towards the boundary with School House but a gap of some 0.9 m (minimum) will be retained and therefore it is not considered to be overbearing or oppressive on the occupiers of this property.

Highway considerations

Each dwelling has vehicular access of Back Way and has 2 off street parking spaces which accords with the council's standards for 3 and 4 bed dwellings. The Highway Officer has raised no objection to this proposal commenting that given the characteristics of the carriageway, vehicular traffic and speeds are likely to be low and that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on the highway network. A number of conditions relating to parking, access and visibility are recommended.

6.5 Meeting housing needs

Policy CSH4 of the SOLP seeks to provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the current and future households. This application proposes 1 no 4 bed dwelling and 1 no 3 bed dwellings. This proposal therefore accords with this policy.

6.6 Loss of community facility

The proposed development involves the use of the existing school buildings for conversion or part of the school site for redevelopment. Policy CF1 seeks to resist the loss of an essential community facility unless suitable alternative provision is made for the facility on a site elsewhere in the locality. In this particular case, the facility is a school which closed in the 1980s and was subsequently used as a day nursery. Children from the village attend schools in neighbouring villages so the provision of an alternative facility is not appropriate and the existing buildings are not considered to be an essential community facility in this particular case.

6.7 The NPPF was published after the SOLP. The NPPF advises that proposals which accord with Development Plan policies should be approved without delay. Paragraph 51 of the Framework is particularly relevant to this proposal as it positively encourages bringing empty buildings into residential use and stipulates in paragraph 55 that in order to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

6.8 The site is not included in the Council's Assets of Community Value register such that, in turn, there is no requirement to market the building for any further period prior to the commencement of an alternative use.

6.9 Garden sizes

Policy D3 of the SOLP seeks to ensure that a private outdoor garden or amenity space is provided for all new dwellings. The South Oxfordshire Design Guide goes on to recommend garden sizes for different sized dwellings. It advises that a 3 or 4 bedroom dwelling should have a garden size of some 100sqm. In this particular case, each property has a garden area in excess of the council's standards with plot 1 having a rear garden of some 230 sq.m and plot 2 some 119 sq.m

6.10 Bats

A bat survey was been submitted with this planning. The council's countryside officer requested further information which has been submitted. Additional bat activity surveys have been conducted at the site and access was created into the previously inaccessible roof voids within the school buildings. No evidence indicating the current or past presence of bats was found in the roof voids. The additional external surveys, emergence and re-entry surveys have confirmed that a roosting site for low numbers of common pipistrelle bats is present on the outside of one of the school buildings. Due to the location of the roosting site it is thought that this can be retained within the re-development proposals without impacts during the construction process.

The additional survey works combined with the safeguards contained within the mitigation strategy give sufficient confidence that the works can be completed without impacting the local bat population. In addition two bat tubes are proposed to be incorporated into the new build structure on the site which would provide an enhancement to the roosting opportunities within the completed scheme. The countryside officer has raised no objection to this proposal subject to a standard condition and informative being added to any planning permission.

- 6.11 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).** The council's CIL charging schedule has been adopted and applies to relevant proposals from 1 April 2016. CIL is a planning charge that local authorities can implement to help deliver infrastructure and to support the development of their area, and is primarily calculated on the increase in footprint created as a result of the development.

In this case CIL is liable because the proposal involves the creation of 2 new dwellings. The CIL charge applied to new residential development in this case is £150 per square metre of additional floorspace (Zone 1). The scheme has a floor area of 373 sqm which would generate a CIL payment of £55,950.0. 15% of the CIL payment will go directly to The Haseleys Parish Council (in the absence of an adopted Neighbourhood Plan) for spending towards local projects.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 I recommend that planning permission is granted because the principle of residential development is acceptable on this site. The amended scheme is not considered unneighbourly or harmful to the character and appearance of the Great Haseley conservation area. The proposal accords with the council's standards in relation to garden sizes and parking and accords with Development Plan policies.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1 **That planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions;**

- 1 : Commencement three yeas - full planning permission.
- 2 : Approved plans.
- 3: New vehicular access.
- 4 : Sample materials required (all).
- 5 : Details of boundary treatments.
- 6 : Existing vehicular access.
- 7 : Parking and manoeuvring areas retained.
- 8 : Hours of construction.
- 9 : Hours of construction and demolition to be restricted.
- 10: Development to take place in accordance with bat mitigation plan submitted.

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