

APPLICATION NO.	P16/S4254/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	4.1.2017
PARISH	WHEATLEY
WARD MEMBER(S)	Toby Newman
APPLICANT	Mr & Mrs Robinson
SITE	4A Farm Close Road Wheatley, OX33 1UQ
PROPOSAL	Side extension to existing flatted block to provide two No. two bed flats. (4 No flats in total). Provision of 3 no. off street parking spaces with new highway access, secure cycle storage and bin enclosures
AMENDMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As amended by plan received 27 February 2017 providing additional parking space - 3 spaces in total, • as amplified by updated block plan received 13 March 2017 showing land ownership, and • contamination questionnaire received 16 March 2017)
GRID REFERENCE	459529/205576
OFFICER	Katherine Canavan

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The application has been referred to Planning Committee because the officer's recommendation conflicts with the views of the Parish Council. The objections raised are as follows:

- Lack of parking
- Insufficient distance between side elevation of 4a and 4b and neighbouring block 6a 6b, 8a and 8b

1.2 The application site is located within the built limits and in the southern area of Wheatley. The surrounding area is characterised by 1960s residential development.

1.3 Nos 4a and 4b (flats) face onto Farm Close Road, and are located close to the junction with Station Road and the Co-op shop. Nos 6a, 6b, 8a and 8b are orientated perpendicular to the street, although one of the accesses faces the street. The area between the buildings is laid to grass and adjoins the footpaths serving 6a and 6b and leading to the rear of 4a and 4b. Until recently a tree was located on the grassed area. Two off-street parking spaces are located to the side of 4a.

1.4 The site is identified on the OS extract attached at Appendix 1.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

2.1 The applicant seeks full planning permission for two 2-bed flats (adjoining the flats 4a and 4b Farm Close Road). The application includes provision of 2 off-street parking spaces (with additional visitor space) with new highway access, secure cycle storage and bin enclosures.

2.2 Reduced copies of the plans accompanying the application are attached at Appendix 2. Full copies of the plans and consultation responses are available for inspection on the Council's website at www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1

Consultees	Original plans and information (Jan 2017)	Additional comments regarding revisions and additional information (Mar 2017)
Wheatley Parish Council	Approved	Parish Council request the application to be called in by ward cllr, and raise the following objections: Lack of parking Insufficient distance between side elevation and neighbouring block
Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council)	Holding objection: Lack of parking Relocation of cycle storage and refuse area needed Relocation of lighting column needed	No strong views, subject to conditions: Additional information clarifies historic and current parking situation Additional parking space noted.
Health & Environment - Contaminated Land	Insufficient information – contamination questionnaire required.	No strong views - contamination questionnaire submitted.

3.1i Comments were received on the original plans and revised plans from 9 neighbour representatives, summarised below. The full responses can be viewed on the Council’s website at www.southoxon.gov.uk.

Objections raised in response to original plans and information (Jan 17):
<p>Residential amenity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overlooking and loss of privacy to 6a, 6b, 8a, 8b, and 1b, 3b, 2. • Impact on outlook for 6a, 6b, 8a, 8b, facing a large, blank flank wall • Loss of light to adjacent properties and no. 3a <p>Overdevelopment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overdevelopment, resulting in cramped environment and concrete jungle • Adverse impact on character of area, and loss of green space • No other properties with such a relationship in the nearby area • Piecemeal development – should be progressed as a coherent approach across the village • The development is not sustainable when considering all aspects • Negates positive design and open space intended in original 1960s development • The development does not respect neighbouring occupants; is not of high quality design; and would create unacceptable living conditions <p>Parking pressure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure on parking – on-street parking is at capacity • Conflict with traffic calming measure near junction • Parking pressure associated with nearby Co-op • The 2 spaces already exist, so no new parking is being added • Further extension to the kerb would reduce on-street parking

Other matters

- Insufficient detail on plans to assess the impact between dwellings – streetscene plan required
- Inadequate consultation and lack of notification
- Pressure on utilities and services – there are frequent water / sewerage issues in this area
- Disruption and parking pressure during construction period
- Remedial work that may be required following removal of willow tree
- Request for drainage details
- Loss of value to neighbouring properties

Objections raised in response to revisions and additional information (Mar 17):

Parking pressure

- Parking concerns as previously stated – revisions do not address concerns
- Conflict with traffic calming measure at a pinch-point in the road and on a busy junction
- Further extension to the kerb to accommodate the third space would reduce on-street parking and impact highway safety (alongside traffic calming)
- There is no possibility of increasing parking on-site – the development would only result in increased parking pressure to the area
- The impact and number of vehicles on Farm Close Road has materially altered since the 1960s, and so many of the integral garages have been converted to living accommodation

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P16/S2800/HH](#) - Approved (14/10/2016)

Erection of single storey rear extension.

[P16/S1314/PEM](#) – Pre-application response provided (01/07/2016)

Erection of two storey side extension to provide additional 2 no apartments. Off street parking and secure bin/bike stores.

[P11/W0441](#) - Approved (18/05/2011)

Gravel hardstanding for two vehicles

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy policies

CS1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CSS1 – The overall strategy

CSR1 – Housing in villages

CSQ3 – Design

5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan policies

G2 – Protect district from adverse development

H4 – Proposals for houses

D1 – Design

D2 – Parking provision

D3 – Plot coverage and garden areas

D4 – Privacy and overlooking

T1 – Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users

T2 – Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

5.3 South Oxfordshire Design Guide

5.4 Neighbourhood Plan

Wheatley Parish Council are in the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, and have formally designated the NP area. The plan is in an early stage and has limited weight.

5.5 National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The key considerations in determining the application are:

- Principle of residential development
- Impact on neighbouring occupants
- Highways and parking provision
- Additional matters

6.2 **Principle of residential development**

6.2i The application site is located in the built-up area of the settlement, and within an area predominantly characterised by residential development. Wheatley is categorised as a 'larger village' in the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS), and a sustainable location where limited infill development is appropriate. In establishing the principle of residential development on the site, consideration has been given to policy CSR1 of the SOCS. In assessing the detail of the proposal, consideration is given to policy H4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan.

6.2ii Policy H4 permits housing on sites within the built up areas of the four main towns and within the built-up areas of villages provided that:

i) an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost, nor an important public view spoilt;

The proposal site comprises an area of land between the buildings housing nos 4a and 4b, and 6a, 6b, 8a and 8b – part of the land is in the ownership of 4A. The area is laid to grass and adjoins the footpaths serving 6a and 6b and leading to the rear of 4a and 4b. Until recently a tree was located on the grassed area. The site is within an area characterised by residential development.

While the grassed area provides a clear division between dwellings and is visible within the public realm, it is not an important space of public value, or environmentally significant, and the development of part of the green area would not result in an important public view being 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;

The height and scale of the addition is consistent with that of 4a and 4b, and the design is similar in appearance and proportions to other dwellings in the nearby area. The floorspace of the proposed units is comparable to other flats in the immediate area, and the roof mirrors the style of no. 2 on the opposite end. In order to integrate the addition effectively it is recommended that a condition requires materials match those of 4a, 4b and 2.

There are no area or character designations that require a particular design to be followed in development terms, and the proposal does not introduce elements or design features that conflict with the character of the surrounding residential area.

iv) there are no overriding amenity, environmental or highway objections; and Residential amenity is considered in section 6.3.

Highway implications and parking standards are addressed in section 6.4.

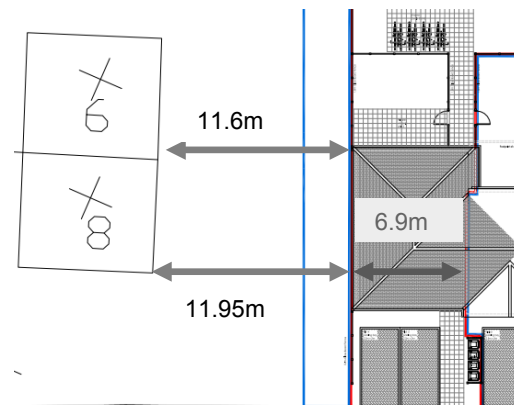
- v) *if the proposal constitutes backland development, it would not create problems of privacy and access and would not extend the built limits of the settlement.*

The proposal is not considered to be backland development as it fronts directly onto the street and adjoins a side elevation of 4a and 4b.

6.3 Impact on neighbouring occupants

6.3i Policies D4 and H4 of the SOLP consider the development's impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring occupants.

6.3ii



Nos 6a, 6b, 8a and 8b are orientated perpendicular to the street and all have habitable rooms on the western elevation (facing the side of 4a and 4b), although the entrances face the street / the rear of the site. The development presents a side-to-front relationship with 4a / 4b.

The South Oxfordshire Design Guide, 7.14, requires that applicants check that 'back to back distances are a minimum of 25 metres; back to side are a minimum of 12 metres; front to front a minimum of 10 metres [...]'.

In this case, if a front-to-front arrangement had been proposed, a minimum distance of 10m would meet the requirements - the proposed development has a greater distance than this. A rear-to-side relationship (where there is a greater need for rear garden space to be safeguarded) requires 12m – the grassed area is not private space and is visible within the public environment. Therefore the distance, which is slightly below 12m, does not present a risk to loss of privacy or conflict with the South Oxfordshire Design Guide.

6.3iii The proposal includes one ground floor and one upper floor window on the side elevation (facing 8a and 8b) and serving kitchenettes. The separation distance is sufficient to safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupants.

6.4 Highways and parking provision

6.4i The South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP) – Appendix 5, and policy D2 of the SOLP, set out the car parking standards for residential developments. Two spaces are required for dwellings with 2 bedrooms, and are required to meet the dimensions specified in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide of 2.5m wide by 5m long.

6.4ii The Highway Authority initially raised a holding objection to the scheme due to the existing flats not having dedicated off-street parking.



Having re-assessed the proposal the objection was revoked on the following grounds:

- The original development P62/M0464 (2 houses and 18 flats) provided parking in the form of on-street bays and garages, but no off-street parking or allocated spaces.
- Within this context, 4a, 4b, 6a, 6b, 8a and 8b do not have dedicated on-site parking provided as part of the original development, but have access to garages off-site. This is consistent with other residential properties within the development.
- In 2011, 4a was granted permission for 2 parking spaces to the side. This was requested for convenience, and not to respond to any development requirement or a need to meet planning policy requirements.
- Parking standards indicate that a maximum of two spaces should be provided for a two bedroom unit, with the parking situation for the existing dwellings remaining unchanged, ie. no loss of parking. However, given the sustainable nature of the site in terms of walking, cycling and public transport opportunities and in its proximity to the village centre the Highways Officer advised this could be reduced to one space per unit.
- The scheme provides two spaces to serve flats 3 and 4, to respond to the likely needs of two new households, associated with the two new units. Flats 1 and 2 (existing) would have no dedicated parking, which equates to the same impact of the original development.
- One additional visitor space has been provided to the front of 4A. This approach is welcomed but not required to meet parking standard requirements.



6.4iii While it is recognised that the residential area is often busy, particularly in the evenings and early mornings, and that visitors to the nearby shop add to the pressure for spaces in the immediate area, for the reasons set out above there are insufficient grounds to insist on additional parking, over and above the two required spaces (plus additional visitor space). The Highways Officer has confirmed that the level of parking meets policy requirements within a sustainable location, and has raised no objections.

6.5 Additional matters

6.5i Private amenity space

Minimum standards for new residential development are recommended in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and in Policy D3 of the Local Plan but allow for shared amenity space. A minimum of 50 square metres of private garden area would be required for each of the proposed two bed dwellings; the two existing units would remain as 2-bed flats.

Following the division of the plot, and taking into account the planning permission for a conservatory (adjoining 4a), the remaining area of 235sqm would be split between the four dwellings. While the ground floor flats would have private enclosed space, and the upper floors would have shared space, this arrangement is not unusual for flats, and provides an average of 58sqm each. The strip of land within the same ownership allows for access to the shared space without having to go through the building, and allows practical access to the bike store. This layout meets the policy requirement relating to amenity space in residential developments.

6.5ii Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) liability

The CIL charge applied to new build residential development is £156 per square metre (as per indexing figure January 2017) in Wheatley. 15% of the CIL payment will go directly to Wheatley Parish Council (in the absence of an adopted Neighbourhood Plan) for spending towards local projects.

In this case the development would result in the provision of 118sqm of new residential floorspace. The relevant forms have been submitted to allow the Council to collect the CIL payment.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1i Your officers recommend that planning permission is granted because the proposed development is considered to be acceptable for the following reasons:

7.1ii The proposal for two flats within the built limits of a sustainable village accords with housing policy and the principle of residential development in this location is acceptable. The scale, height, location and design of the development is consistent with that of residential development in the immediate area. The proposal sufficiently safeguards residential amenity of neighbouring occupants, and is at a scale that is appropriate to the plot and neighbouring buildings. The level of parking provided conforms with the parking standards in the Development Plan.

Subject to conditions, the proposal accords with the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and National Planning Practice Guidance (2014), South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (2012), South Oxfordshire Local Plan (Saved policies, 2011) and the South Oxfordshire Design Guide (2016).

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 **That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. Work to commence within 3 years**
- 2. In accordance with plans**
- 3. Materials to match existing, or otherwise agreed in writing**
- 4. Parking as indicated on plans**
- 5. Boundary treatment and amenity space to be set out**

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