

APPLICATION NO.	P17/S1877/HH
APPLICATION TYPE	HOUSEHOLDER
REGISTERED	26.5.2017
PARISH	SANDFORD
WARD MEMBER(S)	Sue Lawson
APPLICANT	Mr Neil Lawson
SITE	The Pump House, 2 Heyford Hill Cottages, Heyford Hill Lane, Littlemore, OX4 4YJ
PROPOSAL	Demolition of existing lean-to outbuilding and replacement with new garage/outbuilding (3.7 metres in height).
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	452624/202783
OFFICER	Will Darlison

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The application is referred to planning committee because the applicant is the spouse of Councillor Sue Lawson.

1.2 The Pump House, 2 Heyford Hill Cottages is an unlisted semi-detached Victorian dwelling set in an isolated location within the parish of Littlemore but outside of the built-up area of the settlement. The property is served by a generous garden sited to the West of the front elevation of the dwelling.

1.3 Located to the north west of the dwelling is an existing domestic outbuilding. It is of a brick and blockwork construction under a corrugated sheet roof with a rear wall which originally belonged to the now demolished Victorian pump house on the site.

1.4 The site is washed over by the Oxford Green Belt but is not within the Chilterns AONB or a Conservation Area. A plan identifying the site can be found at **Appendix 1** to this report.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the erection of a new garage, workshop and domestic storage outbuilding replacing the existing lean-to outbuilding at the front of the site.

2.2 Reduced copies of the plans accompanying the application can be found at **Appendix 2** to this report. All the plans and representations can be viewed on the council's website www.southoxon.gov.uk under the planning application reference number.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **Sandford-on-Thames Parish Council** - Recommend that the application is approved – no comments made.

Environmental Health - Contaminated Land – No objection to the application subject to the imposition of a condition.

Drainage Engineer (MONSON) - No objection to the application.

Neighbour Representations - 1 x Neighbour supports the application

- The proposed design respects the character of the existing buildings.
- The area is dominated by mature trees as opposed to open grassland. Therefore height is irrelevant as long as it is subordinate to the main building and blends in.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 None

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027 (SOCS) policies:

CSEN2 - Green Belt protection

CSQ3 - Design

5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP) policies:

EP8 – Contaminated land

D1 - Principles of good design

G2 - Protect district from adverse development

GB4 - Openness of Green Belt maintained

H13 - Extension to dwelling

5.3 South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 (SODG)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

5.4 Sandford-on-Thames Neighbourhood Plan

Paragraph 216 of the NPPF allows for weight to be given to relevant policies in emerging plans, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, and only subject to the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent of unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of the relevant emerging policies with the NPPF.

The Sandford-on-Thames neighbourhood plan is currently at the plan preparation stage and therefore cannot be afforded any weight in the determination of this planning application.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The issues to consider in relation to this proposal are;

- **Impact on the openness and visual amenity of the Oxford Green Belt.**
- **Impact on neighbours.**
- **Design, appearance and the impact upon the character and appearance of the existing dwelling.**
- **Impact on parking.**
- **Contaminated land.**

6.2 **Impact on the openness and visual amenity of the Oxford Green Belt.** The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. This is set out in Section 9 of the advice from Central Government in the NPPF.

- 6.3 The five purposes of the green belt are;
- to check the unrestricted urban sprawl of large built up areas;
 - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 6.4 In addition there is a general presumption against inappropriate development. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' to justify inappropriate development will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other circumstances
- 6.5 The NPPF advises that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate development in the Green Belt except for the following purposes;
- buildings for agriculture and forestry;
 - provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, for cemeteries and other uses of land which preserve the openness of the green belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
 - the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
 - **the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;**
 - limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; or
 - limited infilling or partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land) whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.
- 6.6 The proposed outbuilding would replace one that is in the same location and as such in order to argue that it would be an appropriate form of development it would have to fall within the section highlighted in bold above. There is no dispute that this is a replacement building and that it would be for the same use as the one that it would be replacing. The volume of the proposed outbuilding is 254.1 cubic metres, which would be larger than the existing outbuilding, which is 136.1 cubic metres.
- 6.7 The length of the proposed outbuilding would be 15 metres, which would be no greater than the length of the existing outbuilding when the section of brick wall at its west end is taken into account. Whilst this west end of the outbuilding's built-form is not currently an enclosed space, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that it was once was, as there are remnants of corrugated roof materials present. Therefore I consider that the squaring off of this end of the existing structure does not have an impact on openness of the area as a previously developed part of the site.
- 6.8 Furthermore the overall height of the proposed outbuilding would be 3.6 metres which would be less than 1 metre higher than the existing outbuilding, which is 2.75 metres. This is not an excessive increase in height particularly when taking into consideration

the practicalities of the use of the proposed outbuilding for garaging, workshop and domestic storage purposes. The use of a dual pitch on the proposed roof would lessen the impact of the increase in height, as from the north and south perspectives the roof would slope up and away narrowing up to the apex of the ridge.

- 6.9 Policy GB4 of the SOLP is also relevant to this proposed development. This policy states that the impact that proposed development has on the visual amenity of the Green Belt should be minimised. The existing outbuilding is in a poor condition and from a visual amenity perspective makes a negative contribution to the Green Belt with no concessions to its open nature or rural character. The proposed outbuilding would represent an improvement with its strong design cues being drawn from the main dwelling with the matching brickwork and cast stone corner quoins.
- 6.10 To conclude, notwithstanding its greater volume the proposed outbuilding would demonstrate a sufficient degree of proportionality with regards to the existing outbuilding that, in conjunction with a modest increase in width and height would not be considered to be materially larger. Therefore the proposed outbuilding would be an appropriate form of development within the Oxford Green Belt and one that is not materially harmful to its openness or visual amenity.
- 6.11 **Impact on neighbours.** Policy H13 criterion (iii) of the SOLP states that domestic outbuildings will be permitted provided that the amenity of nearby properties is not materially harmed.
- 6.12 The application site is, despite its close proximity to Oxford an isolated location. The nearest neighbouring dwelling is the other half of this semi-detached pair; 1 Heyford Hill Cottages. The proposed outbuilding is located to the north west of the cottages with a good degree of separation and screening from this neighbour that would make the potential for harmful neighbour impact very low. In addition the building is single storey and as previously discussed it is a replacement outbuilding.
- 6.13 **Design, appearance and the impact upon the character and appearance of the existing dwelling.** Policy H13 criterion (ii) of the SOLP states that new ancillary outbuildings will be permitted provided that the scale and design of the proposal is in keeping with the character of the dwelling, the site and the appearance of the surrounding area.
- 6.14 The proposed replacement outbuilding would be of an uncomplicated rectangular plan form with a dual pitched roof. It would be of a size, scale and massing that would demonstrate a clear degree of subservience to the existing main dwelling and it would not employ any overtly domestic features such as dormer roof structures and would be entirely single storey. The use of matching brickwork and cast stone corner quoins would ensure that the outbuilding would be sympathetic and tie in well with the existing dwelling. For these reasons I consider that the design and appearance of the outbuilding is acceptable and in keeping with the character and appearance of the host dwelling as well as the wider area.
- 6.15 **Impact on parking.** The current condition of the existing outbuildings are such that they cannot realistically contribute to the parking provision at the site. The proposed replacement would, according to the submitted drawings accommodate a combination of garaging, workshop and garden/boat storage. The internally measured dimensions of the replacement building are such that it would more than adequately meet the size requirements for a garage and alongside the aforementioned other functions it would provide one parking space at the site.

6.16 There would remain a sufficiently large area of gravelled driveway area within the confines of the site to allow for at least two further off street parking spaces. I am therefore of the view that the impact upon parking at the site is more than sufficient and complies with parking standards.

6.17 **Contaminated land.** A former sewage works was located adjacent to the application site so the Environmental Protection Team were consulted on the application. The comments received from the Environmental Protection Officer recommended that in light of the former use of the adjacent land that a contaminated land condition is imposed on any planning consent. I am of the view that this is a reasonable and necessary condition required as a precautionary measure in case any land contamination is encountered during the course of implementing the development.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 Officers recommend that planning permission is granted because the proposed development would be of an acceptable design and appearance, would not materially harm the amenities of neighbouring dwellings or materially detract from the openness or visual amenity of the Oxford Green Belt and, in conjunction with the attached conditions, the proposal accords with development plan policies.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:**

1 : Commencement within three years.

2 : Approved plans.

3 : Materials as on plan.

4 : Contamination investigation.

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