

APPLICATION NO.	P17/S2437/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	4.7.2017
PARISH	DORCHESTER
WARD MEMBER(S)	John Cotton
APPLICANT	JSNM Properties
SITE	64 Watling Lane, Dorchester-on-Thames, OX10 7JQ
PROPOSAL	Demolition of existing bungalow and outbuildings and erection of a replacement detached dwelling and associated parking.
OFFICER	Kim Gould

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This planning application is referred to Planning Committee because the recommendation differs from the views of the Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council.

1.2 No 64 Watling Lane is a chalet style bungalow with accommodation in the roof space. It has concrete block walls with concrete roof tiles. It sits above the street level. It is located within the built up settlement of Dorchester on Thames, which is defined as a small village with the Core Strategy. The site lies adjacent to the Dorchester conservation area and within the Oxford green belt. The site lies on the south side of Watling Lane and is approximately 0.074 hectares.

1.3 There is a very narrow existing vehicular access off Watling Lane with limited parking available on site. The boundary of the property to the north, along Watling Lane is a mature hedge with a stone/concrete plinth wall. The existing property is situated between a detached bungalow (no 70) to the east and a two-storey detached dwelling to the west. There is currently a mature, dense hedge which runs along the front of the property.

1.4 There are a large variety of house styles and types along Watling Lane most of which are two storey. An OS extract showing the location of the site is **attached** as Appendix 1.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

2.1 This application seeks full planning permission to demolish the existing dwelling and outbuildings and to erect a replacement 4 bedroom detached dwelling and associated parking. The existing access will be widened to allow increased visibility.

2.2 The replacement dwelling would have accommodation in the roof with pitched dormers and gables. It would have ridge height to the front of 0.9m higher than the existing building and 1.2m higher to the rear to accommodate the rise in site levels of 0.3m towards the rear.

2.3 The proposed materials for this development are brick plinths, timber cladding, clay roof tiles with timber windows and doors. A copy of some of the plans is **attached** as Appendix 2. A full copy of the planning application including all the supporting information can be views on the council’s website at www.southoxon.gov.uk

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **Dorchester Parish Council - Object**

The information supplied with the application suggests that the volume of the proposed replacement dwelling may well be larger than is permitted within the Green Belt however, no supporting information regarding volume calculations either way has been supplied with the application. The Parish Council also feels that the scale and massing of the proposal is likely to have a detrimental effect on both the adjacent Conservation Area and on the street scene of this part of Watling Lane which is mainly comprised of smaller dwellings. The Parish Council also feel that there is insufficient proposed parking provision for a dwelling of this size, which combined with the lack of any parking provision along Watling Lane may well lead to future issues.

County Archaeological Services - No objection subject to conditions relating to the need for an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation and a staged programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation to be carried out .

Forestry Officer - No objection subject to a landscaping condition and the implementation of the tree protection measures set out in the tree survey report.

Conservation Officer - No strong views. The site makes a neutral contribution to the setting of the conservation area. It is a simple cottage of diminished proportions largely in-keeping with local vernacular but not of particular architectural or historic interest. I have no objection to the proposed demolition of the existing building. The proposed replacement will occupy a larger footprint across the site but will be set further back from the street frontage and more centrally within the plot. The setback nature of the dwelling should enable the existing boundary hedge to be retained and this will go some way to mitigating the visual change to this plot from the increased scale and massing of the building frontage as proposed. Overall, I do not consider that the proposed siting will harm the setting of the conservation area.

The proposed materials are less characteristic of the domestic architecture both within and surrounding this part of the conservation area. Where external timber cladding is used, this is more typically on ancillary structures such as outbuildings. There is a more consistent use of brickwork or painted render in this part of the conservation area although I acknowledge that the existing cottage does not follow this pattern. This would be an opportunity to preserve this characteristic if a suitable brick with simple detailing on the door and window surrounds was used.

Countryside Officer - Having carried out an assessment I am of the view that there is only a low risk of impacts on protected species. However, as certain species, particularly bats are highly mobile and opportunistic mammals which tuck themselves into narrow cracks and crevices I would take a precautionary approach in this case and recommend that the standard informative is used.

Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council) - No objection. The proposal is unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on the highway network and is unlikely to result in any significant intensification of transport activity at the property.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P16/S3432/FUL](#)

Proposed new dwelling. As supported by additional elevation plan received on 07 November 2016.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) Policies

- CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- CSEN2 - Green Belt protection
- CSEN3 - Historic environment
- CSQ3 - Design
- CSR1 - Housing in villages
- CSS1 - The Overall Strategy

5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP 2011) policies;

- C8 - Adverse affect on protected species
- C9 - Loss of landscape features
- CON11 - Protection of archaeological remains
- CON12 - Archaeological field evaluation
- CON13 - Archaeological investigation recording & publication
- CON14 - Building record survey
- CON7 - Proposals in a conservation area
- D1 - Principles of good design
- D2 - Safe and secure parking for vehicles and cycles
- D3 - Outdoor amenity area
- D4 - Reasonable level of privacy for occupiers
- G2 - Protect district from adverse development
- GB4 - Openness of Green Belt maintained
- H4 - Housing sites in towns and larger villages outside Green Belt
- T1 - Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users
- T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

5.3 Neighbourhood Plan policies; Dorchester on Thames Parish Council recently consulted on the draft version of its neighbourhood plan. The Parish Council is currently reviewing the responses and will submit a revised plan to us for a further period of consultation shortly.

5.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents
South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 (SODG 2016)

5.5 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

5.6 Dorchester Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

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

- The principle of a replacement dwelling
- Impact on the openness of the Oxford Green Belt
- Policy H4 criteria
- Amenity area
- Trees
- Archaeology
- CIL
- Other issues.

6.2 Principle

The site lies within the Oxford Green Belt. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open – the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness.

The Green Belt serves five purposes:

- to check the unrestricted 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.

It is important to note that whilst the Green Belt contains areas of attractive landscape, the quality of the landscape is not relevant to the inclusion of land in the Green Belt or its continued protection. It is the openness of land that is important.

To protect openness there is a general presumption against inappropriate development. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt.

New buildings in the Green Belt are not appropriate unless for the following purposes:

- buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves 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 the 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.

The South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) adopts a more flexible approach to the provision of housing in the smaller and other villages in the district than the previous local plan policies (SOCS Policy CSR1). Dorchester is identified as a “smaller” village. For the smaller villages this will amount to infill developments on sites of up to 0.2 hectares. Infill development is defined as being the filling in of a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings. CSR1 and CSEN2 also make reference to respecting Green Belt designations.

CSR1 considers that if a site is an infill site, then it will be part of a built up area/ frontage and there would be harm to the openness but it would be limited; unless it was an important open space within the village, then that is serious harm and will not be allowed. I consider that the site that the existing house lies within the built up limits of Dorchester and that as such, the principle of the demolition of the dwelling and its replacement with a single dwelling is acceptable and the proposal does not fall under the size and volume constraints of policy H12.

6.3 **Impact on the openness of the Oxford Green Belt**

The existing dwelling is a dormer bungalow with outbuildings. It will be replaced with a new dwelling that will have a footprint which is marginally larger in footprint than the existing (dwelling plus outbuildings). As it will be higher than the existing dwelling it will have an impact on the openness of the Green Belt. However, it is not considered that the impact would be sufficiently harmful to warrant a refusal of planning permission. Conditions removing permitted development rights in relation to extensions and outbuildings have been recommended to ensure that any future extensions or additions would not result in unacceptable harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

6.4 **Policy H4 criteria**

As the site lies within the built up limits of Dorchester on Thames, this proposal falls to be considered within the context of Policy H4 of the SOLP which allows for residential development in the villages providing the following criteria are met:

- i. **An important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost, nor an important public view spoilt.** This site is currently occupied by a single dwelling and its residential curtilage. There are some trees on the site which are visually important and the existing hedge along the front of the site is recognised within the Dorchester Conservation Area Character Appraisal. It is not however, an important open space and will not spoil an important public view.
- ii. **The design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development are in keeping with its surroundings.** The existing dwelling has concrete block walls and is out of keeping with other properties in Watling Lane which are building predominantly in either brick or render. The conservation officer has commented on the proposed materials (timber cladding) and suggested that brickwork painted render would be more appropriate. The applicant has confirmed that she has no objection to using brick and therefore a condition requiring the approval of all external materials is recommended. The design of the proposed dwelling will be in keeping with other properties in the vicinity. The footprint of the replacement dwelling is larger than the existing but again it will not be out of keeping with other larger properties along Watling Lane.
- iii. **The character of the area is not adversely affected.** The site is already occupied by a single dwelling and lies in a predominately residential area. there is a detached bungalow to the east and a two-storey semi-detached dwelling to the west. As such, the proposal would be in keeping with the established character of the area. The Dorchester Conservation Area Character Appraisal refers to the importance of hedges and vegetation on the boundaries of Watling Lane in contributing to the rural character of the area. Whilst the hedge which runs along the front of the site is not protected, the applicant has ensured that the majority of the hedge will be retained and only reduced in width slightly to improve visibility.
- iv. **There are no overriding amenity, environmental or highway objections.** The replacement dwelling has been designed so as to minimise any overlooking to neighbouring properties. The ridge heights have been carefully considered so as not to overshadow the neighbouring properties and will be 0.6 m higher than no 70 to the east and 1.75m lower than no 10 and 12 Tenpenny immediately to the rear. The proposed dwelling will be positioned further away from no 62 with a lower ridge height due to site levels and will thus have less impact than the existing bungalow. No objections have been received from neighbours to this proposal. The proposal is unlikely to result in any significant intensification of vehicular activity at the property. The County Highway Authority has not raised any objections to the proposal on highway safety issues providing conditions are applied to any planning permission which required the improvement of the

existing access and that the proposed parking and manoeuvring areas are provided maintained. The existing access is very narrow with poor visibility and, in my opinion, unlikely to be used resulting in parking occurring on Watling Lane. The proposal seeks to improve the access and visibility and to provide on-site parking.

- v. **If the proposal constitutes backland development, it would not create problems of privacy and access and would not extend the built up limits of the settlement.** The proposal would not constitute backland development.

6.5 **Amenity Area**

Policy D3 of the SOLP requires that a private outdoor garden is provided for all new dwellings. The amount of land to be used for the garden or amenity space will be determined by the size of the dwelling proposed. In this case, the replacement dwelling would be a 4 bedroom property which would require a 100sqm private rear garden as set out in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide. In this case the proposed replacement dwelling would have a private rear garden well in excess of 500sqm.

6.6 **Trees**

A tree survey report and tree protection plan has been submitted with this application and have been considered by the council's forestry officer. He has raised no objection but has recommended that conditions be added to any planning permission to ensure that the measures set out in the submitted documents are implemented and the trees which are to be retained are satisfactorily protected. He has also recommended a general landscaping scheme relating to trees and shrubs.

6.7 **Archaeology**

The site lies within an area of some considerable archaeological interest located 25 metres south of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Dorchester Roman Town. The County Archaeologist has considered this proposal and has raised no objection to the development providing any planning permission is subject to conditions requiring an Archaeological Written Statement of Investigation to be submitted and a staged programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation to be carried out.

6.8 **Community Infrastructure Levy**

This proposal is CIL liable at a total of £16, 692.00.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The principle of a replacement dwelling is acceptable on this site. The proposed dwelling will not harm the established character of the area or be unneighbourly and the proposal would meet council's standards in relation to garden sizes, parking and access. As such the proposal accords with the relevant Development Plan policies.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

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

1. **Commencement three years - full planning permission.**
2. **Approved plans.**
3. **Existing vehicular access to be improved.**
4. **Parking and manoeuvring areas to be provided and retained.**
5. **Landscaping scheme (trees and shrubs only).**
6. **Archaeology – investigation.**
7. **Archaeology – mitigation.**
8. **Sample of materials.**
9. **Removal of permitted development rights Class A.**
10. **Removal of permitted development rights Class E.**

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