

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P17/S2802/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	7.8.2017
<b>PARISH</b>	DIDCOT
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Anthony Dearlove Mocky Khan Anthony Nash
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Mr & Mrs Willis
<b>SITE</b>	8 Abbott Road, Didcot, OX11 8HU
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Erection of 2 no. 2-bedroom terraced houses adjoining 8 Abbott Road, Didcot (As amended by drawing Parking and Access accompanying e-mail from agent received 12 September 2017)
<b>OFFICER</b>	Paul Bowers

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application is referred to planning committee because the views of the Didcot Town Council differ from the officer's recommendation.
- 1.2 8 Abbott Road is one half of a semi-detached two storey dwelling on a corner plot at the junction of Abbott Road and Abbott Close. Vehicular access is to the front and to the side.
- 1.3 A plan identifying the site can be found at **Appendix 1** to this report.

**2.0 PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission from the council to extend the existing dwelling with a staggered two storey addition to create two additional 2 bedroom dwellings with associated parking and garden area.
- 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](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk) under the planning application reference number.

**3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 **Didcot Town Council** – Recommend that the application is refused for the following reasons;
- Lack of visibility splays.
  - Lack of refuse bin storage.
  - Amenity space appears to be inadequate.

**Neighbour Responses** – 1 x letter of objection

- The increased dropped kerb will restrict on street parking.
- Safety risk for children going to St Birinus School with additional vehicles parking on the road.

**Highways Liaison Officer** - No objection following the additional plan being provided showing the visibility splays.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 **Similar proposal at 48 Abbott Road, Didcot**

[P17/S0908/FUL](#) – Refusal of planning permission – 20 September 2017

Provision of 1 no new dwelling in addition to existing (As amended by drawings accompanying e-mail from agent received 19 July 2017 deleting the previously proposed detached dwelling) –

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

**National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)**

**South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027 (SOCS) Policies**

CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CSDID3 - New housing at Didcot

CSQ3 - Design

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

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

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

**South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 (SODG 2016)**

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

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

- **The principle of development.**
- **Whether the proposal accords with the criteria of Policy H4.**
- **Plot coverage and garden size.**
- **Impact on the amenities of the occupants of nearby properties.**
- **Impact on highway safety.**
- **Community Infrastructure Levy.**

6.2 **The principle of development.**

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that the local planning authority shall have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations.

6.3 In the case of this application, the most relevant parts of the Development Plan are the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027 (SOCS) which was adopted in December 2012 and the saved policies of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP).

6.4 Development which is not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan should be refused unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 6.5 Policy CSDID3 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027 (SOCS) permits infill development within Didcot.

Infill development is defined in the Appendix 1 of SOCS as; *'The filling of a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings'*.

- 6.6 The site is located within the town on a corner plot within an established residential estate. The site has a frontage on to the street and is surrounded on all sides by existing dwellings. This is within the meaning of infill development. Although Policy CSDID3 is out of date and the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged, this development complies with its criteria. It also represents a sustainable form of development due to its position within one of the four main towns in the district and has good access to existing services.

- 6.7 **Whether the proposal accords with the criteria of Policy H4 of SOLP.**

If a proposed housing development is acceptable in principle then the detail of the proposal must be assessed against the criteria of Policy H4 which deals with new housing.

- 6.8 Provision (i) of Policy H4 ***states 'an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost, nor an important view spoilt.'***

The site is part of a residential garden. It does not comprise an important public open space.

The site has no ecological value and the development will not spoil or harm any important views beyond the site.

- 6.9 Provision (ii) ***states 'the design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development are in keeping with its surroundings.'*** whilst Provision (iii) ***states that the 'character of the area is not adversely affected.'***

The proposed dwellings take the form of a staggered extension to the existing half of the pair of semis. The stagger in appearance both in terms of footprint and the roof give the general impression of an extension to the existing house and is comparable to many extensions seen through the district. The stagger also assists in softening the appearance of the built form in what is a relatively prominent corner plot.

In the context of the wider area which is not recognised by any special designation and includes properties of similar appearance and materials the form of the development is not in my opinion at odds or out of keeping with the wider visual amenity and character of the area.

- 6.10 ***Provision iv) of Policy H4 states that there should be no overriding amenity or environmental or highway objections.***

In terms of amenity this refers to both the amenity space being provided for the occupants of the existing and new property and also the amenity of occupants of nearby properties. These issues are also covered by other policies within SOLP such as Policy D3 and T1 and they are considered separately as they are fundamental issues to this proposal.

**6.11 Plot coverage and garden size.**

Policy D3 of SOCS seeks to ensure that new dwellings should provide adequate private outdoor space. The amount of land to be used for garden or amenity space will be determined by the size of the dwelling and the character of surrounding development.

- 6.12 The South Oxfordshire Design Guide sets out the minimum amount of private amenity space for 3 bedroom units and above at 100 square metres and for 2 bedroom units 50 square metres.
- 6.13 The existing property is shown to retain 65 square metres. Plot 1 will have 40 square metres and Plot 2, 50 square metres.

This means that the existing property (3 bedrooms) is below standard and Plot 1 below standard by 10 square metres.

Although this is contrary to the council's minimum standards there needs to be identifiable harm caused by this level of deficiency. In my view when you look at the size of the gardens in the context of the surrounding area they do vary but not to a large degree. This development will not result in such small garden areas that they would be at total odds with the established character of the area. The harm therefore that would be caused by being below the minimum standards in this case does not amount to significant and demonstrable harm. This is what would have to be demonstrated in order to be able to justify a refusal of planning permission given that the planning balance is weighted toward allowing sustainable development –which in my view this proposal presents.

The garden areas still provide for a meaningful private amenity space which the purchasers of the new dwellings will be fully aware of.

Overall it is your officer's view that the proposal does not amount to an overdevelopment.

**6.14 Neighbour impact.**

The dwelling extends the form of the existing 8 Abbott Road to the east. In terms of the impact to that property the only potential impact would be from first floor windows overlooking from the east where they don't at the moment because the property is on a corner plot. However this level and degree of overlooking is the same as is possible from the existing 6 Abbott Road. In my view the new dwellings will not harm the amenities of the occupants of the existing dwelling.

The property to the north on Abbott Close is side on to the application site. Whilst the new dwellings have an outlook toward that property there will be no greater level of overlooking of that property than what is already experienced from the existing first floor windows at numbers 6 and 8. The new dwelling is to the south but the main outlook of number 8a Abbott Close is to east-west. In my view the elongation of the existing built form would not cause any material loss of sunlight or overshadowing due to the distances involved.

Properties to the west on Abbott Road at 30a will be side on to the form of the new building at number 8 coming closer to them but with the road in between. In my view this would cause no material impact.

To the south on the opposite side of the road the new dwellings would also in my view, be no more harmful in terms of the bulk of the building and the windows, than the existing dwelling. It should also be noted that it would create a typical across-street type relationship common in nearly every street scene.

Overall I conclude that the development does not give rise to an unacceptable unneighbourly impact.

**6.15 Highway safety.**

With respect to highway safety matters the advice from Central Government set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is as follows:

*Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of the development are severe.*

The term severe is locally interpreted as situations, which have a high impact, likely to result in loss of life, or a higher possibility of occurrence with a lower impact.

- 6.16 The site affords for sufficient parking provision for each of the dwellings i.e. 2 off street spaces. The Highway Officer is happy with the proposed parking arrangements. The amended plans included the alignment of the boundary of the site to allow for visibility looking south. This was at the request of the Highway Officer and he satisfied that this is now adequate.

There is local concern that the increased size of the access and dropped kerb reduces the amount of on street parking for visitors. However what is being proposed will not itself result in increased pressure to park on the highway because adequate levels of parking are provided for on site.

- 6.17 Planning permission was recently refused on a similar corner plot site for the erection of a single dwelling on the basis of the increase in the extent of dropped kerb to allow for the access for two properties which would lead to a reduction in the ability to park on the public highway. This application is comparable in that respect. However this proposal provides for sufficient parking provision on site to accommodate the development. There is no objection from the highway authority. Parking on the highway is a safety issue that falls outside of the control of planning.

As the local authority, the council has to ensure when allowing development that there is sufficient parking to accommodate the needs of the development – which in this case there is. If a development means that parking on the highway is reduced or made more difficult that is not in your officer's view a reason to refuse planning permission. Therefore notwithstanding the recent decision to refuse planning permission at 48 Abbott Road your officers cannot recommend that this application is refused for that same reason.

- 6.18 Overall the proposed development does not give rise to severe harm and in highway safety terms it is acceptable.

**6.19 Community Infrastructure Levy.**

The council's CIL charging schedule has been adopted. 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 as the proposal involves the creation of two new dwellings.

**7.0 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The proposal will create two new dwellings in a sustainable location and accords with paragraph 14 of the NPPF which sets out the presumption favour of sustainable development.

There will be a limited impact to the overall character of the area and limited harm to neighbour amenity. Any perceived harm from the development as a result of the smaller garden areas for 8 Abbott Road and Plot 1 is not significant and does not outweigh the benefit of the development. The site affords for adequate levels of parking.

In conjunction with the attached conditions the proposal accords with 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. **Matching materials (walls and roof).**
4. **Withdrawal of permitted development rights (Part 1 Class A) - no extensions etc.**
5. **Withdrawal of permitted development rights (Part 1 Class E) - no buildings etc.**
6. **Existing vehicular access improved to highway authorities specification.**
7. **Close existing access on to Abbott Road at the front of the property.**
8. **Vision splay protection.**
9. **Parking and manoeuvring areas retained.**

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