

APPLICATION NO.	P18/S0619/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	22.2.2018
PARISH	DIDCOT
WARD MEMBER(S)	Anthony Nash Anthony Dearlove Mocky Khan
APPLICANT	Mr Nicolas Wilder
SITE PROPOSAL	47 Newlands Avenue DIDCOT, OX11 8QA Proposed new two bedroom house at the side of 47 Newlands Avenue, with garage at rear for the new and existing house.
OFFICER	Tom Rice

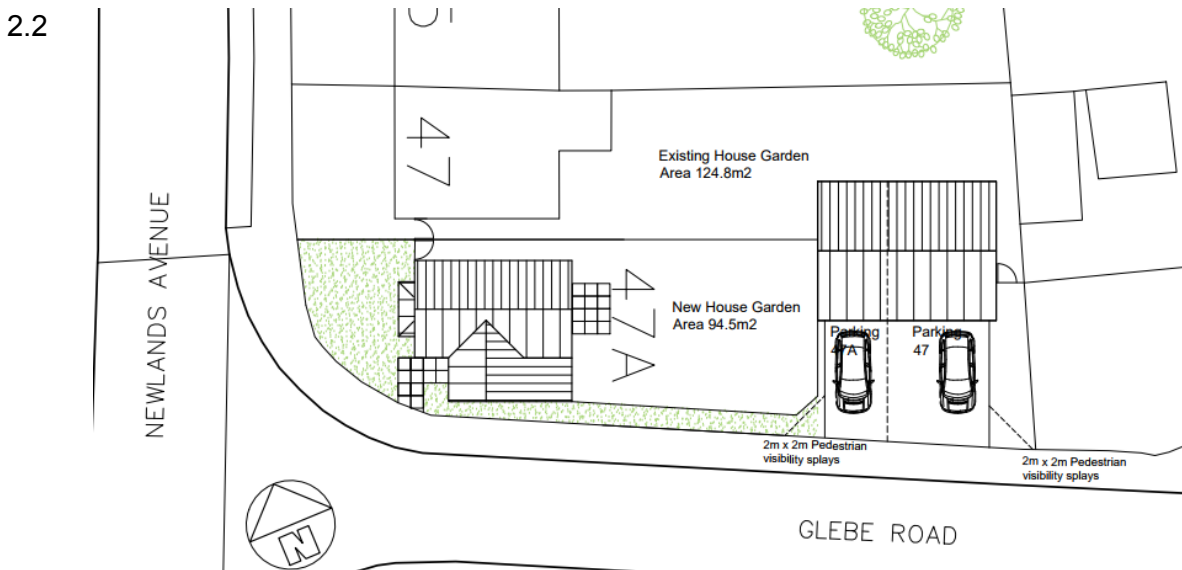
1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The land adjacent to 47 Newlands Avenue is an area of green space in Didcot, measuring around 215m². The site currently houses some utilities infrastructure (cabinets) and litter bins.
- 1.2 The rest of the site forms part of 47 Newlands Avenue itself, measuring around 125m². This area contains the garage and part of the garden for number 47. Newlands Avenue was granted planning permission in the 1950s. A plan identifying the site can be found at **Appendix 1** to this report.
- 1.3 I am recommending that the proposed development is approved.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing garage building of Number 47, remove the boundary wall and planting and erect a new end-of-terrace, two-bedroom dwelling, and a garage to serve 47 and 47A Newlands Avenue.

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**

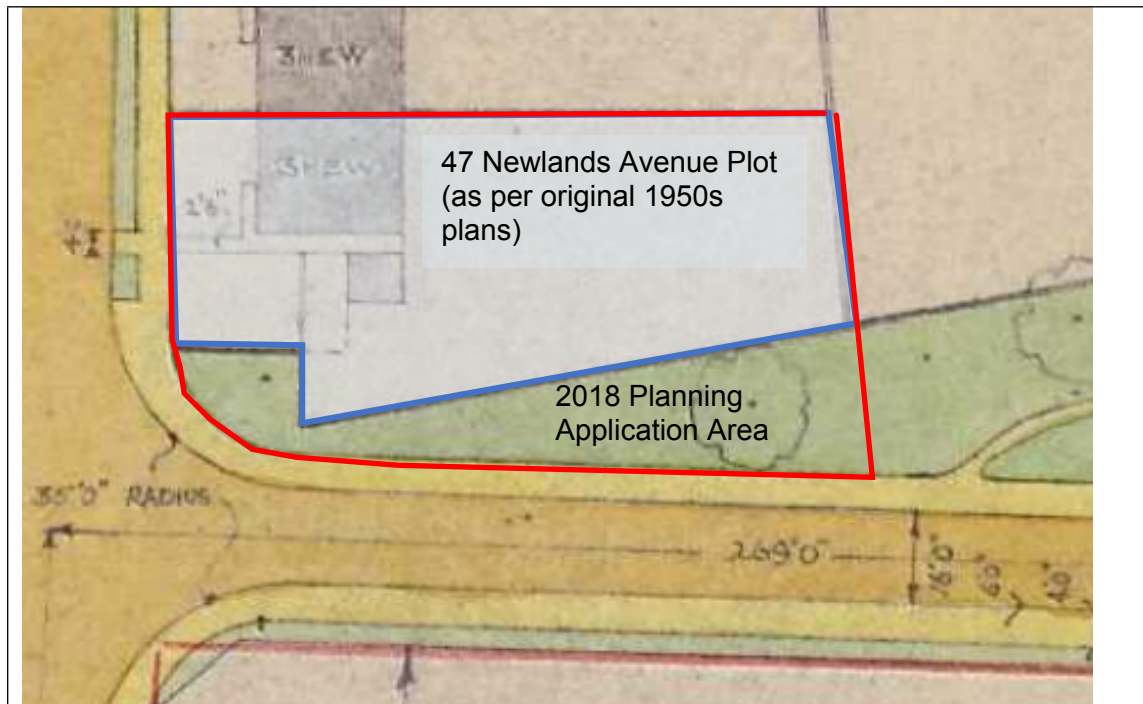
3.1

Consultee	Summary of response
Didcot Town Council	The application should be refused due to a loss of green infrastructure, and a detrimental impact on the street scene.
Highways (Oxfordshire County Council)	No objections subject to conditions relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New vehicular access ▪ Closing of the existing access to Newlands Ave ▪ Visibility splay protection ▪ Retention of parking and manoeuvring areas ▪ No garage conversion to accommodation
Forestry Officer (South Oxfordshire District Council)	The trees within the site are not subject to a tree preservation order and are of a low arboricultural value. There is a Monterey Cypress to the north of the proposed garage building. If this is to be retained, then the tree owner should consult a competent arboricultural consultant as the works may be located in its root protection area. However, the Forestry Officer has no objection to the development, but recommends a landscaping condition is attached to soften the impact of the proposed development.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1

P18/S0036/PEM	Pre-application advice for this application Issued January 2018
<p>The proposed development is likely to be acceptable in principle. The site's ownership is unknown, but the land forms part of an area of green open space and is home to some utilities infrastructure. Details of land ownership should be provided as part of the planning application.</p> <p>The site is likely able to accommodate the development, although the applicant should submit an arboricultural assessment for all trees within 15m of the proposed development.</p>	
P50/R0223	Original planning application for Newlands Avenue Issued April 1950
<p>Nothing notable from this planning permission, other than it showing the area of green space to the south of Number 47. As the application is so old, we do not have details of why this green space was designed.</p>	



5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 Relevant policies from the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy:

- CS1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- CSS1: The overall strategy
- CSDID3: New housing in Didcot

5.2 Relevant saved policies from the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011:

- D1: Principles of good design
- D2: Safe and secure parking for vehicles and cycles
- D3: Plot coverage and garden areas
- D4: Reasonable level of privacy for occupiers
- D10: Waste Management
- 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

5.3 South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016

- The design guide contains a wealth of information for applicants to consider when designing new development. There is too much information to repeat in summary here, but where necessary, I have cited the design guidance under the planning assessment in section 6.

5.4 Relevant paragraphs from the National Planning Policy Framework

- **14**: The presumption in favour of sustainable development
- **49**: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- **60 to 66**: Requiring good design
- **118**: Loss of aged or veteran trees
- **186 and 187**: Determining planning applications

5.5 National Planning Practice Guidance

- Design
- Determining a planning application
- Use of planning conditions

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 **The main matters in this case are:**

1. The principle of development
2. The loss of open space and public views
3. Design, scale and materials
4. Amenity
5. Forestry
6. Highways

Matter one: The principle of development

6.2 Policy CSS1 (the overall strategy) of the Core Strategy focuses major new development at Didcot so that the town can play an enhanced role in providing homes with improved services and connectivity. This is reinforced through policy CSDID3 (new housing at Didcot) which supports new residential development on suitable infill or redevelopment sites. To determine whether a plot is a suitable infill site, I must assess the proposal against the detailed criteria of saved Policy H4 of the Local Plan 2011, which I do so through this report. I believe the proposed development can satisfactorily address these criteria, and consequently the proposed development is acceptable in principle.

Matter two: The loss of open space and public views

6.3 Saved Policy H4 states that permission should be refused where the proposals would result in the loss of an important open space of public, environmental, or ecological value, or where they would spoil an important public view.

6.4 The site is in the centre of a residential estate, and is influenced by neighbouring domestic gardens and appears to be regularly mowed / maintained. Consequently, I believe the site has limited environmental and ecological value.

6.5 Didcot Town Council has expressed their concerns about the loss of this space, believing it to form part of an important public view and that it has public value. They have pointed to the site's relationship with St Peter's Church to the south of the site, and that the site is often used as a pleasant backdrop for photographs after ceremonies. They also believe that the building would have a harmful impact on the view from Oakland Road to the southwest of the site. I have illustrated these views in **Appendix 3** to this report. I address each of the Town Council's points below.

6.6 I have attached very limited weight to the loss of the backdrop for church photographs. The church is very much in a residential setting, and the presence of houses is typical for its setting. Furthermore, there are opportunities to take photographs with a green / floral background within the curtilage of the church, with Newlands Park just 100m away, offering further photograph opportunities. I would also argue that the church is a private institution, and although attended by many residents of Didcot, is not in itself a public facility. I therefore conclude that the relationship of this site with the church does not constitute an important public space or view.

- 6.7 The view from Oakland Road toward the site is characterised by three key features. The first is the row of semi-detached houses along Newlands Road, the second is the large tree in the rear gardens of these properties, and the third is the church and its green setting. The proposed two storey dwelling would not extend significantly beyond the height of neighbouring properties, and is appropriately scaled in relation to neighbouring homes. The view of the mature tree would be slightly reduced, but would still be a dominant landscape feature. The view of the church and its setting would not be affected.
- 6.8 I believe that the view from Oakland Road would change, but it would not be spoilt nor lost. In fact, I believe that the proposed dwelling would create a better edge to this corner. It would create a frontage on to both Glebe and Newlands Roads, creating a sense of activity and increased surveillance. However, as the dwelling would be located on a prominent corner plot, I have suggested that a landscaping plan is submitted and agreed with the Council before development can commence. This will detail the location and type of planting that the applicant will need to achieve, as well as details of the boundary treatments. This condition has also been recommended by the Council's Forestry Officer (see Matter 5).
- 6.9 In summary, I do not believe the development would spoil a public view, nor result in the loss of an important public space. I have noted the Town Council's concerns though, and have recommended a landscaping condition is attached to help mitigate the impact on the street scene.

Matter three: Design, scale and materials

- 6.10 The dwelling would have a ridge height of around 7.5m tall which would be similar to neighbouring homes on Newlands Avenue. The walls and roof will also be constructed from similar materials.
- 6.11 The southern elevation has a long sloping roof pitch from the first floor to the ground floor. This potentially creates a large elevation here, although I do not consider it to be inappropriate. There is sufficient detailing in the elevation (windows) that will help break this up, which will be complemented by the pre-commencement condition requiring a landscaping plan. However, given the site's end of terrace prominence, I have recommended that the Committee attach a condition requiring the applicant to submit details of the proposed materials before development starts.
- 6.12 The proposed garage building would also face onto Glebe Road and carries similar risks to those I have set out above – the creation of large blank facades in a prominent location. The same conditions set out above will mitigate this risk.

Matter four: Amenity

- 6.13 Saved Policy D3 of the Local Plan 2011 requires proposals to provide suitable outdoor amenity area. The design guide provides more detail, containing external amenity space standards, which are 50m² for a 2-bedroom home, and 100m² for a 3 or more-bedroom home. The new dwelling (2 bedroom) would have an external space of over 90m² and 47 Newlands Road would retain a garden area of 125m². Both exceed the minimum standard.
- 6.14 Neither the new dwelling, nor the existing dwelling, would have invasive views into each other's garden space and there would be no large blank facades that dominant private areas. As such, I don't believe there are any issues of privacy, overshadowing, or overbearing.

Matter five: Forestry

- 6.15 The Forestry Officer has raised no objection to the development. He did however identify a Monterey Cypress to the north of the proposed garage buildings, that could be affected if development is taking place within its root protection area. However, this tree is not of arboricultural value, and as such its loss is acceptable. Indeed, if it were to be removed, it would open up views to the larger tree behind, which has a higher arboricultural value.

Matter six: Highways and parking

- 6.16 The County Council has not raised any objections to the proposed development on highways grounds. They have suggested that five conditions are attached to the proposed development to mitigate the highway impact of the proposals. These are set out in **Appendix 4**.
- 6.17 In terms of parking, a new garage and driveway arrangement will be provided off Glebe Road. It will provide each dwelling with two car parking spaces. A condition is attached preventing the garages converting to any other function.

Other considerations

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.18 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, the proposed development is CIL liable.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 I believe that the proposed development is acceptable. It complies with the relevant policies set out in the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy, the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011, and in national guidance and policies.
- 7.2 In reaching this view, I have taken account of the opinions of Didcot Town Council. I do not agree with their conclusions that the proposals would conflict with saved policy H4 (loss of public view and an important open space). I do accept that the development could give rise to some harm, but this harm could be mitigated through an appropriate landscaping strategy.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 **To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions (see appendix 4 for full description):**

- 1. Commencement within three years (full planning permission).**
- 2. Approved plans.**
- 3. Sample materials required (all).**
- 4. Landscaping (including boundary treatment).**
- 5. New vehicular access onto Glebe Road.**
- 6. Close existing access onto Newlands Avenue.**
- 7. Vision splay protection.**
- 8. Parking and manoeuvring areas retained.**
- 9. No garage conversion into accommodation.**

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