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| APPLICATION NO. | P18/S0383/FUL |
| APPLICATION TYPE | FULL APPLICATION |
| REGISTERED | 5.2.2018 |
| PARISH | BINFIELD HEATH |
| WARD MEMBERS | Will Hall & Paul Harrison |
| APPLICANT | Mrs R Richardson |
| SITE | (Land adj) Elm Cottage, Road Between Dunsden Green and Arch Hill, Binfield Heath, RG9 4LE |
| PROPOSAL | Erection of new dwelling |
| OFFICER | Marc Pullen |

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee because the officers' recommendation conflicts with the view of Binfield Heath Parish Council.
- 1.2 The site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) lies vacant, having previously been in the ownership of neighbouring Elm Cottage. The site is approximately 0.2 hectares in size. The site is bounded to the south and west of the site by tall vegetation. The site has previously been granted planning permission for a single storey dwelling and detached garage.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a detached dwelling. The proposed dwelling would be served by a two storey detached garage building.
- 2.2 A copy of the current plans accompanying the application is **attached** as Appendix B. Other documentation associated with the application can be viewed on the council's website, www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 Binfield Heath Parish Council – Object

- House is too large and overbearing on its plot
- Style and size is taken from Marraways which should not be seen as a precedent for future building in this area
- Three large new houses in a row (this being the third) in such a small village would be out of place and inappropriate in this context
- Style does not conform to anything else in village
- This application calls itself 2-storey but is in fact a 3-floor building like its two new-build neighbours, which explains its much greater height than Elm Cottage
- This house does not conform in scale or height with the older properties near to it.
- It is too close to Elm Cottage, which is much smaller and older and is different in style from the close-by late Victorian Holmwood villas and Prospect House or the 1980s Blossom Cottage.
- Directly faces and dominates the newer housing of King's Common Close.
- The council is not convinced that enough space exists for parking and safely turning 3-5 cars so the property, if allowed, might need to be placed further back on the plot.
- The previous permission granted for a single storey building on the plot was more suitable

3.2 **Highways Liaison Officer** (Oxfordshire County Council) - No strong views, subject to condition

3.3 **Countryside Officer** (South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse) - No strong views

3.4 **Forestry Officer** (South Oxfordshire District Council) - No strong views, subject to condition

3.5 **Neighbour** - Approve (1)

- House is more in keeping with the street scene than the previously approved bungalow
- Proposed forward positioned garage would be less disruptive to neighbours at Marraway

3.6 **Neighbour** - Object (7)

- Development would be over imposing on neighbouring Elm Cottage
- Development is too large for the plot
- Would overlook and overshadow the right-hand side of Elm Cottage and garden, including bay windows and French doors of lounge
- Loss of light and overshadowing of south-facing garden of Elm Cottage
- Proposed development would be clearly visible from neighbouring property and would be harmful on amenity
- Concerns over if side facing windows would remain obscure glazed or if new windows would be added
- The property would irreversibly alter the character of this central part of Binfield Heath and would establish a precedent where other properties nearby could follow
- The increase in the number of cars would cause a noise impact on neighbours
- Concern regarding the lack of trees, bushes and greenery around the property
- Despite the modifications in design the three-storey house would represent a step change in loss of amenity for Elm Cottage compared with the agreed single-storey building
- Moving the property forward has inevitably increased its impact on the people who live in King's Common Close
- There is a covenant on the land requiring any development to be single storey only
- Daylight assessment identifies that the proposed development would result in a further 10% loss of daylight to Elm Cottage than the bungalow previously did
- Design is not in keeping with the village
- Excessive glazing would cause harmful light spillage to the effect of harming neighbours opposite
- The proposal undermines the community led plan
- House is too large and too tall

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P14/S2789/FUL](#) - Approved (26/11/2014)
Erection of single storey dwelling and detached garage.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 **National Planning Policy Framework & National Planning Practice Guidance**

5.2 **South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2012 policies;**

CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CSB1 - Conservation and improvement of biodiversity

CSR1 - Housing in villages

CSQ3 - Design

CSS1 - The Overall Strategy

5.3 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 policies;

- C8 - Protected species
- C9 - Landscape features
- D1 - Principles of good design
- D10 - Waste Management
- 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

5.4 South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1
- Principle of development
 - Impact upon character and appearance
 - Impact upon the amenity of neighbours
 - Parking provision and impact on highway
 - Impact on trees and protected species
 - Other matters

Principle of development

- 6.2 The site lies within the built-up limits of Binfield Heath. The site is currently vacant and previously associated with Elm Cottage. The site has previously been granted planning permission for the erection of a single storey dwelling. In this location, the principle of residential development is largely governed by policies CSS1 and CSR1 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS, 2012), which allows for new housing in Binfield Heath on infill sites. The definition of infill as stated within the SOCS is 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. It is officer's view that the site would meet the definition of infill as defined within the SOCS.

Impact on character and appearance

- 6.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms a requirement for good design. Paragraph 56 of the NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) elaborates on the NPPF, stating that new development should look to respond appropriately to the existing layout of buildings, streets and spaces. There may be an existing prevailing layout that development should respond to and potentially improve.
- 6.4 The site currently lies vacant. It makes a noticeable gap within the street scene between Elm Cottage and Marraways. The proposed dwelling would follow the linear pattern of development along this road with an active frontage and access off Dunsden Way. The dwelling has been designed so as to draw from the scale and appearance of the neighbouring Marraways development, granted planning permission in 2014. However, it is clear that there is no particular architectural style or appearance within this part of the village. A mix of brickwork and painted brickwork, clay roofing tiles and slate roofing tiles is evident nearby. Beyond this, the village as a whole displays a larger variety of materials.

- 6.5 The existing properties along this stretch of road are well spaced apart. The proposed development has sought to respect this by ensuring visual gaps between the dwelling and the neighbouring dwellings. The proposed garage building would respond to the existing built form along Dunsden Way, largely informed by the development at Marraways. The height of the dwelling has been negotiated down and the ridge height has been set lower than neighbouring Marraways. This has been done so as to better bridge the gap between neighbouring Marraways and Elm Cottage when viewed from the street scene and to reduce the visual dominance of the dwelling when viewed alongside Elm Cottage.
- 6.6 The dwelling would be finished in painted render and clay roofing tiles. There is a large aspect of glazing along the frontage of the property, which appears somewhat incongruous. However, it is officers view that the variety of built form within the area means that there is no reasonable need for the proposed dwelling to meet a specific style or appearance. In addition, it is important to note that the NPPF (para 60) states that planning decisions and policies should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and should not stifle innovation or originality through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. However, it does require development to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. Officers are satisfied that the proposed development strikes a good balance between respecting local character whilst introducing a dwelling which shows innovation and originality in design and appearance.
- 6.7 The site allows for sufficient private amenity space (1440 sq metres), well in excess of the advised size (100 sq metres) as set out within the South Oxfordshire Design Guide (SODG). In addition, the size of garden is in accordance with the gardens locally.

Impact on neighbours

- 6.8 The council's policies and guidance seek to ensure that new dwellings are considerate to neighbours by way of ensuring that the development does not intrude upon a neighbour's privacy, does not overshadow, obstruct daylight or have an oppressive or overbearing impact, which would be harmful to the amenity of occupiers living in neighbouring properties.
- 6.9 Officers had initial concerns regarding the impact upon neighbouring Elm Cottage. In officer's view, the siting and scale of the proposed dwelling would have had an overbearing impact upon Elm Cottage, to the effect of harming the enjoyment of their garden and their rear facing habitable rooms. Officers therefore sought amendments to the application to reduce this impact. Following submission of amended plans, which moved the dwelling forward on the plot and away from the boundary to Elm Cottage, officers consider the relationship to now be acceptable. In officer's view, whilst the dwelling would still be visible from the rear facing windows and garden area of neighbouring Elm Cottage, the overbearing impact has been significantly reduced as a result of the relocation of the dwelling.
- 6.10 The proposed side facing first floor windows are to be fitted with obscure glazing and fixed shut. The proposed side facing second floor rooflights would not be harmful to the amenity of neighbours, subject to their cill heights being positioned no lower than 1.7 metres above internal floor height. The addition of the dwelling will introduce new windows along both the front and rear elevations, and this will increase the level of impact upon both neighbours. However, it is reasonable to expect this level of overlooking within a built up residential area such as this. In light of the above therefore, officer's do not consider the proposed dwelling would result in any significant

adverse impact upon neighbours' privacy or access to daylight and would not have an overbearing impact.

Parking provision and impact on highway

- 6.11 The council's policies and guidance seek to ensure that in determining planning applications, the council should, in consultation with the local highway authority, ensure that new developments are designed to a standard that ensures a safe and attractive environment and does not result in an unacceptable level of traffic on the local highway network or have a detrimental impact on the amenities and environment of the area.
- 6.12 The local highway authority raises no objection to the proposed development, citing that there is unlikely to be any significant adverse impact upon the local highway. In the view of the local highway authority, the development makes adequate provision for off street parking and sufficient visibility splays to ensure a safe access into and out of the site. Conditions are requested by the local highway authority to safeguard parking and manoeuvring, adequate visibility splays, a suitable new access, means of preventing gravel from spread onto the highway and to ensure the garage accommodation is not converted without the express consent from the local planning authority.

Impact on trees and protected species

- 6.13 The application site appears to have been recently cleared. The proposed development would only be located on land towards the adjacent highway, leaving a large area of garden to the rear. The council's countryside officer has no objections on the basis of ecology.
- 6.14 Due to the existing site conditions the proposed development will not have any significant impact on the adjacent off-site trees, therefore the council's forestry officer has no objection to the proposal on arboricultural grounds. Due to the bulk and scale of the building a substantial landscaping scheme will be needed to soften the views of the dominant front elevations. The existing Elm trees growing in the verge in front of Elm Cottage cannot be relied upon for screening as they will shortly die due to Dutch Elm Disease. The forestry officer advises that for any future permissions granted a landscaping condition should be attached.

Other matters

- 6.15 Gas/Mains Pipelines - SGN Plant Protection Team have commented on the application, identifying nearby SGN owned pipelines. The applicant should be aware of these pipelines during the construction process and the advice set out within the SGN Plant Protection Team consultation response.
- 6.16 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - The council's CIL charging schedule has been adopted and has applied to relevant proposals. The council's 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 would be liable for the development as there would be a net gain of new residential use on site. Self-build exemption has been claimed however. A Commencement Notice must be received by the Charging/Collecting Authority prior to the date of commencement of the development. The applicant will otherwise be liable for the full levy charge

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Planning permission should be granted. The principle of residential development is acceptable on this site. In the view of officers, subject to the attached conditions, the proposal would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area, the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, the local highway or site-specific constraints.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

- 8.1
- 1. Development to commence within three years of date of permission.**
 - 2. Development to be implemented in accordance with approved plans.**
 - 3. A schedule of all proposed external materials to be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority (LPA).**
 - 4. Proposed means of new access onto Dunsden Way to be laid out and formed in accordance with local highway authority's specifications.**
 - 5. Existing access to be closed permanently prior to new access being first used. Details to be submitted for approval by the LPA.**
 - 6. Visibility splays as shown on plan 1616-02-Rev A shall be implemented and not obstructed above a height of 0.9 metres.**
 - 7. Prior to first occupation, concrete or blacktop should be laid out in a 1.0 metre strip from the boundary of the driveway to prevent gravel spread onto highway.**
 - 8. Parking and manoeuvring area as shown on plan 1616-02-Rev A to be retained and laid out in accordance with sustainable drainage principles.**
 - 9. Garage hereby approved should not be converted into living purposes without first obtaining planning permission.**
 - 10. Details of landscaping (planting of trees, shrubs, treatment of access and hardstanding) to be submitted for approval prior to commencement of development.**
 - 11. Rooflights to be fixed at a height where the cill level is at least 1.7 metres above internal floor level of the associated room.**

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