
APPLICATION NO.	P13/S2441/O
APPLICATION TYPE	OUTLINE
REGISTERED	15.8.2013
PARISH	HORSPATH
WARD MEMBER(S)	Mr Roger Bell Mrs Janet Carr
APPLICANT	Mr Michael Mckenna
SITE	1 & 2 Sports Field Cottages Horspath Road near Horspath, OX4 2RL
PROPOSAL	Demolish existing pair of semi-detached houses. Provide new 4 x 1 bedroom. New parking area accessed from existing vehicular entrance. As clarified by design and access statement received on 21 August 2013 and details of bin storage location shown on drawing no. 405 - A4 accompanying Agent's letter dated 3 September 2013.
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	456159/204506
OFFICER	Ms S Crawford

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application has been referred to the Committee because the recommendation conflicts with the views of the Parish Council.
- 1.2 1 and 2 Sports Field Cottages are a pair of semi detached houses at the entrance to the Horspath Sports Ground and Athletics track. The houses date from the 1960s. The site lies in the Oxford Green Belt.
- 1.3 The site is identified on the Ordnance Survey Extract **attached** at Appendix 1.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks outline planning permission for the demolition of the existing dwellings and replacement with 4 x one bedroom flats on two floors. Matters for consideration at this stage are access, numbers of units and layout. Scale, landscaping and appearance are reserved matters for subsequent approval. Parking for cars and cycles, bin stores and gardens are indicated on the layout plan. Reduced copies of the plans accompanying the application are **attached** at Appendix 2. Full copies of the plans and consultation responses are available for inspection on the Council's website at www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 Horspath Parish Council Councillors voted unanimously to recommend refusal on this application on the grounds that it is an inappropriate development in the greenbelt and contravenes the South Oxfordshire Local Plan and NPPF.

It is also an unsustainable location for residential accommodation.

- 3.2 OCC (Highways) No objection subject to conditions.
- 3.3 Waste Management Officer No objection. Comments in respect of the provision for bins
- 3.4 Monson No objection subject to a condition is respect of surface water drainage.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 [P97/N0673](#) - Approved (01/12/1997)
Extension and refurbishment of existing pavilion.

[P86/N0841](#) - Approved (21/01/1987)
3.60m high chain link fencing.

[P65/M0800](#) - Approved (24/11/1965)
ERECTION OF PAIR OF DWELLINGHOUSES. ALTERATION TO ACCESS.

[P51/M0029](#) - Approved (09/03/1951)
USE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

- 5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy policies

CSEN2 - Green Belt protection
 CSH3 - Affordable housing
 CSH4 - Meeting housing needs
 CSQ2 - Sustainable design and construction
 CSQ3 - Design
 CSR1 - Housing in villages
 CSS1 - The Overall Strategy

- 5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 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
 D10 - Waste mangement
 G2 - Protect district from adverse development
 G4 - Protection of Countryside
 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 South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008

- 5.4 National Planning Policy Framework

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main issues in this case are:

- Whether the principle of development is acceptable
- Green Belt impact
- Highways
- Layout
- Affordable housing
- Mix of units, and
- Sustainable design issues

6.2 i **Principle.** 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.

6.2ii 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.

6.2iii 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.

6.2iv To protect openness there is a general presumption against inappropriate development. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt.

6.2v 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.

6.2vi In this case the application proposes the replacement of an existing building for the same use and it is not materially larger than the existing building. Whilst the application proposes 4 flats rather than 2 dwellings, the use as residential is the same and in the circumstances the principle of development is acceptable.

- 6.3 **Green Belt Impact.** The NPPF makes it clear that replacement buildings must not be materially larger than the buildings they replace to minimise the impact on openness. The application is in outline only and there are no details of the design or appearance of the building. The description originally referred to a potential 40% increase in size of the replacement building. Whilst there may be some scope to increase the size of the new building, the impact on openness can only be assessed with full details of the elevations and height of the building. The Agent has agreed to a change in the description to remove the reference to the percentage of increase. The acceptability of the percentage of increase can be assessed at the reserved matters stage.
- 6.4i **Impact on highways.** Policy T1 requires that a safe and convenient access is provided and Policy T2 requires adequate parking provision to be provided. The flats would be accessed off the existing car park and entrance road to the athletics ground which already provides for a safe and convenient access onto the Oxford Road. The Highway Engineer has no objection to the proposal subject to conditions in respect of parking and drainage.
- 6.4ii The Parish Council has objected to the scheme on the grounds that the site is not in a sustainable location. Whilst the site is not within a settlement it is less than half a mile from the Oxford City boundary and is also on a bus route. In addition, there is a fully made up pavement on Oxford Road from Horspath to the City boundary and beyond. In my view an objection on the grounds that the site is not sustainably located is not reasonable.
- 6.5 **Garden size.** Minimum standards for new residential development are recommended in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and in Policy D3 of the Local Plan. A minimum of 35 square metres of garden space per one bedroom dwelling is required. In this case amenity space would be provided in a communal area and would be in excess of the standard.
- 6.6 **Provision for affordable housing.** Policy CSH3 of the Core Strategy requires that 40% of any scheme should be for affordable units, where there is a net gain of 3 units on any site. In this case there is a net gain of two units and there is therefore no requirement to provide affordable units.
- 6.7 **Mix of units.** Policy CSH4 of the Core Strategy requires a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of current and future households. In this case there is no mix in the size of the units as they would all be one bedroom flats. Whilst the scheme does not strictly accord with Policy CSH4, it does provide small units where there is most need in the district. As such there is no objection to the lack of mix in this case.
- 6.8 **Sustainable design issues.** Policy CSQ2 of the Core Strategy requires that all new residential development achieves code level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. A condition is recommended to ensure that Code level 4 is achieved.
- 7.0 **CONCLUSION**
- 7.1 I recommend that outline planning permission is granted because the principle of replacing the existing building with a new building that is not materially larger in the same use is acceptable. Although the site is not within a settlement, its location near to Oxford on a bus route and near to other services means that it is a sustainable location. The proposal accords with the policies in the Development Plan and issues in relation to size and design can be considered more carefully at the reserved matters stage.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 Recommend that Outline Planning Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Commencement - Outline Planning Permission**
- 2. Approval of Reserved Matters prior to commencement (all)**
- 3. Reserved Matters to be submitted - Specific**
- 4. Maximum number of dwellings**
- 5. Surface water drainage works (details required)**
- 6. Parking & Manoeuvring Areas Retained**
- 7. Flats to meet Code Level 4**

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