

APPLICATION NO.	P21/S5334/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	21.12.2021
PARISH	MAPLEDURHAM
WARD MEMBER(S)	Peter Dragonetti
APPLICANT	Bridgland Financial Management
SITE	3 Chazey Close, Chazey Heath, RG4 9ET
PROPOSAL	Subdivide existing 7-bed dwelling to form 1x 5-bed dwelling and 1x 2-bed dwelling utilising existing parking and vehicular access to Chazey Close; single-storey front extension and addition of new porch and access; associated works. (As amended by plan received 04 March 2022 to alter access and parking arrangement).
OFFICER	Marc Pullen

1.0 **INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL**

- 1.1 This application seeks planning permission to sub-divide the existing dwelling into two dwellings. The two-storey side aspect of the dwelling would be divided from the original dwelling to form a two-bedroom house and the original would become a five-bedroom property. The application also includes a single storey front extension to the two-bed unit and a front porch on the five-bed unit.
- 1.2 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix 1) lies within Chazey Heath, a hamlet due west of Tokers Green . The site does not lie within any specially designated area of land, however Chazey Close does lie adjacent to the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.3 This application has been subject to revisions, which have amended the parking and access arrangements.
- 1.4 This application is referred to planning committee as Mapledurham Parish Council object to the proposed development (see below for reasons).
- 1.5 Reduced copies of the detailed plans accompanying the application are **attached** as Appendix 2 of this report. Other documentation associated with the application can be viewed on the council’s website, www.southoxon.gov.uk.

2.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

2.1 **Mapledurham Parish Council – Object**

- The proposed development represents an overdevelopment of the site
- Proposed development will inevitably lead to increased vehicle movements in a narrow cul-de-sac
- Insufficient parking on the site and parking on the cul-de-sac may impede emergency vehicles
- The proposed pedestrian access to the rear of no. 3 Chazey Close lacks credibility – any pedestrian access to no. 3’s rear garden should be from the footway alongside the Reading Road i.e. the public highway.

Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council) – Initially objected but following revisions they now have no objections

- Following the previous Highway Authority comments, the parking area has been altered so as to provide practical parking for both units, which is considered acceptable
- Given the characteristics of the carriageway, vehicular traffic and speeds are likely considered to be relatively low.
- The subdivision of the existing dwelling is likely to result in a relatively modest increase into vehicular numbers, this however is unlikely to significantly adversely impact the Highway

Neighbours - (10)

- Inadequate parking for both properties
- This close already has a lot of on-street parking
- This proposal will change the character of the close from semi-detached to terraced
- The shared access would be an unattractive and urbanising feature in the area
- The proposal would be detrimental to the special quality, distinctive character and natural beauty of the AONB and its setting
- Proposed development would harm the setting of nearby listed building, Cherry Tree Cottage
- The proposal would be visually intrusive and lead to noise and additional external lighting which would adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring residents

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 [P14/S0732/HH](#) - Approved (25/04/2014)
First Floor infill extension

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 N/A.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 Development Plan Policies

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (SOLP) Policies:

- DES1 - Delivering High Quality Development
- DES2 - Enhancing Local Character
- DES5 - Outdoor Amenity Space
- DES6 - Residential Amenity
- DES8 - Promoting Sustainable Design
- EP3 - Waste collection and Recycling
- H17 - Sub-division and Conversion to Multiple Occupation
- STRAT1 - The Overall Strategy
- TRANS5 - Consideration of Development Proposals

5.2 Neighbourhood Plan

N/A.

5.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 (SODG 2016)

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

5.5 **Other Relevant Legislation**

- Human Rights Act 1998 - The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report.
- Equality Act 2010 - In determining this planning application the Council has regard to its equalities obligations including its obligations under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
- Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 **The relevant planning considerations are the following:**

- **Principle of development**
- **Design and character**
- **Impact on neighbour amenity**
- **Access and Parking**
- **Other material planning considerations**

Principle of development

- 6.2 The application site lies within Chazey Heath. In this location, new housing is supported on infill and redevelopment sites by Policy H16 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP). However, in this case, the proposed development would result in the sub-division of an existing dwelling into two dwellings. Policy H17 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP) supports the sub-division of existing dwellings, regardless of location within the District. This policy permits sub-division provided that the development would not harm the amenity of occupants of nearby properties and would be appropriate in terms of the size of the property and the proposed internal layout, access, private amenity space and car parking provision.
- 6.3 In officer's view, SOLP determines that some limited growth is acceptable in Chazey Heath and the principle of subdividing dwellings is acceptable, subject to the criteria of Policy H17 (SOLP) being met.

Design and character

- 6.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to ensure that all development is sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting. Planning decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and include the appropriate and effective use of landscaping. The housing and development policies within the council's development plan seek to ensure that all new developments are of a design and size that is in keeping with the surroundings and does not harm the character of the area.
- 6.5 The new dwelling would utilise an existing two-storey aspect to no. 3 Chazey Close. The development proposes small changes to the exterior of no. 3 to include a new porch and a small one metre extension to the front of the two-storey aspect and the creation of a new front door to serve the new dwelling. This one metre extension would be finished with a mono-pitch roof and materials similar to those seen on no. 3. The new porch is a modest, open canopy with a gabled roof. The hedgerow to the front of the site would be removed to facilitate the new parking arrangement. It should be noted that the hedge can be removed without planning permission.

- 6.6 The materials, roof form and general external appearance would stay the same, which draws from the character and appearance of no. 3 Chazey Close. Despite the creation of a terrace, the proposed development would have a limited impact upon the local street scene. The existing two-storey side extension to no. 3 achieves a visual subservience to the main dwelling which would continue to remain legible even if converted into a separate dwelling. The converted extension would continue to appear as a subservient addition to no. 3 Chazey Close.
- 6.7 The proposed development would result in the sub-division of the plot, with the resultant new dwelling having a smaller footprint and external private amenity area. However, the proposed private amenity space (approx. 98sqm) provided would be more than sufficient in size to meet the design requirements of the South Oxfordshire Design Guide which advises at least 50sqm. In addition, the retained garden area for no. 3 (approx. 130sqm) would also meet the design requirements of the SODG which advises at least 100 sqm. In officer's opinion, the proposed development would not result in a cramped form of development or result in an overdevelopment of the site and would comply with Policy DES5 (SOLP) which seeks to ensure adequate private amenity space for all new dwellings.
- 6.8 Chazey Close lies adjacent to the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). In officer's opinion, Chazey Close does not contribute significantly to the scenic beauty and intrinsic qualities of the AONB, rather it is a piecemeal form of development of fairly standardised design and quality. This development would be contained within an existing residential housing estate which, in officer's view, does not contribute much to the Chilterns AONB. As such, the proposed development is not considered to be harmful to the landscape and scenic beauty of the Chilterns AONB.
- 6.9 The proposed development would open up the frontage of the site to accommodate for parking for both properties. Whilst it is noted this would provide an open aspect dominated by parking, contrary to the prevailing character of the area, this is an aspect of the development that could be implemented without planning permission. This includes the removal of grass and the hedgerow and the laying of permeable hardstanding. In this respect, officers accept that there would be a viable fallback position that should be given weight when considering the impact caused by the open parking area to the front of both properties.
- 6.10 One objection raised locally suggests that the proposed development would harm the setting of Cherry Tree Cottage, which is a listed building. The design and form of the new dwelling remains very similar to existing and the residential nature of the Close would be unaffected. The historic significance of Cherry Tree Cottage draws from the age and historic fabric of the property and its representative vernacular of its time. Its setting is currently poor owing to later residential development being built around it. Furthermore, the area of land that Chazey Close was built on did not have any historic association with Cherry Tree Cottage. As such, officers disagree with the assumptions that the proposed development would result in harm to the setting of this listed building.
- 6.11 It is officer's opinion that the proposed development would not result in any adverse harm to the character or the appearance of the area and would not result in any harm to the Chilterns AONB or the setting of the nearby listed building.

Impact on neighbour amenity

- 6.12 Policy DES6 (SOLP) seeks to ensure that development proposals do not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses. Factors to consider include loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight, dominance or visual intrusion, noise or

vibration, smell, dust, heat, odour, gases or other emissions, pollution, contamination and external lighting.

- 6.13 The proposed development would alter the ground floor arrangement to accommodate the use as a separate dwelling, but other than the change to the front door/garage and the creation of a new porch/entrance, no changes are proposed to the windows and doors. The proposed development would not alter the first-floor internal layout. As such, it is officer's view that the proposed development would not result in any increased harm to neighbours.

Access and Parking

- 6.14 The issue of parking and highway concerns is a key issue raised locally. The NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Policy TRANS5 (SOLP) advises that development should provide safe and convenient access for all users to the highway network, be served by an adequate road network which can accommodate traffic, provide for loading, unloading, circulation, turning space, provide parking in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council parking standards.
- 6.15 The Local Highway Authority has provided comment on the application, as originally submitted and based on the revised plans submitted. Initially they objected to the proposed development citing issues with the size of parking spaces, the lack of pedestrian visibility and the practicality of manoeuvring into and off the site.
- 6.16 Following revisions to the application plans, the Local Highway Authority no longer objects to the proposed development. The revised plan now shows parking spaces which meet current standards, and parking areas which are now practical to use and sufficient visibility. It is noted by the Local Highway Authority that given the characteristics of the carriageway, vehicular traffic and speeds are likely considered to be relatively low and whilst the subdivision of the existing dwelling is likely to result in a relatively modest increase in vehicular numbers, this is unlikely to significantly impact the highway network. As such the Local Highway Authority has no objection to this application subject to conditions being applied to any permission which may be granted on the basis of highway safety.
- 6.17 The proposed development provides for a sufficient level of parking, in accordance with the Local Highway Authority's parking standards and the development is not likely to result in any harm to the highway network. As such, the proposed development would comply with Policy TRANS5 (SOLP) and the NPPF.

Other material considerations

- 6.18 Waste:
Space has been planned to the front of both dwellings for bin storage. This would meet the requirements of Policy EP3 (SOLP).
- 6.19 Electronic Vehicle Charging:
Policy TRANS5 requires all forms of development to, where possible, provide facilities to support the take up of electric and/or low-emission vehicles. Officers consider that it would be possible to provide electric vehicle charging for the proposed development and have requested details to be submitted and agreed by condition of approval.

6.20 Sustainable design:

Policy DES8 (SOLP) advises that all new development, including conversions, should seek to minimise the carbon and energy impacts of their design and construction. Given the limited changes proposed to the building, officers do not consider that there are limited opportunities to ensure compliance with this policy.

6.21 Biodiversity net gain:

Policy ENV3 (SOLP) seeks to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity. All development should provide a net gain of biodiversity where possible. At a minimum there should be no net loss of biodiversity.

It is acknowledged that the front hedge is being removed, however a condition has been added to the recommendation to ensure that an appropriate number of trees suitable for residential gardens are planted to replace the habitats lost by the removal of the hedge.

Other matters

6.22 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

The council's CIL charging schedule applies to all relevant proposals. 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 or net gain of residential use on site. This development would be liable to pay CIL on any net internal floorspace created.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 In your officer's view, planning permission should be granted. The proposed development would be acceptable in principle and subject to conditions, would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and would ensure sufficient parking and a safe and convenient access off the highway is provided.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

To grant Planning Permission subject to the following conditions

- 1. Development to commence within three years of date of permission**
- 2. Development to be implemented in accordance with approved plans**
- 3. The existing access onto shall be improved and laid out and constructed strictly in accordance with the local highway authority's specifications**
- 4. Vision splay (2.0 metres by 2.0 metres) shall be provided either side of access (details to be agreed)**
- 5. Parking & Manoeuvring Areas to be retained and left unobstructed, except for the parking of vehicles**
- 6. Electric Vehicle Charging Points (details required)**
- 7. Landscaping condition**

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Delegated Authority Sign-Off Officer

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