

APPLICATION NO.	P21/S5302/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	24.12.2021
PARISH	WOODCOTE
WARD MEMBER(S)	Jo Robb & Lorraine Hillier
APPLICANT	Mr M Allaway
SITE	3 Beckley Close, Woodcote, RG8 0SZ
PROPOSAL	Proposed two storey dwelling and first floor extension to existing dwelling with associated parking and amenity areas (As amended by plans received 22 February 2022 to re-plan the garden area and to include a kitchen window)
 OFFICER	 Marc Pullen

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This application is referred to planning committee as Woodcote Parish Council object to the proposed development.
- 1.2 This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a new two-storey dwelling and a first-floor extension to no. 3 Beckley Close. The proposed development would introduce a new one-bedroom dwelling on the site and the extension to no. 3 Beckley Close would introduce a third bedroom to the dwelling. The new dwelling would occupy an area of open land which is currently used to park vehicles for no. 3 Beckley Close and would be attached to no. 3 Beckley Close. The extension to no. 3 Beckley Close would be to the rear of the dwelling.
- 1.3 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) lies within an existing area of residential development. The site lies within the built-up limits of the village and is accessed off Beckley Close. The majority of the site is currently used as garden space and parking for no. 3 Beckley Close. The whole of Woodcote lies within the Chilterns AONB.
- 1.4 Reduced copies of the plans accompanying the application are **attached** as Appendix B. 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 Woodcote Parish Council - Object

- WNP, T8 – Failure to provide 1 off street parking space for each bedroom, of what is clearly a 2 bedroom property.
- WNP, H10 – It is unneighbourly development which is overdevelopment of the plot and would have a detrimental impact on the adjoining properties in Beckley Close and on the properties behind in Birchen Close.
- WNP, D1 – The design proposed is out of character (no cladding on properties in this area of the village) and there is no regard for renewable energy technologies.
- SOLP, DES6 – application will result in dominance over neighbours.
- SOLP, DES10 - Application does not give details on how new dwelling will achieve at least 40% reduction in carbon emissions.
- The proposal fails to meet the recommendations in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide:

- The minimum distances between habitable rooms
- Awkward shape gardens (such as one proposed for 3 Beckley Close) should be avoided in order to be usable
- External access to rear gardens has been provided, where needed, that avoids long, narrow alleyways
- Side extensions (although this is a new build) are required to retain important gaps within the street scene to avoid creating a terracing effect. Plus be subordinate to the principal dwelling.

Forestry Officer (South and Vale) – No objections

- The proposed dwelling is located outside of the tree's root protection area (RPA), therefore subject to suitable tree protection measures being put in place prior to any works starting on site it could be retained unharmed.
- To improve the front of the existing and proposed development, returning a section of the existing hard surfacing in front of the new house would help to soften the appearance of the dwelling. A small section of lawn and some shrubs or low-level hedging, and possibly a small tree, such as a Amelanchier would make a marked improvement to the street scene.
- If permission is going to be granted, please attach the general tree protection condition and a landscaping condition.

Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council) – No objections

- The proposed parking area is considered acceptable for the development.
- The proposal is unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on the highway network.
- Conditions recommended to ensure parking and manoeuvring areas are provided on site as per plan and retained as such.

Neighbours - Object (4)

- Proposal would overlook neighbours and block views
- Drainage and flooding would be a problem – other garages flood when there is very heavy rainfall
- Noise and disturbance from the dwelling would be another problem for neighbours
- Development would devalue property prices
- Parking is already inadequate in the close

3.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

3.1 [P21/S2932/FUL](#) - Withdrawn (27/09/2021)

Erection link detached two bed dwelling together with associated parking and amenity areas (As amended by plans 2021-08-31 to re-arrange the internal layout and move dwelling away from boundary).

4.0 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

4.1 The site is within a 'sensitive area' for the purposes of the EIA regulations 2017 but the scale and nature of the proposed development does not require an Environmental Statement.

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
DES10 - Carbon Reduction
ENV1 - Landscape and Countryside
ENV2 - Biodiversity - Designated sites, Priority Habitats and Species
ENV3 - Biodiversity
H1 - Delivering New Homes
H16 - Backland and Infill Development and Redevelopment
INF4 - Water Resources
STRAT1 - The Overall Strategy
STRAT5 - Residential Densities
TRANS5 - Consideration of Development Proposals

5.2 Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan Policies:

T8 - Residential Car Parking Spaces
H10 - Infill Housing in the AONB
D1 - Good Design

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

- Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- 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.

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**
- **Other matters**

Principle of development

6.2 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. In the case of this application, the most relevant parts of the Development Plan are the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP, 2035) and the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan (WNP, adopted in 2014).

6.3 The South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP) supports new housing within Woodcote. The SOLP allocates new housing in Woodcote alongside the WNP. Policy H10 of the WNP also allows for windfall housing to be delivered. Policy H10 of the WNP supports applications for small residential developments on infill and redevelopment sites within

Woodcote, provided that the proposal adheres to the WNP and SOLP and where such development:

- a) fills a small, restricted gap in the continuity of existing frontage buildings or on other sites within the built-up area of the village where the site is closely surrounded by buildings;
- b) will not involve the outward extension of the built-up area of the village;
- c) is not considered to be backland or unneighbourly development that requires unsuitable access, reduces the privacy of adjoining properties or is inconsistent with the character of the locality; and
- d) provides for at least one small home with two or fewer bedrooms for every one large dwelling with four or more bedrooms.

- 6.4 It is officer's view that the proposed development would be on a site which is closely surrounded by other buildings and the development would not result in the outward extension of the built-up area of the village. The proposed development would not constitute backland development and is a single dwelling which does not need to provide a mix of tenure. It is officer's view therefore that the proposed development would adhere to the policy requirements of Policy H10 of the WNP and that the principle of the development is considered acceptable.

Design and character

- 6.5 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.
- 6.6 The Council's Development Plan advises that all new development must be designed to reflect the positive features that make up the character of the local area and should both physically and visually enhance and complement the surroundings, and that all new development respects the local context working with and complementing the scale, height, density, grain, massing, type and details of the surrounding area.
- 6.7 Policy D1 of the WNP advises that all forms of new development must plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design, at the same time demonstrating that they have sought to conserve local distinctiveness and the aesthetic quality of traditional rural settlements and buildings found in the Chilterns AONB.
- 6.8 The proposed development constitutes two elements, a new two-storey dwelling and a two-storey rear extension to no. 3 Beckley Close.
- 6.9 The new two-storey dwelling would be attached to no. 3 Beckley Close. The height of the proposed dwelling would be set lower than the overall height of no. 3 Beckley Close and its width is broadly similar. The massing of the proposed dwelling would be broadly similar to other properties experienced in the locality, with a relatively shallow roof form and linear plan form. The use of a front gable might not be experienced within Beckley Close, but is seen in some properties in nearby Grimmer Way and is not considered out of keeping. .
- 6.10 The proposed new dwelling would have adequate garden space to the rear (104sqm) which would be delineated by a close board fence. The garden space which would be

retained by no. 3 Beckley Close would also be acceptable (104sqm). The general plan form would not be out of character with the area and adequate space would be provided to avoid any cramped form development.

- 6.11 The use of facing brickwork and similar roof tiles would be in keeping with the nearby properties. Cladding has been omitted from the proposal following a request from officers. Officers are satisfied that materials similar to those currently on no. 3 would be acceptable on the new dwelling and the rear extension.
- 6.12 The proposed two-storey extension to no. 3 Beckley Close would be modest in comparison to the main dwelling. The extension would be set down in height from the ridge of the dwelling and the width of the extension is smaller than that of the dwelling. The use of matching brickwork and roofing tiles is appropriate. The first-floor addition above the existing utility room also appears as a modest addition to the dwelling, set down from the ridge of the dwelling and providing a small extension to the first floor.
- 6.13 It is officers view that the proposed development, constituting an extension to no. 3 Beckley Close and the addition of a new two-storey dwelling, would not result in any adverse harm to the character and appearance of the wider area. The development would not be regarded as an overdevelopment of the site and its external appearance would not be out of keeping. In officer's view, the proposed new dwelling would complement the scale, height, density, grain and massing of the close and the immediate neighbour at no.3 Beckley Close. The extensions would be subservient and sympathetic additions to the dwelling.

Impact on neighbours

- 6.14 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.
- 6.15 Concerns have been raised by local residents that the proposed development would result in adverse harm to them. The principal reasons for concern relate to overlooking/loss of privacy from the proposed development and a loss of view. In considering the impact upon neighbours, officers have considered the guidance set out within the South Oxfordshire Design Guide (SODG).
- 6.16 Privacy:
The SODG advises on the minimum back-to-back distance between properties where habitable rooms face each other as 25 metres. The minimum back-to-boundary distance between properties where habitable rooms face each other is 10 metres. The proposed development achieves approximately 21 metres between it and neighbouring no. 4 Birchen Close. However, the only first floor window to the rear of the new dwelling serves a stairwell – this is not considered as a habitable room and as such there would be no conflict with the advice of the SODG. A condition can be imposed which would prevent any further first-floor rear facing windows from being installed so that the council can maintain control over any future alterations that might be harmful to the amenity of neighbours.
- 6.17 The back-to-back relationship between the proposed extension to no. 3 Beckley Close is approximately 23-24 metres. This falls just shy of the advised 25 metres but the back-to-boundary distance is approximately 10 metres which does adhere to the guidance within the SODG. Officers are satisfied that this very small shortfall in

distance would not be harmful. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that there are two existing first floor windows that serve bedrooms at no. 3 Beckley Close that already provide views toward the gardens and windows of neighbours. It is officer's view therefore that the new extension would not result in any sudden or increased impact upon the privacy of neighbours, beyond the existing situation.

6.18 Loss of view:

It is noted that the loss of a private view is not a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. Nor is property value a material planning consideration.

6.19 Overbearing/Oppressiveness:

It is officer's view that in addition to not resulting in any adverse harm to the privacy of neighbours, the proposed development would provide adequate space between neighbours and the development and would avoid any overbearing or oppressive impacts on neighbours or any shared boundaries. The proposed extensions to no. 3 would have an acceptable presence and impact upon neighbouring no. 1 Beckley Close.

Access and parking

6.20 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.

6.21 Oxfordshire County Council, as the local highway authority, do not object to the proposed development. In their view, the proposed development provides adequate levels of parking and manoeuvring. The proposed development is not considered to result in any significant pressures upon the highway network or result in any increased harm to highway safety. As such, the development is considered to be acceptable on highway safety and parking terms.

6.22 It is noted that Woodcote Parish Council object to the application on the grounds that the new house would not provide enough parking – as the sitting room upstairs could be used as a second bedroom. Officers have reconsulted with Oxfordshire County Council on the basis that the development could be used as a two-bedroom dwelling, and they continue to support the proposed development. They state that any displaced vehicles would not result in any significant risk to highway safety and whilst the site would egress onto Grimmer Way, it is considered that vehicle speeds and traffic volumes are relatively low so would not present any threat to the safety of the highway network.

6.23 Accordingly, officers do not consider that the proposed development would warrant a refusal on grounds of parking and highway safety. Accordingly, the development would adhere to the NPPF and Policy TRANS5 (SOLP).

Other material considerations

6.24 Trees/Landscaping:

The mature Oak tree growing in the rear garden of the neighbouring property behind (4 Birchen Close) is of moderate arboricultural quality and does make a valuable contribution to the landscape, being visible from several vantage points.

6.25 The proposed dwelling is located outside of the Oak tree's root protection area (RPA), therefore subject to suitable tree protection measures being put in place prior to any works starting on site, this tree could be retained. The submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment includes a draft tree protection plan which illustrates the type of protection required. A condition can be attached which will require the submission and agreement of tree protection measures.

6.26 The proposed amount of garden space shown for the new dwelling is very small, however due to the size of the tree, it would have limited negative impact on the plot only causing some shade in the morning. To improve the front of the existing and proposed development, returning a section of the existing hard surfacing in front of the new house would help to soften the appearance of the dwelling. A small section of lawn and some shrubs or low-level hedging, and possibly a small tree would make a marked improvement to the street scene. A condition can be attached which will require landscape details to be submitted for approval.

6.27 In light of this assessment, it is officer's view that the proposed development would comply with the policy requirements of Policy ENV1 (SOLP).

6.28 Drainage:

The proposed development lies in an area of low flood risk (flood risk 1) and is not identified as an area susceptible to surface water flooding.

6.29 Carbon Reduction:

In consultation with the council's contracted energy assessor, the proposed energy statement and calculations comply with the requirements of Policy DES10.

Other matters

6.30 Pre-commencement conditions:

In accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Pre-commencement Conditions) Regulations 2018, Section 100ZA (6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990(a) the Council is required to confirm agreement to all pre-commencement conditions. These will all have been agreed by the applicant/agent in writing in accordance with the requirements of this legislation.

6.31 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.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 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 or the amenity of neighbours and would ensure the protection and enhancement of landscape value within the site. The development

would ensure sufficient energy reduction measures are implemented and that sufficient parking and vehicular access is provided.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **Planning permission should be granted subject to the following conditions:**

- 1 : **Development hereby approved to commence within three years of date of permission**
- 2 : **Development hereby approved in accordance with approved plans**
- 3 : **Development to be implemented in accordance with materials shown on plan and outlined within application form**
- 4 : **The approved parking & manoeuvring areas should be retained for parking of car**
- 5 : **Landscaping Scheme (trees and shrubs only) to be submitted for approval**
- 6 : **Tree Protection (General) details to be submitted for approval**
- 7 : **No windows, doors or other openings along rear of property unless consent given**
- 8 : **Electric Vehicle Charging Points to be installed for new dwelling (details required)**
- 9 : **All carbon reduction energy efficiency measures to be implemented in accordance with Energy Statement and a verification report submitted for approval**

Author: Marc Pullen

Tel: 01235 422600

Email: Planning@southoxon.gov.uk