

APPLICATION NO.	P14/S0581/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	4.3.2014
PARISH	SONNING COMMON
WARD MEMBERS	Mr Alan Rooke & Mr Paul Harrison
APPLICANT	Mr Ruwanal Perera
SITE	Land at Ridgeway, Bird in Hand Lane, Sonning Common
PROPOSAL	Erection of a two storey four bedroom dwelling with rooms in roof space and detached garage and construction of new vehicular access (dormer windows replaced with rooflights and corrections to site boundaries on floor plans and building heights on street scene plan as shown on amended plans received 29th April 2014).
AMENDMENTS	One – see above
OFFICER	Paul Lucas

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application is reported to the Planning Committee as a result of a conflict with the views of Sonning Common Parish Council.

1.2 The application site, shown on the OS extract at **Appendix 1**, is an area of 0.055 hectares located amongst a group of dwellings between Kennylands Road and B481 at the southernmost end of Sonning Common. The application site is a broadly rectangular segment of the southwestern part of the garden of Ridgeway, an existing one and a half storey dwellinghouse constructed of red brick and clay tiles. Ridgeway has its front elevation on the north-west facing Bird in Hand Lane and has its main garden area presently located to the south-west. A conservatory has been constructed on the south-west elevation of the house. Otherwise all other windows to habitable rooms are located on the front and rear elevations. The front boundary of the application site consists of a mature hedgerow, which is part deciduous, part coniferous. The boundary with Keeper's Corner, a residential property to the south-west, consists of a timber fence. A detached outbuilding runs alongside some of the neighbour's side of the boundary. Bird in Hand Lane is a narrow road and is not wide enough to allow two vehicles to pass alongside one another without driving onto the verge. The surrounding area is characterised for the most part by detached dwellings set in fairly generous plots. Some of these are two storey dwellings and others are bungalows and there is no prevailing design. Most of the surrounding dwellings were constructed before the 1960s. An informal recreation ground is located to the north of Bird in Hand Lane. The surroundings therefore have a spacious semi-rural character. Some of the site has been recently cleared of vegetation and a second access point has been created in the hedge to serve the existing dwelling. There are no special designations on this site.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a two-storey four bedroom dwelling with rooms in the roof space with a detached garage and construction of a vehicular access, as detailed in the amended plans and supporting documents submitted in support of the application. This application follows on from a recent outline planning permission for a new dwelling on this part of the site, as set out in Section 4 of this report. The amended plans of the proposed development can be found at **Appendix 2**. Other documents in support of the application can be viewed on the Council's [website](#).

3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 Sonning Common Parish Council – The amended application should be refused for the following reasons:

- Outline permission for 2-storey was approved by us, but 3 storey ridge height remains out of character with surrounding properties

Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council) - No objection subject to the imposition of standard planning conditions

Neighbours – Five representations of objection to the original plans, three of which were reiterated for the amended plans, summarised as follows:

- The increase in footprint compared with the most recent outline planning permission represents an overdevelopment of the site
- This development with three storeys would be too high and overly dominant on this plot, out of keeping with the surroundings, particularly Ridgeway, the oldest dwelling in the locality
- The overall height should be restricted – the street scene plan is misleading
- Mass of the building would be readily visible from Bird in Hand Lane, due to the requirement to keep vision splays open, lack of scope for screening
- Rooflights would be out of character at three-storey level resulting in loss of privacy and light pollution
- Dormer windows would result in loss of privacy and should be removed or relocated to front elevation (these have been removed from the amended plans)
- No provision for construction traffic and parking, Bird in Hand Lane is too narrow and private access lane to the rear of the properties should not be obstructed
- No mains sewer – will need to be a soakaway
- Would not provide an affordable dwelling
- Ridgeway also likely to be extended so need to consider cumulative impact

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 [P13/S1117/O](#) - Approved (11/06/2013)

Outline planning permission for the erection of a two storey four bed single family dwelling with detached garage and new vehicular entrance to Bird in Hand Lane.(Resubmission of P09/E1211/O). The approved outline plan can be found at **Appendix 3**.

[P09/E1211/O](#) - Approved (28/01/2010)

Erection of a detached two storey 4 bedroom single family dwelling with detached garage and new vehicular entrance (Outline).

[P06/E0403/O](#) - Approved (16/06/2006)

Erection of house with detached garage and new access (as amended by block plan received 1 June 2006).

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy policies

- CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- CSEN1 - Landscape protection
- CSM1 - Transport
- CSQ2 - Sustainable design and construction
- CSQ3 - Design
- CSR1 - Housing in villages
- CSS1 - The Overall Strategy

5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 policies;

- C4 - Landscape setting of settlements
- C9 - Loss of 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
- EP4 - Impact on water resources
- EP6 - Sustainable drainage
- EP8 - Contaminated land
- 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

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008 – Sections 3 & 5

South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment – Character Area 10

5.3 National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

The policies within the SOCS and SOLP 2011 of relevance to this application are considered to be in general conformity with the provisions of the NPPF and therefore this application can be determined against these relevant policies.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The previous grant of outline planning permission has established that the site is located within the built-up confines of the village of Sonning Common, which is a settlement where residential development is considered to be acceptable in principle under the SOCS Policy CSR1. Consequently the proposal falls to be assessed primarily against the impact-based criteria of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011. The planning issues that are relevant to the planning application are whether the development would:

- Result in the loss of an open space or view of public, environmental or ecological value;
- Be in keeping with the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area;
- Safeguard the living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers and provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers;
- Demonstrate acceptable provision of off-street parking spaces for the resultant dwelling and prevent any other conditions prejudicial to highway safety;
- Provide sufficient sustainable and waste management measures; and
- Give rise to any other material planning considerations

Loss of Open Space

- 6.2 Criterion (i) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 requires that an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost, nor an important public view spoilt. The site has formed part of a plot containing a dwelling since the early 1900s. It is surrounded by residential plots on three sides and there is no evidence that the site has any particular ecological value. The site is mainly visible in public views along Bird in Hand Lane and there are only limited wider views from the adjoining public open space to the north, where it would be seen in the context of established residential development. This criterion would therefore be satisfied.

Visual Impact

- 6.3 Criteria (ii) and (iii) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 explain that the design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development should be in keeping with its surroundings and the character of the area should not be adversely affected. Although officers accept that the footprint of the dwelling would be larger than that approved under the outline planning permission, this is not a reserved matters application and is not required to adhere to that footprint. The building to plot ratio would be about 23%, which would be less than the maximum plot coverages set out in Section 3 of the SODG 2008, so it would nonetheless be in accordance with current guidance. It is accepted that the dwelling would have one of the higher ridges in the immediate surroundings and that many of the nearby dwellings are bungalows or chalet bungalows. However, the submitted street scene plan shows that in spite of the additional height, the dwelling would sit comfortably between Ridgeway and Keepers Corner. The additional 0.5 metre in ridge height would not result in any discernible harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. An 8 metre ridge height is typical of many two storey dwellings and it is sometimes the case that additional habitable accommodation is provided in the roof space. For established dwellings, loft conversions incorporating rooflights (and in some cases roof extensions) can usually be achieved under permitted development rights. Under these circumstances, an objection to the visual appearance of the rooflights would be unlikely to be sustained at appeal. The dwelling would otherwise have a simple design, which would add to the variety of dwellings in the immediate surroundings. Whilst the inclusion of a flat roof element would be unfortunate, in itself, this would not be sufficient justification to warrant refusal of planning permission. Planning conditions requiring general tree protection measures to safeguard any retained trees and hedges and provision of additional landscaping to soften the appearance of the development could be imposed. In the light of the above assessment, the proposal would comply with the above criteria.

Neighbour Impact

- 6.4 Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 requires that there are no overriding amenity objections. The main amenity concern raised is the impact of overlooking and light spillage from the proposed rooflights. Officers consider that in spite of being at second floor level, as these would be over 15 metres from the rear boundary, this level of separation would be sufficient to prevent any undue loss of privacy and light intrusion occurring into the adjoining rear garden of The Crow's Nest and other gardens beyond. The dwelling would lie to the north of Keeper's Corner where the closest part of the adjoining plot is occupied by an outbuilding and forming a parking and turning area. Consequently, the amenity of the private garden and north-facing rooms of Keeper's Corner would not be unduly compromised. The rear building line would be slightly behind the rear of Ridgeway, but angled away from the existing dwelling. Although there would be some loss of sunlight in the late afternoon to the closest part of Ridgeway's remaining rear garden, there would be sufficient separation to enable the rear aspect of this dwelling to remain largely open and unshaded.
- 6.5 The amount of garden area at the rear of both the proposed dwelling and Ridgeway

would comply with the recommended minimum standard of 100m² for a dwelling of this size as set out in Section 3 of the SODG 2008. On the basis of this assessment, the proposal would be in accordance with the above criterion.

Access and Parking

- 6.6 Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 also requires that there are no overriding highway objections. The OCC Highway Liaison Officer (HLO) is satisfied that the proposed access and parking arrangements would be acceptable to serve the proposed dwelling, subject to standard planning conditions relating to parking and turning area provision and retention of the garage for parking purposes. Although the scale of development is such that the HLO does not recommend a construction traffic management plan condition, the applicant is encouraged to ensure that construction activity at the site embraces the principles of the Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS) by following the Code of Considerate Practice, and is CCS registered. In this regard it is expected that contractors vehicles should pass slowly and with caution down Bird in Hand Lane, endeavour to keep all construction related vehicle parking within the curtilage of the site and refrain from obstructing either Bird in Hand Lane or the private access at the rear of the surrounding dwellings. This matter can be dealt with through an informative on any planning permission. The proposal would therefore satisfy the above criterion.

Sustainability Measures

- 6.7 Core Strategy Policy CSQ2 requires proposals to incorporate sustainability measures in terms of energy, water and materials efficient design to reach at least Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. A planning condition is recommended requiring measures to achieve Code Level 4 to be implemented prior to occupation. There would also be sufficient space on the plot to store waste in line with the SOLP Policy D10.

Other Material Planning Considerations

- 6.8 Matters relating to foul drainage could be dealt with through building regulations. Any future application for development at Ridgeway would have to be considered as and when it is received, as it is an established planning principle that each application has to be assessed on the basis of its individual merits. Officers accept that the proposal would not provide an affordable dwelling; however, the SOCS Policy CSH3 only applies to residential development where there is a net gain of 3 or more dwellings.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The application proposal would comply with the relevant Development Plan Policies, Supplementary Planning Guidance and Government Guidance and it is considered that, subject to the attached conditions, the proposed development would not materially harm the character and appearance of the area or the living conditions of nearby residents or result in conditions prejudicial to highway safety.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **Planning Permission**

- 1 : Commencement 3 yrs - Full Planning Permission**
- 2 : Approved plans**
- 3 : Levels (details required)**
- 4 : Schedule of materials required (all)**
- 5 : Withdrawal of P.D. (extension/roof extension/outbuilding)**
- 6 : Code Level 4**
- 7 : Parking & Manoeuvring Areas Retained**
- 8 : No Garage conversion into accommodation**
- 9 : Landscaping (incl boundary fencing and screen walls)**

Agenda Item 12
South Oxfordshire District Council – Planning Committee – 23 July 2014

10 : Tree Protection (General)

11 : Informative – Construction Traffic

Author: Paul Lucas
Contact No: 01491 823434
Email: Planning.east@southandvale.gov.uk