

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P14/S1788/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	20.6.2014
<b>PARISH</b>	THAME
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Mrs Ann Midwinter Mr David Dodds
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Mr Branch
<b>SITE</b>	8 and 10 Queens Road, Thame, OX9 3NQ
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	2 new semi detached houses in plot to rear of 8 and 10 Queens Road
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	As amended by revised location and ground floor plans showing parking for 8 Queens Road re-located to the front of the property ref 30 July 2014 and by revised plans received on 12 August 2014 showing removal of first floor rear facing windows and reduction in scale of rear two storey wings.
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	471420/205384
<b>OFFICER</b>	Mrs G Brown

---

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee because the Officer's recommendation conflicts with the views of Thame Town Council.
- 1.2 The application site is shown on the OS extract **attached as Appendix 1**. The site is located within the built-up limits of the town of Thame and measures some 0.029 hectares in size. It currently forms part of the rear gardens belonging to Numbers 8 and 10 Queens Road.
- 2.0 PROPOSAL**
- 2.1 It is proposed to erect a pair of semi-detached dwellings to the rear of No's 8 and 10 Queens Road. The new dwellings would front on to Horton Avenue, a residential cul-de-sac made up largely of two storey semi-detached dwellings. Each property would have two bedrooms with an off-road parking area to the front and a garden to the rear.
- 2.2 The plans of the proposed development can be found at **Appendix 2**. Full details of the application and the consultation responses can be viewed on the Council's website at [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk).

**3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**  
**Original Plans**

- 3.1 **Thame Town Council** – Object. The gabled roof form does not reflect the hipped roof sections evident along Horton Avenue. The proposals to hardsurface the whole frontage of the properties is out of keeping with the surroundings and indicates that this represents an over-development of the site. The windows to bedroom 2 would have an unacceptable impact on the privacy of the occupants of 12 Queens Road. The garden areas left for No's 8 & 10 would be below the Council's amenity standard. The plans show 2 new parking spaces for 8 Queens Road in the rear garden which would result in pedestrian safety dangers.
- 3.1.i **Highways Liaison Officer** - No objection. Condition securing parking and manoeuvring areas recommended.
- 3.1.ii **Neighbour Representations (3)** – We consider that the proposed development

**Agenda Item 11**  
**South Oxfordshire District Council – Planning Committee 15 October 2014**

would have a serious impact on our standard of living. It does not respect local context and would be out of keeping with the character of the area as it would create 4 properties with very small gardens whilst the properties near to the development site are of low density. The development also contravenes Thame Neighbourhood Plan policy regarding outdoor amenity space as the gardens are very small. The proposed development would also block daylight to the front door and hallway at 2 Horton Ave and we would lose all of the afternoon and evening sunlight to the rear of our house and garden except in the height of summer. The proposed development does not afford adequate privacy for the occupants of 12 & 14 Queens Road. If planning permission is granted construction hours should be restricted and consideration given to where construction traffic will park.

- 3.1.iii We are concerned that there will be two properties on two storeys in a relatively small area. If built this means there will be two further families of possibly one or two children cats/dogs and cars causing over crowding in the area. It will be cramped, and the height of the proposed buildings will cause loss of light and we will be overlooked by the buildings.
- 3.1.iv If the properties are built it will result in a significant reduction in the amount of evening sun in my garden during the majority of the year including to my patio at the bottom of my garden. There would be a clear view from upstairs windows directly in to my garden. Residents of Queens Road already park on Horton Ave especially in the evenings and if only two spaces are provided for each of the new dwellings then this will make an already bad situation worse. Cars parked on the road will make it difficult for the new occupants to manoeuvre out of their driveways and on to Horton Avenue. As I work from home the building work will cause major disruption to my work as well as to a number of child minders who live on the road. I am also concerned about where site traffic will park and it will cause considerable congestion and hazards to neighbouring residents and will present a danger for school children walking to and from school. A single bungalow would be more in keeping with the character of the area.

**Amended Plans**

- 3.1.v **Thame Town Council** – Object. The alterations do not change the proposed parking layout and the extent of hardsurfacing which would be out of keeping with the character of the area. Replacing the rear facing first floor windows with high level roof lights has overcome our concerns with regards to overlooking. The size of the gardens at 8 & 10 Queens Road has not been addressed. One of the parking spaces at the front of 8 Queens Road is not of a sufficient depth.
- 3.1.vi **Neighbour Representations (3)** – Our concerns remain. The applicant states that the amended plans show a reduction in the scale of the rear wings. This is not the case as they have the same footprint as in the original proposals and the roof line has in fact been raised. In addition, with both the back door and patio areas opening on to the garden close to our back door and kitchen we would be subjected to unacceptable noise levels.
- 3.1.vii There is continual road parking in the narrow Horton Avenue on our side of the road and parking for these two new properties would entail difficult manoeuvring to get in and out. Apart from that we have no further objection also we have noticed that sunlight would be greatly restricted to No.2 Horton Ave.

My concerns and objections still stand as before.

**4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P13/S3478/PD](#) - Responded (15/11/2013)  
Drop kerb for access to park vehicles.

[P13/S3171/PD](#) - Responded (17/10/2013)  
Proposed dropped kerb for access to park 3 vehicles.

**5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) policies;

CSQ2 - Sustainable design and construction  
CSQ3 - Design  
CSS1 - The Overall Strategy  
CSTHA1 - The Strategy for Thames

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP) policies;

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  
EP3 - Adverse affect by external lighting  
EP4 - Impact on water resources  
EP6 - Sustainable drainage  
EP7 - Impact on ground water resources  
EP8 - Contaminated land  
G2 - Protect district from adverse development  
H4 - Housing sites in towns and larger villages outside Green Belt  
T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

Thames Neighbourhood Plan 2013 (TNP) policies;

H5 - Integrate windfall sites  
H6 - Design new development to be of a high quality  
H9 - mix of units  
ESDQ11 - SUDS compliant new development  
ESDQ13 - Code for sustainable homes  
ESDQ16: Development must relate well to its site and its surroundings  
ESDQ18: New development must contribute to local character by creating a sense of place appropriate to its location  
ESDQ22: The visual impact of new development on views from the countryside must be minimised  
ESDQ28: Provide good quality private outdoor space  
ESDQ29: Design car parking so that it fits in with the character of the proposed development

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

**6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

**6.1 The main considerations in the determination of the application are:**

- **The principle of the proposed development**
- **Whether it would be detrimental to an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value**
- **Whether the design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development are acceptable**
- **Whether the character of the area would be adversely affected**
- **Whether there are any overriding amenity, environmental or highway objections**
- **Whether the backland development would cause amenity environmental or highway objections**
- **Parking and amenity provision**
- **Sustainability**
- **Housing mix**
- **Any other material planning considerations**

**6.2 The principle of the proposed development.** Thame is categorised at Appendix 4 of the SOCS as one of the four main towns within the district. Policy CSTHA1 of the SOCS and H5 of the TNP permit housing on suitable infill or redevelopment sites within the town.

6.2.i The proposed development site is located within the built-up limits of the town and it sits between existing dwellings on Queens Road and Horton Avenue and is also closely surrounded by buildings. As such, the principle of the proposed development is acceptable.

6.2.ii The merits of the proposed development fall to be assessed against the criteria of Policy H4 of the SOLP which states that proposals for housing on sites within the built-up areas of the four main towns of the district and within the built-up areas of the villages will be permitted provided that all five criteria can be met. These criteria are explored below:

**6.3 (i) an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost, nor an important public view spoiled.** The site which currently forms part of the gardens belonging to No's 8 and 10 Queens Road lies within the built-up limits of the town and is enclosed by a hedge with an opening through to a hard standing and garage. There are a number of outbuildings across the site which can be seen from above the hedge in views from Queens Road and Horton Avenue. As there are existing structures on the site and having regard to the fact that the plot is surrounded by residential development, the proposal would not involve the loss of an important open space or spoil an important public view.

- 6.4 **(ii) the design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development are in keeping with its surroundings.** Horton Avenue is a cul-de-sac and there are a variety of property types on the road. Queens Avenue comprises predominantly detached and semi-detached housing dating from the mid 19th Century. There are also some Victorian terraced houses and chalet style bungalows. Horton Avenue is a mixture of house types and periods. Adjacent to the site are mid 20th century semi-detached properties and opposite the site there are detached bungalows. The majority of houses have pitched gables facing the road and are of traditional design and construction.
- 6.4.i It is proposed to erect a pair of semi-detached dwellings fronting on to Horton Avenue. They would be set back from the road, slightly behind the established building line along the northern side of Horton Avenue. A number of the front gardens at properties on Horton Avenue have been laid to hard standing and dropped kerbs installed to provide off-road parking.
- 6.4.ii As such, the erection of one pair of semi-detached dwellings would be in keeping with the type of properties in the immediate area. The slight set back from the established building line would ensure that they are not overly dominant within the street scene and the parking area to the front would also be in keeping with the established situation on both Horton Avenue and on the eastern side of Queens Road where driveways have been created.
- 6.4.iii The properties are modest two bedroom dwellings reflecting the size of the site and the ridge height of the new semis is some 0.3 metres lower than that of the adjacent semi detached properties. The properties have a pitched, hipped roof with small gable features to the front elevation which picks up on the gables on the existing properties on Horton Avenue. To the rear, a hipped roof one and half storey projecting wing straddles the rear of the properties and it is set down from the main ridge with a steeply sloping roof.
- 6.4.iv The proposed dwellings are of a simple, tradition design and they are to be finished in brick and render and the roofs clad in clay tiles which is in keeping with the local vernacular.
- 6.4.v The proposal would equate to a density of 69 dwellings per hectare which is an acceptable density for a site within the built up limits of a town. Whilst the gardens are smaller than those belonging to the older properties in the surrounding area they are not dissimilar to the amenity areas serving newer properties including the six dwellings on land between Queens Road and Croft Road for which planning permission was granted in 2006 (P06/E1026).
- 6.4.vi To conclude therefore, officers do not consider that the scale of the proposal would be detrimental to the established character of the area in terms of development density or in terms of its height or design.
- 6.5 **(iii) the character of the area is not adversely affected.** The properties would be read in conjunction with the surrounding development and as already discussed, the design and scale of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable and appropriate given the established character of the area.

**6.6 (iv) there are no overriding amenity, environmental or highway objections**  
**Amenity considerations**

- 6.6.i Policy H4 of the SOLP seeks to resist development that would be harmful to the amenities of occupants of nearby properties. The dwellings would be erected at a distance of some 12 metres from the rear elevation of No.8 Queens Road and only part of the relatively shallow side elevation of the full two storey element of the new property would face the rear of No.8. The remainder of the two storey section and the rear one and half storey wing would be located behind No.10 Queens Road. No first floor openings are proposed within the two storey side elevation of the new property and having regard to this, to the distance between the new and existing property and to the location of the new dwellings to the east of No.8 Queens Road the proposed development would not have a material impact on the amenity of the occupants of No.8.
- 6.6.ii Only a very small section of the two storey side elevation would sit to the rear of 10 Queens Road whilst the one and half storey wing would be located at a distance of over 15 metres from the rear of the neighbouring property. One high level roof light is proposed within the side elevation of the rear wing and as such, the proposed development would not introduce any overlooking of the garden at 10 Queens Road.
- 6.6.iii The rear wing would be located at a distance of over 16 metres from the rear of No.12 Queens Road and the two storey element of the new properties would be almost 15 metres from No.12. The properties would back on to the rear garden belonging to No.12 at a distance of some 4.2 metres from the shared boundary which is marked by a mature hedge. The garden at No.12 is some 28 metres long and the proposed dwellings would sit parallel to the rear part of that garden. Only two high level roof lights are proposed within the rear of the semi's so as to prevent any overlooking of the neighbouring property. In order to ensure that this situation remains your officers' recommend that a condition is imposed on any planning permission removing permitted development rights for any additional first floor openings within the rear elevations or roof slopes of the properties.
- 6.6.iv The new dwellings would be located at a distance of some 2 metres from the side elevation of 2 Horton Avenue, a two storey semi-detached dwelling to the south-east. The new semi's would sit further back from the road than No.2 but as the main two storey element of the new properties is shallower than the neighbouring property it would only project beyond the rear of No.2 by some 0.4 metres. The one and half storey rear projecting wing would be set in from the shared boundary by some 4.5 metres and the overall distance between this wing and the wing at the rear of 2 Horton Avenue would be 8.4 metres. The occupants of No.2 have objected to the proposed development on a number of grounds. They believe that it will block daylight to their front door and hallway and that they would lose all of the afternoon and evening sunlight to the rear of their house and garden except in the height of summer. As a considerable gap would remain between the two properties your officers are satisfied that the development would not have a significant impact on the amount of daylight reaching the neighbours' front door and hallway which are located on the north-western side of their property. In addition, as these are not principal living rooms it could not be argued that in planning terms, a reduction in light to the front door and hallway would have a material impact on the neighbouring residents' enjoyment of their home.
- 6.6.v Within the side elevation of the two storey wing to the rear of 2 Horton Avenue there is a glazed door and a small obscure glazed window which face on to the boundary hedge and an outbuilding within the garden of No.2. Having regard to the position of the neighbours' outbuilding between their property and the one and half storey wing

**Agenda Item 11**  
**South Oxfordshire District Council – Planning Committee 15 October 2014**

to the rear of the proposed dwellings, to the distance of 8.4 metre between the properties and to the fact that the hipped roof on the rear wing slopes steeply away from the neighbouring property your officers do not consider that the proposed development would have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of the occupants of 2 Horton Avenue by reason of being overbearing or oppressive. The single high level roof light proposed within the side facing roof slope of the new dwelling would ensure that there would be no overlooking of the garden area to the rear of 2 Horton Avenue and indeed the relationship between the new dwellings and No's 2 & 4 Horton Avenue would be no different to the relationship between all of the existing semi-detached dwellings on Horton Avenue which sit side by side.

- 6.6.vi The occupant of 4 Horton Avenue also objects on the grounds that the new dwellings would block light to their garden which is some 27 metres long. Again, your officers would contend that the relationship between the proposed semi's and the adjacent properties would be no different to the relationship that exists between say 2 & 4 Horton Avenue and 6 & 8 Horton Avenue.

**Environmental considerations**

- 6.6.vii As the proposal involves the loss of a small proportion of a suburban garden and there is no record of any protected species either on the site or in the surrounding area, there are no objections on environmental grounds.

**Highway considerations**

- 6.6.viii New dropped kerbs and driveways have recently been introduced at No's 8 and 10 Queens Road under the owners permitted development rights. As a result each of these properties has two off-road parking spaces at the front and this is an existing situation.
- 6.6.ix Under the proposed plans this parking is maintained to the existing properties and two spaces are to be provided for each of the new two bedroom dwellings. This level of parking provision accords with the Council's parking standards and is considered to be appropriate in this town centre location. Furthermore, the OCC highway officer has no objections to the proposed development on highway safety grounds.
- 7.0 **(v) if the proposal constitutes backland development, it would not create problems of privacy and access and would not extend the built limits of the settlement.** The proposed houses would be positioned behind existing dwellings on Queens Road but as they have a road frontage they would not technically constitute backland development. Furthermore, the relationship between 8 and 10 Queens Road and the new pair of semi's would be a rear-to-side relationship which is not uncommon in a built-up residential area such as this and only one high level roof light is proposed within the side elevation of the new dwellings.

The development would not extend the built limits of the settlement.

- 8.0 **Amenity provision.** No's 8 and 10 Queens Road would be left with amenity areas measuring just over 100 sq metres which would accord with the Council's amenity standard of 100 sq metres for three bedroom dwellings and above. The garden areas for the new dwellings would measure some 45 sq metres which is just under the amenity requirement for two bed dwellings of 50 sq metres. Officers consider that an objection to the proposed development on these grounds alone could not be defended and in any event, the site is within walking distance of a recreation ground on Park Street.

In order to ensure that the size of the gardens is not reduced further and in order to protect the amenity of neighbouring residents your officers recommend that permitted development rights are removed for extensions and outbuildings.

**Agenda Item 11**  
**South Oxfordshire District Council – Planning Committee 15 October 2014**

9.0 **Sustainability.** The proposed dwellings are in a sustainable location being within close walking distance of the town centre and various facilities and services. Various measures and technologies could be implemented in to the construction and finish of the dwellings that would enable them to achieve Code Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes as is required by Policy CSQ2 of the SOCS (or the equivalent standard should the code be replaced). Officers' recommend that a condition is imposed on any planning permission requiring the submission of a post-construction review to demonstrate that at least Code Level 4 has been reached.

10.0 **Housing mix.** The SOCS requires a mix of housing sizes to be provided on all new residential developments. However, Policy H9 of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan requires a mix only on schemes of more than 6 dwellings. As such, the proposal to provide two, two bedroom dwellings is acceptable under the Neighbourhood Plan.

11.0 **Other considerations.** Concerns have been raised by neighbouring residents about the impact of construction traffic and noise on pedestrian safety and on their ability to work from home. With any scale of development some level of disruption can be expected during the construction phase but it should not be to such a degree that it would have a material and long-term impact on the amenity of local residents. It is not standard practice to impose a condition restricting construction hours on a development of this scale and any disturbance experienced outside of normal working hours could be dealt with by the Council's Environmental Health Team. With regards to the parking of construction vehicles it is up to individual drivers to ensure that they park in a safe and considerate manner and this can not be controlled under planning legislation.

12.0 **CONCLUSION**

12.1 The development lies within the well defined confines of the built up part of Thame and there is no objection to the principle of housing development. The proposals comply with the normal space and highway standards and the density of the development is considered to be appropriate for the area. The scheme is otherwise generally in accordance with Development Plan Policies.

13.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

13.1 **To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:**

- 1 : **Commencement 3 years - full planning permission**
- 2 : **Approved plans**
- 3 : **Sample materials required (walls and roof)**
- 4 : **Rooflights – minimum floor to cill level of 1.7m**
- 5 : **No additional windows, doors or other openings in rear elevation or roof slope**
- 6 : **Withdrawal of permitted development (Part 1 Class A) - no extensions etc.**
- 7 : **Withdrawal of permitted development (Part 1 Class E) - no buildings etc.**
- 8 : **Code Level 4**
- 9 : **Parking and manoeuvring areas retained**

**Author:** Mrs Gabriella Brown  
**Contact no:** 01491 823282  
**Email:** [planning@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:planning@southandvale.gov.uk)