

APPLICATION NO.	P14/S2511/O
APPLICATION TYPE	OUTLINE
REGISTERED	20.8.2014
PARISH	THAME
WARD MEMBER(S)	Mrs Ann Midwinter Mr David Dodds
APPLICANT	Mr & Mrs Bostel
SITE	69 Park Street Thame, OX9 3HU
PROPOSAL	The demolition of existing buildings and erection of three 3-bedroom two storey dwellings with parking and amenity space.
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	471128/205453
OFFICER	Kim Gould

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application has been referred to the Committee because the recommendation conflicts with the views of the Town Council.
- 1.2 The site is located within the built up limits of Thame, on the south-western side of Park Street adjacent to John Hampden primary school. The site lies outside but is bounded on three sides by the designated conservation area of Thame.
- 1.3 The site is currently occupied by two retail units at ground floor and a single residential flat at first floor. To the north-west of the site, is a detached garage building together with an area of hardstanding, used for vehicle parking and accessed off Park Street. The site is within a predominantly residential area which is within easy walking distance of the town centre.
- 1.4 The site is identified on the map **attached** at Appendix 1.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks outline planning permission for the demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of 3 no. three bed, two storey dwellings with parking and amenity space.
- 2.2 The application withholds appearance, landscaping and scale as reserved matters, with details of access and layout only to be considered at this stage.
- 2.3 The indicative elevations submitted with the application show a pair of semi detached two storey buildings and a detached two storey building. The materials shown are brick and tile to Local Planning Authority approval with off street parking provided for each dwelling. Each dwelling is served by its own vehicular access.
- 2.4 A copy of the proposed plans is **attached** as Appendix B. The application is accompanied by a planning statement which can be viewed on line at www.southoxon.gov.uk

3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 Thame Town Council – Objection – Overdevelopment / Access onto the highway. Insufficient detail contained within the application. Key issues identified as impact on the character and appearance of the area, quality of living environment for future occupiers, access and parking.

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Conservation Officer - No objection - I have no objection to the demolition of the existing buildings and their replacement with new dwellings. The existing buildings have a negative impact on the historic character of this area and this site in particular has been deliberately excluded from the designated conservation area boundary. As an outline, it would appear that the proposed layout would respond to the existing character of Park Street where houses are typically two-storey, terraced or semi-detached houses which front the road directly inline with the pavement or set back with small front gardens. The full impact of these buildings on the appearance of this part of the conservation area will rely on the design detail yet to be finalised. There is scope to provide suitably detailed dwellings which respond to the established materials for residential dwellings in this part of Park Street and the final design should better reveal or enhance this area in line with recommendations in the NPPF. I would expect to see well proportioned buildings and good quality, traditional materials which are in keeping with the established character and appearance of the conservation area in a future reserved matters application.

Countryside Officer - No objection – recommend informative to be attached to any planning permission.

OCC (Highways) – No objection subject to condition relating to the provision and retention of car parking spaces and the provision of cycle parking facilities.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 [P75/N0143](#) - Approved (30/04/1975)

DIVISION OF EXISTING SHOP INTO TWO (ONE IRONMONGERY, ONE OFF-SET DUPLICATING, PLAN PRINTING AND PHOTO COPIES)

[P73/M0541](#) - Approved (20/06/1973)

Extension to form flat above existing shop.

[P70/M0661](#) - Refused (31/12/1970)

New petrol station to replace existing facilities at new location. Accesses.

[P69/M0153](#) - Approved (10/04/1969)

ERECTION OF 2 FLATS. ALTERATION & EXTENSION OF EXISTING SHOWROOM, GARAGE, & WORKSHOP. ACCESS TO BE IMPROVED.

[P64/M0013](#) - Approved (22/01/1964)

Internal alterations and conversion of front showroom into offices.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy policies

- CS1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- CSQ2 – Sustainable design and construction
- CSQ3 - Design
- CSH3 - Affordable housing
- CSH4 - Meeting housing needs
- CSS1 – The overall strategy
- CSTHA1 – The Strategy for Thame

5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 policies;

- D1 – Principles of good design
- CON7 - Proposals in a conservation area
- D3 - Outdoor amenity area
- E6 - Loss of employment uses
- G2 - Protect district from adverse development
- 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
- D2 – Vehicle and bicycle parking
- D10 – Waste management
- D3 – Outdoor amenity area
- D4 – Reasonable level of privacy for occupiers
- EP8 – Contaminated land

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008

5.3 Thame Neighbourhood Plan 2013

- H9 – Provide a mix of housing types
- H8 – Provide affordable housing
- ESDQ – Incorporate sustainable urban drainage into new development
- ESDQ13 – New dwellings: code of sustainable homes
- ESDQ27 - design in the forgotten elements from the start of the design process
- ESDQ26 - Design new buildings to reflect the three-dimensional qualities of traditional buildings.
- ESDQ28 - Provide good quality private outdoor space
- ESDQ29 - Design car parking so that it fits in with the character of the proposed development.

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main issues to be considered in the determination of this planning application are:

1. The principle of the development
2. The impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area
3. The impact on neighbouring properties
4. The impact on parking provision/highway safety
5. Provision of adequate amenity space
6. Affordable housing
7. Housing mix

6.2 **Principle**

Policy CSTHA1 of the SOCS and the Thame Neighbourhood Plan allow housing on suitable infill and development sites subject to the criteria of Policy H4 of the SOLP. This site lies within the built up limits of Thame in an area of mixed uses including retail, education and residential. The predominant use in this area is residential. As such, the principle of residential development on this site is acceptable.

6.3 Impact on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding conservation area

Criterion (i) of Policy H4 requires that an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost, nor an important public view spoilt. The site is occupied by unattractive buildings and a parking area. The site has no particular environmental or ecological value and there are no important views across the site. On this basis, the proposal would be in accordance with the above criterion.

6.4 Although the site lies outside the Thame conservation area, it is bound on 3 sides by it. Policy CON 7 of the SOLP seeks to resist proposals for development outside a conservation area which would have a harmful effect on the conservation area. The existing building and parking area are unattractive and do not contribute positively to the character of the surrounding conservation area. The redevelopment of this site for 3 modest dwellings and associated parking provides an opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the area. Details of design and materials are not to be considered at this outline stage but good quality materials and a traditional design of dwelling as illustrated in the illustrative drawing submitted with the application would be in keeping with the surrounding residential development and would enhance the character and appearance of the Thame conservation area.

6.5 Criterion (ii) of Policy H4 of the SOLP requires that the design, scale, height and materials of the proposed development are in keeping with its surroundings. The details of the development are reserved for later approval. However, the indicative plans show that 3 dwellings of an appropriate scale, design and appearance could be achieved on this site. As such, the proposal accords with criterion (ii) of policy H4.

6.6 Criterion (iii) of policy H4 requires that development does not adversely affect the character of the area. The submitted drawings demonstrate that there would be sufficient space around the proposed buildings so that the development would not appear cramped and would be in keeping with the established character of the area.

Neighbours

6.7 Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the SOLP requires that there are no overriding amenity objections. Given the position of the building in relation to neighbouring properties, I consider that the development would not result in any adverse impact on neighbours in terms of light and outlook. With regards to overlooking, the illustrative plans show that the proposed dwellings could be designed in a manner which would ensure that there would no issues of unneighbourliness. The proposed layout is in keeping with the established character of the area. The nearest neighbours to the south east are retail premises at ground floor with a residential flat above and to the north west is the primary school. As such, the proposed layout would not result in an unneighbourly form of development. I consider that the development would have an acceptable impact on existing occupiers and neighbouring properties in accordance with policies H4 and D4 of the SOLP.

Highway safety

6.8 This outline application requires the access to be considered together with the layout. The submitted planning drawing 01a shows each dwelling with its own vehicular access directly off Park Street and off street parking. The Highway Liaison Officer has raised no objection to this proposal subject to two conditions being added to any planning permission relating to the provision and retention of car parking spaces and the provision of cycle parking facilities. The Highway Authority has concluded that the application should not have any adverse highways impact. As such there are no technical reasons to object to the proposed access serving this proposed development.

Amenity space

6.9 The planning drawing shows the proposed layout which includes plots nos. 2 and 3

having a private rear garden of approximately 51.6sqm and plot no 1 approximately 65sqm. The South Oxfordshire Design Guide advises that a 3 bed house should have a 100sqm of amenity space. These proposed dwellings do not meet this standard. However, the Design Guide advises that the type and level of open space will vary depending on the characteristics of the development, the site and its context. In this particular case, the development would be in the town centre within 94m of a recreational ground. There are also numerous examples within the vicinity of dwellings, both traditional and modern having rear gardens significantly smaller than 100sqm – For example, no 60 Park Street -32sqm, No 82 -47sqm and 16 Park Terrace 42sqm. As such, the established character of this part of Thame includes dwellings with small rear gardens which is not unusual in a town centre location. It is your officers' view that although the gardens are relatively modest, a reason for refusal on these grounds alone would not be defensible on appeal.

Affordable housing

- 6.10 Policy CSH3 of the SOCS requires the provision of 40% affordable housing on sites where there is a net gain of three or more dwellings. In this particular case, the proposal seeks outline planning permission for 3 dwellings. However, at present there is a first floor residential flat above the existing retail premises. Therefore, there is only a proposed net increase of 2 dwellings on the site and affordable housing is not required.

Housing Mix

- 6.11 Policy CSH4 of the SOCS requires a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of current and future households on all new residential dwellings. This proposal proposes 3 bedrooms in each of the 3 dwellings so does not provide the required mix to satisfy this policy. However, policy H9 of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan requires a housing mix on developments of 6 dwellings or more. This Neighbourhood Plan, although in general accordance with the SOCS, is a more recent document and has been subject to scrutiny by an Inspector and therefore has greater weight in terms of housing mix in Thame than the SOCS. For this reason, no housing mix is required on this development of 3 dwellings.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The principle of residential development is acceptable in this town centre site. The application is in outline only and the submitted details demonstrate that the layout of the development is acceptable and that a development of an appropriate scale and design could be accommodated at the site. The County Highway Authority has not raised an objection to the access which is considered to comply with the requirements of the NPPF. This proposal would provide 3 small units of accommodation in a very sustainable location.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 **To grant outline planning permission subject to the following conditions:**

- 1 : Commencement - outline planning permission.**
- 2 : Reserved matters to be submitted – specific.**
- 4 : Plan of car parking provision (specified number of spaces).**
- 5 : Cycle parking facilities.**
- 6: Development to meet Code level 4.**
- 7: Contaminated land preliminary risk assessment with mitigation if required.**
- 8: Details of foul and surface water drainage.**

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