

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P14/S3995/O</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	OUTLINE
<b>REGISTERED</b>	19.12.2014
<b>PARISH</b>	SONNING COMMON
<b>WARD MEMBERS</b>	Paul Harrison Alan Rooke
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Ammonite Developments Ltd
<b>SITE</b>	Land adjacent to 54 Woodlands Road, Sonning Common, RG4 9TE
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Demolition of existing garage and erection of a single residential dwelling.
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	None
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	470370/180821
<b>OFFICER</b>	Marc Pullen

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee as the officer's recommendation conflicts with the view of Sonning Common Parish Council.

1.2 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) is an open parcel of land which is sited off the end of a cul-de-sac road. The site currently lies vacant and contains a detached single storey garage which was once used by 54 Woodlands Road but has since become divorced. The site does not belong to any land designation but lies in close proximity to the adjoining woodlands, which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

**2.0 PROPOSAL**

2.1 This application seeks outline planning permission for the construction of a dwelling house with all matters reserved except for access.

2.2 A copy of all the current plans accompanying the application is **attached** as Appendix B. Other documentation associated with the application can be viewed on the council's website, [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk).

**3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Sonning Common Parish Council – Object

- Contrary to policies C4, CSR1, T1, T2, C6, CSEN1, D6, D3, G6,

Forestry Officer (SODC) - No strong views subject to conditions to protect neighbouring woodlands.

Countryside Officer - No strong views

Countryside Access - No strong views subject to informatives

Highways Liaison Officer – No strong views subject to conditions to secure sufficient turning and parking area on site.

Neighbours - Object (8)

- Proposal would encroach into the rural surroundings
- Proposal would extend the built up limits and outside the draft Sonning Common neighbourhood plan area
- Narrow access would harm neighbouring property and cause difficulties with the turning area at the end of the road

- Impact on light and privacy on neighbouring 54 Woodlands
- Safety of those using the public footpath
- Site provides a buffer zone for wildlife between the village and woodlands
- Would require the loss of trees and hedgerows
- Access for construction vehicles would not be adequate
- The site is not brownfield
- Would worsen the traffic/congestion problems

**4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 [P87/S0783/O](#) - Refused (16/03/1988) - Refused on appeal (21/11/1988)  
Demolition of existing garage. Erection of one dwelling (bungalow or chalet bungalow).

**5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE**

**5.1 National Planning Policy Framework & National Planning Practice Guidance**

**5.2 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2012 policies;**

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

**5.3 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 policies;**

- C4 - Landscape setting of settlements
- C8 - Adverse affect on protected species
- C9 - Loss of landscape features
- D1 - Principles of good design
- D2 - Safe and secure parking for vehicles and cycles
- D3 - Outdoor amenity area
- D4 - Reasonable level of privacy for occupiers
- D10 - Waste Management
- G2 - Protect district from adverse development
- H4 - Housing sites in towns and larger villages outside Green Belt
- R8 - Protection of existing public right of way
- T1 - Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users
- T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

**5.4 South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008**

**6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 The main planning considerations in the determination of this application are:
- The principle of housing development
  - The impact on the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings
  - The impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers
  - Highway considerations
  - Other material considerations

**Principal of Development**

- 6.2 The site lies within the Sonning Common parish, which is regarded as a larger village within the SOCS. In this location the principle of residential development is largely governed by Policy CSR1 of the SOCS, which allows for new housing on infill sites. The definition of infill as stated within the SOCS is the filling of a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely

surrounded by buildings.

- 6.3 The site is approximately 0.1 hectares in size which currently lies unused and houses a vacant and disused garage. The site currently contributes to a gap between the built up settlement along Woodlands Road and the nearby woodland. The site is neighboured closely by 54 Woodlands Road and the curtilage would be contained by no. 5 and no.6 Carling Road to the rear. It is my opinion that this site would constitute a logical infill site within Sonning Common with regard to the definition set out in Policy CSR1.

**Impact on the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings**

- 6.4 Having regard to criterion (i) of Policy H4 of the SOLP, the proposal would not result in the loss of an important open space of public, environment or ecological value and would not result in an important public view being spoilt. When viewed from the street scene it is quite evident that the site has been used in association with a neighbouring property and appears residential in appearance as the site is bordered with low level hedging which defines the site. The Council's Forestry Officer raises no objection to the proposed development with regard to the existing vegetation on site subject to the imposition of a condition ensuring detailed protection of the nearby woodland. The Council's Countryside Officer states that the development would have a low risk of impacting protected species nearby, however an informative is attached which states that the development should cease if any bats are discovered and only continue once approval from the Local Planning Authority is obtained.
- 6.5 Criteria (ii) and (iii) of Policy H4 seek to ensure that the design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development are in keeping with the surroundings and that the character of the area is not adversely affected. The details of the proposed dwelling are not assessed under this outline application and these matters would need to be fully assessed under an application for reserved matters approval. However, following a visit of the site Officers consider that it would be logical to provide a single storey dwelling here which would accord with local architectural style and the precedents set by nearby bungalows along Woodlands Road.
- 6.6 The site responds to the size of neighbouring properties and I consider that a single storey dwelling could be provided on the site without it resulting in an overdevelopment of the site or in a cramped appearance when held against the existing residential development along Woodlands Road. The indicative siting of the dwelling would accord with neighbouring properties to the east alongside Woodlands Road but would require an adjustment in order to reduce neighbour harm.
- 6.7 A number of representations have raised concerns that the residential development of this site would enlarge the settlement boundary of the village as outlined with the Sonning Common Neighbourhood Development Plan build limits. Whilst this is true, officers are mindful that this plan is only in a draft stage and the inclusion of one dwelling on this site is not considered to materially affect the built up limit of the village.

**6.8 Impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers**

Without final details of the proposed dwelling it is not possible to determine the full impact on neighbouring amenity. However given the size of the plot and the relationship with neighbouring properties I would consider that a two storey dwelling on this site could create significant harm to the amenity of neighbours by way of creating overbearing, privacy and overshadowing effects. Officers consider that it would be possible for the site to accommodate a single storey property which would better relate

to neighbouring 54 Woodlands Road and would have a satisfactory impact on those occupants living there. Officers consider that there is scope to orientate a single storey dwelling on site to mitigate against any significant harm to neighbours. Further consideration to neighbour impact can be addressed during a later application for reserved matters.

#### **Highway considerations**

- 6.9 This outline application requires the access to be considered. The site is currently served by metal gate off Woodlands Road. The Highway Authority has raised no objection to the proposal but recommends the requirement to provide a satisfactory parking and turning area by way of condition
- 6.10 A number of residents have raised an issue regarding the safety of pedestrians who currently use the public footpath which runs adjacent to the property along the south-western boundary. Officers do not consider that an additional driveway here would result in any harmful impact on those pedestrians who wish to continue using the footpath, no more than that harm which could potentially arise from the occupants living at 54 Woodlands Road as they enter and leave their driveway. An informative is recommended to ensure that no construction materials, plant, temporary structure or excavations of any kind should be deposited/undertaken on or adjacent to the Public Right of Way that may obstruct or dissuade the public from using the public right of way whilst development takes place.

#### **Other material considerations**

- 6.11 Having regard to Policy CSQ2 of the SOCS the proposal should meet Code Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. A condition is recommended to secure this.
- 6.12 In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. The application was acceptable in its submitted format and the Planning Service worked with the applicant/agent in a positive manner by dealing with the application in a prompt and timely way.

#### **7.0 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The application proposal is considered to be in accordance with the relevant development plan policies and national planning policy as, subject to conditions, the development would respect the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area and would not cause any significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In addition the proposal would not be prejudicial to highway safety and convenience.

#### **8.0 RECOMMENDATION**

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

- 1 : Approved plans.**
- 2 : Commencement - Outline Planning Permission.**
- 3 : Submission of Reserved Matters – scale, layout, landscaping and appearance.**
- 4 : Sample materials required (all).**
- 5 : Turning area and car parking.**
- 6 : No surface water drainage to Highway.**
- 7 : Tree Protection (Detailed).**
- 8 : Single storey development only.**
- 9 : Code Level 4.**

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- 10 : Informative – Public Footpath.**
- 11 : Informative – Wildlife.**

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