

APPLICATION NO.	P14/S3937/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	17.12.2014
PARISH	GORING HEATH
WARD MEMBER	Pearl Slatter
APPLICANT	Mr and Mrs G O'Brien
SITE	Ivydene, Crays Pond
PROPOSAL	Demolition of garage and erection of two-storey three-bedroom dwelling and new vehicular access (Front dormer window reduced in size and side window increased in size, as shown on amended plans received 6th February 2015).
AMENDMENTS	None
OFFICER	Paul Lucas

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application is reported to the Planning Committee as a result of a conflict between officers' recommendation and the views of Goring Heath Parish Council.
- 1.2 The application site is identified at **Appendix 1**. The application site comprises a triangular parcel of land of 0.1 hectares in area, forming part of a large side garden belonging to Ivydene, a semi-detached two-storey dwelling with rendered walls and a slate roof. It has been previously extended in the form of a two storey side and rear extension and is attached to Conway Cottage which has largely retained its original proportions. The site is mostly open and laid to lawn, but also accommodates a detached double garage with playroom in the roof space, which also has rendered walls and a slate roof. Ivydene belongs to a ribbon of development along the north side of Reading Road towards the western edge of Crays Pond. It was originally part of a hamlet known as Little Heath comprising ten dwellings, which was physically separate from Crays Pond, until the gap was filled by the Heath End rural exception housing scheme granted planning permission in 2003, so that it now reads as a continuous built-up frontage. There is also a 1.8 metre close boarded fence along the northern boundary and both this and the southern site boundary consist of established trees and hedging which largely screen the garden from view. However, the house and garage are visible in public views along the road and from Goring Heath Bridleway 13 that passes between Ivydene and Field End to the west and continues into the open countryside to the north of the site. The site lies within the Chilterns AONB, but has no other special designations.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the garage and the erection of a two-storey three-bedroom dwelling served by a new vehicular access, as detailed on the plans and supporting documents submitted with the application. The dwelling would have an L-shaped footprint and would have a main ridge of 7.8 metres in height. The external finish would be brick and clay tile. The proposed access would lead onto a parking and turning area with 3 spaces and there would be a parking and turning area for Ivydene with 2 spaces. Amended plans were received that reduced the size of one of the front dormer windows and enlarged one of the side windows.

- 2.2 A copy of the current plans is attached at **Appendix 2** whilst other documentation associated with the application can be viewed on the Council's website:
www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 **Goring Heath Parish Council** – The application should be refused:
The site does not fall within Crays Pond, but the hamlet of Little Heath. Crays Pond village was defined on its western border by the former local authority housing of Garton End, and there was a gap between it and Little Heath until the affordable housing scheme of about 10 years ago was built. There was a strong concern at that time that this scheme was ribbon development, and your assumption that Little Heath is part of Crays Pond validates those concerns. This proposal will intensify this ribbon development for nearly 600 metres, from the entrance to Garton end to Field View, all on one side of the road and with virtually no depth. As such, it is not a small gap that is closely surrounded by buildings. There are none to the front or to the rear, and the distance to the nearest existing house (Field End) is 59 metres. As such, the parish council's view remains unchanged that the development does not fall within CSR1 and should therefore be refused.

Forestry Officer (South Oxfordshire District Council) - No objection subject to landscaping condition

Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council) - No objection subject to conditions

Neighbours – No responses received.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 [P07/E1281](#) - Approved (22/11/2007)
Single Storey Garden Room Extension & Double Garage with Games Room in Roof.
- [P99/S0185](#) - Approved (10/05/1999)
Two storey extension to side.

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
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

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008 – Sections 3 & 5
South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment – Character Area 10
Chilterns Buildings Design Guide – Chapter 3

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 planning issues that are relevant to this application are whether the development would:

- be in accordance with the Council's strategy for housing development in rural areas;
- 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 surrounding area, bearing in mind its location within the Chilterns AONB;
- safeguard the living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers and would provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers;
- provide adequate off-street parking spaces for the resultant dwelling and the existing dwelling and not give rise to any conditions prejudicial to highway safety; and
- give rise to any other material planning considerations.

6.2 Principle of Development

In officers' opinion, the site is located within the hamlet of Little Heath, which is now physically and functionally amalgamated with the small settlement of Crays Pond. The SOCS Policy relevant to this proposal is CSR1, which outlines the approach for assessing proposals for infill residential development in the District. The SOCS classifies Crays Pond as an "Other" village. The Council's Settlement Assessment Background Paper 2011, which collected the data for the categorisation of settlements throughout the District did not identify Little Heath as a distinct settlement and therefore the ten dwellings within Little Heath would have been included within Crays Pond. Consequently, officers disagree with Goring Heath Parish Council and consider that the site is part of Crays Pond for the purposes of assessing this application and therefore Policy CSR1 can be applied to this site.

6.3 Policy CSR1, explains that residential development on infill sites of up to 0.1 hectares in size is acceptable in principle in "Other" villages. The supporting text for Policy CSR1 states, "*Infill development is defined as 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.*" Officers consider that the development along the northern side of Reading Road forms a built-up frontage. The distance between the eastern side wall of the garage and the western wall of Field End is 44 metres. This gap would be reduced to a distance of 40 metres to the eastern wall of the proposed dwelling. The plot frontage would be about 45 metres. Whilst this would be larger than many of the plots fronting onto this stretch of Reading Road, it would be smaller than Bonair to the east, which sits on a similar triangular plot with a frontage in excess of 60 metres. Given the thresholds set out under Policy CSR1 for "Other" villages, it follows that "small" in this definition must nonetheless allow for developments equivalent to 2-3 houses in villages

such as Crays Pond.

6.4 The single dwelling currently proposed would occupy about a third of the width of the site and would clearly not fill the whole of the gap. However, there is no policy requirement to fill the entire gap. The proposed dwelling would replace an existing large garage on an established garden and would not extend development out into the countryside to any greater extent than the existing frontage housing. In fact, three of the existing dwellings (Little Heath Cottage, Little Merrywood and Little Heath) are all positioned behind the dwellings that front directly onto the road. On the basis of the above assessment, officers are satisfied the principle of this development is acceptable under the SOCS. Consequently, the proposal falls to be assessed primarily against the criteria of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 for new dwellings, which are addressed below.

6.5 Loss of Open Space

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 is not accessible to the public. It is an established residential garden containing an existing ancillary domestic building enclosed by hedging on the road frontage and some mature foliage forming a domestic boundary at the rear. Although visible from the road and the public bridleway, it is seen in the context of the attached semi and adjacent domestic gardens and it does not afford any significant views into the open countryside. There is no evidence of any significant ecological implications arising from this proposal. On this basis, the proposal would be in accordance with the above criterion.

6.6 Visual Impact

Criterion (ii) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 requires that the design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development are in keeping with its surroundings and criterion (iii) requires that the character of the area is not affected. Policies CSQ3 of the SOCS and D1 of the SOLP 2011 amplify this requirement. The appearance of nearby dwellings is mixed, with variation in size and form. The garage is relatively functional in appearance and there would be no objections to its removal. The amended dwelling would be sited in part on the footprint of the garage and would be of traditional proportions with a ridge height only 0.2 metre higher than Ivydene. It would be largely seen in the context of Ivydene and Conway Cottage and would not stand out against the adjoining countryside. Its appearance could be enhanced through the use of traditional brick and tile as external finishes, which would be appropriate in this part of the Chilterns AONB. The proposed house would respect the location of existing trees and hedges along the site boundaries. In light of this assessment, the proposed house would not be unduly prominent in the street scene and would be in keeping with the character of the surroundings and would not harm the wider Chilterns AONB landscape. In overall terms, officers consider that the dwelling would broadly comply with the relevant sections of the SODG 2008 and with the above policies and criteria.

6.5 Neighbour Impact

Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 requires that there are no overriding amenity objections. Policy D4 of the SOLP requires that all new dwellings should be designed and laid out so as to secure a reasonable degree of privacy for the occupiers. Development will not be permitted if it would unacceptably harm the amenities of neighbouring properties through loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight. Advice on privacy standards is also included in the SODG 2008. In Section 3.2.6 it advocates that a distance of 25 metres between facing habitable rooms is desirable.

6.6 The proposed dwelling would be located relatively close to Ivydene. Although Ivydene has several windows in the eastern side elevation facing towards the side wall of the

proposed dwelling, these are all secondary windows, with other windows serving those rooms on the north and south elevations meaning that the respective rooms would not suffer undue loss of light and outlook as a result of the proposed dwelling. The proposed first and ground floor windows in the western elevation of the proposed dwelling would be obscure glazed to prevent loss of privacy and this could be secured through a planning condition. The distance between the first floor side windows in the eastern elevation of the proposed dwelling would be well in excess of the 25 metre recommended minimum standard in Section 3 of the SODG from the closest part of Field End to avoid loss of privacy to those occupiers, who have not objected to the proposal. The proposed garden area and the remaining garden area for Ivydene would both accord with the recommended minimum standard of 100 square metres in Section 3 of the SODG.

6.7 Access and Parking

Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 also requires that there are no overriding highway objections. The Highway Liaison Officer considers that the proposed parking and turning arrangements would be acceptable. The number of parking spaces would be adequate for a dwelling of this size and the ability to turn within the site would prevent on-street parking from occurring. The replacement parking and turning area for Ivydene would be acceptable. On this basis, the proposal would comply with the above criterion, subject to several highways-related planning conditions.

6.8 Other Material Planning Considerations

Policy CSQ2 of the SOCS requires single dwellings to attain Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. This could be achieved through the imposition of a planning condition requiring details to be provided prior to occupation. With regard to waste management, it appears that there would be sufficient provision on site for waste bin storage, which would allow for both boxes and wheeled bins to be presented for collection at the highway junction with the driveway as is the case for nearby dwellings in accordance with the SOLP 2011 Policy D10.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The proposed development would be acceptable in principle, would be in keeping with the character and appearance the surrounding area, including the Chilterns AONB, would not detract from the living conditions of adjoining residents or be prejudicial to highway safety and would be in accordance with Development Plan Policies, Supplementary Planning Guidance and Government Guidance.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

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

- 1 : Commencement three years - full planning permission.**
- 2 : Development in accordance with approved plans.**
- 3 : Levels (details required).**
- 4 : Schedule of materials required (all).**
- 5 : Obscure glazing to prevent overlooking.**
- 6 : Withdrawal of permitted development for extensions.**
- 7 : Code Level 4 to be attained.**
- 8 : New vehicular access.**
- 9 : Vision splay protection.**
- 10 : Parking and manoeuvring areas retained.**
- 11 : No surface water drainage to highway.**
- 12 : Gates/carriageway.**
- 13 : Landscaping (access/hard standings/fencing/walls) to be agreed.**

Agenda Item 8
South Oxfordshire District Council – Planning Committee – 11 March 2015

Author: Paul Lucas
Email: planning@southandvale.gov.uk
Telephone: 01235 540546