

APPLICATION NO.	P15/S1599/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	22.5.2015
PARISH	EYE & DUNSDEN
WARD MEMBERS	Paul Harrison Martin Akehurst
APPLICANT	For and on behalf of Badnell Properties LTD
SITE	Mill Farm, Sonning Eye, RG4 6TR
PROPOSAL	To demolish the existing building and erect a larger replacement building.
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	475197/175916
OFFICER	Davina Sarac

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee as the Officers' recommendation conflicts with the views of the Parish Council.

1.2 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) comprises a yard directly to the north of Mill Farm House and the attached 2 Mill Farm Cottages which are both Grade II Listed buildings. The site is currently used as a motor vehicle repair yard. There is a current block of industrial units on the east of the site, with an attached garage, and the existing building subject to this application is located on the southern boundary of the site with a storage container located next to it. The site is also located within the Sonning Eye Conservation Area and within Flood Zone 2.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing building and the erection of a larger replacement building. The existing building measures 5.5 metres wide, 9.1 metres long and 5.0 metres in height. The replacement building would measure 9.0 metres wide, 9.4 metres in length and 5.2 metres in height. The building will be used for the repair of cars. Council records indicate that the site has an industrial B1 use which has been in situ for more than 10 years.

2.2 A copy of the 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.

3.0 **CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **Eye and Dunsden Parish Council** – The application should be refused as the replacement building is a substantial increase in footprint. The materials are unsuitable. The building appears older than 50 years old. There is a potential increase in commercial traffic. The floodplain letter from the Environment Agency of early 2003 is very out of date and there is insufficient evidence that the necessary investigation on the biodiversity has taken place.

3.2 **Drainage Engineer (South Oxfordshire)** - No objection.

3.3 **Conservation Officer** - Satisfied that the building is not of special historic interest. No objection to the demolition of the building as it will not constitute the loss of an important historic building.

- 3.4 **Countryside Officer(South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse)** - Satisfied that there are unlikely to be any significant ecological impacts if planning permission is granted.
- 3.5 **Health & Housing – Environmental Protection Team** - In order to minimise disturbance to local residents a condition is recommended to restrict the operating hours of the business.
- 3.6 **County Archaeological Services (SODC)** - The proposals outlined would not appear to have an invasive impact upon any known archaeological sites or features. As such there are no archaeological constraints to this scheme.
- 3.7 **Forestry Officer (South Oxfordshire)** - No objection.
- 3.8 **Neighbours** – 1 letter of objection:
– there is already significant noise from the car workshop and revving of engines
– there are concerns about increase in traffic coming to and from the yard
- the access lane is narrow and its constant use causes pot holes.
- 4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**
- 4.1 No applications directly relevant to this proposal.
- 5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**
- 5.1 Policies of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS)
CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
CSS1 - The Overall Strategy
CSEN3 - Historic environment
CSEM4 – Supporting economic development
CSQ3 - Design
- 5.2 Policies of the Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP)
CON5 – Setting of listed buildings
CON6 - Demolition in conservation area
CON7 - Proposals in a conservation area
D1 - Principles of good design
E5 – Proposals for business, industry, warehousing and storage
EP2 - Adverse affect by noise or vibration
EP6 - Sustainable drainage
G2 - Protect district from adverse development
CON11 - Protection of archaeological remains
- 5.3 Government Guidance
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Policy Framework: Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- 5.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance
South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008 (SODG)
- 6.0 **PLANNING ISSUES**
- 6.1 The main planning considerations in relation to this application are:
1. The impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area
2. The impact on the setting of the neighbouring listed buildings
3. The impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers
4. Impact upon flooding
5. Impact upon trees

Character and appearance

- 6.2 The current building appears to look older than it would seem with some older material within the building, mainly in the form of timbers and some brickwork. The construction, however, suggests that these materials have been reclaimed from other buildings and subsequently patch repaired and strengthened. Evidence was submitted on 14th July 2015 detailing the condition of the building. From this report, and from inspection of the photographs submitted with the report, it is clear that the building materials are rotting and are in a bad state. The timber support beams are rotting beyond repair and are unable to support the structure of the building. There is currently a temporary support in place preventing the roof from collapsing. As such, Officers' are satisfied that the demolition of this building will not constitute the loss of an important historic building.
- 6.3 The proposed new building is significantly larger than the existing building with its footprint including the area of the storage unit that lies next to the building. The proposed timber cladding and the brick plinth should be of suitable colour, texture and size for the surroundings and this can be dealt with by the recommended condition. Given its location within a motor repair yard the proposed building is considered to be of a size, scale and appearance that is visually appropriate to the site and would not adversely harm the character and appearance of the Sonning Eye Conservation Area. The relevant SOLP Policies are CON6, CON7, G2 and D1, and CSEN3 of the SOCS.

Setting of neighbouring Listed Buildings

- 6.4 The proposed new building is larger than the existing building and will have a more industrial appearance. The existing building has a corrugated steel roof and the new roof would be steel clad with timber clad walls and a brick plinth. The rear of the building is highly visible from the driveway leading to 2 Mill Farm Cottages. The existing tall hedging in front of Mill Farm House would create a screen from the Grade II Listed Building. Given the existing yard and appearance of the existing building the proposed building, although significantly larger, would have a negligible impact upon the setting of the nearby listed buildings. The relevant policies are CON5 of the SOLP and CSEN3 of SOCS.

Neighbouring amenity

- 6.5 One letter of objection has been received with regard to concerns over the increase in intensity of the use of the site for car repairs and associated noise generated from that use. No complaints about noise arising from the use of the existing buildings on site have been recorded. However, due to the close nature of the surrounding residential properties, noise could be a potential issue. Therefore, Officers recommend a condition to restrict the operating hours of the business within the building in the interest of the residential amenities of the neighbouring properties.

Flooding

- 6.6 A Flood Risk Assessment report was submitted on 16th July 2015 by Easy Flood Risk Consultants, and consultation advice from the Drainage Engineer on behalf of the Council has stated there are no objections to the proposed development and no necessary conditions required.

Trees

- 6.7 There are some small trees located just behind the existing storage container adjacent to the current building. The trees within the site are not the subject of a tree preservation order. However the site is located within a conservation area. The consultation advice from the council's Forestry Officer is that he has no objection to the proposed development as it is unlikely to have an impact on any trees that make a significant contribution to the visual amenity of the area. The larger trees are located in neighbouring properties on the other side of the road and are considered a sufficient distance away to not be harmed by the proposal.

Addendum

6.8 In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. The Planning Service worked with the applicant/agent in a positive and proactive manner by updating the applicant/agent of issues that arose during the application process, suggesting a solution to objections and providing an opportunity to submit amended plans.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The application proposal is in accordance with the relevant development plan policies and national planning policy as, subject to conditions, the development would not result in any significant harm to the setting of the neighbouring Listed Buildings and would conserve the surrounding Conservation Area. The development would also not cause any significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and would not be prejudicial to highway safety and convenience.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Commencement of development within three years.**
2. **Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.**
3. **Samples of external wall materials to be agreed in writing prior to the commencement of development.**
4. **Noise - Restriction of hours of operation limited to 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays.**

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