

APPLICATION NO.	P15/S3127/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	16.9.2015
PARISH	ROTHERFIELD PEPPARD
WARD MEMBERS	David Nimmo-Smith Charles Bailey
APPLICANT	Mr Simon Chamberlain
SITE	Wickets, Church Lane, Rotherfield Peppard, RG9 5JL
PROPOSAL	Demolition of existing bungalow and garage. Erection of a replacement 5-bedroom dwelling and detached double garage.
AMENDMENTS	As amended by drawings accompanying Applicants email dated 03/11/15 reducing scale of dwelling and altering site area.
GRID REFERENCE	471174/181553
OFFICER	Emma Bowerman

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee as the Officers' recommendation differs from the views of Rotherfield Peppard Parish Council.
- 1.2 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) is within a central location within the village and is surrounded by residential properties. Until recently, the site contained a detached 1950's painted brick and clay tile bungalow. The council issued demolition consent for the demolition and removal of the bungalow in October 2015 and the building has subsequently been removed from the site. Access is via a break in the front hedge and there is a large gravelled parking area to the front of the site.
- 1.3 The site falls within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which washes over the village. Rotherfield Peppard Conservation Area is around 70m to the west of the site.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application seeks planning permission to replace the bungalow that was recently removed from the site with a 5 bedroom dwelling. The application documents state that the roof tiles would be reused from the demolished bungalow. The ground floor would be rendered with wood shiplap on the first floor. A detached two bay garage is also proposed to the front of the dwelling. The garage would be timber clad with clay tiles to the roof.
- 2.2 The application plans were amended during the application process. The amendments slightly reduced the width of the building (from 21m to 19.5m) and the height (from 8.5m to 8.3m). The amendment also corrected the site area.
- 2.3 A copy of the proposed plans is **attached** as Appendix B. The application is accompanied by a design and access assessment, which can be viewed online at www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Rotherfield Peppard Parish Council – Considers the application should be refused for the following reasons:

- proposal overbearing and too large
- volume increase not in accordance with policy
- would be dominant and out of context with the rest of Church Lane
- height excessive in comparison to neighbours
- concerns regarding provision of an appropriate waste sewerage system
- design out of character with properties in Church Lane
- materials not in keeping with character of road
- garage not in keeping with adjacent plots with large open frontages
- impact on neighbouring amenity – impact on outlook and oppressive from garden
- conditions required to mitigate impact including compliance with Considerate Constructors Scheme, Construction Traffic Management Plan and restriction on external lighting

3.2 Neighbour representations – 11 received in objection to the development raising the following concerns:

- overdevelopment, too tall, too large and out of keeping
- forward positioned garage inappropriate - breaches building line
- exterior finish out of keeping with rest of the lane
- intrusive impact on neighbours – loss of privacy and light –overbearing / oppressive
- not contributing towards affordable housing
- insufficient parking
- design, height and scale not in keeping with its surroundings
- detract from the AONB
- excessively dominant and imposing building
- increase in floor area and volume excessive
- incongruous form of development
- noise and disturbance due to position of garage
- changes in levels reduces apparent height of two storey dwellings in the road
- similar to refusal in 1985 so should be refused again
- precedent for future development

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P15/S3069/D](#) - Approved (12/10/2015)

Demolition of bungalow and attach garage/shed

[P85/S0397](#) - Refused (07/08/1985)

Erection of a five bedroom detached house and garage; access alteration; existing bungalow to be demolished.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

5.2 **NPPF Planning Practice Guidance**

5.3 **South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) 2027**

CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CSQ2 - Sustainable design and construction

CSQ3 - Design

CSR1 - Housing in villages
CSS1 - The Overall Strategy
CSEN1 - Landscape protection

5.4 South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP) 2011 saved policies

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
D6 - Community safety
D10 - Waste Management
EP1 - Adverse affect on people and environment
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
T1 - Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users
T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

5.5 South Oxfordshire Design Guide (SODG) 2008

Sections 3, 4 and 5

5.6 Chilterns Building Design Guide

Section 3

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main issues to be considered are:

1. The principle of the development
2. The impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding AONB
3. The impact on neighbouring properties
4. The impact on parking provision / highway safety

Principle:

6.2 The site is located within the built up limits of Rotherfield Peppard, which is classed as a smaller village under policy CSR1 of the SOCS. Policy CSR1 allows for infill development within smaller villages. The site is within a built-up frontage, is closely surrounded by buildings and falls within the definition of an infill plot. As such, I consider that the principle of replacing the existing bungalow with a two storey dwelling is acceptable. The fact that the existing dwelling has already been demolished does not alter this as the principle of a new dwelling on the site would still be acceptable regardless of whether there was previously a dwelling on the land.

6.3 The proposal therefore falls to be assessed against the criteria of Policy H4 of the SOLP. Policy H4 supports new housing in villages, subject to a number of environmental and amenity considerations, which are addressed below.

Character and appearance:

6.4 Criterion (i) of Policy H4 of the SOLP requires that an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost, nor an important public view spoilt. Until recently, the site contained a private dwelling and is not a site that is open to the public.

The site has no particular environmental or ecological value and there are no important views across the site. On this basis, I consider that the proposal would be in accordance with the above criterion.

- 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. There are a variety of house types in the village and this contributes towards its character. To the west of the site is the conservation area, which has a number of attractive historic properties. Within Church Lane there are terraced and semi-detached properties and also a number of more modern bungalows and chalet style bungalows. The variety of architectural styles contributes towards local distinctiveness.
- 6.6 The application proposal would be based on a simple rectangular plan with front and rear gables to break up the elevations. A subservient element with the appearance of an extension would be provided to the side of the building. There are a mixture of gabled and eaves fronted buildings in the road and I do not consider that the design would be out of keeping with the local area given the wide variety of house types in the streetscene.
- 6.7 In terms of its scale, concern has been raised by a number of consultees regarding the bulk and mass of the proposed dwelling. Although a sizable property, the proposed dwelling would be positioned on a large plot and would be similar in scale to Longford House. The main body of the dwelling at Longford House measures some 18m whereas the main body of the application proposal is 17.5m, increasing to 19.5m with the addition of the subservient element to the side. Although the proposal would be one of the larger properties in the village, I do not consider that a further large property would in itself be harmful to the character of the area given that the wide range of house types and sizes contributes to the interest of the village.
- 6.8 With regards to height, the proposed dwelling would measure some 8.3m in height, which would be similar to the neighbour at Longford. The dwellings in Church Lane are of various heights, with Slaters Farm some 8.6m and Hunters Hill just 4.6m high. Given the wide variety in the streetscene, I consider that the height of the dwelling would be in keeping with the character of the area.
- 6.9 There are also a wide variety of materials in the local area. There are examples of render next door to the application site and also across from the site. Timber cladding is a natural material that is appropriate within the AONB and clay tiles are the predominant roof covering within the village. On the basis of the above assessment, I consider that the development would be in keeping with its surroundings and would accord with criterion (ii) of policy H4.
- 6.10 Criterion (iii) of policy H4 requires the development to not adversely affect the character of the area. Given the range of dwelling types and sizes in the village, I do not consider that the proposal would be harmful to the character of the area. The proposed dwelling would be set in from the boundary by 4.6m to one side and 3.4m to the other and in my opinion, this would retain sufficient visual separation to the neighbours to ensure that the development would not appear cramped. The property would be within a large plot and the proposal would allow for sizable front and rear gardens. I do not consider that the proposal would represent an overdevelopment of the site.
- 6.11 The proposed garage would be of a simple, functional appearance and would be appropriate in terms of its scale and design. Although forward of the proposed dwelling, the garage would be positioned further back than the forward most elevation of the neighbour at Rowan Cottage (which is not shown correctly on the submitted

block plan). Given this relationship, I do not consider that the proposed garage would be unduly prominent or intrusive in the streetscene. The guidance in the Design Guide advises that garages should be set back from the street frontage. The garage would be some 8m back from the front boundary and the front boundary hedging would help soften the appearance of this structure from the road. Given these factors, I consider that the position of the garage forward of the dwelling would have an acceptable impact on the streetscene.

- 6.12 In the light of the above assessment, I consider that the development would have an acceptable impact on the character of the site and surrounding area and that the proposal would comply with criterion (iii) of policy H4 and the other policies which seek to secure high quality design and protect the character of the area, including policies G2 and D1 of the SOLP, and policy CSQ3 of the SOCS. As the site is within a central village location and is surrounded by other dwellings, I also consider that the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the landscape setting of the village, in accordance with policy CSEN1 of the SOCS.

Neighbours:

- 6.13 Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the SOLP requires that there are no overriding amenity objections. The proposed dwelling would be located roughly alongside Longford House and would be set in 3.6m from the boundary to this property. Given this relationship, the proposal would not have a significant impact on the front or rear windows and would not be overbearing to the rear amenity area.
- 6.14 The first floor windows in the side elevation of Longford would be over 8m from the proposed dwelling and given that these are not the main windows to primary living spaces, the impact on these windows would not be unduly harmful. Although there would be some impact on the conservatory that is positioned on the side of Longford House, I do not consider that the development would have a significant impact on the use of this part of the neighbouring property.
- 6.15 The introduction of first floor windows would allow for an oblique view towards the rear garden of Longford but this is common with properties that are positioned alongside each other and would not result in any unacceptable overlooking. I note that the garden area to the rear of the application site is also in the ownership of Longford. Given that the proposed dwelling would be positioned over 20m from the rear boundary, I do not consider that there would be any unacceptable overlooking of this part of the neighbour's garden.
- 6.16 To the other side, Rowan Cottage extends closer towards the application site than is shown on the submitted plans. This neighbour has raised concern that the proposed garage would impact on light to windows in the side elevation of Rowan Cottage that serve a dining room and breakfast area. The proposed garage would be located around 10m from these windows. The proposed garage would be 4.1m in height but would appear higher from the neighbour as there are level differences. Although the proposed garage would be apparent from the side windows of Rowan Cottage, given the separation involved, and that the roof of the proposed garage would be hipped, I do not consider that the impact on the dining room and breakfast area would be so significant as to warrant refusal of the application.
- 6.17 Given the separation that would be retained to this neighbouring building and the relationship with the proposed dwelling, I do not consider that the proposed dwelling would be harmful to the rooms at the rear of Rowan Cottage in terms of light or outlook. The balconies at the rear of the proposed dwelling would be Juliet balconies and would not have a platform to step out on. I do not consider that they would result in any

adverse overlooking of the garden area of Rowan Cottage.

- 6.18 The garden of Rowan Cottage has a group of conifers along the boundary with the application site and these would contribute towards screening part of the proposed dwelling. These may require removal in the future due to their age and it would take some time to re-establish such robust screening. The proposed dwelling would have an impact on the garden area of Rowan Cottage in terms of outlook. However, given the size of the neighbour's garden area, the proposed dwelling would not be unduly overbearing and I do not consider that the impact of the proposed dwelling would be so severe as to diminish the enjoyment of the use of the garden and would not warrant refusal of the application.
- 6.19 Given the separation to the properties across the road, the development would not harm the amenities of the dwellings opposite the site. Subject to a condition to ensure that the first floor side window is obscure glazed and fixed shut (with the exception of a top hung fanlight), I consider that the development would have an acceptable impact on neighbouring privacy, in accordance with policies H4 and D4 of the SOLP.

Parking provision / highway safety:

- 6.20 Criterion (iv) of policy H4 also requires there to be no overriding highway objections. Policies D1, D2, T1 and T2 of the SOLP also require an appropriate parking layout and that there would be no adverse impact on highway safety. The proposal would not intensify the use of the site and the existing access would be used. The layout would incorporate sufficient space for turning and the level of parking would meet the council's parking standards. As such, I consider that the development would not be prejudicial to highway safety and would comply with the relevant policies.

Other matters:

- 6.21 With regards to the other comments that have been made by consultees, I note that the fear of establishing a precedent is not in itself a reason to withhold planning permission. Each application should be assessed on its merits. I do not consider that any noise or disturbance from the use of the garage would be harmful to neighbouring properties. Given that the proposal represents a one for one replacement, it would not be reasonable to require conditions regarding drainage, construction vehicles or lighting.
- 6.22 A planning application for a replacement dwelling at the site was refused planning permission in 1985. This proposal had similarities to the current application in terms of the scale of the dwelling and a detached garage to the front. This proposal was considered some 30 years ago under a different policy context. The current application has to be assessed on its merits on the basis of the current development plan policies. This includes the NPPF, which require Planning Authorities to take a positive and proactive approach to development proposals.
- 6.23 I have recommended conditions requiring level details to be approved to secure an appropriate form of development given the level changes on site. A landscaping scheme would help to soften the development and I have also recommended that the hedge is retained as this would soften the appearance of the garage.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Whilst I appreciate that there is much local opposition to this proposal, I do not consider that there are material planning reasons of sufficient weight to justify a refusal of planning permission. The village is characterized by dwellings of various sizes and designs and whilst the proposed dwelling would be large, the addition of a large property would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the site, surrounding

area or landscape quality of this part of the AONB. The proposal would not have a significant impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties and would not result in conditions prejudicial to highway safety. As such, the application is recommended for approval.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 That planning permission is granted for the development contained in planning application P15/S3127/FUL subject to the following conditions-

- 1. Commencement three years - Full Planning Permission**
- 2. Development to be as shown on approved plans**
- 3. Sample materials to be approved**
- 4. Parking to be provided as on plan**
- 5. Ensuite window in side elevation to be obscure glazed**
- 6. Details of levels to be submitted and agreed**
- 7. Landscaping scheme to be submitted and approved**
- 8. Front hedge to be retained**

Author: Emma Bowerman
Contact No: 01235 540546
Email: planning@southoxon.gov.uk

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