

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P15/S1538/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	9.6.2015
<b>PARISH</b>	NETTLEBED
<b>WARD MEMBERS</b>	Charles Bailey David Nimmo-Smith
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Chesterton Commercial Group
<b>SITE</b>	The Bungalow Priest Hill Nettlebed, RG9 5AP
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of two dwellings (as amended by plans submitted on 23 October 2015 to alter the siting and reduce the height of the proposed dwellings).
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	None
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	469965/187074
<b>OFFICER</b>	Tom Wyatt

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This application is referred to Committee as the Officers' recommendations conflict with the views of the Parish Council.

1.2 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) lies in an elevated and visually prominent position alongside the public highway and adjacent to a Grade II listed building (Junes Cottage and Yew Tree Cottage). The site is currently occupied by a modest single storey bungalow, which has lain vacant for a considerable period of time. The site also lies adjacent to 6 Pearces Meadow to the west, which forms part of a more modern (1960s) small estate development.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing bungalow and its replacement with a pair of semi-detached two storey 3 bedroom properties. The dwellings have been designed such that the first floor accommodation would largely be contained within the roof space with dormer windows on the front elevation and a lower eaves line on the rear elevation with rooflights. The overall dimensions of the proposed building would be approximately 19 metres wide, and 7 metres deep and high.

2.2 A vehicular access would be created towards the northern end of the site onto Priest Hill and four parking spaces would be provided. Garden areas are proposed to the front and rear of the dwellings.

2.3 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](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk).

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Nettlebed Parish Council – Objects. The Parish consider that only a bungalow should replace the existing bungalow on the site. The proposal would adversely affect the setting of the adjacent listed buildings and would result in loss of light to neighbouring properties. The proposal would result in additional highway safety concerns.

3.2 Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council) - It is the Highway Authority's opinion that the vehicle movements associated with the proposal do not present "severe harm" as set out within the NPPF. Overall no objections subject to conditions.

3.3 Countryside Officer (South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse) - No objections as there is not a reasonable likelihood of bats being present on the site.

3.4 Neighbours – 6 letters of objection:

- Loss of light to neighbouring property
- Loss of privacy to neighbouring properties
- Increased risk to highway safety
- Overdevelopment of the site
- Design not in keeping with the area
- Potential impact on local infrastructure
- The bungalow should be replaced by a single dwelling

#### 4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P14/S2053/FUL](#) – Appeal against non-determination of the application withdrawn. Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of two new dwellings. (As amended by drawings received on 10th September 2014 to alter the design and siting of the dwellings). The plans relating to this application are **attached** as Appendix C.

[P68/H0444](#) - Approved (20/09/1968)

Site for residential development - 11 dwellings and access road.

[P64/H0976](#) - Approved (26/01/1965)

Site for one dwelling house and access.

[P64/H0548](#) - Refused (20/10/1964)

SITE FOR THREE DWELLINGS.

#### 5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy policies

- CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- CSB1 - Conservation and improvement of biodiversity
- CSEN1 - Landscape protection
- CSEN3 - Historic environment
- CSH4 - Meeting housing needs
- 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
- C8 - Adverse affect on protected species
- CON5 - Setting of listed building
- 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
- 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

5.3 National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main planning issues to consider in relation to this application are:

1. The principle of the development
2. The impact on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area
3. The impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers
4. Other material considerations

The Principle of the Development

6.2 Policy CSR1 of the SOCS allows for infill housing development in the district's villages, including Nettlebed, which is defined as a larger village. 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.'

6.3 The appeal site is occupied by an existing vacant dwelling and is located within the main built up part of the village. In light of this Officers consider that the principle of additional residential development on the site is broadly acceptable having regard to Policy CSR1.

The Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Site and Surrounding Area

6.4 Policy H4 of the SOLP provides a list of criteria against which new housing development should be judged. Criterion (i) of Policy H4 states that there should be no loss of an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value and an important public view should not be spoilt. In this regard the site is private land and has no significant environmental or ecological constraints. Although the site is prominent in public views, Officers do not consider that a view of public importance would be spoilt.

6.5 Criterion (ii) of Policy H4 states that the design, scale, height and materials of the development should be in keeping with the surroundings. The pair of semi-detached dwellings would be relatively modest in scale and would be of a simple and traditional design appropriate to the site having regard to the character and appearance of the surrounding built form and the site's prominent location within the Chilterns AONB.

6.6 Having regard to the slab level of the proposed dwellings and the survey of the existing building it is apparent that the ridge line of the dwellings would be approximately 3 metres higher than that of the existing bungalow, and approximately the same level as 6 Pearces Orchard to the west. These levels are due to a combination of the increased height of the dwellings compared to the existing bungalow and the higher land levels towards the northern part of the site. However, at 7 metres in height the dwellings would not be excessive in height compared to the adjacent listed buildings to the south and the new dwelling adjacent to 2 Priest Hill, which is also approximately 7 metres in height, and 6 Pearces Meadow. The relatively low eaves level of the dwellings and the containment of the majority of the first floor within the roofspace would serve to limit the bulk and massing of the development and this design approach is also consistent with the adjacent listed buildings and the new dwelling adjacent to 2 Priest Hill. In light of

this Officers consider that the overall height, scale and design of the development would be in keeping with the surrounding built form.

- 6.7 Criterion (iii) of Policy H4 states that development should not adversely affect the character of the area. The modest height and scale of the existing bungalow allows the open character and appearance of the site to be maintained. This openness is enhanced and complimented by the open frontage to the dwellings to the south, which are set further back from Priest Hill, the open and verdant frontages to the dwellings on the opposite side of Priest Hill and the undeveloped and open land to the north of the site.
- 6.8 The proposed development would inevitably have a considerably greater visual impact in public views from Priest Hill compared to the smaller bungalow currently on the site. In comparison to the previous scheme the proposed development would be set considerably further back from the edge of the highway and would consequently allow for a deeper and more open frontage to the proposed dwellings. The existing bungalow and an adjacent outbuilding are sited such that the front elevation faces south eastwards directly down the length of Priest Hill. The previous scheme proposed the dwellings on a similar siting and orientation to the bungalow and this would have meant that the development would have been visually prominent and intrusive in views north westwards when approaching the site along Priest Hill. The modest height and scale of the existing bungalow allows the open character and appearance of the site to be maintained. This openness is enhanced and complimented by the open frontage to the dwellings to the south, which are set further back from Priest Hill, the open and verdant frontages to the dwellings on the opposite side of Priest Hill and the undeveloped and open land to the north of the site. The previous scheme represented an overdevelopment of the site to the detriment of the open character and appearance of this part of the village.
- 6.9 The current proposal seeks to address this concern by siting the development further back from Priest Hill and orientating the development such that the frontage of the dwellings would face north eastwards so that it would be almost parallel to the alignment of the highway. This considerably reduces the visual prominence and intrusion of the development in views approaching the site along Priest Hill from the south and respects the alignment of the existing housing fronting this side of Priest Hill to a greater degree. Compared to the bungalow, the proposed dwelling would still have a considerably greater visual presence on the site, however, the retention of a more spacious frontage, which can be further softened with new planting, would serve to ensure that the proposal respects the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings to a much greater degree than the previous scheme. On balance Officers consider that the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and the landscape qualities of the AONB would be acceptable.
- 6.10 The site lies adjacent to a Grade II listed building. Policy CON5 seeks to ensure that development does not have an adverse impact on the setting of listed buildings. The development would lie closer to the boundary with the listed building compared to the existing bungalow but with the frontage angled away to the north. The more open frontage to Priest Hill will also be of benefit to maintaining the open setting of the listed buildings from Priest Hill and overall Officers consider that the development would retain the setting of the listed building to an acceptable degree.

The Impact on the Amenity of Neighbouring Occupiers

- 6.11 Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 seeks to ensure that there are no overriding amenity objections to proposed housing development whilst Policy D4 of the SOLP states that development will not be permitted if it would unacceptably harm the amenities of neighbouring properties through loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight.
- 6.12 The rear elevation of the development would be approximately 4.5 metres from the side elevation of 6 Pearces Meadow. There is a large bedroom window in the side elevation of this neighbouring property, and the proposal would result in a loss of outlook from this window and would also have an impact on ground floor side facing windows relating to a cloakroom and utility room. The development lies to the south and east of this neighbouring property and as such the development would also cause some loss of light to these side facing windows. However, these windows either are not primary sources of light or do not relate to primary living areas. Furthermore, the rear elevation of the dwellings have been designed with a low eaves not much higher than a typical boundary fence and a roof sloping away from the boundary with the neighbouring property. In light of these factors Officers consider that the development would not cause significant harm to the amenity of the occupiers of 6 Pearces Meadow in relation to loss of light and outlook. Potential loss of privacy can be controlled through obscure glazing being fitted to the rear facing roof lights.
- 6.13 The development would lie to the north of Junes Cottage and this orientation along with the separation to this neighbouring property would ensure that there would be no material loss of outlook and light. The side elevation of the proposed development would face the front of Junes Cottage, but this would be at an oblique angle and would be towards the publicly visible front elevation of the neighbouring property. Overall Officers consider that the proposal would not cause any significant harm to neighbouring amenities.

Other Material Considerations

- 6.14 The Highway Authority has considered the highway safety implications of the development and has raised no concerns subject to conditions to ensure the provision of a safe access and parking and turning within the site as indicated on the submitted plans.

**7.0 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The application proposal is in accordance with the relevant development plan policies and national planning policy as on balance and, 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 cause a severe impact in respect to highway safety and convenience.

**8.0 RECOMMENDATION**

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

- 1. Commencement of development within three years.**
- 2. Development in accordance with approved plans.**
- 3. Sample materials to be submitted and agreed prior to commencement of development.**
- 4. Levels to be agreed prior to commencement of development.**
- 5. Hard and soft landscaping details to be agreed prior to commencement of development.**

6. **Withdrawal of permitted development rights for extensions.**
7. **Obscure glazing to rear facing rooflights and no further openings on the rear elevations.**
8. **Provision of proposed access prior to occupation of the dwelling.**
9. **Vision splays to be provided and maintained.**
10. **Parking and manoeuvring areas to be provided prior to occupation of the dwelling.**
11. **No surface water drainage to public highway.**

**Author:** Tom Wyatt  
**Contact no:** 01235 540546  
**Email:** [planning@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:planning@southoxon.gov.uk)