

APPLICATION NO.	P15/S3947/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	27.11.2015
PARISH	KIDMORE END
WARD MEMBER	Robert Simister
APPLICANT	Mr & Mrs M Cooper-Smith
SITE	The Coach House, Tokers Green Lane, Kidmore End, RG4 9EE
PROPOSAL	Proposed conversion of barn to single dwelling with new vehicular access and amenity space.
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	469806/178538
OFFICER	Marc Pullen

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee because the 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) contains an outbuilding which falls within the curtilage of The Coach House. The Coach House is listed given its attachment to the Cross Farmhouse; a Grade II* property. The site falls outside of the main built up limits of the village. The site falls within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

2.1 This application seeks full planning permission to convert the existing barn into a single dwelling with parking and private amenity space and a new vehicular access from Tokers Green Lane.

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.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Kidmore End Parish Council – Object

- Lane is narrow with numerous bends which would reduce visibility
- High volumes of traffic between 08:30-09:15 and then from 15:00-15:30 because of school traffic in Kidmore End
- The lane is subject to national speed limit, some drivers travel at speed
- The bank of high hedgerows which reduce visibility

Forestry Officer - No objections.

Highways Liaison Officer - No objections subject to conditions.

Countryside Officer - No objections.

Neighbour – One letter of approval

- Proposal would ease traffic and reduce risk of road accidents

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P08/E0060](#) - Approved (12/03/2008)

Part conversion of existing barn to create ancillary office accommodation to the main dwelling.

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

CSB1 - Conservation and improvement of biodiversity

CSEN1 - Landscape protection

CSQ3 - Design

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

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

D10 - Waste Management

E8 - Re-use or adaptation of rural buildings outside built up areas

G2 - Protect district from adverse development

G4 - Protection of Countryside

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 conversion into residential
- the impact on the character and appearance of the site
- the highway implications
- the impact on the amenity of neighbours
- impact on protected species
- impact on trees
- other matters

Principle of conversion

- 6.2 Policy E8 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP) is a permissive policy for the re-use of rural buildings outside of the built up limits of settlements provided that certain criteria are met to ensure that the proposal is suitable. The outbuilding itself falls within the curtilage of The Coach House, which is curtilage listed given its attachment to the Cross Farmhouse; a Grade II* property.

- 6.3 The outbuilding is enclosed on all four sides with a stable roof and is considered to be of a permanent form, substantial enough as to not require a major or complete reconstruction. Planning permission granted in 2008 allowed for a part conversion of the building into office use ancillary to The Coach House. The principle of development is therefore considered broadly acceptable, subject to design and character matters and impact on neighbours and the highway.

Impact on character and appearance of site

- 6.4 Criterion (ii) and (iii) of Policy E8 seek to ensure that proposals to re-use rural buildings retain the form, bulk and general design of the existing property and are in keeping with the surrounding area and that the essential fabric and character of the building is maintained. The existing structure of the building would be maintained and the existing appearance of the property would remain largely unchanged, with minimal intervention to the elevations and the continued use of the existing materials. The additional openings are minimal and are simple in design as to not detract from the appearance of the existing building.
- 6.5 Whilst the loss of hedgerow along Tokers Green Lane would be regrettable as it would degrade the rural character of the lane, in the absence of the new proposed access the removal of this section of the hedgerow would not require consent from the Council.

*The Hedgerow Regulations 1997, administered by the district councils in England are intended to protect important countryside hedges from removal. It is against the law to remove most hedges without permission. Removal is uprooting or otherwise destroying a hedgerow. The regulations only cover hedgerows that are at least 20m long or, if shorter, connected to other hedgerows at both ends or part of a longer hedgerow. They must be in or adjacent to common land, village greens, SSSIs, Nature Reserves, or land used for agriculture, forestry or breeding/keeping of horses, ponies or donkeys. **Garden hedges and former hedgerows that have grown to a line of trees are not covered by the regulations.***

- 6.6 Further to this an appointed tree consultant concludes that this hedgerow is “patchy and of little value in terms of visual appearance or indeed from a wildlife point of view”. Its loss is not considered to be harmful to the local area. The replacement hedgerow is considered to be easily planted and quickly established on the new line as shown on plan 15/01. Officers are satisfied with the replacement hedgerow but will seek clarification of species proposed. A condition is recommended to require approval of these details.
- 6.7 The proposed conversion would respect the existing character of the building and in doing so would cause minimal impact on the landscape qualities of the Chilterns AONB. Officers are satisfied that the development would therefore adhere to SOCS Policy CSEN1 and saved policies D1, G2, G4 and C4 of the SOLP.

Impact on highway

- 6.8 The proposal seeks to create a new access into the site from Tokers Green Lane to serve the new residential unit. The Highways Authority raise no objection to the proposed development on highway grounds. Given the characteristics of the carriageway, vehicular traffic and speeds are likely to be low. The proposal is unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on the highway network. After investigation and reviewing the supplied documents, the Highway Authority has no objection subject to

conditions being applied to any permission which may be granted on the basis of highway safety. These conditions are within the recommendation below.

Impact on amenity of neighbours

- 6.9 Given the secluded nature of the site, officers do not consider that the development would result in any adverse harm to the amenity of neighbours. The closest neighbour would be The Coach House, which would be sited some 60 metres away to the north.

Protected species

- 6.10 The building subject to the proposals has been surveyed for bats, and roosting sites for individual common and soprano pipistrelle bats have been identified under the external timber cladding and within the roof void. A Bat Method Statement has been prepared and submitted to demonstrate how the proposals can be implemented without causing harm to the local bat population. The Countryside Officer raises no objection to the development following the submission of a revised bat method statement. The method statement includes details of appropriate measures to protect the small populations of bats using the building. In order to implement the proposals the applicant will need to conduct the works under an appropriate form of licence. A condition is recommended, which requires that development is implemented in accordance with the Bat Method Statement (Windrush Ecology, Jan 2016).

Trees

- 6.11 The council's forestry officer raises no objection to the proposed development. The submitted tree protection information included with the application demonstrates suitable tree protection measures can be taken throughout construction. A condition is recommended to ensure that development is carried out in accordance with these tree protection measures.

Other matters

- 6.12 Policy CON5 of the SOLP seeks to ensure that development does not have an adverse effect on the setting of listed buildings. The existing curtilage of Cross Farmhouse has already been subdivided following permission to use The Coach House as a separate residential unit. The further division of this land would, to some extent cause harm to the setting of the listed building, however it is considered that the design and character of the building will largely remain and the proposed new access and private parking area would not significant detract from the open and green character of the existing site. Views of The Coach House are not considered to be harmed when viewed from the public highway and the perceived impact caused to the setting of the listed building is therefore minimal.
- 6.13 The application will allow for adequate space for waste collection and bin storage, in accordance with SOLP Policy D10.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal complies with the relevant Development Plan Policies and, subject to the attached conditions would be acceptable in principle and would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing site, the amenities of neighbours, protected species, trees on site and health and safety of users of the local highway.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement three years - full planning permission.
2. Approved plans – development in accordance with plans.
3. Matching materials – external walls and roof shall be the same colour, type and texture as those used on the existing building.
4. New vehicular access to be formed and laid out and constructed strictly in accordance with the local highway authority's specifications.
5. Vision splay dimensions – dimensions to be achieved prior to first occupation.
6. Turning area and car parking – details to be agreed by the local planning authority.
7. Protect bats in accordance with bat method statement.
8. New hedge species to be agreed by the local planning authority.
9. Tree protection measures in accordance with the arboricultural and planning integration report to be implemented prior to commencement of work and retained until development ceases.

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