

APPLICATION NO.	P16/S0411/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	17.2.2016
PARISH	HENLEY-ON-THAMES
WARD MEMBERS	Joan Bland Lorraine Hillier Stefan Gawrysiak
APPLICANT	Mr & Mrs D Sherriff
SITE	16 Ravenscroft Road Henley-on-Thames, RG9 2DH
PROPOSAL	Erection of two-storey three-bedroom dwelling attached to 16 Ravenscroft Road, with associated access and services.
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	475952/182953
OFFICER	Simon Kitson

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application is referred to Planning Committee as the Officers' recommendation conflicts with the views of the Town Council.
- 1.2 The existing dwelling at no. 16 Ravenscroft Road (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) is an end-terrace townhouse comprising part of a scheme for 43 houses erected in the early 1960s. The property is set within a relatively generous plot at the junction between Ravenscroft Road and Kings Road, and the site is located wholly within the built-up confines of Henley Town Centre, within walking distance of the primary shopping frontage and other key facilities.
- 1.3 The site does not fall within a conservation area and there are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) or similar constraints to development.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 As detailed in the application submission, this proposal is for the erection of an attached two-storey dwelling house, with off street parking provision for two cars and a garden area. The dwelling would have a footprint of approximately 62m and a height measuring 7.2m to the ridge.
- 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 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 Henley-on-Thames Town Council (HTC)
- Objection. HTC recommends refusal due to incongruity with existing street scene.

The Henley Society (Planning)

- Objection. The proposal to build a house in this corner plot would be detrimental to the character of the immediately surrounding area by creating a more restricted outlook. The Society also objects to the removal of the tree

County Archaeological Services (Oxfordshire County Council)

- No strong views. The proposals outlined would not appear to have an invasive impact upon any known archaeological sites or features

Forestry Officer (South Oxfordshire District Council)

- No strong views. There are no arboricultural reasons why this application should be refused

Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council)

- No strong views

Neighbour Objections (2)

- 6 Ravenscroft Road: A two storey property will be totally out of keeping with the existing houses. There is also inadequate land for a development of this size and the view from the windows at the opposite houses will be affected
- 5 Ravenscroft Road: Even a two-storey dwelling will restrict light to the end-terrace house and it would not be in keeping with the three-storey dwellings. Visual impacts associated with the development of the garden area.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 [P62/H0604](#) - Approved (20/09/1962)
Site for forty-three houses

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 The Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (JHHNP);

Primary Housing Objectives

Housing Strategy

Policy H4 - Infill and self-build dwellings

Policy DSQ1 – Local Character

Policy T1 – Impact of development upon the transport network

- 5.2 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) policies;

CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CSHEN1 - The Strategy for Henley-on-Thames

CSQ3 - Design

- 5.3 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP) policies;

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

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 (SODG)

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main considerations in relation to this application are:

- the principle of the development
- the impact of the design, height, scale and materials upon the character of the site, the street scene and the wider area;
- the ecological and landscape impact;
- the impact upon neighbouring amenity, in terms of light, outlook and privacy
- the impact upon the highway network, in terms of highway safety, access and parking provision.

Principle of development

6.2 As the proposal falls within the built-up limits of Henley, the principle of this type of development is established by SOCS Policy CSHEN1 and the JHNNP, which has now passed its referendum and should therefore be afforded considerable weight. The SOCS allows for housing on 'suitable infill and redevelopment sites', subject to compliance with other Development Plan policies, and the JHNNP emphasises as a primary objective the importance of intensifying existing land uses. Policy H4 of the JHNNP further states that infill housing developments within Henley will be supported where it is demonstrated that the scheme constitutes 'sustainable development'.

6.3 'Infill housing' is defined within the SOCS as the 'filling of a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage' or 'on sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings'. Officers are satisfied that the proposed development complies with the requisite criteria. On the basis that the scheme would intensify an existing land use within a housing area and the site is in a location within walking distance of key services and public transport links, officers are satisfied that this proposal would comprise sustainable development as envisaged by both the NPPF and the Local Development Plan.

Scale and design

6.4 The plot is large enough to accommodate a new dwelling of the scale proposed and the submitted block plan demonstrates that it is possible to provide private amenity spaces of a comparable scale to the neighbouring properties. It is noted that the amount of amenity land retained by the existing dwelling, at approximately 40 sq.m, would not meet the generic standard recommended within Section 3.2.8 of the SODG. However, both this document and Policy D3 of the SOLP require a flexible approach, having regard to the existing grain of development within the locality and the characteristics of the surrounding environment. Whilst the SODG amenity standards are applicable in most circumstances, it is particularly noteworthy that this property is within an exceptionally sustainable location, part of a walkable neighbourhood and in this particular area of Henley, many properties have gardens or patios which would not meet the minimum recommendations. This includes a number of plots on Ravenscroft Road and Kings Road. On this basis, the scale of the proposal would not conflict with SOLP Policies H4, D1 or D3.

- 6.5 Although it is recognised that the proposal would create a two-storey dwelling at the end of a line of larger, three-storey properties, the proposal would still provide a new dwelling within a sustainable location, whilst also taking some architectural cues from the local vernacular and retaining a significant portion of the garden area, which is arguably an important landscape feature within the urban setting. There is also reasonable architectural variety along Kings Road and even within the immediate area the terraces have varied ridgelines as a result of the local topography. This is particularly evident on the steep incline towards the top of Kings Road. The proposal would not project beyond the building line of the Kings Road properties and, if there would be visual incongruity, this would affect a very narrow part of the street scene. In any event, officers accept that it is appropriate to allow some variety within an urban environment, rather than seeking to maintain a homogeneous landscape within an area that has not been designated as of sufficient architectural or historic interest to require special preservation.

Landscape

- 6.6 Whilst the landscape features within the existing garden were not protected and the council's forestry officer does not consider that the removed trees were of sufficient arboricultural quality to represent a constraint to development, officers agree that the trees nonetheless comprised an important green feature within the street and their removal is regrettable. However, with appropriate replacement planting, officers are satisfied that the partial erosion of the site's verdant character area can be mitigated to an acceptable level. Subject to an appropriate landscaping condition, officers are satisfied that this proposal would not materially harm the character and appearance of the area and that the proposal would not conflict with Policy DSQ1 of the JHNNP, Policy CSQ3 of the SOCS or Policies D1 and H4 of the SOLP.

Highways Impact

- 6.7 The block plan demonstrates that it is possible to provide two off-street parking spaces in accordance with the council's adopted parking standards. This is a view shared by the Local Highways Authority, who raise no objection to the impact of this proposal upon the highway network. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policies T1 and T2 of the SOLP and the transport objectives set out in the JJNP.

Neighbouring amenity

- 6.8 There are no objections to the proposal raised by the owners of the nearest residential properties. However, the two properties opposite the site at nos. 5 and 6 raise objection, primarily to the visual impact but also to loss of light and the view from their north-west facing windows. Officers would point out that these properties are on the opposite side of the street, separated from the location of the proposed dwelling by more than 20m and the loss of a private view is not a material planning consideration. The relationship between the proposed dwelling and these properties would be consistent with the built-up town centre location and there would not be a material loss of light, outlook or privacy.
- 6.9 It is acknowledged that there would be some limited impact upon the property no. 96 Kings Road. Nevertheless, the applicant has submitted detailed elevations to demonstrate that the main window affected by the proposed dwelling would not suffer a material loss of daylight or sunlight if considered against the Building Research Establishment (BRE) guidance. It is also evident that this room is served by an alternative bay window opening to the north elevation. Having regard to the orientation

of the proposed dwelling and the comparatively low eaves and ridge heights, officers do not consider that there would be a harmful level of overshadowing with regard to any of the neighbouring gardens.

- 6.10 Whilst it could be argued that the close relationship between proposed and neighbouring dwellings may have a privacy impact, the garden serving the proposed dwelling would have no less privacy than when it served no. 16 Ravenscroft Road. Most importantly, the proposed rear facing first floor window would be obscure glazed as a condition of consent in order to prevent any overlooking of the living accommodation and private amenity areas to the west of the site. Officers are satisfied that this aspect of the proposal would not conflict with Policies H4, D1 or D4 of the SOLP.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal is in accordance with the relevant development plan policies and national planning policy. The development would respect the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area, subject to the attached conditions. The proposal is also acceptable in terms of its impact upon the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and it would not be prejudicial to highway safety.

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. **Schedule of materials to be agreed prior to commencement of works.**
4. **Landscaping and planting details to be agreed prior to commencement of development.**
5. **All car parking areas are to be provided in accordance with the submitted plan and retained unobstructed thereafter.**
6. **All areas of hardstanding shall be constructed in permeable materials or shall make provision for the direction of surface water runoff to a permeable area within the curtilage of the site.**
7. **Withdrawal of class A permitted development rights for extensions, roof extensions and outbuildings.**
8. **Obscure glazing is to be applied to the first-floor, rear facing window.**

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