

APPLICATION NO.	P12/V0981
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL
REGISTERED	26 April 2012
PARISH	SUTTON COURTENAY
WARD MEMBER(S)	Gervase Duffield
APPLICANT	Mr & Mrs O'Callaghan
SITE	Land adjacent to West Wilden Brook Street Sutton Courtenay, OX14 4AH
PROPOSAL	Replacement of existing studio building with flood resilient dwelling.
AMENDMENTS	Amended site plan received 19 July 2112
GRID REFERENCE	450015/193954
OFFICER	Laura Hudson

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site is located towards the north western end of Sutton Courtenay in the conservation area. There is a large copper beech tree on the site which is covered by a tree preservation order (TPO).
- 1.2 The site currently forms part of the residential curtilage to West Wilden, a semi-detached property which fronts Brook Street along with East Wilden, its neighbour. The garden to East Wilden wraps around the curtilage of West Wilden and therefore bounds the southern boundary to the application site.
- 1.3 The north and west site boundaries form a corner between the main road (Brook Street) and an adjacent track known as Ginge Brook. The Ginge Brook itself runs along this site boundary.
- 1.4 The site contains a number of mature trees and other vegetation and a small ancillary studio building is located in the north western corner.
- 1.5 The application comes to committee as Sutton Courtenay Parish Council objects.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the erection of a single dwelling set back in the site away from the road boundary and the Ginge Brook.
- 2.2 The application includes relocating the site access further west so that it can be shared by the existing and proposed dwellings.
- 2.3 The proposed design approach is contemporary with large areas of glazing and tile clad walls. The proposed form is relatively low in profile and is largely single storey apart from one bedroom contained within the roof space. The proposed slab level is raised in order to address flooding concerns on the site. The highest part of the property has a ridge height of 6.4m, including the raised slab level.
- 2.4 The existing small studio building is proposed to be demolished but this element of the scheme does not require conservation area consent give the small size of the structure.
- 2.5 The protected copper beech tree on the site will be retained.

2.6 Amended plans have been received setting the dwelling further back in the site and relocating the parking to the side rather than the front. Extracts from the application drawings are **attached** at appendix 1.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Sutton Courtenay Parish Council - Consider that the application should be refused. The parish council's comments appear in appendix 2.

3.2 County Engineer – Raised initial concerns regarding the access. However, the additional plans have addressed these concerns, subject to conditions.

3.3 Environment Agency – Initial concerns and request for further information. At the time of writing this report, no updated comments had been received. An update will be provided at the meeting.

3.4 Conservation Officer – Principle acceptable but initial concerns regarding the details. Following the submission of further information, considers that the proposed materials and their detailing will make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.5 Council's Ecologist – No evidence of the use of the small studio by bats but due to its location near the Ginge Brook could not rule this out, therefore requests an informative alerting the applicants to the need for a licence should bats be found. No direct impact of the dwelling on the Brook and no other notable ecological issues, therefore no objection to the proposed development.

3.6 Architects Panel – “Very competent design” – Approved with conditions.

3.7 Environmental Health – No objections.

3.8 Arboriculturalist - The tree report that has been submitted is acceptable. If the time table and method of works proposed in this report are followed, no objections.

3.9 Letters of objection have been received from ten neighbouring properties raising the following concerns:

- The site has a history of flooding and concern that the proposal would lead to flooding elsewhere.
- The proposed new access will have a harmful impact on the rural character of the area.
- The proposal will increase traffic to the area.
- The studio building is a much loved landmark in the area and its loss will impact on local character.
- The proposal will not preserve or enhance character of the conservation area.
- The proposed design is at odds with the character of the surrounding area.
- The proposal should be single storey only.
- The proposal would result in the loss of mature trees and vegetation on the site.
- The site is part of the approach to the village.
- Impact on wildlife on the site and the Brook.
- Insufficient drainage system.
- The proposed drawings lack details.
- Incorrect site boundaries shown on the plan.

3.10 Four letters of support have been received stating the following:

- The proposal is sympathetic to its location.
- The proposed dwelling is low key and would not offend anyone.
- The dwelling is for a local person (this is not a material planning consideration).
- The design is architecturally interesting.
- The scheme is better than the houses recently built on the Green.
- Much thought has been given to the flooding issues and the visual impact.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 None relevant.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 Policy H11 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan lists Sutton Courtenay as one of the larger villages which are considered suitable for new housing development of up to 15 dwelling on sites within the main built up area of the village providing the scale, layout, mass and design of the development would not harm the character of the settlement.
- 5.2 Policy HE1 of the local plan requires development within conservation areas to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area. Development in gaps, gardens and open spaces will only be permitted where it can be shown that these areas do not make a positive contribution to the character of the area, and views into and out of the conservation area would not be lost or damaged. All new development should respect its context through appropriate siting, scale, height and form.
- 5.3 Policy DC1 encourages high quality development in terms of design.
- 5.4 Policy DC5 refers to access and parking considerations.
- 5.5 Policy DC9 refers to impact on neighbouring properties.
- 5.6 Policies DC13 and DC14 refer to sites that are at risk from flooding and set out criteria against which proposals should be considered including a requirement for an adequate assessment of flood risk and mitigation measures.
- 5.7 The NPPF seeks to encourage sustainable development in rural areas whilst promoting good design which responds to local character.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 The main issues to consider in determining this application are; i) The principle of a dwelling in this location; ii) the design of the proposed dwelling and impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area; iii) impact on flooding; iv) impact on neighbouring properties; and v) access and parking considerations.
- 6.2 Policy H11 of the adopted local plan permits additional development within the built up area of the village subject to criteria. The site is contained on all sides by existing residential development and curtilages, therefore the site is considered to fall within the built up area of Sutton Courtenay. The principal issue, therefore, is the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.
- 6.3 The site frontage is prominent as you enter the village along the main road from the

west given its location on the corner of Brook Street and Ginge Brook. However, the perimeter of the site is well contained by mature vegetation which would be retained as part of the proposal and there is a wide grass verge on the corner by the roadside. The proposed dwelling would be set well back into the site behind the building line of the existing property. There are a number of dwellings to the rear of the site accessed from Church Lane, therefore when viewed from the main road there is already a glimpsed roofscape of existing properties. Given the location of the proposed dwelling set back in the site, its relatively low profile, and as it will be seen in the context of the existing development beyond, it is considered the proposal would not appear prominent or out of keeping. The open and verdant character of the site when viewed from the road as you enter the village would be retained.

- 6.4 Concern has been expressed over the loss of the small studio building which is located at the front of the site. The building is rendered with a steeply pitched tiled roof which, although attractive in character, has no historic or architectural value. In any event, the removal of this building does not require conservation area consent given its modest size and so it could be demolished at any time.
- 6.5 Some local concern has also been raised about the design of the proposed building. The scheme is contemporary in nature with large areas of glazing and hanging tiles of varying colours. The building takes the form of three separate pitched roofed structures at differing heights and interlinked forming gables at the front and rear. The scale and form is simple and modest in order to ensure that the proposal can be accommodated on the site without appearing prominent or out of keeping. The general character in the locality is mixed with varied property styles and ages. The architects panel is supportive of the scheme and the council's conservation officer says: "the proposed materials and their detailing will make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area".
- 6.6 The site is located within flood zones 2 and 3 which means there is a high risk from flooding. The proposed dwelling has been designed on stilts so that it does not impede flood flows and the applicants have submitted a flood risk assessment and have been involved in lengthy negotiations with the Environment Agency. A response is still awaited on the current amendments and an update will be provided at the meeting.
- 6.7 The proposed dwelling is low in profile and set approximately three metres from the boundary with West Wilden, however the neighbouring dwelling itself would be set some distance away and so there would be no harmful impact on neighbour amenity. The existing dwelling (West Wilden) would retain sufficient garden to the rear of the dwelling. There is another neighbouring property located at the south east corner of the site, however the proposed dwelling is set far enough away so as not to have any harmful impact. The garden to East Wilden lies to the south of the application site, however this part of the curtilage is remote from the house and again the proposal is set far enough away so as not to have any harmful impact.
- 6.8 Concern has been raised over the accuracy of the site boundaries shown on the submitted plan, however land registry plans submitted by the applicant show that the boundaries are correct.
- 6.9 The application proposes a new site access which would be shared with the existing dwelling. Sufficient parking and turning space within the site can be achieved and the county engineer has raised no objections.
- 6.10 The council's arboricultural officer and ecologist have raised no objections to the application in terms of the impact on mature trees on the site (particularly the TPO'd

copper beech tree) and protected species.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposed dwelling would be located within the built up area of the village on a site which is visually contained by mature vegetation. The proposed dwelling, whilst contemporary in design, is simple in form, low in profile and set well into the site, so it will not be prominent. The proposal, therefore, preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area. There would be no impact on neighbouring properties, the access is acceptable and the proposal would have no harmful impact on important trees or protected species. An update on flood risk will be provided at the meeting.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 **It is recommended that, subject to no objections being raised by the Environment Agency, planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:**

1. **TL1 - Time limit**
2. **Planning condition listing the approved drawings**
3. **MC2 - Materials (samples)**
4. **MC9 - Building details**
5. **LS1 - Landscaping scheme (submission)**
6. **LS2 - Landscaping scheme (implementation)**
7. **Works to be carried out in accordance with the submitted arboricultural report by Sylva Consultancy dated July 2012**
8. **HY6 - Access, parking. and turning in accordance with plan**
9. **MC24 - Drainage details (surface and foul)**
10. **MC29 - Sustainable drainage scheme**
11. **RE6 - Boundary details (details not shown)**
12. **RE18 - Slab levels (single dwellings)**
13. **RE3A - PD restriction single dwelling extensions/outbuildings**

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