

APPLICATION NO.	P12/V1192/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL
REGISTERED	24 May 2012
PARISH	CUMNOR
WARD MEMBER(S)	Dudley Hoddinott, Judy Roberts, John Woodford
APPLICANT	I and O Ltd
SITE	136 Cumnor Hill Cumnor Oxford OX2 9PH
PROPOSAL	Demolition of existing flats. Erection of 3 x 1 bed and 4 x 2 bed flats. Provision of 12 parking spaces, refuse store and cycle store.
AMENDMENTS	Amended drawings October 2012
GRID REFERENCE	447213/204506
OFFICER	Martin Deans

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site contains a detached two storey house, now used as two flats (one on each floor) on Cumnor Hill, near to the junction with Chawley Lane. A site location plan is **attached** at appendix 1. To the west of the site is a bungalow, no. 6 Chawley Lane, and the parking area for the Saab motor dealership. To the east is another bungalow, no. 134 Cumnor Hill. To the north is no 8 Chawley Lane. Local land levels fall down appreciably from west to east and also from south to north.
- 1.2 This application comes to committee because Cumnor Parish Council objects. Amended drawings have been submitted and have been sent out for re-consultation

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 It is proposed to demolish the existing two storey building and replace it with a building comprised of two-storey, one-and-a-half storey, and single storey elements, containing a total of seven flats. The application drawings **attached** at appendix 2. Four of the flats would be two-bedroom, and three would be one-bedroom. 12 parking spaces would be provided in the front garden, together with covered cycle parking and bin storage. The existing levels on the front part of the site will be reduced so they are similar to the levels at no. 134 Cumnor Hill. Levels on the rear part of the site will be lower than those on the front, and the level of the proposed building will step down as a result.
- 2.2 The proposal has been amended from its original form by the removal of a one-bedroom flat. The original application drawings are **attached** at appendix 3.

3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 Cumnor Parish Council objected to the original proposal for the reasons **attached** at appendix 4. Any comments received on the amended proposal will be reported to committee.
- 3.2 Local Residents – five letters of objection have been received with the grounds of objection as follows:-
- Overdevelopment of the site
 - Out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area
 - Loss of light and overdominance of neighbouring dwellings
 - Inadequate level of car parking
 - The development will exacerbate local drainage problems

- 3.3 County Engineer – no objection subject to conditions
- 3.4 Architects Advisory Panel objected to the original proposal – comments **attached** at appendix 5.
- 3.5 Environmental Services – no objections
- 3.6 Principal Drainage Engineer – no objection subject to conditions
- 3.7 Arboricultural Officer – no objection subject to details of the construction of the slab of the cycle store to ensure that the existing mature tree on the south boundary is not harmed.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 None

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 Policies DC1, DC5, DC9 and DC14 of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan require all new development to be acceptable in terms of design, impact on neighbours, and highway safety. These policies are considered to be fully consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 The main issues for committee to consider are, first, the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area; second, the impact on neighbours; third, drainage; and, fourth, the safety of access and parking. With regard to the first issue, the existing house is clearly visible from Cumnor Hill due to the low height of the neighbouring bungalows. The applicants argue that the inspiration for the design of the proposed building is the successful development of new flats at no. 10 Cumnor Hill, which was designed to give the appearance of a large, two storey house that has been extended, a built form that may reasonably be expected to be seen on Cumnor Hill. The drawings for no. 10 Cumnor Hill are **attached** at appendix 6.
- 6.2 In answer to the comments of the architects panel the proposed building has been amended to reduce its size, by removing a proposed flat and reducing the size of the rear element. As amended, the proposed building is now more similar to no. 10 Cumnor Hill in that it has a main two storey element with a one-and-a-half storey element to the side and a two storey element to the rear. One difference is that there is a further single storey element on the rear of the proposed building, but given the discrete position and relatively low height of this element it will be largely screened from public view. Officers consider the main elements that will be seen from Cumnor Hill do have the scale and appearance of an extended dwelling. It should also be noted that the building will have a relatively narrow span of only 7.5 metres, which helps significantly to reduce its overall bulk.
- 6.3 With respect to the street scene, and the relationship of the proposed building to its neighbours, it has been noted there are bungalows on either side of the site. The bungalow at no. 6 Chawley Lane has an unusual juxtaposition in that its back garden lies immediately alongside the flank wall of the existing house while the bungalow lies alongside the rear garden. The flank wall of the proposed building will lie in the same position as the existing flank wall, so this relationship will not change. The proposed building has been designed so that there is a step down in height near to the boundary with the bungalow on the other side, no. 134 Cumnor Hill. It is considered this step down from two storeys to one-and-a-half storeys provides a suitable transition in scale

between the main two storey element and the bungalow, and that the relationship will be acceptable. Overall, the scale and bulk of the proposed building is considered to be acceptable. Given the change in levels a slab levels condition is proposed.

- 6.4 There is an extensive hardstanding in the front garden of the existing flats which is well screened by the existing mature hedgerow and boundary treatment. The proposed parking area at the front will remain screened in the same way. Consequently, it is considered the parking area will not harm the appearance and visual amenity of the area. There is a mature tree on the west boundary which is rooted in the adjacent site but whose canopy and root zone spread onto the application site. The proposed cycle store is located under the canopy. This will be a relatively light structure and, subject to a no-dig method for the slab, which should be possible, it is considered there would be no damage to the tree's roots
- 6.5 Regarding the second issue, it has already been noted that the location of the proposed two storey flank wall relative to the rear garden of no. 6 Chawley Lane is similar to the existing two storey flank wall. However, a further important point is that there is a first floor window in the flank wall of the existing flats which overlooks the garden, and which will be removed as part of the proposal – this represents a significant improvement in the amenity of the occupants of no. 6 Chawley Lane. The proposed building extends further back into the site than the existing one, but there is only one obscure glazed windows in the side of no. 6 Chawley Lane so it is considered no harm will result from either overshadowing or over-dominance. There are side facing windows in the other neighbouring property, no.134 Cumnor Hill, but these are screened by boundary planting and are set four metres from the proposed one-and-a-half storey flank wall of the new building. Given these factors the impact on these windows is considered to be acceptable. The side facing windows on the proposed building have been designed not to cause overlooking to neighbours. First floor windows in the proposed rear elevation will be at least 20 metres from the boundary with the neighbour to the rear, no. 8 Chawley Lane. This distance is sufficient to avoid any harmful overlooking.
- 6.7 The third issue is drainage. In terms of surface water drainage the council's principal drainage engineer has assessed the application and has no objections subject to the submission of details, including a sustainable drainage scheme. Foul drainage is dependent on the works to improve the local sewer network that are currently under way. A Grampian condition can be applied to ensure that the proposed flats are not occupied until these works are completed.
- 6.8 The final issue is access and parking. The existing access will be retained and the vision splays meet the necessary standard. 12 parking spaces are proposed which equates to one space for every one-bedroom flat and two spaces for every two-bedroom flat. Given the location of the site, which is in a highly sustainable area, this level of parking is considered to be acceptable. Covered cycle parking is proposed, which will provide encouragement for non-car modes of transport.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of impact on the character and appearance of the area. It is considered no harm to neighbours should arise, acceptable drainage can be achieved, and the proposed access and parking are acceptable. The proposal, therefore, complies with relevant policies of the adopted local plan, namely policies DC1, DC5, DC9 and DC14.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that authority to grant planning permission is delegated to the head of planning services, in consultation with the chairman and vice-chairman,

subject to no additional issues being raised following expiry of the consultation on the amended plans and subject to the following conditions:-

- 1. TL1 - Time Limit**
- 2. List of approved drawings**
- 3. MC2 - Samples of Materials**
- 4. RE7 - Boundary Details**
- 5. RE17 - Slab Levels**
- 6. RE22 - Window Sill Height**
- 7. RE29 - Refuse Storage**
- 8. HY6 - Access Parking and Turning**
- 9. HY20 - Bicycle Parking**
- 10 LS5 - Retain Hedgerow**
- 11 MC24 – Surface Water Drainage Details**
- 12 No occupation or use of the development shall take place until the off-site improvements to the local sewer network have been completed.**
- 12 Prior to the commencement of development, details of the construction of the foundations of the bicycle store shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The bicycle store shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.**

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