

APPLICATION NO.	P13/V2676/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	19.2.2014
PARISH	HARWELL
WARD MEMBER(S)	Margaret Turner Reg Waite
APPLICANT	Kemp & Kemp Property Consultants
SITE	Land Adjacent to Silverdown Reading Road Harwell, OX11 0LU
PROPOSAL	Erection of 2 no. detached dwellings. (as amended by ownership certificate B received 19 February 2014.)
AMENDMENTS	
GRID REFERENCE	449311/188651
OFFICER	Miss S Green

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The site is an area of land adjacent to the Reading Road (A417) in Harwell. A location plan is **attached** at Appendix 1. There are two access points off the Reading Road at either end of the site which serve a private road/track which runs long the southern boundary of the site. This road also serves the row of existing dwellings to the south. To the north of the site a mature hedgerow forms the boundary with Reading Road. The site is elevated in comparison to the A417. The site is within the North Wessex AONB.

1.2 This application is referred to the planning committee for determination due to the number of local objections.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of two dwellings on the site. One would be a three-bedroom bungalow and the other a four-bedroom house. Copies of the site layout, the elevations and floorplans are **attached** at Appendix 2. The full application can be viewed on the council's website.

2.2 The application includes changes to both accesses onto the A417 to improve them.

3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 Conservation Officer Vale • No observations

Drainage Engineer (Vale of White Horse District Council) • No objection subject to condition

Highways Liaison Officer (OCC) • No objection subject to condition

Landscape officer (verbally) • views across to the AONB would already be interrupted by the row of housing to the south. It is unlikely the proposal would cause landscape harm to the AONB.

Vale of White Horse District Council – Committee Report – 23 April 2014

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|------------------------|---|
| Harwell Parish Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No strong views.• Have noted neighbour concerns and request these concerns are given careful consideration |
| Neighbour Support (3) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support application of daughter• No objections. Think plans will greatly improve local infrastructure and will look so much better than the current state• No objections. Would like the existing trees and hedge along A417 retained and thickened to maintain privacy; height of houses to not exceed current tree height so do not lose sunlight from house; that during build no parking of building or delivery vehicles take place on A417. Would be happy to work with developers. Support the initiative of the developers. |
| Neighbour Object (5) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Boundary conflicts with neighbouring registered plans. Neighbouring properties have rights of access over road and to services• Outside village, is open countryside, significant amenity resource for village.• Will set precedent for other larger sites along Reading Road and rest of district• Policy H13 applies, no supporting evidence that 2 workers dwellings are needed• Inappropriate dominant structures; overdevelopment; contrary to local vernacular; Scale, bulk and size is out of keeping and visually intrusive• Visibility at accesses is below standard. Residents could remove trees for visibility themselves without the need for development. Will exacerbate the existing problem. Existing traffic speeds are above 30mph• Paddock was securely fenced and well maintained until permission was refused in 2008• Includes excavation and potential damage to utility services that serve neighbouring properties. Should not be determined until full survey of ground water and services undertaken• Roof of plot 2 would be unneighbourly and visible from all front aspects of Oakleigh House• Concern proposed planting would grow to unneighbourly heights• Concern access road would not sustain building traffic and additional traffic to houses• In AONB, provides an important green buffer screening the houses already in the area. Land specifically protected in NPPF.• There is no lack of housing in the area, several thousand are being built nearby, land earmarked for further housing in village. Pasture is in short supply/ reuse of land for its original agricultural purpose would be more appropriate to its function in the AONB.• Footprint plans are bigger than existing housing, different style, would be out of place in AONB. |

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 This is the third application on this site. There were two previous ones in 2008.

[P08/V0475](#) - Withdrawn (01/05/2008)

Erection of 1 x 3-bed and 1 x 4-bed dwellings.

This was withdrawn due to concerns over principle and highway objection to the access

[P08/V2502](#) - Refused (04/12/2008)

Erection of 1x3 bed and 1x4 bed dwellings. (Re-submission)

This application addressed the previous highway objection over the access points. It was however refused for the following reason:

The site is an area of undeveloped paddock land which in the opinion of the District Planning Authority lies outside the built up area of the village and is more closely associated with the open countryside. The proposed development would result in the urbanisation of this area which would have a harmful impact on the rural setting of the village and would not conserve or enhance the character of the North Wessex Downs AONB. As such the proposal is contrary to the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan in particular policies H11, GS2, DC1 and NE6.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 policies;

DC1 - Design

DC5 - Access

DC6 - Landscaping

DC9 - The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses

GS2 - Development in the Countryside

H11 - Development in the Larger Villages

H13 - Development Elsewhere

Adopted Residential Design Guide (2009)

The National Planning Policy Framework was published in March 2012 and replaced all previous PPG's and PPS's.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main planning considerations are the following:

Principle of development

6.2 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF sets out that the context of presumption in favour of sustainable development means:

- Approving development proposal that accord with the development plan without delay
- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless;

- Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole

- Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted (ie policies relating to AONBs.)

The NPPF sets out that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. As the council does not

have a five year supply of housing land the relevant housing policies in the adopted local plan, policies H11 and H13, have no weight.

The application in 2008 was considered under the local plan policies which had full weight at the time. However, in view of the five year supply shortfall and the advice in the NPPF, there has been a material change in the relevant planning policy for the application. The approach to be adopted is to assess whether the development would represent sustainable development or not, and, if it does, whether the adverse impacts would significantly outweigh the benefits.

Location

- 6.3 Harwell is one of the Vale's larger villages and one of its more sustainable settlements. The site is on the edge of the settlement but is accessible to the village and would be no more further away from village services and facilities than the existing housing to the south of Reading Road. In your officers' opinion the site would be regarded as being within a sustainable location. Thus, following paragraph 14 of the NPPF, there is a presumption in favour of granting planning permission.

Character and AONB

- 6.4 The site is currently an overgrown open area of land, formerly a paddock. Existing views of the site from the A417 are limited by the mature hedge boundary. The site is on the northern edge of the AONB boundary. Everything to the south of the A417 is within the AONB and to the north is outside. Any views towards the AONB from the north are already interrupted by the existing housing to the south. The presence of two additional dwellings set in front of the existing housing, and at a height which would be lower than the existing housing, would therefore not result in significant harm to these views. A condition can ensure the dwellings are built to the height shown on the plans.

Views of the site from the main road, the A417, are screened to a degree by the boundary hedge. Due to the elevated nature of the site, it is likely that there will be some views of the development from the A417, however these are likely to be glimpses between vegetation rather than clear views. The plans do show that this boundary hedge along the A417 would be realigned at either end to allow for the visibility splays. Additional planting is also proposed along the boundaries of the gardens. The size and species of the proposed planting can be ensured by condition. Overall officers accept that the site is an undeveloped piece of land on the edge of the settlement, and that its character will change. However the question is whether the level of change will give rise to a harmful visual impact to this edge of the settlement sufficient to outweigh the presumption in favour of granting planning permission. Given the level of screening along the A417, and the further supplemental planting proposed, officers consider the impact would not be sufficient to warrant refusal.

Design and scale

- 6.5 The proposed buildings have a mix of brick, feather edged timber boarding, timber frame and clay tiles in their construction. The two storey house has low eaves height and is proposed to be clad in timber boarding to reflect a rural barn-style building. The overall height of the house would be 7.2m and that of the bungalow 5.3m. The proposed designs are the same as that originally proposed in 2008, and the local planning authority did not object to the specific design at the time. The existing dwellings along the south of the access road are detached and are a mixture of designs. Within this context the designs of the proposed dwellings are acceptable.
- 6.6 The proposed dwellings would have reasonable sized gardens and space around them that would allow space for suitable landscaping of the plots. Concerns have been expressed with regard to the distance the between the proposed buildings and the

north and south boundaries. These would be the side boundaries of the plots and officers consider there is sufficient space between the buildings and these boundaries.

Highways

- 6.7 There are a number of concerns from neighbours regarding the suitability of the accesses and their visibility splays. The proposal includes adjusting the two existing accesses onto the A417. The proposed works will improve visibility and the county highways officer considers the resulting visibility splays will meet national safety standards. Whilst these works are to facilitate the development of the site, they would also benefit the existing users of the accesses. As any planning permission runs with the land, it would be the subsequent owner(s) of the land that would be responsible for maintaining the visibility splays. The level of parking and turning space available for each dwelling is acceptable and would not cause a highway safety concern.
- 6.8 There has also been concern raised at construction traffic stopping on the A417. As with any development there will be some temporary disruption during construction, including the delivery of supplies. However any issues regarding obstruction of the highway would be covered by the relevant highway legislation, and it is an offence to cause an obstruction to the highway. As legal remedies exist elsewhere, this is not a matter for planning control.

Neighbour impact

- 6.9 The bungalow would be 22 metres away from the existing housing to the south and the house would be 27 metres away. These distances exceed the council's adopted minimum standards. There are proposed boundary treatments along the southern boundary and there are existing mature boundary treatments to the existing properties. It is acknowledged that any outlook the existing housing may have over the site will alter, however in the view of the distances between existing and proposed dwellings, and given that the proposed development would be lower than the existing housing, it is considered the development will not be oppressive or overbearing. Moreover there will not be any direct overlooking towards neighbouring properties. Windows facing the east and west would be at such oblique angles to, and distances from, neighbouring properties that they would not be unneighbourly. A proposed balcony on the eastern elevation of the house would be far enough away not to cause harm.

Other issues

- 6.10 Following the original consultation responses were received that not all the land within the application was in the ownership of the applicant. These comments were put to the agent and an amended ownership certificate has been submitted to cover all the owners within the red line area. There are other comments with regard to rights of access they have over the land. Private covenants such as this are not a material planning consideration but are for the individual parties to resolve between themselves.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 In terms of the NPPF the development amounts to sustainable development for which there is a presumption in favour of granting planning permission. Officers consider that, whilst there would be some change to the character and appearance of the area, it would be difficult to sustain that the overall impact on the area and on views across the AONB would be harmful. Therefore the application has been recommended for approval.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 Grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

- 1: Commencement 3 yrs - Full Planning Permission**
- 2: Approved plans**
- 3: Samples of external materials submitted for approval**
- 4: Access, parking and turning spaces to be provided in accordance with plan prior to occupation. Visibility splays to remain unobstructed.**
- 5: Sustainable drainage scheme for foul and surface water to be submitted for approval**
- 6: Full landscaping scheme to be submitted prior to commencement and implementation programme**
- 7: Implementation of approved landscaping scheme.**
- 8: Ridge heights of development shall be in accordance with plan**

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