

APPLICATION NO.	P14/V0382/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	3.3.2014
PARISH	SPARSHOLT
WARD MEMBER(S)	Yvonne Constance
APPLICANT	Mr & Mrs O'Gorman
SITE	Land adjacent to Humber Barn Westcot Wantage
PROPOSAL	Erection of part single storey and part two storey detached house. (Re-submission of refused application P13/V0337/FUL)
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	433865/187440
OFFICER	Mark Doodes

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application is a resubmission following a refusal last year for a single new dwelling on the same site in the settlement of Westcot. The site is part of the garden of Humber Barn, it is a flat rectangular site and is not developed. There are no listed buildings nearby and the site is not part of a conservation area.
- 1.2 The site is presently an undeveloped field opposite numbers 1-2. The site is bounded to the highway with a mature hedgerow, some shrubs and some mature trees, including some evergreens. The site is flat and contains a number of apple trees arranged in an orchard layout which are each no more than two metres tall. Otherwise, the area is a well maintained lawn.
- 1.3 The nearest main settlement is in Childrey, itself a small village, three miles away. The site location plan can be found **attached** at appendix 1.
- 1.4 The application is brought to committee due to the support of the Parish council, against officer recommendation. A copy of their response is available **attached** as appendix 3.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The applicant seeks full planning permission for a single three bedroom home (184m² or approx 2000 ft²) which is mainly two storeys. The home measures (although no dimensions are included in the drawings and no scale bar present) 10.7m wide, 12.6m at its deepest and 8.1m at its narrowest. It is 7m high. The home is double rear gabled and features a large area of glazing to the front gable and a two storey glazed element. The single storey side element is flat roved. The home appears to be a 1970's style unit with modern design influences.
- 2.2 Parking will be to the front, and a large deep garden to the rear. The home will be open market; not for an agricultural worker.

3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 Sparsholt Parish Council – Support – a copy of the response is attached at appendix three.
Neighbour Support – 19 letters of support from most local residents.
Neighbour Object 1 – The issues with previous scheme have not been overcome.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 [P13/V0337/FUL](#) - Refused (25/04/2013)
Erection of a four bedroom detached dwelling.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 policies;

GS1 - Developments in Existing Settlements
H12 - Development in the Smaller Villages
DC5 - Access
DC1 - Design
DC7 - Waste Collection and Recycling
DC9 - The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses
DC13 - Flood Risk and Water Run-off
DC14 - Flood Risk and Water Run-off

NPPF – Paragraphs 7, 14,

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 The key issue is the principle of development and the extent to which the application has successfully overcome the reasons for refusal from the (similar) 2013 scheme.
- 6.2 The NPPF states clearly a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It is noted that the site in question is not located close to any social, medical, employment, public transport links, leisure or retail facilities. The hamlet is remote from the nearest facilities characteristic of village life, meaning that all forms of goods and services commensurate with a modern life will involve a heavy degree of travel. The site is, based on the above, not considered to be in a sustainable location. Therefore without an agricultural exception basis for the works, such a scheme cannot be permitted and is contrary to policy GS1 of the local plan. The scheme also fails to satisfy officers of being of exceptional quality and therefore fails paragraph 55 of the NPPF in this regard. Officers place less weight on this failure as there has been a clear direction of travel between the original scheme and the floor area of this unit. Design matters are discussed more fully in section 6.4.
- 6.3 The hamlet of Westcot is covered by policy H13 “*Development elsewhere*”, which seeks to safeguard the patterns of development which were developed before the modern town planning regime existed. In doing so, the character of the scattered smallest settlements of the Vale can be preserved overall, including where development is not present and such a lack of development contributes. The intent to preserve the “...*sporadic nature...*” of such areas from “...*development...*” is clearly the intention behind the policy which recognises that only limited development of small gaps in frontage can be accepted. This is not the case with this site. A large gap is present which will be removed. Although eroded weight can be assigned to this policy in a five year land supply environment, the NPPF gives a clear indication that in sustainability terms, the site is the paramount consideration.
- 6.4 Turning to the proposals themselves, the 184m² home remains large but the design ethos itself is not considered to reflect or reinforce any form of local distinctiveness. It is an urban design with its core design reference being an uninspired 1970’s unit with modern glazed sections which appear awkwardly retrofitted. The home is still considered to be large when compared to many of the surrounding modest workers

units (particularly those opposite). The poorly considered design is not considered to accord with policies DC1 and DC9 of the local plan, due to its proportions and scale, bulk and mass will relate poorly with the pre-war homes opposite and other more modest dwellings in the area. The introduction of a single storey flat roof “extension” element is of concern and will appear as an unsightly element that appears incongruous to the street scene in any event and is not acceptable in design terms.

- 6.5 The location is not considered to be infilling of any type, due to the size of the gap in question, and is more akin to greenfield development in this regard. The site itself contributes to the open outlook of several properties which is a key characteristic of such pre-planning village layouts as in Westcot. The addition of the dwelling in this area would turn a sporadic scattering of dwellings into a ribbon style layout, which would make the future resistance of similar development to be more difficult (or unreasonable) in this hamlet. Such future applications for further development of the hamlet will almost certainly rely on this application as precedent in this regard, leading to further unsustainable development in the future.
- 6.6 Policy NE9 seeks to protect the wider views and enjoyment of the open landscape. This application, by virtue of the change from open ground to the new development will cause harm to this scenery, particularly when viewed from the main road and public spaces in the area. This on its own would not be significant enough to refuse the application in its own right, however is a cogent reason for additional concern, noting the recommendation.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The application fails to address the concerns of officers. The site is considered to be in an unsustainable location and one that does not constitute an infill or extended frontage. The large, poorly designed urban-style home with a large flat roof constitutes an undesirable form of development which would put pressure on many other plots nearby by creating a smaller sequence of gaps in the area. The erosion of this and other gaps would, over time, further harm the character of the area which is intrinsically defined by such gaps. The application is not considered to accord with policies GS1, DC1, DC9, NE9 and H13 of the local plan as well as the NPPF.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

Refusal of Planning Permission

1 : Unsustainable location contrary to GS1

2 : No agricultural justification, Unsustainable location – H12 and NPPF

3 : Not infilling, pressure on neighbouring plots

4 : Impact on open outlook of vale in this immediate area (Policy NE9)

Author: Mark Doodes
Contact Number: 01235-540519
Email: mark.doodes@southandvale.gov.uk