

CUM/1429/9-X & CUM/1429/10 – Wytham Ltd.

Erection of a dwelling (land to rear 106 Oxford Road) & demolition of external staircases. Erection of a new communal entrance hall. Conversion of existing building into 4 x 1 bed flats.

106 Oxford Road, Cumnor.

1.0 The Proposal

- 1.1 Application CUM/1429/9-X seeks outline planning permission to erect a two storey detached dwelling in the rear garden of 106 Oxford Road. Siting and access are due for consideration under this application with design, external appearance and landscaping being reserved matters.
- 1.2 Application CUM/1429/10 seeks full planning permission to convert No 106 into 4 x 1 bedroom flats.
- 1.3 It is proposed to demolish an existing staircase extension to the side of No. 106, to enable vehicular access to the rear and to build the proposed two storey dwelling at the back of the site. A copy of the plans showing the location of the proposed new dwelling, siting and access is attached at **Appendix 1**. A copy of the plans for the conversion of No 106 is attached at **Appendix 2**.
- 1.4 The property is bounded by Sands Close to the east, Cumnor Primary School to the rear (north), with the vehicular access to the school running along the west side.
- 1.5 The applications have been referred to Committee because several letters of objection have been received.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 No 106 was originally a shop with living accommodation above. In 1977, planning permission was granted for the change of use of the former shop and upper floor flat into a single dwelling. Permission was also granted for an extension to the front garden to incorporate a vehicle waiting bay (used in connection with the former shop).
- 2.2 An application to convert no 106 into 2x 1 bed and 2 x 2 bed flats was withdrawn on 19 June 2006. An outline application to erect a dwelling to the rear was also withdrawn on 19 June 2006 to enable the applicant to fully consider the implications of the flat proposal on the proposed dwelling.

3.0 Planning Policies

- 3.1 *Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011*
Policy GS5 (making efficient use of land and buildings) seeks to promote the efficient re-use of previously developed / unused land and buildings within settlements (provided there is no conflict with other policies in the Local Plan).
- 3.2 Policy H11 (development in the larger villages) enables new housing development within the built-up areas of the larger villages such as Cumnor, provided the scale, mass, layout, and design of the new dwellings would not materially harm the form, structure or character of the settlement, and it does not involve the loss of facilities important to the local community (i.e. formal / informal open space).
- 3.3 Policies DC1, DC5, DC6, and DC9 (quality of new development policies) are relevant and seek to ensure that all new development is of a high standard of design / landscaping, does not cause harm to the amenity of neighbours, and is acceptable in terms of highway safety.

3.4 PPG3, "Housing", is also relevant and explains the presumption in favour of developing previously developed sites within urban areas for housing ahead of green field sites and making the most efficient use of land.

4.0 **Consultations**

4.1 Cumnor Parish Council had not responded at the time of writing this report. Any response will be reported at the Meeting.

4.2 County Engineer – No objections subject to conditions.

4.3 Five letters of objection have been received from local residents and are summarised below:

- Oxford Road is a narrow one-way street that suffers from considerable congestion at peak times, due to the school run and deliveries to nearby shops. A new dwelling will add to this.
- Taken with the proposed flat development, the new dwelling represents an over development, creating a density that is out of character with this part of the village.
- The new driveway is a few yards from the school entrance and will create a significant hazard to child safety.
- The new dwelling will extend beyond Sands Close and will not follow the existing building line.
- The infilling of properties and the destruction of gardens is out of character with Cumnor Village.
- The proposed access will cause considerable noise disturbance to residents in Sands Close.
- The new access will affect the drains, and with the removal of the trees on the boundary could lead to subsidence of Sands Close.
- Sands Close residents have enjoyed a very pleasant outlook at the rear. This will be lost with the removal of trees. (This is not a material planning consideration).
- The new dwelling in the proposed position will cause overlooking and loss of privacy.
- The rear gardens of Sands Close face north, and any dwelling to the rear of No 106 (being on the western side) will lead to a loss of light.
- The development will lead to a loss in house value. (This is not a material planning consideration).
- There is insufficient parking for four flats and this will lead to on-street parking.

5.0 **Officer Comments**

5.1 The main issues in both cases are considered to be 1) the impact on the character and appearance of the area, 2) the impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties, 3) the safety of the access and parking arrangements, and 4) precedent.

5.2 On the first issue, the building of a two storey dwelling on this site is considered acceptable. Your Officers consider that the footprint of the unit proposed and its proposed siting are in keeping with other two storey properties in the locality. There is sufficient private amenity space for both the existing and proposed dwellings that is similar in size to other properties in the locality and, together with the existing boundary landscaping at the rear of No. 106, the new dwelling will not appear at odds with the immediate locality.

5.3 The proposed flat units are also considered to be an appropriate form of development in the area and would provide small units to meet the needs of an increasing number of one and two person households. In terms of the alterations proposed to No. 106, they are not considered to be out of keeping with the locality and the proposal is not an overdevelopment of the site.

5.4 Turning to the second issue, the potential harm to neighbours, your Officers consider that No. 106 Cumnor Road itself and No. 6 Sands Close are the properties most affected by the provision of a new dwelling to the rear. In terms of privacy, the siting of the dwelling is such

that direct overlooking of No. 6 Sands Close will not occur. The access drive to the new dwelling is also considered acceptable. It will be used by the future occupants of No 106 and is bounded by the garage buildings in Sands Close which will mitigate any potential noise and disturbance impact on those residents in Sands Close.

- 5.5 The proposed flats have been designed to mitigate any overlooking of the new dwelling. By using the existing building, existing relationships with neighbouring properties are maintained and are considered acceptable.
- 5.6 On the issue of parking and access, the proposed arrangements are considered acceptable. The parking provision shown of 4 spaces for the flats and 2 spaces for the new dwelling are considered to be sufficient in this location. Furthermore, the County Engineer has no objection to the proposal.
- 5.7 With regard to precedent, whilst this can be material where other sites possibly suitable for similar development can be identified in the locality, Members will be aware that each proposal must be considered on its own merits. In this case, there are other potential sites in the vicinity that could be the subject of a similar proposal. However, given the thrust of Government guidance on new housing, particularly in terms of making more efficient use of land within settlements, Officers consider that the issue of precedent is not such as to warrant refusal of these proposals.

6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 *That planning permission CUM/1429/9-X be granted subject to the following conditions:*

1. *TL2 Time Limit – outline application*
2. *OL3 Outline condition (excluding siting and access)*
3. *RE14 Garage accommodation*
4. *RE7 Boundary details*
5. *HY3 Access in accordance with specified plan*
6. *RE3 Restriction on alterations and extensions to dwelling*
7. *LS4 landscaping scheme*

6.2 *That planning permission CUM/1429/10 be granted subject to the following conditions:*

1. *TL1 – Time Limit*
2. *RE1 – Matching materials*
3. *RE7 Boundary treatment*
4. *HY3 – Access in accordance with specified plan*
5. *HY25 – Car parking layout (Building)*
6. *Full details of bin storage and cycle parking to be submitted prior to first occupation.*
7. *LS4 landscaping scheme*