

WAN/18492/2 – Mr H Gibson Demolition of single storey extension. Extension and alterations to existing dwelling and erection of a dwelling. 5 Belmont, Wantage

1.0 The Proposal

1.1 This application proposes the demolition of the existing side extension to 5 Belmont and a new extension to the kitchen at the front of the property. It is proposed to erect a detached 3 bedroom dwelling to the north-east of the existing property. The proposed dwelling is 9.7m high, the same height as the existing dwelling. The ground floor would house an integral garage, kitchen and study, the first floor would accommodate 2 bedrooms and a lounge with a third bedroom provided in the roof space. To the frontage an additional 3 parking spaces are proposed and the existing boundary wall is proposed to be removed in order to improve pedestrian visibility. The application drawings are at **Appendix 1**.

1.2 The application comes to Committee at the request of Councillor Joyce Hutchinson.

2.0 Planning History

2.1 An application with the same description was submitted in March 2004 and was later withdrawn.

2.2 A similar application was refused by Committee in December 2004. The application drawings, previous Committee report and minutes are attached at **Appendix 2**. The applicant appealed against the refusal and the appeal was dismissed. The decision notice is at **Appendix 3**.

3.0 Planning Policies

3.1 Policy H10 of the adopted Local Plan states that within the built up area of Wantage new housing will be permitted provided it would not result in the loss of facilities important to the local community, that it makes efficient use of the land, and the layout, mass and design of the dwelling would not harm the character of the area.

3.2 Policy DC1 states that development will be permitted provided it is of a high quality design such that, amongst other things, the layout, scale, height, detailing and relationship to other buildings and spaces do not adversely affect the character of the area.

3.3 Policy DC5 states that proposals will only be permitted if safe and convenient access will be provided within the site and to and from the adjacent highway network. Adequate and safe parking provision must be provided, as must adequate turning and circulation space.

3.4 Policy DC9 states that development will not be permitted if it would harm the amenities of neighbouring properties in terms of, amongst other things, loss of privacy, daylight, sunlight and dominance or visual intrusion.

4.0 Consultations

4.1 Objections have been raised by 8 neighbours and an objection from 'Belmont Property Management Limited' has been received. The concerns raised are summarised below:

- The proposal is similar to that which was dismissed at appeal
- There is no on street parking available in Belmont and the car park is full to capacity. Proposal would put a strain on the availability of parking spaces. Parking permits are only available to those who contributed to the construction of the car park. Permits have not been given to number 5.
- Proposed parking is not sufficient. The parking spaces are too close together. Where will

visitors park? The spaces are not big enough. Getting in and out of the spaces would require a lot of manoeuvring which would be dangerous to pedestrians, cyclists and mobility vehicles. The space in front of the garage would lead to even more manoeuvring.

- The restricted turning space available would lead to cars encroaching on the parking spaces for Belmont House. If these spaces were occupied it would be impossible to get out.
- Proposal should comply with Design Bulletin 32
- Concerns regarding access for large vehicles and building materials. It would be impossible for them to manoeuvre and they would cause disruption
- Parking is outside the proposed study's window
- Study could be converted to a bedroom, garage could be converted to another room.
- Proposed extension to kitchen would limit visibility
- Proposed dwelling would impact upon the amenity of 6 Belmont. This property has had planning permission for an extension which will bring their dwelling closer to the proposed house. New house will tower over number 6 and will lead to a loss of light and privacy
- Proposal would result in loss of value to neighbouring houses (this is not a material planning consideration)
- Proposal will result in overcrowding of the area. Low density housing should be preserved
- Design is not in keeping with the other houses in the area

4.2 Wantage Town Council have no objection, subject to parking and vehicle access arrangements being deemed suitable by the highway authority.

4.3 The County Engineer recommends that the application be approved subject to conditions. A report from the County Engineer is at **Appendix 4**.

5.0 **Officer Comments**

5.1 Your Officers consider that the main issues to be considered here are 1) whether the parking and access situation is acceptable, 2) whether the impact of the proposed dwelling on neighbouring properties is acceptable and 3) whether the design of the proposed dwelling is acceptable.

5.2 At Paragraph 7 of the appended appeal decision letter the Inspector states that there is no objection to the increase in traffic generated by one additional dwelling.

5.3 At paragraph 10 he states that the Council's requirement for two parking spaces per dwelling is appropriate. The current application provides 2 off street parking spaces per dwelling. As such it is felt that the current proposal overcomes this element of the previous refusal. It is recommended that a condition is imposed which would prevent the garage from being converted to habitable accommodation in order to retain the proposed level of parking. It is also suggested that a condition be imposed requiring the garage door to be a roller shutter variety to ensure that it does not encroach on the parking space in front of it.

5.4 Paragraph 12 of the appeal decision letter relates to the issues of carriageway width and the ease of turning into and out of the spaces. The previous proposal would have provided 4.3m between the parking spaces and the parking area for Belmont House opposite. The Inspector concluded that this was insufficient to allow the manoeuvre to be made in a single sweep without encroaching on the parking area of Belmont House. It was established at the appeal hearing, however, that the Council would accept a minimum of 5m between the parking areas. The

revised proposal provides 5m between the edge of the parking spaces and the edge of the parking area for Belmont House. As such it felt that the current proposal overcomes this element of the previous refusal.

- 5.5 At paragraph 13 the Inspector states that the sub-standard pedestrian visibility splays are acceptable given the nature of the road.
- 5.6 For these reasons it is considered that the current proposal overcomes the concerns previously expressed relating to parking and access.
- 5.7 The proposed dwelling occupies a similar footprint to that which was dismissed at appeal. However, the frontage is set 1m further back and the rear elevation is 0.5m further back (making the house 0.5m narrower than the previous application). The proposed dwelling does breach a 40 degree line taken from the nearest edge of the first floor windows of 5 Belmont and as such may result in a loss of light. However, as it is due north of 5 Belmont it is not considered that the loss of light to this property would be sufficient to warrant the refusal of the application. At paragraph 14 the Inspector considered the impact on number 6 Belmont. He considered that the house would be visible from the garden of this property through the existing trees and that this would cause some loss of outlook and shading of the garden. He stated that *“Whilst it is debateable whether the visual harm would be sufficient to warrant rejection of the proposal in its own right, the proximity and height adds weight to my conclusion that the proposal is unacceptable”*. 6 Belmont has consent for a two storey side extension. This would lessen the amount of side garden and bring the extension closer to the proposed dwelling. The extension includes double doors facing front and back, on to a new parking area and down the garden. Whilst, as the Inspector observed, there would be an impact on the light reaching this part of the garden, in your Officer’s opinion this would not be so great as to warrant refusal of the application. The side windows in the proposed dwelling are to bathrooms and will be subject to a condition requiring them to obscure glazed. The rear windows would be facing down the garden, which is a common relationship between neighbouring properties and as such are not considered to result in undue overlooking.

6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 *It is recommended that the application be approved subject to the following conditions:*

1. *TL1 Time Limit – Full Application*
2. *MC2 Submission of Materials (samples)*
3. *RE3 Restrictions on Extensions and Alterations to Dwelling*
4. *RE14 Garage Accommodation*
5. *HY24 Car Park layout (Dwelling)*
6. *MC10 Obscured Glazing (Vent)*
7. *Notwithstanding any details shown on the submitted drawings the garage door shall be of a roller shutter type, details of which shall first be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the District Planning Authority. No other type of garage door shall be fitted without the prior grant of planning permission.*