

CHD/713/5 & CHD/713/6 - CA – Mr. G Chambers
Extension and Alterations to Existing House, Demolition of Barn and Erection of Annex.
Rebuild South and east External Walls of House.
Land at Penn House, High Street, Childrey, Wantage, Oxon. OX12 9UW.

1.0 The Proposal

- 1.1 Penn House is a substantial two storey red brick and tiled cottage on the corner of the junction of Dog Lane and the High Street in the centre of Childrey. It is not a listed building, but it lies within the Childrey Conservation Area. Its frontage is set back about 11 metres from the High Street but the side of the property abuts the pavement in Dog Lane, which is a minor road travelling west from High Street. There is a single storey extension to the gable on the Dog Lane frontage. Also on this frontage is a large dilapidated barn, which is clad in wood boarding with a rounded corrugated metal roof. Behind this is the area of yard to the rear of Penn House. There is a boarded up gateway and a separate pedestrian gate between the house and the barn and an open vehicular access onto Dog Lane at the rear of the site.
- 1.2 The whole property is in clear need of renovation, as confirmed by a structural report accompanying the applications, and the applicant is taking the opportunity of a comprehensive revamp involving extensions, the demolition of the barn and the erection of ancillary accommodation in its place. The planning application included the erection of a detached garage in the yard alongside the northern boundary of the site, which has now been deleted from the scheme. Both access points are to be used and the central one will be widened to provide both vehicular and pedestrian access.
- 1.3 A porch and French window are being added to the frontage but most of the additions and alterations to the house take place at the rear. In addition to the single storey gabled extension to the rear, the present house features a cat-slide roof sloping right down to the ground floor with only a gabled doorway in this elevation. The proposal involves the rebuilding of the gable of the house and adding a first floor to the rear extension, which is being lengthened by a metre and inset from the present frontage with Dog Lane. This will provide a study area on the ground floor and a new bedroom on the first floor. The windows in these rooms will look out into the yard area. It is also proposed to provide additional first floor area at the rear of the house by raising the roof slope and inserting two dormer windows, which will provide light to an en-suite room and a landing area. In addition to the study, the scheme will provide a sitting room and kitchen on the ground floor and still provide three bedrooms with improved bathroom facilities on the first floor.
- 1.4 The barn is to be replaced by a new built annexe with a reduced footprint set back 0.8 of a metre from the Dog Lane frontage. The footprint of the new annex will be 10 sq.m. less than the barn but will also be two storeys high. The barn's height is given as 6.4 metres, the same height as the new annexe. The annexe will be clad in weather boarding above a brick plinth and will have a tiled pitched roof. The accommodation is to be ancillary to the main house and provides an entrance hall with stairway and a bedroom and bathroom on the ground floor. The stairs lead to an open plan living area and kitchen on the first floor. There are no windows onto Dog Lane. There is a window to the kitchen area in the gable at first floor level and a landing window midway up the stairs in the almost rounded corner of the building. The living room area is lit by high level roof lights facing the yard area.
- 1.5 The application drawings are at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.6 The applications come before Committee at the request of Councillor Andrew Crawford.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 Two previous schemes were the subject of applications last year but were withdrawn when it was made clear that they were not to be recommended for approval because of the likely

adverse impact on the site surroundings. The present applications were submitted following further negotiations with your Officers.

3.0 **Planning Policies**

- 3.1 Policy DC1 of the adopted Local Plan requires development to be of a high quality design in terms of layout, scale, mass, height, detailing, materials to be used, its relationship with adjoining buildings and takes into account local distinctiveness and colour.
- 3.2 Policy DC5 requires safe and convenient access and parking.
- 3.3 Policy DC9 seeks to discourage development that would harm the amenities of adjoining properties or the wider environment in terms of, amongst other things, loss of privacy, daylight, sunlight, dominance or visual intrusion.
- 3.4 Policy HE1 requires development to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 3.5 Policy H24 enables the erection of ancillary buildings and structures within the curtilage of a dwelling provided the proposal would not cause demonstrable harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties or the character and appearance of its surroundings.

4.0 **Consultations**

- 4.1 Childrey Parish Council does not object in principle but wants serious consideration to be given to whether the defects in the structure warrant such rebuilding. Other issues raised include traffic, and whether a change of use is involved.
- 4.2 The County Engineer has no objections to the principle of the scheme.
- 4.3 Objections have been raised by residents from 6 local households on the following grounds:
- The scheme is overdeveloped and does not accord with the distinctiveness and character of the area and will therefore not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
 - The development will remove the most distinctive feature of Penn House, the cat-slide roof.
 - The height of the proposed annexe will create a tunnel effect in Dog Lane.
 - The annexe has the potential for use as a separate dwelling, which would result in additional traffic on a narrow and congested highway.
 - The plans include west facing and inappropriate dormer windows in the first floor where none exist at present. There is also a north facing bedroom window. These windows will invade the privacy of the adjoining property.
 - The proposal also includes a detached garage with a pitched roof right on the boundary of the adjoining property in a position that will result in a loss of sunlight.
 - The Design and Access Statement is misleading.
 - The property should be listed.
- 4.4 English Heritage has written to say that a request has been made to have the building listed. The Secretary of State has decided not to list the building following the outcome of a report from the listed building advisor who has visited the site and concluded that the property has been too altered to be recommended for listing. Although it has local character and interest he concludes that it does not merit inclusion in the national list.

5.0 **Officer Comments**

- 5.1 The scheme has been through a series of revisions following negotiations with your Planning and Conservation Officers and, apart from the presence of the garage, previous objections

about the scale and appearance of the development have been addressed and the proposal is considered to meet the tests of acceptability within the terms of the above mentioned policies. Confirmation has been received that the applicant is willing to delete the garage proposal from the application. The removal of the garage from the scheme overcomes the remaining objections to the development. When interested parties heard of this change they pointed out that the removal of the garage would result in the loss of its screening effect allowing for a greater degree of overlooking. The following paragraphs address the points made by the objectors.

- 5.2 Alteration to the rear roof slope to allow additional accommodation on the first floor will change the appearance of the existing cat-slide roof. The first question is whether the feature is worth retaining in itself or in the interests of the Conservation Area. It is clear that the building is not considered worthy of listing and does not have any special architectural or historic value. The other question to be addressed is whether the new elevation that will be created is acceptable in design terms. This is considered to be the case by your Officers. As to the contribution the appearance of the cat-slide roof makes to the character of the Conservation Area, it cannot be observed from any public place. Although it can be seen from the immediately neighbouring property this does not amount to a material contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 5.3 Unfavourable references to the relative height of the proposed annexe and its effect on the street scene are not borne out by the information on the drawings. It will be set further back than the barn and is at the same height as the existing barn according to the drawings. As to its potential use as a separate dwelling, this can be controlled by condition. Any subsequent application to turn it into separate dwelling would have to satisfy different criteria, which are not relevant in the case of an annexe, e.g. matters of privacy, private amenity space and car parking and traffic generation.
- 5.4 One of the objections relates to the matter of privacy in relation to overlooking from the proposed windows. The west facing dormer windows are not to living space. The nearest window to the adjoining property will be to a bathroom and will be obscure glazed enforced by planning condition. The other window is to a landing. This will be 5 metres offset from the adjoining property boundary and will only have an oblique view over the private garden area immediately at the rear of the adjoining house at a distance of 17 metres. The north facing bedroom window is 8.5 metres away from the adjoining garden boundary and will only have an oblique view of the rear of the adjoining property at a distance of 20 metres. This is considered to more than adequate to avoid any loss of privacy. The living room roof lights in the annexe roof are set at a high level and can be controlled by planning condition. They are also set 10 metres away from the adjoining property boundary. Apart from the high level glazing facing Penn House the only other first floor window in the annexe facing west is to the kitchen area. There is also a window lighting the staircase on the rounded corner of the building.

6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 *As the proposal is now considered to meet the objectives of the relevant policies, it is recommended that the planning application be approved subject to the following conditions.*

1. TL1 *Time Limit – Full Application*
2. MC1 *Submission of Materials (Details)*
3. MC9 *All Bathroom/En Suite Windows on West & South Elevations be glazed with obscured glass only*
4. MC12 *Height of Sill of Roof Lights*
5. CN8 *Submission of full details as to extent and method of rebuilding existing walls and all joinery*

6. RE16 *Ancillary Self Contained Accommodation*

7. RE2 *Restriction on Alteration to Buildings inc Alterations to windows or ancillary structures of buildings within curtilage*

6.2 *It is recommended that Conservation Area Consent be granted subject to the following condition.*

1. *TL4 Time Limit – LB/CA Consent*