

SUT/570/14 & SUT/570/15-LB – Mr and Mrs Warne
Erection of a 4 bedroom, single storey dwelling incorporating a Grade II listed dovecote and stone garden wall, and associated external works.
The Manor House, Church Street, Sutton Courtenay, OX14 4NJ.

1.0 **The Proposal**

- 1.1 The Manor House is situated within the village of Sutton Courtenay. It is a Grade II* listed building which lies within the conservation area and the majority of its gardens and grounds are identified as a Grade II historic park and garden. The applications for planning permission and listed building consent involve the erection of a modern single storey dwelling next to and incorporating a listed dovecote within the grounds of the House and the alteration and partial demolition of a curtilage listed wall. The application site plan and elevation plans are attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 The dovecote is a Grade II listed building. It forms part of a small informal courtyard of agricultural buildings which incorporates two further listed barns. A curtilage listed wall forms the eastern boundary of the site with the village road.
- 1.3 The new development will be accessed via the existing driveway to The Manor House, which also serves the existing cottages in the courtyard area.
- 1.4 The application site is well treed on its boundaries and has a number of apple trees in the centre of the farm yard. The will result in the loss of some apple trees on the site and some trees near the old tennis court by the dovecote.
- 1.5 A plan showing the extent of the boundary of the historic park and garden is attached at **Appendix 2**. The only part of the application site which falls within this area is the driveway and the row of lime trees abutting the northern side of the drive.
- 1.6 The applications come to Committee as the Parish Council objects.

2.0 **Planning History**

- 2.1 In 1973 planning permission was granted for the conversion of a poultry house opposite the listed barns into two dwellings.
- 2.2 In March 2004, planning permission and listed building consent were granted for the conversion of barn 2 (which abuts the application site) into one dwelling.
- 2.3 In 2006 a planning application and listed building application which proposed the dwelling the subject of this application and two other dwellings to replace the converted poultry house were withdrawn.

3.0 **Planning Policies**

- 3.1 Oxfordshire Structure Plan Policy EN4 seeks to protect historic parks and gardens from harmful development.
- 3.2 Policy HE1 of the adopted Local Plan requires development within conservation areas to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area. Development in gaps, gardens and open spaces will only be permitted where it can be shown that these areas do not make a positive contribution to the character of the area, and views into and out of the conservation area would not be lost or damaged. All new development should respect its context through appropriate siting, scale, height and form.
- 3.3 Policy HE4 states planning permission for development within the setting of a listed building will not be granted unless the scale, design and form respect the character of the listed building.

- 3.4 Policy HE5 states that extensions or alteration to a listed building will not be permitted if it causes harm to the special interest of the building or fails to retain important features. Policy HE7 seeks to ensure that changes of use of listed buildings can be accommodated without having an adverse effect on the building's character.
- 3.5 Policy HE8 states that proposals for development within or affecting the setting of an historic park and garden will only be permitted if it conserves and causes no significant harm to the historic character of the site.
- 3.6 Policy H11 states that within the built-up area of Sutton Courtenay, developments of up to 15 dwellings will be permitted provided the layout, scale and design of the proposal would not harm the character of the settlement.
- 3.7 Policy DC1 encourages high quality development, in either a modern or traditional interpretation.
- 3.8 The proposed works to the listed dovecote and wall also need to be considered in relation to the advice contained within PPG15, "Planning and the Historic Environment."
- 4.0 **Consultations**
- 4.1 Sutton Courtenay Parish Council objects to the planning application – letter attached at **Appendix 3**.
- 4.2 Consultant Architect - see letter attached at **Appendix 4**. His comments regarding the dovecote house as part of the withdrawn application were "the modern dwelling incorporating the listed dovecote has in my judgement the potential to be an outstanding work of architecture, an enrichment of the conservation area and one which would not detract from the setting of the nearby listed buildings."
- 4.3 Architects Panel – support the dovecote house.
- 4.4 English Heritage – no comments. However, in relation to the recently withdrawn application, English Heritage made the following comments in respect of the dovecote dwelling "we have no objection to the design of house 3 but suggest that a full schedule of works is obtained for the dovecote in order to ensure that its special interest is not lost through the conversion."
- 4.5 SPAB – has not responded to this application but their comments on the withdrawn application were "while there may be good reason to re-use the historic dovecote in order to give it a purpose that will ensure its long term maintenance, we would prefer to see the new building detached from it so that it stands alone and can be read as an independent historic structure."
- 4.6 Ancient Monuments Society – has not responded to this application but their comments on the withdrawn application were "the juxtaposition of the new modernist house and dovecote is challenging. Indeed what dictates the physical connection with the dovecote? A dovecote is best appreciated freestanding. Why must the house have such a large central lantern? This does oversail the boundary wall even at its new height and challenges the dominance of the dovecote."
- 4.7 Environment Agency – comments awaited but they had no objections to the withdrawn scheme.
- 4.8 County Engineer – comments awaited. No objections were raised to the scheme previously.
- 4.9 Council's Drainage Engineer – requests that surface and foul drainage schemes be conditioned.

5.0 **Officer Comments**

- 5.1 The application site is situated in a very sensitive part of Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area. The Grade II* listed Manor House and its grounds are set behind a long stone wall which fronts the village street opposite the Green. The wall screens most of the site's buildings from public view but the roofs of the two existing semi-detached single storey dwellings (ex-poultry house) can be seen, particularly in the winter months. The dovecote is not visible from the road.
- 5.2 The proposal involves the erection of a new house adjoining the dovecote. This will provide a new use for the dovecote and secure its long term maintenance and retention. The new house and its garden will sit on the site of an old hard-surfaced tennis court.
- 5.3 The new house has a very contemporary design and will be situated behind the existing courtyard wall, which will be raised by 0.7 metres to 3.6 metres in height. The new building is single storey and predominantly glazed on its north and eastern elevations. It will be linked to the dovecote by a small glazed courtyard.
- 5.4 From within the site, the new dwelling will be hidden from view behind the raised courtyard wall, although the central lantern feature will be visible above this parapet. However, no public views of the new building will be available.
- 5.5 The proposed design allows the dovecote to remain in its original form with no new openings or floors inserted. The space will be used as a study and the fully glazed courtyard which joins the dovecote to the new house will allow the historic building to be viewed as a freestanding structure.
- 5.6 Vehicular and pedestrian access to the house will be across the courtyard and through a 3 metre wide breach in the court wall.

Impact on listed buildings and the conservation area

- 5.7 The most important consideration of this proposal is the impact of the development on the preservation and setting of the existing listed buildings on the site and on the character and appearance of the conservation area and historic park and garden.
- 5.8 The design concept behind house 3 has received support from the Consultant Architect and the Conservation Officer. Some concerns have been expressed by SPAB and AMS but as a stand alone building the dovecote is not considered viable. Officers are also mindful of the sympathetic manner in which the dovecote has been attached to the proposed house and the fact that the impact of the proposal on the dovecote is totally reversible. The dovecote is a building which requires long term care and this scheme allows it to form a useful part of a new dwelling.
- 5.9 The Parish Council takes the opposite view and considers the design of the new house is incongruous within this historic context. This is an understandable stance to take because matters of design and taste are subjective. However, for the reasons given above, your Officers believe that the proposal offers a sensitive and innovative solution to the long term retention of the dovecote which, while affecting its setting, has little impact on the integrity of the building itself.
- 5.10 The new house will not be visible from any public viewpoints within the conservation area and is not considered to detract from the setting of the dovecote or adjacent barns. However, the detailing of the building and the use of high quality materials will be extremely important if the scheme is to be successful. Nor is the proposal considered to compromise or harm the character and appearance of the designated Historic Park and Garden.

5.11 None of the trees which are proposed to be lost as part of the application are considered to make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area.

6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 *It is recommended that*

(i) *Planning application SUT/570/14 is permitted subject to the following conditions:*

1. *TL1 Time Limit - Full Application*
2. *RE22 Floor/Slab Levels (Dwellings)*
3. *RE7 Submission of Boundary Details*
4. *RE8 Submission of Drainage Details (Surface Water and Foul Sewage)*
5. *RE14 Garage Accommodation*
6. *LS4 Implementation of Landscaping Scheme (incorporating existing tree(s))
- to be submitted*
7. *LS9 Retention of Existing Trees/Hedges*
8. *LS12 Layout and Maintenance of Open Space*
9. *CN8 Submission of Full Details*
10. *MC2 Submission of Materials (Samples)*
11. *MC7 Submission of details of Windows/Doors, etc*
12. *MC11 Details of External Lighting*
13. *MC23 Removal of Existing Buildings (Specified) Prior to Commencement*
14. *Notwithstanding the submitted details and prior to work commencing on site, a plan showing the extent of the residential curtilage of the new dwelling shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the District Planning Authority. Thereafter, only this area shall be used as garden area for the new dwelling.*
15. *Prior to work commencing on site, a full schedule of works for the dovecote shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the District Planning Authority and thereafter all works to the dovecote shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved details.*

(ii) *Listed building application SUT/570/15-LB be granted consent subject to the following conditions:*

1. *TL4 Time Limit -Listed Building/Conservation Area Consent*
2. *MC2 Submission of Materials (Samples)*
3. *CN8 Submission of Full Details*
4. *MC7 Submission of details of Windows/Doors, etc*

5. *Prior to work commencing on site, a full schedule of works for the dovecote shall be submitted to and approved in writing but the District Planning Authority and thereafter all works to the dovecote shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved details.*