

NHI/5147/2 – Mr M Richardson.

Proposed first floor extension to side and rear. Subdivision to provide 2 x 1 bedroom and 2 x 2 bedroom flats with off street parking.

22 Laburnum Road, Botley (North Hinksey Parish).

1.0 The Proposal

- 1.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a first floor extension on the north and west sides of 22 Laburnum Road together with the conversion of the extended dwelling to create four flats.
- 1.2 The property is currently a semi-detached dwelling located on the western side of Laburnum Road, occupying a corner plot that also fronts onto Beech Road. It is bounded by similar dwellings to the west and south.
- 1.3 The proposed extension has been designed to incorporate the existing ground floor extension and would have a lower roof profile than the existing building when viewed from Beech Road. A copy of the plans showing the location of the proposal and its design are attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.4 The plans have been amended to correct a drafting error and ensure compliance with the 40 degree rule.
- 1.5 The application comes to Committee because several letters of objection have been received and the views of North Hinksey Parish Council differ from the recommendation.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 The ground floor side extension was granted permission in 1980. A further rear extension was granted permission in 1997.

3.0 Planning Policies

- 3.1 Policy H4 of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan provides for residential development within Botley.
- 3.2 Policy H11 confirms that the conversion or sub-division of properties into flats will be permitted provided the proposed units would be self contained, would have adequate amenity / living space and car parking provision, and would not undermine the established character of the area or the amenities of neighbouring properties.
- 3.3 Policies D1, D2 and D3 seek to ensure that all new development is of a high standard of design, does not cause harm to the amenity of neighbours and is acceptable in terms of highway safety.
- 3.4 Similar policies to those above have been included in the Second Deposit Draft Local Plan 2011. The corresponding policies are H9, H13, DC1, DC5 and DC9.

4.0 Consultations

- 4.1 North Hinksey Parish Council has objected to the application stating:

“1) Although the application met the onsite parking criteria of 1.5 spaces per unit of accommodation, this could only be achieved by having two cars parked in front of a row of four cars, meaning that the first two cars could only park or leave the property provided the back four vehicles were not parked onsite. 2) The proposals were considered to be an overdevelopment of the site. 3) Access would be from Beech Road, being near the junction with Laburnum Road and result in a number of highway safety issues. 4) Loss of a family home.”

4.2 County Engineer – no objections (subject to conditions).

4.3 Drainage Engineer – No objections.

4.4 Six letters of objection have been received and are summarised as follows:

- Flats are out of character with the rest of Laburnum Road.
- Due to the gradient of Laburnum Road, and the prominent location of no 22 on the corner, the proposal would have a much greater visual impact on the surrounding area.
- The proposal would have a detrimental effect on neighbouring properties in terms of privacy, noise disturbance, and odours from kitchens and bins.
- Tenants would have no responsibility to the property or surrounding inhabitants (This is not a material planning consideration).
- Parking is insufficient for the proposed development and will lead to on street parking. Parking in Beech Road is already a problem, and more accommodation will only add to it. Parking spaces are not to standard size.
- Proposal will lead to loss of trees.
- Construction work which could last for several months will be 'unbearable'.

5.0 Officer Comments

5.1 The main issues in this case are considered to be:

- 1) the principle of the development in this location:
- 2) the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, including its design;
- 3) the impact of the proposal on neighbouring properties; and
- 4) the safety of the access and parking arrangements.

5.2 On the first issue, Botley is a settlement that consists of a mixture of semi-detached / detached dwellings intermixed with blocks of flat accommodation. The area of Laburnum Road is predominantly suburban in its appearance with semi detached dwellings that are set back from the road frontage. The proposed residential units are not considered to be an inappropriate 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.

5.3 Regarding the second issue, the proposed extension in the form proposed is not considered to be out of keeping with the locality. Its siting is wholly within the grounds of the side and rear garden and when viewed from the public highway it is not considered to be out of keeping with other properties in the street scene, despite its slightly elevated position, given that the overall design of the extension proposed is subordinate to the existing dwelling.

5.4 Turning to the third issue, the impact upon neighbouring properties, it is considered that no harm would be caused to no. 24 Laburnum Road, which adjoins the site. The extension is not on the boundary with the adjoining semi-detached dwelling, for example, so any impact on loss of light or loss of privacy is not sufficiently harmful to warrant refusal. Impacts of noise on this property are not considered to be any more harmful than that which exists at present between the two semi-detached properties. Furthermore suitable mitigation measures and sound proofing can

be provided as a requirement of building regulations, if necessary, during construction of the proposal.

- 5.5 The proposed flats will also not cause significant harm to the amenities currently enjoyed by those properties in Beech Road in terms of overlooking rear gardens, as a similar relationship to that which currently exists with no. 22 will be maintained. Similarly, properties across from the site are considered to be far enough away so as not to be adversely affected. In the light of these factors, Officers consider any additional impact upon neighbouring properties to be acceptable.
- 5.6 On the final issue, the parking and access arrangements proposed are considered acceptable. The parking provision shown of 6 spaces is considered to be sufficient so as not to lead to an increase in on street parking, with 2 spaces for the 2 bed units and 1 space for the 1 bed units. For clarity, the 2 spaces in front of the 4 are 'tandem' spaces that would be in the same control as those directly behind. Concern over how they will work in practice, therefore, is considered to be unfounded. The County Engineer has also raised no objections to this arrangement.

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 *That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:*

- 1 *TL1 Time Limit - Full Application*
- 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 *MC20 – Amended plans*