

ABG/10185/2-X – Mr D Rollinson
Erection of 2 detached dwellings with associated garaging, parking and upgrading of access drive.
7A Chandlers Close, Abingdon, OX14 2NN

1.0 The Proposal

1.1 This is a proposal to erect 2 dwellings in the garden of 7A Chandlers Close. It is an outline application with accompanying illustrative plans, and access and layout are due for consideration at this stage. The application is a resubmission of a scheme that was refused in May 2008 under delegated authority. The illustrative plans show changes to the layout in order to address the reasons for refusal. The key changes are:

- Reduction in size of plots 1 and 3 to allow better separation between the dwellings.
- Access drive to plot 3 is shortened, to reduce the exposure of the houses on Chandlers Close to traffic noise.
- Configuration of plot 3 altered and set back in its plot to allow an improved relationship with no 12 Chandlers Close.
- Detailed changes and alterations to the existing house (plot 2) to create more neighbourly relationships with the new dwellings.

1.2 The site is a large plot that is situated to the rear (west) and behind the rear gardens of nos. 6 to 11 Chandlers Close. The existing house is sited centrally on the plot, but is perpendicular to the orientation of the other houses. The site is accessed from the east via a drive between nos 7 and 8 Chandlers Close. To the north lies no 12 Chandlers Close, an end of terrace property. To the west and south lie the rear gardens of properties in St Peter's Road.

1.3 A copy of the illustrative plans showing the location of the site, how the site could potentially be developed and extracts of the supporting information are attached at **Appendix 1**. A copy of the previously refused plans, together with the decision notice, are attached at **Appendix 2**.

1.4 The application comes to Committee because numerous letters of objection have been received and Abingdon Town Council objects to the proposal.

2.0 Planning History

2.1 Planning permission was granted in 1988 for an extension to the existing dwelling. An outline application for 2 dwellings was refused in May 2008.

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 H10 (development in the five main settlements) enables new housing development within the built-up area of Abingdon, provided it makes efficient use of land, the layout, mass and design of the dwellings would not harm the character of the

area and it does not involve the loss of facilities important to the local community (i.e. informal public open space).

- 3.3 Policies DC1, DC5 and DC9 (quality of new development) are relevant and seek to ensure that all new development is of a high standard of design / landscaping, is acceptable in terms of highway safety and does not cause harm to the amenity of neighbours.
- 3.4 PPS3, "Housing", is also relevant and reiterates the key objective of developing previously developed sites within urban areas, where suitable, ahead of greenfield sites and making the most effective and efficient use of land. It also comments on the importance of design, in that proposed development should complement the neighbouring buildings and the local area in general in terms of scale, density, layout and access.

4.0 **Consultations**

- 4.1 Abingdon Town Council objects to the application stating "The application would be harmful to the character of the locality, giving an over-dominant impact and is unneighbourly; there is inadequate parking and the turning head of the road would become inadequate for emergency access; the application would lead to a loss of privacy, daylight and sunlight to neighbouring properties. The application still has inadequate garden and private amenity space. The development would generate surface water runoff and increase the risk of flooding. As such the application is contrary to policies H10 ii, H14 i, Dc1, DC9, DC5, DC14 of the Vale of White Horse Adopted Local Plan 2011".
- 4.2 County Engineer –no objections, subject to conditions.
- 4.3 Principal Drainage Engineer – no objections, subject to conditions.
- 4.4 Waste Management Team – no objections.
- 4.5 19 letters of objection have been received from local residents raising the following issues:–
- Revised proposal does not address previous concerns. The changes are very minor and this scheme should also be refused.
 - Overdevelopment of the site leading to a cramped development that is out of character with the locality.
 - Loss of privacy / light to neighbouring dwellings from likely positioning of dwellings. Proposal will also cut out afternoon / evening sun.
 - Light pollution will arise from these additional dwellings.
 - Construction noise / disturbance will be harmful to residents.
 - Noise disturbance will arise from increase in traffic to the rear of existing properties.
 - Concern over air pollution from additional traffic movements.
 - Substandard access for 3 dwellings and additional traffic will be harmful to highway safety.
 - Existing on-street parking is a significant problem in this road. The proposed dwellings will only add to this, as no on site visitor parking is proposed.

- Existing service infrastructure in the road is worn out and needs replacing. There are frequent power cuts and it cannot cope with additional demand. New dwellings will compound this on going problem.
- The proposed bin store location will block the access, and HGV refuse vehicles could not enter the site.
- The dwellings will result in the loss of garden space which helps discharge surface water in the locality. It is likely this proposal will therefore cause flooding.
- The revised siting of plot 3 is worse than previously proposed in terms of impact on No 12 Chandlers Close.
- The proposal will result in the loss of trees on the boundary.

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 scale and layout, 3) the impact of the proposal on neighbouring properties, 4) the safety of the access and parking arrangements, and 5) drainage.
- 5.2 On the first issue, Abingdon is identified in the Local Plan as an area that can accommodate new housing development providing the layout, mass and design would not harm the character of the area (Policy H10). PPS 3 'Housing' also makes it a priority to use previously developed land in urban areas for new housing (i.e. including gardens), although it does say that not all previously developed land is necessarily suitable for housing development. The principle of a development of detached dwellings in the manner proposed, therefore, is considered acceptable and appropriate in this location.
- 5.3 Regarding the second issue, this revised proposal is not considered to be harmful to the character of the locality. The illustrative drawings show a layout and scale that could be designed to fit with the grain of the area, and at a density of 19 dwellings per hectare such an approach is not considered to be an overdevelopment of the site. The suggested layout of the dwellings is set centrally within the site, which minimises their impact on the character of the area given the surrounding 2 storey housing that borders the site. The likely size and heights of the proposed dwellings are also considered acceptable on the basis that other 2 storey dwellings exist in the vicinity and their footprint is similar to the proposed dwellings. As such the development in the form proposed is not considered to be out of keeping with the locality. The proposed garden space for each dwelling is also considered acceptable.
- 5.4 Turning to the third issue, the impact on neighbouring properties, the properties most affected will be those that adjoin the site. Whilst the detailed design of the development is a reserved matter, it is considered that a scheme could be designed to avoid direct overlooking of adjoining dwellings and any harmful impact in terms of light / privacy/ security.
- 5.5 The original scheme was considered to have an adverse impact on Nos. 8, 9 and 10 Chandlers Close through noise and disturbance from the extended access drive running along their rear boundaries. This revised proposal has reduced the length of the access drive behind these properties so that cars for plot 3 will now be parked where the existing garage (to be demolished) is sited. As such, Officers consider this particular impact has been satisfactorily addressed.

- 5.6 In respect of addressing the harm to no 12 Chandlers Close, the revisions to plot 3 have significantly reduce the impact on this property. The illustrative plans show single storey elements that reduce the likely massing and dominance of this dwelling close to the boundary. As such, your Officers consider that any dominating impact or overshadowing / loss of light arising from this proposal would not be sufficiently harmful to warrant refusal. The side window in the gable of no 12 is a secondary window to the living room and, as such, any loss of light to this window would not be unduly harmful.
- 5.7 The proposal also seeks alterations to the existing dwelling (no. 7A). On the previous proposal, Officers had concern over the likely impact arising from the siting of plot 1 immediately south of the existing dwelling. Plot 1 has now been reduced in size so that it is sited further south of no 7A Chandlers Close, and the proposed changes to the fenestration of the existing dwelling are considered to overcome the previous concern.
- 5.8 On the issue of parking and access, the proposed arrangements are considered acceptable. The parking provision shown provides 2 spaces for each dwelling within the site which is considered sufficient. Furthermore, the existing access is considered acceptable in terms of highway safety. Consequently, the County Engineer has no objections to the proposal.
- 5.9 On the issue of surface water drainage, the proposal is not considered to be of a scale that would overburden the existing drainage infrastructure. Furthermore, your Officers are not aware of particular flooding problems in this locality, and the Principal Drainage Engineer has raised no objection to this proposal. Permeable surfacing of the proposed parking areas can be required by condition (see condition 5).

6.0 **Recommendation**

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

1. *TL2 – Outline Time Limit*
2. *OL2 – Reserved Matters*
3. *MC2 – Sample materials*
4. *RE7 – Boundary treatment*
5. *HY3 – Access in accordance with specified plan*
6. *HY25 – Car parking layout (Building) with permeable surface*
7. *RE3 – PD rights removed.*
8. *Details of SUDS scheme to be submitted.*
9. *No development shall commence until the proposed alterations to no 7A Chandlers Close have been completed.*