

ABG/5566/2 – Mr R Hill

Erection of 1 attached dwelling including part demolition of existing garage. 11 Chandlers Close, Abingdon, OX14 2NN

1.0 The Proposal

- 1.1 This is a proposal to erect a 2 bedroom dwelling on the side garden of 11 Chandlers Close. It is a full application and is a resubmission of a scheme that was refused in May 2008 under delegated authority.
- 1.2 The site is a corner plot that is situated to the northern end of the Close. The existing house, lying to the south, is a link detached dwelling. The proposed dwelling has been designed to replicate this arrangement, being attached to the garage. To the north lies the road, which wraps around the site to give access to nos. 12 – 19 Chandlers Close, which lie further north and to the rear (west).
- 1.3 The plans have been amended to take account of comments from the County Engineer. A copy of the plans (as originally submitted and amended) showing the location of the site, the style and design of the dwelling and extracts of the supporting information are attached at **Appendix 1**. A copy of the previously refused plans, together with the decision notice is 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 1980 for a new boundary wall. An outline application for a dwelling 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 “We consider the application is an overdevelopment of the site and therefore contrary to Policy DC1 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011. The Council is also concerned that parking is a problem for this site and would add to a parking problem which already exists there. As such the proposal is contrary to DC5 ii & iv of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011. The Town Council also wish to see that any hard standing surfaces are compliant with Policy DC14 of the Vale’s Local Plan 2011.”
- 4.2 County Engineer – (Original Plans) – “The development proposes a new 2 bed dwelling with 2 off street parking spaces. The driveway proposes to accommodate both parking spaces; however, Highway Authority standards recommend that parking spaces are minimum dimensions of 2.4m x 4.8m. The length of the driveway would therefore need to be 9.6m. The natural curve of the road suggests that this length is not achievable at the driveway’s shortest point. There is therefore a risk for parked vehicles to encroach onto the footpath / highway, at a detriment to highway safety. Given the lack of public transport provision within easy walking distance, the Highway Authority recommends that 2 off street parking spaces are provided. The site is also located on a bend, and any vehicles parked on street are likely to be a further detriment to highway safety.”
- 4.3 County Engineer (Amended Plans) – “The revised plans meet Oxfordshire County parking standards. The Highway Authority therefore offers no objections to the proposed development”.
- 4.4 9 letters of objection have been received from local residents raising the following issues:–
- Revised proposal does not address previous concerns / refusal reason. 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.
 - The plot is too small for a dwelling. The revised plans leave too small a garden to serve no 11 Chandlers Close.
 - Loss of privacy / light to neighbouring dwellings.
 - Existing on-street parking is a significant problem in this road. The proposed dwelling will only add to this.
 - The proposal fails to provide adequate off street parking for both the existing and proposed dwellings. The proposed tandem parking is too short for 2 vehicles and they will hang over the footpath.
 - The proposed vehicle access on a bend is considered to be dangerous.
 - Construction noise / disturbance will be harmful to residents.
 - Existing service infrastructure in the road is worn out and needs replacing. There are frequent power cuts and it cannot cope with additional demand. A further new dwelling will compound this on going problem. (This is not a material planning consideration).
 - The proposal 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.

4.5 Councillor Alison Rooke has objected to the application, stating “Being located on a 90 degree blind corner, this new building would be a danger to motorists, pedestrians and playing children alike. It is clear to me from his comments that the Highways Engineer has not actually visited Chandlers Close and seen the amount of traffic and children present in the evenings and weekends - the presence of a drive exit on a sharp blind bend is obviously very dangerous. The application's Assessment section states that the Close is 'in the heart of Peachcroft' - it is not, it is on the edge. The now granted outline application for 2 additional dwellings at 7A Chandlers Close makes the very real worries about the Close's infrastructure's ability to cope with extra run off and drainage demands even more important to consider. At the very least I ask that any hard standing would be constructed of permeable materials. I realise and accept that this is a separate application in its own right, but I would ask that the new outline situation at 7A is taken into account when determining this application as they have a very real co-relationship.”

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, massing and design, 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 developing a link-detached dwelling in the manner proposed, therefore, is considered an acceptable and appropriate form of development 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 accompanying the original refused scheme showed a much larger dwelling than that now proposed, and one that was set further back in the plot to allow for frontage parking. The likely siting of the dwelling on the illustrative drawing was considered to be particularly harmful to the character and appearance of the locality. In addressing this concern, the applicant has relocated the required parking to the north of the site, and has sited the proposed dwelling more in line with the existing row of linked dwellings on this part of the Close. This also allows for a larger rear garden for the new dwelling, which is considered to preserve the spatial relationship of the immediate locality. Furthermore, the proposed design of the dwelling is similar to existing dwellings, and is similar in terms of eaves and ridge heights. Its footprint on the site is also commensurate with neighbouring dwellings. As such, the development in the form now proposed is not considered to be out of keeping with the locality and satisfactorily overcomes the previous reason for refusal. The proposed garden space for each dwelling is also considered acceptable.

5.4 Turning to the third issue, the siting and design of the new dwelling avoids direct overlooking of adjacent dwellings and any impact on neighbours' light, privacy or and security is not considered harmful, especially given the distances between the existing and proposed dwellings. For example, no12 Chandlers Close (to the rear) lies approximately 25m away and No19 (to the north) is 20m away. Furthermore, any

areas overlooked are publicly fronted areas, where the degree of privacy is naturally less than rear garden areas.

- 5.5 On the issue of parking and access, the proposed arrangements are considered acceptable. The parking provision, as amended, provides 2 spaces for each dwelling which is considered sufficient. Furthermore, the new access is considered acceptable in terms of highway safety. Consequently, the County Engineer has no objections to the proposal.
- 5.6 On the issue of drainage, the proposal is not considered to be of a size that would overwhelm the existing network. Furthermore, your Officers are not aware of particular flooding problems in this locality, and the Drainage Engineer has raised no objection to this proposal. Permeable surfacing of the proposed parking areas can be required by condition (see condition 5).
- 5.7 With regard to the comments made by Councillor Alison Rooke regarding the recently approved scheme at No 7a Chandlers Close, the key issue is that each proposal must be considered on its own merits. In this case, there is considered to be no material planning harm arising from the proposed development, and the grant of outline planning permission of No 7a has no direct bearing on that assessment.

6.0 **Recommendation**

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

1. *TL1 – Time Limit*
2. *MC2 – Sample materials*
3. *RE7 – Boundary treatment*
4. *HY3 – Access in accordance with specified plan*
5. *HY24 – Car parking layout (Dwelling) with permeable surface*
6. *RE3 – PD rights removed.*
7. *Details of SUDS scheme to be submitted.*