

WAN/20566/1-X – Mr Roger Smith
Outline application for the erection of three two-storey dwellings.
49 Charlton Road, Wantage, OX12 8HJ.

1.0 The Proposal

- 1.1 This application seeks outline planning permission for the erection of 3 dwellings on land adjacent and to the rear of 49 Charlton Road, Wantage with all matters reserved for subsequent approval.
- 1.2 The application is accompanied by illustrative plans showing the retention of the existing dwelling at the front of the site, a detached dwelling adjacent to this also fronting the site, and a pair of link-detached dwellings to the rear.
- 1.3 The site would be accessed via the existing access onto Charlton Road, which would extend into the site along the western boundary to serve the proposed dwellings to the rear.
- 1.4 The site currently forms a large garden to 49 Charlton Road laid mainly to lawn with some fruit trees.
- 1.5 Extracts of the application drawings are at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.6 The application comes to Committee as the Town Council objects and at the request of the Local Member Cllr Julia Reynolds.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 A previous application for 3 dwellings on the site with alternative illustrative plans showing a central access and larger properties to the rear was withdrawn in August 2008.

3.0 Planning Policies

- 3.1 Policy H10 of the adopted Local Plan enables new housing development within the Wantage development boundary as defined on the Proposals Map providing it would not result in the loss of public open space and it makes efficient use of land without harming the character of the area.
- 3.2 Policy H15 recommends minimum densities for residential development in the District.
- 3.3 Policies DC1, DC5 and DC9 relate to the design of new development, access and parking considerations, and impact on neighbouring properties.

4.0 Consultations

- 4.1 Wantage Town Council objects to the application stating: “The proposal is an overdevelopment of the site and is un-neighbourly. This will result in the lack of privacy for the surrounding properties and will result in a loss of amenity for the occupier of 51 Charlton Road. The proposal is back land development and could have an impact on surface water drainage of adjacent properties.”

One of the Local Members, Cllr Julia Reynolds has requested that the application comes to Committee stating: “there are two letters of objection, Wantage Town Council has objected to this application on the grounds that the new houses at the back are very close to the boundary of no. 51 which has an extremely narrow garden (only 22ft) and there is a danger of overshadowing and overbearing and also a potential loss of privacy and loss of enjoyment of garden for no. 51. The existing house and the new house on the front will have very small gardens out of proportion to the size of the dwellings. The amount of hard standing and tarmac on this site create dangers of flooding and/or making adjoining gardens waterlogged.”

4.2 The County Engineer has raised no objections subject to conditions and a contribution of £1500 towards transport infrastructure improvements in the area.

4.3 4 Letters of objection have been received from or on behalf of neighbouring properties raising the following concerns:

- Over development of the site.
- Over dominance of neighbouring properties.
- Loss of privacy for neighbouring properties.
- The proposed trees will overshadow the neighbouring garden.
- Increase in traffic creating noise and disturbance.
- The hard standing area will add to drainage problems in the area.
- The proposal will result in the loss of valuable green space in Wantage.
- Loss of light to neighbouring gardens.
- There has already been significant development in Charlton Road.
- The proposal will add to congestion on Charlton Road.

5.0 **Officer Comments**

5.1 This is an outline application with all matters reserved for subsequent approval. Therefore, the main issues to consider in determining this application are: i) The principle of additional development in this location; and ii) whether 3 additional houses can be accommodated on the site without detriment to the character of the area or neighbour amenity. In addition to the above issues the report will consider the suitability of the illustrative plans in terms of the character of the area, neighbour amenity and highway safety.

5.2 Policy H10 of the adopted Local Plan enables new housing development within the Wantage development boundary as shown on the Proposals Map providing the development does not result in the loss of informal public open space and the proposal makes efficient use of land without detriment to the character of the area. The site is currently the curtilage of no 49 Charlton Road and is largely screened from public view by the existing dwelling, garage and vegetation. In addition, the area is mainly residential in character. Your Officers, therefore, consider that the principle of residential development in this location is acceptable.

5.3 The addition of 3 dwellings on the site would result in an overall density of around 35 dwellings per hectare (dph). In this edge of centre location, Policy H15 recommends a minimum density of around 40 dph. Your Officers however consider that, given the character of the immediate area of larger detached and semi detached properties, 35dph is acceptable and that a higher density would be likely to have a detrimental impact on the character of the area. The proposal for 3 dwellings, in your Officer’s opinion, can be accommodated on the site in addition to the existing dwelling, without

detriment to the character of the area whilst retaining a sufficient distance from neighbouring properties so as not to cause undue problems of over shadowing, overdominance or overlooking.

- 5.4 The submitted illustrative plans indicate an additional detached dwelling to the front of the site adjacent to the existing house, and a pair of link-detached dwellings to the rear with associated parking and garaging.
- 5.5 The plot is much wider than neighbouring properties providing adequate space to accommodate an additional dwelling fronting Charlton Road with access to the side without appearing cramped in the street scene. The sketch design of this unit is similar to the existing dwelling and others in the vicinity of the site and is set away from the boundary with no. 45 – it is, therefore, is considered acceptable in terms of design approach and relationship to the neighbouring dwelling.
- 5.6 Significant concern has been raised by the Town Council and neighbouring properties in relation to the proposed dwellings to the rear of the site. These are shown on the illustrative plans located towards the rear of the site. The design is that of a barn type approach with timer cladding and a relatively low eaves height of around 3.7 metres with dormer windows. Plot 2 is set 2.5 metres from the boundary with no 45 and around 12 metres away from the rear of that dwelling. The windows are set in around 6 metres from the boundary facing directly forward, therefore any views towards the neighbour's garden would be at an oblique angle. Plot 3 is set around 1 metre from the boundary with no 51 but is around 20 metres from the rear of the dwelling and again windows face directly down the site and with only oblique views of the neighbour.
- 5.7 Plots 2 and 3 would be located north east and north west of the two immediate neighbours and, therefore, would not result in any significant loss of light. The scheme includes two flat roof garages on the boundary with each neighbour. However, these are approximately 2.7 metres in height and, although located closer to the neighbour's dwellings themselves, would not be significantly higher than a 2m high permitted fence or wall.
- 5.8 The site access is shown in the same place as existing with parking to the front to serve plot 1 and no 49 as existing. The access then extends adjacent to the western boundary to the rear of the site to serve plots 2 and 3. A landscaped buffer is shown along the site boundary to help protect the amenity of no 45. The County Engineer has raised no objections to the scheme in principle, subject to a contribution towards transport infrastructure. Your officer's consider however that there are no policy grounds on which to require contributions on scheme's of this size and other similar proposals in the area have not had to contribute to transport infrastructure. Such a request would therefore be unreasonable in this case.
- 5.9 Whilst the drawings are only illustrative, your Officers consider that a proposal along the lines shown would be acceptable on the site. There is no doubt that the proposal would have an impact on neighbouring properties, however this is not considered to be sufficiently harmful to justify refusing the scheme should it be submitted in this form at the reserved matters stage.
- 5.10 Concerns have been expressed in relation to the large area of hard standing and the impact on drainage. However the surface can be conditioned to be permeable.

5.11 Another concern relates to the large trees shown along the rear of the site. The drawings are illustrative only and any final scheme would be subject to the requirement of a full landscaping scheme.

6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 *It is recommended that outline planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:*

1. *TL2 Time Limit - Outline Application*
2. *OL1 Standard Outline Condition*
3. *RE8 Submission of Drainage Details (Surface Water and Foul Sewage)*