

Site Address: 2 Exton Cottages, Station Road, Ardley, OX27 7PD

13/01413/F

Ward: Caversfield

District Councillor: Cllr Jon O'Neill

Case Officer: Gemma Magnuson

Recommendation: Approval

Applicant: Mr Jon O'Neill

Application Description: Alteration and extension of existing dwellinghouse

Committee Referral: Applicant is a Councillor

Committee date: 28 November 2013

1. Site Description and Proposed Development

- 1.1 2 Exton Cottages is a semi-detached dwelling situated within a cul-de-sac south-east of the village of Ardley, adjacent to Ardley Road. The dwelling is a locally listed building. The site is within the Ardley Conservation Area.
- 1.2 The proposed development would involve the erection of single storey extensions to the front, side and rear of the existing dwelling. The extension to the front would have a pitched roof and replace the existing canopy above the front door to create a lobby and new entrance. The extension to the side would be more substantial, having a pitched roof and measuring 7.8 metres in length to reach the original boundary of the curtilage. It is understood that a strip of land is to be transferred from Foxfields House to the east to enable a pedestrian access to the garden to be formed. The rear extension would have a lean-to roof and sit between the rear boundary and the dwelling itself to form a store and lobby. This would replace an existing single storey element of the dwelling.
- 1.3 The side and rear extensions would replace the existing close boarded fence that marks the boundary with Ardley Road. A 1 metre fence and gate is proposed upon the western most section of the rear boundary to provide pedestrian access to the rear lobby. The remainder would consist of cedar weatherboard cladding (rear extension) and limestone rubble (side extension) walls. Conservation grade rooflights would be positioned within the lean-to roof of the rear extension and the pitched roof of the side extension. The roofs would be constructed from tile. The openings would be constructed from timber.

2. Application Publicity

- 2.1 The application has been advertised by way of neighbour letter, site notice and press notice. The final date for comment was 07 November 2013. One letter has been received as a result of the consultation process, the following issues were raised:
 - Strong objection from owner/occupier of 3 Exton Cottages to extension of Lobby 1 (front extension) as it will block light from entrance and hallway, and will severely encroach on their building.

3. Consultations

Cherwell District Council Consultees (in summary)

- 3.2 Conservation Officer: No objection subject to conditions and the removal of 4 no. rooflights from the northern facing roofslope of the side extension. *Amended plans*

were received on 29 October 2013 to show the removal of the rooflights.

3.3 Arboricultural Officer: No objection, subject to conditions.

Oxfordshire County Council Consultees

3.4 Highway Authority: concern regarding possible parking on Ardley Road.

Other Consultees

3.6 None.

4. Relevant National and Local Policy and Guidance

4.1 Development Plan Policy

Adopted Cherwell Local Plan (Saved Policies)

C28: Layout, design and external appearance of new development
C30: Design of new residential development

4.2 Other Material Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

Submission Local Plan (October 2013)

The Proposed Submission Local Plan was published for public consultation in August 2012. A further consultation on Proposed Changes to the draft plan was undertaken from March to May 2013. On 7 October 2013, the draft Submission Plan was approved by the Council's Executive. The Plan was presented to Full Council on 21 October 2013 and Full Council endorsed it as the Submission Local Plan. Submission to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government is anticipated by the end of November 2013. The Submission Plan supersedes previous stages of the emerging Local Plan.

Full Council also endorsed the recommendations to:

- Note that the Infrastructure tables in the draft Local Plan are to be replaced in due course by a full Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) prior to Examination.

- Delegate approval of minor text changes (including updating the thematic maps and final Monitoring Framework) to the draft Submission Local Plan text to the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and its transfer in its publication format for Submission.

At the present time the emerging Plan carries weight, however it will not form part of the statutory Development Plan until the Examination process is complete and the Plan is formally adopted by the Council (anticipated mid 2014).

Policy ESD16: Character of the built and historic environment

5. Appraisal

5.1 The key issues for consideration in this application are:

- Relevant planning history
- Visual amenity, including the Conservation Area and locally listed building
- Neighbour impact
- Highway safety

Relevant planning history

5.2 Relevant planning history includes Application Ref: 97/01921/F that gained planning permission on 16 December 1997 to divide the existing cottage, Exton Cottage, to form two separate cottages. No permitted development rights were removed from the property as part of this decision.

Visual Amenity, including the Conservation Area and locally listed building

5.3 Policies C28 and C30 seek to control all new development to ensure the layout, design and external appearance of new development is sympathetic to the character of the area and in sensitive areas such as a Conservation Area, development will be required to be of a high standard and the use of traditional local building materials will normally be required.

5.4 Government guidance contained within the NPPF – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment, states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 56 of the NPPF expressly states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design, is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

5.5 The Ardley Conservation Area Appraisal (August 2005) states that Exton Cottage is a locally listed building and is noted as contributing significantly to the Conservation Area due to its location, orientation and construction materials used (para. 4.7.7). One of the proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area includes *the “tidying up of sheds backing onto land west of Ardley Road”* (para. 5.6).

5.6 2 Exton Cottages currently turns its back to Ardley Road, with no first floor openings in the two storey stone wall that runs parallel with the boundary fence. The orientation of the building is mentioned in the Conservation Area Appraisal as contributing significantly to the Conservation Area, together with its prominent corner location and traditional construction materials. It is considered that the relationship between 2 Exton Cottage and Ardley Road would be sustained as a result of the development, with no openings proposed to face towards Ardley Road and the walls of the extensions replacing the fence. The construction materials would continue to be both traditional and sympathetic to the locality.

5.7 The tidying up of the existing store and sheds at this site has been specifically noted in the Conservation Area Appraisal as a possible future enhancement to the Conservation Area. It is therefore considered that the removal of the sheds and their replacement with sympathetically designed extensions would be in line with the proposal set out in the Conservation Area Appraisal and would serve to enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 5.8 The front lobby would represent a minor addition to the existing building measuring L1.9m x W2.3m x H3.6m, replacing an existing canopy extending 70cm from the building. The lobby would be discreetly positioned in a corner when viewed from within the turning area serving Exton Cottages and is not visually prominent. The impact upon the Conservation Area is therefore considered to be minimal.
- 5.9 The extensions would be positioned in close proximity to 2 no. trees in the Conservation Area, although the Arboricultural Officer has raised no objection.
- 5.10 The sustainment and enhancement of the locally listed building and Conservation Area is considered to accord with Government intentions for heritage assets as set out in the NPPF.
- 5.11 It is considered that the proposed extensions would represent sympathetic and proportionate additions to the existing building; being of single storey height, in-keeping in terms of design and construction materials, and sitting comfortably within the curtilage of the property, and that they would not result in significant harm to the visual amenities of the wider locality, in accordance with Government guidance contained within the NPPF and saved Policies C28 and C30 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan in terms of amenity.

Neighbour Impact

- 5.12 Saved Policy C30 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan states that design control will be exercised to ensure that any proposal for the extension of an existing dwelling provides standards of amenity and privacy acceptable to the Local Planning Authority.
- 5.13 The proposed extensions are all single storey in height with ground floor openings facing towards the rear garden of 3 Exton Cottages. A timber close boarded fence marks this boundary and would prevent a loss of privacy as a result of these openings. The rooflights would be high level and set at an angle, and it is not considered that they would result in significant overlooking.
- 5.14 In terms of amenity, the side extension would be positioned in close proximity to the blank rear elevation of an outbuilding at Foxfields House to the east. This is adjacent to the area of land that would be transferred from Foxfields House to 2 Exton Cottages as part of the development. It is not considered that any harm to amenity for this neighbour would result.
- 5.15 The side extension would be positioned 5 metres from the boundary shared between the site and neighbouring 3 Exton Cottages to the south at its closest point. Due to the single storey height of the extension and separating distance from the boundary, it is considered that no harm would be caused to the amenity enjoyed by this neighbour from this element of the proposal.
- 5.16 No neighbours are positioned to the north of the site that could be affected by the development, and the rear and front extensions are a sufficient distance from adjoining 1 Exton Cottages to avoid harm.
- 5.17 The front lobby extension would be positioned in close proximity to the shared boundary between the site and 3 Exton Cottages to the south. It is understood that the existing boundary fence would be retained as part of the proposal. The extension would introduce a blank wall in close proximity to a ground floor entrance door and hallway. As a hallway is not a habitable room, and considering the current relationship of this entrance door in close proximity to 2 Exton Cottages, it is not considered that a refusal of the application on the grounds of significant harm to the

- living amenities of this neighbour could be either justified or sustained at Appeal.
- 5.18 The proposed development is not considered to present significant harm to the any neighbouring property in terms of a loss of amenity or privacy, in accordance with Government guidance contained within the NPPF and saved Policy C30 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.

Highway Safety

- 5.19 The proposed development would involve the creation of 2 no. pedestrian accesses to the property taken from the verge adjacent to Ardley Road, a Classified Road. Oxfordshire County Council Highway Authority have been consulted and have raised concerns regarding possible parking of vehicles on Ardley Road and the use of the rear access instead of the front.
- 5.20 However, as the creation of a pedestrian access onto a Classified Road is considered to constitute permitted development, there is nothing to prevent the occupant of 2 Exton Cottages parking here at present and as the proposed development would not affect existing parking arrangements, the imposition of a Condition regarding parking at the site cannot not be justified.
- 5.21 The gates are shown to open inwards into the site rather than out across the highway verge and the imposition of a Condition requiring this is therefore not considered necessary.

Engagement

- 5.22 With regard to the duty set out in paragraphs 186 and 187 of the Framework, it is considered that the duty to be positive and proactive has been discharged through discussion of the proposal with the Agent resulting in the submission of amended plans.

Conclusion

- 5.23 To conclude, it is considered that the proposed extensions would not present substantial harm to the historic significance of the locally listed building or the Conservation Area. Further, the extensions would not cause significant harm to the amenity or privacy currently enjoyed by neighbouring properties, or the visual amenities of the wider locality, in accordance with Government guidance contained within the NPPF and saved Policies C28 and C30 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.

6. Recommendation

Approval, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development to which this permission relates shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason - To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Except where otherwise stipulated by condition, the application shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the following plans and documents: Application forms, Design and Access Statement and drawing number: 1012 4D received in the department on 07/11/13.

Reason - For the avoidance of doubt, to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority and to comply with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a schedule of materials and finishes for the external walls and roof(s), including samples, of the development hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved schedule.

Reason - To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development and to comply with Policy C28 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of Classes A, B and C of Part 1, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No. 2) (England) Order 1995 and its subsequent amendments, no new window(s) or other openings, other than those shown on the approved plans, shall be inserted in the walls or roof of the extensions without the prior express planning consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason – To ensure and retain the satisfactory appearance of the completed development and to comply with Policy C28 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

STATEMENT OF ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No 2) Order 2012 and paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012), this decision has been taken by the Council having worked with the applicant/agent in a positive and proactive way as set out in the application report.

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