

West Area Planning Committee

22nd July 2014

Application Number: 14/00962/FUL

Decision Due by: 3rd June 2014

Proposal: Erection of two storey extension to rear and side elevations. Erection of double garage. Roof alterations, insertion of 1 no dormer window and 2 no velux windows to rear roof slope and rear gable projection. Re-arranged parking. New gate and railings to street frontage.

Site Address: 16 Crick Road (Appendix 1)

Ward: North Ward

Agent: Mr Henry Venners

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Patrick Moisy

Application Called in – by Councillors – Upton, Fry, Pressel and Curran for the following reasons – Overdevelopment and scale of the extensions being sought in the area.

Recommendation:

APPLICATION BE APPROVED

For the following reasons:

- 1 The proposed extensions are considered to be of a form, scale and appearance that preserve the special character and appearance of the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area without causing significant harm to the amenity enjoyed by occupiers of neighbouring properties. Consequently, the proposals accord with policies CP1, CP8, CP9, CP10, HE7 and HS19 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, policy CS18 of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026 as well as policies HP9 and HP14 of the Sites and Housing Plan Submission document.
- 2 Officers have considered carefully all objections to these proposals. Officers have come to the view, for the detailed reasons set out in the officers report, that the objections do not amount, individually or cumulatively, to a reason for refusal and that all the issues that have been raised have been adequately addressed and the relevant bodies consulted.
- 3 The Council considers that the proposal accords with the policies of the development plan as summarised below. It has taken into consideration all other material matters, including matters raised in response to consultation and publicity. Any material harm that the development would otherwise give rise to can be offset by the conditions imposed.

subject to the following conditions, which have been imposed for the reasons stated:-

- 1 Development begun within time limit
- 2 Develop in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Brick Samples
- 4 Further details of railings
- 5 Arch - Implementation of programme
- 6 Landscape plan required
- 7 Tree Protection Plan (TPP) 1
- 8 tree protection measures
- 9 SUDs
- 10 Biodiversity
- 11 Obscure glass

Main Planning Policies:

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016:

- CP1 - Development Proposals
- CP6 - Efficient Use of Land & Density
- CP8 - Design Development to Relate to its Context
- CP10 - Siting Development to Meet Functional Needs
- HE7 - Conservation Areas

Core Strategy:

- CS18 - Urban design, town character, historic environment
- CS11 - Flooding
- NE16 - Protected Trees

Sites and Housing Plan:

- HP9 - Design, Character and Context
- HP14 - Privacy and Daylight
- MP1 - Model Policy

Other Material Considerations:

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Application is within the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area.

Relevant Site History:

None.

Public consultation

Statutory Consultees:

None.

Third Party Comments Received:

Oxford Architectural and Historic Society Victorian Group, Oxford Preservation Trust, 15 Crick Road, Linton Road Residents Association, and Norham Road Residents Associations, the following comments are summarised below: -

- Overbearing and excessively large size of the proposed kitchen and side elevation plans which will impinge on privacy and impact on our outlook;
- Out of character with the original layout of the area's Victorian gardens and with the unique rural and architectural beauty specific to Norham Manor.
- The extension to the side of the house is too large.
- This application also needs to reconsider the design of the railings that are proposed for the front boundary. The design and access statement discusses the OPT and Oxford City Council Project to reinstate the North Oxford Railings, however the choice of railings design needs to better follow the guidance given.
- The proposed extensions add 44% to the existing house. The change from a simple single-storey garage to a 3-storey block presents a threatening aspect to no. 15. The gap between the garage and the wall of no.15 is already small and will be decreased.
- This is another example of purchasers buying a substantial house in a conservation area and then squeezing as much additional accommodation into the plot as possible.
- It is most regrettable that there has been a series of applications for extensions in recent years, almost all of which have been approved. This is changing the appearance of North Oxford irremediably. We should like to draw attention to the garage on the west side of the house. It is exceedingly rare for a garage in North Oxford to be an enhancement of the house, but this one is. The brickwork not only matches that of the house, but is carefully coursed in with it, and the bargeboards are attractive. This garage should certainly not be destroyed.
- It is again remarkable that the rear elevation has been more or less unaltered since the house was built. We deplore the proposal to mutilate it in such an inappropriate manner.
- The railings proposed to go along the street are of unsuitable design and should not be permitted.
- This specific application should be refused on the grounds that it does not preserve a sufficient gap between the house and the edge of the property. As an alternative, a lower extension on the same footprint might be acceptable - i.e. only allowing extension of the ground floor.
- There should not be brick piers on either side of the gateway. Generally speaking, brick gateway piers are only found on some of the larger houses in the conservation area, notably in Banbury and Woodstock Roads.

Determining Issues:

- Impact on the conservation area
- Impact on neighbouring amenity
- Archaeology
- Biodiversity
- Trees

Officers' Assessment:

Site Description

1. The application site relates to a detached Victorian three storey house set within the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area. It was built in 1873 by Galpin and Shirley along with No.17 next door. The two houses were designed to mirror each other and placed close to each other, but with wider gaps on the further sides. The symmetry of the pair of houses has been lost by the unattractive flat roof two-storey side extension of no. 17. The property is constructed of yellow Oxford stock brick under a slate roof and lies on the southern side of Crick Road. Crick Road is accessed off the Banbury Road to the north of University Parks. The area is predominantly residential.

The Proposal

2. The application seeks consent for the erection of a two-storey side and rear extension with a basement extension. Also proposed is the formation of a double garage and alterations to the roof comprising the insertion of 1 no dormer window and 2 no Velux windows to rear roof slope and rear gable projection, 1 conservation roof light to the side roof elevation. A new gate and railings to the street frontage are also proposed.

Impact on the Conservation Area

3. The Conservation Area and immediate surroundings are characterised by large Victorian houses in a suburban setting with relatively generous gaps between buildings allowing views through to rear gardens as well as green, tree-lined streets. No's 16 & 17 although detached, are the only two houses in the street that are of the same architectural style. The existing house at no.17 has been altered with a two-storey side extension. Both houses still read as an architectural pair though their symmetry has been somewhat diminished by the extension to no.17.
4. Gaps between buildings are an important contributing feature towards the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The current proposal would infill some of the existing gap on the east side between the application property and no.15 Crick Road. However, views through to the green rear gardens and their associated trees would still be present by a retained 5.7m wide gap from the eaves of no.15 and the ridge of the side extension of the application site, thus preserving the green suburban character of the area. On balance therefore, and given that there would still be a 6.0m gap between the roofs of no.15 and the no.16, the proposal is not considered to cause an unacceptable degree of harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area to justify its refusal. Rather, whilst there is some closure of the existing gap, the extension would form an appropriate visual relationship with the existing building within the street whilst preserving views between buildings.
5. At the rear, the part single and part two-storey extension would be 6.5m in

length along the west elevation with a stepped back section of 600m so that along the east elevation it would be 5.8m in length on the ground floor level. The first floor level would not come out as far and it would be only 1.8m in length along the western elevation and then stepped back so that it is 1.2m in length from the eastern elevation. Whilst the ground floor proposes a large flat roof, it has been modified since originally submitted by a small step back of 600m to break up the width and appearance of the extension. In relation to other rear extensions in this part of North Oxford it is of a similar size, scale and form and would not be visible from the public realm of the Conservation Area. Painted timber windows and doors are proposed throughout.

6. The rear dormer window is of a scale and size that is considered appropriate, the proposed roof lights are conservation style roofs and therefore would not harm the character and appearance of the conservation area.
7. Revised plans were submitted showing the cast iron railing 'trellis' pattern to be erected above a replacement low brick wall which is appropriate to the Conservation Area and consistent with the historic precedents of the area. However, the railing shown on drawing no. PA03 rev. A are not shown correctly and therefore a condition shall be imposed requesting revised drawings and additional details of the gate opening mechanism and proposed boundary treatment prior to its construction in order that the fixings and gate openings are appropriate for the conservation area.
8. The drawings show two brick piers either side of the gate along with gate posts. There is no need for brick piers to be present because gate posts are enough to support the gate and railings. A condition shall be imposed requesting that a revised drawing is submitted showing the removal of the brick piers and the correct gate posts prior to commencement of the development.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

9. Development proposals are required to adequately safeguard the amenity of neighbouring occupiers to accord with policies CP1, CP10 of the Oxford Local Plan and policy HP14 of the Sites and Housing Plan.
10. The two main properties that could be affected by the proposed extensions would be No.15 and No.17 Crick Road.
11. In terms of the impact of the proposal affecting the light to the neighbouring properties, the side extension would be erected 900m from the side elevation of no.15's garage. The side extension would not cause any loss to light to the garage or the second floor windows in the side elevation of no.15. The proposed side facing window would face the blank side wall of no.15's garage and therefore there would be no loss of privacy.

12. The proposed two-storey rear extension does not breach the 45 degree lines taken from no.15 and no.17's nearest habitable ground floor and first floor windows. This would comply with policy HP14 and would not cause any loss of light to these properties.
13. The rear extension would create some additional overlooking into the private rear garden of no.15 Crick Road from the first floor windows. However, the level of overlooking is considered not to be above the mutual overlooking that already exists in built up suburban areas.
14. It is considered that the proposal would not adversely affect the outlook from either no.15 or no.17 Crick Road due to the distance between the extension and the neighbouring habitable windows.

Archaeology

15. The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.
16. Archaeological findings in Crick Road show that the site is located on a well-settled part of the Oxford gravel terrace, close to evidence for Bronze Age, Iron Age and Saxon activity. In the 19th century, a number of finds were made in Park Town Crescent including a possible Bronze Age food vessel with associated human remains and Roman inhumation burials and pottery. Furthermore, an Iron Age pit and possible Saxon inhumation have been recorded in Crick Road.
17. In this case, bearing in mind the site constraints and the scale of the proposed works, officers consider that, in line with the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework, the application should be subject to a condition requesting an archaeological investigation to be undertaken by a professionally qualified archaeologist.

Biodiversity

18. In line with recognised good practice and governmental policy on biodiversity and sustainability (National Planning Policy Framework 2012 & NERC 2006), all practical opportunities should be taken to harmonise the built development with the needs of wildlife. The NPPF seeks to provide a net enhancement to biodiversity through sustainable development and policy CS12 of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026 states: Opportunities will be taken (including through planning conditions or obligations to): ensure the inclusion of features beneficial to biodiversity within new developments throughout Oxford.
19. In this instance, it is appropriate for provisions for wildlife to be built into

the development. The height and proximity of the development to productive habitat makes it ideally suitable for enhancements. Certain bat and bird species are urban biodiversity priority species almost entirely dependent on exploiting human habitation for roosting. An appropriate provision for this development would be 1 integrated bat roosting tube on the southern aspect of the new extension. Integrated boxes can be matched with the brickwork of the extension rendering them virtually invisible. The box should be as high as possible in the brickwork, under the eaves, but not above the new window. A condition requesting the location and model of the tube is required prior to commencement.

Trees

20. The garden boundary wall is likely to have shallow footings and it is possible that roots growing from trees in the neighbouring garden will be growing into the application site and these may be disturbed during works required to excavate steps to the new basement etc. An Arboricultural Report was submitted stating that no trees were to be removed.
21. Although it would appear to be necessary to prune or remove existing trees and other vegetation along the front boundary to allow the proposed new wall and railing to be erected. Therefore a condition shall be required with further details of how the construction works will be undertaken to minimise damage to the trees, in order for the Local Authority to ensure that there is no damage to existing tree roots.

Conclusion:

The extensions have been carefully designed and in officers' view would not lead to any unreasonable impacts on the adjacent properties or on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal conforms to the Council's standards and the presumption should be in favour of the grant of permission. Whilst the comments from neighbours have been carefully considered, they do not raise issues which would justify the application being refused planning permission.

Human Rights Act 1998

Officers have considered the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, subject to conditions. Officers have considered the potential interference with the rights of the owners/occupiers of surrounding properties under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Act and consider that it is proportionate.

Officers have also considered the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol caused by imposing conditions. Officers consider that the conditions are necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest. The interference is therefore justifiable and proportionate.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Officers have considered, with due regard, the likely effect of the proposal on the need to reduce crime and disorder as part of the determination of this application, in accordance with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In reaching a recommendation to grant permission officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

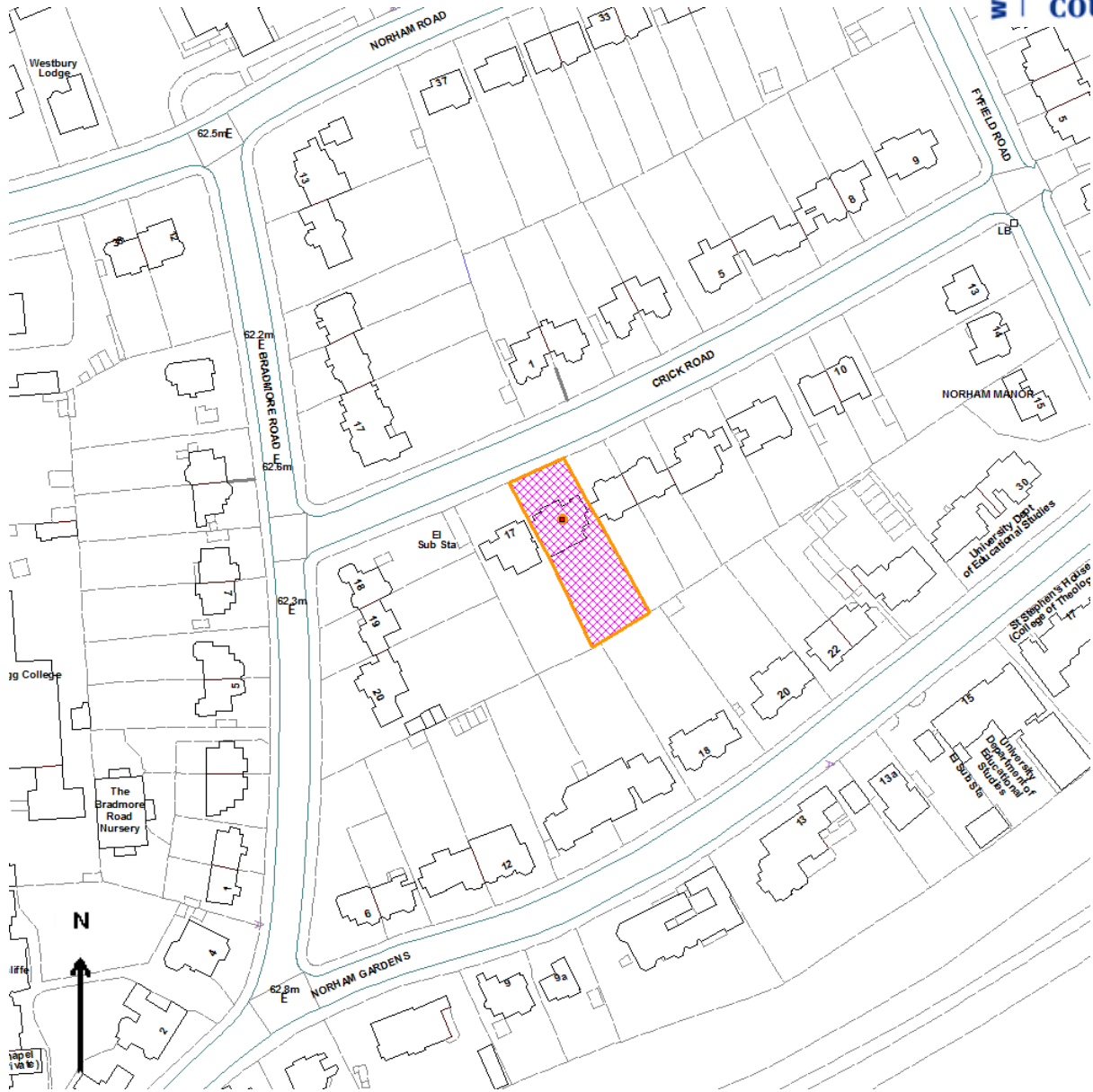
Background Papers: 14/00962/FUL

Contact Officer: Davina Sarac

Date: 9th July 2014

Appendix 1

14/00962/FUL - 16 Crick Road



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Ordnance Survey 100019348

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