

West Area Planning Committee

2nd August 2016

Application Number: 16/01468/FUL

Decision Due by: 31st August 2016

Proposal: Alterations to existing buildings on Iffley Road frontage and improvements to provide main entrance to student accommodation, rear extensions and staircases. Alterations and extension to Stockmore House, Stockmore Street to provide additional study/bedrooms, alterations to existing access to Stockmore Street, parking space for disabled persons and servicing. Alterations to bin storage area and cycle parking.(Appendix 1 site plan)

Site Address: 77-83 Iffley Road 85 And 87 Iffley Road And Stockmore House Stockmore Street Oxford Oxfordshire OX4 1EG

Ward: St Marys Ward

Agent: Mr Nik Lyzba

Applicant: St Hilda's College, Oxford

Recommendation: West Area Planning Committee is recommended to REFUSE planning permission for the following reasons:

1. The proposed extension at the rear of the 77-83 and 85-87 Iffley Road would, by virtue of its visual prominence and unsympathetic design have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of Stockmore Street and Iffley Road. The proposed development's bulky design and flat roof would introduce a discordant feature at the rear of the terrace. The development fails to preserve or enhance the St Clement's and Iffley Road Conservation Area and would be harmful to the character, appearance and special significance of the Conservation Area. The development is therefore contrary to Policy CP1, CP8, CP10 and HE7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy (2011).
2. The proposed development would result in the loss of vegetation on the site; notably an existing magnolia tree. There are no proposals to provide replacement planting which would otherwise maintain the verdant appearance of the site. The leafy appearance of the St Clement's and Iffley Road Conservation Area is an important aspect of the area's character, appearance and special significance. The failure to provide adequate landscaping whilst removing trees on the site would mean that the development would have a negative impact on the character, appearance and special significance and the development is therefore contrary to Policy CP1, HE7 and NE16 of the

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy (2011).

Legal Agreement and CIL

No legal agreement would be required but a CIL contribution would be required if planning permission was granted.

Main Local Plan 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

CP11 - Landscape Design

CP13 - Accessibility

CP19 - Nuisance

CP20 - Lighting

CP21 - Noise

HE7 - Conservation Areas

TR3 - Car Parking Standards

TR4 - Pedestrian & Cycle Facilities

Core Strategy

CS2_ - Previously developed and greenfield land

CS9_ - Energy and natural resources

CS10_ - Waste and recycling

CS11_ - Flooding

CS12_ - Biodiversity

CS17_ - Infrastructure and developer contributions

CS18_ - Urban design, town character, historic environment

CS19_ - Community safety

CS25_ - Student accommodation

CS29_ - The universities

Sites and Housing Plan

HP5_ - Location of Student Accommodation

HP9_ - Design, Character and Context

HP14_ - Privacy and Daylight

Other Planning Documents

National Planning Policy Framework

Relevant Site History

None

Statutory and Internal Consultees

Land Quality Officer

No objections subject to an informative relating to unexpected contamination.

Highways

No objections subject to conditions requiring a construction traffic management plan, measures to ensure no cars are brought to Oxford by students and a management plan dealing with arrival and departure for students at the beginning and end of terms. A condition would also be required to deal with visibility splays for the proposed vehicle access onto Stockmore Street.

Tree Officer

As far as possible the proposals should be adjusted to include additional soft landscaping to 'green' the Iffley Road and Stockmore Street road frontages to enhance the appearance and character of this part of the St Clement's and Iffley Road Conservation Area. In particular a new tree of an appropriate species should be planted at a location which will mitigate the impact that removing an existing magnolia tree will have on public views from Stockmore Street.

Representations Received

91 Iffley Road, objections:

- Amount of development proposed on site
- Effect on character of the area
- Noise and disruption on nearby dwellings during construction
- Increase in student numbers
- Poor appearance of existing buildings
- Lack of landscaping
- Impact on light
- Concerns about cycle parking
- Impact of the proposed development on conservation area

It should be noted that the above consultation was carried out on the basis of the originally submitted plans. Minor amendments to the proposed two storey extension were sought following discussions with Officers where concerns were raised; no consultation has been carried out on the amended plans because the changes were very minor in nature. The amendments that were made are set out in Paragraphs 8 and 9 below.

Site Description

1. The application site includes existing properties at 77-83 Iffley Road, 85-87 Iffley Road and Stockmore House. The site is on the corner of Iffley Road and Stockmore Street in East Oxford; it functions as a single site that is owned by St Hilda's college and is used for student accommodation occupied by up to 54 graduate students.
2. The accommodation is accessed from Iffley Road, with the buildings on the frontage being 77-83 (known as Fulford House) and 85 to 87 Iffley Road. The Iffley Road properties form a four storey terrace; the buildings are Victorian and constructed from brick. Stockmore House lies to the rear of 77-83 Iffley Road and has an access off of Stockmore Street (with a small adjacent parking area). Stockmore House is a three storey 1970s building; it is purpose-built student accommodation. There is an area of open area of

garden at the rear of 85-87 Iffley Road.

3. There is a change of ground levels across the site, with entrances to the Iffley Road buildings being at the ground floor level which is raised from the street (lower ground levels benefit from lightwells across the front).
4. There are number of trees in the rear garden area of the site; including Chestnut, Holly, Magnolia and fruit trees. The magnolia tree is visible in the public realm and occupies an existing gap between Stockmore House and the rear elevation of 77-83 Iffley Road.
5. There is an existing low brick boundary wall on the Iffley Road elevation (with brick detailing matching the terrace behind). There is a higher boundary wall of approximately 1.5m along the Stockmore Street elevation and a modern metal gate in front of the parking area between Stockmore House and the adjacent dwellinghouse (No. 44 Stockmore Street).
6. None of the properties on the site are listed. The entire application site lies within the St Clement's and Iffley Road Conservation Area.

Proposed Development

77-83 Iffley Road and 85-87 Iffley Road

7. It is proposed to extend the rear of 77-83 Iffley Road and 85-87 Iffley Road to provide new student rooms and a new full height stairwell at the rear of each terrace; providing additional circulation space. The proposals would also involve substantial internal changes to the existing accommodation which would modernise the accommodation available and provide a more uniform arrangement within the cluster flats. The development proposed would result in a total of 33 rooms being provided in 77-83 Iffley Road and 12 rooms for 85-87 Iffley Road; a net gain of 2 rooms. It is proposed to retain the self-contained two bedroom fellows set own the lower and upper ground floors; with a retained access onto Iffley Road.
8. The proposed extension would be a three storey flat roof development. Accommodation would be provided across four floors (there is a lower ground floor which would extend into existing lower ground floor accommodation of the building). The proposed flat roof would have a parapet wall which would be slightly higher than the existing eaves of the Iffley Road terrace. The original height of the parapet wall was slightly higher than now proposed and was reduced as part of the minor amendments to the scheme that were made.
9. The proposed extension would extend across the width of 77-83 Iffley Road; this extension would result in the rear elevation being approximately in line with the adjacent terrace 85-87 Iffley Road. The proposed extension would be set back from the corner of the existing terrace on the Stockmore Street elevation by approximately 450mm. When the application was originally submitted the proposals did not incorporate the 450mm set-back but this was sought as an amendment to the proposed scheme.

10. The stair block is proposed at the rear of 85-87 Iffley Road; this would have an overall depth of approximately 5.5 and a width of approximately 3.3m. The materials proposed for the extension include red brick for the walls (to complement the existing predominantly red brick used in the external construction of the existing terrace). Subtle brick detailing is proposed; in the form of horizontal banding is proposed. Large bay windows are proposed for the rear of the extension, the windows would have timber cladding with powder coated grey frames.
11. A new pedestrian and cycle entrance to the rear of the terrace at 77-83 Iffley Road would be created onto Stockmore Street which would serve as the main entrance for the site. The gate for the entrance is proposed to incorporate a stylised map of East Oxford.

Stockmore House

12. A three storey extension is proposed to Stockmore House, on the site of the existing car parking area (between Stockmore House and No. 44 Stockmore Street). The new block would function as a standalone accommodation block but physically adjoin the existing Stockmore House. The proposed extension would provide a total of 11 rooms, with minor changes proposed to the stairwell and entrance area at the existing Stockmore House.
13. The proposed extension of Stockmore House would have materials to complement the existing building and would incorporate a standing seam roof to match the existing Stockmore House. The fenestration proposed would be larger windows (existing windows on Stockmore House's front elevation are predominantly bathrooms and high level kitchen windows).

Summary

14. The total net gain would be 13 additional student rooms; arising from the extension and refurbishments to the Iffley Road terraces and the extension to Stockmore House.

The principal determining issues of the application are:

- Principle of development
- Design
- Impact on Amenity
- Car Parking and Access
- Flooding and Surface Water Drainage

Officers Assessment:

Principle of Development

15. The majority of new development would take place on what would have originally have been garden land at the rear of the terrace and an existing car parking area. Much of this land would not be considered to be

previously developed land for the purposes of planning. Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy (2011) together with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that previously developed land should be the focus of new development. However, in the wider context of the Council's planning policy there is scope to accept development on existing sites where design and other constraints can be addressed. There is an emphasis in particular on promoting a greater efficiency of land as set out in Policy CP6 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.

16. The proposed development would facilitate substantial improvements to the internal layout of the Iffley Road properties and provide more purpose built student accommodation that is built to modern standards. Information provided with the application and raised with Officers by the applicant has suggested that there is currently a lower demand on the student accommodation within the Iffley Road properties on the site because of the lower quality of accommodation there. The proposals therefore provide a greater opportunity to provide overall improvements to the accommodation that may increase the occupancy of the site whilst providing a modest increase in the number of students on the site. Officers would recommend that this would not only bring about a greater efficiency of the use of the existing site and raise the standard of accommodation provided by the college but also reduce demand from the college's student on open market accommodation; an approach promoted by Policy CS25 of the Core Strategy.
17. Officers advise that the development is on a main thoroughfare (Iffley Road) and therefore acceptable in the context of Policy HP5 as a location for student accommodation. Developments for new student accommodation must include a management regime and appropriate controls to ensure that the development is car free.
18. On the basis of the above, Officers regard that the principle of the development proposed would be considered acceptable.

Legal Agreement and CIL

19. The proposals would require a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contribution. There is no requirement for an affordable housing contribution as the number of student rooms sought falls below the threshold identified in Policy HP6 of the Sites and Housing Plan (2013).

Design

Siting, External Appearance and Impact on Conservation Area

20. The proposed rear extension to the Iffley Road terrace (77-83 and 85-87 Iffley Road) would be highly visible from Stockmore Street; effectively filling a gap between the existing Stockmore House and the existing terrace at 77-83 Iffley Road. As this is a corner plot the development would also be visible from Iffley Road. The overall height of the development would increase the visual prominence of the development;

the height to the top of the parapet wall would be higher than the existing eaves of 77-83 Iffley Road. It is the view of the Officers that the proposed development would appear as a three storey flat roof extension to a terrace; the overall form of the development would, combined with its prominent siting be a discordant and unsuitable addition to the streetscene.

21. Further to the above, the proposed development would as a result of its poor design have a detrimental impact on the character, appearance and special significance of the St Clements and Iffley Road Conservation Area. This part of the Conservation Area contains buildings of varying architectural styles and quality but the overall mix of development has given rise to a distinct and special quality of environment. 77-83 and 85-87 Iffley Road are Victorian Terrace properties which have a traditional pitched roof and some interesting brick detailing. The proposed development does not respect this context and Officers consider that the development would fail to harmonise with the existing development on site and would detract from the overall character and appearance of the area; having an overall negative appearance on the Conservation Area. Officers therefore recommend that the development fails to preserve or enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area and the development is contrary to Policy HE7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.
22. Officers have had regard to the overall visual prominence of the development and consider that this is a factor that has been particularly concerning in terms of giving rise to the unacceptability of the scheme. Following the submission of the scheme Officers recommended that the proposed extension be set back from Stockmore Street which would decrease the prominence of the extension and provide an opportunity to provide landscaping to soften the impact of the development. Providing landscaping would also ameliorate the loss of the magnolia tree (as discussed in paragraph 25 below). Some minor changes have been provided, these feature as the amended plans that now form the basis of the application. However, the setting back of the extension by 450mm and the small decrease in the height to the parapet wall would not decrease the prominence of the development sufficiently and would not provide sufficient space to provide adequate landscaping.
23. The proposed stairblock at the rear of 85-87 Iffley Road would have a contemporary appearance and would be at odds with the overall appearance of the rear of terrace. However, its discrete siting would make this feature acceptable in design terms. Other modifications proposed to Iffley Road terrace would be acceptable in design terms and would facilitate the significant improvements to the accommodation that are proposed.
24. The proposed extension to Stockmore House would have a contemporary appearance and would emulate some of the appearance of the existing Stockmore House. The proposed development would be acceptable in design terms, having a similar pallet of materials to surrounding properties

and an overall height and siting that would be sympathetic. The fenestration of the proposed extension to Stockmore House would not match particularly well with the original building; having much larger windows but Officers do not recommend that this should necessarily mean that the development is not acceptable in design terms. The overall scale of development would enable this aspect of the development to form a visually acceptable relationship in the streetscene and it would not harm the character, appearance and special significance of the Conservation Area.

Materials

25. Officers recommend that the materials proposed would likely be acceptable as they would provide some visual interest to the development whilst also respecting the existing pallet of materials on the site. If planning permission was granted then samples and additional information about the detailing proposed would have to be required by condition.

Boundary Treatments

26. The proposed boundary treatments would be acceptable, with walls along the Stockmore Street elevation providing a similar level of enclosure to the existing walls in this location. The use of matching materials would ensure that this aspect of the development would be visually satisfactory.

Public Art

27. It is proposed to provide a new piece of public art on the gate for the new pedestrian access. The gate would incorporate a stylised map of East Oxford and would contribute positively to the public realm. If planning permission is granted then the details and provision of the public art could be required by condition.

Communal Areas

28. Policy HP5 of the Sites and Housing Plan requires that for sites of more than 20 student bedrooms there would need to be communal spaces provided (indoor and outdoor). The proposals would bring about a layout where there would be a central shared courtyard which would provide a pleasant area of outdoor amenity for shared use. The internal changes to the buildings on the site (as well as the proposed new build areas) would bring about a higher standard of accommodation where there would be shared indoor areas, namely kitchen areas in the flats.

Landscaping and Trees

29. The proposals would involve the loss of a mature magnolia tree; the tree has outgrown its location but it does make a positive contribution to the St Clement's and Iffley Road Conservation Area. Officers recommend that the development should have proposed the replacement of the magnolia tree or landscaping to maintain the verdant appearance that part of the site. Because the proposed development extends so close to the highway, it would not provide sufficient space to provide an acceptable amount of

landscaping in this location which would otherwise soften the appearance of the building. Officers have recommended that this form a basis for refusing the application.

30. If planning permission is granted for the proposed development then conditions dealing with trees and landscaping would be required.

Refuse and Recycling Storage

31. A refuse and recycling store is proposed at the front of the existing Stockmore House. This area is already screened by a high brick wall; gates are proposed to provide access to this area.

Energy

32. The application provides an energy statement proposing to provide 20% of energy on-site from renewable and low carbon technologies. This would enable the development to meet the requirements of Policy HP11 of the Sites and Housing Plan (2013). If planning permission was granted for the proposed development then conditions would be required to ensure that the development met the requirements as proposed.

Access and Car Parking

Car Parking

33. The proposals would be for car free development, students at the college are not entitled to bring a car to Oxford; conditions can be applied to ensure that the normal regime of ensuring that this is enforced by college can be used and is included in the recommendation. The proposals would remove an existing area of car parking which would reduce car movements along this narrow residential road.
34. There is provision for a disabled car parking space for a student on the site. This aspect of the development is required in order that the development complies with the requirements of Policy CP13 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.
35. The highway authority has not raised objections subject to conditions if planning permission is approved.

Pedestrian Access

36. A new pedestrian access is proposed onto Stockmore Street; this would form a new access for the entire site and would enhance the security for students on the site. The entrance is also positioned so that it would give rise to less disturbance for neighbouring residential occupiers, being further from neighbouring dwellings than the existing entrance adjacent to Stockmore House and would mean much reduced use of the Iffley Road entrances (that would only serve the two bedroom fellows sets at the lower ground level).

Cycle Parking

37. It is proposed to provide cycle parking within the courtyard area at the rear of 85-87 Iffley Road. Details of the cycle parking could be required by condition if planning permission was granted.

Flooding and Surface Water Drainage

38. The application site does not lie in a high flood risk area. The proposed development would take place partially on land that is already surfaced in impermeable materials (the existing car park). The overall amount of land that would be covered as a result of the proposed development would not likely lead to adverse impacts on surface water drainage. If planning permission was granted then conditions would be required to ensure that permeable surfacing was used as widely as possible and require plans of a drainage scheme to ensure that the development complied with the requirements of Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy (2011).

Biodiversity

39. The proposals would involve modifications within existing buildings and extensions. The development proposed would not involve significant alterations within roofspaces or on areas of the site where there are likely to be protected species, notably bats. As a result, the development is acceptable in the context of Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy (2011).

Conclusion

40. On the basis of the above and for the reasons outlined in this report, Officers recommend that the West Area Planning Committee refuse planning permission for the proposed development.

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 approve, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

community safety.

Background Papers: 16/01468/FUL

Contact Officer: Robert Fowler

Extension: 2104

Date: 21st July 2016

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