

REPORT TO THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE Report No.

Date of Meeting	28th January 2009
Application Number	08/02450 LBC, 08/02451 FUL & 08/02566 CAC
Site Address	42, High Street, Corsham
Proposal	Change of use of outbuildings to form residential extension & one bed residential unit with single storey extension, erection of four two-storey two bed dwellings, re-cladding rear extension, external alterations and demolition of outbuilding.
Applicant	Mr M. Smith
Town/Parish Council	Corsham
Grid Ref	409298 187724
Type of application	Full application, Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area Consent.

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

This application has been submitted to the Committee for decision under the scheme of delegation in force after the 8th April 2002 at the request of Councillors Elaine Marston and Christine Reid so that members may fully discuss the impact of this proposed development which is in the Corsham Conservation Area and its impact on neighbours and the surrounding area.

Summary of Report

These applications propose the development of the site by the construction of four dwellings and conversion of existing outbuildings to form a fifth dwelling and a residential extension. An existing office extension would be partially rebuilt. The site lies within the framework boundary of the town and therefore the key points to consider are as follows:

- Implications on DC Core Policy C3, Housing Policy H3 and historic environment policy HE4.
- Affect of the residential amenity of existing properties
- Impact on the listed building and the wider conservation area
- Impact on highways

Officer Recommendation

Planning Permission be REFUSED

Listed Building Consent be REFUSED

Conservation Area Consent be GRANTED

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Proposal and Site Description

This site is located in the centre of Corsham, an area of considerable historic interest and sensitivity. The pattern of building on the eastern side of the High Street, backing onto the grounds of Corsham Court, has barely changed since the mid 19thC and most of the buildings are listed or of traditional appearance. Any intervention in an area such as this requires to be of the highest quality, carefully considered so as to damage neither the listed buildings or the character and appearance of the conservation area. The Corsham Conservation Area Statement (1999) recommends no new development in the High Street.

The site comprises the mid 19thC listed building on the High Street, currently used as retail/offices on the ground floor with residential accommodation above. A single storey flat roofed 20thC extension is attached at the rear. Behind the building lies the open service area containing the historic outbuildings, a remaining length of historic boundary wall and a small modern garage outbuilding. The area is used as a parking area for the retail unit and associated service vehicles. Adjacent is Rose Cottage, a small, 17thC cottage facing onto the narrow access lane, which forms the southern boundary to the site, continuing as a footpath into the South Avenue to Corsham Court. . Also abutting the lane is the one and a half storey outbuilding which it is proposed to convert. On the northern boundary lies the two and a half storey neighbouring property with a high stone wall to the east.

The terrace of three cottages would run east-west and would be sited five metres to the south of the northern boundary (with no 44). The terrace would be 16.1m in length, by 5.2m in width by 4.7m to eaves and 7.6m to the ridge. This is shown as being the same height as the east-west range of number 44 adjacent.

The small barn would be converted into a one bedroom dwelling with a single storey extension (5.3m by 3.4m) off the north-east corner. Linked to this would be a single cottage module running along the boundary with the lane. There would be 6.3m between the front elevations of this cottage and the terrace.

The other single storey outbuilding would be converted into a kitchen dining room for Rose Cottage.

The flat roofed extension to the rear of the shop would be rebuilt on a slightly reduced footprint, in natural stone with a flat roof.

The access would remain via the side alley and five parking spaces would be provided for the new units. No space would be available for existing residents or employees.

Planning History		
Application number	Proposal	Decision
07/02879 LBC 07/02881 FUL 07/02882 CAC	Erection of 4 dwellings, conversion/extension of outbuilding to dwelling, conversion of outbuilding to residential extension, re-cladding of rear extension, internal and external alterations.	Withdrawn 14 October 2008

Consultations

Parish Council Access would be a problem due to location of existing business and increased traffic on a public right of way.

Wiltshire County Council Highways Recommends refusal - same comments as those in respect of 07/02881 FUL:

- Any increased use of the substandard access generated by the proposed development would be prejudicial to road safety.
- The site cannot accommodate adequate turning facilities to enable a vehicle to enter and leave the highway in forward gear, which is essential to highway safety
- Adequate provision cannot be made on site for the parking of vehicles in a satisfactory manner.

County Archaeologist There is potential for archaeological remains as the site is in the midst of a medieval settlement. Recommends condition for archaeological watching brief (comment made initially in respect of 07/02881 FUL).

Representations

The applications have been advertised and local residents notified. No representations had been received at the time of writing, any received subsequently will be reported as additional information.

Planning Considerations

Principle of development

Residential use of the site could be acceptable subject to very stringent safeguards and to the proposal being in accordance with policies C3, HE1 & HE4 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.

Impact on amenity

There would be a degree of overshadowing of the neighbouring property to the north but this would be limited to mid-October to mid-March and there is already an evergreen tree adjacent to the boundary. It is considered that the relationship could be improved by amendments to the design of the cottages to lower the height of the ridge. There is some confusion as to the possibility of overlooking of no 44 as there are windows shown on the rear elevation which are not indicated on the floor plans.

Within the site, the window to window distance between the terrace and the new cottage adjacent to the lane, of 6.3m, is considered to be completely inadequate and unacceptable.

Impact on Conservation Area and Listed Building

Terrace

The historic development along Corsham High Street has a number of examples of subsidiary buildings and structures running back into the sites along an east-west axis, including some cottages. It is considered therefore that the principle of a range of simple, subsidiary building to the rear of number 42 could be acceptable subject to the scale and design and site layout/landscaping being appropriate. However the site section clearly shows that the terrace is virtually the same height as the adjacent property and, as importantly, the same height as the principle listed building on this site. It cannot therefore be described as subsidiary in scale or massing as would be expected of the traditional pattern. It is considered essential that this hierarchy of importance is maintained, in the interests of both the listed building and the character of the conservation area, which this design fails to do.

Outbuilding conversion

The outbuilding is proposed to be used as a one bedroom dwelling, with additional living space being provided by a single storey extension. Whilst this could be acceptable in principle, the alterations to the original building ignore existing historic openings, removing a stone mullion window and adding unnecessary new openings and a plethora of roof-lights. The extension is very badly related to the original building and appears to have been sited with regard to the general site layout rather than with any thought for the listed building. The roof is of a very shallow pitch which would preclude the traditional materials. In addition, the design of the fenestration of the conversion is not appropriate to the character of this simple outbuilding.

The boundary wall attached to the outbuilding is raised to nearly three metres, which together with the wall of the proposed new cottage would completely alter the character of the lane at this point to the detriment of the conservation area as well as the listed building.

Indeed the insistence on including a new dwelling at this point compromises the listed outbuilding, its setting, the setting of the principle building and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Outbuilding conversion to Rose Cottage

The use of the single storey outbuilding as living accommodation would be acceptable, however the design and materials of the link need to be smaller, simpler and more sympathetic.

Rear extension

The existing rear extension, built of artificial block-work under a flat felt roof, is highly detrimental to the character of the parent building and its removal would constitute an improvement. However it is important that any replacement is of an appropriate quality of design and materials, as would be required of any extension to a listed building. The replacement extension is on a marginally reduced footprint, the size of which would normally be considered excessive. If an extension of this size is to be acceptable an enhanced design as well as improved materials would be expected. The proposed extension whilst improving the wall materials fails in respect of both the design and the materials for the roof. Rather than a repeat of the simple felt flat roof, pitched, hipped slate roofs within the parapet would be expected.

Site

The site area is largely given over to tarmac parking area and rolled gravel paths which do little to provide an appropriate setting to the listed buildings.

Highways and Access

The highway authority has objected recommending refusal on the basis of; internal site conditions, loss of parking for existing uses and the nature of the access.

Wildlife

A bat survey has been received, clearly indicating the presence of Serotine bats in the outbuilding in the recent past. No amendments to the proposals to take account of the presence of bats have been received.

Conclusion

Whilst the principle of some residential use could be acceptable, the impact of the proposals upon the conservation area and the listed buildings is considered to be harmful, to their character, appearance and setting. The intensity of the use and the detailed approach fail to take into account the sensitivity of the location. In addition, requirements in respect of highways, residential amenity and protected species are not fulfilled.

Recommendations

Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent be REFUSED for the following reasons:

In respect of 08/02450 LBC:

1. The proposed alterations and extensions to the principle building and outbuildings at no 42, High Street, would, by reason of their size, location, design and details have a harmful impact upon the architectural and historic interest of the listed buildings and their setting contrary to S.16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and guidance in PPG 15.

In respect of 08/02451 FUL:

1. The proposed new dwellings, alterations and extensions to the principle building and outbuildings at no 42, High Street, would, by reason of their size, location, design and details have a harmful impact upon the architectural and historic interest of the listed buildings and their setting and the character and appearance of the conservation area, contrary to S.66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, guidance in PPG 15 and policies C3, HE1 and HE4 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.
2. The proposal by reason of lack of information submitted, fails to demonstrate that the proposed development would be acceptable in terms of protecting the amenities of local residents and its impact upon protected species. As such the proposals would be contrary to policy C3 and NE9 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.

3. Any increased use made of the existing sub-standard access generated by the proposed development would be prejudicial to road safety.
4. The site cannot accommodate adequate turning facilities to enable a vehicle to enter and leave the highway in forward gear, which is essential to highway safety.
5. Adequate provision cannot be made on the site for the parking of vehicles in a satisfactory manner.

In respect of 08/02566 CAC:

Conservation Area Consent be GRANTED subject to:

1. The works to which this consent relates shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Informative

1. This decision relates to documents/plans submitted with the application, listed below. No variation from the approved documents should be made without the prior approval of this Council. Amendments may require the submission of a further application. Failure to comply with this advice may lead to enforcement action which may require alterations and/or demolition of any unauthorised buildings or structures and may also lead to prosecution.

Plan Refs:

06.0986.L(0)01, L(0)02, L(0)03, L(0)05, L(0)06, L(0)10, L(0)11, L(0)12 and 06.0986.SK01D, SK02C, SK03C, SK04, SK06A, SK08A, SK09B, SK22C & SK25A

all received by the local planning authority on 24 October 2008.

Reason for Decision

The proposals fail to comply with S.16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, advice in PPG15 and with the terms of policies C3, HE1, HE4 & NE9 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.

Appendices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NONE
Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.20; 1.26; 2.02; 2.07; 4.02; 5.01; 6.03.