

REPORT TO THE WESTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	07.03.2012		
Application Number	W/11/03270/FUL		
Site Address	Land Adjoining 51 Summerleaze Trowbridge Wiltshire		
Proposal	Side extension to 51 Summerleaze to create two new additional dwellings (flats)		
Applicant	Morris Developments		
Town/Parish Council	Trowbridge		
Electoral Division	Trowbridge Lambrok	Unitary Member:	Helen Osborn
Grid Ref	384184 156942		
Type of application	Full Plan		
Case Officer	Mr James Taylor	01225 770344 Ext 01225 770249 james.taylor@wiltshire.gov.uk	

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

Councillor Helen Osborn has requested that this item be determined by Committee due to:

- * Scale of development
- * Visual impact upon the surrounding area
- * Relationship to adjoining properties
- * Design - bulk, height, general appearance
- * Environmental/highway impact
- * Other: Impact on the area, loss of amenities, this development is fundamentally altering the character of the area, front and side gardens are being lost, all in all we are getting a deterioration of the local built environment which will have a negative impact on local people. In light of opposition from the people living in this area.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the above application and to recommend that planning permission be granted.

Neighbourhood Responses: Two letters of objection received to original submission.

Trowbridge Town Council Response: Final comment – “Objection, the proposal represents overdevelopment, would be visually intrusive and detrimental to local amenity”.

2. Report Summary

The main issues to consider are:

- * Principle of development; and conformity with the criteria of policy H1 of the Local Plan
- * Highway safety;
- * Residential amenity of neighbouring property and the development itself;
- * Planning history.

3. Site Description

The application site is part of the side garden of 51 Summerleaze. This is a 2-storey, semi-detached, 3-bedroom dwelling which has an enclosed and private rear garden, a side garden and a front garden enclosed with a low brick boundary wall.

The area has clearly been subject to a number of changes in the built form which have evolved the character of the area to one where smaller dwellings are becoming more prevalent. In the immediate vicinity of the application site some changes are evident. For example the other half of this semi-detached pair has been extended and converted to flats; dwellings opposite have been extended and converted to a greater number of flats also. Their frontage has been turned over entirely to hard surfacing for parking.

4. Relevant Planning History

04/00520/FUL – Conversion/two storey extension to form 4 flats (at 38 Summerleaze)– Permission on 03.06.2004

05/03007/FUL - Conversion and extension of existing dwelling to form four flats (at 49 Summerleaze) – Permission on 17.02.2006

06/01436/FUL - Conversion/extension to dwelling to form four flats (at 40 Summerleaze) – Permission on 13.07.2006

07/02398/FUL - Erection of dwelling and link garages (at 29 Westfield Road) – Permission on 11.10.2007

5. Proposal

This is a proposal to build an extension to the existing terrace that has the form and appearance of a semi-detached house but that contains one ground and 1 first floor flat. To facilitate this a single storey attached structure would be demolished and a building would be erected using matching materials, matching eaves and ridge heights and employing a projecting gable to match others in the locality. The width of the extension would be 6.8 metres and a gap of approximately 1 metre would be maintained to the north east boundary to retain a rear access to the amenity area.

The proposal details the creation of a completely open frontage laid to hard standing for up to 5 vehicles. This would allow 2 for the existing 3-bedroom dwelling, 2 for the 2-bedroom ground floor flat and 1 for the 1-bedroom first floor flat.

This scheme is a revised proposal following discussions with officers. The original submission was for a larger footprint up to the boundary of the site to create 2x 2-storey dwellings (a 1-bedroom and a 2-bedroom). A full re-consultation has been carried out on the revised proposals.

6. Planning Policy

West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration (2004)

C31a: Design; C38: Nuisance; H1: Further Housing Within Towns

National guidance

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development; PPS3: Housing; PPG13: Transport

7. Consultations

Trowbridge Town Council

No objection to original proposal. Objection to revised plans – “The proposal represents overdevelopment, would be visually intrusive and detrimental to local amenity.”

Highways

No objections subject to conditions relating to the provision of parking facilities.

Wessex Water
No objections.

8. Publicity

The application was advertised by site notice and neighbour notification. Expiry date: 13 February 2012.

Two letters received regarding the original submission. No comments have been received regarding the revised proposals. Summary of points raised to original scheme:

- * Whilst the need for more accommodation is understood, why should it all be concentrated on the corner of Summerleaze and Westfield Road_
- * There are already 12 flats due to conversions in the area;
- * Can the extra demand on sewerage and drains be coped with;
- * Previous development has area looking untidy; and
- * Walls have been knocked down and not been repaired by landlord.

9. Planning Considerations

- * Principle of development.

The application site is part of the residential curtilage of 51 Summerleaze and is within the built-up area of Trowbridge. The relevant planning policy is therefore policy H1 of the local plan. This permits the erection of new houses subject to compliance with the detailed criteria of this policy. The criteria are addressed in turn below:

- * Siting, layout and design considerations and whether they are in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.

The proposal creates a built form (semi-detached house in appearance) that utilises the side garden area of this semi-detached property. The proposal has a gable end 2-storey projection which would reflect that on the other half of the semi-detached pair and create a sense of symmetry. Indeed these projecting gables are typical of the street scene at this point. The eaves and ridge heights, the materials and all other aspects are in keeping with the existing built environment. As such it can only reasonably be concluded that the siting, layout and design are in keeping with the surrounding area.

- * Whether inappropriate backland or tandem development.

The proposals are not backland or tandem development. The extension is to the side, not the rear, and maintains the existing form and width of the terrace of houses at this point. The projecting gable 'bookends' the existing gable at the other end of the terrace and is in keeping with the character and appearance of the street scene at this point.

- * Whether adequate provisions can be made for surface waters and flood risk.

The area is designated as flood zone 1, the lowest probability of flooding. Wessex Water have no objection to the proposals. However it would be prudent to add a condition to seek a more sustainable drainage strategy than discharging surface water to the main sewer. This may simply include grey water harvesting and soakaways given the small scale of development.

- * Whether adequate provisions can be made for connection to water and sewerage systems without harm to the environment.

The proposals are located within an established urban environment where there are known water and sewerage facilities. The application details use of these and Wessex Water raises no objection.

- * If any visual gap or open area, important for public recreation and amenity would be lost.

The proposals would involve the erosion of a gap, but this particular gap between dwellings is not considered to be of any significant value to the character or appearance of the area or its amenity, and similar gaps have been lost due to other developments in recent years. The proposals are on private land and as such would not affect any public recreation interests.

* Highway safety;

The proposal details 5 car parking spaces to serve the existing dwelling and the proposed flats. This is in accordance with the Council's adopted minimum residential parking standards given the type of accommodation being created.

* Residential amenity of neighbouring property and the development itself.

The proposals would not be overlooked by any existing development and would not themselves create any significant overlooking issues as the only first floor gable window is an obscure glazed bathroom window. The built form has been set in from the boundary to the east and would not cause any dominant or overbearing impact to occupiers of 29 Westfield Road.

* Planning history.

The site itself has no relevant history. However it is noted that 4 sites in immediate proximity around this junction of Summerleaze and Westfield Road have been subject to positive planning decisions which have resulted in a higher density development and projecting gables. This has been noted in the public consultation responses. Whilst the maxim of each case being assessed on its merits holds, it is hard to ignore these decisions as all but 1 has been implemented and this has changed the character of the area at this point to one where smaller dwellings are more prevalent. It is on the basis of the existing character that the development must be assessed.

Some of the issues raised regarding the type and tenure of property at this point, poor maintenance / poor control of tenant's behaviour by landlords and general untidy or unsightly development have been noted. Much of this is beyond the reasonable control of the planning system and the scope of this application. However a condition to require some frontage soft landscaping is suggested. This condition is necessary in order to try to create a better street scene and soften the development proposals; however within the scope of this application there is nothing that can be reasonably done to improve neighbouring sites.

* Other material considerations

The proposals retain a rear access, so bin and recycling storage can be facilitated conveniently at the rear, depending on the behaviour of occupiers.

* Summary and conclusions

In summary, the proposal creates a built form of development that is in keeping with the character and appearance of the area and will provide smaller accommodation in a sustainable location to those seeking it. As the proposal is in accordance with the criteria set out in policy H1, and there are no other adverse impacts, permission is recommended.

Recommendation: Permission

For the following reason(s):

The proposed development conforms to the Development Plan and there are no objections to it on planning grounds.

Subject to the following condition(s):

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from 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 the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Drawing: 11.45.1 received on 15 December 2011 (site plan only);
Drawing: 11.45.1 Rev A received on 30 January 2012;

Drawing: Parking plan received on 30 January 2012;
Drawing: 11.45.4 Rev A received on 30 January 2012; and
Drawing: 11.45.5 Rev A received on 30 January 2012.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match in material, colour and texture those used in the existing building.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration 2004 - POLICY: C31a.

- 4 The development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until the first five metres of the access, measured from the edge of the carriageway, has been consolidated and surfaced (not loose stone or gravel). The access shall be maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety.

West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration 2004 - POLICY: C31a

- 5 No part of the development hereby approved shall be first occupied until the parking area shown on the approved plans has been consolidated, surfaced and laid out in accordance with the approved details. This area shall be maintained and remain available for this use at all times thereafter.

REASON: To ensure that adequate provision is made for parking within the site in the interests of highway safety.

West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration 2004 - POLICY: T10

- 6 The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the flank boundary features have been reduced to not more than 0.6 metres for 1 metre back from the adjacent footway. These features shall be maintained at that height at all times thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety.

- 7 No development shall commence on site until a scheme of hard and soft landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All soft landscaping comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first occupation of the flats or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner. All shrubs, trees and hedge planting shall be maintained free from weeds and shall be protected from damage by vermin and stock. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. All hard landscaping shall also be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development.

West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration 2004 - POLICY: C31a and C32

- 8 No development shall commence on site until a scheme for the discharge of surface water from the site (including surface water from the access/driveway), incorporating sustainable drainage details, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be first occupied until surface water drainage has been constructed in accordance with the approved scheme.

REASON: To ensure that the development can be adequately drained.

West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration 2004 - POLICY: U2

- 9 Notwithstanding the hereby approved plans a rear access shall be provided to serve the amenity areas of both the approved development and 51 Summerleaze before the first occupation of the development. Details of this shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any development. The approved details of access shall be maintained in perpetuity.

REASON: To ensure that rear access to private and secured amenity areas is maintained to facilitate bin, recycling, bicycle storage etc.

POLICY: West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration (2004) Policy H1.

Informative(s):

- 1 The developer is advised to contact Wessex Water to ensure that any section 105a sewers (formally private sewers and lateral drains) that may be existing on the site are identified and then, as appropriate, suitable action is taken to ensure proper drainage and sewerage to serve residential property is provided. Wessex Water may be contacted on 01225 526000.
- 2 The consent hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to carry out works on the highway. The applicant is advised that a licence may be required from Wiltshire's highway authority before any works are carried out on any footway, footpath, carriageway, verge or other land forming part of the highway.
- 3 The developer is advised that any details of landscaping should include frontage planting to compliment the built form and soften the hard landscaping / parking area. To discuss this further you are advised to contact the planning case officer on 01225 770249.

Appendices:	
Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:	

