

PLANNING REF : 251852
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Council Office
: Pearson Road, Sonning, Reading
: RG4 6UL
SUBMITTED BY : Sonning Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 10/09/2025

COMMENTS:

Sonning Parish Council has carefully considered this application and has the following comments.

This part of Old Bath Road is a quiet, pleasant, no through road, and residential area. The large, grassed verges, trees and hedges soften its appearance. To the left, when viewed from Warren Road the dwellings are typically large, detached bungalows, with some detached two storey dwelling, all with low profiles. To the right-hand side, the dwellings are mainly 1½ to 2 storey detached dwelling all with low profiles, the overall ambience of this part of Old Bath Road is very harmonious.

The existing dwelling is of a red brick construction under a tiled roof. The adjoining dwellings are of similar construction, which is typical of Sonning, and the surrounding area. The proposal is to use Forterra LBC Light brick, under a slate roof. The proposed dwelling, with its substantially larger footprint, would be incongruous, stand out from adjoining properties, the street scene, jar in the existing harmonious setting and is not vernacular. The height and massing of the proposal is out of proportion to existing properties which all maintain similar low profiles. The proposal makes no attempt to blend in with the existing area and with the pale brick and black painted windows would do the opposite. The Parish Council's concerns are:

The application does not give due regard to the setting in which it proposes such an ambitious, dominating and imposing design. Although it is an improvement on the previous design and will not project as far forward as the previous proposal, it does however project further to the rear. The roofline is 1500mm higher than the existing and the proposal would extend across the whole frontage dominating the properties on either side and the street scene. The proposal is cramped and leaves little space for access to the rear and there is no obvious space for garden equipment, storage for rubbish or access to such necessities. It is completely out of keeping with any of the existing dwellings and would completely alter the street scene to the detriment of its surroundings. The dwelling will be disproportionately larger than other properties in this part of Old Bath Road and is 2.5 times the size of the existing dwelling. This will be overbearing and intrusive on neighboring properties. The Parish Council question if this increase is permitted. The light brickwork and large size will highlight the buildings sheer volume, oppressive nature bulk and massing. The proposed dwelling would be better suited to a larger plot surrounded it with open spaces rather than this plot.

There are concerns about the very large balcony, across most of the rear elevation, it is not screened in any way and will provide a wide

view of the private rear gardens of adjoining properties. This will result in a loss of the existing privacy, ambience and leisure amenity currently enjoyed by these properties.

Currently there is a detached double garage to the side/rear of the property with a long access, providing parking for several vehicles. The proposal is to demolish the existing garage to allow the replacement dwelling that spans the whole width of the plot. This reduces the existing parking to a one vehicle garage with onsite parking for 2 vehicles. The current owner proposes a self-build, which indicates their future occupation for at least 3 years in this well used property. This loss of onsite parking could potentially lead to regular on street parking, due to the owners owning several vehicles and neighbours have observed 6 vehicles belonging to the family parked there on a regular basis. On street parking would reduce the width of the road and potentially create hazards for emergency vehicles, refuse vehicles and other large vehicles. The Parish Council understands that a WBC refuse lorry could not access the road recently because of the obstruction created by on street parking and no collection was made to the properties in this part of Old Bath Road. This indicates the hazard's already facing emergency and essential delivery vehicles.

Additionally, there are concerns that the proposal does not provide sufficient onsite parking for the proposed 6/7 bedroom 7-bathroom property.

There are also concerns about the site, which was formed from the spoil from the joining railway cutting, and that the area has been subject to subsidence recently.

The proposal is contrary to:

- CP1 as it does not enhance the high quality of the environment.
- CP2 in that it is disproportionate to the scale of the existing settlement.
- CP3 (a) in that it is not of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.
- CP3 (f) in that it does not contribute to a sense of place in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings (especially existing dwellings)

For the above reasons Sonning Parish Council urge refusal of this application.

L. A. Bates (Clerk to the Council).