

PLANNING REF : 241875
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Council Office
: Pearson Road, Sonning, Reading
: RG4 6UL
SUBMITTED BY : Sonning Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 25/10/2024

COMMENTS:

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

This part of Old Bath Road is a quiet, no through road, residential area with large, grassed verges, trees and hedges, which soften its appearance. To the left, when viewed from Warren Road the dwellings are typically large, detached bungalows, with some detached two storey dwellings with low profiles. To the right-hand side, the dwellings are mainly 1½ to 2 storey detached dwelling with low profiles, the overall ambience of this part of Old Bath Road is 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 Dane Hill Yellow Freshfield facing brick, under a slate roof. Bath stone would be an added feature. The proposed dwelling, with its substantially larger footprint, would be incongruous, stand out from adjoining properties, the street scene and jar in the existing harmonious setting. The height and massing of the proposal is out of proportion to existing properties which all maintain a similar low profile. 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. It would project further forward beyond the existing building line and projects 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. 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. The Parish Council question if this increase is permitted. The proposal is to site the new dwelling closer to the road than the existing and its tall doric columns will highlight its sheer volume and oppressive nature. The site plan would appear to include the highways verge to the front of the property which hints at a larger frontage than there actually is. The proposed dwelling would be better suited to a larger plot surrounded it with open spaces rather than this plot.

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 (if not already done) 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 future occupation for at least 3 years. This loss of onsite parking could potentially lead to on street parking, due to the owners owning several vehicles. On street parking would reduce the width of the road and potentially create hazards for emergency vehicles, refuse vehicles and other large vehicles.

There are also concerns about the site, which was formed from the spoil from the adjoining 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).