

Householder Planning Application

Planning and Heritage Statement

Oxford House

1. Introduction

Oxford house is an existing semi detached single dwelling house in a Conservation Area.

The original house is Victorian of two storey brick construction with stone and stucco detailing around windows and doors, rusticated string course at first floor level, topped with a slate pitched roof with decorative ridge finials and a well proportioned traditional shared chimney stack



Oxford House the right hand of the pair and both houses have over time been extended and added to, the left hand Cambridge House has a more significant and visually imposing side/rear extension whilst Oxford house has a more modest additions.

The two storey rear/side extension is of poor design and not sympathetic to the original dwelling in design style or proportion.

Set in the front garden/driveway area of the house is a single storey two car garage with a pitched roof which conceals a flat roof presumably allowing for the overall size of the garage whilst keeping the ridge at a modest height due to the proximity of the neighbouring house.

2. The proposal in the context of the North Bolney Conservation Area

The pair of houses – Oxford and Cambridge are within the Northern Bolney Conservation Area which is characterised by;

low density development, the lack of a uniform building line which greatly adds variety and interest and reflects the gradual growth of the village and enhances its semi-rural character

the variety of age and style of the buildings and the use of natural and traditional building materials;

Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that planning should conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states that ‘great weight’ should be given to the conservation of a designated Heritage Asset.

Oxford House is a non-designated heritage asset and as such does not require ‘great weight’ to be considered or applicable, so the question really is does the proposal ‘harm’ the original House, does it make the original dwelling less ‘legible’ and does it de-value Oxford House and the surrounding Conservation Area.

The NPPF in paragraph 206 requires Local Authorities to ‘look for opportunities for new development in conservation areas’ of which this proposal is and it is the balance between conservation at all costs and to the detriment of any development, progress or enhancement of housing and the built environment, or acceptance that there has to be and should be ‘progress’ alongside conservation.

3. The Proposal

The proposal is in two distinct parts to a) house and b) garage

a) House

It is proposed to extend the property to a single storey to the side elevation creating additional ground floor living space. In doing so there will to some degree be a rationalisation and improvement of the previous alterations and extensions.

The type of the proposed extension respects the original house and is Victorian in character with facing brickwork walls and detailing around windows and doors.

During the design process a pitched roof was investigated but to use a similar pitch to the original roof resulted in quite a substantial change to the outline of the house and the loss of first floor windows. In order to reduce the overall mass and impact or loss of first floor side windows to the original house a parapet style roof design has been opted for concealing a flat roof behind. Whilst it is recognised that a flat roof is not preferred in a Conservation Area it is of traditional Victorian style and heritage and it makes for an extension with a reasonably low profile and subservient appearance to the original house.

b) Garage

It is proposed to extend the existing garage on its rear elevation towards the house to create additional space as a home office working from home space. The existing garage shape and form will be simply ‘stretched’ back toward the front of the house so it very much will retain its existing style and appearance.

The flat roof creates opportunity to conceal flat solar panels which in turn will charge a storage battery which in turn will charge an electric car all with a view to reducing the carbon impact of travel associated with village life.

The enlarged part of the garage will be in brickwork with a slate roof all to match the existing

4. The Impact of the Proposal

The extension of the house and garage do not significantly increase the overall mass and size of the property and certainly make very little change to the streetscene and appearance of the Conservation Area and semi rural appearance of the neighbourhood

The garage does not increase in height therefore doesn't overshadow or overbear on the neighbouring house to the north.

The extension to the side of the house does have an apple tree to be removed but as noted on the Application drawing the proposal is for this tree to be moved to a nearby location. Whilst this is not ideal an apple tree of this size is one of the more suitable for transplanting at the appropriate time of year.

The Application includes new gates to be hung on existing brick pillars. The new gates will be of a 'field gate' style similar to the existing gate to be removed. The new gate will appear very similar to the existing so be a minimal change in the streetscene

5. Summary and Conclusion – Heritage

The proposed works and alteration that this Application seeks Permission for have been informed by understanding of the existing buildings, surroundings, Heritage Asset and the Conservation Area and this document reviews and assesses the impact to the site and surroundings and it is the conclusion of this report that the proposals would not negatively impact on the the Conservation Area and the significance of the (non designated) Heritage Asset.

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