

Comments for Planning Application 21/00278/FUL

Application Summary

Application Number: 21/00278/FUL

Address: 1 Northmoor Road Oxford OX2 6UW

Proposal: Demolition of existing rear conservatory. Erection of a single storey rear extension.

Formation of ramp access to rear elevation.

Case Officer: Charles Refson

Customer Details

Name: Dr Pauline Collier

Address: 3 Northmoor Road Oxford OX2 6UW

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbours

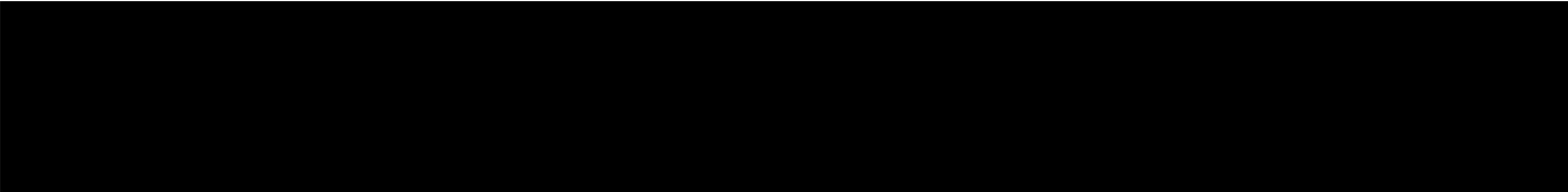
Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

- Effect on adjoining properties
- Effect on character of area
- Effect on privacy
- General dislike or support for proposal
- Height of proposal
- Light - daylight/sunlight

Comment: Objection to planning request No 1 Northmoor Road, OX2 6UW

We are writing as the only neighbours of Mr Johnson, being located at no 3 Northmoor Road (we are directly to the north of No 1, and to the south is a school which is unaffected). We are submitting this letter as we strongly object to this proposed extension of his house.



However, our homes are semi-detached, identical houses which are huge for just two people - ours has comfortably accommodated 7 of us - and there are numerous alternatives that do not inflict so much damage on our property. We ourselves faced a similar situation with the prospect of accommodating our elderly, disabled mother, who required constant care. We found several options through rearranging the ground floor rooms, or building an extension which did not affect our neighbours (but to which Mr Johnson nevertheless objected). All can create a large, flat, ground-floor space with toilet access and are architecturally feasible (indeed, our own house was arranged in one of these configurations until shortly before we bought it). However, they all involve

some (reversible) change of use for the existing rooms.

Instead, Mr Johnson has selected the one option that would result in zero disruption to the current layout of his house. It is, however, the one option which inflicts major and irreversible damage to our property. Indeed, we ourselves dismissed this option out of hand on the grounds that our neighbour would most certainly have objected, while doing irreversible damage to the light access of the main living room.

In doing so, he failed to inform or consult us in advance of his application, then provided us with an architectural sketch so inadequate that we had to commission our own architect's study to discover the implications.

We now turn to the damage to our home.

It would block sunlight and views:

Our first concern is that by creating what would effectively be a large brick box right along the boundary wall of our two properties, the extension would very substantially block our sunlight and views. While the long side of Mr Johnson's house faces due south, making it sunlit, ours faces due north, making sunlight a pressing concern. Our main sunny room is a small Victorian conservatory, matching the one that Mr Johnson is seeking to demolish. The proposed tall box would completely hem it in. Being 3 metres high where there is currently no wall, it would block out the sunlight as shown on the diagrams and sunlight analysis attached, which have been drawn by our own architect using standard and documented professional methods. Since the proposed tall structure is directly south and west our property it would throw the conservatory into deep shadow, particularly in the winter months when it is most in use.

Not only this conservatory would be affected, but also our kitchen and dining room (which are already darkened by the massive fir tree at the bottom of Mr Johnson's garden). The proposed extension would stretch some 3 metres out along our boundary wall, stepping down to a slightly lower height of approximately 2.60m, and creating an ugly brick mass that we would be confronting every day of our lives. Our views south from our dinner table would be irreversibly marred.

Mr Johnson's architect has simply ignored both these effects in his submitted drawings. Our line of sight would be far more impaired than shown on his sketch, as indicated by the more thorough analysis of our own architect.

The proposed structure is ugly and completely out of character:

We are not aesthetically dogmatic, but this structure is unambiguously ugly and would involve the loss of an attractive fig tree (confirmed by Mr Johnson), that in summer is beautiful. The flat roof

jutting out from the bottom of the first floor; the high, bulbous skylight windows; the square, uncompromising lines of the extension itself; and the west-facing window that fails to match in any way those already existing in both houses in our Conservation Area would all be jarring to the eye. We should also note that the proposed elevated height of the floor level in the extension would give this west-facing window a direct and intrusive view over the boundary wall onto our patio, where we have our meals in the summer.

Although this ugly structure would not be seen from Mr Johnson's own house, it would be facing us daily from our conservatory, dining room and kitchen. It is neither pleasingly integrated, nor interestingly modern.

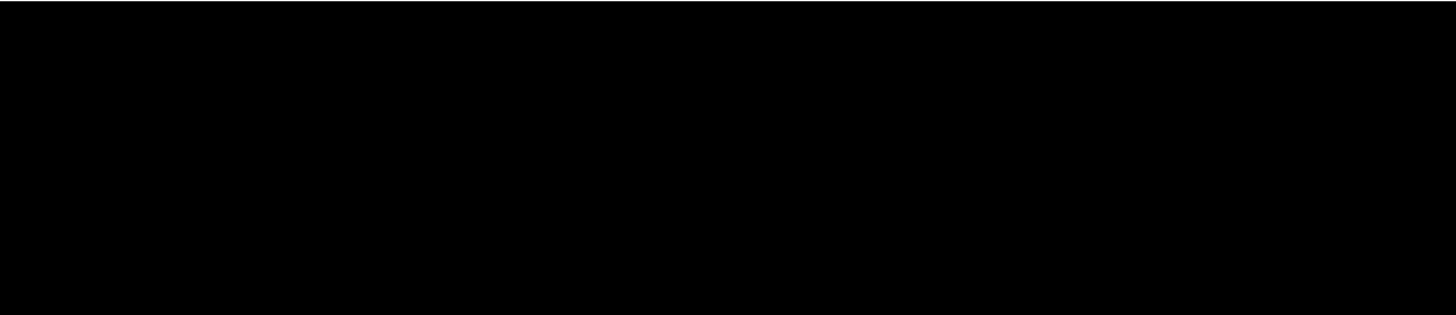
Its creates a security hazard:

Our house is uniquely vulnerable to burglary because of the poor design of the building in the carpark of the Murray Court Flats which backs onto our garden. It is possible to walk through the carpark and get onto a gap between the garages which leads directly to our back garden, at the height of our garden wall. It is all visible from the Banbury Road: the local youths know of it and periodically we see them on it. As a result of this vulnerability, we have had 3 attempted break-ins (two successful). While we have secured the ground floor, the potential vulnerability is our balcony and from there the room which overlooks it. Currently, although the balcony is visible from the Banbury Road, it is protected by the two matching Victorian conservatories. A burglar would have to cross their glass roofs to reach it, and we have had no attempted entry.



It reduces the value of the property:

Quite evidently, the overall effect on light and views together with the ugly character of the extension itself, would reduce the charm of our house and its value would be diminished: the best estimate is by around two hundred thousand pounds.



In summary:

We are dismayed that Mr Johnson has made this choice, and done so without consultation. We feel that the considerable and irreversible damage it would inflict on our household is disproportionate relative to the modest benefits to Mr Johnson of this, rather than one of his other options. He has in effect shifted all the irreversible and intangible costs of the extension from himself to us, and we appeal to the Committee to recognize this.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Paul and Dr Pauline Collier