

PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposal

Demolition of existing dwellinghouse and garage. Erection of 2 x 4-bed semi-detached dwellinghouses (Use Class C3). Car parking, bin and cycle storage, landscaping, and alterations to access.

At 30 Davenant Road, Oxford, OX2 8BY

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30 Davenant Road View from Davenant Road



30 Davenant Road View from rear garden house and garage

1.INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application seeks full planning permission to demolish an existing house and garage at 30 Davenant Road and to erect 2 x 4-bedroom semi-detached houses. They would each have one parking space and individual vehicular accesses. The existing stone wall would be removed, the materials stored and re-used in the construction of the low stone walls proposed on the frontage.

1.2 There is an existing dwelling on the site which has 2 existing vehicular accesses at the eastern and western ends of the site. The existing house is two storeys constructed in red/brown bricks, black stained timber boarding, and render with a plain tiled roof and flat-roofed elements. There is provision for at least some 5 cars on site, the spaces being shown on the existing site plan. It has a gable facing the road with ridges which run north to south and east to west.

1.3 The existing house to the west is located some distance away from the boundary with No.30 and is rendered with timber detailing under a plain tiled roof. To the east, No. 28 has similar material to No.30 with a substantial gable and bay windows facing the street, a 2 storey flat-roofed element to the front west side and a substantial flat-roofed dormer on the east side. Generally, the street has a mixed character with many modern homes of more contemporary design nearby.

1.4 This Statement sets out why planning permission should be granted and includes an appraisal of the relevant planning policies and an assessment of the planning, design and access issues raised by the proposed development.

2. THE CONTEXT

2.1 The site is within the built-up residential area of North Oxford on Davenant Road. It is some 1.6km to the northwest of Summertown Centre. The site (about 0.09ha) is occupied by a detached house, parking and garaging situated within a good-sized plot, described above. The area is within a controlled parking zone (North Summertown Controlled Parking Zone), but the road is not heavily parked up. There are permit holder parking spaces on street for the period 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, double yellow lines, and protected access drives outside and near the site.

2.2 The existing dwelling is two storeys under a pitched and tiled roof with a third storey in the roofspace. It is located to the eastern side of the site with a vehicular access on the west side leading to a garage and store, a further narrow access being on the east side. There are trees to the rear of the site, but these are unaffected by the proposed development.

2.3 The site is bounded by the residential curtilages of the neighbouring houses. The design and appearance of the buildings in the street vary. Other houses in the road are detached and semi-detached houses with frontage car parking and constructed in render or facing bricks, for the most part, under pitched roofs. There is a mix of two and two and a half storey buildings, the third floors being within the roof spaces.

2.4 The site boundaries are mostly fenced, and these are identified on the submitted drawings. The drawings also show windows to the adjoining properties which are closest to the site and the proposed houses.

2.5 The site is not within a Conservation Area, the existing building is not listed, and there are no nearby listed buildings. The site is not within an area at risk of flooding.

3. Planning History

3.1 There are two past planning applications on the site:

58/06724/A_H Garage for private car and store: 30 Davenant Road Oxford OX2 8BY

Approved 17 March 1958

54/03544/A_H Alterations and addition : 30 Davenant Road Oxford OX2 8BY

Approved 2 April 1954

3.2 There are examples of similar replacement homes being permitted in the road.

4. Planning policies

4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 The NPPF continues the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Councils should take a positive approach and decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan. Where the development plan is absent, silent, or relevant policies are out of date, Councils should grant permission unless the adverse impacts outweigh the benefits when set against the policies in the NPPF.

4.2 In relation to housing, it continues to seek to boost housing supply. It encourages the provision of small sites for development (seeking some 10% of allocated sites for such purpose); supports the development of windfall sites, asks LPAs to give great weight to suitable sites within settlements, and encourages the subdivision of large sites (paragraphs 68 and 69); makes clear that development should be resisted where harm is caused; promotes and supports the development of under-utilised land (paragraphs 119, 120 and 124); and seeks to optimise the use of land (paragraph 120). A high standard of design is required (paragraphs 126 to 136).

4.3. The NPPF makes clear that:

- *Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.* (paragraph 38); and that they should:
- *Give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;* (paragraphs 117 and 118).

4.3 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) 2014 as revised: The NPPG provides further detailed advice to supplement the NPPF. The **National Design Guide** provides general guidance to achieve a high design standard for new developments. Oxford City Council does not possess a Design Guide or Design Code which relates to this area.

Local Development Plan

4.4 The Oxford Local Plan 2036 (OLP) : The OLP was adopted in June 2020 and forms the main part of the development plan for this area.

4.5 Those policies in OLP 2036 of relevance are:

S1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

H4 Mix of housing

H14 Residential amenity standards

H15 Internal space standards

H16 Outdoor space standards

RE1 Sustainable design and construction

RE2 Efficient use of land

G2 Biodiversity

G7 Protection of existing features, including trees

DH1 High quality design and placemaking

DH7 External Servicing features and stores

M1 Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport

M3 Parking

M5 Cycle provision

4.6 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): CIL has been introduced in Oxford and requires payments to be made from new development towards infrastructure in the City, subject to a number of exceptions.

4.7 Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan (WNP): The Plan forms part of the development plan. It was put to a referendum on 6 May 2021, where a substantial majority of those voting voted in favour of adoption. The WNP includes policies aimed at achieving landscaped front gardens (GBC5), biodiversity (GBS5), electric charging points (CHS2), preferring brownfield site development (BES1), avoiding flooding, and providing appropriate drainage (BES4). Several community policies are included (which are not part of the development plan) which relate to layout, design, energy efficiency and housing mix.

4.8 Conclusions: This is an existing developed site, and the proposal seeks to make better use of the land consistent with the NPPF and the development plan policies. Bin and bicycle parking provision is made. The new homes would improve the appearance of the site, would not have an adverse impact on adjoining homes. They would not be within a flood area or cause flooding elsewhere. The development would meet internal and external amenity standards. The site is within the existing built-up area of the City. One parking space per dwelling is proposed.

5. Planning Considerations

5.1 Principle There is a need for additional housing in Oxford to meet its housing needs. The site is within the predominantly residential built-up area of Oxford and the land is previously developed. The development would comply with policy RE2 of OLP which encourages the efficient use of previously developed land and increasing densities where appropriate. This approach is supported by the NPPF and by other decision taken by the Council in Davenant Road. The proposed development would be consistent with the NPPF in that it would make efficient and effective use of previously developed land. The development would be compatible with its surroundings and would help to boost housing supply, albeit in small measure, through a net gain of one new home.

5.2 The site is in a sustainable location. The development seeks to achieve a high-quality environment consistent with its surroundings and has been progressed following a detailed analysis of the site's opportunities and constraints. It would conform to the WNP also.

5.3 Amount of development: The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing detached house, garage, and store. The existing house has parking for about 5 cars. The house is located to the east of the site with an access drive on the west side. There is a wide gap between Nos. 30 and 32 Davenant Road. The replacement homes proposed would comprise two semi-detached houses with rooms in the roof space, similar in principle to the existing and other homes which exist nearby. The existing house has 5 bedrooms and a bathroom on the two upper floors with a hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen, and WC on the ground floor.

5.4 The dwellings would be accessed from the front and would comprise a hall, lounge, WC, dining room, utility room, study, and a kitchen/family room on the ground floor. The first floor of the houses would contain two bedrooms and shower rooms with two bedrooms and a bathroom on the upper floor. The front section of the building would be 2 full storeys with an upper storey in the roof space. To the rear, there would be a single storey part which accommodates the kitchen/family room.

5.5 Layout and Scale The proposed houses would be semi-detached and would be comparable to the surrounding development in terms of type, positions on the site, and the depth and height of the buildings. Each house would face the road and would be set back from it following the existing general building line. One parking space with landscaping would be provided to the frontage with private gardens to the rear. The existing stone wall would be removed, the stone would be retained and re-used in a new low wall along the site frontage, save for the access openings. Overall, the new houses would reflect the layout and scale of properties in the road.

5.6 There would be a single vehicular/pedestrian access to each new home. In relation to policy M3 of the OLP and the Council Technical advice note, the proposed car parking would be less than exists on the site at the present time. Whilst the site is within a 400m distance to a regular bus service it is outside 800m to a supermarket or similar (the M&S store at the BP Petrol station and the Summertown supermarkets are outside the 800m distance, albeit that the M&S store is not similar to a supermarket and the access to the site requires crossings of major road junctions at Wolvercote roundabout).

5.7 The scheme has been designed to ensure that the scale of the houses accords with the character of the area and would not cause potential detrimental impact to the amenities of existing neighbouring properties in terms of overbearing or overlooking. The new houses would have a ridge height which mediates between the heights of Nos.76 and 80.

5.8 The proposed dwellings would feature gabled frontages with rooms in the roof space. They would not dominate or appear out of place, and this can be seen in the street elevation drawing provided. The buildings would have a reduced scale and height to the rear where the height reduces to single storey. The drawings show the 45° and 25° lines from the nearest windows of the adjoining houses. The daylight and sunlight standard included in Appendix 3.6 of OLP would be met. The relationship shown is similar to most of the replacement homes approved in this and nearby roads in North Oxford.

For the avoidance of doubt, there are windows in the side elevations of nos. 28 and 30 Davenant Road. These are shown on drawing PL 23 20 10. There are a number of rooflights to the rear of No. 28 which would not be affected, as well as a ground floor utility room window and glazed door facing the fenced boundary. These are opposite No. 30 which has 6 windows and a door facing No. 28. No.32 is distant from the common boundary with No. 30 and would be unaffected.

5.9 In terms of overlooking, the only windows proposed in the side elevations of the upper floors of the proposed dwellings would serve landings, bathrooms/shower rooms and two small bedroom windows to bedroom 4, which would be obscure glazed if required. The landings to the upper floor would be lit by roof lights which would be out of sight. Otherwise, the side windows at first and second floors would be glazed with frosted glass. No unacceptable overlooking would occur from the rear upper floor windows. There are no houses to the rear which would be adversely affected. The ground floor windows would be screened by existing and proposed fencing, the height of which is shown on the drawings.

5.10 It is considered that the scale, massing, and height of the proposed new homes would be consistent with that of the neighbours and would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area. The existing front stone wall would be replaced, using the stone reclaimed from the existing wall. The proposal would be in accordance with Policies H14, H15, and H16 of the OLP. It would represent an efficient use of the land (Policy RE2) and would be consistent with Policy DH1 in improving the design and appearance of the site in its surroundings. The development would not have an adverse impact upon the privacy or amenity of adjoining properties in terms of a sense of enclosure, loss of light, or overlooking into habitable rooms.

5.11 Each dwelling would meet the nationally described space standards and have suitable outdoor amenity space.

5.12 Appearance There is a wide range of architectural styles in this area. The proposal incorporates building elements and design features found within it.

5.13 The new dwellings would have a traditional design consistent with their surroundings. Proposed materials include tiled roofs, render, and timber boarding to the dormers. The proposed design details include pitched roofs, the overall appearance of each house being appropriate to the location and not dissimilar to those approved in the road in recent times.

5.14 The scheme provides a high standard of design which would relate well to its setting in terms of form, materials, and scale and would assist in strengthening local character and the streetscape. The scheme follows good urban design principles overall including reinforcing a sense of place, providing adequate amenity and space about the buildings, and a clear distinction between more open and private areas. The site is not within a conservation area, is not near listed buildings or within an area designated as having a special character. The proposal would accord with guidance in the NPPF in respect of design and with Policy DH1 of OLP. It would also be consistent with the expectations of the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan.

5.15 Energy Efficiency It is intended that the homes would be energy efficient following a fabric first approach. Complete Energy Consultancy has undertaken an evaluation of the proposals and has provided advice on the requirements for, and the provisions made to achieve the Council's 40% reduction in Co2 emissions compared to the building Regulations. Its statement forms a separate report which forms part of the formal application submission. The comments made in the report are able to be incorporated into a suitable planning condition.

5.16 Landscaping Overall, the frontage would be attractively landscaped and sustainable drainage would be provided to the parking areas.

5.17 Access Considerations The current site has two vehicular accesses, a garage, car port, and forecourt parking for 5 cars, with the ability to enlarge the area in order to increase the parking spaces. The proposed development provides one off street parking space for each of the semi-detached homes. The vision splay for each access is shown on the layout drawing. There are charging points shown for each house to serve PHEVs or electric vehicles. This would be consistent with Policy M3 of OLP.

5.18 Consistent with other developments and because the road is not heavily parked up, it is expected that visitor parking permits will continue to be allowed for the new homes: the existing house has access to both residents and visitor parking permits.

5.19 Overall, the development would not cause harm to highway safety or convenience.

5.20 Bins and cycle storage Each dwelling is proposed to have separate storage facilities for bins and there is adequate space for cycle storage within the site boundaries. This is consistent with Policies M5 and DH7 of OLP.

5.21 Access to the dwellings: The dwellings would have a level access to the front doors, meeting the needs of those with disabilities. The proposal would meet all other elements of Part M of the Building Regulations such as doorway and corridor widths and the provision of a ground floor WC.

5.22 Bats The existing house has been surveyed by Ecoconsult (September 2023) and its report forms a separate document accompanying the application. The report indicates that daytime and dusk emergence surveys were undertaken which recorded:

1.3.2 No bat evidence was recorded during the daytime bat inspection survey.

1.3.3 A common pipistrelle day roost supporting a single bat was recorded in a gap associated with the eaves on the southwest elevation during dusk emergence and dawn re-entry surveys.

1.3.4 A common pipistrelle night roost supporting a single bat was recorded in a gap beneath a tile on the southwest elevation during a dusk emergence survey.

5.23 The report's summary of conclusions notes that:

1.4.1 The building will be demolished and therefore bat roosts present in the building will be lost.

1.4.2 Summer emergence and re-entry surveys are generally considered to be valid for 12 to 18 months depending on the potential for roosting bats within the building.

1.4.3 As bat roosts will be destroyed, the site must be registered under the Natural England Bat Mitigation Class Licence scheme prior to demolition.

1.4.4 Natural England licence applications can only be made once full planning permission has been obtained.

1.4.5 To support a Natural England licence application, surveys must be up to date and have been conducted within the current or most recent optimal season.

1.4.6 A mitigation strategy and method statement will be required to ensure the works will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

1.4.7 Please see outline mitigation strategy below:

-Demolition will take place between late March to the end of October.

- Before works start, one Schwegler 1FF bat box will be erected in nearby trees

- Before commencing demolition work, builders and contractors will be inducted by the licensed bat ecologist or accredited agent.

- A pre-works inspection survey will be carried out. The licensed bat ecologist or accredited agent will check the building for bats prior to demolition.

- The licensed consultant/accredited agent will supervise the careful hand removal of the tiles in locations where bat roosts have been identified and in locations providing potential bat roosting habitat.

- Should any bats be discovered during any unsupervised works, that work will cease immediately and the licensed consultant contacted to establish bat presence or otherwise and to advise as necessary.

-Two Habibat cavity wall bat boxes (or similar) will be incorporated in to the side elevation (southwest) of Unit 1.

- One Habibat cavity wall bat box (or similar) will be incorporated into the side elevation (northeast) of Unit 2.

- External lighting will be designed sympathetically and be directed away from newly created roost sites and associated access points.

1.4.8 A jackdaw nest was observed in the chimney. Additional potential nesting bird habitat is present in ivy growing on the garage.

1.4.9 Nesting birds and their nests are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Disturbance to nesting birds can be avoided by carrying out works outside the main nesting season (the main nesting season is generally March to August inclusive). If birds are nesting in the vicinity of the proposed works and could therefore be disturbed by those works, works should cease until birds have fledged

1.4.10 To enhance the site for nesting birds, four swift nest bricks will be integrated in to the cavity wall on the northeast elevation of Unit 2.

5.24. Further advice is provided in relation to nesting birds. Bat and Bird boxes to enhance biodiversity are recommended and are shown on the drawings.

5.25 The report concludes that:

With mitigation, the works will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species (bats) concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range and therefore Regulations within 'The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019' can be met.

6. Conclusion

6.1 This statement provides an appraisal of the prevailing planning policies and an assessment of the planning, design and access issues raised by the proposal to demolish an existing dwelling and to erect 2 x 4-bedroom semi-detached dwellings with the provision of one car parking space for each unit and with private rear gardens. The application should be determined by the Council in accordance with the development plan and on its individual merits. The proposal would be consistent with the development plan and there are no material considerations which indicate otherwise.

6.2 The proposal would provide family homes and make efficient and effective use of previously developed land in an appropriate way in a sustainable location, which is encouraged by current planning policy. The NPPF provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that developments which accords with the development plan should be approved.

6.3 The area is formed by a mixed character of buildings. The scheme offers two dwellings (a net gain of one) of a layout, scale, appearance, and positioning in keeping with the surrounding development and appropriate to the context. The scheme would meet the Council's sunlight and daylight standards and would not unduly overbear on or overlook neighbouring properties. It would not have any significant impact on neighbouring houses and their occupants. In both internal and external standards, the houses would meet appropriate the Council's policies. Sufficient private amenity space for the residents would be provided.

6.4 The form, appearance and scale of the buildings would follow the general pattern of development in this area and the development is similar to that approved for nearby sites.

6.5 One parking space per home is shown. Appropriate facilities would be provided for residents to store cycles and bins out of sight.

6.6 The proposed development would be appropriate for the site in its context and would be a logical complement to the area. The proposal would accord with the Development Plan and would be sustainable development, such that planning permission ought to be granted.