

APPLICATION NO.	P21/S1805/HH
APPLICATION TYPE	HOUSEHOLDER
REGISTERED	15.4.2021
PARISH	LONG WITTENHAM
WARD MEMBER(S)	Sam Casey-Rerhaye
APPLICANT	Mr & Mrs Lloyd-Jukes
SITE	Vincent House, High Street, Long Wittenham, OX14 4QQ
PROPOSAL	Removal of existing garage and replacement with oak detailed garage as amended by plans 10A, 11A, 12AB and 13 A which reduces the height of the proposed garage.
OFFICER	Kim Gould

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This application has been referred to the Planning Committee because it has been called in by Councillor Sam Casey-Rerhaye.
- 1.2 Vincent House lies within the built-up limits of Long Wittenham within the conservation area. It is a traditional red brick property with a plain tile roof set back from the highway. Pedestrian access is gained off the highway across the grass verge at the front of the property with vehicular access and parking being taken at the rear from Fieldside to the existing garage.
- 1.3 The site is identified on the Ordnance Survey extract **attached** as Appendix 1.
- 1.4 The application seeks full planning permission to remove the existing single storey garage and studio at the rear of Vincent House and replace it with a timber clad three bay garage. It would be constructed with oak detailing, timber cladding and plain tile roof.
- 1.5 The proposal was the subject of a pre application advice request ref P20/S1985/PEO.
- 1.6 The plans have been amended during the determination period in response to conservation officer's comments and objections from neighbours and the Parish Council. Reduced copies of the amended plans accompanying the application are **attached** as Appendix 2. Full copies of the plans and supporting information together with consultation responses are available for inspection on the council's website at www.southoxon.gov.uk

2.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

2.1 Long Wittenham Parish Council – Objection

Original plans – Objections on the basis of

- Adverse impact on the character of the conservation area
- Bulk and mass of replacement building would adversely affect the conservation area.
- Significant impact on immediate neighbours
- Adverse impact on highway safety
- Condition required to ensure no parking on the highway outside the garage.
- A condition preventing conversion into a dwelling would be of no use as enforcement team is significantly stretched.

- Supports the concerns of the Long Wittenham History Group (detailed below)

Amended plans – Objection

- The amendments do not significantly address the concerns that were raised initially and confirms objection on those grounds.

County Archaeological Services - No objection

Drainage – No objection subject to condition requiring surface water drainage details to be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of development.

Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council) – No objection subject to a condition preventing the conversion of the garage/carport to residential accommodation.

Forestry Officer – No objection subject to a condition requiring tree protection measures submitted to be in place prior to the commencement of works.

Conservation Officer – No objection on heritage grounds.

Neighbours - Objections

Original plans (3)

- Two storey replacement of a single storey garage and artist's studio in the conservation area.
- Significantly higher than the existing building – visually prominent
- Heritage report is dismissive in terms of the impact on nearby listed building and says it is not of any heritage value. The building is associated with Robert Gibbings.
- Would want to see wooden garage doors to prevent theft and vandalism
- Rooflights will directly overlook a garden and patio area
- First floor accommodation should only be used as storage

Amended plans (2)

- The amended plans have not addressed concerns
- We met 3 times with the applicant over a number of months and although some changes were made, I would not say that broad agreement was reached.
- Roof windows will still overlook my property
- This building could be converted into a dwelling

Long Wittenham History Group –

Robert Gibbings was a significant author, engraver, traveller, naturalist and teacher. The studio building itself may not be grand but its connection with Gibbings is most certainly important in the same way that the childhood homes of the Beatles are not architecturally important but nevertheless have a significance by association with remarkable people. Gibbings working in his studio in the garden at Footbridge Cottage headstone in the churchyard.

Heritage statements need to be checked and challenged and on this occasion it is clear that the Heritage statement is misleading. It is very easy for the history and heritage of villages to be eroded small bit by small bit until no trace remains. Please do not let this happen here.

3.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

3.1 [P20/S4540/DIS](#) - Approved (15/12/2020)

Discharge of condition 5 - location of drainage and services on application ref. P20/S2982/HH Erection of single storey rear extension

[P20/S2982/HH](#) - Approved (11/11/2020)

Erection of single storey rear extension (as amplified by Arboricultural Impact Assessment report received on 21/10/20).

[P20/S1985/PEO](#) – Pre application advice provided (16/07/2020)

Removal of existing garage and replacement with oak frame detailed garage.

[P17/S4234/HH](#) - Approved (11/01/2018)

Front entrance porch

[P17/S1541/HH](#) - Approved (27/06/2017)

Alter position of the fence to the front of the dwelling.

[P14/S2913/NM](#) - Approved (02/10/2014)

Non-material amendment to planning permission P13/S0064/EX, to insert barn style garage doors into the existing opening. Demolition of existing detached double garage and erection of a garage and garden room with a home office within the roof space.

[P13/S0064/EX](#) - Approved (08/03/2013)

Extension to the time for implementation of planning permission (Demolition of existing detached double garage and erection of a garage and garden room with a home office within the roof space).

4.0 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

4.1 N/A

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 **Development Plan Policies**

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (SOLP) Policies:

DES1 - Delivering High Quality Development

DES10 - Carbon Reduction

DES2 - Enhancing Local Character

DES8 - Promoting Sustainable Design

DES9 - Renewable Energy

ENV1 - Landscape and Countryside

ENV3 - Biodiversity

ENV6 - Historic Environment

ENV8 - Conservation Areas

ENV12 - Pollution

H20 - Extensions to Dwellings

TRANS5 - Consideration of Development Proposals

5.2 **Neighbourhood Plan**

Long Wittenham Parish Council has reviewed their current neighbourhood plan and submitted a modified version to South Oxfordshire District Council. The reviewed plan is considered to contain significant modifications and therefore needs to undergo an independent examination and local referendum. As such the current made plan (October 2027) is the relevant document and the relevant policies are:

LW4 Design
LW5 Car parking

5.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 (SODG 2016)

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

5.5 Other Relevant Legislation

Human Rights Act 1998

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report.

Equality Act 2010

In determining this planning application, the Council has regard to its equalities obligations including its obligations under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The relevant planning considerations are the following:

- **Impact on the character and appearance of the Long Wittenham conservation area**
- **Design and character- impact on the Long Wittenham conservation area.**
- **Residential amenity**
- **Access and Parking**
- **Carbon reduction and sustainable design**
- **Impact on trees**

6.2 Impact on the character and appearance of the Long Wittenham conservation area and historical significance of the existing building

The site lies within the Long Wittenham conservation area and is sited relatively close to listed buildings. Policy ENV6 of the SOLP seeks to ensure that proposals for new development should be sensitively designed and should not cause harm to the historic environment. Policy ENV7 seeks to ensure that development sympathetic to the setting of a listed building.

6.3 A heritage statement has been provided with this application. This looks at the possibility that the existing garage could be considered a non-designated heritage asset by means of its association with Robert Gibbings. The heritage statement concludes that the garage was built after Robert Gibbings association with the property and is otherwise of no historic and architectural interest in its own right. This is at odds with the representations provided by the Long Wittenham History Group which maintains that the studio was that built by Robert Gibbings and whilst not grand, is of significance as a result of its association with this person.

6.4 The Council's conservation officer has carefully considered the information provided by both the applicant and consultees. She agrees that the connection of Robert Gibbings to the village is of historical and artistic interest. She is, however, of the view that his contribution to the village is best represented and sustained by the literary works he produced and that this would not be diminished by the removal of the studio building. She has no objection to the removal of the structure.

6.5 The proposed structure would replace an existing building which is visible within the street scene. The key difference is the proposed removal of a hedge along the front of

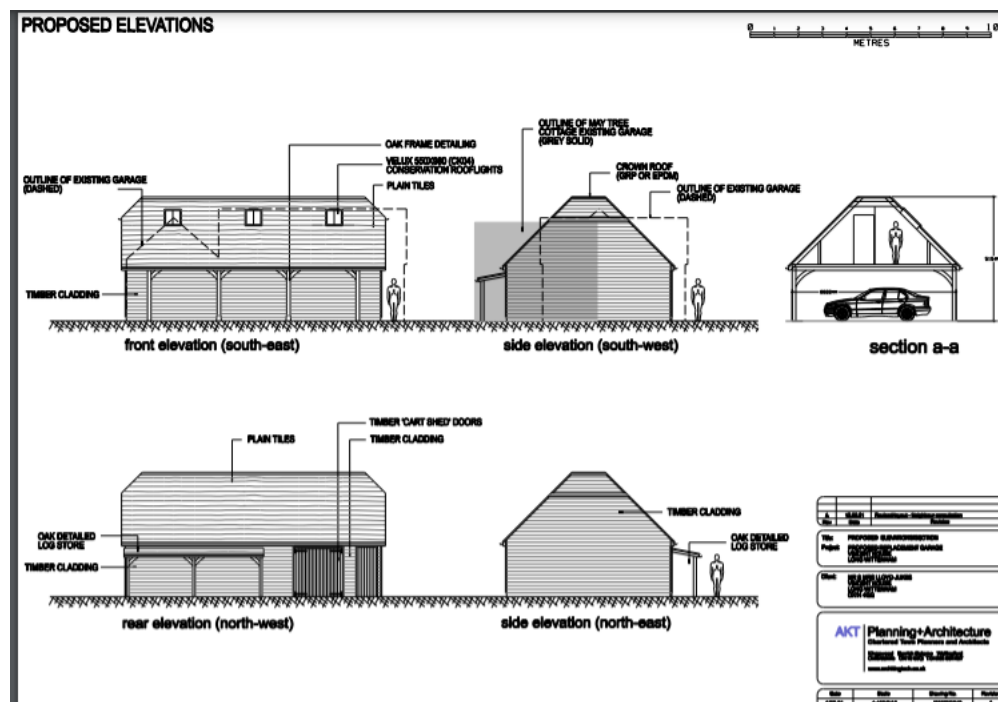
the site which would enable vehicular access to the triple garage directly from Fieldside. This hedge could be removed without the need for planning permission and whilst it is acknowledged that it contributes to the green character of the site it is not integral to the special character and appearance of the conservation area. There are other instances where buildings, such as Lovegrove Barn, are positioned directly onto Fieldside without hedging but maintaining a grass verge. This proposal would include the provision of grasscrete blocks to preserve the impression of a grass verge.

6.6 The proposed building is 0.9m (maximum) higher than the existing. It would be constructed using good quality traditional materials. The Council’s conservation officer has considered the proposal and agrees that the design of the building would preserve the general character of Fieldside, echoing the design of traditional cart sheds, rather than having a suburban garage design or a particularly domestic character, which is considered appropriate in this location. Its scale would be similar to other barn type buildings along Fieldside and would not appear out of character within this context.

6.7 **Design and character**

Policy DES2 of the SOLP seeks to ensure that all new development is designed to reflect the positive features that make up the character of the local area and should both physically and visually enhance and complement the surroundings.

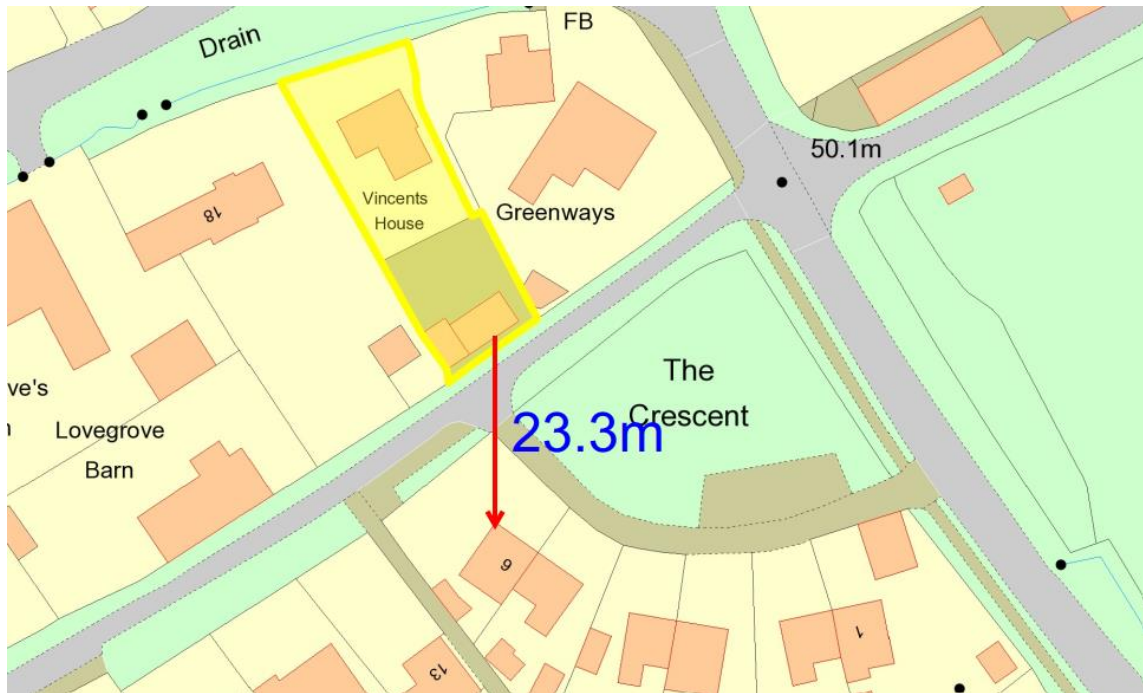
6.8 In this case, the proposed garage would replace a building of no particular architectural merit and would be constructed using high quality traditional materials. As illustrated below, the new building would be higher than the existing but not to such an extent as to be visually intrusive or out of character. The outline of the existing building is shown as a dotted line.



6.9 **Residential amenity**

DES6 of the SOLP seeks to ensure that development proposals will not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring properties in relation to, for example, loss of privacy and dominance or external lighting.

- 6.10 The neighbour at no 6 The Crescent has expressed concern over the potential loss of privacy from the proposed rooflights in the south-eastern (front) elevation. There are 3 rooflights proposed which would have a cill height of 1.4m. The rooflights would face onto Fieldside and the side/rear garden of No 6. Given the cill height and the distance from the neighbour across an access track, I am of the view that this would not result in significant adverse impact on the neighbour's privacy. The GIS extract below illustrates the relationship between the application site and no 6 The Crescent.



6.11 **Access and Parking**

Policy TRANS5 of the SOLP seeks to ensure that all new development provides for a safe and convenient access for all users to the highway network and that parking is provided in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council parking standards. Objections from the Parish Council and neighbours have included concerns over highway safety.

- 6.12 The existing boundary hedge will be removed to provide direct access from the replacement garage onto Fieldside. Visibility splays have been provided together with space for manoeuvring and parking. The County Highway Authority has not objected to the proposal. As such there are no technical reasons to refuse this application on highway safety grounds.

6.13 **Sustainable features and carbon reduction**

DES8 of the SOLP states that all new development, including building conversions, refurbishments, and extensions, should seek to minimise the carbon and energy impacts of their design and construction. Policy DES9 of the SOLP encourages the incorporation of renewable and low carbon energy applications within all development.

- 6.14 The proposals are relatively modest in terms of size and scale and offer limited opportunity to minimise the carbon and energy efficiency. The front of the proposed garage is intended to be left open so insulating the ground floor would not be appropriate. The Design and Access statement accompanying the application states that the materials for the building will be sourced from ethical and local companies where possible. The agent has confirmed that all materials including insulation will be

BREEAM A/A+ rated. All lighting will be low energy LED fittings and a car charging point will be included within the electrical installation. I am therefore satisfied the design addresses the aims of Policies DES8 and DES9 of the SOLP.

6.15 Trees

Policy ENV1 of the SOLP seeks to ensure that South Oxfordshire's landscape features are protected against harmful development and should protect features that contribute to the nature of and quality of South Oxfordshire's landscape such as trees. The trees within this site are protected by the conservation area. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report has been submitted with this application which has been considered by the Council's forestry officer. He has concluded that having regard to the existing site conditions the proposed development would not have any significant impact on the adjacent trees. By removing the existing hard surfacing and returning it to garden the growing environment for the trees on the south western boundary will be improved. The submitted tree protection measures set out in the arboricultural report are acceptable and should be put in place prior to any works starting on site. This can be covered in conditions

6.16 Community Infrastructure Levy

The additional floor area over and above the existing structure is, however, less than 100sqm so CIL would not be payable.

6.17 Pre-commencement conditions

Pre-commencement conditions in relation to tree protection and surface water details are recommended. These conditions have been agreed with the agent.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The principle of replacing the existing outbuilding is acceptable. The new garage would not result in a significant impact on neighbour amenity or result in issues affecting highway safety. It would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. Therefore, the proposal accords with the relevant Development Plan policies.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 **That planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:**

1 : Commencement three years - Full Planning Permission

2 : Approved plans

3 : Materials as on plan

4 : No garage conversion

5 : Tree protection

6 : Surface water details

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