

<b>Application Number</b>	16/0062/FUL	<b>Agenda Item</b>	
<b>Date Received</b>	18th January 2016	<b>Officer</b>	Mairead O'Sullivan
<b>Target Date</b>	14th March 2016		
<b>Ward</b>	Romsey		
<b>Site</b>	Adj 150 Catharine Street Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 3AR		
<b>Proposal Applicant</b>	Erection of a single dwelling with 5 bedsits. Mr Richard Fella 1 Lion Works Business Park Station Road East Whittlesford Cambridgeshire cb22 4wl United Kingdom		

SUMMARY	<p>The development does not accord with the Development Plan for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> The proposal would not provide quality living space for future occupiers of the site</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> The proposal does not adequately respect the amenity of the occupants of No.150 Catharine Street</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> The design is out of character with the area and fails to preserve and enhance the setting of the Conservation Area and street scene</li></ul>
RECOMMENDATION	REFUSAL

## **1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION/AREA CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The application site is garden land located adjacent to 150 Catharine Street.
- 1.2 The site itself is not within the Conservation Area but properties to the south fall within the Conservation Area. These consist of

later Victorian terraced properties. Properties to the north are mainly interwar semi-detached houses.

## **2.0 THE PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The proposal is for the erection of a single detached building to accommodate 5 independent bedsits/flats.
- 2.2 The application has been amended since its original submission.
- 2.3 The proposal has a height of 8m. The building is to be set back from the street but forward of the building line of No.150 and 152 Catharine Street. Bin and cycle storage is to be provided to the front of the property.
- 2.4 There is an unenclosed porch to the front. A large box dormer is proposed to the rear. The rear element of the property steps in at both sides and drops in height to 6.8m.
- 2.5 The bedsits are accessed from Catharine Street through a lobby. Two bedsits are provided at ground floor and first floor with a further unit at second floor. Each unit is comprised of a kitchenette, living area with fold down bed and bathroom. A small communal garden of 10m depth is provided to the rear of the property.

## **3.0 SITE HISTORY**

- 3.1 There is no site history.

## **4.0 PUBLICITY**

- |     |                        |     |
|-----|------------------------|-----|
| 4.1 | Advertisement:         | No  |
|     | Adjoining Owners:      | Yes |
|     | Site Notice Displayed: | No  |

## **5.0 POLICY**

- 5.1 See Appendix 1 for full details of Central Government Guidance, Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policies, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations.
- 5.2 Relevant Development Plan policies

PLAN	POLICY NUMBER
Cambridge Local Plan 2006	3/1 3/4 3/7 3/10 3/11 3/12 4/10 4/11 4/13 5/1 8/6 8/10

### 5.3 Relevant Central Government Guidance, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations

Central Government Guidance	National Planning Policy Framework March 2012  National Planning Policy Framework – Planning Practice Guidance March 2014  Circular 11/95
Supplementary Planning Guidance	Sustainable Design and Construction (May 2007)  Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste Management Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (February 2012)
Material Considerations	<u>City Wide Guidance</u>  Cycle Parking Guide for New Residential Developments (2010)
	<u>Area Guidelines</u>  Mill Road Area Conservation Area Appraisal (2011)

## 5.4 Status of Proposed Submission – Cambridge Local Plan

Planning applications should be determined in accordance with policies in the adopted Development Plan and advice set out in the NPPF. However, after consideration of adopted plans and the NPPF, policies in emerging plans can also be given some weight when determining applications. For Cambridge, therefore, the emerging revised Local Plan as published for consultation on 19 July 2013 can be taken into account, especially those policies where there are no or limited objections to it. However it is likely, in the vast majority of instances, that the adopted development plan and the NPPF will have considerably more weight than emerging policies in the revised Local Plan.

For the application considered in this report, there are no policies in the emerging Local Plan that should be taken into account.

## 6.0 CONSULTATIONS

### **Cambridgeshire County Council (Highways Development Management)**

#### *First comment*

- 6.1 If parking is to be provided on the site the applicant should reassess provision based on recent guidance. If no parking is to be provided the development may impose additional demands upon on-street parking on the surrounding street. This will not have a significant adverse impact upon the public highway but may impact on residential amenity.

#### *Second comment*

- 6.2 No comment

### **Environmental Health**

#### *First comment*

- 6.3 The development is acceptable subject to two conditions.

#### *Second comment*

- 6.4 No additional comments

### **Refuse and Recycling**

#### *First comment*

- 6.5 Before planning can be agreed they need to allow more space for the bins (at least 10 x 240 bins) or if the bedsits want to share, they could have a 660 litre bin for rubbish and a 660 litre bin for recycling, but they need to make sure this will fit.

#### *Second comments*

- 6.6 Recommend 1 x 660 black refuse bin, 1 x 660 blue recycling bin and 1 x 240 green bin (food/garden waste). The capacity on 2 people per bedsit so 10 people. Need to demonstrate that this can be provided on site.

#### *Third Comment*

- 6.7 The proposal has now demonstrated that it can adequately provide refuse arrangement for five units.

### **Urban Design and Conservation Team**

#### *First comment*

- 6.8 The development is unacceptable. The principle of a development in this location is acceptable. The concerns relate to the scale and architectural language. The site lies between the Victorian housing within the Conservation Area and the later interwar properties beyond. The proposal does not amplify local distinctiveness nor raise the quality of the space. The dormer to the front roof slope disrupts the character of the place. The development fails to preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area and is therefore not supported. A narrower more thoughtfully detailed scheme to reflect the property at No. 150 would be looked on more favourably.

#### *Second comment*

- 6.9 The proposal is unacceptable. The agent has removed the front gable from the plans giving the proposed new building a

character more in common with that of No. 150. However, the long rear outrigger, with its small windows and large expanse of blank walls is a poor detail which does not contribute positively to the local area due to its looming impact on the adjacent properties. The roof design is convoluted and full width which does not comply with the Roof Extensions Design Guide. The proposal does not contribute positively to the local character of the area and is not supported. A smaller, better detailed proposal may be acceptable in Conservation terms.

- 6.10 The above responses are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the consultation responses can be inspected on the application file.

## **7.0 REPRESENTATIONS**

- 7.1 The owners/occupiers of the following addresses have made representations:

- ☐ 150 Catharine Street
- ☐ 152 Catharine Street
- ☐ 158 Catharine Street
- ☐ 115 Sedgwick Street

- 7.2 The representations can be summarised as follows:

- ☐ Concerned about parking
- ☐ Residents would not need a car given the location
- ☐ Will enhance an untidy space
- ☐ Uses space efficiently
- ☐ Concerned about sewage

- 7.3 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations can be inspected on the application file.

## **8.0 ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1 From the consultation responses and representations received and from my inspection of the site and the surroundings, I consider that the main issues are:

1. Principle of development

2. Context of site, design and external spaces (and impact on heritage assets)
3. Residential amenity
4. Refuse arrangements
5. Car and cycle parking
6. Third party representations
7. Planning Obligations (s106 Agreement)

### **Principle of Development**

- 8.2 Policy 5/1 states that proposals for housing development on windfall sites will be permitted subject to the existing land use and compatibility with adjoining uses. The application site is within a predominantly residential area and therefore complies with policy 5/1.
- 8.3 The proposal relates to the sub-division of the plot, therefore condition 3/10 is relevant. This policy requires consideration to be given to the impact on amenities of neighbours (part a), amenity space/car parking (b), impact on the character of the area (c), effect on listed buildings/BLI (d), impact on trees (e) and whether the proposal would compromise comprehensive redevelopment (f). In this case parts (d), (e) and (f) are not relevant in this case. I will assess the application against the remaining criteria in the body of my report.
- 8.4 In my opinion, the principle of the development is acceptable and in accordance with policy 5/1.

### **Context of site, design and external spaces and impact on the character of the Conservation Area**

- 8.5 The Conservation Team has considered both the original and amended proposals to be unacceptable in failing to respond to the context of the surrounding area. While the application site itself does not fall within the Conservation Area, the southern site boundary adjoins the Central Conservation Area and would be visible from within it.
- 8.6 The amended proposal removes the front gable and front dormer window. This is a welcome alteration and appears more in keeping with No.150 Catharine Street. However, the roof form of the proposed development is bulky and convoluted to accommodate the large dormer to the rear. The large dormer

does not fit well within the roof and neither does the large extent of unarticulated brickwork that sits underneath it. My view is that this detailing is out of character with the surrounding properties both within and outside the Conservation Area and is of a poor design.

- 8.7 The southern elevation, which will be visible from the Conservation Area, is poorly detailed, with a large expanse of blank wall, long outrigger and small windows, with no recess in the brickwork. This is of poor design and does not preserve or enhance the setting of the Conservation Area. The northern side elevation is also poorly detailed but will be less visible from the street.
- 8.8 Whilst the principle of a development in this location is acceptable, the detailed design is poorly articulated and is a clear consequence of ambitions to deliver too many units on what is a constrained site. The proposal would be visible from the Conservation Area and negatively impact upon its setting but even on its own merits as a building outside of the Conservation Area, my view is that it fails the test of good design pursuant to policy 3/12. It would not have a positive impact in its own right and clearly fails to respond adequately to its context.
- 8.9 As a result, I consider that the development would not preserve or enhance the character of the area contrary to policies 3/4, 3/7, 3/10, 3/12 and 4/11.

### **Residential Amenity**

Impact on amenity of neighbouring occupiers

- 8.10 The proposal is set away from the neighbouring property at No. 148 Catharine Street to the south. While the proposal would enclose an area to the side of the house that is currently open and surrounded by garden land, I do not consider that the proposal would appear unduly dominant from this property given the staggered building lines and orientation of the plots.
- 8.11 Two upper floor windows are proposed in the southern side elevation. These are both to be obscure glazed and would not result in any significant overlooking of No. 148.



- 8.12 The proposal site occupies a similar footprint to No. 150 Catharine Street to the north. However, in terms of scale, the massing of No. 150 drops down to single storey to the rear. The proposed outrigger of the proposal is set away from the boundary with this property by some 1.2m and is subservient to the main ridge, but is nonetheless of a two storey height of 6.8m extending to a distance of 5m from the rear wall of the property parallel to and slightly beyond the rear extent of No. 150. I consider that due to its depth, height and proximity, coupled with the very poor design of the northern elevation, that the proposed rear element of the scheme would unacceptably enclose the neighbour at No. 150 and dominate the amenity that occupiers here could reasonably expect to enjoy. The rear projection would also be likely to result in a loss of light to the immediate garden area of No.150 and to its east facing living room window because the rear outrigger is due south of it. Whilst I appreciate this room is also served by a larger window on the west elevation, the room is deep and the loss of light would in my view be noticeable to occupants. Outlook from the window would also be reduced by the 5m element, compounding the sense of enclosure.
- 8.13 In my opinion, the proposal does not adequately respects the residential amenity of No.150 Catharine Street and as a result is not compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 3/4, 3/7, 3/10 and 3/12.

*Amenity for future occupiers of the site*

- 8.14 The first and second floor units provide an adequate level of amenity for future occupiers of the site.
- 8.15 The ground floor unit which fronts onto Catharine Street (bedsit 1) is in close proximity to both the bike and bin store and also the forecourt area, which would accommodate all of the comings and goings to the property. Views from the window facing onto the street would in my view be compromised and suffer from a lack of privacy and landscape buffering and be likely to result in future occupants having minimal privacy. The side kitchen window to this unit would face the side of no. 148 and views from here would also be enclosed. Given the limited space on the site, I do not consider it possible to condition the relocation of the bins and bikes as this may in turn lead to other issues and would significantly reduce the already limited

outdoor amenity space. I consider that this unit would experience an unacceptable level of noise and disturbance from its proximity to these elements, which would have an unacceptable level of outlook and privacy as a result.

- 8.16 The principal window which serves the rear ground floor unit would be overlooked by the shared communal garden space. The applicant has amended the plans to include a hedge abutting the window to help screen this unit and provide privacy. However, if it were to provide any meaningful privacy it would have to be relatively high and this would restrict outlook from the window because it is so close. My view is that the proposed arrangement of landscaping to the rear is compromised and needs to be re-thought.
- 8.17 In my opinion the proposal does not provide a high-quality living environment or appropriate standard of residential amenity for future occupiers, and I consider that in this respect it does not comply with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 3/7, 3/10 and 3/12.

### **Refuse Arrangements**

- 8.18 The Recycling Officer requested further detail to ensure there was sufficient space to accommodate the required refuse storage. I am awaiting formal comments from the Recycling Officer and will report these on the amendment sheet.

### **Car and Cycle Parking**

- 8.19 No car parking is to be provided on the site. The Highway Officer notes that a lack of parking on the site may increase the demand for on –street parking. I recognise the representations made in this regard but consider the lack of parking provision to be acceptable given the sustainable location of the site within close proximity of bus and cycle infrastructure.
- 8.20 Eight cycle parking spaces are to be provided. This complies with the Cycle Parking Guide for New Residential Developments (2010). No details are provided as to whether there is adequate room for these spaces but these details could be dealt with by condition if I was minded to support the proposal.

- 8.21 In my opinion the proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 8/6 and 8/10.

### **Third Party Representations**

- 8.22 I have addressed most of the representations within the body of my report. I will address any outstanding issues in the below paragraphs.
- 8.23 The principle of a development in this location is acceptable and I accept that this space currently appears untidy. However, the current proposal is out of character and of poor design, fails to adequately respect the amenity of No. 150 Catharine Street and does not provide high quality living accommodation to future occupiers of the site.

### **Planning Obligations (s106 Agreement)**

- 8.24 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 have introduced the requirement for all local authorities to make an assessment of any planning obligation in relation to three tests. Each planning obligation needs to pass three statutory tests to make sure that it is
- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
  - (b) directly related to the development; and
  - (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

In bringing forward my recommendations in relation to the Planning Obligation for this development I have considered these requirements.

- 8.25 The size of the development and its location leads me to conclude that no obligations would be required towards any of the open space categories. For this scale of build, I am unaware of any specific project/s that the scheme could meaningfully contribute towards whilst meeting the CIL regulations.

## **9.0 CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 The proposal is of poor design and is out of character with its surroundings and the setting of the Conservation Area. The

proposed outrigger, running at first floor level at a length of 5m, would visually enclose the neighbour at No. 150 Catharine Street to an unacceptable degree and result in a loss of light to their immediate garden area and living room. Bedsits 1 and 2 fail to provide high quality living accommodation to future occupiers of the site.

## **10.0 RECOMMENDATION**

**REFUSE** for the following reasons:

1. Due to its bulky design and poor detailing the proposal would appear out of context with its surroundings. The development would be visible from the Conservation area and would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of it or the street scene. The proposed development is therefore contrary to policies 3/4, 3/10, 3/12 and 4/11 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2006).
2. The two ground floor units, bedsits 1 and 2, fail to provide adequate living accommodation for future occupiers of the site. Noise and disturbance from the use of the bike and bin store and forecourt area would have an unacceptable negative impact on the amenity of the occupier of bedsit 1 and reduce the level of privacy to an unacceptable extent. The primary window of bedsit 2 would be overlooked from the communal garden and suffer from a lack of privacy given that the hedge is likely to be maintained to a low level. As a result, the proposal would not provide an adequate level of amenity for future occupiers of the site contrary to policies 3/7, 3/10 and 3/12 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2006).
3. Due to its height, depth, orientation and oppressive design, the proposal would visually enclose the neighbour at 150 Catharine Street and reduce outlook from the east facing living room window. The development would also result in a loss of light to this living room window and dominate the immediate garden area of the property. This would result in an unacceptably harmful impact on the amenity of the occupants of No. 150 Catharine Street contrary to policies 3/4, 3/7, 3/10 and 3/12 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2006)