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| Application Number | 18/1952/FUL | Agenda Item | |
| Date Received | 12th December 2018 | Officer | Mairead O'Sullivan |
| Target Date | 6th February 2019 | | |
| Ward | Newnham | | |
| Site | 6 Wilberforce Road | | |
| Proposal | Retrospective permission for the erection of a bike store. | | |
| Applicant | Mr Joe Sanghera 6 Wilberforce road | | |

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|----------------|---|
| SUMMARY | <p>The development does not accord with the Development Plan for the following reason:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The store is considered harmful to the Conservation Area and streetscene. - The amendments are not considered adequate and the revised store would remain out of character. |
| RECOMMENDATION | REFUSAL |

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION/AREA CONTEXT

1.1 The application site is a three storey mid-terrace tile clad residential dwelling on the north western side of Wilberforce Road. This is a predominantly residential area although the area to the east of the site is occupied by Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics. The properties on the western side of the road are all set back from the street. The majority have hedges and mature planting to the front of the properties.

1.2 The site lies within the West Cambridge Conservation Area.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The application seeks retrospective planning permission for a bike store to the front of the property.

2.2 The bike store is completed and in place. It is sited on the front driveway hard on the boundary with 8 Wilberforce Road. The store is timber. It runs perpendicular to the street. Planting was removed to accommodate the cycle store. The application was submitted following an enforcement investigation.

2.3 The application has been amended since submission and proposes to reduce the length of the existing store by 1.1m. The height is marginally reduced in places. The applicant notes that the height is difficult to calculate as the ground slopes. Additional planting and a green roof are also proposed. The store also accommodates bins in a covered area adjacent to the house.

2.4 The application is accompanied by the following supporting information:

1. Plans
2. Amended plans
3. Cover letter in support of application

3.0 SITE HISTORY

| Reference | Description | Outcome |
|-------------|---|-----------|
| 14/0643/FUL | Removal of tile hanging on front elevation, render wall and replacement of all windows. Windows replaced in rear elevation as required to fit minor opening size adjustments. | Permitted |

4.0 PUBLICITY

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|------------------------|-----|
| 4.1 Advertisement: | Yes |
| Adjoining Owners: | Yes |
| Site Notice Displayed: | Yes |

5.0 POLICY

5.1 See Appendix 1 for full details of Central Government Guidance, Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations.

5.2 Relevant Development Plan policies

| PLAN | POLICY NUMBER |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Cambridge Local Plan 2018 | 1 55 56 57 59 61 81 822 |

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

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Central Government Guidance | National Planning Policy Framework 2019 National Planning Policy Framework – Planning Practice Guidance from 3 March 2014 onwards Circular 11/95 (Annex A) |
| Material Considerations | <u>City Wide Guidance</u> Cycle Parking Guide for New Residential Developments (2010) |
| | <u>Area Guidelines</u> West Cambridge Conservation Area Appraisal (2011) |

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

Cambridgeshire County Council (Highways Development Control)

- 6.1 No objection: The proposal would not have any significant adverse impact on highway safety.

Urban Design and Conservation team

First comment

- 6.2 Objection: The size and location of the bike store is considered to have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. No. 6 Wilberforce Road is within a terrace of 4 modern three storey buildings. All of the frontages have parking spaces, originally divided up by hedging from the house elevations to the pavement edge. The owners of no. 6 have removed the hedge between no. 6 and no. 8 and replaced it with a timber cycle shed. The height and length of the shed make it very intrusive in the streetscene which has a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area due to the uncharacteristic nature of the structure. The softness of the hedging has been replaced with the harshness of the built form.

Second comment

- 6.3 Objection: The revised plans do not overcome the Conservation Team's concerns and the proposal remains harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.4 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 which are in objection to the proposal:
- 10 Adams Road
 - 6 Clarkson Road
 - 5 Madingley Road
 - 7 Wilberforce Road

- 8 Wilberforce Road (photo of the bike store and photo prior to construction of the bike store provided) x4
- 9 Wilberforce Road
- 30 Wilberforce Road

7.2 The representations in objection can be summarised as follows:

- Out of character
- Structure is harsh, bulky, visually intrusive and at odds with the green to the front of the other properties
- visually dominates the neighbouring property
- Hedge should be reinstated and a transparent curved bike store erected in its place (as at 2 Adams Rd)
- Hornbeam was removed as part of construction
- Does not preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Hazard as reduces visibility when moving a car out of driveway of 8 Wilberforce Road
- Hazard to pedestrians as it limits visibility for vehicles leaving 6 Wilberforce Road
- Exceeds 1.8m boundary fence height
- Hope that the structure could be modified to be in keeping
- Concerned about accuracy of the plans
- Very large structure for a bike store

7.3 The owners/occupiers of the following addresses have made representations which are in support of the proposal:

- 94 Ainsworth Street
- 11 Bendyshe Way, Barrington
- 21 Blackthorn Close
- 69 Bramley Way, Hardwick
- 44 Broadway, Bourn
- Camcycle x2
- 2 Clarkson Close
- 16 De Freville Avenue x2
- 24 Fox Hill Road, Guilden Morden
- 71 Hemingford Road
- 161 Hobart Road
- 17 Lilywhite Drive
- 6 Lotfield Street, Orwell
- 31 Madingley Road
- 10 Malthouse Place, Green Drift, Royston
- 4 Opeford Close, Offord Cluny, St. Neots

- 2 Page Close, Histon
- 3 Pear Tree Close, Haddenham, Ely
- 78 Sedgwick Street
- 15 Shelly Garden
- 24 Springfield Road, Sawston
- 5 Stevensons Road, Longstanton
- 58 The Limes, Harston
- 14 Wilberforce Road
- 16 Wilberforce Road x 2
- 19 Wilberforce Road
- 28 Wilberforce Road

7.4 The representations in support can be summarised as follows:

- Were the proposal to be a new house there would be a requirement for cycle parking and the store is conveniently located and would comply with policy 82
- The shelter is custom built to the needs of the occupier
- Uses natural materials and once weathered will blend in well as opposed to the metal cars on other driveways
- The structure is attractive to look at and made of high quality materials
- It supports a sustainable mode of transport which helps reduce greenhouse emissions and air pollution
- Cycle parking should be encouraged to alleviate traffic congestion
- In line with the councils recently adopted climate change policy
- The roof would have a green element which would improve biodiversity
- This type of bike store is common in new residential developments
- The Conservation Area has a mixed character
- No higher than a normal fence and no more imposing
- The applicant has demonstrated a willingness to compromise to ensure the shelter is more sympathetic to the Conservation Area
- The revisions to the plans overcome the previous objections as the building will be reduced and will blend into the environment and would provide adequate visibility for pedestrians

7.5 Councillor Rod Cantrill has requested that the application is determined at planning committee. He considers the applicants suggestion to amend the plans and reduce the size of the store

would overcome concerns about the impact on the street scene and Conservation Area.

7.6 Councillor Nethsingha has requested that the application be determined at planning committee if the case officer recommendation is for refusal.

7.7 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. Context of site, design and external spaces and impact on heritage assets
2. Residential amenity
3. Highway safety
4. Car and cycle parking
5. Third party representations

Context of site, design and external spaces and impact on heritage assets

8.2 The applicant has amended the plans and proposes to reduce the overall length of the existing bike store by 1.1m. The height of the structure would remain unchanged but would be lessened as the highest part of the store currently lies nearest the footpath due to the slope in the ground; by removing the element closest to the footpath the highest part of the store would be removed.

8.3 The Conservation Officer considers the bike store to be harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. She notes the soft landscape to the front of the terrace, which acts as a boundary treatment, is characteristic and that this has been removed between nos 6 and 8 to make way for the bike store. She considers that the harshness of the bike store replaces the softness of the landscape and appears out of

character as a result. She does not consider the proposed amendments overcome her concerns.

- 8.4 This part of Wilberforce Road has much greenery which softens the surrounding buildings and mature planting in the front gardens of properties is characteristic in the area. The bike store is between 1.59 and 1.78m in height and currently runs all the way to the pavement. The proposal is to reduce the store so it would be 1.2m from the footpath. A hedge is proposed to the front of the store and it is proposed to have a green roof. Whilst this would be an improvement on the existing arrangement, it is not considered to be adequate and the bike store would still appear bulky and incongruent in the streetscene. None of the other nearby buildings have stores or outbuildings to the front of the building and this form of development is considered out of character. I do not consider that the reduction in length and additional planting would adequately mitigate the harshness and overall bulk and scale of the boxy structure.
- 8.5 I accept that there are benefits from the store as it enables the occupant to provide secure and easily accessible cycle storage and keeps bins tucked away from the street. However this does not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the store is considered contrary to the NPPF.
- 8.6 In my opinion the proposal, in terms of design and impact on the Conservation Area, is contrary to Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 55, 56, 57, 59 and 61.

Residential Amenity

Impact on amenity of neighbouring occupiers

- 8.7 The proposed store lies hard on the boundary with 8 Wilberforce Road. No 8 is to the south of the store so it does not overshadow this property. Given that no 8 is an end of terrace property, although the store does enclose the outlook from the nearest window on the front elevation, I do not consider this to be significantly harmful to warrant refusal given the more open aspect to the south.
- 8.8 In my opinion the proposal adequately respects the residential amenity of its neighbours and the constraints of the site and in

this respect, I consider that it is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 55 and 57.

Highway Safety

- 8.9 The Highway Engineer considers the proposal would have no significant adverse impact on highway safety. I note the representations raise concerns that the store impacts on car and pedestrian visibility. However, given the Highway Authority's view, I do not consider the store would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety. The proposed store is now to be set back by 1.1m from the pavement which would result in improved pedestrian visibility.
- 8.10 In my opinion the proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policy 81.

Car and Cycle Parking

- 8.11 The proposal does provide covered cycle storage for 6 Wilberforce Road. I accept the point made by supporters of the application, that were no 6 a new build, covered and secure cycle storage would be required. However, the proposal is to retrofit cycle storage rather than integrating it into the design as would be the case with any new build. I accept that the occupier does have a demand for secure cycle parking and that as the property is a mid-terrace property there is no direct access to the rear garden other than through the house. However, the benefits of the store do not outweigh the harm to the streetscene and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area contrary to the NPPF.
- 8.12 In my opinion the proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policy 82.

Third Party Representations

- 8.13 I will respond to any matters raised in the third party representations which I have not addressed in the body of my report in the below table.

| Representation | Response |
|--|---------------------------|
| Were the proposal to be a new house there would be a | Noted. See paragraph 8.11 |

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| requirement for cycle parking and the store is conveniently located and would comply with policy 82 | |
| The shelter is custom built to the needs of the occupier | I note the store serves a purpose but this does not outweigh the harm to the Conservation Area. See paragraph 8.11 |
| Uses natural materials and once weathered will blend in well as oppose to the metal cars on other driveways | I accept the store will weather but the height, scale and massing appear harsh and out of character. Cars are not permanent structures and the use of the driveway by cars would allow the hedge to have been retained. |
| The structure is attractive to look and made of high quality materials | The structure itself is well built but does not conform to the surrounding character due to its height, scale and siting. |
| It supports a sustainable mode of transport which helps reduce greenhouse emissions and air pollution | I note this is a benefit of the store |
| Cycle parking should be encouraged to alleviate traffic congestion | I note this benefit but this is not considered to outweigh the harm to the Conservation Area. |
| In line with the councils recently adopted climate change policy | I note the importance of sustainable transport in the Local Plan however the store itself is considered harmful to the Conservation Area and this harm is not considered to be outweighed by the benefits of the store. |
| The roof would have a green element which would improve biodiversity | The addition of a green roof would not adequately mitigate for the overall scale of the bike store. The loss of the existing hedge harms biodiversity and the addition of the green roof in terms of biodiversity is not considered to be a benefit which would outweigh the harm to the |

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|---|---|
| | Conservation Area |
| This type of bike store is common in new residential developments | Noted but these are normally part of a comprehensive re-development rather than the bike store for consideration as part of the application which was added to the frontage of an older property within a Conservation Area. |
| The Conservation Area has a mixed character | I note the mixed character but consider greenery and planting to the front of properties to be characteristic of this part of the Conservation Area. None of the properties in this part of the Conservation Area have buildings to the front of the house. |
| No higher than a normal fence and no more imposing | Fences at the front of a property which abut the highway can be no greater than 1m to be considered pd. The structure is taller than a PD fence and is also substantially bulkier than a fence. |
| The applicant has demonstrated a willingness to compromise to ensure the shelter is more sympathetic to the Conservation Area | I note the applicant's willingness to make amendments but these do not go far enough to overcome the harm to the Conservation Area and streetscene. |
| The revisions to the plans overcome the previous objections as the building will be reduced and will blend into the environment and would provide adequate visibility for pedestrians | I agree that pedestrian visibility would be improved but do not consider that the store as amended would blend into the environment and consider it would still have an unacceptable impact on the Conservation Area. |

9.0 RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE, for the following reasons:

- 9.1 The cycle store by virtue of its height, length, bulky form and siting adjacent to the street appears prominent in the

streetscene. The timber structure, which has replaced a hedge, appears harsh and is incongruous in the street. The proposed planting to the front of the store is not considered adequate to soften the structure. The cycle store is considered harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and is considered to appear dominant in the streetscene. As a result it is contrary to Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 55, 56, 57 and 61 and the NPPF (2019).