

Application Number	18/1397/FUL	Agenda Item	
Date Received	19 th September 2018	Officer	Alice Young
Target Date	12 th November 2018		
Ward	Kings Hedges		
Site	38 Ramsden Square		
Proposal	Erection of an attached building containing 2 dwellings. Single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory and rear box dormer with Juliet balcony to main dwelling. Retrospective subdivision of main dwelling into two flats.		
Applicant	Ms Heike Martin 38 Ramsden Square		

SUMMARY	<p>The development fails to accord with the Development Plan for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The proposal is of poor design and would harm the character of the area - The proposal would fail to provide a good quality of amenity and accessibility for future occupiers - The proposal fails to respect the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers
RECOMMENDATION	REFUSAL

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION/AREA CONTEXT

1.1 No. 38 Ramsden Square comprises a two-storey semi-detached property set within a large plot, benefiting from a modest sized front garden and a sizeable rear garden. The

application site is on the north side of Ramsden Square, situated outside the conservation area and the controlled parking zone. This is predominantly a residential area characterised by semi-detached properties arranged in a square and a communal green space is located in the centre.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal seeks permission for the erection of an attached building containing 2 dwellings and a single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory and rear box dormer with Juliet balcony to main dwelling. The proposal also includes the retrospective subdivision of main dwelling into two flats.
- 2.2 The plans were amended to include external amenity space for each of the units; the ground floor flats have direct access to a rear garden and the first-floor flats have balconies and a communal garden to the rear where bins and bikes are located.
- 2.3 The proposal consists of an erection of a two-storey attached extension, a single storey extension, two rear box dormers, one on the existing dwelling and one on the proposed. The proposal would also include the subdivision of the proposed plot and flat conversion of the existing building to result in a total of 4 flats on site.
- 2.4 The two-storey dwelling would project 5 metres to the side elevation at first floor and 6 metres on the first floor and roof slope to create a first floor overhang. The dwelling would have a width of 8.2 metres at two storey and a height of 5.15 metres to the eaves and 8.5 metres to the ridge to match the existing dwelling. The roof form would be partially hipped, and materials would match the existing. A front bay window would also be included in the design of the dwelling to match the existing. The dwelling would include a single storey rear element which would project 8.6 metres to the rear and have a width of 5 metres. This element would have a contemporary design with rounded corners and a flat roof. On top of the flat roof would be a balcony which would measure 2.2 metres (depth) and 3.4 metres (width) and include privacy screens on either side of the balcony which would be a height of 1.5 metres sloping down to 1 metre on the side elevation and 1 metre in height to the rear. The rear dormer would be 4.05 metres in width and would be

stepped down from the ridge by 0.2 metres and a similar distance from the eaves. This element would be standing seam leadwork with a Juliet balcony on the rear elevation.

2.5 The single storey rear extension to the existing building would stretch 4.7 metres to the rear along the common boundary with no. 40 and 4 metres in width. The design would be similar to the proposed dwelling's single storey extension. A first-floor balcony would be the same as the one on the new dwelling. The rear box dormer would also be of a similar scale to the proposed dwelling.

2.6 The application is accompanied by the following supporting information:

1. Design and Access Statement
2. Drawings

3.0 SITE HISTORY

Reference	Description	Outcome
15/2204/FUL	Proposed garden room, home office and store.	Granted Permission
14/0808/FUL	Proposed garden room, home office and store	Granted Permission

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 2018 policies, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations.

5.2 Relevant Development Plan policies

PLAN		POLICY NUMBER
Cambridge	Local	1,

Plan 2018	28, 50, 51, 53, 55, 56, 58 82
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5.3 Relevant Central Government Guidance, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations

Central Government Guidance	<p>National Planning Policy Framework 2019</p> <p>Planning Practice Guidance 2014</p> <p>Circular 11/95 – The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions (Annex A)</p> <p>Planning Policy Statement – Green Belt protection and intentional unauthorised development August 2015</p> <p>Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard – published by Department of Communities and Local Government March 2015 (material consideration)</p>
Supplementary Planning Guidance	<p>Sustainable Design and Construction (May 2007)</p> <p>Cambridge City Council (May 2007) – Sustainable Design and Construction</p> <p>Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste</p> <p>Cambridgeshire Design Guide For Streets and Public Realm (2007)</p> <p>Cycle Parking Guide for New Residential Developments (2010)</p>

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

Cambridgeshire County Council (Highways Development Control)

- 6.1 The application form provides no information regarding parking within the site, either proposed or existing. The applicant must provide information regarding existing and proposed parking arrangements to allow informed comment upon the full impact of the proposals. The applicant must show the dimensions for the proposed car parking spaces, which should measure 2.5m x 5m.

Environmental Health

- 6.2 The development proposed is acceptable subject to the imposition of the condition(s)/informative(s) outlined below
- Demolition/construction hours
 - Piling
 - Demolition/construction collection and delivery hours
 - Airborne dust
 - Dust Condition Informative
 - Low NOx Boilers Informative

Waste

- 6.3 Please supply information on where bins will be stored. Each flat should have their own set of bins and be responsible for putting them on the pavement for collection.

Drainage

- 6.4 The development proposed is acceptable subject to the imposition of a surface water drainage condition.

Urban Design and Conservation team

- 6.5 It is considered that there are no Urban Design issues with this proposal.

Landscape officer

- 6.6 It is not possible to comment on the proposed development and the additional information set out below will be required in order to provide comments.

1. Bin location is acceptable; however, cycle parking proposals are inappropriate. A total of 7 spaces are required based on the number of bedrooms proposed. Additional visitor parking is also required. The Cycle Parking Guide for New Residential Developments SPD will provide guidance on acceptable forms of cycle parking provision. The semi-vertical raised racks shown on the proposals do not provide frame locking locations for bikes placed in them. They also cannot provide adequate storage for off-gauge bicycles, or bikes with large baskets or panniers. The location of the cycle store should more ideally be located near the bin store rather than in the alcove in front of a residential bathroom window.
2. How are the ground level amenity spaces to be used? Will all four units use the rear garden communally? There is a requirement for all new developments to provide private external amenity space where practicable and it is considered practicable for both the ground floor units. Balconies should be considered for upper floors. Refer to Policy 50 of the Local Plan for the external space requirements.

6.7 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

Initial submission:

- 7.1 Councillor Smart has commented on this application
 - Concerned about the overlooking potential from the balconies, lack of information for highways and a general large development on a small site.
- 7.2 The owners/occupiers of the following addresses have made representations:
 - 29 Ramsden Square (objection)
 - Camcycle (objection)
- 7.3 The representations can be summarised as follows:

- Concerns regarding limited car parking causing parking pressure and the sufficient provision of bins
- The proposed alcove used for cycle storage (using a purpose made bike rack) is not compliant with the cycle parking guide and the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policy 82.

Amended submission 1:

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

- Camcycle (objection)
- 40 Ramsden Square (supportive)

7.5 The representations can be summarised as follows:

- The bike stores are not situated in a convenient location and the side passage is below the minimum 1500mm for a distance over 10m. Cycle stores are not large enough to provide a sufficient number of cycles.
- I am confident that we as neighbours would not be detrimentally affected by the style of the building and the subsequent tenants. I do not believe that our privacy would be any further compromised by their inclusion in the scheme.

Amended submission 2:

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

- Camcycle (objection)

7.7 The representations can be summarised as follows:

- The previous comments still hold. The applicants have suggested replacing one of the car parking spaces at the front with cycle parking in order to create some more convenient cycle provision.

7.8 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

Principle of development

- 8.1 As the proposal is to subdivide the existing residential plot to provide two further units as well as to convert the existing property into two flats, both policy 52 and policy 53 relate to the principle of development.

Policy 52

- 8.2 Policy 52 outlines that proposals for development on sites that form part of a garden or group of gardens or that subdivide an existing residential plot will only be permitted where:
- a) the form, height and layout of the proposed development is appropriate to the surrounding pattern of development and the character of the area;
 - b) sufficient garden space and space around the existing dwellings is retained, especially where these spaces and any trees are worthy of retention due to their contribution to the character of the area and their importance for biodiversity;
 - c) the amenity and privacy of neighbouring, existing and new properties is protected;
 - d) provision is made for adequate amenity space, vehicular access arrangements and parking spaces for the proposed and existing properties; and
 - e) there is no detrimental effect on the potential comprehensive development of the wider area.
- 8.3 The proposal does not meet criterion a, c, d and e. These are explained in the relevant paragraphs below.

Policy 53

- 8.4 Policy 53 outlines that proposals to convert a single family dwelling house or a non-residential building into self-contained flats will be permitted where:
- a) the proposed development (the original building including acceptable extensions and roof conversions) has an internal gross floor area of at least 120 sq m (excluding stairwells, balconies, external open porches, conservatories and areas with a floor to ceiling height of less than 1.5m), and proposed room sizes meet minimum room sizes (see Policy 50);

- b) the ground or lower ground floor includes a family unit (two bedroom plus) with garden access;
 - c) the proposal, in terms of the number of units and scale of associated extensions, would not have a negative impact on the amenity or character of the area or on highway safety in streets already experiencing parking stress;
 - d) the proposal would result in a good standard of amenity for its occupiers and is designed to avoid cumulative and negative impacts on neighbouring residential properties; and
 - e) the proposal includes appropriate refuse, recycling and cycle storage to serve the development
- 8.5 The proposed internal floor space meets the 120m² minimum and whilst 38b would not comply with the internal space standards, policy 50 states that conversions should seek to meet or exceed the standard. As such it is considered that the proposal meets criterion a. The proposal fails to provide a family unit on the ground floor of the conversion and therefore does not meet criterion b. The proposal fails criterion c and d but meets e. The three remaining criterion is assessed in the relevant paragraphs.

Context of site, design and external spaces

- 8.6 Ramsden Square is characterised by semi-detached pairs which are set back from the street. The majority of existing subdivisions on Ramsden Square are on the corner plots which benefit from a plot with a larger width. By virtue of the layout of Ramsden Square and the pattern of development, the majority of these existing subdivision would not be seen in the context of the application site and therefore carry less weight than they would if they were located closer to the application site. From the public realm the proposal would be visible from both the front, from Ramsden Square, and the rear on the north-eastern entrance to Ramsden Square. Given this highly visible location, the proposal should be sensitively designed taking cues from the surrounding environment. By virtue of the proposal's expansive scale and massing, the proposed two storey dwelling would appear prominent within the street scene. Whilst there are a couple of properties in this section of Ramsden Square which have been extended, the examples that would be seen in the context of the application site are not in a similar vein to the proposed. The two storey side extension at no. 34 is of a smaller scale than the proposed with a lower ridge height than

the existing form, resulting in the extension appearing as a subservient addition to the existing form, unlike the proposed.

- 8.7 Furthermore, the cantilever design results in the proposal appearing unbalanced and top heavy. By failing to be of good design, this unorthodox design sits uncomfortably within the street scene and fails to make a positive contribution to the character of the area. No. 30 is an example referred to in the precedent document provided by the agent (16/0351/FUL). Whilst this example would not be seen in the context of the proposed, it is important to highlight the differences between the two cantilever designs. No. 30 was extended at two storey level to create a new two-bedroom dwelling, which included a cantilever element. However, this cantilever element is significantly set back from both the front and rear and significantly more modest than the proposed, limiting the impact this element would have on the composition of the area. Therefore, it is my opinion that no. 30 bears little relation to the proposed design and the proposal would result in adversely impacting upon the character of Ramsden Square.
- 8.8 The remaining subdivision examples referenced by agent, due to the layout of Ramsden Square, are not visible from the application site. Therefore, the examples are considered to be outside the immediate vicinity of the application site and do not form the context of the site. As a result, it can be argued that the proposal would be out of character with the surrounding area.
- 8.9 In my opinion the proposal is contrary to Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 52, 55, 56, 58.

Residential Amenity

Impact on amenity of neighbouring occupiers

No. 40

- 8.10 Despite the scale and massing of the proposal, the impact on no. 40 would be limited to the overlooking impact resulting from the rear balconies at first floor. Due to the scale and massing of the proposed single storey rear extension located on the boundary with no. 40 and no. 40's rear single storey extension, the proposal would not result in a significant overbearing or

overshadowing to no. 40's rear habitable rooms or outside amenity space. Given the amended scheme includes privacy screens of a height of 1.5 metres, decreasing to 1 metre adjacent to no. 40, the proposed balconies would, however, give rise to direct overlooking to no. 40's rear ground floor. Whilst the application suggests that this would give rise to a similar impact resulting from the existing rear windows, it is officers' view that, due to the smaller distance from the balconies to the neighbours amenity space alongside the likely intensive use of the balcony as it is the primary outside amenity space for the proposed flat, the proposal would cause a significant overlooking impact resulting in a detrimental loss of amenity.

No. 36

- 8.11 The proposal would not have a significant impact on no. 36 as the dwelling would be 5.8 metres from the existing building of no. 38. As no. 36 is stepped back from no. 38, the two storey element would not project further than no. 36's existing rear. As such the two storey extension would not impact the rear of the adjacent property, no. 36 and by virtue of the separation distance alongside the absence of habitable rooms on the side elevation and the proposed scale, the proposal would not significantly overshadow or overbear the front habitable rooms of no. 36. Furthermore, as the use of the land adjacent to the extension is currently used as a driveway, the proposal would not significantly impact upon the amenity of no. 36. Given that no. 36 is sited further away from Ramsden Square than the proposed dwelling, the proposed balconies would not give rise to direct views into no. 36's rear habitable rooms or immediate outside amenity space, it would only continue the mutual overlooking relationship already present.
- 8.12 In my opinion the proposal does not adequately respect the residential amenity of its neighbours and the constraints of the site and I consider that it is contrary with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 55 and 58.

Impact on amenity of future occupiers

- 8.13 As the table below outlines, all but one of the proposed units would not meet the gross internal floor space measurements. Policy 50 states that new homes created through conversions

should seek to meet or exceed the standards as far as practical to do so. 38a exceeds this standard, however 38b fails to meet the internal requirement. Although, it is the opinion of officers' that it would not be practical to do so. Conversely, the two units created within the proposed two storey side extension, 38c and 38 d, must meet this standard and the proposed units fail to do so. Furthermore, the lack of windows serving both the kitchen and living area for no. 38c would cause a reliance on artificial light, and a lack of outlook and ventilation. As such it is considered that this would provide a poor living environment for the future occupiers of no.38c and no.38d. Similarly, the balcony at no. 38b would also overlook the outside amenity space of no. 38a, impeding on the residential amenity of no. 38a.

The gross internal floor space measurements for units in this application are shown in the table below:

Unit	Number of bedrooms	Number of bed spaces (persons)	Number of storeys	Policy Size requirement (m ²)	Proposed size of unit	Difference in size
38a	1	2	1	50	58.5	+8
38b	1	2	2	58	56	-2
38c	2	4	2	70	66	-4
38d	1	2	2	58	57	-1

Size of external amenity space

8.14 The amended plans provide external amenity space for all of the flats; the ground floor flats have a private rear garden of adequate size and the first-floor flats have rear balconies of a generous size as well as a communal garden to the rearmost section of the garden.

Accessibility

8. 15 Policy 51 requires all new units to comply with part m4(2) of building regulations, which includes level access. Whilst the proposal allows for retrofitting a stairlift for the proposed first-floor flat, no.38d, this would not be compliant with part m4(2) of building regulations and therefore would not be acceptable.

8.16 In my opinion the proposal does not provide a high-quality (*and accessible*) living environment and an appropriate standard of residential amenity for future occupiers, and I consider that in this respect it is contrary to Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 50, 51 and 53.

Refuse arrangements

8.17 The proposed refuse arrangements in the rear communal garden is considered inconvenient for future occupiers as the dragging distance for collection from the front driveway would exceed 30 metres. However, as I am satisfied that the required refuse could be accommodated on site, this could be easily rectified via condition.

8.18 In my opinion the proposal is compliant in this respect with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policy 57.

Car and Cycle Parking

8.19 The amended plans show provision of four car parking spaces for the four flats; this is considered acceptable. The amended plans also show secure and sheltered cycle storage for 8 cycles, this is also considered acceptable.

8.20 In my opinion the proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 82.

Third Party Representations

8.21 The cycle and car parking has been addressed in the amended scheme.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE, for the following reasons:

1. By virtue of the scale, massing and cantilever design of the proposed two storey dwelling, the proposal would be of poor design bearing little relation to the positive characteristics of Ramsden Square. By failing to be of good design and positively responding to the character of the surrounding area, the proposal is contrary to Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 52, 55, 56, 58.
2. Given the poor internal space attributed to no. 38c and no. 38d alongside the reliance on artificial light, lack of outlook and ventilation in the living areas of no. 38c, the proposal would not provide a good quality living environment for future occupiers. Furthermore, as there is no lift access to the upper floor flat, the proposal would not be of a size, configuration and internal layout to enable Building Regulations M4 (2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' to be met. The proposed development therefore fails to provide a high quality internal and accessible living environment for the future occupants and is therefore contrary to Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policy 50, 51, 52.
3. By virtue of the insufficient screening on the proposed balcony for no. 38b, the proposal would cause a significant overlooking impact to no. 40, resulting in a detrimental loss of privacy impact to no. 40. By failing to respect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, the proposal is contrary to the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policy 53, 55.