

Application Number	21/01279/FUL	Agenda Item	
Date Received	20th March 2021	Officer	Alice Young
Target Date	15th May 2021		
Ward	Romsey		
Site	Land At 64 Cromwell Road Cambridge		
Proposal	Demolition of existing garage and creation of a one bedroom dwelling including outdoor amenity space and primary pedestrian access from Cromwell Road		
Applicant	Richard Sykes-Popham Flat 1 64 Cromwell Road Cambridge		

<p>SUMMARY</p>	<p>The development fails to accord with the Development Plan for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal, through introducing a dwelling in this back-land location, would harm the character of the area. <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal would fail to provide safe and inclusive access to the proposed dwelling, posing a risk to future occupant's safety. <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal would result in a substandard living environment for future occupiers given the poor light levels and outlook experienced from the lower ground floor living area.
<p>RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>REFUSAL</p>

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION/AREA CONTEXT

- 1.1 No. 64 Cromwell Road is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling on the eastern corner of Cromwell Road. The area predominately comprises residential dwellings with a small commercial area located south of the site on the Cromwell Road-Fairfax Road roundabout. Within the site a garage is sited on the eastern (rear) boundary accessible via the shared vehicular (unadopted) road accessed via Brampton or Cromwell Road. The application site has no site constraints as it falls outside the conservation area and controlled parking zone.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal seeks planning permission for the demolition of existing garage and creation of a one bedroom dwelling including outdoor amenity space and primary pedestrian access from Cromwell Road. Cycle storage would be provided adjacent to Cromwell Road.
- 2.2 The application is accompanied by the following supporting information:
1. Planning statement
 2. Environmental statement
 3. Drawings

3.0 SITE HISTORY

Reference	Description	Outcome
16/1340/NMA1	Non-material amendment on application 16/1340/FUL to allow alterations to the second floor balcony design.	Permitted
16/1340/FUL	Extension and subdivision of existing house to create 3 no. self-contained apartments	Permitted
16/0555/FUL	Extension and subdivision of existing house to create 3 no. self-contained apartments	Refused

4.0 PUBLICITY

4.1 Advertisement: No
 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 3 28 29 30 31 32 35 50 51 52 55 56 57 59 80 81 82

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

Central Government Guidance	National Planning Policy Framework 2021 National Planning Policy Framework – Planning Practice Guidance from 3 March 2014 onwards Circular 11/95 (Annex A) Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard – published by Department of Communities and Local Government March 2015 (material consideration)
Supplementary Planning	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Flood

<p>Documents (These have been prepared in parallel with the Local Plan preparation and will be shortly adopted by the Executive Councillor by an out of cycle decision.)</p>	<p>and Water</p>
<p>Previous Supplementary Planning Documents (These documents, prepared to support policies in the 2006 local plan are no longer SPDs, but are still material considerations.)</p>	<p>Sustainable Design and Construction 2020 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste Management Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (February 2012)</p>
<p>Material Considerations</p>	<p><u>City Wide Guidance</u> Biodiversity Checklist for Land Use Planners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (March 2001). Cambridge and Milton Surface Water Management Plan (2011) Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (November 2010) Cambridge City Nature Conservation</p>

	Strategy (2006) Cycle Parking Guide for New Residential Developments (2010)

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

Cambridgeshire County Council (Highways Development Control)

- 6.1 **No objection.** The proposal removes the potential to park a motor vehicle off street and potentially increases demand for existing on street spaces, as the streets in the vicinity provide uncontrolled parking, and as there is no effective means to prevent residents from owning a car and seeking to keep it on the local streets, this demand is likely to appear on-street in competition with existing residential uses.
- 6.2 The development may therefore impose additional parking demands upon the on-street parking on the surrounding streets and, whilst this is unlikely to result in any significant adverse impact upon highway safety, there is potentially an impact upon residential amenity which the Planning Authority may wish to consider when assessing this application.

Environmental Health

- 6.3 **No objection:** subject to the imposition of the following conditions/informatives:
- Construction hours;
 - Collection during construction;
 - Piling
 - Dust
 - And a dust informative.

Sustainable Drainage Engineer

- 6.4 **No objection:** subject to the following conditions:
- Flood risk assessment
 - Surface water drainage scheme
 - Long term maintenance of surface water drainage system

6.5 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:

- 54 Cromwell Road (objection)
- 60 Cromwell Road (objection)

7.2 The representations can be summarised as follows:

- Increase pressure on local services such as schools, nurseries and doctors
- Housing of this type is not a priority for this area, should be family housing or housing for elderly.
- Cramped development, not in keeping with the local housing.
- Overlooking to neighbouring properties.
- Setting a precedent for further development.
- The storage of bins, bikes and cars has not been considered.
- There are no other properties along Cromwell or Brampton Road which have dwellings in the rear such as the proposed.
- The proposal results in a high density on the site and is not appropriate to the context nor will it enhance the local area.
- The building does not relate appropriately to the building and spaces around it. The design may have wood cladding and be arranged to be as unobtrusive as possible a 'box' but it is nonetheless a 'box' at the end of a garden with it's only windowed wall facing directly a similarly largely windowed face of the recently converted house at 64 Cromwell Road.
- The use of the small triangle of land bordering the access road needs clarification as if this is going to be used for parking it will obstruct the access road for other properties/users.
- Impact on biodiversity, namely hedgehog movements, and limited planting.
- Impact of another dwelling and comings and goings on no. 62's amenity.
- Inappropriate access to the dwelling down a side passage.
- Clarity is needed on the purpose of the dwelling

7.3 Two Councillors (Cllr Baigent and Healey) have requested that the application be heard at Planning Committee.

7.4 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 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 through policy 52 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 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

8.2 The principle of development is considered unacceptable as the proposal is contrary to the above criterion: this will be discussed in the relevant sections of the report.

Context of site, design and external spaces

8.3 Cromwell Road properties have long rear gardens with vehicular access to the rear. As such, single storey structures, ancillary or incidental in use, are common and vary in scale and character.

8.4 The proposal seeks to demolish the existing garage along the eastern rear boundary, subdivide the residential garden and erect a one-bedroom dwelling in its place. The dwelling would be partially sunken, with a living area below ground level and the bedroom and the main outside space at ground level. The proposed dwelling would take visual clues from the surrounding context, with its single storey appearance, flat roof form and a

similar material palette. While the proposal would be subservient in scale, sympathetic in design and have a modest footprint, Officers consider that the dwelling would appear more domestic than the surrounding outbuildings and the use would not be compatible in this backland location. The subdivision and movements to and from the dwelling in this backland location would change the nature and character of the site, as it would function and appear as a separate dwelling. This is contrary to the surrounding uses in the rear of Cromwell Road gardens, all uses here are incidental or ancillary in use, and therefore is out of character.

- 8.5 The proposed dwelling would be sited to the rear of 64 Cromwell Road with the designated access from Cromwell Road via a small long pathway to the side of no. 64 (35m from Cromwell Road). This access would be shared by two of the occupants of no. 64, who use this pathway to access their private amenity space to the rear. It would also create a long, unsafe inaccessible and contrived pedestrian entrance to the proposed dwelling. This may lead to the proposed occupiers accessing the dwelling from the rear via the small vehicular access (dirt track) which is unlit and unpaved and not segregated from motor vehicles. Consequently, this would lead to conflict between pedestrians and vehicles along the rear unadopted road. Both access arrangements would not be inclusive, safe, or in accordance with Secure by Design principles or paragraph 130 of the NPPF.
- 8.6 The proposal fails to be compatible with its surroundings or provide a safe, inclusive or accessible place and therefore, the proposal would be contrary to Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 55, 56, 57 and NPPF paragraph 130.

Residential Amenity

Impact on amenity of neighbouring occupiers

- 8.7 The proposed dwelling would be sited adjacent to 62 and 66's rear garages on the rear (eastern) boundary, located approximately 20m from the rear elevation of Cromwell Road properties. Given this surrounding context alongside the scale and massing of the proposed dwelling, the proposal would not result in harm to residential amenity in terms of overshadowing, overbearing or overlooking. While the proposal would create a

new dwelling, increasing the comings and goings to the site, the noise impact arising from this movement would not be significant.

- 8.8 The proposal adequately respects the residential amenity of its neighbours and the constraints of the site and in this respect, it is considered compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 57.

Amenity for future occupiers

- 8.9 The gross internal floor space measurements for the dwelling is 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
1	1	2	2	50	58	+8

- 8.10 The proposed dwelling would have a gross internal floor area of 58m² which exceeds the requirement for a 1 bed 2 person dwelling, as stated in policy 50. The proposed habitable rooms are both west facing, with the living room at lower ground floor and bedroom at ground floor. The living area would be open plan with a depth of 8.3m and would be served by west facing bi-fold doors and a narrow roof light sited 2m into the room. The principal outlook of this habitable room would be west onto a small patio and stairwell sited approximately 2m from the bi-fold doors. Given the lower ground floor location, the boundary treatment would be located 3.15m west and to preserve the amenity of surrounding occupiers this wall would have to be at least 1.8m in height, a total of 4.6m above lower ground level. Consequently, the ground floor living area, the principal living space, would likely have a poor enclosed outlook. Despite the additional light source (rooflight), given the proposed design, its western orientation and the surrounding built form, would likely receive substandard light levels internally particularly in the winter months. Cumulatively, the proposed dwelling, by virtue of its design as a single aspect west facing unit with its principal living area being located at lower ground floor, would fail to provide a high-quality living environment for future occupiers and would be highly enclosed.

- 8.11 The west facing dual level patio totals 25m² which is proportionate to the size of the dwelling, providing sufficient space for drying clothes and a table and two chairs. The ground level patio would be partially overlooked by Cromwell Road properties, yet the separation distance between the patio and the rear of Cromwell Road properties is considered to mitigate against harm. There is also an alternative patio at lower ground level. While this space is likely to feel enclosed due to the stairwell and sunken position, given the ground floor patio is considered to be of sufficient quality, this is not considered to be of significant harm to the amenity of future occupiers.
- 8.12 The Design and Access Statement states that the proposed unit would comply with Part M4(2). This would be secured via condition if officers were minded to support the proposal.
- 8.13 However, for the reasons as set out at para. 8.10, the proposal fails to provide a good quality and accessible living environment for future occupiers, in this respect, it is considered contrary to Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 50 52 and 57.

Highway Safety

- 8.14 Despite raising concerns regarding parking pressure, the Highway Authority are of the opinion that the proposal would not adversely impact upon highway safety.
- 8.15 The proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policy 81.

Car and Cycle Parking

Car parking

- 8.16 The proposal involves the removal of the existing garage associated with no. 64 and the erection of a new dwelling in its place, resulting in a loss of one car parking space for the host dwelling. The host dwelling has been converted into three self-contained flats (one and two beds) so is not a family dwelling. The proposal would therefore remove one car parking space within the site and add an extra unit on site. Despite this, considering the existing provision for other properties along Cromwell Road, the parking pressure Cromwell Road experiences and the size of the dwellings, alongside the site's

sustainable location, officers consider that the proposal would not result in additional parking pressure on surrounding streets.

Cycle parking

- 8.17 Cycle storage for two cycles is proposed to the front of 64 Cromwell Road adjacent to the existing cycle stands for the flats within the host dwelling. This level of provision would comply with appendix L of the Local Plan. The siting of the store is considered relatively convenient despite the separation between the dwelling and the cycle store. For the proposal to comply with policy the cycle parking needs to be covered and secured. Therefore, if I was minded to support the proposal, a condition would be required providing further details of the cycle storage on site.
- 8.18 The proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policy 82.

Refuse arrangements

- 8.19 No details of bin storage have been provided. However, there is sufficient space on site to accommodate a low-rise store for bins on site. A condition could be utilised if I was minded to support the proposal.
- 8.20 It is therefore considered that the proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policy 57 and the RECAP Waste Guide.

Third Party Representations

- 8.21 Third party representatives have raised concerns regarding character and amenity which have been addressed in the relevant sections of the report. Further concerns are addressed below:

Objection	Response
Increase pressure on local services such as schools, nurseries and doctors	The addition of one dwelling would not cause a significant impact on local services.
Overlooking to neighbouring properties.	As stated in the residential amenity section of this report,

	the proposed dwelling is single storey and enclosed by boundary fencing, and therefore would not give rise to overlooking to surrounding neighbours.
Housing of this type is not a priority for this area, should be family housing or housing for elderly.	While this may be the case, there is public benefit arising from the delivery of a dwelling of this size.
Setting a precedent for further development.	Every application is assessed on its merits. This application is considered unacceptable for the reasons discussed above.
The use of the small triangle of land bordering the access road needs clarification as if this is going to be used for parking it will obstruct the access road for other properties/users.	This land has not been allocated for parking and therefore I have assessed it on these grounds.

CONCLUSION

- 8.22 The proposal would be located where the presence of a separate dwelling would be out of character with the prevailing pattern of residential development. The site is remote from Cromwell Road and not easily accessible. It would not feel safe for future users and the access is narrow, long and awkward. Alternative access from the track to the rear would be inappropriate. Outlook from the dwelling would be unduly enclosed and daylight levels would be reduced. Future occupants would have a poor standard of residential amenity.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE

1. The proposed development, by virtue of its use and back-land location, would not be compatible with the surrounding area which is characterised by ancillary and incidental buildings, not separate dwellings. By introducing a separate unit of accommodation in this back-land position, the proposal would change the nature of rear gardens of Cromwell Road, encroaching on the rear garden environment. By failing to respond to the surrounding context, the proposal would be contrary to policies 52 and 55 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018).
2. The proposed dwelling, by virtue of its main long narrow access from Cromwell Road, would not create a safe or inclusive access to the proposed dwelling, posing a safety risk for future occupiers. This may lead to the proposed occupiers accessing the dwelling from the rear via the small vehicular access behind Cromwell Road which is unlit, unpaved and not segregated from motor vehicles. Consequently, this is likely to lead to a conflict between pedestrians and vehicles along this unadopted road. By failing to provide a safe, inclusive or accessible place, the proposal would be contrary to Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 55, 56, 57, Secured by Design principles and NPPF paragraph 130.
3. The proposal would create a single aspect west facing unit with its principal living area being located at lower ground floor. By virtue of the design and the required boundary treatment, the proposal would create substandard accommodation with a poor and enclosed outlook and reduced light levels to the detriment of the amenity for future occupiers. By failing to provide a high-quality living environment for future occupiers, the proposal would be contrary to Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 52, 56 and NPPF paragraph 130.