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L 210212 KJ - Planning Statement Final



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Dear Sir / Madam,

**Submission of Full Planning Application (and demolition within a Conservation Area) for a ground floor extension and infill of the exiting undercroft and provision of associated cycle storage
1-3 Cambridge Terrace, Oxford, OX1 1RR**

**On behalf of Christ Church
Planning Portal Reference: PP-09517547**

PLANNING STATEMENT

Savills has been instructed by Christ Church (hereafter 'the Applicant) to submit a planning application at 1-3 Cambridge Terrace, Oxford, OX1 1RR, for the following

"A Ground floor extension and infill of the existing undercroft area and provision of associated cycle storage"

We enclose the following documents forming the application, submitted via the Planning Portal:

- Application Form
- CIL Form
- Site Location Plan (drawing no. 19-19-01)
- Block Plan (drawing no. 19-19-02)
- Existing Ground Floor Plan (drawing no. 19-19-03)
- Existing First Floor Plan (drawing no. 19-19-04)
- Existing Second Floor Plan (drawing no. 19-19-05)
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan (drawing no. 19-19-06)
- Proposed First Floor Plan (Drawing no. 19-19-07)
- Proposed First Second Floor Plan (19-19-08)
- Existing Elevations (19-19-09)
- Proposed Elevations (19-19-10)
- Proposed Window Door infills (19-19-11)
- Proposed Single Storey Extension (19-19-12)
- Proposed Bin Store Fence (19-19-13)
- Design and Access Statement (incorporating a Heritage Assessment)
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (document reference 43-CAM-RPT-AIA-01 NB 170221)
- Arboricultural Implications Plan (document reference 43-CAM-DRW-AIP-01 170221)
- Tree Survey Results (document reference 43-CAM-INF-SCH-01 020221)
- Structural Inspection Note (document reference 210203)
- Structural Technical Note (document reference 210212)

The Site and Surrounding Context

Offices and associates throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia Pacific, Africa and the Middle East.

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1-3 Cambridge Terrace comprises a three storey office block that was constructed in the 1970s, located just south of the centre of Oxford City.

Access into the site is principally gained from Cambridge Terrace, a no-through road, which extends off Albion Place to the west.

The building itself lies on the edge of Oxford's Central Conservation Area. The boundary for the Conservation Area stops just south of Cambridge Terrace.

The building is not listed, however there are several listed buildings nearby, including:

- 7 Clarks Row, a Grade II listed structure approximately 9 metres to the east of 1 Cambridge Terrace
- Boundary wall of Number 3 Fronting Rose Place, a Grade II listed structure approximately 12 metres to the north east of Cambridge Terrace

A large silver maple tree is present within the site boundary, to the east of the bike storage area. Given its siting within the Conservation Area, the tree is protected.

The site is within a Flood Zone 1 which has the lowest probability of flooding according to the Environment Agency.

From desktop review, the site is not subject to any further land-based designations.

1 Cambridge Terrace features an undercroft which is currently used as a covered walkway. It also acts as a cover for cycle storage further west. A 2 metre high metal railing and fence runs around the boundary of 1 and 2 Cambridge Terrace enclosing the undercroft in an east-west direction. The diagram below shows the extent of the undercroft:



Figure 1 – Existing Ground Floor Plan for 1-3 Cambridge Terrace

The Applicant has advised that the undercroft has given rise to anti-social behaviour at the site. As a result, the security railing was erected along the site’s frontage to prevent such behaviour, however, this has created an unwelcoming space, relating poorly to the surrounding environment and wider Conservation Area.

Currently, there are 14 Sheffield Stands located within the undercroft, providing bike storage for 28 bikes overall.

A small courtyard area is located to the south of the frontage for 2 Cambridge Terrace, however this is poorly maintained and under-utilised, failing to create a sense of place and improve the visual amenity of the surrounding area, as shown below:

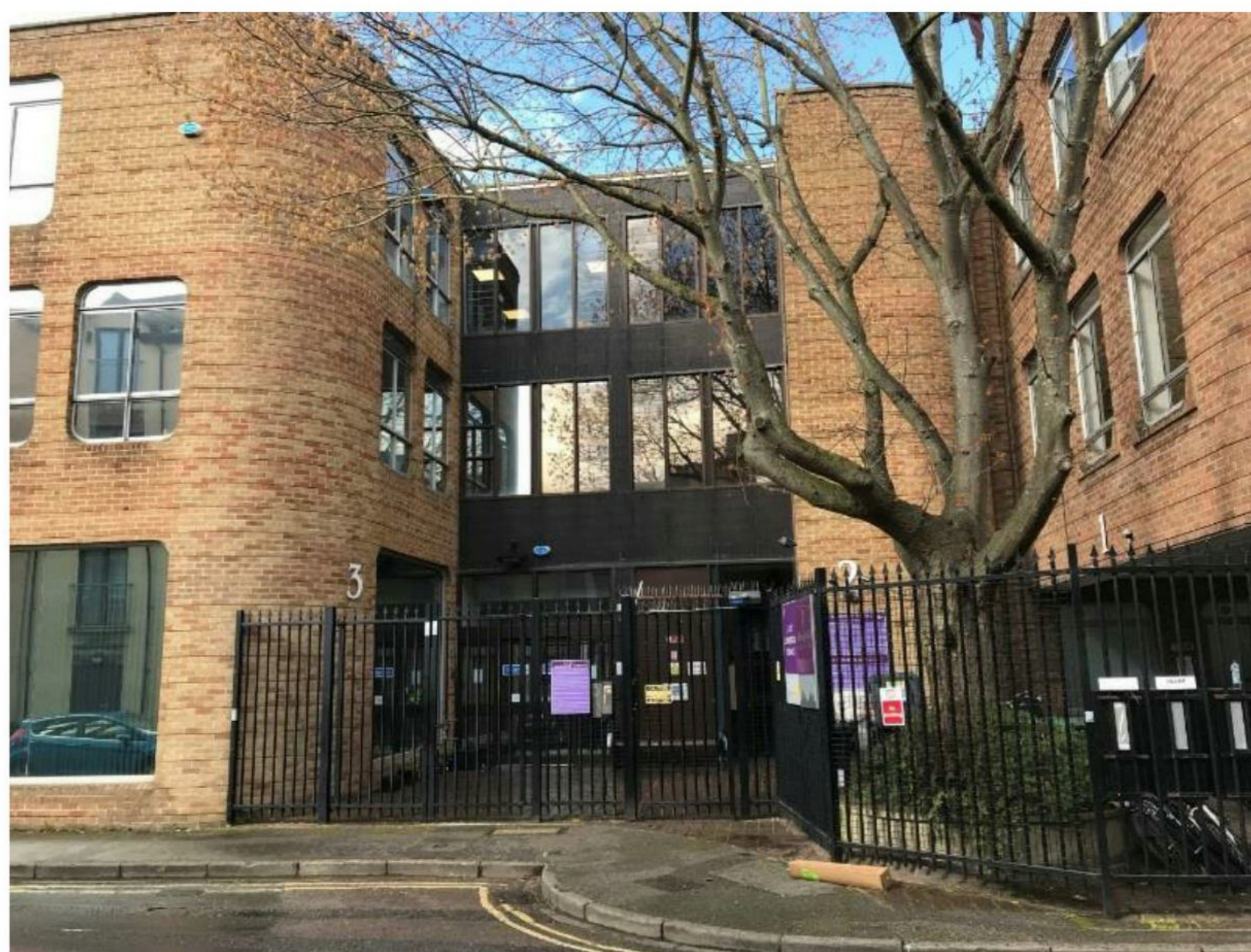


Figure 2 – Metal railing outside the frontage of 2 and 3 Cambridge Terrace

Planning History

There is an extensive planning history associated with the site. The table below identifies those which are particularly relevant to these proposals:

Date	Application Reference	Property	Description	Decision
1972	72/25844/A_H	2-3 Cambridge Terrace	Erection of three storey building to provide showroom on ground floor with offices on first and second floors.	Approved 1972
1978	77/01103/A_H	Southern House 1 Cambridge Terrace	3 storey office block comprising showrooms and reception at ground floor with two floor of offices	Approved 1978
1981	81/00554/NFH	Southern House 1	Change of use from showroom to offices	Approved 1981

		Cambridge Terrace		
1997	97/00244/NFH	Southern House 1 Cambridge Terrace	Change of use of part of ground floor from Business (Class B1) to Educational Use (Class D1 Language School)	Approved 1997
2003	03/01844/FUL	first and 2nd floors, 2-3 Cambridge Terrace)	Partial change of use of office (Class B1a) accommodation (500 sq m) to student accommodation (first and 2nd floors, 2-3 Cambridge Terrace) , together with the erection of a third floor extension (1,300 sq m) for student and office accommodation (totalling 36 study bedrooms)	Approved 2004
2007	07/00071/PDC	Southern House 1 Cambridge Terrace	Use of office for Solicitors is authorised under Class B1 and A2. (Ground Floor)	Permission not required 2007
2008	08/01170/FUL	1-3 Cambridge Terrace	Erection of 2.5 m high perimeter fence with gated entrance points and relocation of bike racks (1-3 Cambridge Terrace).	Approved 2008
2017	17/00619/FUL	Southern House 1 Cambridge Terrace	Erection of new boundary wall with railings and gated access	Approved 2017

It is worth noting that the new boundary wall and access permitted under application 17/00619/FUL was not implemented. It is also understood that permission relating to application 03/01844/FUL was not implemented. As such the current use of the ground floor areas in which this application relates to is B1 use.

Proposed Development

The proposed development involves a ground floor extension and infilling of the undercroft area, as well as replacement bike storage provision at the site. Overall, the extension and new lobby will result in 82m² additional floor space In particular, it involves the following:

- Demolition of existing under croft external walls
- New external walling
- Creation of a new single storey flat roof glazed lobby
- Removal of existing security railing fence and the installation of timber boundary treatment to create a secure cycle store
- Resizing of one external window
- Internal remodelling

No work is proposed to the upper floors of the buildings.

As a part of the development, the undercroft will be infilled with the internal ground floor area of 1 Cambridge Terrace extending southwards, providing additional internal floor area. The openings are to be filled with a glazed entrance and window(s). A new pillar will be constructed in matching brick to allow for another dwarf wall and window as a part of the extension. It is considered that this extension will omit the need for much of the security railing that currently fronts the street and will largely resemble the existing format of the building.

To the west of the frontage of 1 Cambridge Terrace, timber palisade walling will be utilised to enclose the bike storage and act as a softer security fence in comparison to the current metal fence.

In terms of cycle parking, two tier cycle storage provision is proposed to allow storage for up to 24 bikes in total. An additional two Sheffield Hoop stands will be implemented outside of the building, providing for 4 additional cycle parking spaces, 28 in total. The proposed cycle storage ensures that the overall proposed provision matches that of the existing.

At 2 Cambridge Terrace, a new single storey lobby extension is proposed. This will provide direct access to 1 Cambridge Terrace and act as an internal 'common area'. The proposal will extend the frontage southwards, and the new entrance will face directly onto Cambridge Terrace. The security fence and gates will be removed and an existing window along the eastern flank wall of 2 Cambridge Terrace will be resized to accommodate for the extension.

Bin store provision has been identified on the plans submitted with this application just west of the bike storage area.

Planning Policy

The Oxford City Local Plan was adopted in June 2020 and guides development within Oxford up until 2036. The relevant planning policies contained within the Local Plan are as follows:

- Policy E1 (Employment sites)
- Policy RE2 (Efficient use of land)
- Policy DH1 (High quality design and placemaking)
- Policy DH3 (Designated heritage assets)
- Policy DH7 (External servicing features and stores)
- Policy G2 (Protection of biodiversity and geo-diversity)
- Policy G7 (Protection of existing Green Infrastructure Features)
- Policy G8 (New and enhanced Green and Blue Infrastructure Network Features)
- Policy H14 (Privacy, daylight and sunlight)
- Policy M1 (Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport)
- Policy M5 (Bicycle parking)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 contains the following chapters which are relevant to this application:

- Chapter 6 (Building a strong, competitive economy)
- Chapter 9 (Promoting sustainable transport)
- Chapter 12 (Achieving well-designed places)
- Chapter 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)

Planning Assessment

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 directs Local Planning Authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the policies of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 38(3) of the Act provides that the Development Plan includes the "*development plan documents (taken as a whole) which have been adopted or approved in relation to that area*".

The NPPF notes plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11(c) notes that for decision making, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

Principle of Development

Policy E1 (Employment Sites) in Oxford's Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for the intensification, modernisation and regeneration purposes of any employment site if it can be demonstrated that the development makes the best and most efficient use of land and does not cause unacceptable environmental impacts and effects.

Policy RE2 (Efficient use of Land) states that planning permission will only be granted where development proposals make efficient use of land. Development must make best use of site capacity and the surrounding area. The density must be appropriate for the use, the scale of development, including building heights and massing should conform to other policies in the plan. The built form and site layout must be appropriate for the capacity of the site.

Within the NPPF, Paragraph 80 sets out that planning decisions should help create the conditions where businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity.

This application seeks to extend the ground floor area of both 1 and 2 Cambridge Terrace in order to modernise the existing offices which are currently failing to make the best use of space. It will result in a larger internal floor area and a more attractive office environment both internally and externally, improving the commercial desirability of the offices and improving their long term sustainable usage. It is worth noting that the proposals will not, however, result in an increase to the number of staff. As such it is considered that the proposals will maintain and enhance this existing economic site, ensuring overall support for Oxford's economy. The development is therefore in accordance with both Policy E1 of the Local Plan and NPPF Paragraph 80.

The extension is considered to be appropriate given its existing location, scale, and use. The ground floor extension will result in just 82m² of additional gross internal floorspace. Building heights will not be increased and the massing is deemed appropriate to the existing context. The development seeks to respond to the areas associated with 1 and 2 Cambridge Terrace that have previously been underutilised, particularly along the building's frontage, enabling a more efficient use of land as set out in Policy RE2. It is also considered that the nature of the proposals will avoid any unacceptable environmental impacts as set out in Policy E1.

In summary, it is considered that the principle of development is acceptable and accords with the relevant planning policies as set out above.

Design

Policy DH1 (High quality design and placemaking) within the Local Plan sets out that planning permission will only be granted for development of high quality design that creates or enhances local distinctiveness. Proposals must meet the key design objectives and principles for delivering high quality development as set out in Appendix 6.1.

The Design Checklist set out within Appendix 6 of the Local Plan requires that development must consider the site character and context, for example, through considering the features, opportunities and constraints of the site and its setting within development proposals. Access to surrounding areas, including access links for pedestrians and cyclists must be incorporated within proposals, in addition to prioritising the needs of pedestrians, people with disabilities, cyclists, public transport users and motorists. The way in which the buildings relate to the surrounding area, as well as quality of materials, must be considered as a part of the design.

Within the NPPF, Paragraph 124 states that development should seek to achieve high quality buildings and places.

Paragraph 127 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments add to the quality of the area and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture. They must also be sympathetic to the local character and history, and create safe, inclusive and accessible places

Paragraph 130 sets out that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.

The proposed development seeks to build on and improve the character of the area. The ground floor extension will be constructed in matching brick, following the same brick pattern as the existing building.

The timber palisade walling that will enclose the bike storage is considered to be a high quality material and a visual improvement to the existing security fence present. This proposal therefore integrates with the design and character of the existing building but in so doing offers subtle improvements to the site's frontage and overall relationship to the surrounding area. Outdoor spaces are clearly defined, with a separate area for bin storage provided. The proposal ensures that the existing 'dead space' at the front of the building is reworked into the internal design of the building and outdoor space now more clearly defined. Overall it seeks to improve the relationship between the frontage of the building and wider area.

This extension is designed to be unimposing and is considered to be appropriate given the size of the existing building. The use of materials seeks to avoid any major deviation from the original design and instead looks to enhance various aspects of the existing structure which are isolated and poorly integrated with the surrounding area.

Bike storage will be secured by the timber palisade walling and the new entrance points will have various security measures in place. Health and wellbeing will be promoted as a result of this development through its improved sense of security, visual appearance and priority given to cyclists and pedestrians.

Overall, it is considered that the proposals promise to deliver high quality design, in accordance with Local Plan Policy DH1, the Design Checklist set out within Appendix 6 of the Local Plan, and NPPF Paragraphs 124, 127 and 130.

Heritage

Policy DH3 (Designated Heritage Assets) within the Local Plan states that great weight will be given to the conservation of any heritage asset and to its setting, where it contributes to that significance or appreciation of that significance.

Chapter 16 within the NPPF addresses the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, noting that policies and decision-making should identify and assess the significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal. Great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, irrespective of whether any potential harm amount to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

As discussed previously the site is situated on the edge of the Central Conservation Area. A heritage appraisal accompanies this application which notes that the proposal will incorporate materials that match that of the existing, seeking to conserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area where possible. The design has also been carefully considered to avoid any visual impact on the existing built form and potential impact on the existing tree which acts as an important frontage feature at 1-3 Cambridge Terrace. In addition, the removal of the security railing and fencing will help to enhance the character of the Conservation Area through removal of this incongruous feature, and allow for the tree to be opened up to the street frontage, creating a more visually attractive environment.

Overall it is considered that the proposals will enable the conservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area, in accordance with local planning policy and NPPF guidance.

Access and Bike Provision

Policy M1 within the Local Plan (Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport) states that the Council will seek to ensure that development provides accessible, conveniently located and secure cycle parking in private locations.

Policy M5 (Bicycle Parking) states that planning permission will only be granted for development that complies with the minimum cycle parking provision set out in Appendix 7.3.

Within Appendix 7.3, for B1 businesses, the minimum requirement is 1 space per 90m², or 1 space per 5 staff or other people.

The proposed extensions at 1-3 Cambridge Terrace will not provide for any additional desk space or scope for extra employees as a result. It simply provides for additional communal areas within the building and improvements to the internal environment. As such, the proposal has re-provided the existing levels of cycle parking, providing for 28 spaces in total. This is reflective of the current bike storage provision and is seen to be acceptable in principle.

It is considered that the removal of the security fencing will greatly improve access to the buildings from the street and help to create a more active frontage. In addition, emergency exits will be improved by the removal of the security fencing.

Overall it is considered that the proposals comply with the policies as set out within the Local Plan through its sufficient provision of accessible, conveniently located and secure cycle provision.

Trees

Policy G2 (Protection of biodiversity and geo-diversity) within the Local Plan states that sites and species that are important for biodiversity and geodiversity will be protected.

Policy G7 (Protection of existing Green Infrastructure Features) states that planning permission will not be granted where development results in the loss of green infrastructure, including trees, where it would have an adverse impact upon public amenity or ecological interest unless it is demonstrated that their retention is not feasible and their loss will be mitigated.

Policy G8 (New and enhanced Green and Blue Infrastructure Network Features) sets out that proposals affecting Green Infrastructure features, such as trees, should demonstrate how these have been incorporated within the design of the new development, where appropriate.

Policy H14 (Privacy, daylight, sunlight) requires proposals to have regard to providing reasonable privacy, daylight and sunlight.

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment accompanies this planning application in relation to the single silver maple tree located to east of the courtyard area along the site's frontage. Given its siting within the Central Conservation Area, the tree is protected.

The impact assessment identifies the silver maple tree as a Category B tree, considered to be of moderate quality and confirms that the development will not require the removal of the tree, nor will the proposals for the new cycle storage impact upon the health and stability of the silver maple. Whilst the report notes that the new lobby area could have the potential to impact the root protection area of the tree, it notes that the roots that would be affected in this instance would be limited to very small diameter fibrous roots that are short lived, growing and dying during each season. The report further notes that any disturbance to the soil in the

top 650mm is unlikely to have an impact on the long-term health of the tree, and confirms that the ground works will not affect the microclimate around the tree.

The arboricultural impact assessment also includes tree protection measures to ensure that there is no harm on the tree during the construction phase, such as the use of barriers.

Overall, the assessment concludes that the development will have no long-term negative impacts on the existing tree. In addition, the report confirms that the development will not impact the tree in terms of light or privacy. As set out above the proposals do not require the removal of the tree and it is therefore considered that the proposed development complies with policies G2, G7, G8 and H14 within the Local Plan.

Conclusion

To summarise, the application seeks planning permission for extensions and external alterations on the ground floors at 1-3 Cambridge Terrace to provide enhanced office accommodation. Also proposed are replacements bicycle stands. The proposal is unimposing and appropriate to the existing context. The development also seeks to improve the quality of the external environment and enhance the character of the area by removing the dominant metal railing that currently fronts onto the street, replacing it with infill development and alternative cycle storage provision.

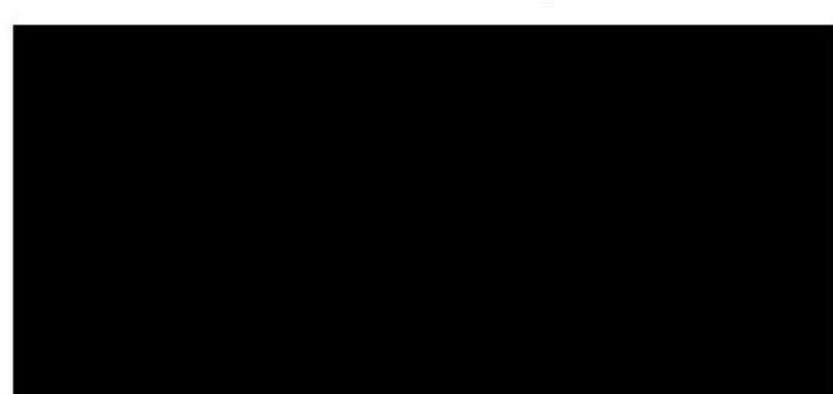
This will help to improve the visual relationship between the buildings' frontage and local environment, whilst appropriately responding to previous security issues experienced at the site and creating a more efficient use of land. The proposals also allow for the opening up of the silver maple tree to the street, conserving and enhancing the character and amenity of the Conservation Area. The tree survey submitted with this application confirms that the proposals will not result in any long-term negative impact on the contribution that the silver maple tree offers to the site.

As a part of the proposals, cycle storage is provided in line with the current provision at the site. This is deemed appropriate given the small scale nature of the extension.

It is considered that overall, the proposed development is compliant with local and national planning policy and as such, it is respectfully requested that the application is approved without delay, in line with paragraph 11(c) of the NPPF.

We trust that letter and the associated documents enable the validation of the planning application, but if you have any questions please contact Katie Jefferis at the above address. We also look forward to discussing the application with you in due course.

Yours faithfully

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Savills