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6 Worcester Street – Bike Shelter Installation

Design & Access Statement

6 Worcester Street, Oxford, OX1 2BX

**A REPORT PREPARED
FOR AND ON BEHALF OF**

OXFORD UNIVERSITY

**Job No: 20355
Issue Date: 26 January 2024
Revision No.: 02**

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1.0 Introduction

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared to support the full planning application for the installation of a bike shelter to the rear of 6 Worcester Street.

This document is to be read in conjunction with the architectural drawings and other documentation submitted with the application.

2.0 Site Context

6 Worcester Street is located in the North West of the city centre. The building is currently occupied by a firm of solicitors and a development company. Part of the ground floor, the first floor and the second floor are currently vacant and an Oxford University Department will be moving in at the end of the summer of 2024.

It is a modern building constructed from red brick cavity walls, with pitched lead roof coverings, aluminium framed casement windows with stone mullions, lintels and cills and cast rainwater goods. The building is four storeys tall with a balcony area situated to the front of the top floor. To the rear of the building there is a small block paved courtyard area enclosed by matching brick and painted railing boundary walls.

This proposal seeks to install a secure bike store to the rear of the building which is something which has been requested by the university department which is moving into the building. The site is located in the Central (City & University) Conservation Area, in the Western Fringe area of the conservation area; the Worcester Street terrace is listed as a non-designated 'positive contributor' to the conservation area. There are several Listed buildings nearby including numerous buildings of Worcester College located opposite and the Midland Counties Omnibus Company Waiting Room building. However, it is of note that the subject property is not listed.

3.0 Access

The proposal seeks to make no physical changes to the access layout and arrangement, which will remain as existing. The existing landscaping / planting and cycle hoops will be cleared and removed to make space for the proposed bike store.

As noted, the existing arrangement is several bicycle loops for people to lock their bikes to. However, because these are external only and provide no shelter, in the bad weather building users would still use alternative means of transport. Not only this, because the bicycle loops are all external, bikes are easily visible and accessible to thieves, which may prevent building users cycling into work; staff now prefer secure facilities for bicycle parking. The two main drivers of the proposed development are to provide the building users with somewhere safe and sheltered to store their bikes.

The main aim of the proposal is to provide a safe, secure and sheltered store for people to leave their bicycles whilst at work or visiting the premises. This in turn, will encourage



occupants and visitors to cycle rather than drive (or cycle from the Park and Ride car parks), helping to make the immediate surrounding area less congested. It is also of note that at present there is very little provision for car parking on site so occupants who drive would have to use the nearby Worcester Street carpark potentially preventing others from using it.

Signage affixed to the boundary railings indicates that there is currently an ongoing problem with bicycles being locked against the railings, hence the requirement for signage. It is noted that bicycles fixed to the railings obstruct a fire access route which could cause significant delays should access be required for emergency vehicles. The sign reads:

“No bicycles to be fixed to these railings please. They obstruct a fire access route.”

Through the construction of a new cycle store it is believed this problem would be alleviated. This is because it creates an alternative for those who would otherwise have fixed their bikes to the railing. Thus providing the necessary access for the emergency services as required.

4.0 Design, Scale & Appearance

It is of note that immediately to the rear of the building is the Oxford Bus Station and so it is thought that members of the public are not likely to walk past.

The exact location of the bike store to the rear elevation has been carefully considered to ensure minimal impact to established street scene as it will largely be screened and obscured by the boundary wall and railing arrangement.

The design has been kept simple and of no particular style so that it does not detract from the character or style of the conservation area. The proposal looks to make no changes to the principal elevation of the building.





Image of existing bicycle storage

5.0 Existing and Plans

Proposed

Please refer to plans and drawings appended to this application. The list of drawings is as follows:

- 20355-TMD-XX-00-DR-A-1000-SO-T00-Location Plan
- 20355- TMD- XX- 00- DR- A- 1 001-SO-T00- Existing Block Plan
- 20355- TMD- XX- 00- DR- A- 1 001-SO-T00- Proposed Block Plan
- 20355- TMD- ZZ- XX- DR- A- 5 211- S2-T00- Proposed Bike Shelter Visuals
- 20355- TMD- ZZ- XX- DR- A- 5 211- S2-T00-Proposed Bike Shelter
- 20355-TMD-ZZ-GF-DR-A-3130-SO-T00-Proposed ground floor plan

6.0 Planning Policy

This statement has been prepared in accordance with several Government and Council documents. These include:

- National Planning Policy Framework.
 - Oxford Local Plan 2036.
- a. In the *Oxford Local Plan 2036* Policy M1 focuses on Prioritising Walking, Cycling & Public Transport. In this policy it states following:

“In order to promote cycling in the city and ensure an accessible environment for cyclists, the Council will seek to ensure that development provides for accessible, conveniently located, secure cycle parking facilities in both private and publicly-accessible locations.”

- b. Also as noted in the *Oxford Local Plan 2036* one of the issues highlighted in Diagram 1 – Oxford’s Issues & Challenges is as follows:

“Challenge to shift more journeys on to walking, cycling, public transport and reduce the need to travel.”

- c. Similarly in the *National Planning Policy Framework* it states the following:

“Opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued”



&

“Planning policies should; provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking.”

It is believed that the above policies are in support of the proposed development. It is noted that there is significant emphasis in both documents on the requirement for / promotion of sustainable travel. This application looks to promote cycling through the creation of a safe, secure and sheltered bike store for all building users.

7.0 Planning History

There is no planning history nearby that impacts the proposed development.

8.0 Heritage Assets

There are no heritage assets nearby that will be impacted by the proposed development as the proposed cycle shelter will be screened from view of the listed buildings by walls, railings and hedges. Due to its discreet location, it will not impact on the roofscape, skyline, landmarks, views within or the setting of the conservation area; these are detailed in the Character Zone Assessment document on Oxford City Council's website.

9.0 Daylight / Sunlight Assessment

There are minimal implications for the daylight or sunlight: the construction of the shelter may reduce the light levels slightly through the windows at the rear of the building. The shelter which has been specified will have a clear roof which will help to mitigate this issue and the room internally adjacent to the shelter is an office which will also have artificial lighting designed to meet the relevant standards.

10.0 Noise Impact Assessment

There are no implications for Noise Impact.

11.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, this statement outlines the requirement for the installation of a new bicycle store for a variety of reasons. The most significant of these is to provide all building users with a sheltered store to protect bikes from bad weather and theft. Not only this but, a new store would provide additional security for all cycles. With these points in mind it is hoped that the Case Officer will be able to support this application.