

## **Planning Report November 2020**

The Society has been consulted on four applications since the last report.

### **APP/20/01092 – Oxton Bar and Terrace: Replacement of existing outside awning with a larger retractable awning.**

Comment: The proposed awning would, when fully extended, cover a significantly larger area of the outside terrace than the existing. It would be attached to the building at a higher point, requiring the existing sign to be moved. However, the visual impact of the awning when fully extended, including the permanent structural components, would not be harmful to the street scene or character of the village centre. It was agreed that no comment was necessary.

### **APP/20/01115 – 3 Talbot Road: Subdivision of front garden area and construction of a new house.**

Comment: This application raised important issues of policy and principle relating to key elements of the character of the Conservation Area and the design of the proposed new house. The Society submitted extensive comments, summarised as follows.

The property is identified in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal as “making a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area”. Large Victorian villas set within extensive grounds are an important part of the area’s character, and the property is one of the relatively few remaining examples of this character type. A further significant element of the local context is the adjacent Listed Oxton Old Hall and the potential impact of the proposed development on its setting.

Whilst the Society does not oppose development within large gardens as a matter of principle it is important that the design of such developments should make a positive contribution to local character, for example through exemplary contemporary design or very sensitive contextual additions. Whilst acknowledging that there is an important element of judgement in considering the quality of design, we do not consider that the proposed development rises to the importance of the site.

In its draft Local Plan policies the Council has set out its aspirations for improving the design of new development. The Society urged the Planning and Conservation officers to engage with the applicant’s design team to secure significant improvements to the design of the proposed development in accordance with the Council’s ambitions for better design in the emerging Local Plan.

### **APP/20/01119 – 4 Arno Road: Single storey detached outbuilding in front garden area.**

Comment: It is relevant that a similar application was approved at the adjacent property, 2 Arno Road, in October 2018. Both properties are identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal as “making a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area”. The approval of the development at no. 2 was conditional on the choice of materials and the planting of a landscape screen

Although the Society has serious concerns about frontage development of this sort, in the light of the precedent it was recognised that an objection would not be reasonable. However we urged that the officers give the same attention to the design, materials and screening of the building as was given to the development at no.2, and that if the Council were minded to approve the application that these mitigating measures should be secured through appropriate conditions.

**APP/20/01440 - 4 Salem View: Single storey rear extension**

Comment: The development would not be visible at all from Salem View and would be largely hidden from view on Croft Edge by a high sandstone wall. It was agreed that no comment was necessary.