

## **Planning Report March 2021**

The Society has been consulted on just one new application since the previous report:

### **APP/21/00074 – 30 Birch Road**

#### **Conversion of a detached garage to create a workspace with an open roof terrace above.**

##### Comment:

Whilst the proposal for a high-level platform to be used as an outdoor sitting area generated a large volume of neighbour objections, mainly over concerns about loss of privacy and visual intrusion, the Society's role as a consultee is to focus on the potential impact of the proposals on the character of the Conservation Area. In this case the setting of the two Grade 2 Listed cottages on South Bank, which lie very close to the rear boundary wall of the application site, was the key issue of concern for the Society.

However, the application raised once again the problem that the Heritage Statement accompanying the application, which is a mandatory requirement, was wholly inadequate. In this case it failed to even mention the key aspects of heritage impacted by the proposals, notably the Listed Buildings and the character of the main property.

In the absence of this information the Society asked to Council's planning and conservation officers to make their own assessment of the impact on the setting of the Listed Buildings, following national planning guidance, and recommended that the application should be refused if significant harm would be caused by the proposals in this respect.

The property is identified in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal as "making a positive contribution" to the character of the Conservation Area. However, the garage proposed for conversion is detached and located at the rear of the property, set well back from the road. As a result the proposed development would not be very visible from any public area and the Society concluded that there were no grounds for objection arising from potential harm to character of the Conservation Area or to the character of the main building.