OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 25/00776/HHFUL **Householder (Full)**

Proposal: **Installation of an electric vehicle charger on the southwest facing side of a pillar in the brick boundary wall.**

Location: **18 High Street Hemingford Grey Huntingdon**

Applicant: **Mr John Peter Wienand**

Grid Ref: **529517 270550**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The application site at 18 High Street is occupied by a three-storey detached dwellinghouse located within a residential area in Hemingford Grey. The application site falls within the Hemingfords Conservation Area, with the dwelling classed as a Grade II Listed Building alongside a number of Grade II Listed Buildings along High Street. The application site also falls within Flood Zone 2 of the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning.

This application seeks permission for the installation of an electric vehicle charger on the southwest facing side of a pillar in the brick boundary wall.

This application is also accompanied by an application for Listed Building Consent (25/00777/LBC).

Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):

* delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
* building a strong, competitive economy;
* achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
* conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

For full details visit the government website: https://www.gov.uk

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)

LP5: Flood Risk
LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation
LP14: Amenity
LP31: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

Neighbourhood Plan and relevant policies where applicable

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):

* Place Making Principles parts 3.7 Building Form and 3.8 Building Detailing

The Hemingfords Conservation Area Character Assessment (2008)

Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (2022)

Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024)

Local policies are viewable at https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Given the historic nature of the property there is an extensive planning history associated with it. The history from 1979 onwards is available to view on HDC's Public Access Site. The most recent, relevant planning history is detailed below:

00/00036/FUL - Extension and alterations to dwelling (Permission)

00/00075/LBC - Extension and alterations to dwelling (Consent)

25/00777/LBC - Installation of an electric vehicle charger on the southwest facing side of a pillar in the brick boundary wall. (Pending Consideration)

CONSULTATIONS

Hemingford Grey Parish Council - No comment received at the time of determination.

HDC Conservation Team - Support the application.

REPRESENTATIONS

None received at the time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

- Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets
- Residential Amenity
- Flood Risk
- Biodiversity
- Environmental benefits

* Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets

The application site at 18 High Street is occupied by a detached Grade II Listed Building located in The Hemingfords Conservation area. The surrounding area depicts the character of a typical rural village, and there are a number of additional Listed Buildings in the vicinity of the application site. The works which are proposed include the installation of an electric vehicle (EV) charging point on the southwest facing side of a pillar on the brick boundary wall to the west of the dwelling.

Considering the development, the proposed EV charger is small in scale, to be integrated within the application site and minimise impact on the fabric of the Grade II Listed Building. This is supported by the EV charger to be installed on the side of a brick pillar on the boundary wall, with no impact on the views into the application site due to the location on the southwest facing side, away from the primary frontage. The cable of the EV charger is stored effectively on the charger, and the charger is connected to the cellar mains supply by an underground cable, therefore minimising any impact the charger has on the character and appearance of the designated heritage assets.

Overall, taking the above factors into consideration, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable with regard to design and visual amenity and would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the character or appearance of the area. It therefore accords with Policies LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

As detailed in the previous sections of this report, the application site lies within the Hemingfords Conservation Area, and the proposed EV charger also lies within the curtilage of the Grade II Listed Building. As such, it should be regarded that:

Section 16(2) of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 (as amended) requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 66 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 (as amended) states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

Para. 212 of the NPPF sets out that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'.

Para. 213 states that 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification'

Local Plan policy LP34 aligns with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice.

As this is the case, HDC's Conservation team have been consulted and having reviewed the documents supports the application as a result of revised plans submitted, with their comments summarised below.

HDC's Conservation Officer states that the proposed installation of the EV charger has minimal visual impact, and the proposal avoids affixing the charger to the elevation of the building. As a result, this is unlikely to cause any harm to the Grade II Listed Building and the Hemingfords Conservation Area.

To add to this, the set back nature of the EV charger behind the primary elevation of the building, alongside its location to the rear of the pillar, results in no impact on the appearance of the application site when looking in from the street, and is therefore considered acceptable with regard to its impact on the Hemingfords Conservation Area.

Therefore, given the supporting comments from HDC's Conservation Officer alongside the above assessment, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable with regards to its impact on the designated heritage assets. It therefore accords with Policy LP34 of the Local Plan to 2036, the provisions of the NPPF (2024) and the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990.

*Residential Amenity

Given that the proposal consists of the installation of an EV charger, and taking into consideration the scale and location of the development, it is not considered that there will any unacceptable material impacts in terms of overbearing or loss of light, nor would there be any issues regarding loss of privacy or overlooking.

Overall, taking these factors into account, the development is considered acceptable in terms of overshadowing, overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light and would not have a significant impact upon residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

*Flood Risk

The application site lies in Flood Zone 2, as thus is liable to flood. It is noted that as the proposal would be considered 'minor development' as per the NPPF (2024), it is therefore not subject to Sequential or Exception Tests. The NPPF however does state that a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment should accompany applications for development within Flood Zone 2, which in this case has not been provided. However, officers have taken into consideration the scale and type of proposal as the installation of an EV charger on the boundary wall, and it is considered that this would not result in significant issues in terms of surface water or altering flood risk when taking into account the surrounding area, and as such the requirement for a Flood Risk Assessment and any flood protection measures would not be necessary in this instance.

Therefore, taking the above into account the development is considered to be broadly acceptable with regard to its approach to flooding and will not (given its scale and use) result in an increased risk of flooding in the locality. It therefore accords with Policy LP5 of the Local Plan to 2036.

*Biodiversity

It is noted from the submitted biodiversity checklist and the cover letter accompanying the application that there is an artificial pond within 250 metres of the application site. When taking into account the location of the pond to the rear of the application site alongside the location of the works, it is determined that there will not be any detrimental impacts upon the pond and in this instance, it is not considered necessary for any enhancement or protection measures. It is also considered by officers that the benefit of an EV charger with regards to the promotion of a more sustainable mode of travel would outweigh any minimal harm which could occur on the pond, and is justified in this instance when taking into account paragraph 213 of the NPPF.

Having taken this into account, with the development also resulting in no net loss of biodiversity, it therefore broadly accords with Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

*Environmental benefits

The installation of domestic electric charging points are encouraged as the use of electric cars rather than traditional petrol/diesel cars, helps to reduce car emissions, and environmental pollution. The environmental impacts of installing EV chargers is therefore recognised and supported and it helps contribute to meeting the challenge of climate change and supporting the UK's transition to net zero, endorsed by the NPPF and in particular para 163.

*Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to be compliant with the relevant national and local policy as it:

* Is of an appropriate scale and design
* Would not have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area;
* Would not have a harmful impact upon the designated heritage assets;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours;
* Would not have a harmful impact upon flood risk in the area;
* Is acceptable with regards to the impact on biodiversity.
* Supports the provision of low carbon heating improvements, to help mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

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CONTACT OFFICER:
Enquiries about this report to **Josh France**