



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CONSERVATION ADVISORY PANEL

Held: WEDNESDAY, 28 JUNE 2006 at 5.30pm

P R E S E N T :

R. Lawrence – Chair

Councillor O'Brien

- | | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| S. Bowyer | - | English Heritage |
| S. Britton | - | University of Leicester |
| K. Chhapi | - | Leicestershire and Rutland Gardens Trust |
| D. Hollingsworth | - | Leicester Civic Society |
| D. Martin | - | Leicestershire and Rutland Gardens Trust |
| R. Roenisch | - | Victorian Society |
| A. McWhirr | - | Leicester Diocesan Advisory Committee |
| C. Sawday | - | Person of Specialist Knowledge |

Officers in Attendance:

- | | | |
|--------------|---|--|
| J. Carstairs | - | Urban Design Group, Regeneration and Culture Department |
| J. Crooks | - | Urban Design Group, Regeneration and Culture Department |
| D. Windwood | - | Development Control, Regeneration and Culture Department |
| M. Reeves | - | Committee Services, Resources Department |

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9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from J. Dean, M. Elliot, R. Gill and D. Smith.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

S. Britton declared an interest in Appendix C, Item C, 34 Elms Road.

11. DATES OF MEETINGS 2006/7

The following dates of meetings were approved by the Panel.

26 July 2006
30 August 2006
20 September 2006
25 October 2006
22 November 2006
17 January 2007
14 February 2007
14 March 2007
18 April 2007
16 May 2007 (provisional)

It was requested that the proposed 20 December meeting be moved. (Subsequent to the meeting this has been moved to 13 December).

All meetings to revert to the start time of 5.15pm.

12. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the Panel held on 24 May 2006 were confirmed as a correct record.

13. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Bath Lane – Merlin Works

A number of comments raised by Richard Gill were circulated to the Panel following the presentation received by the developer.

Members of the Panel made a number of further comments.

- There was a query over whether the building was of the right scale for Leicester.
- These were landmark buildings that were proposed which were to be welcomed due to their high legibility and simplicity.
- There were still concerns about the bulk proposed at the lower levels.
- Concerns were expressed about potential traffic problems, although it was noted that a new road layout was proposed.
- It was suggested that the layout of the building needed to be re-balanced to make it sit properly on the site to create a more elegant building; some of the views of the proposal looked too 'block like'.
- It was noted that a number of proposals for the site had been explored.
- An experiment with a balloon to show the height of the proposed building had indicated its high visibility from various points in the city.
- The previous three tower scheme was considered to look more together.
- It was commented that the quality of materials and detailing were critical for the scheme to work.
- The public realm space on the scheme was welcomed.

Southampton Street

A comment was made that the minutes needed to be clearer in future to demonstrate the firm views of the Panel in certain cases.

14. HIGH STREET CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER STATEMENT

The High Street Conservation Area Character Statement was circulated with agenda for the previous meeting.

The Panel raised no further comments.

It was noted that any further comments could be sent in to officers, but it was requested that this be done as soon as possible.

15. DECISIONS MADE BY THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

The Newarke Bridge

Members of the Panel queried the approval of this application. Officers commented that justification was sought from the applicant and the recommendation was for refusal. The application went to the secretary of state for determination because the applicant was Leicester City Council. English Heritage were convinced by the applicants arguments but delegated authority to the Acting Senior Building Conservation Officer to agree materials. As the concerns of the Panel didn't match those of English Heritage it wouldn't be possible to follow those up with the secretary of state.

16 Market Street

Officers commented that Development Control had managed to convince the applicant to maintain the existing shopfront and tone down their corporate colours to make a better contribution to the street scene. Members of the Panel welcomed this.

Memory Lane Wharf

It was queried whether the Panel's concerns had been addressed. Officers commented that the concerns were regarding the design. It was noted that the number of materials being used in the development would be reduced and that assurances had been received that it would be a quality development.

Other

On another matter it was requested that the order of the columns in the report be amended to reflect the chronological order of events.

16. CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

A) MORLEDGE STREET Planning Application 20060783

Digital Media Centre

The Director said that the application was for a new five-storey building for a digital media centre with flats. It was proposed to replace the Phoenix Theatre facility on Upper Brown Street and give additional workshop space.

The Panel supported the form and design of the proposed building which it was noted would be a striking addition to the St Georges Area.

Concerns were however raised about the potential parking problems that this facility, combined with the performing arts centre would create. In particular adjacent landowners may face particular problems. It was suggested that basement parking could be explored.

It was also commented that the corners of the building could be exploited more to make more of a visual impact.

It was also felt that the entrance could be moved to create better views from streets leading up to the centre.

B) 4-6 WHARF STREET SOUTH, 1-3 CAMDEN STREET Planning Application 20060860 Redevelopment

The Director said that application was for the change of use of the first and second floors of the buildings from a factory to twelve self-contained flats. The proposal also involved a two-storey extension and alterations to the ground floor retail shop.

The Panel felt that the proposed extension was out of proportion with the existing building and poorly designed. Panel Members suggested that the complete redevelopment of the site would result in a better building and would support the demolition of the existing building. If however the existing building were to be retained, it was felt that only a single storey extension should be allowed.

C) 34 ELMS ROAD Planning Application 20060902 Change of use and new garage

The Director noted that an application for the demolition of the existing student accommodation and the redevelopment of the site with 19 houses was presented to the panel in April. The current application was for the conversion of one of the 19th century houses used for student accommodation back to a single dwelling. The proposal involved a new garage using painted brick and Swithland slates to match the main house and new 1.8 metre high railings and gates.

The Panel welcomed the change of use from student accommodation to a single dwelling.

Concerns were expressed regarding the siting of the proposed garage which would partially block views of the front elevation. It was suggested that it could be moved closer to the street. It was also suggested that materials could be reconsidered to make the building less obtrusive.

The Panel made no adverse comments about the proposed fencing and railings.

D) 34 SPRINGFIELD ROAD
Planning Application 20060946
One house

The Director said that the application was for a new detached dwelling house to the rear of the building which, if built, would face Avenue Road. The Panel had made observations on similar applications for backland developments in recent years.

The Panel felt that the development was a poor quality pastiche design. It was requested that a more exiting modern designed house would be preferable.

E) ELMFIELD AVENUE
Planning Application 20061021
Change of use to flats, extensions

The Director noted that the Victorian house on the application site was previously in use as part of the Stoneygate School until the land was developed and the main school building converted to flats. An application for the conversion of the building to five self-contained flats involving a first floor rear extension and alterations to the roof was considered at the April meeting of the Panel. That application was refused as per the Panel's recommendation. The current application was a revised scheme.

The Panel felt that the current application had not addressed that concerns raised previously and was still unacceptable. There was particular concern about moving rooflines.

F) 55 OXFORD STREET
Planning Application 20060772
Demolition and redevelopment

The Director said that the application was for the demolition of the existing 1930's building and the redevelopment of the site with a new five-storey building for 22 flats with a basement car park.

The Panel strongly opposed the loss of the existing building and felt that the height and design of the new building was inappropriate to the historic streetscene and would undermine the character of this group of locally listed buildings.

G) 59 LONDON ROAD
Planning Application 20060817
New access ramp

The Director said that the application was for an access ramp to the main from entrance of the building. It would be located within the front garden space and mostly concealed from the street scene by the existing front walls and railings.

The Panel supported the provision of disabled access but asked for improvements to be made to the design which currently as proposed, would impact on the appearance of the historic building, in particular the attractive bay window.

H) 96 LONDON ROAD
Planning Application 20060808
Retention of external alterations

The Director noted that the building was a fine Italianate styled building dating from the mid Victorian era. The most prominent feature on the building was its grand porch with Corinthian columns supporting a robust entablature, which was removed without consent. The foliate capitals on the columns were an integral part of the character of this building and they were also used extensively in the window details on the first floor. The current application was for a new plainer styled porch made from Haddenstone which had already been built and other external alterations.

The Panel was of the opinion that the replacement porch and balustrading were of inferior quality to the original features. Formal enforcement action was supported. It was commented that even if there were problems with the original features, they should have been repaired.

I) 3-5 GALLOWTREE GATE
Listed Building Consent 20060899, Advertisement Consent 20060898
Replacement internally illuminated projecting sign

The Director said that the application was for a new internally illuminated projecting sign to the front fascia of the building. The sign replaced an existing one.

The Panel made no adverse observations.

J) 37 GALLOWTREE GATE, MARKET PLACE
Advertisement Consent 20060960
New signs

The Director noted that the building had frontages onto both Market Place and Gallowtree Gate but only the Market Place elevation was listed and within the conservation area. The application was for a new fascia sign and projecting signs to replace the existing ones.

The Panel opposed the use of internal illumination and recommended that halo lit signs would be more appropriate. The Panel also gave its support to officer suggestions that the height of the signs should be raised to match the adjacent properties.

K) 151 LONDON ROAD
Planning Application 20060805
Change of use from place of worship to restaurant

The Director noted that the Panel had previously considered an application for a change of use to three hot food takeaway units and new shopfronts at the April meeting. This was a revised scheme for a change of use to a restaurant involving new windows and entrance doors.

The Panel welcomed the change of use to a single restaurant but thought that the proposed aluminium windows were unsuitable and that the existing panelled door should be retained. The Panel further commented that if side windows were to be introduced then they should mimic the design of the first floor casement windows and should be timber, not aluminium.

L) 92-94 CHARLES STREET
Planning Application 20060787
Retention of rooftop extension

The Director said that the application was to retain a rooftop extension built to a different design to the approved plans.

The Panel opposed the retention of the extension which was substantially larger than the approved scheme. Formal enforcement action was supported.

M) 2 LANCASTER ROAD
Planning Application 20060857
New windows

The Director said that the application was for new uPVC windows to the rear of the building.

The Panel reiterated its stance on uPVC windows as environmentally unfriendly and unsuitable for use in historic buildings.

N) UNIT 73 THE SHIRES, HIGH STREET
Advertisement Consent 20060859
Banner signs

The Director said that the application was for two banner signs at first floor level.

The Panel was of the opinion that two banners would add clutter and suggested that one banner would be sufficient to advertise the business.

O) 30 MARKET PLACE, 28 CANK STREET
Planning Application 20060765 & Advertisement Consent 20060766
New shopfront & signs

The Director noted that the building had frontages on both Market Place and Cank Street. These applications are for new signage to the Market Place elevation and a new shopfront to the Cank Street elevation.

The Panel raised no objection to the replacement sign or shopfront.

P) 4 NORTH AVENUE
Planning Application 20060829
New windows

The Director said that the building was a post war block of flats know as the Sycamores. The application was for new windows made from uPVC.

The Panel reiterated its stance on uPVC windows as environmentally unfriendly and unsuitable for use in historic buildings.

Q) 114A LONDON ROAD
Planning Application 20060880
Gate to rear

The Director said that the application was for a new gate to the rear of the building. The gate would be seen from Victoria Avenue.

The Panel felt that the proposed gate should be set back into the door surround rather than project forward and suggested that the applicant consider strengthening the existing door instead of installing a metal gate.

The Panel raised no objection to the following and they were therefore not formally considered:

R) 100 HIGH STREET
Planning Application 20060804
Change of use

S) 44 FOSSE ROAD CENTRAL
Planning Application 20060802
Change of use

T) 25 GOTHAM STREET
Planning Application 20060856
Replacement rear windows

U) 4 OXFORD AVENUE
Planning Application 20060877
Rooflights

V) 104 KNIGHTON ROAD
Planning Application 20060894
Rear dormer window

W) 34 LINCOLN STREET
Planning Application 20060855
Replacement rear windows and door

17. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Granby Street Conservation Area

Officers reported that a conservation area had been recently approved on Granby Street. This was implemented following a request from the Victorian Society in 2005. It was also hoped that the conservation area status would help to protect the Wellington Hotel which was under threat of demolition. It was noted that the boundary of the area would be reviewed in due course.

Members of the Panel commended the Council for the implementation of the conservation area.

18. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.

