



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
CONSERVATION ADVISORY PANEL

Held: THURSDAY, 6 MARCH 2008 at 5pm

P R E S E N T:

R. Gill - Chair

D. Hollingworth - Leicester Civic Society
D. Martin - Leicestershire and Rutland Gardens Trust
A. McWhirr - Leicester Diocesan Advisory Committee
R. Roenisch - Victorian Society

Officers in Attendance:

J. Carstairs - Planning Policy and Design Group, Regeneration and
Culture Department
D. Chapman - Planning Policy and Group, Regeneration and Culture
Department
P. Mann - Committee Services, Resources Department

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72. BATH LANE, DONISTHORPES

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**Listed Building Consent 20080080 Planning Application 20072365
Change of use, new development**

The special meeting of the Conservation Advisory Panel was held to consider the above application following a site visit and presentation from the applicant on Tuesday 4 March.

The Senior Building Conservation Officer and The Head of Planning Policy and Design were present to show the Panel the presentation disc provided by the applicant along with photographs taken on Tuesday 4 March, which provided more details on the proposed extensions and alterations to the listed buildings.

A Member of the Panel questioned why the boiler house could not be kept. The Head of Planning Policy and Design commented that the applicant had stated that if the boiler house were kept, then the overall concept of the design would be compromised. However, the Panel and officers agreed that alternative

designs that kept the boiler house and the publicly accessible courtyard around it should be looked into. The Panel felt that the new building in the courtyard could be pulled back accordingly. The Panel were also informed that there was scarring on the roof and that the Boiler House could prove uneconomical to retain. The Panel felt that the scarring was part of the history of the boiler house and was a result of the weathering. They felt that this was not a reason that should be used for the building not to be kept. The Panel expressed concern that English Heritage had not been consulted earlier regarding the removal of the Boiler House.

A Member of the Panel queried whether the chimney on the Boiler House would be restored. The Senior Building Conservation Officer stated that it would be restored and that although it had been taken down, the bricks had been saved. The Panel felt uneasy regarding the installation of the chimney without the boiler house.

The Panel expressed concern at the removal of two staircases within the Mill. Some Panel members felt that the position of the staircases was important to the industrial heritage of the building, and that if new staircases were necessary these should be installed where the current two staircases lay. It was also felt by the Panel if the two staircases were kept it would give more flexibility than the proposed single staircase in the middle. The Panel were also concerned at how the single staircase would affect the fire escape routes.

The Panel were supportive of the glazed link from the Mill to the hotel, but felt that it should be fully glazed without the rendered section on top. They had no objection to the size or height of the link. They felt the number of exits to the waterside were not necessary and felt the ones to the rear elevation of the Mill should be removed. The Panel emphasized the importance of ensuring that the courtyard, glazed link and waterside were fully accessible. The Panel supported the concept of a raised piazza to avoid the archaeology and draw the public into the area. They also liked the amount of glazing, particularly where it enabled a public view of the historic structures such as inside the mill.

The Panel had no objection to the raised courtyard, as a preferred option to open air car parking, but stated that they needed more information on how it would be constructed and how it would be attached to the listed building. It was suggested by the Panel that the War Memorial could be mounted on a special display in the paved area next to the Pumphouse. They felt that it was important that public access to the memorials was possible.

The Panel noted that some images showed a different boundary treatment to the waterside. They stated that they wished to see the existing historic wall retained. The Senior Building Conservation Officer stated that she thought it was being kept, however needed to check to confirm.

The Panel had no objection to the conversion of the cottages to office use but stated that they wished to see the internal partitions only removed where necessity was shown. They felt the shop front on the side elevation and the paired doors on the front should be retained, and suggested that the main

gates could be kept.

A Member of the Panel stated his disappointment at the design of the frame of the new courtyard building. The Panel were also concerned that the new building would overpower the listed buildings and destroy the relationship between the listed buildings. They described the design as brutal, heavy, years out of date and trying to do too much in one building. They suggested that a simplified form and detailing similar to the architects Mal Maison scheme in Liverpool would be more appropriate.

The Panel had no objections to the new hotel and thought that the design was better than the other new buildings proposed on the site. However, they thought that there should be more attention to detail and that suitable materials should be chosen.

The Panel had no objection in principle to the new residential tower, but felt that it was a bit too wide and the random asymmetrical detailing was at odds with the historic buildings. They suggested that the building should be narrower and possibly taller, and that the detailing be improved. The Panel also stated that they wanted the application to better reflect the symmetry of the mill.

The Panel also asked how their concerns and comments from the minutes were usually presented to the Planning and Development Control Committee. The Senior Building Conservation Officer stated that should the application go before the Planning and Development Control Committee the views of the Panel would be included in the final report, which an officer would present to the Committee

Overall the Panel had concerns about the scale and design of the new buildings, the treatment of the listed buildings and a lack of justification for the demolition of the boiler house and the internal alterations to the listed buildings. They therefore raised a formal objection to the scheme and due to the agreed protocol this meant that the application should be determined by the Planning and Development Control Committee.

73. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 6:34pm.

