



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CONSERVATION ADVISORY PANEL

Held: WEDNESDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2007 at 5.15pm

P R E S E N T :

R. Gill - Chair

R. Lawrence –Vice Chair

Councillor Garrity

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|--|
| S. Britton | - | University of Leicester |
| D. Hollingworth | - | Leicester Civic Society |
| D. Martin | - | Leicestershire and Rutland Gardens Trust |
| P. Draper | - | Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors |
| R Roenisch | - | Victorian Society |
| A. McWhirr | - | Leicester Diocesan Advisory Committee |
| J. Dean | - | Royal Town Planning Institute |
| S. Britton | - | University of Leicester |
| C. Sawday | - | Person having appropriate specialist knowledge |

Officers in Attendance:

- | | | |
|---------------|---|---|
| J. Carstairs | - | Urban Design Group, Regeneration and Culture
Department |
| Jane Crooks | - | Urban Design Group, Regeneration and Culture
Department |
| Jeremy Crooks | - | Urban Design Group, Regeneration and Culture
Department |
| M. Reeves | - | Committee Services, Resources, Access and Diversity
Department |

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71. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from Cllr. O'Brien.

72. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Garrity declared that she was a member of the Development Control Committee and therefore undertook to give no opinions on any of the business

on the agenda for the meeting.

J. Dean declared a personal interest in Appendix C, Stoneygate Conservation Area Character Appraisal due to his association with Leicester University and the property they have in the area.

73. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the Panel held on 17 January 2007 be confirmed as a correct record.

74. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

John Dean reported that he had undertaken some research with regard to paving regulations in conservation areas. He consulted with the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC). He noted that the primary concern of the RTPI related to water run-off. Both organisations were concerned about the aesthetic issues raised by paving and loss of gardens in conservation areas. Concern was also expressed about the affect of hotels in conservation areas. He recommended that Officers seek to lobby both the RTPI and the IHBC also he felt that it would be useful to put pressure on the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment as well, with a view to getting a change in legislation.

Officers commented that they were aware of the concerns of the IHBC relating to the loss of gardens but noted that there was nothing in legislation to protect them. It was felt that the Council alone wouldn't be able to have much of an affect on changing legislation, although consideration could be given to a joint lobbying effort with other local authorities.

Councillor Garrity suggested that a link up could be made with the Stoneygate Conservation Area Society on this issue. Officers confirmed that they had recently held a meeting with the group.

Rowan Roenisch noted that the Royal Horticultural Society had a useful leaflet which gave guidance on how to minimise the effects of driveways on front gardens. Officers commented that they could provide this guidance with publicity on the forthcoming Article 4 direction in the Stoneygate conservation area.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that it was hoped that the Panel's concerns regarding paving in the Stoneygate Conservation Area could at least be partly met by the forthcoming Article 4 Direction;
- (2) that research be undertaken into the possibility of taking forward a joint lobbying effort with other local authorities; and

- (3) that consideration be given to utilising the Royal Horticultural Society guidance as part of the publicity on the forthcoming Article 4 direction in the Stoneygate Conservation Area.

75. DECISIONS MADE BY LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL

The Service Director, Planning and Policy submitted a report on the decisions made by Leicester City Council on planning applications previously considered by the Panel.

Members of the Panel queried the refusal of the 2-6 St. Martins Walk signage application. Officers commented that the signs were considered out of place and unattractive.

RESOLVED:

that the report be noted.

76. STONEYGATE CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

The Service Director, Planning and Policy submitted the draft Stoneygate Conservation Area Character Appraisal for comment by the Panel.

The Chair commented that the Appraisal was written to the usual very high standard, and congratulations should be passed to its author.

A query was raised regarding the legal status of the document. Officers commented that it would be a material consideration in planning applications, although Character Appraisal's were yet to be tested fully as part of the appeals process. The Panel could however have regard to such documents in their deliberations. Applicants in conservation areas were referred to the document as part of the process.

A further query was raised about the status of the document in comparison to other policies, such as those on brownfield sites. Officers explained that there was a hierarchy of policies, which basically followed a national, regional, local pattern. Concern was expressed about the power of national policies overriding conservation area policies.

A comment was raised with regard to 4.67 of the report. It refers to problems and pressures. It was felt that the current and future redevelopments at Mary Gee House and Elms Road had largely positive benefits and should be promoted as such. Officers commented that they would give consideration to the orientation of the report.

It was suggested that the difficulties being faced with overdevelopment at Clare Hall should be highlighted as a problem.

It was commented that South Lodge and College Hall as referred to at 4.09 of the report were in Knighton Village Conservation Area, not Stoneygate

Conservation Area.

It was also commented that it was Chamberlain who designed the house that formed part of Stoneygate School, not Henry Goddard as referred to at 4.30 of the report.

A Panel member made the comment that there had been relatively few good modern buildings in the conservation area. He felt that there should be a greater emphasis on providing modern buildings not mediocre retrospective pastiche. Officers commented that this was a concern across the city.

The extension of the boundary to include St. John's School on Clarendon Park road was welcomed. It was also noted that Inglewood on Ratcliffe Road was now Grade II* listed, not grade II.

The Chair advised the Panel that any further comments would be welcomed.

77. CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

A) QUEEN STREET, SPA BUILDINGS Conservation Area Consent 20070013 Demolition of Spa Buildings

The Director said that the application was for the demolition of the existing Spa buildings which were formerly a hide skin and fat market. A proposal for the redevelopment of the site with a multi-storey building of 87 flats, offices and shops with two bars on the ground floor was considered by the Panel in January 2006. There was currently a revised, but as yet incomplete scheme accompanying the current application which retained the front façade of the building along Queen Street.

The Panel reiterated their views that this was a fine quality building at the vernacular end of the architectural scale and that in this area where big buildings dominate, these smaller buildings added drama to the street scene with the dramatic drop in scale and therefore should be preserved. It was further thought that just keeping the front section along Queen Street would be pointless and recommended that the whole building should be kept. It was suggested that with all the flats already in the area a more diverse use, such as workshops would be welcomed

B) 78-80 RUTLAND STREET Listed Building Consent 20062210, Planning Application 20062208 Change of use

The Director noted that the Panel had previously made observations on the conversion of this building to 13 flats with basement car parking, including a rooftop extension in 2002. A new application had been submitted for the conversion of the ground floor and basement to a bar/restaurant and the conversion of the upper floors to nine self contained flats – omitting the

approved roof extension.

The Panel welcomed this application and felt that it was much better than the previously approved scheme. It was noted that careful treatment of the double doors was vital (as with the other detailing) as getting it wrong could make a huge difference to the character of the building. It was also recommended that officers should encourage the applicant to retain the existing roof lanterns, which were very attractive and use that pattern for the new ones.

C) GIPSY LANE, THE BEECHES
Planning Application 20061814
Twenty four flats

The Director said that the application was for two and three storey buildings to provide 24 flats.

The Panel noted this site was surrounded by listed buildings. The proposal was considered a poor pastiche and the lack of chimneys compounded and emasculated the buildings. The applicant should be encouraged to do something very modern and of superior quality.

D) BATH LANE, RUDING STREET, BLACKFRIARS
Planning Application 20061724
New Development

The Director said that the application was for the clearance of most of the buildings on the site and redevelopment with new buildings, ranging between two and eleven storeys in height, for residential / commercial use.

The Panel expressed some support for this scheme but thought that there should be more variety in the heights of the buildings. There were concerns that timber cladding was not a suitable material for Leicester. The retention of the tower & chimney was welcomed but the lack of open space and future uses of the viaduct arches were queried. The Panel highlighted the previous archaeological finds in the vicinity and pointed out that there was likely to be more archaeology on the site.

E) 107 HIGHCROSS STREET
Listed Building Consent 20070195 & Advertisement Consent 20070034
New signs

The Director said that the application was for a non-illuminated sign at the side and a non-illuminated projecting sign at the front of the shop.

The Panel raised no objections.

F) 76 CLARENDON PARK ROAD
Planning Application 20070136
Change of use

The Director said that the application was for the conversion of the building to thirteen flats. The proposal involved a single and two storey rear extension, dormers and external alterations.

The Panel were unhappy with the changes to the fenestration on the front and side elevations although some thought that it might not be as bad as perceived from the drawings. Overall it was requested that the external character be preserved and it was suggested that this could be achieved by having fewer flats in the building.

G) 7 EAST STREET, LEICESTER YMCA
Listed Building Consent 20070050, Advertisement Consent 20070039
New signage

The Director said that the application was for new internally illuminated signs at first floor level to replace the existing ones on both the East Street and Granby Street elevations.

The Panel was happy with the principle of the signage but thought that it might be positioned a little lower away from the stone sill.

H) 3 – 5 UNIVERSITY ROAD
Planning Application 20062204
Conversion to flats

The Director said that the application was for the conversion of the residential care home into 7 flats with office use on the ground floor. The proposal involved a rear extension.

The Panel was dismayed that the work was being carried out without consent. Generally the Panel had no real objections except that the front rooflights would only be acceptable if they could not be seen from De Montfort Street.

I) 20 THE NEWARKE
Planning Application 20062230
Canopies

The Director said that the application was for canopies to the side elevation facing the canal.

The Panel raised no objections.

J) ASHFIELD COURT
Planning Application 20062169
Retention of UPVC windows

The Director said that the application was for the retention of uPVC windows.

The Panel reluctantly accepted the retention of the uPVC windows, as there were already some installed several years ago.

K) 189 LOUGHBOROUGH ROAD
Planning Application 20062167
Replacement of windows to Flats

The Director said that the application was for the replacement of windows.

The Panel accepted the principle of the replacement windows providing they were like for like in terms of proportions. Accordingly, details of the new units should be agreed by officers before the work commenced.

L) 2 BIRKDALE AVENUE
Planning Application 20070031
New boundary wall & railings

The Director said that the application was for a 1.5 metre boundary wall with iron fencing at the front of the house.

The Panel noted the open plan character of this enclave and thought that the proposal would be out of character with that open character.

The Chair agreed to take the following items of urgent business.

74 HIGHCROSS STREET
Replacement Shopfront & rear extension

The Directors said that the application was for a new shopfront in uPVC to create an additional doorway to allow access to flats above. Also proposed was a two-storey rear extension.

The Panel did not like the proposed uPVC shop front or its design. It was suggested that if the shop front was altered sensitively it could be made to work. Having one door with an internal lobby and retaining the existing shop front proportions which were very good, was recommended.

The rear extension was thought to be too big. However it was conceded that the rear was unsightly and a smaller two-storey extension could be acceptable providing the large dormer was removed from the proposal. The Panel asked what was going to happen with the existing rear flue. It was recommended that the flue be put up the chimney.

CITY ROOMS
Signage

The Director said that the proposal was a pre-application enquiry for signage that could include a free-standing sign, lettering on the portico and a plaque by the door.

The Panel raised no objections to the free standing sign, this was reversible and would not damage the historic building. It was suggested that the City

Rooms lettering could go on the fan light, rather than have the City Rooms engraved on the portico which was not reversible.

The Panel raised no objection to the following, they were therefore not formally considered.

M) 20 MILL HILL LANE

Planning Application 20070152

Replacement UPVC windows at side and rear of house

N) 28 TOWER STREET

Planning Application 20070151

Replacement UPVC windows at side and rear of house

O) 64A CLARENDON PARK ROAD

Planning Application 20070112

Conversion to flats & bedsits

P) 86-92 REGENT ROAD

Planning Application 20062177

Rear Extension

Q) 4 NEW WALK

Planning Application 20070022

Change of use

78. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

79. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.17pm.

