

Cambridge City Council

Planning - Pre-Application Developer Presentations

Date: Friday, 25 January 2019

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Committee Room 1 & 2, The Guildhall, Market Square, Cambridge, CB2 3QJ

Contact: democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk, tel:01223 457000

Agenda

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Pre-Application Briefing by the Developer - Grafton Centre Hotel

Grafton Centre Hotel Proposal

The pre-application proposal is for a 153 bedroom hotel for Premier Inn in the location of the current bus interchange and part of the service area to the south east of the Grafton Centre, fronting onto East Road. The proposal includes a restaurant / bar at ground floor level and the creation of a new public space. Improvements will also be made to the shopping centre entrance along East Road. The height of the proposed building ranges from 7 to 8 storeys with the upper floor set back by 3 metres along the principal elevations. The proposed building's layout provides new frontage to East Road and a new public space adjacent to the existing cinema. The proposal for the public space includes a new square with a raised lawn, seating and paved areas providing routes from East Road to the cinema plaza and a pedestrian route to the new Premier Inn and The Grafton. Trees and planting are incorporated to enhance biodiversity and create a buffer between the square and the road corridor.

The façade and fenestration have been designed with recessed, full height window and canted brickwork detail to exploit the south-facing

aspect and create a varying shadow pattern throughout the day. A restrained palette of high quality materials will be used to reflect recent development in the area. Materials will include buff/cream clay facing brickwork for the façade, aluminium inset panels used to express the windows, and full height aluminium framed glazing on the ground floor, revealing the restaurant and lobby.

The proposal will achieve BREEAM “excellent” level consistent with Local Plan Policy 28 and the scheme has been designed to minimise the cooling load of the building through its construction, insulation techniques and materials choices.

As the first development to be delivered by the Grafton Area of Major Change SPD, highways improvements to East Road will be required to facilitate the removal of the bus interchange and provide on-street bus stops to East Road. To cater for the pedestrian ‘desire line’ between The Grafton and the new bus stops, an additional pedestrian crossing point will be incorporated across East Road. Hotel guests will be able to use The Grafton car park situated nearby. No dedicated car parking spaces are proposed on the hotel site.

The servicing strategy for the new hotel looks to utilise the retained section of the existing shopping centre service yard, screened as part of the proposed hotel envelope. The emerging scheme removes service vehicles from the public square by creating a dedicated, managed service bay at the far end of the cinema building.

Design and Conservation Panel Feedback

The proposal was initially presented to the D&C Panel in June 2018. An updated proposal was presented to the Panel in August 2018 to which the Panel responded with a unanimous “Green” verdict subject to some final design developments. The Panel were encouraged by how many of their previous comments had been taken on board and responded to. As a result, the Panel’s view is that the scheme is greatly improved with appropriate well-proportioned elevations.

Background and Policy Context

Cambridge Local Plan Policy 12 supports the Grafton Area of Major Change (AOMC) as a location for expansion and/or redevelopment for retail and leisure use (A1, A2, A3, A4 and D2). Grafton Area of Major Change SPD was adopted on 11 January 2019 and is therefore a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning

applications. The SPD identifies the East Road bus area site as an Opportunity Site with the East Road as potential frontage for hotel use. The SPD envisages removal of the existing bus interchange and its potential replacement with on-street bus stops.

Key Issues

The key issues are considered to be:

- Principle of the proposed use;
- Design and appearance of the new building and new public space in context;
- Active frontages and contribution to wider public realm;
- Transportation issues including servicing, access and the re-provision of bus stop to East Road;
- Cycle parking strategy;
- Relationship with existing trees;
- Energy strategy; and a
- Inclusive access.

Councillor attendance

Whilst any subsequent planning application relating to this site will be determined by the Planning Committee, all Councillors are invited to attend and take part in this pre-application developer presentation.

Purpose of the meeting

These meetings allow developers an early opportunity to present proposals for future planning applications to elected members of the Council.

The process allows Councillors to feed into the process at an early stage and raise any questions or concerns that can then be addressed by the developer prior to a formal planning application being submitted.

Whilst the meetings will be held in public, they do not form part of the formal decision making process. All planning applications will be determined in line with formal processes as adopted by Cambridge City Council.

Format of the Meeting

For each Briefing:

- Introduction by the Head of Planning Services or a Senior Planning Officer – up to 10 minutes
- Presentation by the developer of the proposal – up to 30 minutes

- Opportunity for Members to ask questions, raise issues, seek clarification, comment on the apparent positive and less positive aspects of the proposal – up to 40 minutes

During this part of the meeting it is important that Councillors who may ultimately make the decision on any subsequent planning application do not feel unduly constrained by what they can ask or raise. However they should avoid expressing views that might give any appearance that they are approaching the proposal with a closed mind. The discussion should not be used for negotiations with the developer. These should take place with officers separately from the meeting. Members of the public must refrain from entering into the discussion at the meeting.

- Summing up – up to 10 minutes

A Planning Department representative will take notes of the meeting, which will be a summary of the proceedings. Nothing said by Councillors at the meeting will in any way be binding on the Committee that subsequently determines the application. The notes will be uploaded to the City Council's website upon completion.

Development Control Forum Members: Baigent, Blencowe, Hart, Hipkin, McQueen, Nethsingha, Page-Croft, Smart (Chair), Thornburrow and Tunnacliffe

Alternates: Gillespie, Green and Holt

Information for the public

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