

Application Number	12/0496/CAC	Agenda Item	
Date Received	20th April 2012	Officer	Mrs Sarah Dyer
Target Date	15th June 2012		
Ward	Trumpington		
Site	32 - 38 Station Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 2JH		
Proposal Applicant	Demolition of 32-38 Station Road. Mr Sven Topel c/o Agent		

SUMMARY	<p>The development accords with the Development Plan for the following reasons:</p> <p>An assessment of 32-38 Station Road as a Building of Local Interest (BLI) and a heritage asset has been carried out.</p> <p>The demolition of 32-38 Station Road is justified by the public benefit that will derive from the development of the site for office accommodation as part of the wider Station Area redevelopment</p>
RECOMMENDATION	APPROVAL

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION/AREA CONTEXT

1.1 The application site forms part of a larger area, which is the subject of the CB1 Station Area Redevelopment proposals for which outline planning permission was granted in April 2010. The site lies on the south side of Station Road and to the east of the access serving the Warren Close development. The site is occupied by 32-38 Station Road (Wilton Terrace) which accommodates Woodlands Doctors Surgery and Brookgate's Offices (the applicants).

- 1.2 To the south of the site is the Warren Close housing development. A six storey block of flats at Warren Close sits behind the site. To the west the site is bounded by the access road serving Warren Close beyond which are office buildings. To the east is a vacant site which is proposed to accommodate an office building. To the north the site is bounded by Station Road beyond which is former Red House site that has planning permission for a hotel and the current station cycle park.
- 1.3 The site is within the Station Area Redevelopment Framework Boundary and within the Central Conservation Area No.1. 32-38 Station Road are buildings of Local Interest as are the Mill and Silo that sit to the southeast. The Station is a listed building. The site falls within the controlled parking zone.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Conservation Area Consent is sought for the demolition of the terrace to facilitate the development of the western half of a pair of office buildings. Parameter Plan 1 of the Outline consent identifies 32-38 Station Road as Buildings of Local Interest that are to be demolished. Whilst this does not negate the need for Conservation Area Consent it is a material consideration.
- 2.2 The application is accompanied by the following supporting information:
1. Design and Access Statement by Grimshaw
 2. Heritage Statement by Beacon Planning
 3. Planning Statement by Savills
- 2.5 The application has been amended in the following ways:
- Response to comments by Nature Conservation Officer
 - Response to comments by Sustainable Drainage Officer
 - Response to comments by Cycling and Walking Officer and associated revisions to Ground Floor Plan and updated Travel Plan to incorporate Cycle Parking Management Plan
 - Response to County Highways officer comments.

3.0 SITE HISTORY

Reference	Description	Outcome
05/1166	Conservation Area Consent for demolition buildings on the Rank Hovis site	A/C
06/0266/OUT	CB1 Station Area Redevelopment	A/C
09/0031	Conservation Area Consent for demolition buildings on the Rank Hovis site	A/C
11/1303/FUL	Demolition of 32 – 38 Station Road and erection of two office buildings	Withdrawn
11/1351/CAC	Conservation Area Consent for demolition of 32-38 Station Road	Withdrawn
12/0502	Demolition of 32 – 38 Station Road and erection of two office buildings	Pending determination
	Non Material Amendment for Realignment of SAR	Pending determination

4.0 PUBLICITY

4.1	Advertisement:	Yes
	Adjoining Owners:	Yes
	Site Notice Displayed:	Yes
	Public Meeting/Exhibition	No
	DC Forum (Meeting of 4 July 2012)	Yes

4.2 The grounds for the Forum were that the Petitioners wished to express their concerns about the increase in office space, the insufficient car parking on site, the environmental impact on the neighbourhood and the demolition of 32-38 Station Road, which are fine Victorian buildings listed as buildings of local interest. They also wished to discuss a reduction in the scale of the

development and to ensure that the development makes a full financial contribution (including deferred payments) to the Cambridge Guided Bus. A copy of the DCF minutes will be attached to the Amendment Sheet.

5.0 POLICY

5.1 See Appendix 1 for full details of Central Government Guidance, East of England Plan 2008 policies, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 policies, Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policies, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations.

5.2 Relevant Development Plan policies

PLAN	POLICY NUMBER
East of England Plan 2008	ENV7
Cambridge Local Plan 2006	4/11 4/12 4/13 8/2 9/9

5.3 Relevant Central Government Guidance, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations

Central Government Guidance	National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 Circular 11/95 Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010
Material Considerations	<u>Central Government:</u> Letter from Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (27 May 2010) Written Ministerial Statement: Planning for Growth (23 March 2011)

	<u>Citywide:</u> Air Quality in Cambridge – Developers Guide
	<u>Area Guidelines:</u> Buildings of Local Interest Station Area Development Framework/Station Area Conservation Appraisal

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

Cambridgeshire County Council (Engineering)

- 6.1 No objection subject to a condition to secure a Traffic Management Plan for demolition/construction traffic and informatives.

Head of Environmental Services

- 6.2 Environmental Protection

Construction Method Statement

This work especially the demolition presents the risk of harm to the amenity from a number of pollutants including noise, vibration and dust. Considerable work was done in the early stages of the CB1 development to control such pollution and a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) was required by condition 31 of the outline planning permission reference 08/0266/OUT. This has been written and agreed, each phase is also required to produce a Construction Method Statement.

Phases of the development that have followed this approach have proceeded without justified complaints. In the interests of protecting the amenity and consistency a condition requiring a Construction Method Statement that is in accordance with the existing agreed CEMP is recommended.

- 6.3 The existing terraced houses are, in some ways, pretty typical of their type and era and common enough in larger towns and cities across Britain. However, these examples are slightly more decorative than is usual in Cambridge, with the ‘crow-stepped’ gables and red brick banding, quoins and so on. This may result from the locally well-known architect, Richard Reynolds Rowe, who did use such details and operated in the area and – if this could be indisputably proved – this would give rather more weight to the history of the terrace. Nonetheless, these houses are not particularly rare architecturally and have lost some of their residential character through changes-of-use, particularly by the unfortunate and visually prominent ramp occupying one front garden space. The other item of interest is the ‘no fines’-type concrete boundary wall which also occurs in front of the villas further down the street and in Warkworth Street & Terrace not that far away. This is believed to be a very early use of concrete but not enough research has been done to establish the rarity or historic value of these examples.

Whilst the ‘masterplan’ process always assumed demolition of these BLIs, no consent has ever been granted and the changed circumstances since 2008 and changes to the proposals for this area of the larger scheme mean that this CAC application must be assessed against current policies. It also is tied inextricably to the application for the replacement building and the two things must be seen, assessed and balanced together. The houses are undoubtedly ‘heritage assets’ although of fairly modest significance in themselves and changes to the surrounding area in recent decades have disconnected them from the nearby residential areas of similar age and scale. They were also in the same area as, but of a different character to, the railway lands & buildings nearby [and the industry co-located deliberately] and hence the station building [the LB itself]. Once the character of the area was changed substantially by the demolition for and construction of the ‘Deity’ office blocks, the residential nature became confined to the other side of the street largely and the gradual drift of industry away from the now mainly passenger railway allowed for the comprehensive redevelopment proposed by the ‘masterplan’.

Whilst the substantially different character to the area already being formed [by the Microsoft HQ building, for example] will

contrast strongly with these BLIs, that is not – in itself – a reason for demolition; indeed the opposite might be argued as the whole scheme is likely to take years to complete and there will be times during redevelopment that noticeable contrast in building ages, types and scales will be evident. And there will be, or should be, a marked difference in age, type and scale between the LB and its new setting for the foreseeable future and nobody seems to have suggested that was inappropriate.

If the BLIs are to be demolished, then the quality and suitability of the proposed replacement building(s) both for the Conservation Area and the nearby listed building must be assessed before acquiescence can be supported. The detailed assessment by U D & C Section is to be found at 12/0502/FUL on this matter.

The loss of BLIs in a prominent location in the CA is always a matter for regret and the policies at national & local level are against such a loss except in cases where there is a demonstrable benefit to be derived. In this case, the decision makers who granted outline permission for the 'masterplan' were aware of the presumed demolition and assessed it to be worthwhile. All the discussions about the replacement building were predicated on the design having to be assessed as of suitable quality to meet the policy 'tests'.

English Heritage

6.4 Summary

The principle of demolition of 32-38 Station Road was given tacit support when the CB1 Masterplan was agreed. However consent should only be granted once a scheme for high quality replacement buildings has been secured. The current proposals require changes to the Masterplan which have much to recommend them and the revised design has gone a long way to address the previous concerns raised by English Heritage.

Conservation Area Consent application

The NPPF includes a provision of a presumption in favour of the conservation of heritage assets. In this instance 32-38 Station Road are not designated heritage assets but the Conservation Area within which they are located is and therefore the presumption in favour of conservation is relevant. The removal of

these buildings will enable the implementation of a holistic redevelopment that will deliver an overall enhancement of the Conservation Area whereas to retain them would be at odds with the new context.

The Victorian Society

- 6.5 (Note – the Victorian Society were not formally consulted on the application because 32-38 Station Road are not listed buildings)

The Society objects to the demolition of 32-38 Station Road. They are a striking late Victorian terrace and may have been designed by Richard Reynolds-Rowe. The rarity of the buildings adds to their value in the streetscape.

The poor state of the frontage and the access ramp can be easily rectified. Other sites could provide new officer space which would negate the need to demolish these buildings.

The Council has an obligation to ensure that development either preserves or enhances the Conservation Area.

Design and Conservation Panel (Meeting of 14 March 2012)

- 6.6 The conclusions of the Panel meeting were as follows:

In strategic terms, the Panel considers that the new approach is a great improvement. The change in massing, the handling of the frontage at ground level along Station Road and the greater animation of the frontage to the 'anti-chamber' square to the south are welcomed. The 'kit of parts' proposed for the elevations looks promising but further refinement of the design is still needed, as is further examination of the treatment of stair cores at ground level.

VERDICT –

1. The strategy of the massing, the relationship of the stair core with Station Road, the overall strategy for the elevations and the handling of the public realm, GREEN (5), AMBER (1)

2. The 'kit of parts' for the elevations, the handling of the elevations at ground level, the design of the 'fins' and other components and the planting of the terraced area,

GREEN (3), AMBER (2)

The relevant section of the minutes of the panel meeting(s) are attached to this report as Appendix A.

The above responses are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the consultation responses can be inspected on the application file.

7.0 REPRESENTATIONS

7.1 The owners/occupiers of the following addresses have made representations:

Daedalus House, 30 Station Road (Operations Manager,
University of Cambridge Investments Office)

3 Ascham Road

22 Brooklands Avenue

17 Christchurch Street

5 Clarendon Road

17 Clarendon Road (x3)

28 Emery Street

33 Glisson Road

61 Highsett, Hills Road

4 Lyndewode Road

33 Lyndewode Road (x2)

62 Mawson Road

70-72 Norwich Street

15 Shelly Garden

10 St Barnabas Court (x3)

4 St Barnabas Road

27 Silverwood Close

9 Tenison Avenue (x3)

13 Tenison Avenue

25 Tenison Avenue

27 Tenison Avenue

2 Vintner Terrace

8 Thomas Christian Way, Bottisham

5 Cambridge Road Girton

20 Hinton Way, Great Shelford

7.2 The representations can be summarised as follows:

Loss of Existing Buildings

The existing buildings with their architectural heritage and elegant facades should not be demolished.

The existing buildings are more worthy of listing than the Station buildings.

Wilton Terrace is well above average in terms of design and quality for its period and has been designed to relate to the Station.

Demolition of the existing buildings amounts to vandalism against the wishes of residents.

The existing buildings are some of the better features on Station Road. Already the urban landscape of Station Road has deteriorated through poor design, miserable architecture and zero traffic planning.

Loss of welcoming vista along Station Road.

The only aspect of Station Road which is good are the Victorian villas.

A terrace of good, sound, attractive buildings is to be demolished and replaced by an ugly building which does not provide an improvement over the previous scheme.

The terrace does not need to be demolished and could be incorporated into the new development.

More imagination and flexibility should be deployed before it is too late.

7.3 Brooklands Avenue Area Residents Association has made representations as follows:

Demolition of existing buildings

We object to the demolition of the present Victorian terrace on the site, and believe that it should be preserved, as architecturally in keeping with the properties on the other side of Station Road and of the Station itself. In this connection we further note that the houses are designated as "Buildings of

Local Interest.” As indicated above, the case for demolition cannot be deemed as having been agreed, since as a full application this has to be considered from scratch, and cannot ride on the back of the Masterplan outline. Indeed there is a strong argument for retaining the properties in the interest of balance with the similar buildings on the north side of Station Road, and thereby preserving important features of this part of the Central Conservation Area.

For all the above reasons we urge the City Council to reject the proposed applications.

7.4 David Campbell Bannerman MEP has also made objections which relate to the loss of 32-38 Station Road. He considers that the loss of these buildings and the new development to be harmful to the Conservation Area. He considers that the existing buildings have a greater value than suggested by the applicants. In his view the level of harm caused by the loss of 32-38 Station Road heavily outweighs the potential gain of amenity.

7.5 Cambridge Past Present and Future has made representations as follows:

It is recognised that outline planning permission has already been granted but CambridgePPF believes that the City Council should give very serious consideration to the groundswell of public opinion against the demolition of this Victorian terrace.

The determination of the application should be delayed to allow more time for an assessment of the practicality of retention of Wilton Terrace. CambridgePPF believes that the most sensible course for the Council would be to defer the decision on these applications so that more time can be given to explore the practicality of retaining the terrace and the feasibility of incorporating it into the overall design of the CB1 development.

The terrace is recognised by the City Council as comprising 'Buildings of Local Interest', that could be regarded as being a 'Significant Heritage Asset' to the local community and their demolition would be a loss to the heritage value of the locality.

7.6 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations can be inspected on the application file.

8.0 ASSESSMENT

8.1 From the consultation responses and representations received and from my inspection of the site and the surroundings, I consider that the main issues are:

1. Principle of demolition
2. Impact on Heritage Assets
3. Public Art
4. Renewable energy and sustainability
5. Disabled access
6. Residential amenity
7. Refuse arrangements
8. Other environmental impacts
9. Transport Impact
10. Highway safety
11. Car and cycle parking
12. Third party representations
13. Planning Obligation Strategy

Principle of Demolition

8.2 Parameter Plan 1 of the Masterplan indicates 32-38 Station Road as a group of Buildings of Local Interest that are to be demolished. In the report that was considered by Planning Committee in October 2008 the following comment is made about the demolition of these buildings:

‘The applicant has not provided a full justification for the demolition of 32-38 Station Road that will be necessary when an application is made for Conservation Area Consent for its demolition. Clearly Block I2 cannot be developed without removing 32-38 Station Road. The pivotal role that I2 has in the scheme is considered more fully below but essentially I would conclude that the loss of 32-38 Station Road is justified by the need to increase the density of development across the site in order to achieve the aim of improving the transport interchange. 32-38 Station Road are not worthy of listing and in my view to seek to refuse the masterplan on the grounds that these buildings should be retained alone would be very difficult to substantiate at appeal.’

- 8.3 My views have not changed. I consider that subject to the grant of Conservation Area Consent, the principle of the demolition of 32-38 Station Road is acceptable. I have dealt with the loss of the doctor's surgery as a community facility in my report for the full planning application for the new office buildings.

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 8.4 The applications for Conservation Area Consent and planning permission are supported by a Heritage Statement as required by paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Officers in the Urban Design and Conservation Team have not raised any concerns about this analysis and support the scheme subject to the imposition of planning conditions to address matters of detail.
- 8.5 The applicants have correctly identified the heritage assets that are affected by the development as 32-38 Station Road which are Buildings of Local Interest (BLIs) and the Conservation Area including the Station and associated buildings, the villas on the north side of Station Road and the Mill. The NPPF includes buildings that are locally listed in the definition of a heritage asset.
- 8.6 The significance of 32-38 Station Road has been assessed using the NPPF and English Heritage's document Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance 2008. The aspects of moderate significance have been identified as the evidential value as example of a late Victorian terrace, which has been the subject of removal of some features of interest and the aesthetic value of the front elevation. Aspects of low significance included the historical value, communal value, the south/east/west elevations, the interior and the setting. No elements of high significance were recognised. The level of significance of this part of the Conservation Area is considered by the applicant to be moderate. This is because 32-38 Station makes a moderate contribution to the character.
- 8.7 The advice in the NPPF on dealing with the removal of heritage assets is as follows:

Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to

achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site*
- no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation*
- conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible*
- the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

8.8 Local Plan policy is not silent on the issue of demolition of BLIs as heritage assets and requires that the demolition will only be permitted if the building is demonstrably incapable of beneficial use or reuse or there are clear public benefits arising from the development. The advice in both the policy and the NPPF helps to identify how an assessment of the application should be made.

8.9 Both the policy and the NPPF look to establish either a clear public benefit or compliance with a set of criteria. It is important to note that a justification for demolition does not need to establish both a public benefit argument and compliance with the criteria or test established by policy/guidance.

8.10 In this case the nature of the heritage asset does not prevent use of the site and the buildings are currently in beneficial use. No evidence has been brought forward regarding the availability of grant funding or public/charitable ownership. The justification in this case is solely reliant upon the 'public benefit' argument.

8.11 Although Conservation Area Consent is needed I would argue that the basis of the public benefit was established at the Outline Consent stage. The redevelopment of the Station Area as a whole is necessary to bring forward the very significant improvements to the transport interchange that include works to the Station, the new Station Square, the bus interchange and Cycle Park. An increased density of development is needed to support these improvements. This site is the key to the delivery of that vision

because it is the only location in the Masterplan where the highest building can be positioned. The demolition of 32-38 Station Road is necessary and justified for this reason.

8.12 In reaching this view I am mindful of the Senior Conservation Officer's view as follows:

'The loss of BLIs in a prominent location in the CA is always a matter for regret and the policies at national & local level are against such a loss except in cases where there is a demonstrable benefit to be derived. In this case, the decision makers who granted outline permission for the 'masterplan' were aware of the presumed demolition and assessed it to be worthwhile. All the discussions about the replacement building were predicated on the design having to be assessed as of suitable quality to meet the policy 'tests'.'

8.13 I share the Senior Conservation Officer's view that the design of the new building is an extremely important consideration. All of the discussions with the applicants have been based on the need for the new building to be appropriate for its setting in the Conservation Area. The reason why the previous scheme was withdrawn was because the design was not acceptable.

8.14 I am convinced that the new office buildings will be a positive asset to the Conservation Area for the reasons set out in my report on the planning application. This view is shared by the Design and Conservation Panel, English Heritage and the Urban Design and Conservation Team. These views provide the necessary justification for the demolition of 32-38 Station Road.

8.15 In my opinion the proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 4/11 and 4/12 and guidance provided by the NPPF.

Other environmental impacts

8.16 I have recommended conditions and informatives as recommended by the Highway Authority officer and the Environmental Health Officer.

8.17 In my opinion, subject to compliance with conditions, the proposal

is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 4/13 and 8/2.

Third Party Representations

- 8.18 I have addressed the issues raised in this report and in the related report on the planning application. I do not consider employment generation to be a relevant consideration to this application.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 In my view the demolition of 32-38 Station Road is justified by the public benefit that will derive from the development of the site for office accommodation as part of the wider Station Area redevelopment. The assessment of 32-38 Station Road as a BLI and heritage asset has been carried out properly and is supported by officers. I have no objections to the demolition which will facilitate the delivery of the CB1 Masterplan approved under the Outline Planning Consent.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE subject to the following conditions and reasons for approval:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. No development shall take place until a full photographic record and survey by measured drawing and salvage of samples has been made depicting the exterior and interior of the building (including any parts to be demolished) and a copy deposited with each of the following organisations: the Cambridgeshire Collection of the Central Library, Lion Yard, Cambridge; the County Archive, Shire Hall, Castle Hill, Cambridge, and the local planning authority. The precise number and nature of the photographs, drawings and samples to be taken is to be agreed in advance with the local planning authority and the format in which they are to be displayed and titled is to be agreed with the local planning authority before the deposit is made.

Reason: To foster understanding of the building's importance in the national and Cambridge context, and to ensure proper recording of any aspects of the building's special interest which are to be lost or altered. (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003, policy P7/6 and Cambridge Local Plan 2006, policy 4/12)

3. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, including any demolition or enabling works, a detailed Construction Method Statement (CMS) shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing.

The Construction Method Statement shall be accompanied by:

- 1 A statement that demonstrates how the proposal accords with the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), Eight Issue dated 5 January 2011 (condition 31 of the outline planning permission reference 08/0266/OUT).

In addition the CMS shall also provide:

- 2 A specific construction programme
- 3 A plan identifying:
 - (a) The contractor site storage area/compound
 - (b) Screening and hoarding locations
 - (c) Access arrangements for:
 - i. Vehicles
 - ii. Plant
 - iii. Personnel
 - iv. Building material
 - (d) Plant and equipment storage areas
 - (e) Contractor parking arrangements for:
 - i. Construction vehicles
 - ii. Personnel vehicles
 - (f) The location of contractor offices

Thereafter the development shall be undertaken in accordance with the agreed details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the environmental impact of the construction of the development is adequately mitigated and in the interests of the amenity of nearby residents/occupiers (Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policy 4/13).

INFORMATIVE: Applicants or their agents preparing a survey for archive deposit are advised to refer to "Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice." - English Heritage, 2006.

INFORMATIVE: New development can sometimes cause inconvenience, disturbance and disruption to local residents, businesses and passers by. As a result the City Council runs a Considerate Contractor Scheme aimed at promoting high standards of care during construction. The City Council encourages the developer of the site, through its building contractor, to join the scheme and agree to comply with the model Code of Good Practice, in the interests of good neighbourliness. Information about the scheme can be obtained from The Considerate Contractor project Officer in the Planning Department (Tel: 01223 457121).

This development involves work to the public highway that will require the approval of the County Council as Highway Authority. It is an OFFENCE to carry out any works within the public highway, which includes a public right of way, without the permission of the Highway Authority. Please note that it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that, in addition to planning permission, any necessary consents or approvals under the Highways Act 1980 and the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 are also obtained from the County Council. Public Utility apparatus may be affected by this proposal. Contact the appropriate utility service to reach agreement on any necessary alterations, the cost of which must be borne by the applicant.

Reasons for Approval

1. This development has been approved, conditionally, because subject to those requirements it is considered to conform to the Development Plan as a whole, particularly the following policies:

East of England plan 2008: ENV7

Cambridge Local Plan (2006): 4/11 4/12 4/13 8/2 9/9

2. The decision has been made having had regard to all other material planning considerations, none of which was considered to have been of such significance as to justify doing other than grant planning permission.

These reasons for approval can be a summary of the reasons for grant of planning permission only. For further details on the decision please see the officer report online at www.cambridge.gov.uk/planningpublicaccess or visit our Customer Service Centre, Mandela House, 4 Regent Street, Cambridge, CB2 1BY between 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, the following are “background papers” for each report on a planning application:

1. The planning application and plans;
2. Any explanatory or accompanying letter or document from the applicant;
3. Comments of Council departments on the application;
4. Comments or representations by third parties on the application as referred to in the report plus any additional comments received before the meeting at which the application is considered; unless (in each case) the document discloses “exempt or confidential information”
5. Any Structure Plan, Local Plan or Council Policy Document referred to in individual reports.

These papers may be inspected on the City Council website at: www.cambridge.gov.uk/planningpublicaccess or by visiting the Customer Service Centre at Mandela House.

Cambridge City Council
Design & Conservation (CB1) Sub-Panel

Notes of the meeting Wednesday 14th March 2012

Present:

Dr Nick Bullock	Chair
Terry Gilbert	RTPI (vice Chair)
Richard Owers	RIBA
Carolyn Gohler	Cambridge Past, Present & Future
Jon Harris	Co-opted Member
David Grech	English Heritage

Officers:

Glen Richardson	City Council
Sarah Dyer	City Council
Jonathan Brookes	City Council

Presenters:

Neven Sidor	Grimshaw Architects
Eric Osborne	Grimshaw Architects
Robert Myers	Robert Myers Associates

Observers:

Sven Topel	Brookgate Developments
Derek Ford	Brookgate Developments
Jon Burgess	Beacon Planning

1. Apologies – Oliver Caroe

2. Introduction to 50/60 Station Road by Glen Richardson.

A note prepared by Glen Richardson explaining the background to today's presentation had been circulated in advance.

A proposal for this site was last seen by the Panel in November 2011 (verdict AMBER). City Council officers working on the scheme throughout last year expressed significant concerns on issues such as its compliance with the approved CB1 parameter plans (principally the requirements for the I2 block), whether the buildings were a matched pair, the overall height of the building(s) and the approach to fenestration, materials and renewables, amongst others. The application was submitted without, in effect, these matters being fully resolved and was then reviewed by the sub-panel at the November

meeting.

In early December 2011, officers gave a clear steer to the applicant that the submitted application could not be supported on design grounds. The architects then took the officer comments and over a series of meetings and design iterations have produced a scheme which, in officer opinion at least, is better resolved overall and which is improved in respect of scale, mass, materials and composition.

The lead architect, Neven Sidor, described the features of the amended proposal. These included the following:

- o Differentiation between the different sides of the buildings.
- o A landscape scheme adapted to the new architectural layout.
- o The facades now seen as an expression of light, not mass, as demonstrated by detailed modelling.
- o A design without louvers this time around, and instead with reconstituted stone fins and of a more solid nature
- o A glazed entrance lobby
- o A view through to the station building down the Southern Access Road.
- o A more generous colonnade facing Station Road.
- o A public artwork setting the tone for Station Road.

The Panel's comments are as follows:

- The Panel welcomed the new design strategy for the development with its revised massing and the clear differentiation of the two buildings.
- The Station Road frontage. The Panel welcome the double height of the ground floor of the two towers and the more generous approach to the design of this area. This and the redesign of the 'Pod' is likely to generate more activity along this frontage could, with the proposed cycle racks, lead to greater conflict between cyclists and pedestrians. The Panel expressed some scepticism about the adequate management of the cycle parking and the ability of the developer to prevent its use by rail travellers.
- The South Square frontage. The Panel welcomed the chamfering of the south-eastern corner of No 60 at street level and the view through to the Station Square and the level of animation at the northern edge of the South Square that this will make possible.
- The Café area, the Station Road frontage. The Panel

questioned whether the area would be as open as it appeared from the presentation and asked that the dimensions of this space be checked. While the Panel generally favoured the openness of the area around the café, there was concern about the possible crowding of activity with the café, pedestrians en route to the station and cyclists leaving their bikes.

- The 'Pod'. The Panel welcome the architectural language and animation of this single height space set against the double height of the two foyers.
- The Stair cores, No 60 and 50. The Panel favoured the differentiation and the placing of the two cores and the way that the core to No 60 would clearly signal the position of the development on Station Road.
- West elevation of No 50. The core does not continue to ground level and the Panel thought that the choice of stone or precast units for the elevation of the 'base' element of the building, particularly around the junction of the western and the Station Road elevations, needed further consideration. The Panel also raised the issue of the detailed topography of the area and the need to consider carefully the relative levels in the handling of the ground floor of the development.
- Rear stair core No 60. There is no visible expression of the stair tower, and the members of the Panel questioned this arrangement, in particular the treatment of the stair core especially at ground floor level.
- Details of the cladding of the frame, the 'fins' and the base elements. The Panel are confident that the proposed 'kit of parts' will provide the basis for a successful treatment of the elevations but feel that further refinement of the proposals for both sets of elevations is necessary to recognise, for example, the different conditions for the northern and the southern elevations.
- The choice of the 'family' of materials. In general terms, the Panel favours the development of an architectural language with a restrained palette of materials.
- The detail design of the 'fins'. The Panel raised the dangers of weather staining on the 'fins' and looks forward to seeing the details of the design that will address this issue.
- Reconstituted stone elements. Although the Panel recognise the reasons behind this choice of material, careful control of the finishing, handling and installation of these elements will be needed to avoid the kind of chipping seen on other developments in the City.
- The Panel would welcome an approach to detailing that would

- take account of the approach adopted for neighbouring buildings.
- Green roof over cycle parking (No 50). This is welcomed. Opportunities for green roofs above other parts of the building should also be explored.
 - Tree guards/shelter. The Panel consider that tree guards must be made to a robust design if they are to succeed.
 - Planting (in the space between buildings) facing south. The Panel are confident that this arrangement would be successful, but recommend some protective measures being taken against a possible wind “vortex”, perhaps through the inclusion of a taller glazed element at the southern end of the open terrace.
 - The panel note the scheme will have a BREEAM Excellent rating.
 - Public art. The Panel welcome the suggestion that the stair tower of No 60 might be used for public art. The form that this might take needs to be determined in consultation with the City’s Public Art Panel.

Conclusion

In strategic terms, the Panel considers that the new approach is a great improvement. The change in massing, the handling of the frontage at ground level along Station Road and the greater animation of the frontage to the ‘anti-chamber’ square to the south are welcomed. The ‘kit of parts’ proposed for the elevations looks promising but further refinement of the design is still needed, as is further examination of the treatment of stair cores at ground level.

VERDICT –

1. The strategy of the massing, the relationship of the stair core with Station Road, the overall strategy for the elevations and the handling of the public realm, GREEN (5), AMBER (1)

2. The ‘kit of parts’ for the elevations, the handling of the elevations at ground level, the design of the ‘fins’ and other components and the planting of the terraced area, GREEN (3), AMBER (2)

Reminder:

CABE ‘traffic light’ definitions:

GREEN: a good scheme, or one that is acceptable subject to minor improvements

AMBER: in need of *significant* improvements to make it acceptable, but not a matter of starting from scratch

RED: **the scheme is fundamentally flawed and a fresh start is needed.**

