

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FORUM

9 December 2015
10.00 – 11.15

Present: Councillors Blencowe, Bick, Hipkin, Sinnott and M. Smart

Officers:

Principal Planner (City) – Chair: Tony Collins
Planning Officer: Lorraine Casey
Committee Manager: Toni Birkin

For Applicant:

Chris Senior, Director of DPA Architects
Peter McKeown, Carter Jonas Associates
Tom Webb, DPA Architects

For Petitioners:

Three Members of the Local Community

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

15/10/DCF Declarations of Interest

Councillor Sinnott requested permission to address the committee and declared an interest she had recently moved into the area as a long-term, temporary resident.

15/11/DCF Induction by the Chair

The Chair outlined the role and purpose of the Development Control Forum. Those present were informed that no decisions would be taken at the meeting.

15/12/DCF Application and Petition Details 48 New Square 15/1940/FUL

Application No: 15/1940/FUL
Site Address: 48 New Square, Cambridge, CB1 1EZ
Description: Conversion of existing end terrace known as No.48 New Square, 3No. self-contained flats, demolition of existing garage and erection of 1No. self-contained studio-flat and removal of 4No. parking bays accessed via Willow Walk

and erection of 2No. self-contained flats. All with associated landscaping and access arrangements.

Applicant: Mr Simon Hawkey
Agent: Mr Chris Senior
Address: Once Architecture Ltd, The Gallery, 96 King Street, Cambridge, CB1 1LN

Text of Petition: That the proposal for the erection of 2 self- contained flats is highly damaging to the Kite Conservation area and to the setting of the early Charles Humfrey listed terrace in Willow Walk.

Although residents of Willow Walk support the bringing back into use of 48 New Square there is genuine concern over the impact over the Willow Walk element of the scheme which increases density on the application site and impacts on the Willow Walk street scene which is historically open in aspect along its New Square side.

The petitioners believe that if there is no value to Jesus College in maintaining the car spaces there is scope for enhancing the Conservation Area by means of including the car space land within the curtilage of Number 48.

Case by the Applicants:

1. Had noted the concerns of the residents regarding the Willow Walk aspect of the development.
2. Referred to photos of the area to demonstrate that development would complement the area.
3. Development conformed to National Policy Framework requirements for conservation area developments.
4. Have carried out extensive consultations with local residents.
5. Set out the expected timeframes for the next stage of the application.
6. Expected the application to go to the February Planning Committee.
7. Next door neighbours were supportive of the application.
8. Plans included protection of the existing facade.
9. Proposals offered adequate separation from existing properties.
10. Proposals were sympathetic to the character of the area.
11. Consultees such as Highways and Environment were happy with the proposals.

12. The Conservation and Design Panel were largely content with the proposals with the exception of minor reservations.

Case by Petitioners:

13. Not unhappy with the idea of development provided this was not to the detriment of the community.
14. Concern regarding the Willow Walk block.
15. Old building was a low, single storey stable.
16. Mass and large frontage to Willow Walk out of keeping with area.
17. Area currently enjoys open views.
18. The applications states that it is New Square but greatest impact would be to Willow Walk.
19. Technical drawings do not allow accurate estimation of the size of the proposed building.
20. Old stable was converted to parking area.
21. Privacy would be lost as properties would be overlooked.
22. Window on Willow Walk side of development not needed.
23. Neighbours would suffer loss of light and over shadowing.
24. Shadow study alarming.
25. Sunlight study needs further investigation.
26. Planning applications submitted by existing residents subject to rigorous investigation.
27. New applications did not appear to be subject to the same rigor.
28. Willow Walk resident met and expressed their opposition to any access point from Willow Walk.
29. Residents were prepared to compromise on some matters.
30. No reciprocal concessions had been made by the developer.
31. Willow Walk was a special area.
32. Cross section drawing from developer were unclear.
33. Proposed footprint is larger than old building.
34. Overdevelopment of the area.
35. Community involvement statements did not adequately capture the views of local residents.
36. Local Plan requires developments to have a positive impact on the area.
37. Design does not reflect nature of the area.
38. Would compete visually with existing properties.
39. Trees would be lost.
40. Majority of residents do not agree that the proposals met the test for development in a conservation area.

Case Officers Comments:

41. Summarised additional consultations.
42. 22 local objections regarding: the block in Willow Walk, the one and a half storey building in New Square and pressures on parking.
43. Noted the comments of the officers regarding the trees.

Non Planning Committee Members' Statement

Councillor Bick

- Acknowledged residents' concerns.
- Expressed disappointment the application lacked detail with regard to Willow Walk.
- Concerns regarding massing and proximity to Willow Walk.
- A proper cross sectional diagram was needed to demonstrate proximity to neighbouring buildings.
- Long term fears for Willow Walk and the future street scape.
- Relationship between Willow Walk and New Square should be retained.

Councillor Sinnott

- Willow Walk was part of the shared heritage of Cambridge and was of value beyond just those who lived there.
- Greatest impact of the development would be to Willow Walk.
- Suggested that the building footprint could be rotated to allow a side access route.
- Overlooking was a concern with current proposal.
- There was more room for compromise.

Councillor M Smart

- Concerned by the proposals.
- Property values appeared to be the driver.

Members' Questions and comments:

44. Conservation appraisal seeks to identify the unique features of an area and these should be considered by planning officers.
45. Willow Walk needs to be considered in its entirety as the area (back gardens in particular) could be seen as a prime area for development.
46. Would the development have any access from Willow Walk?
47. Had an alternative orientation been considered?
48. Would the development be car free?

49. Is there a marked gradient across the street? If yes could this be highlighted in the next stage of the planning process?
50. Could members be provided with images of the old stable?

Response to Members' Questions:

51. The original application had access from Willow Walk but the revised plan has all access from the front of the development. The development was set back with only windows to the rear. Conservation and Urban Design had required the rear of the building to present an attractive façade to Willow Walk.
52. No alternative orientation had been proposed.
53. The development would be car free.
54. There was gradient across the street and detailed at the next stage of the planning process.

Summing up by the Applicants:

55. Development would not have a detrimental impact on the area.
56. New properties would be assimilated into the area and would enhance the street.
57. The impact on light levels would be minimal.
58. Detailed consultations had been undertaken.

Summing up by the Petitioner:

59. Local residents were concerned about the scale of the proposals.
60. Developers' drawings were misleading.
61. Conservation area decisions would always be subjective.
62. Need to protect the quality of the landscape for future generations.
63. Application lacks details for considered decisions.
64. Height projections do not take account of sloping nature of the street.
65. Light and shadow impacts on other residents not acceptable.
66. Alternative cycle and bin storage suggestions were needed.
67. Disappointed at lack of alternative proposals.
68. In making this application, Jesus College had been influenced by property values.
69. Gardens in the area were at risk.

Final Comment from the Chair

70. The Chair confirmed that the notes of the Development Control Forum would be made available to relevant parties and would be reported to the Planning Committee when the application is reported to them.

The meeting ended at 11.15 am

CHAIR