

Response to Design and Conservation Panel Comments June 2020.

Appearance from the Botanic Garden

Comment: Acknowledge there are some significant visual effects. See further assessment below regarding Townscape Impacts. Recognition from Conservation officer and Historic England that the proposal is of significantly lesser degree of harm than extant planning permission.

Setting of the Flying Pig amongst large office buildings

Comment: The provision of a higher boundary wall to the pub garden provides a greater visual presence in the streetscape. In the context of the overall townscape, the removal of low-quality detracting buildings and replacement with buildings of greater architectural quality is a considerable improvement. It is also a significant improvement from the extant planning permission which retains the Flying Pig's presence and identity as a standalone building set within an improved public realm.

Treatment of the extension to the Flying Pig

Comment: This is proposed as matching brickwork, details of which will be sought by condition. No objection raised by urban design or conservation officers.

Pub garden should help define the pub in streetscene through use of walls so as not to appear left over

Comment: This is considered to have been addressed through the provision of a higher boundary wall along the frontage of the pub garden which will lift its presence.

Needs to be clear where public realm begins and ends

Comment: A raised table across the ramp entrance to the basement is now proposed to favour/define pedestrian movement along Hills Road. The public space between Buildings B and C is designed for people and will use materials which are appropriate to a pedestrian environment, not vehicles.

Traffic impact needs to be proven

Comment: County Highways officers are satisfied with the findings of the Transport Assessment which will reduce peak time vehicle movements and that there are no significant environmental effects in transport terms.

Concern regarding conflict with pedestrian, cyclists and vehicles outside Building C

Comment: Toucan crossing outside Building C provided as part of highway mitigation package. County Highways officers have raised no objections in relation to this matter.

Concern whether taxi drop off points are well planned in the context of space for pedestrians

Comment: The County highways officers acknowledge the benefit of vehicle set down areas near both building entrances. The buildings benefit from appropriate setbacks to the street to allow pedestrian movement in and out of the buildings together with significant internal lobby space which will allow people to congregate.

Concern regarding impact of crossing on Hills Road junction

Comment: County Highways officers are satisfied there is no material impact on the junction as a result of the proposed Toucan crossing.

Office with views onto Botanic Garden is a significant opportunity but proposals fails to reflect this

Comment: The ground floor of both buildings is designed as a space where the public are welcome and will have active frontages through uses such as food and beverage. The ground floors are light and transparent using full length glazing to maximise views of the gardens. The exterior spaces around the building at ground level (public and private) also provide opportunities for views of the Botanic Gardens. All elevations benefit from glazing. Upper floors also provide outdoor space with views across the gardens. The proposal improves upon the extant planning permission which created a continuous built form along the back edge of pavement.

Large trees will not flourish in planters

Comment: This has been addressed through amendments to provide larger planters and is now considered acceptable by officers.

Drought tolerant trees may be an option but contribute little to the streetscene

Comment: Details of soft landscaping scheme will be sought by condition to ensure appropriate planting is achieved.

Landscaping is on podiums and in planters and therefore reliant on watering undermining sustainability credentials

Comment: The development includes SuDS which incorporate a blue roof and storage tanks to allow for rainwater harvesting. This can be used to irrigate landscaped areas thus conserving the use of water.

Frontage likely to remain heavily shaded in summer and degree of sunlight penetration to public realm between Buildings B and C

Comment: Shadow studies have been provided to demonstrate the effects of shadowing. The orientation of the site is such that shadowing of the site frontage is inevitable in the afternoons, although this may provide some welcome shade in the summer.

Roof terraces likely to be very hot and windy (should consider shading elements)

Comment: This detail could be secured through a landscaping condition however, is likely to be explored further during the detailed design process. In terms of wind, appropriate mitigation has been identified in the ES and there are no significant environmental effects.

Accept the curved form but still feel sprawling and could be more clearly ordered

Comment: Refer to Urban Design Officer comments

The two buildings need to relate to each other architecturally so despite the different brick detailing, have a shared language

Comment: Refer to Urban Design officer comments

Little discussion on aspiration on achieving high quality internal office environments

Comment: The buildings propose to be WELL platinum enabled. WELL is the leading tool for advancing health and wellbeing in buildings globally. Furthermore, the overall design of the building is aimed at securing excellent thermal comfort for occupants.