

Hove Civic and Regency Societies: Joint Planning Forum

Notes of the meeting held at 7:30pm on Tuesday 11th August 2018 at 12 Abbots, 129 Kings Road, Brighton BN1 2FA

Present:

Hove Civic Society: Helmut Lusser, Bob Ryder

Regency Society: Richard Carroll, Roger Hinton (chair), Kate Ormond, Richard Robinson, Helen Walker, Alasdair Glass

1. Matters arising from the previous meeting
 - 1.1 It was noted that the Regency Society committee will consider at its meeting on 18 September, whether to oppose or support the Sea Lanes application considered at the previous Planning Forum meeting.
2. Consideration of significant planning applications:
 - 2.1 BH2018/02598 Longley Industrial Estate New England Street & Elder Place Brighton

Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment to provide: 3,333sqm of office/research/development floorspace (B1 (a)/(b) use), 308sqm of flexible commercial/retail floorspace fronting Elder Place (B1 (a)/(b) and A1-A4 use), 208 residential units (C3 use) in buildings ranging between 3 and 18 storeys plus roof plant level, together with associated car and cycle parking, further plant at lower ground level, supporting facilities and landscaping.

The group looked at both the current application and the proposed master-plan of which it forms part.

There was no objection to the configuration or massing of the building though the height of the tallest section (17 storeys) was noted as a possible concern. It was felt that the building was appropriate for a brownfield site close to the main transport hub and the New England Quarter development.

However, it was agreed that the design was disappointing. Comparison was made with the Hove Gardens scheme (currently subject of an appeal) which, like this proposal involves a series of building sections of differing height and design, but with greater distinction between the separate elements. The residential elements of the Preston barracks site development were also quoted for comparison. It was agreed therefore that the proposed Longley site building, as currently designed, would represent a missed opportunity to create an architecturally beneficial addition to the area and should therefore be subject to a design review.

It was also agreed that the possible uses of the (considerable) s.106 contributions which would result should be allocated after a meaningful consultation with the local community.

Turning to the master-plan, which does not form part of the application, it was agreed that it would represent over-development of the area and the Longley scheme, if it does go ahead, should not be seen as a precedent for the master-plan as currently proposed.

Roger Hinton undertook to prepare a Regency Society comment which, while not objecting to the Longley site scheme, would outline the areas of concern discussed. Hove Civic Society will also submit a comment along similar lines.

2.2 BH2018/02051 Grove Park (Site Of William Moon Lodge) The Linkway Brighton BN1 7EJ

Erection of three storey (plus basement) residential care home providing 88 bedrooms and 39 parking spaces and associated works.

This site already has two permissions for similar schemes, but this is a new, application. It would be a large development on a medium-sized site in a suburban area.

It was agreed that the design was disappointing. Internally it adopts a traditional, institutional layout with resident's rooms along linear corridors and little or no attempt to create opportunities for residents to benefit from outdoor green space or indoor communal areas.

Externally the appearance of the building was also disappointingly old-fashioned. Less of the limited outdoor space on the site should be allocated to parking and more to green space.

Richard Carrol will draft a comment objecting on behalf of the Regency Society.

2.3 BH2018/02607 Greater Brighton Metropolitan College Pelham Street Brighton BN1 4FA

Hybrid planning application comprising: Full Planning application Site A (West of Pelham Street): External alterations and internal refurbishment to the existing college building and redevelopment of the existing car park to provide 3 storey extensions to the existing college (D1 use), disabled parking spaces with new vehicular access, cycle parking spaces, open space and landscaping. Outline Application Site B (East of Pelham Street): Demolition of York, Trafalgar and Cheapside Buildings and the erection of up to 135 residential units (C3 use) at maximum 6 storeys with associated new and relocated vehicular accesses, car and cycle parking (with all matters reserved except access, layout and scale).

It was noted with regret that this scheme offers no affordable housing on the grounds that all of the surplus generated by the housing element was needed to finance the re-furbishment of the tower and the new courtyard development on the car-park. Although this is disappointing it was recognised that, unlike most housing schemes, this one is designed specifically to enable improvements to the educational facilities provided by a public sector college and so the 0% affordable housing was, arguably, justifiable.

It was agreed that the proposed improvements to the tower and new courtyard development are acceptable. There was a suggestion that the courtyard could perhaps be enhanced to provide some elements of public realm improvement.

However, it was agreed that a comment should be submitted proposing that the college should be asked to look again at the viability of providing at least some affordable housing, taking into account not only the sites under consideration but also all of the college's other properties elsewhere.

Alternatively, or additionally, consideration could be given to allowing taller residential development on the east side of Pelham Street.

It was also noted that the scheme provides no alternative to the car-parking space that would be lost as a result of the courtyard development. College staff would be expected to find alternative transport arrangements.

Richard Robinson undertook to draft a Regency Society comment based on the points summarised above.

2.4 BH2018/02114 136 Freshfield Road Brighton BN2 0BR

Change of use & conversion of vacant public house (A4) incorporating the erection of 3 storey extension & associated works to create 3no. two bedroom flats (C3) with office space (B1) and Café (A3).

The proposed plans were considered acceptable and it was noted that there were few local objections. It was felt that the brick finish to the building provided a good contrast to the white render of the former pub, particularly bearing in mind the variety of materials present in buildings nearby.

It was agreed that the Regency Society would support the scheme and Kate Ormond undertook to draft a brief comment to that effect.

2.5 BH2018/02088 17 Circus Street Brighton BN2 9QF

Demolition of existing garage and store and erection of two storey dwelling incorporating 2no one bedroom apartments (C3).

The external design of this proposed new building is very similar to the already approved scheme and was considered to be a welcome improvement to the streetscene. However, it was decided to object to the internal layout: the existing approval is for a single dwelling, but this new version is for two self-contained flats. The resulting homes were described as “slums” in that there would be little or no natural light in the bedrooms and the bathrooms appear to be extremely cramped.

Roger Hinton undertook to draft an objection along these lines.

2.6 BH2018/02551 Marlborough House 54 Old Steine Brighton BN1 1NH

Change of use from office (B1) to single dwelling house (C3) with associated alterations including infill of some rear windows, replacement of rooflights and insertion of rear dormer. | Marlborough House 54 Old Steine Brighton BN1 1NH

This appears to be simply a re-submission of the existing scheme, approval for which has now lapsed. However, inconsistencies between the drawings and the design and access statement raise a question over whether internal changes are in fact being proposed.

More importantly concern was expressed that no adequate heritage appraisal has been prepared for the building, neither for this nor the previous application. Therefore no approval should be granted until that has happened.

Alasdair Glass undertook to prepare a comment to that effect.

3. Update on applications considered previously:
It was noted that only one application had been decided since the previous meeting.
4. RS Comments on the City Plan part 2
RS trustees present approved the proposed draft wording of the comments, RH undertook to submit them to the Planning Authority in time to meet the deadline on 12 September 2018.
5. Update on the Waterfront Project
The current position, as set out in Katherine Pierce's email was noted. It was agreed that the council committee delegated to authorise the signing of the conditional land agreement with Standard Life Aberdeen should ask some challenging questions before doing so. For example, it seems that they are being offered only two options, namely to approve the agreement for a venue at Black Rock or abandon it. It would make more sense if alternative options were on the table such as the construction of a new, state of the art venue on the current Brighton Centre site.
Helen Walker will speak to Councillor McCafferty who is a member of the committee.
6. AJ Ideas Competition for St Martin's Church
Noted with interest.
7. Complaint about speed trials on Madeira Drive
It seems that this complaint was received by the Regency Society as one of a number of addressees. It was decided not to respond.
8. Repairs to Unitarian Church, New Road
It was recognised that the discovery of the need for expensive additional works should have been identified during the survey made when preparing for the repairs to the pillars.
Nevertheless, the church is an important heritage asset and the additional work should be completed. It was agreed that the problem should be reported in the October update, drawing attention to the crowdfunding campaign.
9. Blue plaques for suffragettes
The Regency Society has been approached by a local women's history group for comment on their proposed blue plaque sites. No concerns were expressed about the sites. It was agreed that the Regency Society should not offer to contribute to the costs of any blue plaques unless they commemorate people relevant to the society's interests, such as architects or town planners..
There was also mention of a possible statue of Mary Clarke in the Royal Pavilion Gardens. Roger Hinton will enquire what the connection is between Mary Clarke and Brighton and/or the Pavilion.

10. Any other business

- 10.1 New plans for Madeira Drive and Arches: it was noted with approval that the Council has declined to enter into an exclusivity agreement with the developer proposing this scheme (Roger Wade).

The Regency Society's position is as set out in the comment on part 2 of the City Plan: we want to see the arches restored on a conservation basis, retaining full access to the existing terrace walkway. The Wade proposals do not appear to take account of the frequent use of Madeira drive for major event.

- 10.2 House of Lords consultation on regenerating seaside towns: It was decided not to respond to this consultation. It was noted that it is the third select committee consideration of this issue and the questions posed are disappointing and show no evidence of what was achieved by the previous work.

- 10.3 Sackville Road / coalyard site: it was noted that there is to be a public exhibition on 18-19 September of the Moda plans for an extensive development of 600-700 homes. Helen Walker undertook to circulate details.

- 10.4 Hove Gardens: it was noted with interest that the appeal against refusal of this scheme will involve public hearings.

11. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting will be 9th October 2018

RH 12-9-18