



CHEL TENHAM CIVIC SOCIETY

PLANNING FORUM

Notes of online meeting held at 5.00 pm on Tuesday 28 July 2020

Those present: Rob Rimell (Chair), Andrew Booton, Peter Sayers, Adrian Phillips, Andrew Kitching, Mike Richardson, Tess Beck (Minutes) & Mike Duckering

Apologies:

Car Park, Chester Walk, Cheltenham

Proposed Mixed Use Innovation Hub for the town centre (revised scheme following grant of planning permission ref. 19/00201/FUL)

Planning ref: 20/00552FUL

NEUTRAL

The Civic Society Planning Forum continues to strongly support the principle of this development. It provides something that is much needed for the town and has the potential to transform this area.

We appreciate that this building will be facing the Minster, unlike most of its neighbours. This latest design helps to make sense of the space around the Minster. We really welcome the plans for the Minster grounds, and these must be carried through for the scheme to be a success for this area. Though we appreciate that this is not fully in the applicant's hands.

The Hub will sit between the Minster, one of the oldest and most important buildings in Cheltenham, and the Children's Library, a building which really has not passed the test of time. In such an important location, it is crucial that we have a building that makes a positive contribution to its environment and that can still look as good in 30 years' time as it did when it was built. The details and materials are essential to its longevity. We are concerned that the proposed mint green colour scheme will age badly.

The forum feels strongly that the detailing and materials should be addressed in the application itself rather than by planning conditions.

This most recent version is an improvement on the previous scheme and has the potential to be a very successful scheme. We appreciate that the applicant has taken on board our comments about the second iteration and has addressed many of our concerns. We still have some reservations. The massing of this building is much greater than the already approved repurposed containers design. The detailing of the horizontal bands is not consistent. An alley way will be created behind the Children's Library which could present problems. While there is provision for disabled access, greater thought could be given to the experience of wheelchair users, e.g. in the height of the cut-outs.

Some problems, such as the lack of parking, can be mediated by good signage, and signage should be part of the overall design.

Oakley Farm, Priors Road, Cheltenham

Outline application for development comprising up to 250 dwellings including provision of associated infrastructure, ancillary facilities, open space and landscaping, demolition of existing buildings and formation of new vehicular access from Harp Hill. All matters reserved except for means of access from Harp Hill.

Planning ref: 20/02069/OUT

OBJECT

Even for an outline application, this lacks detail. There are no elevations, no masterplan. The renewable energy document contains no concrete proposals. The applicant fails to make a case for developing this area of particular importance as part of the Cotswold AONB. The Civic Society Planning Forum objects to this application as the proposed development is wholly within the AONB and outside Cheltenham's Principle Urban Area. The proposed development would not conserve nor enhance the AONB and would lead to adverse change to the landscape.

Due to its location on the urban fringe of Cheltenham, the Cotswold AONB will continue to come under pressure from developers, which is why the restrictions in line with the NPPF, JCS and Local Plan should be strictly enforced to prevent even small scale developments - let alone larger projects such as the one proposed. The Forum advocates increased public benefit of this area of the AONB in line with its very special conservation status. Beyond providing visual amenity for its neighbours, this area could provide benefits for the community through access and management for biodiversity. The formation of a trust could help with this process.

Oakfield House Stables, Oakfield House, Greenway Lane, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham

Erection of a single self-build dwelling following demolition of existing stables (revised Scheme)

Planning ref: 20/00014/PP1

Comments to be sent to the Planning Inspectorate

The Civic Society Planning Forum stands by its original comments on this application, which are that the Forum objects strongly to this proposed development within the AONB, which would adversely affect the AONB and would be contrary to the AONB Management Plan, the NPPF, JCS and Local Plan.

The Forum are aware that this is not the only application attempting to breach the AONB in this area. Permitting this could set a precedent which would considerably speed up the despoiling of this part of the AONB.