

PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (CHESIL STREET THEATRE, WINCHESTER)
SUB-COMMITTEE

20 June 2005

Attendance:

Councillors:

Busher (Chairman) (P)

Baxter (P)
Bennetts (P)
De Peyer (P)
Evans (P)

Mitchell (P)
Read (P)
Saunders
Sutton (P)

Deputy Members in Attendance:

Councillor Chapman (Standing Deputy for Councillor Saunders)

Officers in Attendance:

Mr D Dimon: Acting Planning Team Manager
Mrs E Patterson: Principal Planning Officer
Ms T Matthews: Sites and Monuments Officer
Mr R MacCulloch: Conservation Officer

1. **RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSION TO BIRD IN HAND ACTIVITY CENTRE, 14 CHESIL STREET AND CHESIL STREET THEATRE, WINCHESTER.**
(Report PDC556 refers)

The Sub-Committee met at the Guildhall, Winchester. The Chairman welcomed to the meeting five representatives of the applicants (St Johns Charity and the Chesil Street Theatre) and as well as five local residents.

The proposals contained three applications – listed building consent for internal alterations in the Grade II* listed Chesil Theatre building (including the creation of a new opening in a medieval wall); conservation area consent for the demolition of Nos 14, 16, 18 and 20 Chesil Street; and permission to erect five terrace dwellings with a flat over a new extension to the Chesil Theatre building.

A previous application for the site had been considered by the Sub-Committee on 29 September 2004. Mrs Patterson explained that the latest application contained amendments to the 2004 application including a revised elevation to Chesil Street and the introduction of a “jetty” at the second floor level from these buildings on Chesil Street towards the builder’s yard. Following Members’ comments at the previous Sub-Committee, the design of the dwellings’ roof terrace had also been amended to prevent overlooking into the neighbouring Watersmeet Residential Care Home. Therefore the 1.1metre high stainless steel balcony had been moved away from the building’s edge.

Mrs Patterson reported that subsequent to the publication of the report, further representations had been received from the City of Winchester Trust who welcomed

the scheme, its joint approach between the applicants and the daytime access to the bridge.

The Sub-Committee also noted a letter dated 25 May 2005 from Mr Collins who owned the builder's yard that was not included in the application site. In this letter, Mr Collins objected to the application as the proposed buildings and proposed trees were too close to his boundary, that there would be poor egress onto Chesil Street, that the appearance of the design was awkward and that there were errors in the plans.

Following on from Mr Collins' comments, Mr Jackson (the Director of St Johns Charity) explained that Mr Collins had recently accepted an offer for his land from the applicants, subject to contract. The Sub-Committee acknowledged that if this was to proceed, the availability of this land was likely to result in the submission of a further amended (and significantly improved) application. Although Members were minded to deal with the application before them, the debate concentrated on those aspects that would be unaffected by the availability of Mr Collins' land.

In response to a Member's question, Mr MacCullagh clarified that the positioning of the proposed residential development at right-angles to Chesil Street would be detrimental to the street's medieval and meandering character.

During discussion on the proposed alterations to the walls of the listed building, Mr MacCullagh reported that there had been no historical assessment submitted with the application. He added that whilst the proposed entrance was compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act, he suggested that the new entrance would be better located through the tower. However a representative of the applicant stated that English Heritage had recently visited the site and had agreed that in order to adapt the building to its current use, it was necessary to create the new entrance through the listed wall. Following debate in which some Members raised no objection to the new entrance, the Chairman requested that English Heritage's consultation be presented in writing to the next Committee.

During discussion, Mrs Patterson clarified Members' questions regarding the plans published in the report. It was noted that there were errors in the plans regarding the roof of the residential building's staircase (and the applicant explained that a similar design had been used at the 1984 re-development of The Dolphin, High Street, Winchester) and the ridge height measurements.

Members considered the new refectory, caretaker's flat and hall to the rear of the theatre and it was noted that the hall was likely to have a variety uses, including a day centre for the St Johns Charity and as a rehearsal room for the theatre.

The application included a bridge across the River Itchen from the St Johns Charity site at the Weirs to the rear of the application site. Mrs Patterson explained that an amendment was required to ensure that both sides of the river were included within the application's red-line and that a Section 106 Legal Agreement was required to cover access to the bridge. During discussion, Members noted that the bridge would be gated to allow daytime access only and that a brick and flint wall would be erected on the Chesil Street bank. Members also noted that the Environment Agency had independently contacted the applicant regarding the bridge and location of the proposed refectory. Members requested that officers monitor the outcome of these negotiations.

At the invitation of the Chairman, a member of the public questioned what she considered to be a compromised fire escape from Watersmeet (the adjacent residential buildings) as a result of the development and Mrs Patterson confirmed this was a Building Regulations matter.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Members welcomed the principle of the development and did not object to the alterations to the listed building. However, some Members had concerns regarding the bulk of the proposed buildings and the modern design of the new dwellings in comparison to its neighbouring properties. Notwithstanding this, it was agreed that the application be deferred for further negotiation (pending the possibility of including Mr Collins' land within the application) and to receive comments from the Environment Agency.

RESOLVED:

That the application be deferred for further negotiation (pending the possibility of including Mr Collins' land within the application) and to receive comments from the Environment Agency.

The meeting commenced at 9.30am and concluded at 11.10am.

Chairman