

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Item No: 04
Address: Bird In Hand Activity Centre 14 Chesil Street Winchester Hampshire
SO23 0HU

Parish/Ward Winchester Town

Proposal Description: Erection of 5 no. one bedroom terraced dwellings, new refectory, kitchen; hall with 1 no. one bedroom flat over and new theatre facilities, alterations to existing access, replacement bridge over River Itchen (AMENDED PLANS)

Applicants Name St Johns Winchester Charity

Case No: 05/01201/LBC

W No: W19175/03LBCA

Case Officer: Elaine Patterson

Date Valid: 11 May 2005

Reason for Committee: The previous applications were referred to a Planning Development Control Working Party Sub-committee

Site Factors: Grade II* listed Chesil Theatre
Conservation Area
River Itchen SSSI

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Site Description

- The application site comprises the grade II* star listed Chesil Theatre, the 4No. Victorian houses and the builders yard which front Chesil Street, as well as the land to the rear including the Bird in Hand Activity Centre, down to the bank of the River Itchen.
- St John's Winchester Charity own the majority of the land within the application site, that is the builders yard, the four dwellings Nos. 14, 16, 18 and 20 Chesil St, the Bird in Hand Activity Centre and the land to the side and rear of the theatre down to the River Itchen. The Grade II* listed Chesil Theatre is owned by the Winchester Diocese but is operated by the Winchester Trust and the Winchester Dramatic Society.
- Also included within the red line of the application site, but not in the applicants' ownership is the line of a proposed pedestrian footbridge over the River Itchen, with the site for a ramp up from the Weirs footpath, which is land owned by Winchester City Council.
- The site lies within the conservation area.
- The River Itchen is a designated SSSI.
- There are mature trees on site, protected because they are situated in the Conservation Area, however only a mature yew adjacent to the river by the boundary with the Soke is to be retained.

Relevant Planning History

- W19175 Erection of 5 no. one bedroom terraced dwellings, new refectory, kitchen; hall with 1 no. one bedroom flat over and new theatre facilities, alterations to existing access. Withdrawn whilst negotiations continued to complete the sale of the builders yard on Chesil Street frontage.
- W19175/01LBCA Demolition of No: 16, 18 and 20 Chesil Street. Withdrawn.
- W08577/03LB Chesil Theatre External and internal alterations to incorporate disabled accesses by re-opening formal vestry door, new opening through inner wall, window to become door for actors access, partitioning actors entrance from public access. Withdrawn.
- W08577/04LB External and internal alterations and additions to incorporate foyer, changing facilities and WC's, disabled accesses by re-opening formal vestry door, new opening through inner wall, window to become door for actors' access, partitioning actors' entrance from public access (AMENDED PLANS). Recommended for approval under delegated powers.
- W19175/02 Erection of 5 no. one bedroom terraced dwellings, new refectory, kitchen; hall with 1 no. one bedroom flat over and new theatre facilities, alterations to existing access, replacement bridge over River Itchen (AMENDED PLANS). To be determined. See elsewhere on this agenda.

Proposal

- This application seeks Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of the 4No. terrace dwellings on site.

Consultations

Conservation:

- Recommend refusal.
- The latest drawings show little or no change from the previous scheme therefore the Conservation Officer's concerns remain.
- The converted church dates from the 12th century with later additions and is Grade II* listed. It is an important landmark on Chesil Street, which twists around it creating a defining townscape feature within this part of the conservation area. In Roman times, Chesil Street provided a principal route into the city from the southeast and it seems that the area developed as a suburb outside the walled city in medieval times. The street contains many other important listed buildings including the Grade II* 'The Soke' (No.12), which dates from

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE AGENDA

the 17th century and is immediately adjacent to the north of the site. The small 2-storey houses on the east side of Chesil Street (Nos 17-21 and 23-27) are also listed Grade II.

- The site extends to the river, which has significant tree cover next to the bank obscuring views into the site when trees are in leaf. Glimpses of the church tower are seen from the riverside walk on the west bank of the Itchen and the church and its neighbours appear more prominent in wintertime. Important views of St Giles Hill are seen from the riverside walk. The gardens, trees and historic walls next to the river of the houses on the west side of Chesil Street make a significant contribution to the quality of this part of the conservation area. The houses to the north of the site have large garden plots reflecting their status while the houses to the south have long narrow ones reflecting the smaller medieval plots. This pattern is broken with the 1980s 'Watersmeet', sheltered housing, immediately to the south of the site, which has an apartment block in close proximity to the river.
- The demolition of the terrace houses to the south of the site will result in loss of street frontage and this will be reinforced by turning the residential block at right angles to the street.
- The loss of street frontage will erode the fine urban grain of the medieval street with its established scale and rhythm. The opening up of the street and the horizontal emphasis of the block facing Chesil Street will adversely affect the setting of the listed church, listed houses opposite and the character of this part of the conservation area.
- At the previous Working Party the applicant was urged to redesign the scheme to provide a street frontage following the acquisition of the 'ransom strip'.
- The flat roof and parapet approach to the new housing will appear at odds with the surrounding roofscape.
- The monopitch roof of the foyer building will look awkward next to the church tower when viewed from the old railway bridge on Chesil Street and the tall blank wall of its west elevation will make this new building appear more dominant in views from the riverside walk.
- The footprint of the Refectory and Hall encroaches on the garden to the west of the church and the Hall's roof will partially obscure riverside views of the church. A more lightweight link with Church was previously advised along with transferring caretaker's accommodation to Chesil Street frontage.
- The extent of the overall footprint of the development will erode the softer, green, semi-natural and more open character of the Riverside part of Winchester Conservation Area with its large gardens, trees, stone walls and plants. Reinforcing the Chesil Street frontage would have allowed the opportunity to provide greater open space and more of a natural transition between riverside and Chesil Street.
- It is unclear whether the hard landscaped area will be public open space.
- While certain elements of the scheme clearly have architectural merit and the new facilities are welcome, these are outbalanced by the reservations above. For the scheme to be acceptable in planning terms it must preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- Conservation would encourage a more contextual approach which seeks to reinforce the street frontage and does not encroach so greatly on the church and its views from the river.

Archaeologist:

- The application is archaeologically sensitive since it is located within the historic eastern suburb of Winchester, indeed the site lies adjacent to and to the rear of the Grade II* listed 12th century St Peters Church, now the Chesil Theatre. Although the historic eastern suburb dates back to the Roman period, our current understanding of the area suggests that the Roman suburb and cemetery lay to the north, around the Bridge Street /Blue Ball Hill area. During the Saxon and medieval periods, occupation in this area will have focused on the Chesil Street frontage; documentary evidence indicates that three property plots within the application site (as depicted on a map of 1750), may have existed in the 13th century, while late 19th century photographs held by Winchester Museums Service show two late medieval or early post-medieval timber-framed buildings fronting Chesil Street to the south of St Peters Church.
- The archaeological interest within the site can therefore be defined as relating to the medieval church and other historic buildings and structures (such as the remains of the footbridge)

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE AGENDA

within the site; together with buried remains relating to medieval and earlier occupation fronting onto Chesil Street and associated backlands activity (rubbish/ cess pits etc) to the rear (west). The existing buildings which currently occupy part of the site, together with previous activities on the site, are however likely to have impacted on any buried remains present within the site.

- In accordance with the principles of PPG16 and policy HG.3 of the Winchester District Local Plan (Policy HE.1 of the Revised Deposit Local Plan) planning consent should only be granted subject to a condition for a programme of archaeological recording and a condition for a programme of historic building recording in mitigation of development. If this application is refused, please append a reason for refusal.

Representations:

City of Winchester Trust:

- The Trust welcomes the crisp design of this interesting and innovative scheme for a difficult site. Assume the effect of run-off on copper on the north elevation has been taken into account. Welcomes a joint approach with the Chesil Theatre and the inclusion of daytime access to the bridge both of which will be of great benefit to the public,
- No letters of representations have been received on this application nor the revised drawings received.
- On the original application which was withdrawn, 2 letters of support were received and 6 neighbours objected on the grounds of loss of light, views, quiet and privacy to Watersmeet.

Relevant Planning Policy:

Hampshire County Structure Plan Review:

- UB3, E16, R2

Winchester District Local Plan

- EN5, HG3, HG6, HG7, HG9, HG11, HG20, HG23, H1, FS1, RT3, T9, W1, W5, W30

Winchester District Local Plan Review Deposit and Revised Deposit:

- DP1, DP3, HE.1, HE5, HE7, HE14, H2, H7, SF6, RT3, T2, W1, W6, W9

National Planning Policy Guidance/Statements:

- **PPG 3 Housing**
- **PPG 15 Planning and the Historic Environment**

Planning Considerations

This is an application for Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of 14, 16, 18 & 20 Chesil Street. The corresponding planning application for the development of the site for 5No. dwellings, a caretakers flat, new theatre facilities and a replacement bridge over the Itchen is included elsewhere on the agenda W/19175/02.

The main considerations in respect of this application, for the demolition of the buildings are:

- Impact on the character and appearance of the area

Impact on character and appearance of area

- It is considered that the demolition of the victorian terraced houses will result in a loss of street frontage, which the development proposed in application W19175/02 (see elsewhere on this agenda) will not adequately replace. The planning application is therefore recommended for refusal. The loss of these will erode the fine urban grain of the medieval street with its established grain and rhythm, causing harm to the character and appearance of this part of the Winchester Conservation Area. Therefore the demolition of the terrace buildings can not be justified in line with guidance provided in PPG15 or Local Plan Historic Environment Policies and the Winchester Conservation Area Project and the supplementary planning guidance contained within this document

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Recommendation

REFUSE – subject to the following refusal reason(s):

Conditions/Reasons

01 The proposed development is contrary to Policies UB3 and E16 of the Hampshire County Structure Plan Review; Policies EN5, HG6, HG7, HG9, HG11, HG23, W1 of the Winchester District Local Plan; and DP3, HE5, HE7 and W.1 of the emerging proposals of the Winchester District Local Plan (Review) in that:-

(i) The loss of street frontage will erode historic townscape character of this part of Winchester Conservation Area. Therefore the demolition of the terrace buildings can not be justified under PPG15 or Local Plan Historic Environment Policies and the Winchester Conservation Area Project and the supplementary planning guidance contained within this document

02 The proposed development is contrary to policy E14 of the Hampshire County Structure Plan and policy HG.3 of the Winchester District Local Plan (Policy HE.1 of the Revised Deposit Local Plan) in that it fails to make satisfactory provision for a programme of archaeological investigation and recording before or during development, on a site which is considered to be of archaeological interest.

Informatives

01. The Local Planning Authority has taken account of the following development plan policies and proposals:-

Hampshire County Structure Plan Review: UB3, E16, R2

Winchester District Local Plan Proposals: EN5, HG3, HG6, HG7, HG9, HG11, HG20, HG23, H1, FS1, RT3, T9, W1, W5, W30

Emerging Development Plan- WDLP Review Deposit and Revised Deposit: DP1, DP3, HE.1, HE5, HE7, HE14, H2, H7, SF6, RT3, T2, W1, W6, W9

National Planning Policy Guidance/Statements:

PPG 3 Housing

PPG 15 Planning and the Historic Environment