

Meeting	Planning Committee A
Date	8 September 2022
Present	Councillors Cullwick (Chair), Ayre, D'Agorne, Doughty, Kilbane, Fisher, Melly, Waudby, Crawshaw (Substitute for Cllr Looker), Douglas (Substitute for Cllr Pavlovic) and Fenton (Substitute for Cllr Barker)
In Attendance	Becky Eades (Head of Planning and Development Services) Ruhina Choudhury (Senior Solicitor) Alison Stockdale (Development Management Officer)
Apologies	Councillors Pavlovic, Barker and Looker

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## **19. Declarations of Interest (16:34]**

Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in respect of business on the agenda. In respect of agenda items 4a [Northern House, Rougier Street, York [22/00098/FULM], Cllr Crawshaw noted that he was a Governor at Scarcroft Primary School and Cllr Doughty noted that his employer was a tenant of Northern House. There were no further declarations of interest.

## **20. Minutes [16:35]**

Cllrs Crawshaw and Melly noted a number of suggested amendments to the minutes of the meeting held on 4 August 2022.

Resolved: That the approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 4 August 2022 be deferred.

Reason: In order to consider suggested amendments.

## **21. Public Participation [16:42]**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme on general matters within the remit of the Planning Committee A.

## **22. Plans List [16:42]**

Members considered a schedule of reports of the Head of Planning and Development Services, relating to the following planning applications, outlining the proposals and relevant policy considerations and setting out the views of consultees and officers.

## **23. Northern House Rougier Street York [22/00098/FULM] [16:42]**

Members considered a major full application from Rougier Street Developments Ltd for the demolition of 1 - 9 Rougier Street and erection of mixed use development including 153 apartments (Use Class C3), offices (Use Class E), visitor attraction (Use Class F1), aparthotel with 88 rooms (Use Class C1) with associated landscaping and public realm improvements (resubmission) at Northern House, Rougier Street, York.

The Head of Planning and Development gave a presentation on the application showing the existing site, views, elevations and 3D isometrics. She advised that Members needed to base their decision on the scale plan.

An update was given to the committee, informing them of two additional representations in relation to the bat survey being out of date and a request for the full Financial Viability Assessment to be published, not just the Executive Summary. There had also been additional consultations from the Council's Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development (Conservation) officer, Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development (Ecology) officer, Design and Conservation and Sustainable Development (Design) officer and Yorkshire Water, resulting in a number of additional conditions being recommended. These were related to the biodiversity enhancement plan and drawing, the lighting design plan and construction.

### Public Speakers

Johnny Hayes spoke in objection to the application noting concerns regarding harm to heritage and archaeology, the need for affordable housing and disclosure on the Financial Viability Assessment. In response to Member questions, he explained the need for the full FVA to be

published and not just the Executive Summary. He was asked and explained that he could not comment on what would change as a result of seeing the full FVA until he had seen it.

Flick Williams spoke in objection to the application detailing concerns regarding disabled access. She explained a number of problems with the exterior of the building, issues with public transport infrastructure and size of the flats and shared space.

Ken Smith spoke in objection to the application on behalf of the Council for British Archaeology (CBA). He explained the CBA rationale for objecting to the application on the grounds of harm to the central conservation area and concern regarding the proposed approach to archaeology on the site thus resulting in the CBA recommending refusal of the application. In answer to Member questions, he explained that:

- The timescale and funding for the site needed to be sufficient and it was not known what laid under that ground.
- The CBA perspective would be an evaluation of the site when the building was dropped. He added at policies nationally and locally were not being applied.
- There was a degree of assurance in that it was recognised that it was not known what was under the site however but there were further concerns which were explained.
- In accounting for the fundamental difference between the CBA and York Archaeological Trust (YAT), it was noted that YAT were part of the application. The CBA tried to take an objective view in context of designated heritage assets and what was the best way forward.
- If there were waterlogged remains, the site would be of international interest.

Laurence Beardmore, President of the York & North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce spoke in support of the application on behalf of the Chamber on the economic and business benefits of the scheme. These included economic growth and the regeneration of that side of York. He added that all occupiers of Northern House had leases ending by the end of the year and the offices would be vacant by the end of the year. He added that there was permitted development rights on the building and that the new development would offer grade A office space. In response to Member questions, he noted that:

- The GVA was built over a number of years and was cumulative, and there was a need to keep adding to the city.
- The office space could be converted into flats without planning permission.

Nick Rowe spoke in support of the application on the health and wellbeing benefits of the archaeological dig. He explained the value of archaeology on prescription and the mental health benefits of belonging to the team doing the dig to York and through their contribution to discovery and achievement.

At this point in the meeting, a Member expressed concern regarding the number of registered speakers on behalf of the Applicant. The Chair stated that the speakers on behalf of the Applicant would have 5 minutes to speak combined.

Eamonn Keogh, Agent for the Applicant, spoke in support of the application on the planning case. Neil Brown, the architect for the application explained that when the application was approved the previous year, the Applicant listened to the comments of the committee and had worked with the council design and conservation team and other stakeholders in changing the design of the scheme. He detailed the changes noting that the design included significant public realm improvements. He noted that the Applicant would continue to work with stakeholders. David Jennings spoke on the archaeological aspects of the case on behalf of the Applicant. He explained that public engagement would run alongside the excavation of the site and that the scheme would be focussed on the maximum delivery of public development.

Members then asked Eamonn Keogh and colleagues in attendance a number of questions to which they responded that:

- The Tanners Moat end of the site represented challenges and the reasons for moving the building were explained.
- The entrances and access arrangements were detailed.
- Concerning why the building was not accessible from all directions, there was a need to be clear about how to enter the attraction through the signposted routes on Tanners Moat and the glass atrium.
- The access from Tanners Moat to the public realm space was explained. It was noted that each side of the building did have access.
- Regarding how the building was accessible, this was part of the detailed design stage and the Applicant was happy to have conversations to address concerns about the design.
- Access was at the core of all attractions. They had worked with MySight, The Hut and the Blueberry Academy and they would work hard to make sure that everybody could access the attraction.
- The one and two bedroomed apartments were above space standards and studio bedroom did not have national minimum space standards.

- There was no reception area and there was a mix of units of single and double dwellings.
- The national minimum space standards started at one bedroom dwellings. 60% of the flats were studios. The report stated that the flat space sizes were considered acceptable.
- There would be a minimum let of a three month stay and in services apartments there was an average stay of 18 months. The benefits for tenants of services apartments included access to the gym and restaurant. All apartments would be tenanted.
- It was noted that the site was appropriate for high density.
- There was no level affordable housing in the apartment mix.
- The spaces in the scheme worked for a range of people and mix of tenants.
- The cost of rent would depend on the size of the unit.
- The uplift in visitor numbers was explained and it was noted that the attraction was three times as big as the Jorvik Viking Centre. It was noted that the Roman period was popular and that the projected visitor numbers were modest.
- Regarding displaying finds on the site, the design of the museum had not been finalised. It was explained that they wanted residents to get involved.
- Regarding significant finds on the site, this was about programming. The timings were ambitious and the reality was about resourcing. The estimations were based on long industry understanding. There was a balance between conservation and discovery.
- There were different tests for designated assets and non-designated assets and they would look at specific based assets known on the area and area based assets. The complexity of the assessment of the harm for the area was explained.
- Regarding not following CBA methodology, the YAT was following industry methodology and would comply with the methodology of the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists.
- Concerning the difference of opinion from the CBA and YAT, YAT was interested as an educational institution in investigation. The approaches regarding conservation and investigation were noted.
- In regard to the fuel used in the building, the building was designed using available technology and it met the policy requirements of the Draft Local Plan. The aim was to deliver low energy and a note was made of the measures in place to deliver future proof solutions.

On the news of the death Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Members unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting to consider the running of the meeting and they left the meeting to deliberate.

[The meeting adjourned from 18:33 to 18:42]

Members returned to the meeting. The Chair read out a statement on the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and all present were informed that it was appropriate to discontinue and adjourn the meeting to a later date.

[The meeting adjourned at 18:44]