

From: Mark Peacock
Sent: 16 February 2012 17:24
To: Planning
Subject: FW: Salisbury Square, Old Hatfield
Attachments: 021612 - Mark Peacock.pdf

PLANNING
DEPARTMENT

17 FEB 2012

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Please record attached letter to post and FastPlanning

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From: Sue Foster [<mailto:Sue.Foster@jbplanning.com>]
Sent: 16 February 2012 17:08
To: Mark Peacock
Cc: Paul Atton
Subject: Salisbury Square, Old Hatfield

Dear Mark

Please find attached correspondence from Paul Atton in respect of the planning application at Salisbury Square.


Sue Foster
Personal Assistant

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Our Ref: PA/1040/sf
Yr Ref: S6/2011/1994/MA and S6/2011/2092/CA

16 February 2012

Mark Peacock
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
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Dear Mr Peacock

Salisbury Square, Old Hatfield

Further to the recent letter addressed to you from the Old Hatfield Residents Association, I am writing on behalf of Gascoyne Cecil Estate with their response to the comments made. We are pleased that the OHRA feel able to be 'generally supportive of the scheme'.

As discussed at our meeting with you on 14th December, the applicants are agreeable to the imposition of a suitably worded planning condition requiring the submission of further details of the design of the new public square for approval in due course. The detailed design would be the subject of public consultation beforehand carried out by the Estate. You will recall that the current proposals have been the subject of extensive public consultation via the Old Hatfield Charrette and to address key issues raised which include "lack of attractive shopping" and "unattractive and inflexible open spaces".

Retail Units

- 1) We note the comments about the car parking spaces currently shown on the planning drawings as allocated to the Job Centre. These spaces are effectively replacement spaces for existing provision adjacent to the Job Centre building. It may be in due course that these spaces can be re-allocated for public usage (for visitors to the shops) but this will need to be subject to further discussion with the Job Centre. There will be a net increase in overall parking provision; space for retail visitors will also be available on the west side of the new square. The scheme therefore makes provision for short term street parking as envisaged in the Old Hatfield Charrette.
- 2) The applicants aim is to support existing and attract new retailers with well-considered marketing and signage. Retail tenants will ultimately only be attracted by a scheme which is well presented, carefully constructed and which offers sufficient foot-fall and passing trade to support businesses. Parts 1 and 2 of the Gascoyne Cecil Estates Design Codes (submitted with my letter of 29th November) provide detailed comment in respect of building design, shop signage and lighting etc and the standards that will be adhered to.
- 3) The applicants are open minded about the future tenant mix and will be happy for existing occupiers to remain. Rents will be assessed in line with market conditions and the

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applicants will maintain dialogue with all of the existing retail occupiers prior to any future development taking place. York House might provide a potential location for businesses to re-locate to for the duration of, or indeed, subsequent to the proposed re-development.

- 4) Whilst in our opinion the tenant mix and details of specific retailers are irrelevant in planning terms, the applicants are very conscious of ensuring that the community is served by an appropriate mix of shops and have noted comments raised in relation to the existing supermarket and the dry cleaners.

The Use of Salisbury Square

- 1) The applicants do not accept that the development plans are "completely without detail" and consider that the scheme will engender a high quality public realm. Drawing Number 789 091 A – Street Furniture and Finishes indicates the proposed tone and palette of materials for Salisbury Square and further examples can be found in and around Hatfield Park.
- 2) With reference to the comments made within Anita Ward's (WHBC Senior Projects Officer) memorandum dated 09/12/2011, rather than being cut off, it is proposed that the new Square would be an all inclusive space and vehicular speeds would be low.
- 3) The new space is intended to be fully flexible and suitable for a variety of uses. The suitability of use of the whole of the space for 'soft, green' landscaping is debatable. Details of appropriate tree planting and peripheral soft landscaping can be covered by planning condition.
- 4) The scheme has been designed to increase visibility, accessibility and foot fall within the public space. The proposed alignment of the buildings has been designed to provide enhanced visibility from Hatfield Railway Station and the A1000. You will be aware that Gascoyne Cecil Estate are a key stakeholder in emerging plans to upgrade Hatfield Station in consultation with Hertfordshire County Council and Network Rail.
- 4) We acknowledge the example of Baldock High Street as a good example of public realm. Indeed, photographs of Baldock High Street and additional examples of finishes at Hitchin Market Place and Hatfield Park are included on drawing 789 091 A.
- 6) The applicants have indicated their desire for the Square to be a true shared surface as detailed within application drawings and noted in section 3.37 of the submitted Planning, Design and Access Statement.
- 7) With reference to OHRA comments on Stable Yard, the applicants consider that the activities at Stable Yard can successfully co-exist with new activities at Salisbury Square. Certain events such as a farmers market might be better suited to Salisbury Square, given its location at the heart of Old Hatfield, close to parking and public transport. Other events may remain better suited to Hatfield Park and further opportunities exist for both locations to be used in parallel. Potential pedestrian routes and linkages are highlighted on Page 11 of the Planning, Design and Access Statement. The applicants have a genuine desire to see the whole of Old Hatfield flourish and remain a vibrant location.

Green Space

- 1) As previously discussed further details of hard and soft landscaping; tree planting and street furniture can be submitted as a planning condition. In the applicants view, many of the better examples of public realm, both nationally and internationally include minimal green space. The quality of the detailed design and the choice of material palette may be a greater priority than a simple choice between hard or soft (green) landscaping. When



considered in the context of the desire to create a flexible public space, large areas of grass may not necessarily be appropriate. One must, for example, consider the implications of shading beneath trees, potential over-running by vehicles notwithstanding potential wear from pedestrian traffic. Section 8.0 of the Gascoyne Cecil Design Code also provides clear aspirations in respect of landscaping and public realm.

- 2) The existing green space within Salisbury Square is not widely used by the local community. Indeed, it fails a number of the tests applied by your Senior Project Officer. The existing space it is not considered to engender a feeling of safety or security (particularly during hours of darkness) and significantly reduces the visibility (and viability) of the few remaining retail units.
- 3) With reference to the first phase of Dunham's Mews, it must be remembered that this development replaced an unattractive and unsightly garage court. Mews developments are by nature largely hard landscaped and with small gardens to the rear of each property. New tree planting (following completion of the second phase) will further soften the general appearance of the area.
- 3) Old Hatfield residents have access to wide areas of Hatfield Park through the operation of the pass-holder system. This affords access to large areas of green space within the Park notwithstanding other green areas such as the Church Yard and Palace Green.

Having carried out public consultation during the Old Hatfield Charrette, the applicants will continue to consult with the local community and work to overcome any concerns in respect of landscaping and the detailed layout of the new Square. The applicants remain committed to the delivery of Salisbury Square which they hope will once again become a viable and attractive heart to Old Hatfield.

We trust the above comments are of assistance and look forward to sight of your report to the Planning Committee on 1st March.

Yours sincerely



Paul Atton MRTPI MRICS
Senior Associate
paul.atton@jbplanning.com