

Comments for Planning Application 18/01176/FULM

Application Summary

Application Number: 18/01176/FULM

Address: Ryedale House 58 - 60 Piccadilly York

Proposal: Erection of four storey extension to provide 4no. flexible use (A1/A2/A3/B1) commercial units at ground floor level with 14no. new/enlarged apartments, 2no. substations, balcony extensions to 3no. existing apartments and widening of existing pavement along Piccadilly with associated carriageway narrowing, landscaping and ancillary works

Case Officer: Jonathan Kenyon

Customer Details

Name: Dr David Fraser

Address: Fairfax House, 27 Castlegate, York YO1 9RN

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Consultee response

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: York Civic Trust's Planning Committee considered this application at its meeting on 19 July 2018.

The Trust objects to this application due to: 1. the loss of architectural unity and ability to 'read' the original 1972 design of Ryedale House by Diamond Redfern & Partners, particularly its pin-wheel shape, 2. Over-development, and 3. a likely negative contribution this proposal would have on the strategic implementation of the wider Castle Gateway Masterplan, and in particular the provision of a pedestrian / cycle bridge across the River Foss.

1. Loss of architectural unity

While not a building of national importance, Ryedale House is a rare surviving example in York of 1960/70s large-scale development in the city centre, when the provision of office space was understood as an asset for the city as a centre of post-industrial employment. Indeed, the Piccadilly Conservation Area Appraisal identifies the building as part of 'Post war commercial development' and Ryedale House itself as a noted 'landmark' (p.304).

Similar to Stonebow House, Ryedale House has long been a building that divides opinion in the city, and was duly considered a 'detractor' building in the Conservation Area Appraisal (p.306). However, the recent applications (16/02022/ORC & 17/02398/FUL) to convert the building to residential use in its current and historic footprint and massing, and subsequent approval by CYC

in March/April 2018, suggest that the building is no longer considered detracting but rather now contributes to the wider streetscape and Conservation Area. Indeed, even the Conservation Area Appraisal concedes that it at least provides 'sculptural interest' (p.309).

The proposed four-storey extension on Piccadilly would significantly harm the ability to read the original Diamond Redfern & Partners pinwheel design, and compromise its architectural unity, especially when approaching along Piccadilly from the south, north or Dixon Lane. The extension would also remove much visibility of the undercroft (parking area) of the building, which is integral to its original design.

2. Over-development

The proposed extension would also be over-development of the site, with lack of suitable existing space for it between the building and the public highway - which might account the suggestion in the application to expand the pavement by 2m - 2.5m, albeit at a cost to the public highway.

It is not that the Trust is opposed in principle to expand the pavement along Piccadilly, or the addition of tree planting. We understand the need for a bold landscaping / tree planting plan for Piccadilly to help give it some unity, identity and dignity. This should however be decided through the Castle Gateway Masterplan rather than through piecemeal development along Piccadilly.

3. Negative impact on the Castle Gateway Masterplan

The Trust continues to question the wider wisdom of the Council considering applications for sites located in the vicinity of the Castle Gateway vision without having first approved the gateway plan. The latter would bring welcome strategic guidance and direction for such planning applications. A major concern is how access for a proposed pedestrian and cyclist footbridge over the River Foss as part of the Gateway scheme is being squeezed out by applications such as this and a concurrent application to develop 46 Piccadilly as a hotel (18/01296/FULM). This proposal would likely lead to the only available access space for such a bridge to be placed south of Ryedale House and, on the other side of the Foss, behind and to the south of the Castle Museum. Compared to earlier Castle Gateway Masterplan draft proposals which locate the bridge to run between the 46 Piccadilly site and Ryedale House, and to arrive on the other side of the Foss to the north of the Castle Museum, this would severely limit the bridge's visibility, and hence awareness of its existence to the general public and overall effectiveness.