

Comments for Planning Application 18/01296/FULM

Application Summary

Application Number: 18/01296/FULM

Address: Infinity Motorcycles 46 Piccadilly York YO1 9NU

Proposal: Erection of part 5/part 6-storey hotel (155 bedrooms) with 6-storey apartment block (8 apartments) following demolition of existing buildings.

Case Officer: Victoria Bell

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.

While the Trust welcomes in principle the redevelopment of this site and recognises that a hotel here would be a positive move for the city and in keeping with the Council's Castle Gateway Masterplan ambitions, we object to the proposal in its current form. Our objection is due to: 1. over-development, and a consequence negative impact on historic sites and river/streetscape, and 2. 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. Over-development

The Trust previously twice objected to the 2017 application for a proposed hotel at 46-50 Piccadilly (17/00429/FULM). We did so on the grounds that, firstly, there was a lack of aesthetic interest in the design of the apartment block on the riverfront vista when viewed from the Castle complex, and that being built up to the riverfront, this would remove the possibility of a walkway along on the Piccadilly side of the River Foss.

While welcoming this application's setting back of the apartments 1.5m from the riverfront, the Trust is concerned by the increased massing of the overall scheme and how this will likely negatively impact on the Historic Core Conservation Area and associated historic vistas.

The proposed riverfront apartments would be 1.5m taller and c.3m wider than those previously

approved in application 17/00429/FULM. The proposal to connect the apartments and the hotel on Piccadilly would effectively be seven storeys high, and would significantly add to an apparent increased massing - in terms of height, width and density - when seen from important historic vistas and sites, notably the Scheduled Ancient Monument Castle complex, but also when approaching up and down the River Foss from Castlegate or the Coppergate Centre to the North or from the south and the soon-to-be improved public domain to the rear of the Castle Museum. The images in 'Proposed Views - River Foss Townscape' (Drawing 05-04-03b) show that the backdrop to the Castle complex historic site - which holds Clifford's Tower (Grade I); the Castle Curtain Wall (Grade I); Castle Museum (Grade I); The Debtor's Prison (Grade I), and Crown Court (Grade I) - would become this infill Piccadilly development of a large, 6-7 storey building. This would be wholly unacceptable over-development.

A revised scheme would be welcomed, one that respects the approved height of the riverfront apartments in application 17/00429/FULM, and any connecting building between the hotel and the apartment block to be no taller in height than the latter building.

2. Negative impact on the Castle Gateway Masterplan

Furthermore, 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 extend Ryedale House along Piccadilly (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 consequently its effectiveness.