



Newsletter December 2015



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FLETTON QUAYS

As reported in the local press, the Society objected to the current plans for the South Bank development, now called Fletton Quays, viewing them as uninspired and mundane. The application (Ref: 15/01589/OUT) is from Peterborough Investment Partnership (PIP) a Joint venture partnership between the City Council and a company called Lucent. The application went before the City Council's planning committee on the 8th December. David Turnock presented the Society's case but the application was approved. We were asking for deferral to secure improvements.

On behalf of the Society Kem Mehmed produced a submission to the Planning Department. In broad terms:
"It has long been an ambition of the City that this site could be the place for a flagship scheme to regenerate the south end of the city centre. The PIP scheme is a competent redevelopment but is not a regeneration. Essentially it is a mix of residential apartments, offices and an hotel. There is provision for cafes and bars but nothing to attract visitors other than views of the river and the Cathedral. Where is the 'iconic' footbridge linking the site to the rest of the city centre? This must be included in the current application and not left to future generations to finance. Where is the provision for the meaningful renovation, enhancement and re-use of the group of heritage railway buildings and Whitworth Mill, in the proposal? This must be considered as a great opportunity to create a significant asset to city residents and a visitor attraction which will entice people to visit Peterborough.

In addition to the general critique above:

A new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the river was a significant feature of the City Centre Plan approved as recently as 12 months ago, yet this scheme omitted it. As submitted it didn't even include a reserved landing area for its future provision. (We were pleased to see Council committee members insist that a landing reservation be required). Also, there is no provision for affordable housing in the scheme.



Less than a year ago the City Council agreed to use a Design Review Panel to assess major schemes. This followed the Society's objections to the City Centre Plan's lack of attention to how good design could be delivered. This scheme was not submitted to the panel (or if it was, its conclusions were kept secret).

A comprehensive scheme such as this needed to be fully comprehensive and include the Mill buildings. It doesn't. (We were told at the committee that negotiations are on-going).

There was little attention given to the impact on Cathedral views, and English Heritage's comments were based on a belief that the scheme would be 6/7 stories high at its highest, not the 7/8 storeys that are now proposed opposite the Customs House. Bridge House, formerly opposite the Customs House was only 3 storeys high. There's a lot of difference.

The officers recommended that details of the scheme only needed to be submitted within 10 years (instead of the usual 3) and begun within 12 (instead of 5); enough time for the site to be kicked around between investors rather than built.

Is there anything about the scheme that we welcome? Yes. The reclamation of the river frontage is long overdue. The scheme will allow public access and river-side uses. There is some hope that the historic railway sheds will find new uses. And the huge Bridge House relief sculpture by Arthur Ayres, now in storage, will be incorporated within the development. We can only hope that the City Council's advisors have built in to the highly secret negotiations some means of clawing back their share of any value that becomes apparent at a later stage and use it to deliver some real enhancements. And of course that some enlightened developers come forward to make the best of the project. We are due to have a meeting with Simon Machin, the Director for Growth at the Council in January. Perhaps he will be able to give us some meaningful assurances.

THE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL LATEST



We were very concerned to see developers hold the gun of 'viability' to the City Council's head in order to remove the obligation to include some social housing on this massive site. But it has been followed by some good news.

Three applications have been submitted. First, the retained houses at 60/62 Thorpe Rd, previously doctors flats, are to be converted back into single dwelling use with 5 houses on the Aldermans Drive frontage. Second a scheme by Weston Homes proposes 56 dwellings, mostly behind The Gables and lining the west side of its access avenue. Third, The Gables itself is proposed for conversion into 8 flats. All very acceptable schemes. The Gables will see some removal of partitions currently obscuring the Elizabethan-style details of the hallway.

CIVIC VOICE CONFERENCE

This annual event was in Bristol in October. David Turnock, our chairman, and Jeremy Roberts represented the Society and Peter Lee was there representing the Civic Societies of the region. It is always an inspiring event, hearing what societies around the country are doing to celebrate, enhance or protect their cities, towns and villages. It is also an excellent opportunity to steal others ideas for projects, speakers or visits (though Chester's programme of day, week-end and 4 day European stays was a touch mind-blowing!)

A major item this time was the launch of the Historic Cathedral Cities Alliance. We are not the only cathedral city with concerns that a 'growth at all costs' approach at both national and local level has the potential to seriously erode the presence and setting of the Cathedral. The Alliance was launched by Spencer de Grey, head of design at Foster and Partners, responsible for a major study of cathedral cities published this year, *Cathedral Cities in Peril*. David Turnock will continue to represent the society in the work of the Alliance.

We are exploring another theme of the conference, a national survey of the condition of our war memorials followed by a programme of repair, restoration and future maintenance. Your committee is keen to be involved. Peter Lee is currently working to discover what is already under way in this area to ensure that we avoid duplication. We know that fine work has been done to identify all the memorials in this area by the local registered volunteer of the Imperial War Museum. And some memorials are already lovingly cared for. If you are involved in war memorial work in the Peterborough area, or would like to be involved in a future condition survey of them please contact Peter Lee (Tel: 01780 782703). There may well be a training course for people interested in delivering this project in the new year. If you are interested in participating please contact Peter.

VISIT TO SACREWELL MILL

On 9th September a number of Society members visited Sacrewell Mill which as recently received significant Lottery Fund improvements and adaptations. Due to the short notice given of this visit, it was only those members who are contactable by email who were informed that the visit was taking place.

It is our intention to be able to contact as many of our members via email as possible. Of course we realise that not everyone will have an email address but, should you be a late convert to this particular technological march, please let Ian Webb, our membership secretary, know and he will update our records (see address below).

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PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The following is a selection of the cases your Plans Groups have looked at since your last newsletter and decisions made on previously submitted comments. The reference numbers are given so that you can examine the plans if you wish on the City Council's web-site, http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/planning_and_building.aspx and by clicking on the Planning and Building Online Register.

Five 130m high wind turbines Willow Hall Farm, Willow Hall Lane Thorney (14/01136/FUL) Society had concerns about visual impact. **Outcome:** Application withdrawn 11th November 2015.

Seven 126m high wind turbines Gores Farm Whittlesey Road Thorney- (13/00431/FUL)
Outcome: Application withdrawn Oct 2015.

North Westgate Redevelopment (15/01041/OUT). Society strongly supported in principle but with some requests for amendment. **Outcome:** Application approved at Planning Committee 29th September.

Queensgate rooftop extension for Cinema and food hall. (15/01013/FUL) Society concerned that this would undermine the viability of a North Westgate redevelopment. **Outcome:** Application approved at Planning Committee 29th September.

Four 100m high wind turbines, French Farm, French Drove Thorney (13/00933/FUL) Civic Society concerned at adverse impact on setting of historic buildings. **Outcome.** Application called in for Secretary of State decision. His inspector recommended approval, but was overruled by the Secretary of State on grounds of 'overbearing impact on visual amenity of neighbouring properties'. Secretary of State's decision- 21st September.

New Primary School at Memorial Wing Midland Road. (15/00692/FUL)- see article page 3 of July Newsletter

Outcome: Permitted 4th August with amended plans addressing our concerns.

Residential development (610 dwellings and school) E of Alwalton Hill (15/01431/OUT) Society recommended refusal- land allocated for employment purposes and relatively isolated. Insufficient facilities proposed for a settlement. **Outcome:** Awaited.

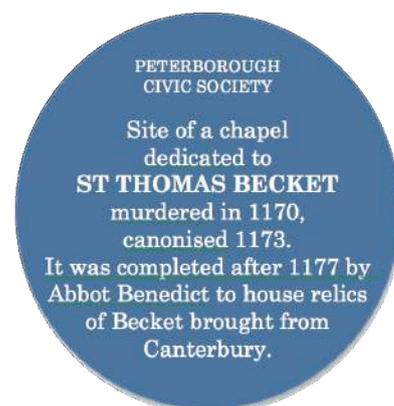
Residential development (80 houses- outline) Uffington Road Barnack (15/01840/OUT). This major development is outside the village envelope line, supposed to contain development. Its justification is that the City Council can no longer claim that it has 5 years supply (plus 20% margin) of readily developable housing land, as required by Government edict. This is a technical point that is likely to give rise to more random applications of this kind before the Council has a new Local Plan in place. Barnack Parish Council has made an impressive case against the scheme and we have endorsed those objections.

PLAQUES UPDATE

As you may be aware, the Society is in the process of designing and producing a new blue plaque trail for the city centre, There are likely to be two short trails (north and south) both starting from Cathedral Square. There may well be about twenty plaques initially, with the option to expand the number in the future. The next step is to finalise wording and to obtain permission to erect from the various building owners. Once that is done a plaque trail leaflet will be written, along with supplementary material to be placed on our website. It is hoped that the venture will bear fruit late in 2016/early 2017.

Please note that the plaque on the right is for illustrative purposes only although the wording itself may eventually be used on one of the new plaques.

www.peterboroughcivicsociety.org.uk



CLUTTER REVISITED

The Society is always looking out for examples of street clutter – examples of items that may be unnecessary and certainly that do not add to the aesthetic appearance of an area. The latest example of this is in Central Avenue, Dogsthorpe. The £400,000 scheme was designed to improve parking on the street for those visiting the nearby shops. Sadly, as part of the scheme, 21 poles have been erected, some with signs telling motorists when and where they can park and the others to tell them when and where they can't!

Your newsletter editors are always looking out for other examples of street clutter in and around Peterborough. Please contact us with your examples.



IN BRIEF

Civic Society Twitter account – the Society now has its own Twitter account which now has over 300 followers. The account enables us to inform followers about our activity, express and collect opinions and to post photographs easily and quickly. It's also a way to communicate with Civic Voice and other likeminded organisations. Are you a Twitter member? If so follow us @PeterboroughCS

Civic Society archives – we are collecting items of interest from the Society's history. When collected these items – annual reports, meeting notes, photographs and curios – will be put together and given to Richard Hunt who is the Collections and Archives Manager at Vivacity. Richard has kindly agreed to sort and catalogue any material we might have. If you have anything that you feel might be relevant, please contact Toby Wood by 31st January – he would love to hear from you!

Annual Lottery – Many thanks to all those who contributed this year. The lottery winners were:

First Prize	£60	John Westcombe
Second	£50	Richard Winfrey
Third	£40	John Westcombe
Fourth	£30	Steve Allen
Fifth	£25	Gordon Chambers
Sixth	£20	Rosemary Evans



*Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year
to all Peterborough Civic Society members*