

PLANS GROUP REPORT



Derek Brown

Our Plans Group monitors all Peterborough planning applications. On the City Council Planning website pages the Civic Society's comments appear under the name "Peterborough Civic Society" in the list of Planning Application Documents. 'Outcome' in the reports below is the decision on the application by Peterborough City Council.

Towns Fund projects

We continue to support the Council in progressing the "Towns Fund" projects, which have partial funding from the government. We are concerned that progress on several outstanding projects has been very slow and that the March 2026 deadline for completion of the projects will not be met.

The latest proposals for the flagship "Vine" culture hub locate the main activities in the Central Library building in Broadway with food and beverage facilities in the old railway workshops on Fletton Quays. This project is still in the planning stage and we await detailed plans.

Proposals to improve access from the railway station to the city centre have progressed and we have supported the latest plans to alter the Crescent roundabout, which are linked to the much larger "Levelling Up Fund" project for the station quarter.

We strongly supported a planning application for a pedestrian/cycle bridge from the Embankment to Fletton Quays. The application is currently awaiting decision but we expect that the plans will be approved by the Council in the near future and hopefully construction will start next year.



*River Nene pedestrian/cycle bridge,
an artist's impression*

We supported plans for improvements to the shopping area in Lincoln Road, although plans were significantly curtailed by financial restrictions. The project appears well advanced and work should start next year.

Building of a Green Technology Centre at Peterborough College is now in progress and the Centre is expected to open next year.

Plans for the Ferry Meadows Activity Centre were approved by the City Council in 2022, but there is no obvious progress beyond the new car park; funding appears to be a significant issue.

Cont.

Station Quarter redevelopment

Redevelopment of the area around the railway station will have a major impact on the city. The first phase is largely funded by the government “Levelling Up Fund”. This will bring improvements to the station with a new western access, alterations to the current building, a new station square, relocation of taxi and drop-off areas and improved links to the city centre (the Towns Fund project). We have met the Council project team to discuss the proposals and, with some reservations around limitations of the station building, separation of pedestrians and vehicles and traffic issues at the western entrance, we support the proposals.



Station Quarter redevelopment, very much an artist's impression

Westgate area

The approved plans to redevelop the former Westgate House/Beales department store into apartments and smaller retail units are yet to be implemented and the future is again uncertain as the property has been put up for sale by the developers. Redevelopment of North Westgate still shows little sign of progress although the developers, Hawksworth Ltd., have said they will submit new plans around the end of 2024. It is hoped that the station quarter redevelopment and improvement of links from the station to the city centre will spur developments in Westgate.

East of England showground

Last year we objected to two outline planning applications, one for 650 dwellings and the other for a further 850 dwellings with commercial, leisure and educational facilities. We felt that the two applications should be combined to avoid separation of infrastructure and community, leisure, and retail facilities from housing and we were concerned about transport and traffic to and from the site. The applications have only recently been considered by the Council Planning Committee, with conditional approval of the application for 850 houses and rejection of the application for 650 houses. The final outcome is yet to be determined because the application for 650 houses has now been referred to the Council Planning Appeals Committee.

Industrial units in Oxney Road

This area is between parcels of land already designated for industrial development. We did not object but, as with neighbouring developments, we raised concerns about inadequate perimeter landscaping, access arrangements and possible impact on Flag Fen. Outcome: permission.

Industrial units and vehicle storage areas at Lynch Wood Business Park

We objected to revised plans for industrial units and to retrospective applications for three vehicle storage areas. The plans are out of character with the area, would have a negative impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents and office staff and would create traffic hazards. The application for industrial units was approved but the applications for vehicle storage areas were refused by PCC.

Solar farm at Dogsthorpe landfill site

We supported this application as it appears to be an excellent use for an old landfill site. Outcome: permission.

Cont.

Historical Peterborough street-scene mural on end wall of 50 Cowgate (see also front cover)

The building is listed but we felt that a mural showing an historical view of Cowgate was an attractive idea which should merit the interest of both Peterborough citizens and visitors to the city. Outcome: permission.



*Cowgate mural under construction,
28 February 2024*

Extension of hotel at 77 Lincoln Road

We objected because the design was incongruous with the old original building. Outcome: permission.

Conversion of former passport office to 126 flats

We did not object but asked whether evidence should be provided that the site is inappropriate or unviable for any employment use to continue. Awaiting decision by PCC.

Change of use of Lynch Farm, Orton Wistow to a dog walking field, forest school education and events centre

We were neutral about this application as we supported community uses but were concerned about impact on closely neighbouring residential areas. Application withdrawn by the applicant.

Conversion of Guild House Oundle Road to 77 flats with 54 additional flats in four new blocks

We were essentially supportive of the proposal but had some concerns regarding lack of affordable housing, adequacy of car parking provision and failure of some apartments to meet national space standards. Outcome: permission.

Care home next to Werrington Centre

We objected to the application on grounds that the proposed siting, scale and architectural design would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area and to Werrington Centre in particular. Outcome: refusal.

Conversion and extension of Roadway House, Bretton to 14 apartments and 7 houses in multiple occupation (HMOs)

We objected to this development as it would be out of scale with the area and have a negative impact on views from the open countryside to the west of the site. Outcome: permission.

42 one-bedroom apartments on part of existing car park at Ascot House, Lynch Wood

We objected as the proposed block was out of scale with neighbouring buildings, all apartments failed to meet national space standards and there was no outside amenity space for residents. The application was refused by the City Council but is currently subject to an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate

Additional flats and external alterations at 36-36B Cowgate

We objected as the development would have a negative impact on the Conservation Area and some of the flats would not meet the national space standards. Outcome: refusal.

Cont.

Conversion of workshop at 63-65 Oundle Road to 3 flats

We objected as apartments were significantly smaller than required by the national space standards resulting in poor amenity for residents. Outcome: permission.

250 dwellings on land south of Peakirk Road, Glinton

We objected as the site is not an allocated development site within the existing Local Plan and is in open countryside outside the designated village envelope. Application awaiting decision by PCC.

Change of use to 9 apartments at 45 Priestgate

We were neutral about this application as we supported conversion to apartments but were concerned about failure to meet national space standards. Outcome: permission.

New block with 48 residential units, 1 commercial unit and 73 parking spaces on the car park in Brook Street

We objected as the building was too high, several mature trees around the edges of the site would be lost and it appeared that no parking spaces were allocated to the flats. Outcome: refusal.

Installation of boxing to hide external drainage system at Midgate House

We were neutral in our comments on this application because it is a forced inadequate 'solution' to the botched scheme for conversion of offices to flats that has resulted in an ugly waste pipe spaghetti on the outside of Midgate House. Application awaiting decision by PCC.



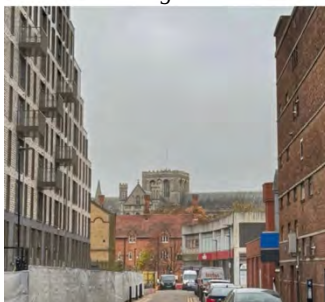
March



May



August



November

Cont.

Northminster development 2024

Change of use of shop units to an adult gaming centre at 28-30 Bridge Street

We objected to this application as it would be detrimental to the vitality and viability of the City Centre Conservation Area. It would also negatively impact on the street scene and change the character of this shopping and café/restaurant area around the Town Hall. Outcome: refusal.

Addition of 2 extra floors to create 50 apartments at Rightwell House, Bretton

We objected as this proposal would result in the tallest building in Bretton Centre and would be a reduction in quality from the existing. Outcome: permission.

Rebuild with 2 additional floors to provide 36 studio rooms at 36-38 Park Road

We strongly objected because of the grossly inappropriate design for the location in its scale, appearance and impact on surrounding buildings. The application was withdrawn by the applicant.

Change of use from offices to 24 bedroom care home at 90 Lincoln Road

We did not object as use of the building as a care home is reasonable and there were no significant external changes to the front of the building. However, we did express concerns with what appears to be a very cramped internal layout. Outcome: permission.

Conversion of industrial barn to 5 residences at White Post Farm, Eye

We objected because the development would not provide viable accommodation with a reasonable quality of life for residents. Application withdrawn by the applicant.

Replacement of the RAAC roof at the Key Theatre

We supported this application as it is essential for the future of the theatre. Application awaiting decision by PCC.

Residential development of up to 95 dwellings on land east of Lincoln Road, Glington

We opposed this application principally because the site is in open countryside outside the designated village envelope and is not an allocated development site within the existing Local Plan. Application awaiting decision by PCC.

We would like to thank all members of the Plans Group. These include Chris Ash, Derek Brown, Peter Lee, Keith Lievesley (non-committee member volunteer), Henry Mansell Duckett, Peter Sargent and David Turnock. We are particularly grateful to Kem Mehmed, a long-standing member of the Plans Group who has retired from the Group but continues to provide expert assistance with screening of planning applications. New volunteers would be welcome to join us. If you are interested, please contact Derek for more information.

Derek Brown



Key Theatre and, in front, Lagoon by Sir Anthony Caro