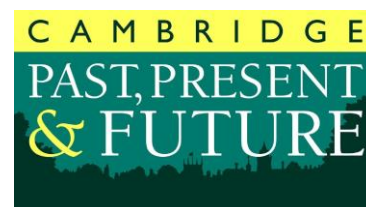


Greater Cambridge Share Planning Service



By Online Planning Register

Cambridge Past, Present & Future
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24/05/2022

Dear Mary

Response to 21/05570/FUL; 21/05571/LBC; 21/05572/ADV: Installation of a new shopfront and internal works and installation of fascia and projecting signs.

22/00905/FUL & 22/00906/LBC: Installation of external plant and equipment

3-4 Market Hill Cambridge CB2 3NJ

Cambridge Past, Present & Future is Cambridge's largest civic society. We are a charity run by local people who are passionate about where they live. We operate in the greater Cambridge area and working with our members, supporters and volunteers we:

- Are dedicated to protecting and enhancing the green setting of Cambridge for people and nature.
- Care about Cambridge and are an independent voice for quality of life in the strategic planning of Greater Cambridge.
- Are working to protect, celebrate and improve the important built heritage of the Cambridge area.
- Own and care for green spaces and historic buildings in and around the city for people and nature, including Wandlebury Country Park, Coton Countryside Reserve, Cambridge Leper Chapel & Barnwell Meadows, Bourn Windmill and Hinxton Watermill.

CPPF object to the applications relating to the shopfront because they do not accord with Policies 64 and 65 and Appendix H of the Adopted Local Plan on Shopfront design. The proposed signage detracts from the character of the conservation area and significance of the heritage assets.

CPPF object to the installation of the plant and equipment on the grounds that it will limit the opportunity for a viable use of the upper floors of these buildings, preventing their future beneficial use and so directly prejudicing their future conservation and thereby causing substantial harm.

We support the concerns and objections raised by Susan Smith, GCSPS Conservation Officer and by John Preston, Historic Environment Consultant.

Shopfront and signage

Paragraph H.18 of the local plan requires the lettering size, materials and typefaces to be appropriate to the building and its fascia, and the amount of text is restricted.

We object to the loss of the current timber fascia and the removal of the small panes of glass currently at the top of the shopfront glazing. The timber fascia is a tradition material which adds texture to the shopfront and the small panes of glass add visual interest. Such changes have a negative impact on the character of the conservation area and the significance of the listed building.

The proposed signage is not considered appropriate. The lettering is too large for the depth of the fascia, giving a cramped appearance. The inclusion of 'Famous Louisiana Chicken' is unnecessary text, contrary to the guidance.

The use of the colour orange, as the corporate colour is considered inappropriate on a listed building and within the conservation area. Paragraph H.19 encourages such colours to be restricted to the lettering.

Paragraph H.28 advises on illumination. The proposed trough lights are not discreet as required by guidance. The projecting signs are internally illuminated contrary to paragraph H.24 which resists such signage on listed buildings and in conservation areas.

For these reasons the proposed signage detracts from the character of the conservation area and significance of the heritage assets and should be refused.

External plant and equipment

CPPF support the comments of John Preston that the use and repair of these buildings needs to be considered in a wider context. CPPF have been involved in proposals to improve the market square for the last 7 years, starting in 2015 when it presented a report on Market Square to the City Council. Bringing a variety of uses, including residential, into town centres is now recognised as essential for their vitality.

The use of the ground floor as a restaurant has led to the need for this external plant and equipment. Concerns have been raised by the conservation officer who considers that the need for extraction and ventilation would compromise viable uses of the upper floors, by virtue of noise and odour. John Preston also raises the issues of restaurant uses being incompatible with future residential uses of the upper floors and the dependence of upper floors at No 5 to numbers 3 and 4 for independent access. Getting a listed building into a compatible use is one of the best ways to ensure it is well maintained and does not become at risk.

This installation and use on the ground floor as a restaurant would therefore not be appropriate to these buildings and should be refused.

In addition, we strongly encourage that the Council take a pro-active whole building and interdepartmental approach to secure the future of these listed buildings. These very significant historic buildings are at risk and in urgent need of appropriate upper floor use. The Council is encouraged to work with the owners and environmental health team to enable active use of the upper floors.

I trust that you will take our comments into consideration.

Yours sincerely
Sarah Nicholas
Principal Planning Officer