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24<sup>th</sup> May 2001

**ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY FORUM**  
**RECORD OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2001**

Present            Cllr. W. Gifford, Cllr. G. Darmody., Cllr. Mrs. C. Hodgetts,  
Mr. G. Goddard-Pickett, Mr. L. Cave, Mr. P. Edwards, Mr. M. Sullivan,  
Mr. M. Baxter, Mr. R. Hayden

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Mr. Edwards was welcomed as the new representative for the Leamington Society and Mr. Hayden pointed out that he would now be the representative for the Chamber of Trade.

1.     **Appointment of Chairman** - Councillor W. Gifford was nominated by Councillor Mrs. Hodgetts and seconded by Councillor G. Darmody. There being no other nominations, Councillor W. Gifford was appointed as Chair for the ensuing year.
2.     **Appointment of Vic-Chair** - Councillor W. Gifford nominated Councillor Mrs. Hodgetts as Vic-Chair and seconded by Councillor Darmody. There being no other nominations, Councillor Mrs. Hodgetts was appointed by Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.
3.     **The Minutes of the Meeting** - held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2001 were accepted as a correct record.

Mr. Cave pointed out that he had not received a Local Plan leaflet in the Observer. The ongoing condition of the Stoneleigh Arms was also raised and Mr. Mayes pointed out that the building was being monitored.

4.     The Chairman welcomed Mr. John Archer to present the Regent Hotel/Site E applications, as follows:-

W20010483 - Regent Hotel/77 Parade, r/o Town Hall, Parade, 90-98 (evens) Regent Street; car parking; 27-30 (odd) Regent Grove; Leamington Spa - Change of use and conversion of Regent Hotel of basement and ground level (in parts) for Class A1 or A3 purposes with continued use of upper floors for hotel purposes. Erection of a new mixed development of 130 flats with ground floor Class A1 or A3 units and a basement car park for 129 vehicles accessed off Regent Grove. The scheme will entail alterations and extensions to Listed Buildings within the site including the demolition of rear wings to the Regent Hotel, No. 90 Regent Street and 31 Regent Grove, the demolition of non-listed buildings within the site, and the creation of a new street linking Regent Street and Parade, all as shown on the submitted plans.

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W20010484LB - Regent Hotel/77 Parade, Leamington Spa - Demolition of rear extension to hotel and refurbishment of main hotel building including internal and external alterations together with construction of rear extension.

W20010485LB - 31 Regent Grove, Leamington Spa - Internal and external alterations to provide 2 retail units on ground floor with 2 residential units above served by a separate access from the rear, including creation of new wall within and removal of staircase at ground floor.

W20010486LB - 36 Regent Grove, Leamington Spa - Demolition of rear extensions.

W20010487CA - Car Park/27 Regent Street, Leamington Spa - Demolition of wall

forming boundary of car park and 27 Regent Grove; demolition of front wall and railings (of no. 27).

W20010488LB - 90 Regent Street, Leamington Spa - Demolition of rear extensions.

W20010489LB - Regent Hotel/77 Parade, Leamington Spa - Demolition of garages at rear of 92-96 Regent Street.

W20010499CA - Rear of Town Hall, Parade; 27 Regent Grove, 92-100 (evens) Regent Street, Leamington Spa - Demolition of buildings and structures at the rear of the Town Hall (Denby Buildings), 92-100 Regent Street and 27 Regent Grove.

The above applications were all considered together.

The drawings had been circulated previously and letters from Mr. Peter Storrie as requested by Mr. Gordon Goddard-Pickett were circulated to all members of the Forum. Mr. Archer explained that what was put before the Forum was what had been received so far. He pointed out that the Planning Department considered that the submission at the moment is inadequate and we are currently requesting further information before a proper assessment can be made. The presentation would be an interim one and once a final scheme had been produced, this would be brought back to the CAAF for further comments. Mr. Archer took members through the proposals prior to comments being given by individuals the following areas were highlighted where more information was needed:-

What balance would there be between A3 and A1 uses?

What would the triangular area at the back of the ballroom be used for?

The need for some confirmation on traffic flows.

The need for a design statement.

Would 90 Regent Street be rebuilt or repaired?

What, if any, would the proposals for the rest of the site in terms of the buildings adjacent to Lantern Corner?

Would the porticos on the front of the Regent Hotel be identical to the original portico on the side elevation.

Would the lettering on the Regent Hotel be retained?

Representatives of the Forum then each gave their individuals view.

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Mr. Cave representing the Ancient Monument Society - The scheme has not been designed to enhance the Grade II\* Listed Building. The hotel has not been offered on the open market in accordance with PPG15. The development has a detrimental effect on the Grade II\* building and also the Conservation Area. Comments have also been made by the Ancient Monuments Society on the standard and content of the Repair Application which is considered is inadequate.

Mr. Baxter representing the Victorian Society - There are some good things about the scheme which included the new street between the Parade and Regent Street and the inclusion of residential accommodation in principle. Also the scheme is not as large as some of the previous schemes. However, concerns were expressed that the Regent Hotel should be kept as a going concern and indicating the ground floor with unspecified uses was not acceptable. Concern was expressed at the possible loss of No. 90 completely, also particular concern was expressed at the loss of the rear wing of the Regent Hotel. It was felt that the architectural style of the new buildings was alien to Leamington with square windows and circular windows, aluminium roofs and other unsympathetic materials. It was also considered that more smaller shops would be more appropriate for Leamington, within the scheme.

**Mr. Paul Edwards representing the Leamington Society** - It was felt that the pedestrian street was a good idea, however, the architecture of the new build and the attempt at Regency architecture did not preserve or enhance the Conservation Area. It was felt by the Society that the Regent Hotel is the most valuable asset within the site which is not being preserved as a functioning hotel, or in one ownership. Architecturally, it is felt that the hotel is being treated very unsatisfactorily particularly with the grand staircase being cut off from the Parade entrance. It is felt that the architecture on the site is poor quality and the scheme over development. It was felt that the number of flats has doubled since Scheme 5 giving poor quality accommodation with poor access.

**Mr. Goddard -Pickett representing CLARA** - It was regrettably felt that this scheme was not acceptable. The present scheme impinged heavily upon the boundaries of the hotel and resulted in too much of the hotel being demolished. The hotel should be offered on the open market in accordance with PPG15. It was pointed out that 60 apartments had been considered adequate for the site; now this had been doubled taking the site to its limits with over development by the developers trying to increase their profits. It was felt that the rear wing of the hotel could be retained and only two units lost from the street development which could then be developed separately with the hotel ring fenced to be developed as a single unit. It was felt the scheme contained no vision and was based on over development and did not provide for the Leamington style. There is a need to look at bringing in Regent Square House into the scheme. The scheme should be ring fenced and two separate schemes, ie: one for the retained hotel and separate for the retail. The Scheme has no spirit.

**Mr. Hayden representing the Chamber of Trade** - The street linking the Parade and Regent Street was considered to be very good in principle, however, it was felt that Leamington needs more shops and not as many flats within this particular scheme. Significant concern was expressed at the lack of car parking for the retail. The Chamber of Trade had requested further car parking and this had been ignored. It was felt the scheme was unsustainable.

**Mr. David Brown representing the Coventry Society of Architects** - The scheme was considered to be disappointing particularly given the Architects involved but it needs to be recognised that the pressures on anyone trying to develop this site are enormous, a number of people in the past have been approached regarding up-grade and reuse of hotel but because of strict standards find it difficult to facilitate. It was considered the car parking was unsatisfactory and that the previous schemes had been better in this respect. The scheme was disappointing and in some respects has gone backwards from earlier schemes.

The attempt at Regency's pastiche was considered very poor. The street link is a way of providing circulation but some concerns were expressed at the servicing traffic that will need to use it. Concerns were also expressed about fire escape routes and the storage of waste.

**Mr. Mark Sullivan representing the Royal Town Planning Institute** - Many of the comments already expressed were in line with Mr. Sullivan's views. The new street was to be supported; however, concern was expressed at the flexibility that could be built into the shop units. It was felt that retail should be the prime aim and housing should be subsidiary. There is a need for better designed buildings. It was felt that the basement car park should be supported to avoid a multi-storey car park as in the previous schemes but should be allocated with 70 spaces for the hotel and 25 for the shops. It was felt that the rear the rear wing of the hotel could be kept by only losing two shop units.

There was no up to date brief for the site.

**Cllr. Darmondy** commented that there should be a recognition by CAAF of the need for residential provision in the town to meet housing needs.

**General Comments** - It was suggested that the Council could provide an up-dated design brief for the site. CLARA pointed out that they had attempted to work alongside the developers to achieve an optimum solution for the site but this so far had not been achieved. The Chairman summed up the areas of general agreement as follows:-

- There was support for the new street between Parade and Regent Street.
- There was concern at the level of housing included in the scheme and the environments created within the flats.
- The hotel had not been properly protected.
- Over-development of the site and inadequate parking.
- Inadequate parking.
- Poor access to the flats.
- Some flats had to be accessed across roof areas.
- Poor quality of design, especially the mock Regency.
- No design statement.

- Drawings not as informative as they could be.
- This scheme in many ways represents a retrograde step from earlier schemes.
- Generally does not find favour with the CAAF Members.

**W20010523/24CA - Feldon Veterinary Centre, 1 Guy Street, Leamington Spa** - Demolition to part of rear building to create a patio; alterations and extensions to parts of first floor; creation of new flat, formation of new vehicular access onto garden face.

Cllr. Darmody and Cllr. Mrs. Hodgetts expressed a non-pecuniary, non-substantial interest in that they use the veterinary centre. It was felt that the elevations facing the car park had been spoiled by the insertion of an upper floor and the removal of traditional windows from that part of the building. It was felt that the drawings were inaccurate and that a better solution could be achieved, in particular to the car park elevation. The internal alterations and alterations to Guy Street were generally considered acceptable.

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**W20010525, 78 Regent Street, Leamington Spa** - Demolition of detached outbuilding to rear and single storey; rear extension to retail area, including spiral staircase to allow revised access to existing flat.

This was generally considered acceptable although there was some reservations in terms of loss of buildings to the rear yard area.

**W20010585, 55 Kenilworth Road, Leamington Spa** - Erection of a rear conservatory with an access ramp and ground floor side extension to provide treatment room, office and staff rest room.

The flat roofed extension was considered regrettable, particularly to the front of the building and it was felt that a better solution might be achieved if the existing flat roofed building were demolished and the whole area redeveloped more comprehensively with pitched roofed buildings and a new conservatory.

**W20010601, 52 - 54 Holly Walk, Leamington Spa** - Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed insertion of replacement windows.

This was considered acceptable, after discussion.

**W20010539 - The Falstaff Hotel, 16, 18 & 20 Warwick New Road, Leamington Spa** - Erection of a three storey extension to provide conference rooms, and 12 additional bedrooms on first and second floors; additional car parking spaces, and cycle parking; provision of new roof to part of rear elevation, with three new fire escape stairs.

Significant concern was expressed at the effect on the neighbouring property of a new three

storey, rear extension adjacent to the boundary. It was pointed out that two bedrooms did not have windows. Concern was also expressed that the additional parking which would be inadequate in terms of a new conference facility but would also results in the loss of all the lawn space to the rear of the building. The provision of a pitched roof detailed on the flat roofed extension was considered an improvement. It was generally felt that there could possibly be another location within the site for the provision of the conference facility.

**W20010542 - 9, Parade, Leamington Spa** - Positioning of non-illuminated, wall-mounted signs (21 cm x 21cm) adjacent to front door; strip quarry tile from front steps to reveal the original stone work.

The placement of the sign was considered acceptable, however, the detail on the material of the sign and its colour was considered necessary and it was felt should be negotiated by the Conservation Architect.

**W20010544 - 19 - 21 Parade, Leamington Spa** - Refurbishment of shopfront and internal alterations to provide replacement staircase; new non-illuminated fascia lettering.

It was felt that the logo was unacceptable across the middle of the window and should be at the bottom in the form of single words. The mirrored panel was considered as unacceptable. It was felt that more detail was needed for the lettering, which again, it was considered could be unacceptable with mirrored sides.

**W20010555 - Walton House, 11 - 15 Parade, Leamington Spa** - Upgrading of telecommunications equipment on roof top to include the addition of seven equipment cabinets and associated works; provision of new antennae on mounted poles.

Significant concerns were expressed that if further antennae were allowed on this building it would be difficult to control in the future and the view of the building would be seriously compromised.

**W20010559 - W.H.Smith, 54-56 Parade, Leamington Spa** - Alterations to shopfront, including installation of two sets of replacement, four leaf, by parting, telescopic automatic doors; a new timber panelled area to match existing escape doors.

The folding doors were considered acceptable.

**W20010562 -22, Portland Place, West, Leamington Spa** - Insertion of two rooflight to front roof level to Portland Place West.

It was considered that the blocked window at the second floor level could be opened up to provide light onto the staircase to avoid the need for a rooflight. It was also felt that by rotating this window the balance of the terrace would be improved.

**W20010563LB - 1 - 5 Clarence Terrace, Warwick Street, Leamington Spa** - Removal and reinstatement of ceilings and cornices from upper ground, first and second floors

This was considered acceptable subject to the works being carried out in the traditional manner.



**W20010618 - 5 Cross Road, Leamington Spa** - Application for a certificate of lawfulness for existing use of premises of three flats.

This was considered as acceptable.

**W20010622 - 58, Clarendon Street, Leamington Spa** - Erection of a rear single storey kitchen extension.

Concern was expressed that the original plan form of a single storey kitchen extension with yard alongside would be lost by the extension which covered the whole area. There would also be loss of light and ventilation to the rear rooms of the main house and that the design was generally of poor lightweight construction.

**W200110626 - 11, Regent Place, Leamington Spa** - Change of use from Class A (retail) to Class A3 (restaurant); alterations to rear elevation and provision of a flue extract.

The use as a restaurant was considered acceptable, however, significant concern was expressed at the route of the extract. It was felt that investigations should be carried out to inserting this within the chimney flue and taking up through the roof at some point.

**W20010627 - The Avenue Hotel, 15, Spencer Street, Leamington Spa** - Display of 1 no. wall mounted fascia sign above front entrance and 2 floodlit fascia signs below the second floor windows; display of a non-illuminated amenity board and an externally illuminated hanging sign.

It was felt that the gold letters and the existing appearance of the hotel were preferable to the supposed signage. The high level signage was unacceptable and if signboards are to be used the colour should be changed which tends to make the old building appear too top heavy.

**W20010634 - r/o 74, Holly Walk, Leamington Spa** - Variation of condition 1 (time limit) W980831 for the erection of two dwelling.

This was considered acceptable.

**W20010671 - The Wig and Pen (Bar Citrus), 26 Park Street, Leamington Spa** - New signage.

This lettering was considered of poor quality for this area. Also the hanging sign needed to be of a higher quality. The lettering and approach to signage should be much more in line for that adopted for Parade, in this location.

The date of next meeting to be 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2001.