

A recent history of Round Hill's planning concerns 2012-2013

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<https://roundhill.org.uk/images/ParkingReportPrincesRd2010.pdf>

https://roundhill.org.uk/main?sec=planning&p=Carelet_0000_index_to_applications

https://roundhill.org.uk/main?sec=planning&p=Richmond_House_0000_index

7 June 2012 - Carelet's attempt to sell their site with planning permission

Carelet is currently applying to extend its 2009 permission to build four new houses to the rear of 67 to 81 Princes Road until 2015.

Their current permission expires on 27th July 2012.

They are also trying to sell both their application site with the planning permission which they seek to renew.

See

<http://www.rightmove.co.uk/property-for-sale/property-23124771.html>

If any developer deems it viable to build four houses opposite a Waste Transfer Station with a known odour management problem, then it would generate a demand for six of Round Hill's existing on-street parking spaces, which is unwanted pressure on infrastructure whether one favours CPZs or not. Further losses to our neighbourhood could easily involve the listed horse chestnut tree in Princes Road. There would be an unwanted bottleneck opposite the sole narrow access to site both before and after construction.

Please go to The Round Hill Society's website at

<http://www.roundhill.org.uk>

for the relevant link to The Council's online comment form

and make it known that you are opposed to the 2009 planning permission being extended to 2015.

You can also read there about the current attempt to sell land together with planning permission to build 2 new houses to the rear of Ashdown Road. The link to the Ashdown Road sale is at

<http://www.rightmove.co.uk/property-for-sale/property-23106774.html>

Ted

22 June 2007

22 June 2012 - Carelet's planning permission is not for a car-free development and their data on on-street parking is out of date. Round Hillers have their own 2010 parking survey referred to by the planning inspector who dismissed Carelet's 3rd appeal.

Thank you to Round Hill residents who have already objected to Carelet's 2012 planning application BH2012/01583. There is still time to "make your comment" since the application is not on the agenda for any Planning Committee Meeting before 18th July 2012 . However, the Case Officer may already be assembling the opinions of Council Departments (e.g. Highways), so the earlier that Round Hill residents get their points across the better.

The BH2009/00847 permission, which the developer wants to renew until 2015 with the intention of selling it on, is not for a car-free development, so it gives prospective residents as much right as existing residents to on-street space or a residents' permit should Round Hill decide in the future to join a residents' parking scheme. Once approved, I think that "equal rights" has to be correct practice, but I agree with Jane that the application site so near The Waste Transfer Station is not a suitable one for housing.

Success in getting permission in 2009 rested crucially on the Council's acceptance of survey data presented by the developer demonstrating that there was surplus on-street parking availability within 400M of their site.

The 2009 data identified unoccupied "legal/safe" spaces around the "Princes Rd / Mayo Rd junction" on both sides of the road within 100M of their site.

They also claimed that the straight section of Princes Road on the northern side from their site entrance up to the junction with Mayo Road did not currently (i.e. then in 2009!) generate any parking demand.

The 2009 survey identified unoccupied on-street parking spaces within 300-400M from the site in Ditchling Rise, available for Round Hill residents to use at midday . With a CPZ having been operating there for nearly two years, it is careless of the developer to recycle the same data in 2012.

Carelet's current application (BH2012/01583) offers no update whatsoever, but merely uses the BH2009/00847 data on parking for a third application in a row. The same was presented when they applied unsuccessfully for 6 houses in 2010. Though acceptable to The Council's Highways Department, the Planning Committee refused application BH2010/00083 and the government's planning inspector dismissed Carelet's Appeal against refusal in early 2011. She observed that with the introduction of a CPZ some 400M from the appeal site (from 27th September 2010), it was highly probable that some displacement parking, both from commuters and from residents within the CPZ who cannot get/do not wish to purchase permits, would take place within the vicinity of the site. She did not know then what we know now in 2012 that all the streets to the north of London Road Station up to Stanford Avenue will be re-consulted on membership of a CPZ very shortly. However, she accepted residents' concerns about parking in 2010, referring to their (July 2010) survey data which countered the data collected for Carelet between Dec 2008 and Jan 2009, which the developer is treating as valid even now!

The residents' study "Community Parking Survey in the Princes Road area" used definitions (e.g. "parking space") provided by The Council's transport manager. See:

<http://www.roundhill.org.uk/images/ParkingReportPrincesRd2010.pdf>

We could not have stopped permission for 6 three-storey houses without being supported by letters of objection submitted from many Round Hill addresses. If you have time to give to the current cause, the link below will take you to the Council webpage (with the BH2012/01583 application details already written in). There is a tab "Make a comment" which you can open to post your objection.

http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1199915&action=showDetail&application_number=BH2012%2F01583

16 October 2012 - A CPZ would create a better pedestrian environment

Nearly all of us who drive vehicles fall into the category of pedestrians too. However, there are many Round Hill residents, especially among the young & older age groups, who do not drive, but get around our neighbourhood mainly on foot.

Our Council has now had considerable practice in the design and implementation of residents' parking schemes. The whole point of the proposed Round Hill CPZ design is to make parking in the vicinity of our homes a lot easier.

Outer areas of our city do not experience as much demand for permits as the most central areas of Brighton and Hove. Only two central areas in the city have waiting lists; the Viaduct-Rise area CPZ, just to the west of Round Hill, has been able to deliver two permits per household when requested, yet still has 30% to 40% spare capacity.

Having involved myself in a study measuring Round Hill's supply of "safe/legal" onstreet parking space, I agree that the resource is limited. The aim of the study was to counter claims by the backland developer (Carelet) that Round Hill had a surplus of onstreet parking space, which could satisfy the transport needs of additional residents.

See: <http://www.roundhill.org.uk/images/ParkingReportPrincesRd2010.pdf>

What I cannot support is defence of parking around junctions, on pavements, or across accesses to driveways, as reasons to vote against CPZs. No Council wishing to maximise revenue from a CPZ would deliberately propose yellow lines where they are not needed.

I therefore cannot agree with the argument that the proposal to yellow line the junction of Princes Crescent and Crescent Road amounts to a loss of "safe" parking space, even though it is currently legal to park there. I have even observed double parking in this dangerous location.

The width at the southern end of Crescent Road presents pedestrians with "a lot of road" to cross. Disability (my own slowness) gives me insight into how older pedestrians must feel. Residents who live in the area know that some motorists take this sloping corner very fast. Visibility between all road users by yellow lining this junction would greatly improve safety, but still the mouth of the junction could invite fast speeds. The complete solution would be narrowing the road and enlarging the pavement. This could incorporate both a safer crossing point and a couple of lower-lying installations such as a cycle rack &/or planter.

There are some good examples of cycle racks within streets within the Viaduct-Rise area CPZ. My suggested Round Hill improvements could benefit cyclists living in parts of Princes Crescent and Crescent Road whose homes are accessed high up above street level. The same or other residents, who would like to cycle, may have limited home/garden storage for bicycles. Freeing the obstructed pavement in Wakefield Road would create a safe pedestrian route (& route for wheeling bicycles) connecting with The Level, conditional on a safe crossing being provided "at" or "towards the west end" of Upper Lewes Road.

22 November 2012 Parking on junctions blocks path of recycling and refuse collection vehicles

I witnessed the several attempts made by the recycling collection vehicle to negotiate the junction of Princes Road and Crescent Road last Thursday (15 Nov 2012). I would say that they spent between 20 and 30 minutes trying to get round this junction alone. Either because of access or because they ran out of time, they did not collect from my side of Princes Road, but they returned early this week. I talked to them and they were both cooperative and polite.

The collection scheduled for Thursday 1 Nov 2012 was also delayed until Thursday 8 Nov 2012. It needs to be stated that City Clean were very supportive when The Round Hill Society held its recent Neighbourhood Clean-up Event,.



Onstreet parking in Richmond Road (east of the entrance to the Mayo Court car park) has created a problem in the siting of the communal rubbish bins for 32 flats. City Clean can so rarely access the driveway that the bins have had to be placed in the meantime where they badly affect the visual amenity of some of the flats nearby.

3rd Feb 2013 - Carelet tries to use CPZ to resuscitate a rejected scheme(6 three storey houses).

Carelet is trying to use the CPZ expected in Round Hill later this year to resuscitate a proposal for 6 three-storey houses which was refused by the planning committee in 2010.

If we fail to make our case before mid Feb 2013, we may soon see buildings materials craned onto the site, a listed chestnut tree at great risk, and massive upheaval in Princes Road and surrounding streets.

Carelet's resuscitated scheme was also dismissed by the appeal inspector after Round Hill residents had sent our own community parking survey to counter the developer's transport report. See:

<http://www.roundhill.org.uk/images/ParkingReportPrincesRd2010.pdf>

With no space at all for parking on their site, Carelet's proposal generates a demand for 9 extra onstreet parking spaces.

The case we must now make is as follows:

A majority of residents in Round Hill, London Road Station (south) and London Road (north) have voted for membership of the Area J CPZ in order to reduce parking stress, free up pavements and access at junction for emergency & service vehicles.

We did not cast our votes to allow The Council to increase parking stress in our densely populated neighbourhoods.

Previous planning inspectors have regarded the parking issue as sufficient reason on its own for refusal. Carelet's scheme for 6 three-storey houses "does not provide for the travel demands which it creates, contrary to policy TR1 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan."

This reason has not changed. With fewer onstreet parking spaces available after the CPZ has been implemented, there is all the more reason to apply policy TR1 now. Carelet was previously claiming available onstreet parking spaces for its prospective residents on junctions which would be yellow lined under the CPZ to allow access for service & emergency vehicles.

Application BN2013/00139 is NOT for car-free housing

Carelet's hopes rest on their planning application being misidentified as a proposal for car-free housing, which BN2013/00139 is not. Clarity on this point is essential if residents are to influence those who will make the decision.

The Council does have another planning policy which operates in the presence of CPZs where it is possible to exclude groups of residents from having parking permits. Housing policy HO7 provides for developments which will remain "genuinely car-free" over the long term (i.e. not car-free merely during the occupancy of the development's first tenants).

However, the presence of a CPZ in no way facilitates a planning application which cannot be car-free. Carelet's very first planning application for 30 flats (back in 2004) was dressed up as a car-free development. Their proposal was refused and the planning inspector who dismissed Carelet's appeal (Appeal Decision APP/Q1445/A/05/1178381) argued the following:

It is not clear that the development could be guaranteed to remain 'traffic free' and that none of the residents would own or use cars.

The existing residents rely heavily on on-street parking and any significant additional car usage would exacerbate the pressure for parking in the area, with the concomitant additional hazards to road safety stemming from possible indiscriminate parking and the circulation of vehicle drivers seeking a parking space.

Prince's Road and several of the surrounding streets slope steeply and are not ideal terrain for cyclists or pedestrians.

I note that the Highway Authority does not object, providing the details of the car club are pursued further, but the lack of a guaranteed traffic-free solution reinforces my view that the proposed development is unacceptable.

We now need to communicate clearly with the Case Officer for Carelet's latest proposal as well as the Highway Authority to encourage them to follow our Council's own planning policies as cited by previous planning inspectors in relation to the shortcomings of Carelet's application site. The last planning officer drew a line between Carelet's successful application in 2009 for 4 two-storey houses and the unsuccessful proposal for 6 three-storey houses.

See <http://www.roundhill.org.uk> for full info on a deeply flawed application BN2013/00139 which would create cramped accommodation right opposite The Waste Transfer Station. Odour and noise would cause problems so ventilation systems are part of the design when windows cannot be opened. There are better places to build "homes for life".

Ted Power

26 Feb 2013 - Demolition of Richmond House proposed to be replaced by three and five storey buildings: 15 + 129 studio rooms.



Under the details given on the Council's online planning register, the Richmond House application (BH2013/00197) is described as "adjoining Round Hill". Two buildings are proposed.

IN - The three-storey building (15 cluster rooms i.e. a flat on each floor) would be wholly within the conservation area roughly in line (a little further forward) than the existing dwellings on the east side of D'Aubigny Road.

ADJOINING - The five-storey building (129 studio rooms) would actually be built on an industrial estate! The foundations would be very marginally to the NE of the Round Hill conservation area. The Hughes Road entrance would sit at the mouth of the Centenary Industrial Estate. There would be no waiting or parking at or near this entrance since parking on this category of industrial estate is limited to operational use only. The reason for this Council policy is to encourage the employees at the industrial units to use public transport to get to work.

HUGHES RD ACCESS - LIMITED IN AREA, USES & UNSAFE

The active streetscape on this lower level (two-storeys down from the conservation area) would be the sloping service road used by trucks & vans going to & from Sainsbury's delivery yard. This would be walled off from residents, so the Hughes Road access to the 5-storey building would be confined to a very small area at the junction of two roads which were never planned with residents in mind.

This would not be the safest access for 186 bicycles or people on foot. Nor would the two lower floors provide very suitable accommodation - on one side a road for trucks and vans and on the other an embankment which would preclude natural daylight.

The Hughes Road entrance of the 5-storey building neither makes a safe cycle/pedestrian access nor does it serve the needs of those who need to be dropped off or collected by car e.g. disabled people.

HUGHES RD ACCESS - A SMOKESCREEN

However, (for the developer making promises in their Design & Access Statement) the Hughes Road entrance provides a convenient smoke-screen used to minimise the impact of a massive development (with no outdoor amenity space of its own) on Round Hill.

THE MORE USABLE ACCESS IS IN ROUND HILL

The 5-storey building would also have a second entrance onto Richmond Road which the developer tells us "would primarily be used by staff".

How could this vaguely specified restriction possibly be enforced when access for all visitors with cars and especially people with limited mobility would have to be via Round Hill?

Would an occupant wishing to visit a friend in Richmond Road obediently leave via the Hughes Road entrance and access Richmond Road via the Vogue Gyratory etc when their own room might look out onto Richmond Road? The restriction would be absurd.

ALL RUBBISH COLLECTIONS FROM ROUND HILL SIDE

Refuse and recycling collections and any service involving a motor vehicle would be delivered via the Round Hill elevation of the 5-storey and 3-storey buildings. All 144 rooms would be serviced from the conservation area. The gigantic structure planted just outside our conservation area would borrow nearly all its infrastructure from Round Hill.

CITY CRAMMING

BH2013/00197 is a very poor housing proposal in relation to the amenity it would offer prospective residents. The fact that the developer may have students in mind is irrelevant. No social or professional group should be singled out to provide justification for poor housing. Neighbourly values cannot be imparted by first stereotyping people and then hoarding them together in cramped surroundings.

IMPACT ON AN 'ALREADY DENSELY POPULATED' NEIGHBOURHOOD

It is clear that BH2013/00197, which is several times greater in internal area than the existing Richmond House, shows no sensitivity towards the very tightly knit Round Hill community. Count the number of windows in the proposal and compare it with the window count for existing dwellings in D'Aubigny Road.

The 5-storey building (3-storeys of which would be above Round Hill level) and its 3-storey neighbour would be dominant and obtrusive by reason of their height, bulk, massing, form, siting, materials and design. They would clearly be harmful to the setting of the existing and adjoining houses and to the Round Hill Conservation Area.

The more temporary the period of occupancy, the greater the number of occasions when different sets of belongings are moved in & out of residential accommodation. Anybody who has witnessed Halls of Residence being evacuated at the end of summer terms will know the scene.

The servicing of such a massive development via Round Hill would test our limited on-street infrastructure to breaking point. Round Hill already has double the population density of the average UK city suburb with circa 2300 residents living within just half a square kilometre.

Ted

see <http://www.roundhill.org.uk> for more info on the proposal including links to the developer's plans

26 Feb 2013 - Suggested objections to Richmond House proposal: the principle of putting residential homes on an industrial estate should be a non-starter.

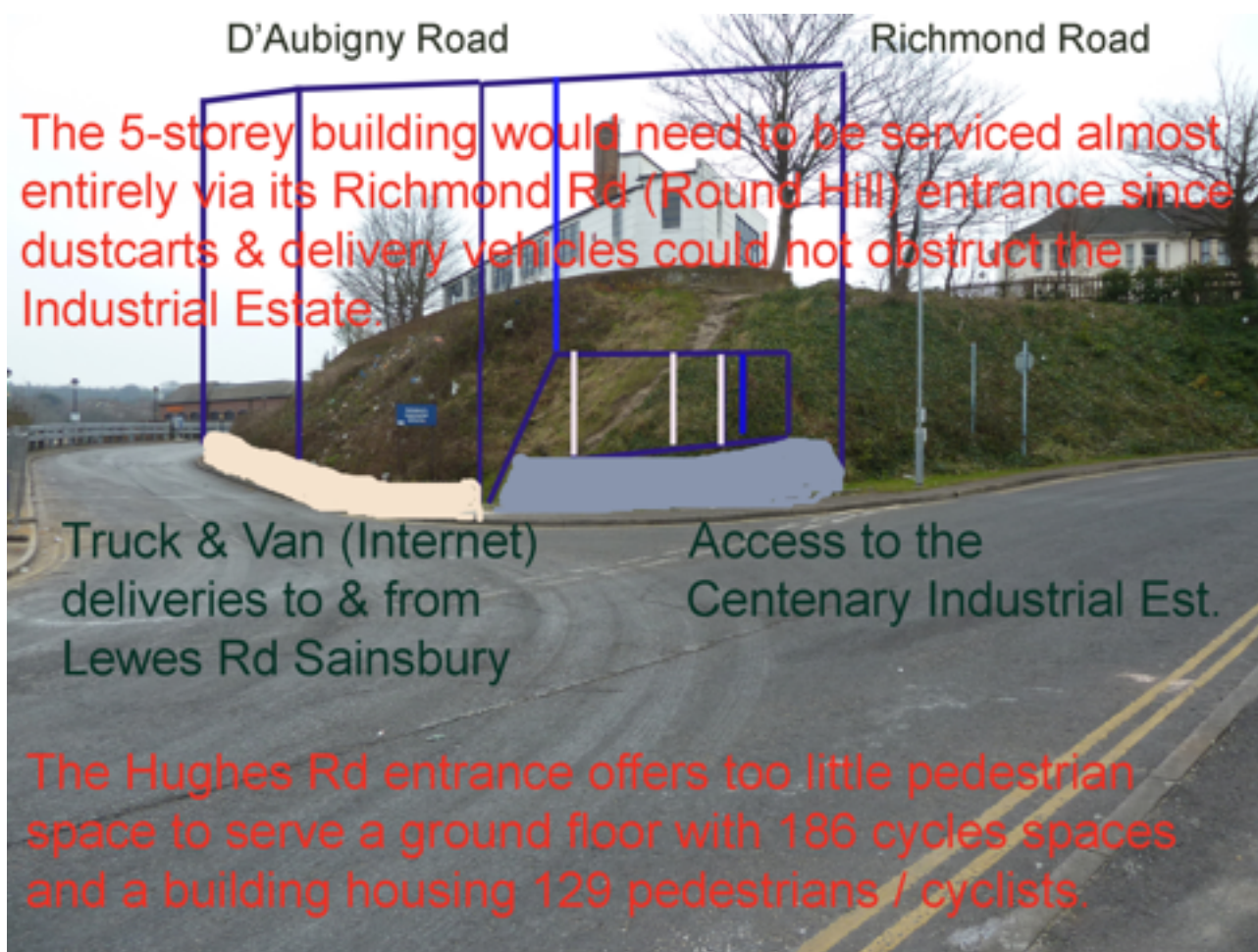
It is encouraging, Adrian, that so many local residents have been quick to spot a clear case of overdevelopment. Suggestions as to how to fight it are as follows:

1. Make a comment on The Council's website at

http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1199915&action=showDetail&APPLICATION_NUMBER=BH2013%2F00197

For help with the content of objections see The Round Hill Society's website where there are two sample letters and many more arguments:
<http://www.roundhill.org.uk>

2. Strongly object to any acceptance by The Council of "the principle of residential development" on an industrial estate.



The Council seems obliged to register planning applications even when the scale of them is absurd in relation to site locations. However, it would be surprising if such a detailed planning application (as BH2013/00197) were submitted without some prior discussion (however informal) with the Local Authority.

I would have hoped that Brighton and Hove City Council would have advised the developer (Matsim) that "the principle of putting residential homes on an industrial estate" is a non-starter and completely unacceptable.

We need this message to be made clear to both Matsim and any other developer with a similar vision of how they might "get away with" stereotyping a particular group (in this case "students") and using the stereotype to offer sub-standard homes in an unsuitable location.

If the Council's legal officers have been in any way reluctant to advise that "supermarket depot service roads on industrial estates are not places for people's homes", then we must get others within the Council to rule out "the principle of development" on this unsuitable application site. The message needs to be conveyed to & by The Case Officer for BH2013/00197, the Council's conservation & design department, their transport planning department & parking infrastructure team. If the application goes before a planning committee (i.e. elected Councillors) they need to spell out to Matsim and other developers (hoping that planning policies will be relaxed altogether) that The Centenary Industrial Estate was not planned as a Housing Estate.

3. Strongly object to the pretence that Hughes Road would be adequate as a usable access. The Council's own Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGBH4: in which parking standards for industrial estates are given) limits the parking of motor vehicles to "operational use", ruling out car-use even among employees to travel between their homes and the units on the Centenary Industrial Estate.

Having a "car-free" development is one thing, but having an access serving 129 rooms where nobody can be dropped off or collected by taxi, ambulance, relative's car etc and where no refuse collection can be done, is no more than a pretence.

Where would all these residents congregate if there were a simple fire drill? The dependence of this 5-storey building on the Richmond Road access is completely understated in the developer's Design & Access Statement. The developer prefers to feed the Local Press with a vision of 186 bicycles with fit owners ready to emerge via the Hughes Road entrance in 'the direction of study' i.e. along the academic corridor of Lewes Road.

4. As Round Hill's representative on the Council's Conservation Advisory Group, I have a dialogue with their Heritage Team, the department which protects the period-look (character & appearance) of conservation areas. It is helpful to me if letters of comment from Brighton and Hove residents (they do not need to live in Round Hill) reflect what I intend to say about the impact of BH2013/00197. I repeat the relevant extract from my previous post:

"The proposed five and three storey buildings would be both dominant and obtrusive by reason of their height, bulk, massing, form, siting, materials and design, and be harmful to the setting of the existing dwellings in Richmond Rd & D'Aubigny Road and to the Round Hill Conservation Area".

I would welcome any detailed observations from residents with an architectural background &/or interest which illustrate the above. Comments such as those posted by Alex The Architect would be gratefully received.

GETTING INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

I don't expect BH2013/00197 will come before a planning committee until April of May 2013. Objections will usually be accepted until Friday noon before the relevant planning committee date, which will be on a Wednesday.

It is a good idea to watch planning committee dates & agendas on The Council's website. Circa one week before planning applications go before the planning committee, a PLANS

LIST is posted to The Council website. This provides a recommendation ("grant", "minded to grant", or "refuse") from the Case Officer, a summary of the views of different Council departments as well as arguments FOR & AGAINST extracted from residents' comments.

One week before the relevant meeting is also a good time to make final representations to members of the planning committee, the elected Councillors who will decide the outcome. Their contact details are listed at

<http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/mgCommitteeMailingList.aspx?EM=1&ID=118>

Ted

4 Mar 2013 Need for community to participate in large planning briefs. Care home suggestion.

It seems that Council planners steered Matsim Properties Ltd away from their first idea 10,000 sq. ft. of offices with 33 flats over (approached from Richmond Road) as still described on the developer's website at <http://matsim.co.uk/portfolio/richmond-hous/>

However, their latest proposal now under consideration involving 144 rooms for students, siting a 5-storey building with access to Richmond Rd on the Centenary Industrial Estate, is a step (an 8 metre drop!) in the wrong direction.

Surely, it is time for members of our own community to be given a chance to participate in what are "large planning briefs" in terms of existing pressures on Round Hill's limited infrastructure.

Schemes which are clearly "non-starters" result in long stalemates. These (e.g. Carelet's 8 applications and 3 appeals since 2004) waste thousands of pounds of both developers' and ratepayers' money. Our planners should not be giving days/weeks/months of their time to them.

Can members of this forum help by exchanging ideas which may be used to create better planning briefs for the Richmond House site?

One idea might be to use the vacant site for a reasonable amount of extra care housing. The development could incorporate some space used to foster links with the Round Hill community, which I judge could be very supportive.

I describe how this might work at http://www.roundhill.org.uk/main.php?sec=planning&p=A_suitable_planning_brief_for_Richmond_House

It is important that we remember to object to Matsim's current proposal BH2013/00197, but let's offer them and our Council planners some better ideas for schemes which won't just turn into costly stalemates.

Ted

4 March 2013 - Need for community to participate in large planning briefs: for example, + Richmond House: no taller than 2-storeys; amount / design / use in keeping with the character & appearance of the conservation area; a use which is compatible with community wishes, preferably one which harnesses resources (e.g. social or economic) which local residents have to offer. . Care home suggestion.

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Ted

See info on DOES ROUND HILL NEED A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN? at [https://roundhill.org.uk/main.php?sec=planning&p=A Neighbourhood Plan for Round Hill](https://roundhill.org.uk/main.php?sec=planning&p=A%20Neighbourhood%20Plan%20for%20Round%20Hill)

8th March 2013 - Social segregation and scapegoating of students

When the headline "Empty offices could make way for 144 flats" appeared on page 17 of The Argus (25 Feb 2013), the leading item on page 10 of the same paper was a letter to the editor from somebody with a Scandinavian name. It concluded: "Students should be designated accommodation which is appropriate to their lifestyle, preferably in an isolated field somewhere."

The headline chosen by the editor, was "Students should be accommodated somewhere suitable for their ways".

I found the prominence given to this letter somewhat distasteful. Would other social or occupational groups be stereotyped so disrespectfully?

It seemed to me that the Richmond House proposal was being "news managed" so that opposition to an unsuitable housing proposal would get tied in with people reporting their worst encounters with students. Representing objectors as "anti-student", may be a way of trying to get student support for a proposal which serves the whole community very badly.

The weaknesses of the Richmond House proposal should be clear to students and non-students alike.

The mouth of an industrial estate is the wrong place for a large residential development. It is not a permitted drop off or collection point for people who at some time in the year might need motorised transport (perhaps a taxi). Rooms which face a lorry/van service road (front elevation) or look through light wells into an embankment (rear elevation), are going to make their occupants feel rather coupé up.

Whether a person is a student or not, is irrelevant to a scheme which provides for transport needs by pointing 186 bicycles (or however many are actually ridden) along Hollingdean Road into The Vogue Gyratory.

We learn in section 5.1 of the developer's transport assessment that "The Sussex Police have advised that there are a high number of collisions in the vicinity of the application site, particularly in and around the Vogue Gyratory."

However, the developer's transport consultant continues in Section 5.2: "No further analysis of the data has been considered as the upgrade to the Vogue Gyratory that is part of the LSTF works will completely redesign layout of the road network and thus mitigate for the existing collision statistics."

Why does a transport assessment for a proposal which depends on all these bicycles blind us with every bit of transport data under the sun, but refuse to explore available data on road safety for cyclists?

I would like to know how many accidents occur in this area, how they are caused, and how many of them involve cyclists. The police already have this data, and transport consultants probably have it too, but don't always want to use it.

I have so far been reluctant to join debates about how students should be accommodated, because they are not central to recognising a bad housing proposal.

For most of my working life, I was a teacher of overseas students. When I worked at The English Language Centre Hove, my learners learnt a large part of their English, not from me, but by being integrated into host families. The policy too was to ensure that no two students of the same language background were placed in the same host family. Many older residents in Round Hill have themselves been students at different periods of their life. Perhaps the 18-21 age group accounts for too large a portion of adult education. Students of this age group are noticed more today, because they account for a much larger section of the population than they used to. However, more courses seem to be work-related or offer work experience.

Perhaps the concept of Continuing Education needs revitalising. In Sweden, they pay native English teachers less by calling them "Study Circle Leaders"! Everybody, is both a learner and a teacher in different ways. We are all students!



The worst aspect of the Richmond House scheme is that it identifies a large group and proposes to hoard them together. It is neither respectful of students nor non-students. Brighton University recently co-operated with Round Hill by basing a Community University Partnership Project (CUPP) on our conservation area's needs.

The concept of CUPP is unlikely to be progressed through social segregation.

22 Mar 2013 - Support from BHCC's Conservation Advisory Group and the importance of civic pride.

This morning, I attended the Council's Conservation Advisory Group and expressed the strength of local feeling against The Richmond House planning application.

All members of the CAG agreed that the proposal involved excessive bulk and that the 5-storey building would have an adverse effect on long views into and out of The Round Hill conservation area: e.g. towards & from Lewes Road valley (Coldean woods, Wild Park, Moulsecomb, Bevendean), towards the Race Course (top of Bear Rd, Woodvale and Tenantry Down).

When we do our next Big Community Clean-up on 13th April 2013, there could be scope to 'beautify' (e.g. planters at junction of Princes Rd and Mayo Rd) as well as 'clean' the gaps between ends-of-terraces. This would show that these vantage points for long views are features of our conservation area which residents really value.

An account of other such features (which The Council believes we value) is given in Round Hill's conservation area character statement at

https://ww3.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/downloads/conservation/Character_Area_Roundhill_Final.pdf

This morning, members of The Conservation Advisory Group also agreed that the two proposed Richmond House buildings would be dominant and intrusive and not in keeping architecturally with the existing buildings in Richmond Road and D'Aubigny Road. Most of these buildings have light-coloured renders (shades of white), most are of 2 storeys with bay and wooden sash windows. The materials proposed by the developer are blue-grey brick, aluminium windows, a stretch of glass balustrade along the length of their larger 129-room building at Round Hill street level, and aluminium cladding in the vicinity of their fire escape.

With reference again to the Round Hill Clean-up scheduled for 13th April 2013, the more we do to make our existing dwellings and front gardens look attractive and in keeping with what we say we value, the stronger our position will be when opposing unsuitable developments. People notice local initiatives, such as the community garden at London Road Station, and a demonstration of 'pride in our area' on 13th April 2013 will not go unnoticed. News of our last community clean-up even made The Council's own website.

I also mentioned how the siting of the larger building on an industrial estate devalued what the developer described as "the primary entrance" in Hughes Road. This entrance would be at a junction of a lorry service road, which is currently yellow-lined. No taxi, car, refuse or recycling vehicle could pull up there, so all the servicing, collections, dropping off, deliveries for this enormous building would test Round Hill's street infrastructure to breaking point. The split-level design of the larger building would mean that several of its prospective residents would be housed effectively underground (some below the service road on floor 0, some looking into light wells dug into the embankment on floor 1). The outlook of those living above Round Hill street level would be severely compromised on one side by the siting of a second (three-storey) building. This is really a case of using a second building to hide the first! However, these two last objections will probably not be reported since they are outside of The Conservation Advisory Group's remit, which is our neighbourhood's character & appearance.

As the title suggests, we are only an advisory group made up of people from local residents' associations and groups such as The Brighton Society and The Regency Society.

We meet monthly with Brighton and Hove City Council's Heritage Team to advise on planning applications affecting conservation areas. One of our committee members also attends planning committee meetings and is permitted to reiterate our views at those meetings, but does not have a vote. Just as the 12 elected Councillors on the planning committee can choose to follow or ignore the Council officers' recommendations, they can equally accept or reject our advice.

Our remit is limited essentially to the appearance of a proposed structure or building, and only when it can be seen from a public place (such as a street). We cannot comment on other main factors which may influence the outcome such as the impact of a development on the local transport infrastructure or the poor standard of accommodation a building may offer its prospective residents, so please don't depend on The Conservation Advisory Group to put the full range of arguments.

About ten days before a planning application goes before Brighton and Hove Council's planning committee, you will find an Agenda for the meeting and a document called THE PLANS LIST published at <http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=118>

This contains the Case Officer's recommendation ('grant', 'minded to grant', 'refuse') and summary of all the arguments IN FAVOUR & AGAINST a proposal. When a proposal is within or adjoining a conservation area, THE PLANS LIST will also summarize the Conservation Advisory Group's views. We sometimes choose to make "no comment".

Any Brighton and Hove resident can access THE PLANS LIST for a forthcoming meeting online. If you think that a Case Officer has done a poor job of summarizing the objections to a planning application, you are perfectly free to write an email to all the members of the planning committee to reiterate your objection directly to those who will make the decision. Their contact details are at: <http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/mgCommitteeMailingList.aspx?ID=118>

Bear in mind that they have a large number of planning applications to study. While it is a good idea to let our own ward Councillors know of our views at an early stage, I feel that members of the planning committee are best lobbied a few days before the relevant planning committee meeting. Members can note our views, but they are not permitted to take sides in advance of their meeting.

The deadline for late objections is Friday noon before the relevant meeting (which could even be as far away as May 2013), so we should continue to encourage residents who have not made their views known to do so.

14th April 2013 Call for objections (148 to date) to Richmond House proposal

It is good that there are already 148 objections to the Richmond House proposal, but there is scope to increase that number if enough people are made aware of the need to act.

Although the official deadline for comment has passed, the Council will accept objections until Friday noon before the relevant date (always a Wednesday) of the planning committee meeting. We can review planning committee dates at:

<http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1182376>

The next one is on 3rd April 2013 where the big Anston House development threatening to overshadow the best parts of Preston Park (withdrawn from yesterday's planning committee meeting for that reason) will probably be re-scheduled. The Richmond House proposal could very likely come up at a later meeting. There should be time to chase a larger number of objections. When Carelet applied for 30 flats in 2004 before online submission of objections was available, Round Hill raised 300 objections.

I was saddened at yesterday's planning committee meeting that an extension of permission was granted to build 4 houses on the attractive plot of land opposite platform 1 of London Road Station, which (as an open space!) gives this well used portal to the railway network its distinctive rural-feel.

I was disappointed that there were not more objections, though Councillors seem to be aware that the local community would prefer to keep this attractive urban open space (also next to the outdoor smoking area of the Open House pub) undeveloped. If new residents complain about noise (other than trains!) in the vicinity of their homes, this could affect the operation of the Open House pub, which did object to the proposal.

There is currently an opportunity to get London Road Station added to the city's list of heritage assets. If this is done, it would add a material consideration which could be used to fight future proposals to renew permission to develop the much valued open space. Any future planning application would then affect the setting of a listed building.

If you can help by nominating LONDON ROAD STATION as an addition to the Council's list of our city's heritage assets

See <http://www.roundhill.org.uk>

or more specifically the item at

http://www.roundhill.org.uk/main.php?sec=planning&p=London_Road_Station_Open_Space

Ted

4th May 2013 - Details of planning meeting to decide Richmond House & Carelet

Dear all,

Both the Richmond House 144-room proposal and Carelet's application for 6 three-storey houses will be decided by members of Brighton and Hove City Council's planning committee at their next meeting starting at 2pm on Wednesday 15th May 2013 at the Council Chamber in Hove Town Hall.

The Case Officers' recommendations are:
"to refuse" the Richmond House application
"to grant" Carelet's proposal.

However, the outcome will be determined by the elected Councillors on the planning committee. The PLANS LIST containing the two Case Officers' reports (summaries of objections, comments in support, what different Council departments say) should be available via the Council's Planning Committee Page about one week before the meeting. It is not too late to lobby members of the planning committee directly, though late comments after Friday noon 10th May are unlikely to be appreciated.

A presence in the public gallery on the day is usually helpful, as is use of the 3-minutes speaking time given to a spokesperson for local residents at the meeting.

For further information, please see <http://www.roundhill.org.uk>

6th May 2013 Emailing members of planning committee RE Carelet's proposed 6 houses. Will they add a car-free component?

Members of the planning committee can be emailed directly, though it is best not to bombard them after Friday 10th May, the deadline for late objections. Their contact details are at

<https://democracy.brighton-hove.gov.uk/mgCommitteeMailingList.aspx?EM=1&ID=118>

The PLANS LIST, which the Council will shortly publish online, will reveal whether the officers' support for Carelet's 6 three-storey houses (which would generate a demand for 9 extra on-street parking spaces in the vicinity of Princes Road) is conditional on adding a car-free component.

If that is the case, it would be worth reminding members of the planning committee that two planning inspectors have stated in *their appeal decisions that Carelet's site is unsuitable for car-free development. A third planning inspector has recognised the same.

*J Mansell Jagger - APP/Q1445/A/05/1178381 and Roger Mather -APP/Q1445/A/08/2073223

Within the Council's own Local Plan (policy HO7), 'the mere existence of a CPZ' is insufficient to make a site suitable for car free housing. It also needs to be demonstrated that the proposed development will remain genuinely car-free over the long term. See

http://www.brightonandhovelocalplan.org.uk/pdfs/Pages%20from%20adopted_local_plan-chapter4-HO7.pdf

Both planning inspectors felt that the Council would not be able to insist over the long term that a development on Carelet's application site (a hilly terrain where other residents have and use cars) remained car free.

To omit this second qualifying condition for car-free housing would turn CPZs into a means of putting unreasonable pressures on densely populated neighbourhoods' transport infrastructures. The popularity of residents' parking schemes would be badly dented if residents come to perceive them as a licence for city cramming. They would be voting for less parking difficulty simply to allow developers to reverse the benefits. Carelet's scheme would do this almost immediately!

Whether one loves or hates CPZs, areas which fall outside the extensions of the Area J zone such as the Triangle streets SE of Upper Lewes Road and streets to the N of Stanford Avenue will experience further displacement when the Round Hill and London Road Station North extensions are implemented.

If Council officers have amended Carelet's application by persuading them to add a car-free component, they would have made a number of errors:

1. changing an application after the formal period for public consultation has passed
2. adding a change which does not satisfy their own policy on car-free housing
3. ignoring two appeal inspectors' decisions which explain why the application site is unsuitable for car-free housing and would lead to increased demand for parking space.

4. compounding the political problems of persuading residents to adopt parking schemes schemes by using CPZs to meet housing targets in locations where new development would overburden available on-street space for parking.

Members of the planning committee should be urged merely to repeat their last decision. The CPZ does not change the conclusion of the third and most recent appeal inspector. Carelet's proposal (BH2013/00139) for 6 three-storey houses does not provide for the future travel and parking demands which it would create. It is therefore not in accordance with Local Plan policy TR1. See Isobel McCretton's appeal decision APP/Q1445/A/10/2131115.

For most recent update, see http://www.roundhill.org.uk/main.php?sec=planning&p=Carelet_2013_update

Ted

11 May 2013 Officers recommendation is minded to grant Carelet providing there is a condition that the occupants of the 6 three-storey would not be entitled to parking permits under the expected CPZ.

Unfortunately, I won't be in Brighton on the day of the planning meeting. It is possible that Annie has already lined up someone to speak on Richmond House. THE PLANS LIST for Richmond House covers the reasons for objection very well and pleasingly the officers are recommending refusal. The Carelet application concerns me more since the recommendation of the officers is "minded to grant" providing there is a condition that the occupants of the 6 three-storey would not be entitled to parking permits under the expected CPZ.

I have written to members of the planning committee to draw their attention to where I believe the officers have got it wrong. In past Appeal Decisions on Carelet's application site (located in one of the hilliest parts of Round Hill where existing residents have and use cars), planning inspectors have ruled that the TWO pre-conditions for genuine car free housing cannot be satisfied. The existence of a CPZ is just ONE of the conditions. There also has to be a probability that car-free housing can be secured over the long term. The government's planning inspectors do not believe it can.

The existence of a CPZ therefore does not salvage an unsuitable application site. Council Officers would weaken their policy on car-free housing if they did not apply BOTH pre-conditions. They would also bring CPZs into disrepute if they asked residents to vote to reduce parking stress and then allowed developers to reverse the benefits. It would be cynical to secure a car-free development by planning condition when advice from the government's planning inspectorate is that such a condition cannot be sustained.

That's what needs to be explained during the 3-minute speaking slot. Members of the planning committee have got it from me in writing, but I am disappointed that the officers did not include the views of appeal inspectors on the site's unsuitability for Car Free Housing in the Carelet PLANS LIST. The Case Officer assigned to the Richmond House development did a better job at explaining the background.

Ted

16 May 2013 Carelet granted permission for a 6-house car-free development. Richmond House refused/

Not such good news with the Carelet site, though it remains to be seen if they find the latest permission "viable".

The latest permission is subject to a condition that none of the prospective residents would be entitled to parking permits. The 2009 permission (renewed in 2012) for 4 two-storey houses does not have this car-free component.

The voting was 8 in favour, 1 (ward Cllr Ian Davey) against, 1 abstention (Cllr Jones) and 1 left the meeting to open a Brighton Festival Event just before the Carelet item was reached.

The Case Officer for the Richmond House proposal did a better job. The energy which went into the residents' campaign was justly rewarded.

The webcast of the meeting can still be played, though there are also reports of the meeting now on The Round Hill Society website at <http://www.roundhill.org.uk>

Ted

17th May 2013 The permission for 6 three-storey houses may still prove "unviable"

Paul's prediction is justified, but it may not happen.

The permission for 6 three-storey houses may still prove "unviable", given the heavy construction costs of excavating the shaft for the Gatehouse lift etc, the bleak outlook for residents housed just 35 M from the Waste Transfer Station.

Also, if these houses are offered FOR SALE, then it would need to be made clear that the "car-free" condition applies. The developer would not be able to profit from any entitlement offered to prospective residents in relation to on-street parking. Ironically, if a developer uses the permission (valid until 2015) to build the 4 two-storey houses, then that permission (given originally in 2009 and renewed in 2012) has no condition which prevents occupants from applying for parking permits. Developers will need to choose which permission to go with if they are still tempted to use one of them.

On Simon's point, if ever the 6 houses are built The Gatehouse address will be at 83 Princes Road within the CPZ design.

I agree with Paul that it would be extremely difficult for The Council to disqualify the 6 householders from applying for parking permits over the long-term. Comments by all the government inspectors, who have dismissed appeals against refusal of development on this site, have said the same. Unfortunately, our Council's Highways department has chosen to take a different view.

As residents, we might also exchange our own views on entitlement to permits, even if they don't always count! Some may say "first come first serve", but others may think it

would be unreasonable to have two classes of resident in Princes Road. The resident who has the greater need to escape their immediate surroundings (i.e. a noisy smelly Dump) would be denied a motorised means of a escape. But people also need cars for other purposes. The planning inspectors observed that the Carelet plot is on a hilly terrain where existing residents have and use cars.

Without a Round Hill CPZ, we would soon be expecting displacement from all streets between Springfield Road and Stanford Avenue. With one, our permits entitle us to park anywhere within the wider Area J.

After drivers merely seeking free parking in Round Hill are required under the CPZ to consider different places to leave their vehicles, my hope is that there will be space for all RH households to have a reasonable permit allocation and to park in the vicinity of their homes. If not, my own view is that priority should be decided by need. But I also believe for a number of reasons that Carelet's plot is unsuitable for a housing development and both permissions should have been refused on that basis. On the second permission, The Council's Highways Department chose to break with their own policy on Car Free development which requires the "car-free condition" to be sustainable over the long term.
Ted