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Planning Officer
City Development Dept.,
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Dr.D.Hewick,
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2 April, 2013

Dear Mr Ballantine,

Extensions to 4-6 Camphill Road, Broughty Ferry DD5 2JA
(13/00167/FULL)

We note the following:

1. The garden has been enlarged by moving the health centre building southwards. This should result in a lower degree of overshadowing and provide more parking space. It needs to be checked that there is now adequate garden ground available.
2. The windows are now to be of timber with an 'emulated' sash and case design, and a 6-over-6 astragal pattern. The design statement uses the word 'emulate' in referring to sash and case windows. The windows should be proper sash and case windows.

We don't think that it is necessary to recess the frontage of the extension to indicate it being interpreted as new. In addition, to reduce the lopsided look of the western extension a chimney stack could be added to the new gable end.

We consider 1 and 2 above as significant improvements; however, there remains an important remaining issue. That is the proposed removal/demolition of the stone staircase (along with the attractive decorative cast iron balustrades) that is accessed from Camphill Road.

The applicants state that 'The staircase to the North of the site is not an important feature of the Conservation Area and is in a poor state of repair'. We disagree. The iron work seems to have been fairly recently painted (see photos 2013 and 2013a) with the balustrades complementing the gate. The ironwork has only minor damage and any unevenness in the original stone steps can be levelled with cement (a common procedure with stone of this age). The removal of this original feature would most certainly not preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area.

It is noted that a similar photograph (photo 2012) taken a year ago of the east balustrade shows that all the uprights were complete. Now one (6th from top) is broken (photo).

It is disturbing that the balustrades have been intact for over 150 years, yet the noted damage has occurred within the last year. This fact, along with our previous observation (objection letter of 23 February, 2012, relating to 12/0009/CON) that a small section of railings that fronted Camphill Road has already been blocked in and obliterated, indicates that the applicant has no appreciation of historical features that are important in a conservation area.

Apart from the aesthetic importance of the staircase, its retention will also provide a continuing useful access to the cottage garden via Camphill Road.

It is usual for historic features to not strictly comply with modern building/ safety regulations. That does not justify removal.

Presumably the main reason the applicants want to remove the staircase is because part of it is in the path of the proposed western extension.

We would be prepared to withdraw our objection if the developer could sensitively modify the design of the western extension so that the staircase can be retained.

Finally, we would like to mention that again in their design statement the applicants state ‘We have not pursued the views of Broughty Ferry Community Council at this time as our previous experience revealed that they could not comment, even informally, until an application was lodged.’ This is completely erroneous. We have been advised by the Scottish Government that we should not discuss matters with developers AFTER submission of an application. We are, however, willing to discuss matters PRIOR to submission. The agent Mr Fraser Middleton of ARKTX should know this since he discussed, with the community council, an earlier application (the hotel) involving this site prior to its submission. A number of Ferry city councillors were present.

Yours sincerely,

D.S. Hewick [Planning Secretary, Broughty Ferry Community Council]