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Dr.D.Hewick,
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14 October, 2013

Dear Paula Frickleton,

Alterations and extension to gatehouse, Armistead Child Development Centre, 94 Monifieth Road, Broughty Ferry DD5 2SJ (13/00643/LBC).

Partial demolition and change of use of Armistead House to create 5 dwelling houses, extension to gatehouse and erection of 2 dwellings and 18 flats Armistead Child Development Centre 94 Monifieth Road, Broughty Ferry, Dundee, DD5 2SJ (13/00643/FULL

General

These applications are an improvement on those submitted earlier in the year. That being said, we consider that there is room for still further improvement, which we will indicate below.

Currently the site is in a deplorable state. The fabric of the buildings has been allowed to deteriorate and there has been vandalism as well as pilfering of valuable traditional building material. The applicants who have owned the site for around three years must be held partly responsible for this.

It is therefore important that the owners improve the security of the site, to prevent further deterioration of important historical assets and to act as good neighbours to nearby residents.

The Gatehouse

This listed building in a conservation area is in a prominent position on a main road and is highly visible to members of the public. As such, sensitive restoration is required, retaining as much of the original character as possible.

The proposal to extend the gatehouse seems a reasonable concept. However, a more sympathetic approach to restoration than the one proposed is required.

The following conditions should be applied.

1. Reclaimed stone should be used (not vertical timber cladding as proposed) on the north and south elevations. We will make the case for not using such cladding on other buildings on the site later in this objection letter.

2. The timber front door is in a restorable condition and should be reused.. Any original Victorian internal features such as plasterwork, fireplace, timber panelled doors, timber skirting boards etc should be retained/restored and, where appropriate, replicated.

8. Suitable railings should be reinstated on the listed boundary walls. This would help with security as well as appearance. It is noted that the reinstated railings at the C(s) listed former St Aidan's Halls have set a precedent in this regard.

Until these conditions have been addressed, we would like this letter to be considered as an objection to the LBC application.

The Proposed New Buildings

Our key objection to 13/00643/FULL is to the standard of design and finish of the new buildings. A greater effort should be made to blend these in more sympathetically with the most important buildings on the site (namely those with statutory protection).

Some effort has been made by having dark grey slate roofs throughout. However, the following further steps should be taken.

1. The plentiful supply of good quality re-usable sandstone should be incorporated more extensively on important facades, such as those facing the courtyard and those flanking the south elevation of Armistead House. Regarding the latter, such sandstone should not just be restricted to providing 'base plinths' to the "B Blocks".

2. This would allow the avoidance of 'Vertical Timber Cladding' on the external walls of the habitable buildings. Such expanses of wood are not typical of houses in the conservation area and, importantly, do not weather well in a seaside climate. Wet-dash harling (as was on the original lean-to extension of the gatehouse) could also be used where appropriate.

3. On the above-mentioned important facades, at least, an attempt should be made to make the windows more closely resemble the sash window form that is a feature of the neighbouring Victorian buildings on the site.

4. The proposed 'Arctic White' render is inappropriate. A different colour that blends in better with the mellow tones of original sandstone should be chosen. The proposed colour will tend to have an overwhelming/clashing impact on the setting of the traditional protected buildings (particularly with the important south elevation of the main house).

We would add that the 'B Blocks' still appear over-dominant. In addition, the eastern one is very close to the border of the site and could pose a threat to the nearby trees as well as the amenity of the neighbouring private property.

Armistead House (and Gatehouse)

The Conservation Statement seems muddled in places when after referring to the correct architects, it describes the gatehouse as a 'Picturesque Georgian Lodge', the main building as a 'Substantial prominent Georgian stone villa' and the 1930s extension as a 'Late Victorian stone extension'.

Nevertheless, the statement indicates that in the main house the following original (main house) internal features will be retained/restored: main stair (carefully relocated within the house), three types of decorative cornicing, and triple panelled stained glass window. Unfortunately, the applicants have provided no photographs of external or internal features of the main house, and we are therefore reliant upon the relevant case officers ensuring that any remaining features are treated/retained/restored sympathetically.

It would seem obvious however, that it is in the developer's interest to retain as many original features as possible, as these are regarded by most prospective purchasers as highly desirable.

There should be no timber cladding on the main house.

Yours sincerely,

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