

Conservation Advisory Group

Minutes of remote meeting held on Teams on 11 July 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present:

Councillor Kathy Ballard (Chair)

Councillors Colin Belsey, Pat Rodohan and Robert Smart

Advisors: Richard Crook (Royal Institute of British Architects) and Joanna Saady (Chair of South East Branch, Institute of Historic Building Conservation and RIBA)

Officers in attendance:

Chris Connelley (Specialist Advisor, Conservation) and Elaine Roberts (Committee Officer)

1 Appointment of Deputy Chair

The Chair began the meeting with a minute's silence for ex Councillor Barry Taylor, who's funeral had taken place earlier that day.

The Chair invited nominations for a Deputy Chair.

Cllr Rodohan proposed and Cllr Ballard seconded Cllr Williams as Deputy Chair

Agreed (2 vote for, 0 against, 2 abstentions) to appoint Cllr Williams as Deputy Chair.

2 Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting, on 7 March 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

3 Apologies for absence/declaration of substitute members

Apologies were received from Councillor Jenny Williams.

4 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) by members as required under Section 31 of the Localism Act and of other interests as required by the Code of Conduct.

There were no declarations of interest.

For transparency, co-opted advisor, Richard Crook, noted his involvement as a Trustee of the Sussex Heritage Trust as well as his representing the Eastbourne Society.

Members took the opportunity to pay tribute to the work of ex-Councillor Barry Taylor, who's many roles over the years had included being a member of CAG. Members also wished to note its thanks to Nicholas Howell, a co-opted advisor of many years, for his valuable contribution to the work of CAG. Mr. Howell had stepped down from the Group after the meeting in March 2023.

5 Introduction to the Conservation Advisory Group

Chris Connelley, Specialist Advisor, Conservation, (CC) gave a presentation entitled 'An Introduction to Conservation', to help give a broad understanding of the world of conservation and the work of CAG. Questions were taken at the end. Topics of discussion included balancing green considerations, the scope of Eastbourne's conservation areas and plans for review, and managing issues of enforcement, where works that had started without appropriate permissions.

CC agreed to share a copy of a single map illustrating all the current conservation areas, to complement the individual area maps that had already been shared with CAG members and confirmed that an additional training session could be arranged as required around managing green considerations in a conservation context, once guideline advice had been issued by Heritage England, expected later in the year.

6 Planning Applications for Consideration

Chris Connelley, Specialist Advisor, Conservation, gave a presentation about the one application on the agenda, application, and the Group considered the application:

New Wilmington Hotel, 25-27 Compton Street, Eastbourne Street, Eastbourne (Town Centre and Seafront conservation area) - Ref: 230269 (Planning Permission - PP)

Proposal: Extension to the existing hotel to provide a fourth storey with 11 additional rooms and use of flat roof as a rooftop garden and restaurant area.

CAG Comment: The Group agreed that the proposal did not preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and invited significant revision.

The Group felt that this application lacked detail and was insensitive to the host conservation area. Whilst the proposal for the additional floor offering accommodation was broadly welcomed, the appropriateness and size of the roof garden was questioned. The loss of chimneys was deplored, and the lack of any environmental augmentation, and poor quality of the Heritage Statement, were also noted.

CAG asked the Specialist Advisor, Conservation to provide feedback to the agent on detailed points raised during the discussion.

7 New Listings

Chris Connelley, Conservation Specialist Advisor, reported no new listings.

8 Date of next meeting.

The next meeting of this Committee is scheduled to be held at **6 pm on Tuesday 8th August 2023, via Teams.**

The Group discussed the possibility of holding future meetings in person. At the end of the discussion the Chair confirmed that the majority were in agreement with the current arrangements, namely, that meetings should be arranged on Teams unless there was a particular need to meet in person, such as a site visit.

The meeting ended at 7.44 pm

Councillor Kathy Ballard (Chair)