

Kingsdown Conservation Group

10th November 2009

Alison

Southwell Street Kingsdown- 07/04608/F

Thank you for meeting members of the Kingsdown Conservation Group on site to discuss our concerns.

Planning matters



Photograph 1 contrasts the regenerated private space of the Boiler House to the degraded public space that faces this excellently remodelled building. There can be fewer better illustrations of space left over after planning than this example.

To build out the planning permission 07/04608/F, the developer must surely make good the consequential damage to the public realm whether under planning or highways legislation? The planning and highways matters are connected.

Photograph 1

The report that led to the delegated decision said, "*the Department must approve the landscaping materials to ensure that they are of sufficient quality to sit comfortably within the local street scene.*"

Highways matters

Photograph 1 shows how UHB has divided the space in front of the Boiler House with diagonal lines into parking spaces.



Photograph 2

Photograph 2 shows that UHB has appropriated the whole of the pavement for private parking. Photograph 1 shows the path on the north side of Southwell Street to be continuous. Buried in the modern concrete are the remains of traditional stone paving slabs. KCG is not aware of a Highways Act order that entitles UHB to block the pavement to pedestrians. Despite the stagger of the parking bays, vehicles also block part of the carriageway, which photograph 4 shows, pedestrians walking in the road.

Photograph 1 shows the barrier across Southwell Street that separates it into two halves. Southwell Street is a public road. We question UHB's right to erect this barrier. Is there a Highways Act Closure Order that permits this obstruction?

If UHB is entitled to block the road, does the City control the appearance and quality of the barrier? What you see is highly unattractive and degrades the appearance of the public space. Retractable columns, of the type UHB has recently installed at the junction of Cottage Place and Marlborough Hill, would be a better solution. They would enhance the public realm and cause less inconvenience to the many pedestrians and cyclists who use this street. Photograph 4, shows a second, redundant yellow barrier on the left of the picture.



Photograph 3



Photograph 4

Photographs 3 and 4 show Southwell Street at 9.00 a.m. on every working day. The barrier forces both pedestrians and cyclists through the narrow gap at the south side of the barrier next to the car park exit. The chain on the north side of the barrier renders the north pavement impassable. The hospital car park entrance so narrows the south pavement that pedestrians prefer to walk in the road. Photograph 3 shows a car emerging from the hospital car park blind to the pedestrians and cyclists in the road. During our discussions, we saw three cars emerge from the car park without stopping.

We would like the City to answer a number of questions. They are:

1. Does UHB have a legal right to invite drivers to park across and block the whole of the northern pavement of Southwell Street?
2. Does UHB have legal authority to erect and to maintain a permanent barrier across Southwell Street?
3. Does the Highways Department have a right to approve the quality and appearance of a legally authorised barrier?
4. Does the Highways Department agree that vehicles emerging from the hospital car park into a Southwell Street are a danger to pedestrians and cyclists?
5. Does it propose to improve the safety of Southwell Street?

We are grateful to you for your offer to take up the highways matters with the Highways Department.

Yours

John Frenkel

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