

<b>Application Number:</b>	2017/1500/FUL
<b>Site Address:</b>	1-4 Cornhill Pavement And 7-8 Sincil Street, Lincoln.
<b>Target Date:</b>	24th March 2018
<b>Agent Name:</b>	Lichfields
<b>Applicant Name:</b>	The Lincolnshire Co-operative Ltd
<b>Proposal:</b>	Demolition of 1-4 Cornhill Pavements and 7-8 Sincil Street to facilitate the erection of a new building to provide new Class A1 (retail), Class A2 (financial and professional services), Class A3 (restaurants and cafes), Class A4 (drinking establishments) and Class D2 (leisure) uses; and other associated works

### **Background - Site Location and Description**

Application is for planning permission for the erection of a new building to house a cinema (D2), and 5 no. retail (A1), financial and professional services (A2), restaurant uses (A3) and drinking establishments (A4).

The existing buildings at 1-4 Cornhill Pavements and 7-8 Sincil Street are to be demolished to accommodate the new development.

The site is located within the Cathedral and City Centre Conservation Area No.1 and the 'Primary Shopping Area' as identified in the CLLP.

The application has been subject to some pre application discussion with Officers and Historic England, whilst revisions have been made to the scheme further to the receipt of the application.

The scheme is the latest part of the wider redevelopment of 'The Cornhill Quarter' by the Co-op which stretches from the River Witham to the North, and Tentercroft Street to the South. The scheme to date has involved the refurbishment of the grade II listed Corn Exchange and the on-going alteration and extension of no's 30-35 Sincil Street (2015/0381/F) and in conjunction with the City Council, the recently completed new multi storey car park and transport interchange and Central bus station.

### **Site History**

No relevant site history.

### **Case Officer Site Visit**

Undertaken on 19th February 2018.

### **Policies Referred to**

- Policy LP1: A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy LP26: Design and Amenity
- Policy LP31: Lincoln's Economy
- Policy LP33: Lincoln's City Centre Primary Shopping Area and Central Mixed Use Area
- Policy LP25: The Historic Environment
- National Planning Policy Framework

## **Issues**

- Local and National Planning Policy
- Effect on visual amenity
- Setting of adjacent listed buildings
- Character and appearance of the conservation area
- Highway safety
- Archaeology
- Lighting
- Fume Extraction
- Land contamination

## **Consultations**

Consultations were carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement, adopted May 2014.

## **Statutory Consultation Responses**

Consultee	Comment
Councillor Chris Burke	No Response Received
Councillor Sue Burke	No Response Received
Councillor Helena Mair	No Response Received
Highways & Planning	Comments Received
Environmental Health	Comments Received
Shane Harrison	No Response Received
Lee George	No Response Received
Anglian Water	No Response Received
Upper Witham, Witham First District & Witham Third District	Comments Received
Paul Carrick	No Response Received

Licensing Manager	No Response Received
Lincoln Civic Trust	Comments Received
Historic England	Comments Received
Lincolnshire Police	No Response Received

### **Public Consultation Responses**

No responses received.

### **Consideration**

#### The Proposal

The proposal is for the erection of a new building to contain shops and café/restaurants across 5 no. double height ground floor units and a cinema and associated restaurant and roof terrace at second floor. Ground floor access to the cinema is to be taken from Sincil Street. A small 4th floor is also created with staffing area and bar storage.

At the rear, the new building will extend further within the current service yard of the site than the present Cornhill Pavement buildings. This will involve the demolition of the rears of adjacent 14 and 15 Sincil Street. The demolition and extension of the rears of 14 and 15 Sincil Street was approved under 2017/0064/FUL. A non-material amendment application for a revised scheme for the extension of these properties has also been submitted. The application proposes extensions shorter in length than previously approved in order to accommodate the rear of the new cinema building. (2018/0285/NMA).

Dedicated plant and bin store areas are located within the building at the rear of the property with direct access to the service yard.

A Design and Access statement and a Heritage, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (HTVIA) have been submitted with the application which consider the effect of the proposals on Lincoln's townscape, visual amenity and heritage assets which may be sensitive to change. The Statement identifies that whilst the Eastern side of Sincil Street is predominately made up of unlisted, 2-3 storey 19th Century commercial buildings in generally red brick and clay roof tile, the western side of Sincil is more varied.

At the centre of Sincil Street with the junction of Cornhill Pavements, a square is formed flanked by the listed Exchange Arcade to the west and Corn Exchange to the North. Both buildings are grade II listed. The South side of the square is however bounded by the 20th Century buildings at no's 1-4 Cornhill Pavements and 7-8 Sincil Street. Built in the 1980's, it is considered that the architectural style and materials of these 2 storey buildings detract from the overall character of the area.

Works to improve the public area have already begun with improvements made to the hard landscaping around the recently completed Corn Exchange building. It is planned that these works will extend out to include the entirety of the public realm within the Cornhill area and along Sincil Street. The proposal is to use a unified palette of quality materials to reinforce the identity of the area and the new public square that will be created between the Corn Exchange, Exchange Arcade and the new cinema building proposed as part of this application.

#### Local and National Planning Policy

The proposed development is in accordance with Policy LP31 of the CLLP, in that the proposal will support the strengthening of Lincoln's economy, by enhancing the overall offer that Lincoln provides, enhancing Lincoln as a key destination for tourism and leisure, and as a significant provider of retail services. The proposal also "enhances the quality, attractiveness, character and assets of Lincoln and the City Centre in particular". The CLLP states development whilst being important, "not being at the expense of the City's unique heritage and environment which should continue to be protected and enhanced."

The redevelopment of Cornhill Pavements is considered to be an important part of the overall redevelopment of the Cornhill area, where the sensitive refurbishment of the listed buildings is key and forms the focus of the area. The demolition of the existing poorly designed and incongruous buildings is therefore considered to be in accordance with local planning policy.

Similarly local plan policy LP33 states that development should not exacerbate the City's traffic problems. The site is located in a highly sustainable location, being within the heart of the city centre and adjacent to public transport links at the railway station and the recently completed Central Bus Station and car park.

#### The Lincoln Townscape Assessment

The Lincoln Townscape Assessment states that the Sincil Street area which includes the application site, "is a busy commercial area and public space in the city". The Character Area "is composed of large urban blocks, which extend outside the area, integrating the area with those surrounding it. "Building density is high and building scales varies, broadly decreasing away from High Street". "Narrow pedestrianised streets/ footpaths and taller building height along Sincil Street.... and around Cornhill all result in a high sense of enclosure".

The Assessment describes the "modern buildings' along the south side of Cornhill are constructed in heavy block-like style and are of steel or reinforced concrete construction with brick walls laid in stretcher bond." Modern shop fronts have low solid to void ratios with large shop windows above low brick stall risers. Fascia's are generally narrow and mounted onto the front of the building or set back within shallow porches or below projecting first floors. First floors have high solid to void ratios with infrequent square casement windows. Plain decoration. The variation on style and material produces an incoherent streetscape in many places.

The assessment also goes on to state that "the three markets strongly influence the character of the area". Streets in the Character area are described as "cluttered and often incoherent in character", while views are limited to "distant views" of the North escarpment and the castle visible from the southern end of Sincil Street. Views of the Cathedral are partially obscured by Thorngate house on Broadgate.

### Proposed Demolition

The application proposes the demolition of no's 1-4 Cornhill pavements and 7-8 Sincil Street. These two storey red brick and monopitched pantile roofed buildings were built in the 1980's, and replaced a series of Victorian shops and market buildings.

The buildings are considered to be of little architectural merit and do not contribute to the visual amenity of the area or the wider conservation area. The scale, form and architectural design of the properties appears incongruous when viewed against the other built form within the area, including the two listed properties of the Corn Exchange and Exchange Arcade and the traditionally proportioned properties on Sincil Street.

The Cornhill Pavement properties project into the street and also cut short views and activity from High Street to the Cornhill. The forward positioning of the group of existing units also encroaches upon the formation of the proposed public square which forms part of the wider masterplan for the area and the aim of creating a well-designed and functional public space. The forward building line of Cornhill Pavements also infringes upon the setting of the adjacent grade II Exchange Arcade. The proposed development will afford greater space around the Exchange Arcade thereby improving the setting of this listed building. The current units also present areas of blank brick frontage at ground level which prevents active street frontages.

With regard to local and national planning policy guidance, the proposal is in accordance with LP25 of the CLLP in that the application has within the Design and Access Statement and the Heritage Townscape Assessment, taken account and considered the effect of the demolition of the existing buildings and the proposed scheme on the setting of the adjacent listed buildings and conservation area.

LP25 states that "Development proposals that affect the setting of a listed building will be supported where they preserve or better reveal the significance of a listed building." LP25 also states that the effect of a proposed development on the character or appearance of a conservation area is always a material consideration and as a minimum requires all proposed development to either preserve or enhance that character or appearance.

LP25 states that "proposals should retain historic building lines and ground surfaces, retain architectural details that contribute to character and remove features that are incompatible with the Conservation Area. Reinforce local distinctiveness with reference to height, massing, scale and materials and assess and mitigate against any negative impact the proposal might have on townscape, roof scape, skyline and landscape".

It is considered that the demolition of the existing buildings at Cornhill Pavements, would not be harmful to the character or appearance of the conservation area. This application also proposes a scheme of redevelopment and therefore avoids an undesirable gap being created in the street scene further to demolition.

The proposed re development of the site, better acknowledges the creation of a public square in this area, established street frontages and will allow better physical and visual connections with the wider area and sightlines from the High Street.

### Proposed Cinema Building

The cinema building will bring enhancements to the area over the existing Cornhill

Pavement built form. The position of the new cinema building has been set back from the existing building line, therefore enabling the new frontage to be in line with that of the remainder of this Southern side of Cornhill. The realignment will also reflect the position of the Corn Exchange opposite further to the recent demolition of the modern extensions and back to the original built form. Views between the High Street and Sincil Street will as a result, be greatly improved by the proposals.

The realignment of the building will also create the final 'side' to the new public space stretching from High Street to Sincil Street with the listed Exchange Arcade sitting in the centre.

The Design and Access Statement identifies that Sincil Street has in recent times suffered from the retail offering being within small, older properties generally 3 storey's in height which aren't attractive options for many potential tenants. The provision of a new development here will also enable the provision of larger shop and leisure units within the area, which are considered to be a more attractive offering in terms of bringing uses and tenants into the area.

As submitted, the application proposed a building 25.8m high with the South Western fire escape stair tower being slightly higher at 26.7m.

Negotiations to the proposal have secured revisions further to concerns being raised by Historic England regarding the height and massing of the rear of the building, when viewed in particular from St. Mary's Street.

The upper floors of the cinema building are a series of setbacks to lessen the overall massing and impact on views from the street and to enable the creation of an outside terrace café which maximises views towards the Cathedral.

Given that the new building will house a cinema, there are certain size/height requirements that are required as a minimum, however the revised plans have reconfigured ceiling heights where possible and structural depths, whilst the third floor has been lowered by relocating the cinema staff areas away from this level to the first floor. The silhouette of the block has been broken up by lowering the stair block to the east and the roof lowered by removing the parapet. Small projecting cooling fan vents are also now expressed as 'modern' chimneys to again break up the roofline, enabling the overall height of the building to be lowered in order to address the concerns of both HE and the Civic Trust.

The amended scheme has significantly reduced the overall height of the building and in particular the rear of the building and altered the roofscape. I am of the opinion that the amendments made have addressed the initial concerns of Historic England.

The Civic Trust also raised objections to the application based on the original, as submitted plans. Concerns raised regarded the height of the structure and the materials to be used and that the modern design may detract from the established area and the adjacent Corn Exchange building which the Trust states should be the primary building in the area. Again, these concerns have been addressed by the revised proposals, proposing a significantly lower building than originally proposed and a revised palette of materials, particularly to the treatment of the roofline to help the new building assimilate into the established street scape and skyline.

I do not consider that the new cinema building will detract from the historic Corn Exchange

being the dominate building within the area. The proposed cinema building is of a relatively simple design to complement the listed building opposite and proposes a palette of materials to reflect those used on the successful refurbishment of the Corn Exchange. The new cinema building is positioned further from the Corn Exchange than the existing buildings on site and provides the opportunity to create a public space with the listed Corn Exchange and Exchange Arcade buildings as the main focus.

The palette of materials is proposed to be red brick with stone string course, powder coated Aluminium fascia's and recessed cladding panels, powder coated aluminium framed glazing system all in dark bronze to reflect the material used at the Corn Exchange. A glass balustrade with powder coated aluminium handrails also in dark bronze. The roof material has been revised to a standing seam Zinc façade cladding in grey. It is expected that the panels will be in 450mm wide panels with a standing seam, in a regular formation across the roof, reflecting the wider city roof scape.

### Effect on Views

Policy LP17 is relevant. The application has included a sketch up model which demonstrates how the proposal will sit within a series of key views within the vicinity of the development.

The revised sketch up proposal shows a significant difference between the 'as submitted' proposal and the now revised scheme.

The principle change to views is from the South. Of concern initially was the rear view of the new cinema building when viewed from the vicinity of the Central Railway station and St. Mary's Street. Due to the height and scale of the building, the upper part of the cinema is seen beyond the roofline of buildings fronting St. Mary's Street.

The revised plans demonstrate that the overall height of the building has been lowered by approx. 1.3m to the Northern elevation facing Cornhill and approx. 3m towards the southern elevation viewed from St. Mary's Street. The main roof (adjacent to Cornhill) has therefore been reduced from AOD 25.825 to AOD 24.500. The revised plans and sketch up clearly show the difference that the reduction in the overall height and massing of the building has made on this view, which takes in both Sincil Street and the Cathedral beyond. The revised plans and sketch up model show that the proposed building will now appear lower in height than the nearby new Lincoln Central car park, again another initial concern of HE.

Revising the roof design to be expressed as a mono pitched roof also has the advantage of minimising both its impact from distant views from the historic hillside and closer distance from the South where the eaves of the cinema are lower with the roof to slope upwards away from St. Mary's Street.

The revised Heritage and Townscape Assessment undertaken by the applicant concludes that the visual effect on townscape of the amended proposal as viewed from St Mary's Street has reduced from 'moderate to minor adverse'. The Assessment states that 'given the majority of beneficial visual affect in townscape, the proposal is considered to be a positive replacement.'

The revised plans have also included indicative proposals for 'Block B' which forms part of the wider masterplan for the area and will sit on the corner between Sincil Street and St.

Mary's street. Whilst the plans for Block B are very much indicative at this stage, its inclusion on the drawings provides an indication of how this building will sit in front of the rear of the new cinema building and help mitigate views from St. Mary's Street and the grade II listed Central Station.

### Archaeology

Discussions between the agent and the City's Archaeologist have been on-going during the course of the application. An initial evaluation has been undertaken and indicative sub structure schematic and foundation design submitted. A full mitigation strategy/WSI is being undertaken and will need to be conditioned, along with the submission of the final foundation design.

### Lighting

As with the refurbishment of the Corn Exchange opposite, a lighting scheme for the new cinema building is proposed. Details of the lighting scheme are not yet finalised and will therefore be subject to a condition prior to installation on site. No objections are raised however to the principle of a sensitively designed lighting scheme which will complement the adjacent listed buildings and add to the creation of a welcoming public realm.

### Fume Extraction

The proposal has been considered by Environment Health. Given that the units created are for a mix of commercial uses including A3, kitchen extraction is likely to be required, depending on the end users. Environmental Health has therefore requested that a condition is included requiring the details of any kitchen extraction systems prior to their installation, in order to assess the level of noise and odour emitted and effect on adjacent properties, and the external location and appearance of the equipment.

### Highways

A transport assessment has been submitted with the application and the proposal has been considered by the Highway Authority. No objections are raised by the County Council with regard to highway safety or as the Lead Flood Authority. A condition has been requested for a detailed design of the glass balustrade to the outside terrace in order to prevent objects from falling onto the public realm below.

No objections has been received from the Witham Internal Drainage Board.

No responses have been received from neighbours or the general public.

### **Application Negotiated Either at Pre-Application or During Process of Application**

Yes.

### **Financial Implications**

None.

### **Legal Implications**

None.



## **Equality Implications**

None.

## **Conclusion**

The cinema development is another step towards the refurbishment of the wider Cornhill Quarter, following on from the recently completed Corn Exchange building and the redevelopment works currently taking place to properties at 30-35 Sincil Street. This development is crucial to the creation of a public square within the area and in improving visual links with the High Street. The development will also help to encourage activity both during the day and evening.

The proposal has been revised in order to address initial concerns regarding scale and height and the effect on particular views within the area. The revised proposal is considered to be a good modern design which respects the architectural character of the area and the setting of the adjacent listed buildings. The proposal will contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area and is therefore in accordance with both local and national planning policy.

## **Application Determined within Target Date**

Yes.

## **Recommendation**

That the application is granted conditionally.

## **Conditions**

- 1) 3 years
- 2) Drawing numbers
- 3) Lighting scheme
- 4) Materials
- 5) Archaeology
- 6) Design of balustrade to prevent items falling onto highway below
- 7) Land contamination
- 8) Extraction equipment