

To Mr Tom Brandfield
Case Officer, Development Control
London Borough of Hounslow.

March 10 2015
Re: BCC 713 dmb

By email: Tom.bradfield@hounslow.gov.uk

Dear Mr Bradfield,

Planning Application: Market Building, Brentford.

The BCC noted that this application was to be decided by delegated authority and has asked that it be called in for decision by the Planning Committee. We have also asked the chair for consent to speak to members on this item.

The BCC is aware that the present office building can be converted to residential without reference to the Local Planning Authority This is an unfortunate change as it removes the only significant office building from our town centre, which is liable to be predominantly residential. We have also noted that members have already indicated that a fourth floor would be acceptable.

The building does form an important part of the setting of the recently restored former Market Building and of the large paved forecourt, which was recently laid out with public funds. This space is the centre point of the Brentford Town Centre.

The building should be read with the 3 floor terrace of flats over shops which flanks the east side of the Magistrates Court building. That terrace has a continuous brick façade and forms a low key setting to the feature building. Even though the ground on this site of the Magistrates Court Building is higher than the court building the parapet line is well below the cornice of the Court.

This follows the guidance given by English Heritage that buildings placed next to Listed Buildings and those which are townscape features should be subservient to them.

The BCC welcomes the upgrading of the Market Building which we understand would include the much needed re-facing of the Fletton brickwork to the west and north elevations.

Unfortunately the EH guidance has not been followed in the proposed detail designs for Market Building. As a result Market Building will not complement the setting for the Magistrates Court nor ensure that the Court buildings continue to dominate.

The BCC requests that the applicant be advised that the design as now proposed is not acceptable, but that a revised design meeting these criteria would receive serious consideration:

1. All application drawings and computer presentations should include the Magistrates Court so the relationship can be seen clearly.

2. The fourth floor should be set back at least 2 meters from the east elevation.
A set back elsewhere would be desirable. On the north elevation a greater set back would improve the privacy, daylight and sunlight to the houses under construction in Market Place.
3. That the over-hanging canopy to the 4th floor balconies be removed.
4. The proposed balcony level curve to the south-east corner should be omitted.
5. The two 4th floor bedrooms above the main entrance should be omitted so the 3rd floor parapet line can be continued.
6. Green wall features should be omitted.
7. The facing brick on the east elevation be continued to Market Place and to the north elevation,
8. That logos and contrasting brick panels be only retained on the west elevation.

The BCC considers that these relatively minor changes could contribute significantly to the success of this urban space and to the quality of the Brentford Town Centre.

I have had the opportunity to discuss these proposed changes with Matthieu Proctor, the Borough Urban Design Officer.

We request that the committee rejects this application in its present form.

Yours sincerely

Denis Browne
Chairman, Planning Consultative Committee
Brentford Community Council.

Cc Cllr Theo Dennison
Cllr Mel Collins
Matthieu Proctor LBH.
Matthew Rockell BCC