

ACK 11/03/2014

Richard I Smith

From: ellisshellap@googlemail.com
Sent: 11 March 2014 08:57
To: DC
Subject: 14/00254/FUL part retrospective application for Avanti in the former Golden Lion St Michaels Conservation Area Houghton Ward

Good Morning.

I wish to object to every aspect of the above. The alterations already carried out have a detrimental effect on the appearance of a 300+ year-old building. They have an adverse effect on the Conservation Area. The Building is set into the corner of a burial ground that is approximately 1,500 years old. It is next to the Grade 1 Listed Church of St Michael and All Angels, the oldest parts of which date from the C7th. The Church is built on the site of a Roman temple and Mesolithic Stone Circle and is part of an important Ecclesiastic complex. This consists of the old Kepier Grammar School which was granted a Charter by Queen Elizabeth I and the Lilburn and Davenport Almshouses. These buildings are all Listed.

It is next to historic Church Street, the oldest surviving street in Houghton. This street also contains listed buildings and one house is built around the remains of a C13th Pele tower. The Golden Lion was the only surviving tavern from the famous 4 "Lion Pubs" - White, Golden, Red and Black which historically stood in this area. The Golden Lion looks across the historic Broadway to the Rectory Park and the Listed Old Rectory, home of Bernard Gilpin, Apostle of the North, as well as other famous Rectors, 2 of which went on to become Archbishops of Canterbury. The Park is one of the oldest gardens in the UK. This area is the heart of the mediaeval village of Hoctona, listed in the Bolden Beuk.

The destruction of the traditional wooden sash windows and their replacement with UPVC materially detracts from the appearance of the former Golden Lion building. The external metal chimney and 2 large air-conditioning units are monstrous carbuncles totally alien to the historic setting. An external metal staircase would also be completely alien to the historic environment. A brew house would have stood on this site from the time the Church was first built, to provide Communion wine. The alterations to the former Golden Lion, a building which had been completely sympathetic to its historic surroundings, are highly intrusive. The complete gutting of the formerly-untouched 300 year-old interior is also deplorable.

When the new owner started destroying the old windows, I approached him as an elected Member and he told me he had planning permission for everything he was doing. I think it is appalling that a Developer should deliberately lie to an elected Member in order to try to gain material advantage for himself.

I ask that the application be refused in its entirety because of its adverse appearance in this important Conservation Area. I ask that this application be put before Committee. I also request that my comments be given to the Committee in full and I ask to speak.

Sincerely Sheila Ellis
Sent using BlackBerry® from Orange

