

**SDNP/25/00292/FUL: Former Garden Street Auction Rooms. Demolition of existing industrial buildings and provision of 18 residential units with associated amenity, car and cycle parking provision.**

The Friends of Lewes object to this proposal for the following reasons:-

1. The design of the proposed scheme is considered to be excessively high and over dominant when viewed from the corner of Garden Street and Southover Road. The Society suggests that the size of flat 17 should be reduced and set back from the street frontage.
2. Furthermore, the northern / eastern corner of the proposed development, facing Southover Road and Lewes Station is considered to be very dominant, (largely as a result of the significant drop in ground level from Southover Road to the level of the station platforms), to the extent that its visual impact of the proposed development on the 'Public Realm' is considered to be unacceptable, especially when viewed from the station platforms, (as shown in the illustration from Station Road in the 'Visual Impact Study').
3. Overall, the resulting size of the building being located in the northern part of the site is considered to be excessive, and needs to be reduced in height, in order that a number of longer 'key' views of the Downs to the east can be appreciated.
4. It is also noted that the proposed scheme does not comply with Network Rail concerns about the need to ensure that all parts of the proposed building need to be a minimum of 3 metres distant from the curtilage of the station, which would require the entire 'footprint' of the scheme to be set back further from the site boundary.
5. Although the existing 1200mm diameter storm water overflow tunnel has been identified and clearly illustrated on the 'Landscape General Arrangement Plan', the culverted Winterbourne Stream that passes under the site has not been shown, and may yet prove to be a further constraint on the proposed layout of the development.
6. It is also noted that although the number of residential units has been increased from 17 to 18 apartments, the number of car parking spaces has been reduced from 13 to 12. Whilst the central location of this site might encourage future residents not to own cars, there are very few on street car parking spaces available locally, which is considered to be an important issue by existing residents.
7. The Society would therefore like to propose that East Sussex County Council, as the local highway authority, be requested to consider this proposal as a "non permit development", should it be considered for approval. This would prevent, future residents applying for a car parking permit on the local streets.
8. The Society strongly regrets that no social housing is proposed within this development.
9. The Society is also aware of the concern of local residents about the possibility of Garden Street having to be closed to enable this proposal to be erected, should it proceed, which would have a significant impact locally.
10. Furthermore, the Society considers that any conservation assessment needs to fully assess the visual impact of this application within the existing Conservation Area, in order to ensure that both the detailing and careful choice of materials to be used in the construction of this significant development, would make a positive contribution to enhancing the local setting.