

Ordnance Lane Redevelopment

FFH Statement to the Planning Application

Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington Local History Society is very disappointed that our contribution to the consultation on this project has been ignored. It would appear that the decision to demolish all the houses in Ordnance Lane was taken at an early stage in the design development.

Normally, only the backs of these houses are seen from Fulford Road and Ordnance Lane, but the new development closes off this route and opens a new pedestrian access passing their much more interesting frontages. Although the project includes retention of the 'married quarters' block, the true heritage value of the site lies in retaining all the houses.

Retention of some or all of these houses could have provided a positive contribution to the new development as a gateway from Fulford Road, whilst also preserving some of the last remaining evidence of the historic significance of the site.

One house is of an interesting Arts and Crafts design. From photographic evidence showing soldiers posing by the porch with a trophy in 1924, perhaps this house functioned as a club house for military personnel at the nearby Ordnance Depot.

The other houses are similar to many across the city which the Council are currently modernising and improving their energy efficiency. In the context of the climate emergency, it does not make sense to extinguish the embedded carbon of these houses and burn more carbon creating new buildings. The Architects Journal has been very vocal on this issue, and it is surprising that a project which takes pride in the energy efficiency standards being adopted in the new houses should be ignoring this aspect.

The planning application includes a Heritage Statement which is unusually opinionated, repetitive, and surprisingly limited in scope, almost entirely focussed on justifying demolition, rather than presenting an independent professional assessment:

- It contains no photographs of the houses, external or internal
- Only the Arts and Crafts house is described, but in a very derogatory manner. There is no serious attempt to describe the other houses.
- The merit of the Arts and Crafts House is dismissed because it is not of an exceptional quality or by a recognised designer, ignoring its heritage value and the potential for this unusually interesting design in this setting.
- The report makes no attempt to assess the houses in the context of the new development, which includes a new pedestrian path from Fulford Road. This path will give passers-by the opportunity to view the houses from their more pleasing frontages, particularly the Arts and Crafts house.
- The report repeatedly focusses on the lack of evidence that the houses may have been built for staff of the Military Hospital, as if this is a key element of their history which would have justified their preservation. Whereas, the historical merit of the houses is that they were part of the Fulford Road complex of York's military garrison, much of which has been lost and the remainder is under threat of extensive redevelopment.
- Reference is made to the decision to exclude the houses from the Conservation Area. However, this was mainly because only the uninteresting backs of the houses were visible at the time.

There is no need to demolish these houses, and we call on members of the planning committee to visit the site, so they can appreciate the arguments we make in this submission.

Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington Local History Society call on the council to instigate a redesign of this part of the project, so that all or the houses, or at least the Arts and Crafts house is retained.



The Arts and Crafts House in Ordnance Lane



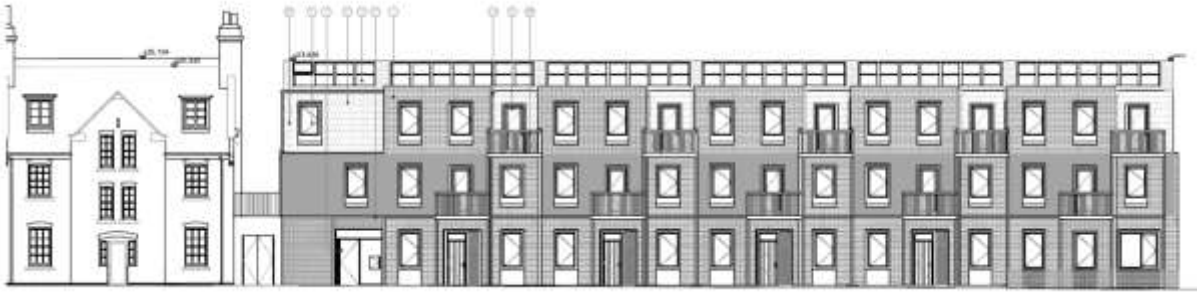
The First House in Ordnance Lane



The Semi-Detached Houses in Ordnance Lane



Winners of the RAOC Trophy in 1924, outside the Arts and Crafts House



South Elevation of the Proposed Ordnance Lane Houses
(note: only part of the 'Married Quarters' block on the left is shown)



Elevation of New Houses in Fulford Road, adjoining Wenlock Buildings (Sainsbury's)