RIPON CIVIC SOCIETY

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Development Management
North Yorkshire Council

7th July 2024

Dear Ms Rann

APPLICATION NOS: ZC23/03403/FUL and ZC23/03404/LB
Proposed conversion of Ripon Spa Baths and Boiler Tower to form two commercial units and offices, including demolition of Swimming Pool Building and replacement with single storey extension to Spa Building, and internal and external alterations to existing buildings. Erection of new building to accommodate four residential apartments. Alterations to landscaping to link new courtyard to Spa Gardens.

Thank you for consulting Ripon Civic Society on the revisions to the above applications.

As we said before, the Society very much supports the scheme which proposes to conserve and provide new uses for an important historic building in the city. Overall, it is a sensitive approach with historic structures cleansed of later inferior additions (including the 1936 pool) and with newbuild done in an unashamedly modern but complementary style and materials. We also accept the need for the residential development as enabling development to make the scheme viable. We therefore continue strongly to support the applications, not least because the building continues to deteriorate.

The only disappointment is that there are no details of a planting scheme, which may be because part of the application site remains in the control of the Council. The Society is strongly of the view that the planting needs to be part of the application even if treated as a reserved matter and that we want to be consulted on it. It is really important that some greening is done or the view from the Spa Gardens could look rather bleak.

Otherwise, most of what we asked for has happened, including clarification of the retention of internal features in the pump room and better alignment of frontage planters, now replaced with bollards.

The applicant has not picked up our comments about the wording on the frontage. We still think repainting the Spa Baths lettering on the porte-cochere should be avoided and it would be better to take the opportunity to change the wording but keep the font. We suggest 'Ripon Spa' would be a suitable name, especially as the Spa Hotel name has now gone.

We understand that the applicant hopes that the applications can go to the August committee and we strongly support this. A decision is needed as soon as possible in view of the deterioration of the building and the possibility that the applicants could pull out if it is delayed further and hand the problem back to the Council, with all the delays and dangers that brings. In conclusion, we continue to give this scheme our strong support as being the best chance of allowing the site to survive. We would urge a speedy grant of Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent to allow work to begin as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Wigginton

Planning Lead
Ripon Civic Society