

Matter 4 - Place making, design, heritage and culture.

Policy D1.

There are many fine aspirational statements within this policy but the test of many of them will be when the Inspectors undertake their site visits.

In particular Policy D1 (iv) has and continues to be compromised not only by approval of a number of private developer planning applications but also by City of York Council promoted schemes that have led to considerable internal angst with CYC conservation architects in particular.

For example 19/02063/FULM & 19/02415/FULM

However my interest in these matters has been documented in previous submissions and that is in regard of continued references to The City of York Streetscape Strategy and Guidance (2014).

Para. 8.8 refers to “development proposals support the principles” of that document.

The City of York Streetscape Strategy and Guidance (2014) is an excellent document drawn up by a well respected private individual in conjunction with CYC which sought to protect and enhance the Streetscape of the city centre.

However, when I have tested the application of the guidance and strategy to implementation of various works in the conservation areas of the Ward I represent - Osbaldwick & Dunnington CAs I have been told that CYC can simply ignore the document as it is simply ‘guidance’.

The Corporate Director has stated publicly that the document was never costed and is simply that ‘guidance’.

If Policy D1 makes reference to this excellent document in the context of developers supporting the principles as set out and yet CYC as local authority seeking to encourage others to follow such guidance remains free to ignore the document as it sees fit how can this be a sound policy?

As an example;

Page 39 of the Streetscape document.

Lanes and alleyways - reference is made to reinstatement of historic surfaces and yet CYC has and continues to remove such surfaces and replace with tarmac.

De-cluttering - is completely disregarded by CYC, the recent approval of Hostile Vehicle Measures in the city centre and the large number of BT Hub applications (yet to be determined) are but two examples. City wide the lack of a comprehensive street sign audit as recommended by DoT leads to a proliferation of street clutter with redundant road signage in abundance.

Lighting - the guidance is completely ignored by CYC when replacing ‘human scale’ lighting columns with bog standard 20’ utilitarian columns. I have had to fight tooth and nail to retain historic cast iron columns in this Ward.

Policy D2 (ix) Lighting.

As above comments on replacement lighting columns, I have had to make representations to get CYC to recognise the different light levels for rural villages as opposed to urban areas where again bog standard utilitarian 20' high columns are routinely imposed at high light levels.

Policy D4 Conservation Areas.

This omits to mention that The statutory duty to protect and enhance Conservation Areas is also extended to local authority highway schemes and should be included to make the policy sound and so the public know that removal of for example historic paving, kerb blocks, over use of road makings/road signage is in some cases against that statutory duty.

I hope the Inspectors will see from Osbaldwick Conservation Area on their site visits how a CA can be enhanced when there is strong representation to protect it.

Policy D7. Non-designated Heritage Assets.

A good test of this policy is 21/00304/FUL shortly to go a PINs appeal.

Cllr. M. Warters.

31st August 2022