

The South Jericho Residents' Association (SJRA)



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Angela Fettiplace
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Oxfordshire City Council Planning Department
St Aldate's Chambers
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By email

26th August 2013

PLANNING SERVICES	
3 SEP 2013	17 SEP 2013
REFERRED TO	CAT

Dear Angela,

Planning Application No.13/00832/FUL
Former Ruskin College Site, Walton Street, Oxford
Response to letter from Turnberry Planning dated August 20th 2013

On behalf of the South Jericho Residents Association (SJRA) I write in response to the letter submitted by Turnberry Planning on the 20th August attempting to clarify the technical aspects of the proposed scheme. The SJRA has met to discuss the feedback from Turnberry Planning and our response is set out below.

- Our independent **daylight and sunlight analysis** is quite basic but it does demonstrate that the significantly higher proposed building will result in many additional hours of the year when daylight to our houses will be impeded. In addition Worcester Place stretches from east to west and therefore sunlight is directly impeded by additional height. Our efforts to validate Exeter's plans have been hindered by their refusal to release the 3d CAD files to us, despite several requests.
- The SJRA does not agree that the **glass dormer windows** will be "... very transparent. *Although visible, they will appear as delicate triangular forms and reflection which the glass construction means they will hardly be distinguishable from the sky behind*" as asserted by Turnberry Planning. Nor do we believe that such windows "*follow in the Oxford tradition of cock lofts to Fellows' residences at roof level...*" at least not in a residential setting. The SJRA believes these will be visible and intrusive (similar to concerns about the proposed Blavatnik building). We fail to see why these windows have remained hidden and unexplained until now given that they appear to be such an important feature. The glass dormers are unsuitable for an already very high frontage overlooking a narrow residential street. We think these protruding dormer windows are a significant concern because they are effectively **all-year roof terraces**. These are intended as waiting rooms for students awaiting tutorials and, in our view, should be replaced with roof lights that are flush with the surface with seats placed within the internal corridor instead. See Appendix 1.

The South Jericho Residents' Association (SJRA)

- The **very much larger windows** facing Worcester Place should be reduced to the same size as those of the existing Ruskin building and should be recessed behind parapets and with wings. The current proposal, where the enlarged windows are flush with the surface, are intrusive especially in the context of overlooking a narrow residential street.
- We wish to see the design of the screens that are proposed for the **outside roof terrace** planned to be situated above the South residential building, high up and outdoors. We consider that the screens should be a solid permanent barrier high enough to ensure privacy for the houses opposite. This should also be designated a quiet area with no noise permitted after 10pm, with no music to be played at any time, no alcohol and no parties and with the Porters locking access to it outside its hours of use. We are concerned that this feature was not presented to us by Turnberry Planning. See Appendix 2.
- The letter from Turnberry Planning confirms that the two visualisations of Worcester Place, that have been used in all of their presentations since January 2013 (including once called "Updated Heritage Impact Assessment"), are in fact only **Artist Impressions, and do not represent Verified Views** (and therefore do not meet British Standards). This renders them useless and worse misleading. These Artist Impressions make Worcester Place look significantly more spacious than the narrow one-way city centre residential street that it actually is. See Appendices 3 and 4.
- Turnberry Planning's representation of the **auditorium height** should have used the comparison to the Ruskin houses that span the majority of the width (i.e. the lower one, which is relevant to three fifths of the width of the proposed auditorium, representing a 1.3 metre height increase). It is not acceptable to use the higher one, relevant to only two fifths of the width, at all. The presentation of this in Turnberry Planning's materials has been misleading.
- The former Ruskin students were mostly mature and were lectured either on-site or in Headington. The Planning Application form states that Exeter are planning to have 77 **cycle stands**, of which 27 would be situated on the highway of Worcester Place. These would be intended for students who will take lectures within the city centre. These facts contradict the Local Highway Authority statement that "*....the potential increase in cycling, from this proposed use is likely to be low*". We point out that this statement cannot be sustained given an **increase from zero to 77**. Nor are we aware of any precedent in the Jericho area where cycle stands are situated in a residential street. We propose that the cycle stands should be moved within the site and with access onto Walton Street instead. See Appendix 5.

Two additional points have come to light through our analysis of the plans that we think should be brought to your attention:

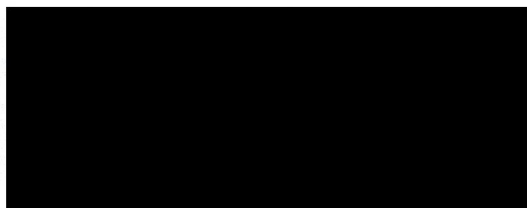
1. The **1960s block** that faces opposite 26-28 Worcester Place has windows that protrude 73cm (two feet five inches) for about half of their width (except for the ground level where there is no protrusion at all). It appears that Exeter's plans have incorporated this extrusion into the front elevation of their planned building as if it were a continuous line. This appears to represent an incursion onto Worcester Place. See Appendix 6.
2. The original Ruskin building follows the **rules of a corner site** (where the side of a building wraps around into a side street). It is very clear that the original building stops at the point where it is opposite Walton Lane. Thereafter the Ruskin buildings are more domestic in scale as they face the smaller houses opposite. This principle has not been upheld in the proposals where higher buildings extend further along Worcester Place.

The South Jericho Residents' Association (SJRA)

The Planning Application form states that the gross internal floorspace would be increased from 3,676 to 5,118 (an extra 39.2%). This is another indication that a relatively small site would be overdeveloped by this proposal.

In conclusion the letter from Turnberry Planning has not provided any comfort to us about the points we have raised previously and we remain extremely concerned about the increased scale of the building and the negative impact on our homes. We therefore re-state our request that the plans are required to be scaled back accordingly.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Johnson , Chair, SJRA

Also on behalf of, and with copies to:

Professor Victor Flynn, 25 Worcester Place
Mark Johnson-Watts, 2 Walton Lane
Mary Keen, 4 Walton Street
Marya Lewis, 13 Walton Street
Nicky Schlatter, 27 Worcester Place
Sir Stephen Sedley, 15 Walton Street

Copies to:

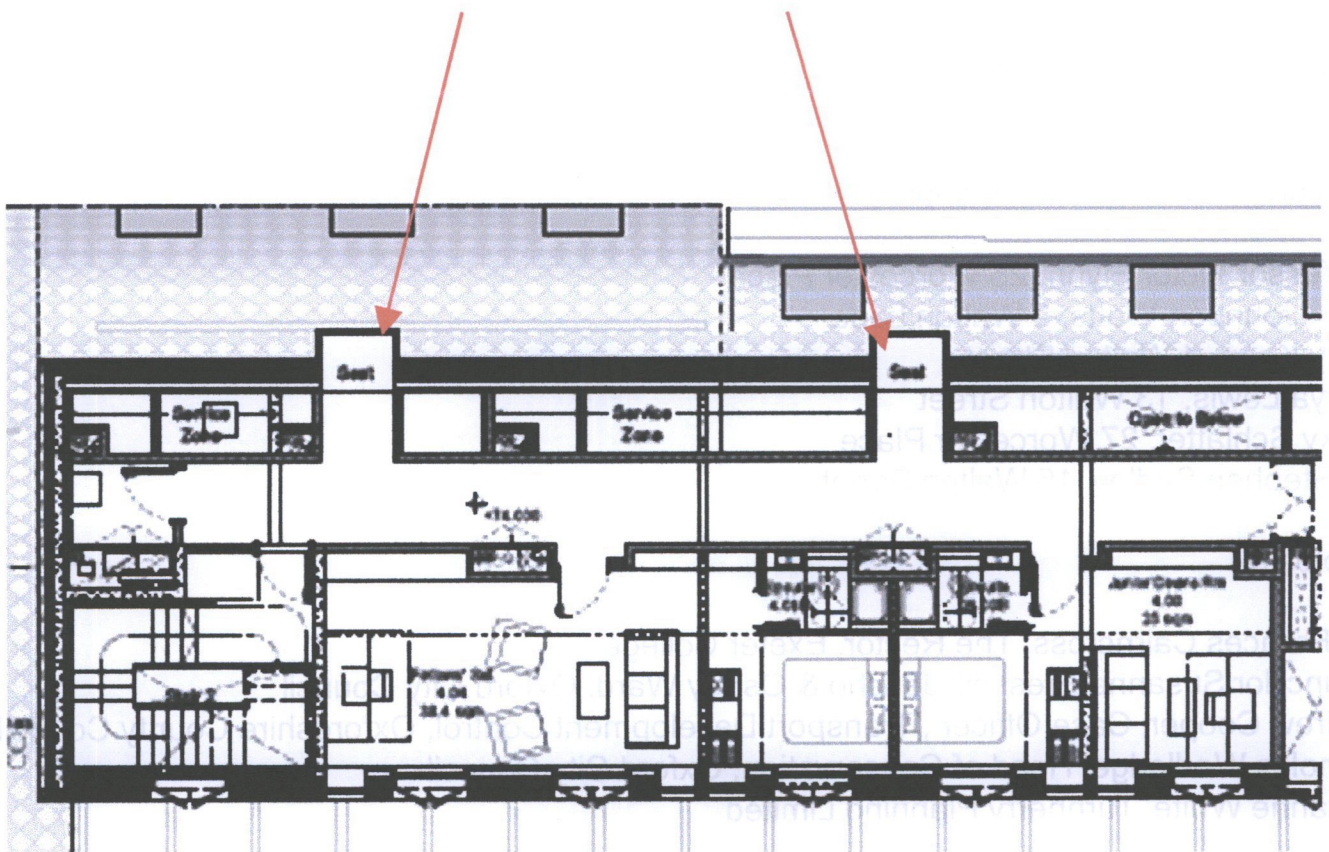
Ms Frances Cairncross, The Rector, Exeter College
Councillor Susanna Pressell, Jericho & Osney Ward, Oxford City Council
Andrew Cooper, Case Officer , Transport Development Control, Oxfordshire County Council
Nicholas Worlledge, Head of Conservation, Oxford City Council
Suzanne White, Turnberry Planning Limited

West Area Planning Committee:
Councillor Elise Benjamin
Councillor Anne-Marie Canning
Councillor Bev Clack
Councillor Colin Cook

Councillor Michael Gotch
Councillor Graham Jones
Councillor Bob Price
Councillor John Tanner
Councillor Oscar Van Nooijen

Appendix 1: Glass Dormers on the fourth floor

- the glass dormers are unsuitable for an **already very high frontage** overlooking a narrow residential street
- these are intended as waiting rooms for students awaiting Tutorials and, in our view, should be replaced with **roof lights that are flush with the surface** with seats placed within the internal corridor instead
- we think these protruding dormer windows are a significant concern because they are effectively **all-year roof terraces**
- Turnberry Planning omitted to explain the nature and purpose of the glass dormer in any of their presentations

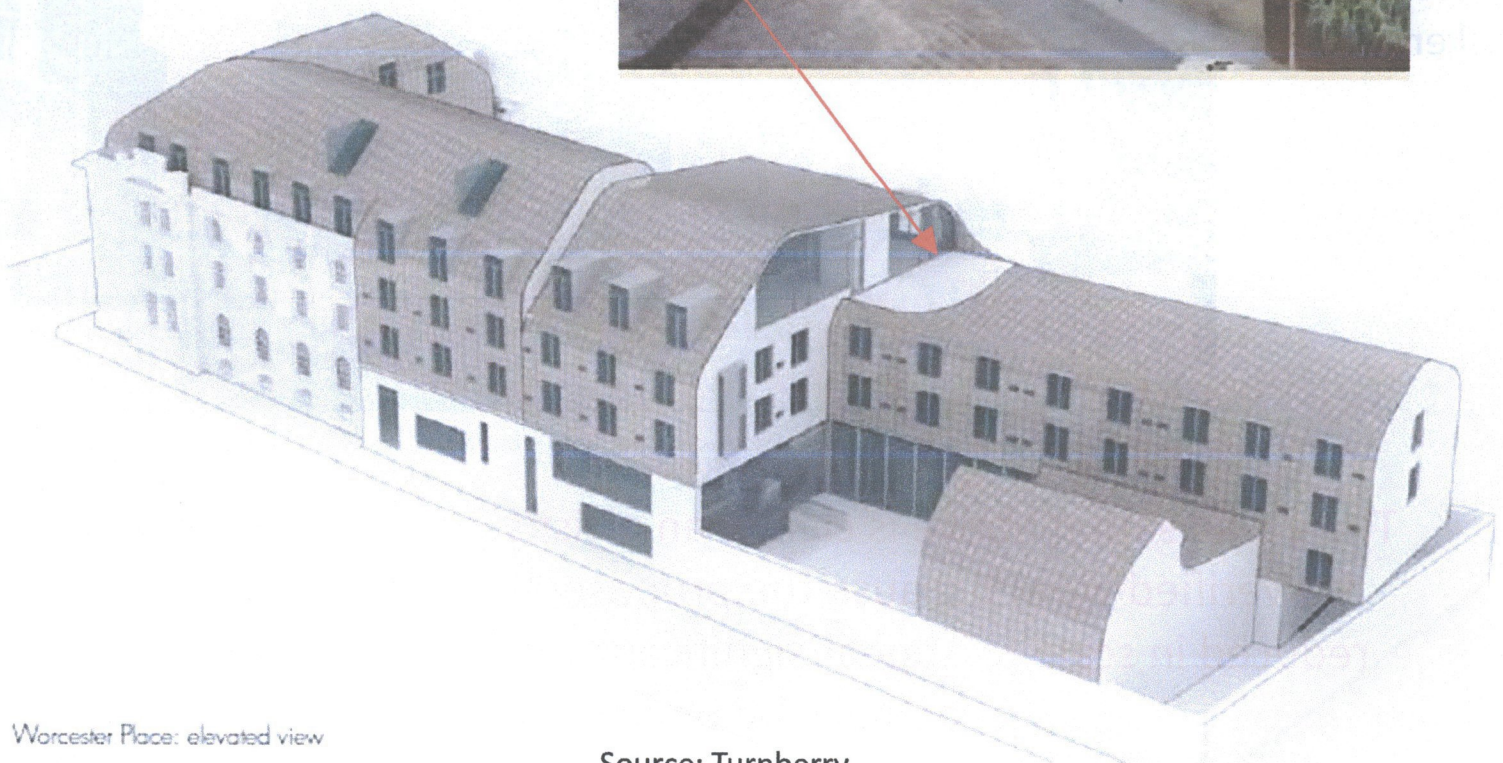


Proposed fourth floor plan

Source: <http://public.oxford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=MKZA7ZMF0RQ00>

Appendix 2: Outside roof terrace

- the screening (mentioned by Turnberry Planning in their letter) should be a **solid permanent barrier** high enough to ensure privacy for the residential houses opposite
- this should also be **designated a quiet area** with no noise permitted after 10pm, with no **music** to be played at any time, no **alcohol** and no **parties**
- we have a particular concern with Summer Schools
- Turnberry Planning omitted to mention the roof terrace in any of their presentations



Worcester Place: elevated view

Source: Turnberry

Appendix 3: The view facing east along Worcester Place

1. As presented by Turnberry Planning "Updated Heritage Impact Assessment"



Visualisation

http://public.oxford.gov.uk/online-applications/files/C7712F75AFC3F916244D7D179FB39384/pdf/13_00832_FUL-VISUALISATION_BOOKLET-1358099.pdf

The size has been compacted



2. As per photograph taken by SJRA



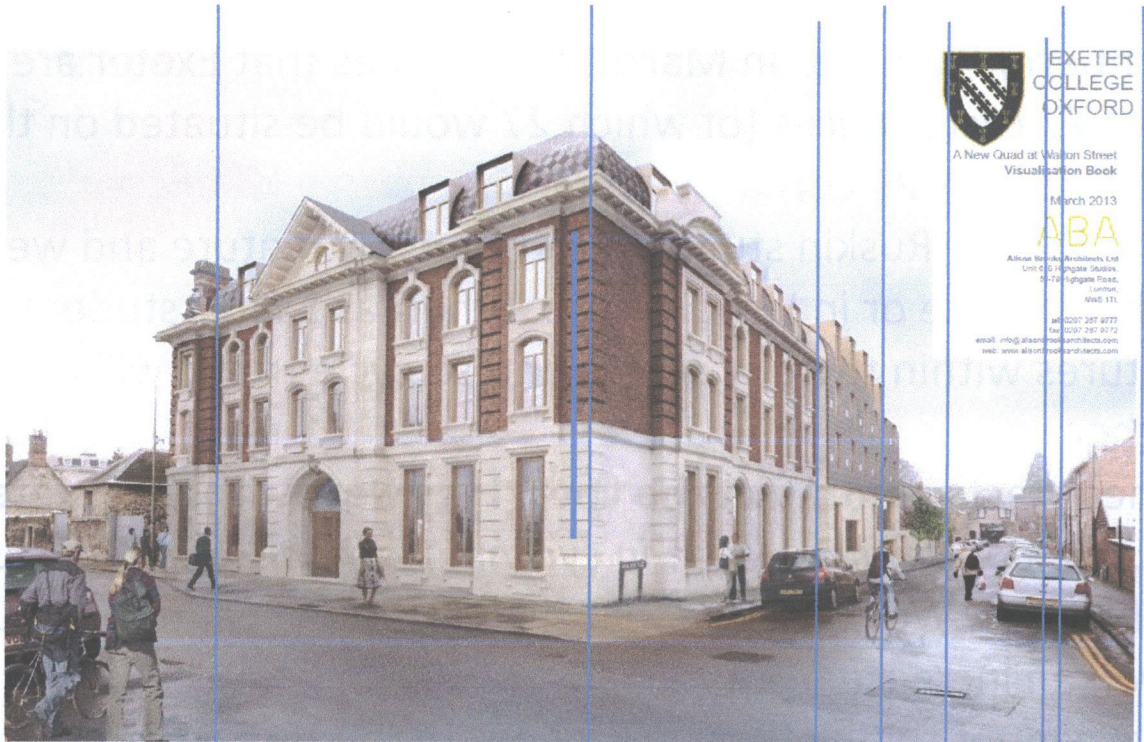
Picture taken
May 26th 2013
C Johnson

Comparison

The visualisation above is clearly an artist's impression, and not a verified view, because the proposed building has been reduced in scale to appear significantly smaller than it would actually be once built

Appendix 4: The view facing west from the junction of Worcester Place and Walton Street

1. As presented by Turnberry Planning "Updated Heritage Impact Assessment "



Visualisation

http://public.oxford.gov.uk/online-applications/files/C7712F75AFC3F916244D7D179FB393B4/pdf/13_00832_FUL-VISUALISATION_BOOKLET-1358099.pdf

The size has been compacted



2. As per photograph taken by SJRA



Picture taken
May 26th 2013
C Johnson

Comparison

The visualisation above is clearly an artist's impression, and not a verified view, because the proposed building has been reduced in scale to appear significantly smaller than it would actually be once built

Appendix 5: Cycle stands

- the planning application form submitted to Oxford City Council by Turnberry Planning in March 2013 states that Exeter are planning to have 77 cycle spaces (of which 27 would be situated on the highway of Worcester Place)
- the former Ruskin students were mostly mature and were lectured either on-site or in Headington. Whereas Exeter students will take lectures within the city centre and so cycle traffic will be much higher
- these facts **contradict the Local Highway Authority statement** that “....the potential increase in cycling, from this proposed use is likely to be low”. We point out that this statement cannot be sustained given an increase from zero to 77
- we cannot think of any precedent in the Jericho area where cycle stands are placed in a residential street
- **we propose that the cycle stands should be moved within the site and with access via Walton Street instead of Worcester Place**
- we also note the reduction of five parking spaces

Extract from Planning Application Form dated March 27th 2013

11. Vehicle Parking

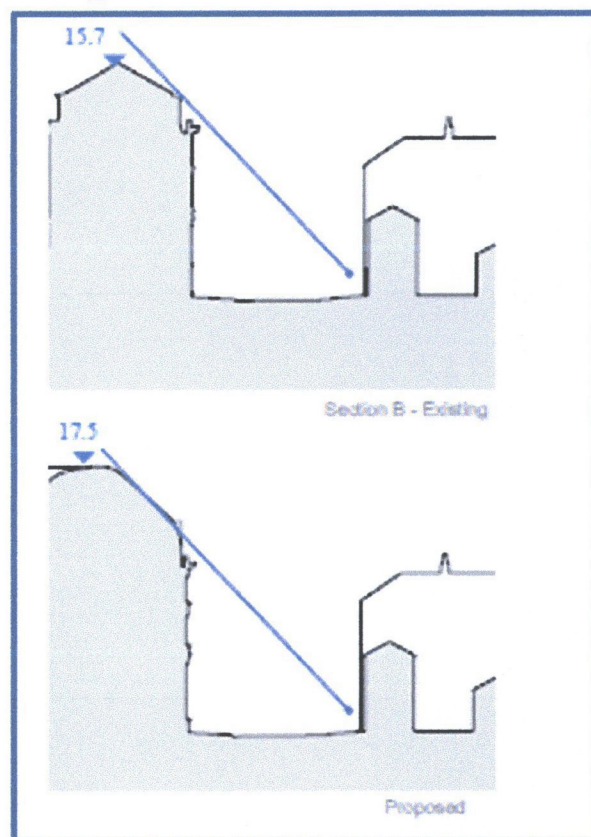
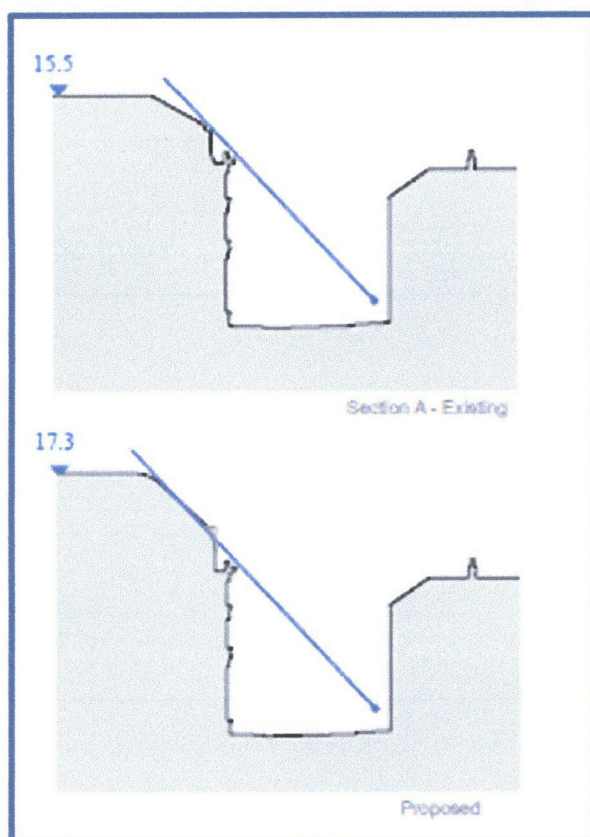
Please provide information on the existing and proposed number of on-site parking spaces:

Type of Vehicle	Total Existing	Total proposed (including spaces retained)	Difference in spaces
Cars	5	0	- 5
Light goods vehicles/ public carrier vehicles			
Motorcycles			
Disability spaces			
Cycle spaces	0	50 INTERNAL, 27 EXTERNAL	+ 77
Other (e.g. Bus)			
Other (e.g. Bus)			

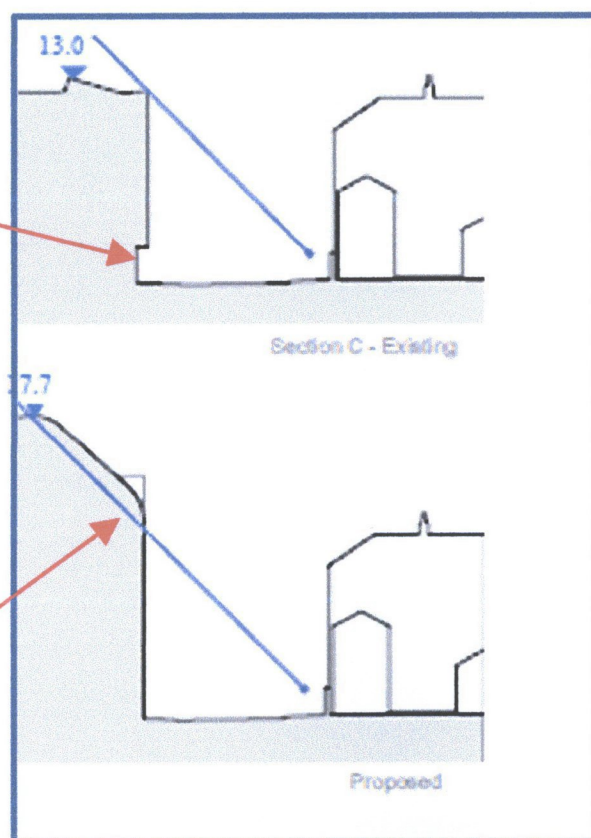
\$Date: 2013-01-07 #5 \$Revision: 4679 \$

Source: http://public.oxford.gov.uk/online-applications/files/90C9F54CC8FF883171AA3D3DA9E353FA/pdf/13_00832_FUL--1357939.pdf

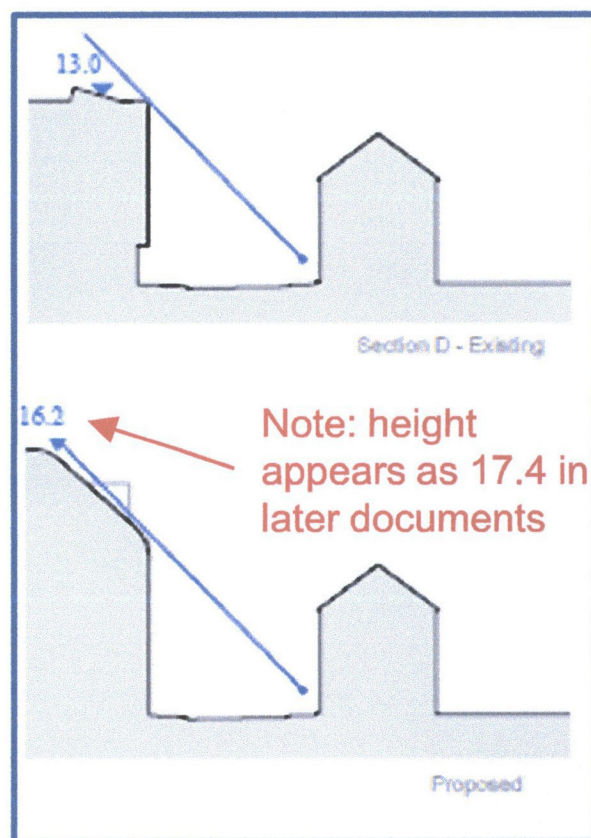
Appendix 6: Angles and height measurements presented by Turnberry Planning



Additional width of protruding windows has been assumed



Angle is greater even though effect of dormer windows is not included



Note: height appears as 17.4 in later documents