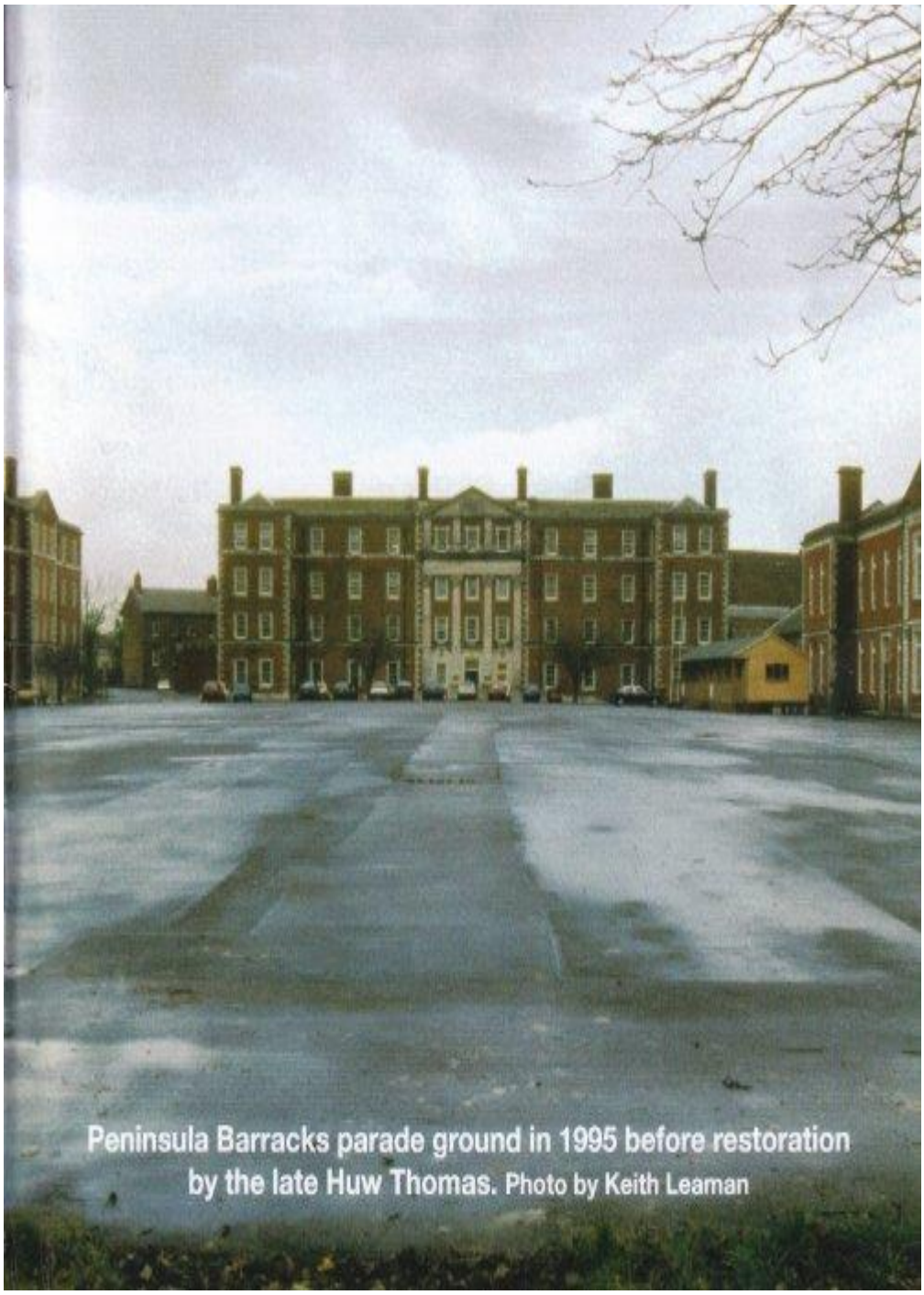
Peninsula Barracks image - TrustNews Dec 20



Peninsula Barracks parade ground in 1995 before restoration by the late Huw Thomas. Photo by Keith Leaman

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Chairman's Jottings - TrustNews Dec 20

Water Garden, Colebrook Street

First of all, I should like to thank Judith Martin for undertaking a good deal of research on the water garden in Colebrook Street, working alongside Sally Miller of the Hampshire Gardens Trust. As many of you will know there was an explosion of objections to the planning application for a house set in the grounds of the water garden which would have compromised a much loved view across the garden designed specifically to focus the view to the east end of the Cathedral. The good news is that the planning department has refused the application.

While I was preparing the Trust's response to the application, I took a good look at number 34. I have always considered it was one of Winchester's building gems so I was surprised to find that it is only listed grade 2. Pevsner records the building as being re-modelled by the architect, Henry Holland for his own use around 1790. Henry Holland had a very impressive client base, amongst whom was Lord Palmerstone, who employed him to undertake the design of Broadlands. Henry Holland's life was based in London, so it seems curious that apparently, he is recorded as having altered this house for himself. Maybe he prepared a base for his use while Broadlands was underway in the same period?


34 Colebrook Street

Government Planning White Paper

John Beveridge masterminded our response to the Government White Paper on their proposal to streamline the planning system. We considered the paper had some good ideas, but also some very naive propositions mixed in with suggestions which we considered extremely difficult to deliver. John took on a difficult task and deserves a vote of thanks together with the team who helped with contributions.

Civic Voice

A number of Trust Council members have been attending webinars convened by Civic Voice. The webinars are for making suggestions, as well as exploring ways of how trusts, up and down the country, could pick up on the white paper suggestions for involving the public in improving the planning system, the designing of mass housing etc. These webinars are still ongoing, and it will be interesting to see whether they inspire some positive results.

Winchester Projects

Although we are aware that Station Approach is under consideration by Winchester City Council - the Trust has been involved in some of the discussions - there is nothing as yet of any substance to report. For an update on the Central area (Silver Hill), see page 8.

The other ongoing engagement is a vision statement for Winchester being prepared for the City Council by Jones, Lang, Lascelles, who are in the process of producing their findings ready for discussion shortly. We await with interest!

Keith Leaman

Planning Appraisal Group - TrustNews Dec 20

As heralded in the September issue of TrustNews, PAG chair Mary Tiles has moved to Scotland, and as a result the administrative side of the work of the PAG panels is being undertaken by Trust Secretary Tessa Robertson, overseen by Trust Council member and previous PAG chair Shione Garden.

Our four review panels are still unable to meet because of the Covid restrictions, and so are carrying out their important work by email and Zoom. We are very grateful to panel members, all of whom are volunteers, for continuing to operate in these less than ideal circumstances.

The number of planning applications, while varying from week to week, has certainly not decreased, and may even have increased, perhaps as a result of people having to spend more time at home and deciding to make changes. The majority of applications involve minor changes and a large number of extensions.

The possible changes on the cards in the future as a result of the Government's two White Papers are covered elsewhere, but if they go ahead, there will be significant differences in the ability of the public and the Trust to comment on proposed development. The Trust will be keeping a close eye on the proposals and what they will mean for Winchester.

The issue of tree felling, both for trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and for trees in the Conservation Area, has occupied our panels recently, as they have found it difficult to make effective comments because of the paucity of information included in the applications. The Trust has raised this with the City Council.

We are always on the lookout for people interested in joining one of our review panels. The job involves reviewing once a month the planning applications that have been submitted for Winchester Town that week. Each panel includes an architect, but otherwise members are lay people with an interest in planning and development in Winchester. If you are interested in becoming a member or finding out more, please contact Tessa at secretary@cityofwinchestertrustco.uk for more information.

Tessa Robertson

Members and Public Comments

The Trust welcomes informative comments from local people, but must avoid being influenced by vested interests or personal matters. Individuals who believe their interests are being threatened by proposed schemes are advised to contact their Ward Councillors, who have more influence over such matters. If you would like to see details of Trust objections to planning applications and their fate, please go to the monthly PAG reports on our website.

Lord Ashburton - TrustNews Dec 20

As many of you will probably know, Lord Ashburton died recently, aged 91. He served as one of the Trust's Vice-Presidents from 2004 until 2015. Sir Peter Ramsbotham, our President at the time, invited him to serve as a vice president, which he willingly undertook, as he had been a long-time supporter of the City of Winchester Trust and its philosophy. Lord Ashburton resigned from the post when he started to take a working interest in The Grange, his old family home, and its new re-incarnation as a successful opera house.

Keith Leaman

The Water Garden - latest episode - TrustNews Dec 20

This could be called a Chronicle of a Planning Application Foretold. When the Water Garden by the cathedral wall was put up for sale at the very end of 2017, the details from the estate agent said: "There may be future development potential....If the future owner of the 'Water Garden' obtains planning permission for residential development, then 30% of the uplift between the current garden value and the then development value, will be paid to the current vendor of their successors in title."

At an asking price of 100,000 pounds for 0.1 acres of land, designed to be open to the public gaze and with an implied responsibility for maintenance, it was pretty obvious that the new owner, possibly with a little pressure from the previous one, with the overage clause, would apply for development sooner or later. In fact, the new owner told one of the Hampshire Gardens Trust team that he realised he'd paid over the odds, and therefore the garden would have to earn its keep.

When the City of Winchester Trust and the Hampshire Gardens Trust became aware that the garden was to be sold, they organised a joint meeting, on 4th January 2018,

with the aim of persuading Winchester City Council to acquire it. In fact it was already rumoured that it had been sold, but the representative from WCC said then that the council would do all it could to protect it. In June 2018 they agreed to a request from the Gardens Trust for a Tree Protection Order on the two magnolias, and fought off an appeal against the decision by the new owner.

The Trust was alerted to the new threat, to build a house on the northern half of the garden, on 22nd October, by Janet Hurrell of HGT who had in turn been told by the owner of the adjacent house. The two trusts swung into action, with the result that the number of objections may well be a record. Not all of them are from our members, of course - in fact theyâ€˜ve come from across the world, from people who know and love the city and remember the Water Garden. At the time of writing, there are well over 600 objections.

The Trust's approach has not been to criticise the proposed house, tempting though that is, but to say that the garden should be protected from all development. There are plenty of legal as well as emotional reasons for that protection. Anything else risks leaving the door open for a better plan by a better architect.

The last date for comments to Winchester City Council was 11th November. Thank you to those members who have already written, and thank you to everyone who just breathes a little deeper, and feels a little more expansive and appreciative when confronted with beauty. Above all, thank you to Sir Peter Smithers, who designed the garden in the 1950s for public benefit. And what a shame anyone should try to turn that to private profit.

Judith Martin

After this article was written, the planning application to develop the Water Garden was refused by the City Council. There were more than 1,000 objections. [Ed.]

A Practical Vision for Winchester High Street - TrustNews Dec 20

A Vision for Winchester High Street was proposed by Stephen Harte in the June issue of TrustNews, and he elaborated it in the September issue with contributions from Richard Baker and Arthur Morgan. Peter Liddiard then wrote with several comments and questions which are reproduced below with responses from Stephen (assisted by Richard) in italics. I was very grateful for Peter's thoughtful response and I have spoken with him and expressed my appreciation and gone through the points he raised.

I was not intending to be pedantic and resolve everything, as issues are complex and we look to the authorities (Councils and others) to do that with the community. Paramount in the proposal is the need to achieve a fully pedestrianised High Street. That is a red line!

Item 1 of the article says that making Sussex Street two-way would get major traffic out of Upper High Street and reduce traffic at the top end of the High Street. I cannot see how it would reduce traffic in the High Street. Please explain.

Traffic coming up St Georges Street which wants to go west up the Romsey Road without going up the top part of the High Street would need to turn right along Jewry Street, left along City Road, left along Sussex Street and right up Romsey Road. With south- and north-bound traffic on Sussex Street (i. e. making it two-way) means traffic does not need to go along the upper High Street.

The article suggests that an improved High Street would connect the city's Cultural and leisure facilities. It does not, and cannot. The city's cultural and leisure facilities are uch more widespread.

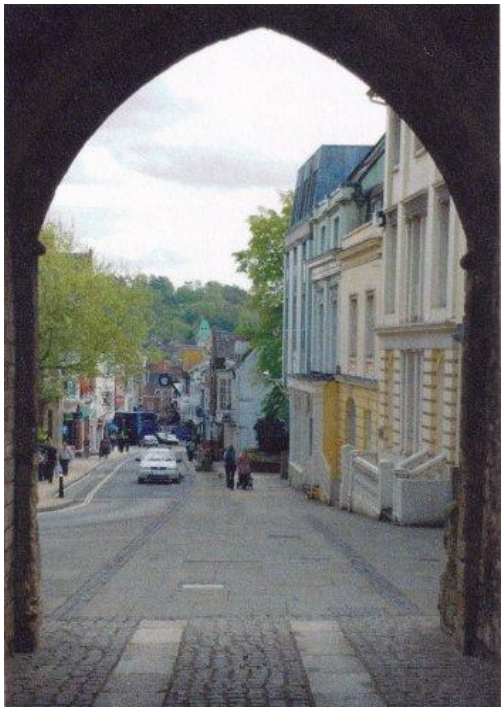
Yes, there are widespread cultural and leisure facilities in the City. Pedestrianising all of the High Street creating a linear plaza from the Broadway to Westgate would mean that major attractions, not all but probably most, would be in a pedestrian zone directly accessed off the High Street, i.e. the Guildhall, Cathedral, City Museum, College, Great Hall, Westgate Museum, and Military museums.

If the eventual aim is to pedestrianize the upper part of the High Street below the Westgate, one has to address how traffic and deliveries would access Staple Gardens, the Law Courts and St Clement's Street.

Deliveries and access are major issues which need to be studied in detail. We can learn from how other cities have achieved access and deliveries where pedestrian priority is necessary.

I agree that a visually strong entrance to the barracks is needed, but I can't see how. Once one goes up Romsey Road, the barracks have a fine entrance; the problem is that it is not visible from the High Street, and is accessible only along a narrow footpath to Romsey Road.

The Barracks and their military museums do need better promotion. A museum pass might be one way of giving access to the Peninsula Square museums by coming through the Great Hall and up the steps from the Queen Eleanor Garden. A platform lift could be provided for disability access. The other suggestion is to make a strong link from the High Street to Trafalgar Street through into Gar Street and the Barracks. There may be another way of creating a path to pass behind the Law Courts where there is the open landscape area and keeping to the boundary up to Peninsula Square. No doubt contentious and would need detail.


View East from inside Westgate

There is no George Street. It is St George's Street. True. *Editor's oversight.*

In section 4 it is stated that only essential traffic should be able to turn left at the top of St George's Street. How do you define essential, and how do you stop non-essential traffic from turning left?

'Essential' may be defined as public transport and emergency services. This would need detailed analysis. I am suggesting ways of managing traffic but not a final solution which the authorities need to agree on.

If non-essential traffic is prevented from turning left out of St George's Street, how do residents and visitors get to St Cross, Winchester College, etc?

This is linked with the point above. Either traffic has to circumvent the City by other routes, or access must be allowed from St George's Street to Southgate Street.

I do not understand what you mean by "the lower end of George Street (sic) could be one way as far as Parchment Street". Is St Georges Street not going to be one way throughout its length, as it is now?

'One way' should have been 'one lane' as far as Parchment Street then two lanes for traffic to turn south or north along Jewry Street. However, traffic could be one lane the length of St George's Street and still turn left or right at the traffic lights.

I do not understand what is meant by traffic lights managing a two way system alternating as one way from Southgate Street along Jewry Street.

To establish a pedestrian area in Jewry Street outside Barclays Bank, only one traffic lane is proposed between St George's Street and Southgate Street with through use

of traffic lights to control alternate use of the one lane by north- and south-bound traffic.

The article suggests altering the traffic flow to the Broadway to the north side of King Alfred's statue. I think this would be a mistake, for lots of reasons. A much better solution, in my view, would be to leave the traffic flow much as it is, but make the whole of the area in front of the Guildhall, all the way to King Alfred's statue, a pedestrian priority zone, with the area in front of the Guildhall having high spec paving laid out to a formal pattern.

I agree about the area in front of the Guildhall as a high spec paved area giving pedestrian priority. I proposed that the Abbey Gardens (south) side of King Alfred's Statue could be a pedestrian area and traffic two-way on the north side of the Statue. This is an area integral to the arrangements being developed for the Central Winchester Area Regeneration, bus routes, local and national and the location, if any, of a bus station/bus hub.

It might be worth exploring some of the other issues for visitors/pedestrians in Winchester:

The bridge on Bridge Street by City Mill is lethally narrow. A solution to this urgently needs to be found:

- widen the bridge (rebuilding the parapet in a new location)?

- put a pedestrian bridge alongside the existing bridge? - change the traffic to single way alternating, controlled by traffic lights, enabling the footway to be extended in width?

- establish a second bridge crossing point for pedestrians a little further south?

I agree. Richard Jobson of Design Engine has produced a creative design for attaching a pedestrian bridge on the south side of St Swithuns bridge. A traffic system to alternate traffic so only one lane is in use at a time would reduce the wear and tear on the bridge and create more pavement.

The footpath along the weirs arrives at a very tight spot on Bridge Street â€“ there needs to be ready access to the footpath along Water Lane.

I agree that a better pedestrian link is needed between the Weirs and Water Lane.

A footpath/cycle-way needs to be established to the new Leisure Centre and Park & Ride.

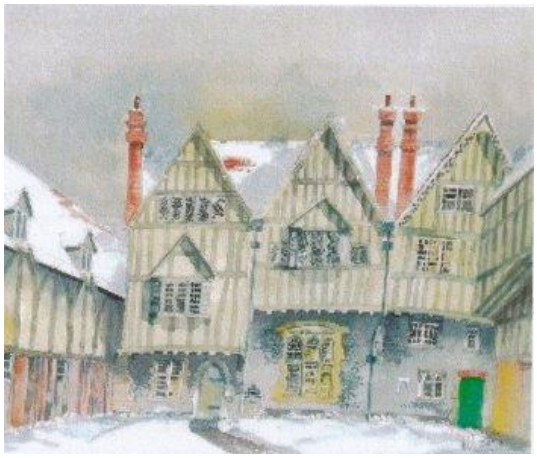
Pedestrian routes between the city centre and the new Sports Centre at Bar End are poor. There is the potential for a route between Wharf Hill and the Handlebar CafÃ©, and a new easterly footpath connection north of the Recycling Centre to Bar End Road could be considered.

Trust Christmas cards for sale - TrustNews Dec 20

As a result of changes to the arrangements at the charity Christmas card shop at the Guildhall and the new Covid restrictions, this year the Trust's Christmas card is being sold directly by the Trust. The card depicts a wintry scene of Winchester's Cheyney Court, from a watercolour by Trust Chairman Keith Leaman. The price is £5.95 for a pack of 10, including postage.

There are two ways of buying: either via the online shop on the Trust website at www.cityofwinchestertrust.co.uk/shop, or by sending a cheque with your order to The Secretaly, The Heritage Centre, 32 Upper Brook Street, Winchester SO23 8DG.

The sale of Christmas cards raises funds to help the Trust continue its work throughout the year.



Christmas Card 2020

Central Regeneration Area site - progress report - TrustNews Dec 20

In June 2018 Winchester City Council adopted a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) following a period of extensive engagement and consultation in 2017.

At a Cabinet meeting of the Council on Tuesday 10th November 2020, approval was given for a consultation programme on the draft Central Winchester Regeneration Proposal from 11 November 2020 to 12 January 2021.

A dedicated page setting out the Proposal will be set up on the Council website which will include details of online consultation sessions.

The Proposal states that the SPD guidance underpins all the work now being undertaken. The focus of the Proposal is on development that meets the needs of the younger population in Winchester for employment, housing and leisure. It proposes retail, residential and mixed uses totalling 32,166 sq. metres of floor area, which is said to produce a viable scheme. The Proposal sets out five phases of development with housing to the east and mixed uses to the west.

The preferred method of implementing development is a contractual joint venture between the Council and a developer for the whole site. The SPD approach to implementation was to respect different land ownerships to enable sites to be developed independently within a long term plan.

Alongside this Proposal is a feasibility study on the creation of a creative hub at King's Walk, carried out by Turner Works and Worthwhile Works, requiring an investment of 3.5m to 4.2 pounds, set against an estimated income of c.825,000 pounds.

It is unclear as to what consultation will take place on this study and how it fits with the phasing and long term plan for the Central Area site.

The Trust will be responding to the consultation on the Proposal and would like to hear the views of members of the Trust. Please send them to the Secretary, Tessa Robertson, by Monday 4th January 2021.

Richard Baker

Silver Hill - here we go again! - TrustNews Dec 20

It was the late great Huw Thomas who prompted Robert Adam who then nudged a councillor chum who told me to look into Silver Hill when I became a councillor in 2011. It was immediately apparent that there was little to see, in contrast to the amount of talk about the site's history.

The Council is following the same approach today in that there is nothing to see but for plenty of fine words and aspirations. There is an odd fixation on the purported need to attract the young, but there are no clear solutions for the opening up of historic waterways, a world class museum, a solution for public transport, a ‘pocket’ park or any provision for the needs of the not so young.

Nothing about the Council's current proposal excites. Nothing which indicates empathy for the city’s heritage or its context. Nothing that suggests that the structure of the proposal is anything but vague. The so-called ‘meanwhile uses’ may appeal but the concept is spoiled by the plan to spend £4 million to retain the especially ugly King's Walk for a decade or more. Gone is the idea of working with several developers so as to encourage variety.

“We must get on with things," the Council will cry, without acknowledging that the years of delay are of its own doing. It extended the contract made with Thornfield by more than ?ve years, including a year after the Judicial Review (2015) in which it spent hundreds of thousands of pounds trying to revive a version of the scheme it had said was unviable. The Supplementary Planning Document (SDP) was produced in 2017/18 and, subsequently, JTP put a lot of work into preparing schemes and delivery options, but they never saw the light of day because Council officers decided to give the job to JLL. Time, money and a huge amount of goodwill was wasted by that decision.

Oblivious to the contradiction, the Council is now claiming that JLL is realising the SPD whilst, at the same time, it maintains that JTP's schemes based on the SPD were unviable. The JLL scheme is about 100,000 square feet smaller but said to be much more viable. Go figure.

The Council should be told of the faults in its proposal through its online consultation process, and because we, the Winchester Deserves Better group, can see this leading to a repeat of the Henderson debacle, we are girding our loins again to provide the Council with constructive criticism and some solutions.

We say that before selling the site the Council needs either to itself direct master planning experts to ensure that the public benefits are secured, or it should pass that responsibility to a Community Development Trust or a similar civic entity. The CWT de?nitely has a role to play here and, whenever we are allowed to hold hands again, we look forward to doing just that in a concerted effort to achieve what really could be a transformational scheme for our wonderful city.

Kim Gottlieb

www.WinchesterDeservesBetter.org

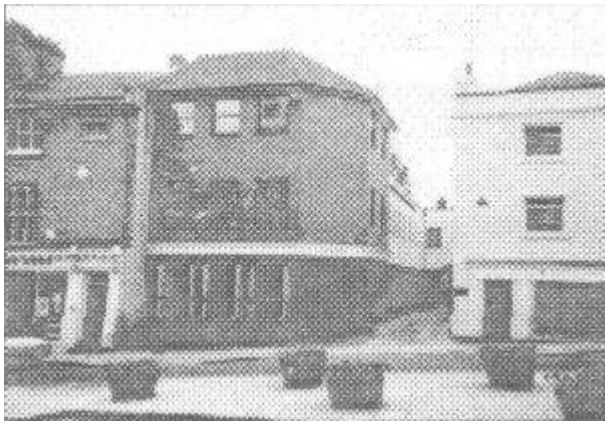
Lipstick on the Gorilla Huw Thomas - TrustNews Dec 20

In 2004 Huw Thomas wrote a series of articles titled 'Lipstick on the Gorilla' for TrustNews, here we re-print the back page from the March and September 2004 editions

Lipstick on the Gorilla Huw Thomas

This is the title for a little series in TrustNews. It is an attempt to brighten up and improve visually some of the unattractive buildings in Winchester. Of course, it is true that ' beauty is in the eye of the beholder' and some of the suggestions may not be entirely popular.

I have illustrated one building called Wessex Court (Upper High Street), which was a drab office block, now converted into flats. What do you think of this lipstick? It illustrates what can be done to an existing building.

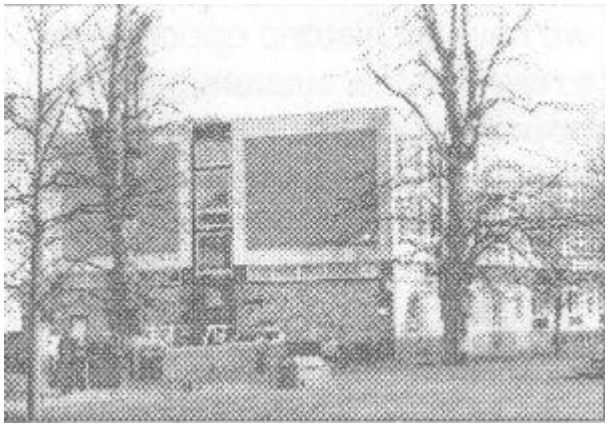


Wessex Court before lipstick

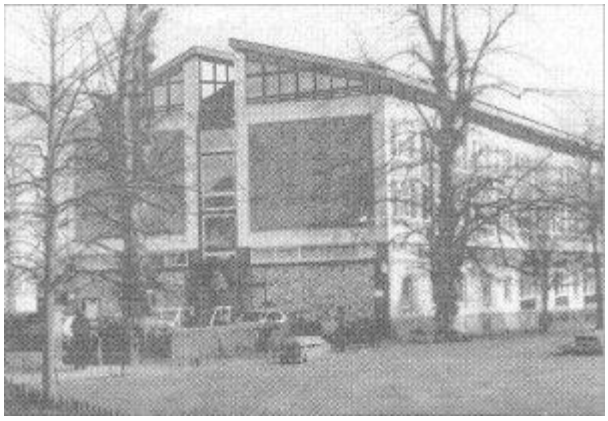


Wessex Court after lipstick

The next example is the Wessex Hotel. I have always thought it lacked something. Therefore, in the computerized montage, I suggest another floor with a low-pitched lead covered roof. Not only would this improve the look of the building but, by adding additional rooms, it could trigger the viability needed to change its appearance.



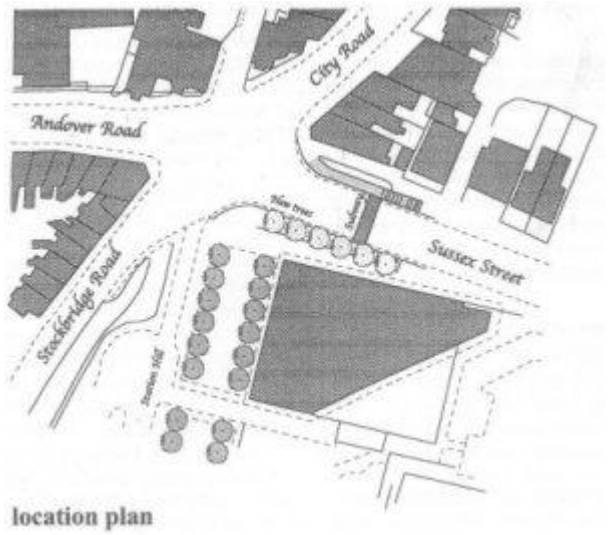
Wessex Hotel before lipstick



Wessex Hotel after lipstick

Lipstick on the Gorilla No. 3 Huw Thomas

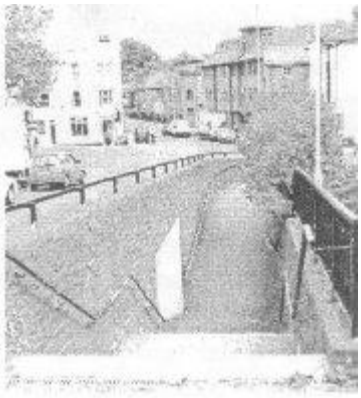
1. The underpass on Sussex Street is a foreboding and threatening tunnel which is avoided by the pedestrians it supposed to serve.



Underpass Location



Underpass as it exits



Underpass entrance

2. Could it be abandoned completely?

3. The ramp and steps on the side of the archivist building could be filled in, providing a "planter" for new trees. They would soften the rather cold wall of the archivist building and certainly improve the entrance to the city from the Andover Road.



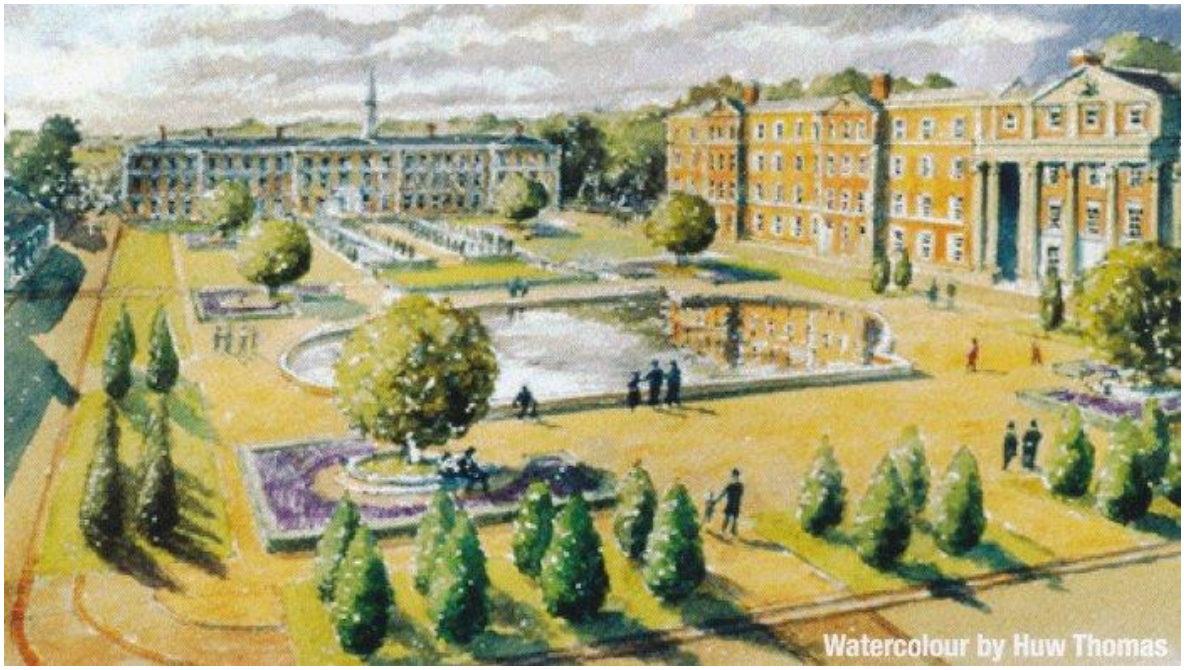
Underpass closure

4. The other side with its ramp and steps could remain. The tunnel itself could be gated forming a useful store. Perhaps the new bike hire scheme (located at Winchester Railway Station) could use this space for storage of further bikes?

Huw Thomas - TrustNews Dec 20

The Trust was shocked to learn of Huw's death early in October; only in his early 70s, I had expected him to long outlast me. How desperately sad for his family, and a sad loss to many others too. I first knew of him when he worked as a member of the County Architect's team of award-winning modern architects. However, later when in private practice, he found it increasingly frustrating not to be able to obtain this sort of work, though with his skill in remodelling older buildings he soon made a name for himself designing ingenious and stylish barn conversions. Widely known for his delightful water colour design sketches, he became sought after by discerning developers, and it is as the designer of high standard neo-Georgian housing that he has become best known in Winchester. But his greatest single gift to the City was his inspiration in 1990 that the abandoned and dreary buildings of Peninsula Barracks could be converted into prestigious homes in a very gracious setting, rather than demolished to make way for an alien housing estate on this historic site. He was

always a friend of the Trust and we were pleased to support this venture, making a joint donation with the Gardens Trust to help take his ideas forward. Huw joined the Trust Council in 2001, and some will remember his series of articles for TrustNews entitled ‘Lipstick on the Gorilla’: provocative ideas for improving the appearance of buildings that he felt didn't fit in. He retired from the Trust Council seven years later when his work load became too great. Always interesting and entertaining, we shall miss his input at design review meetings, and the cheerful impromptu chats at chance encounters in the streets of his beloved Winchester.



Water Colour of Barracks by Huw Thomas

Michael Carden

Footer - TrustNews Dec 20

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