

SWINDON CIVIC TRUST - Ref: 108

Swindon Central Area Action Plan 2008

Written Statement – Session 4 - AM

Area Based / Site Specific Issues (2)

“Pg 99, Policy 17

The semi-used and empty buildings in the Railway Village Conservation Area offer an ideal opportunity to house the creative and social aspects of cultural development. It is not by nature an aggressively economic area, and offers an ambience which would be appealing to many sections of the community. There is a educational philosophy that peoples involvement in the arts and its achievement is good for personal development, and the work carried out by the Mechanics' Institute in the former railway museum has bourne substance to this view.

The buildings referred to comprise the Carriage Works, The Mechanics Institute, the Former Railway Museum, and the cluster of building adjacent to the Water Tower. Whilst we appreciate that these are in the main in separate or private ownership, we see no reason why this form of usage should not be considered as an integral part of planning policy for the central area.

We thus object to a policy which does not fully recognise the contribution the Village can make to the social and cultural development of the peoples of the town.”

Railway Village Conservation Area, page 99, Policy 17.

The policy is unsound as it fails both part of test 7. It does not accept that there are buildings in the area that could make a significant contribution to the cultural development of the town in the provision of workshops/studios, meeting places, rehearsal and performance spaces. Correctly developed using a social enterprise model this area could provide a vital incubator for the delivery of cultural vitality to the town.

“Pg110, Policy 18

We object to the fact that there is no policy regarding houses in multiple occupation. The issues and problems that arise have been well aired and documented at the Community Planning Forum. There needs to be robust policy incorporated into this section to ensure that the problems of HMO's can be contained and balanced, family friendly communities encouraged.”

Central Swindon's Residential Communities, page 110, Policy 18

The policy is unsound as it fails both parts of test7. We accept that there is ongoing work to produce a separate policy on HMO's in order to achieve a balanced communities, but a much stronger reference to this issue needs to be made in the policy.