



# TRUST TOPICS

Doncaster Civic Trust Newsletter ©

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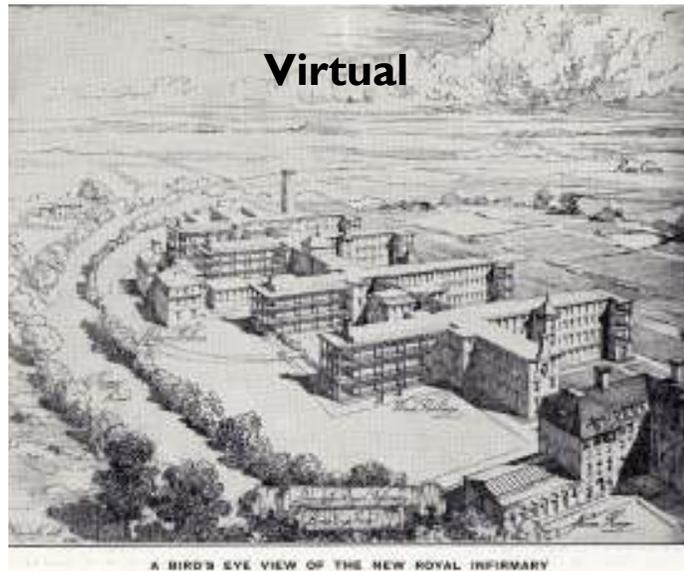
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## Virtual

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE NEW ROYAL INFIRMARY



## Actual

## The History of Doncaster Royal Infirmary

Doncaster Civic Trust : Registered Charity No. 508674 : Founded in 1946  
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## The Buffet Supper 2009

The Civic Trust Buffet seems to come round as quickly as Christmas! We, that is Sue (Barnsdale), Tina and me, have got it down to a fine art. Without any discussion, we all have our roles, and we meet at 2 pm on “the afternoon” and get it done. Sue orders the ham, gets the wine and glasses and boils 6 dozen eggs. It’s a horrible job peeling off the shells, so we gave it to Colin to do. But he got tenosinovitis (he had a man’s funny way of doing it!) so now Sue does it.

I go to Asda and, following last year’s till receipt, buy the bread, chicken portions, salad, pickles, dressings etc. It is quite amazing but the bill is practically the same year after year. “Asda Price!” The delivery man from Toppings the butchers arrives with the cheese and onion quiches and the pork pie cakes.

Sue, John Colin and I meet in Sue’s kitchen and put it all together. I get on with the salads, and the men wield the electric carver and slice the ham (which makes us long to have a sandwich), and cut up the pork pie. John and Colin do it all to the cries of, “Thin slices please!” An hour later we have a cup of tea, get out the huge roll of tinfoil and load the cars.



Meanwhile the “mad” Tina gets up at 5.30 am to make sponge cakes and those fabulous trifles, not to mention all those mince pies. Every year we tell her she does too much, but she won’t listen.

Left: Tina & the Two Sues

We all arrive early at the venue, St Peter’s Church Hall. To our relief, it’s warm, very warm. The tables get set out and the food arranged. Malc puts out the wine glasses. I taste the crisps, pickled onions and the wine, checking for poison! This year there was a new electric cooker in the kitchen and none of us knew how to work it. The men were put in charge. Then it was working. “Put in the quiches!” Then, “Turn off now!” But to deaf ears – so I’m afraid the top quiche was cremated because they’d switched on the grill, not the oven.

The members arrive and the evening begins. Our speaker has cancelled due to a bad knee, but “never fear, Archie is here!” A really enjoyable slide show follows as Archie relives his youth and early enthusiasm for European architecture. The food and wine goes down well, as usual. We always worry that we won’t have enough – but I am sure everyone feels well fed. In fact we were able to give the caretaker the left-overs to give to the homeless when they came to the church the next day. Even the cremated quiche.

By the end of the evening my back is always aching. No – none of us wants to open a restaurant! We all felt satisfied that it had been a good do – better than usual – as the warm atmosphere had made people chat and linger longer. We caterers feel we are on a bit of a treadmill with years of “doing the buffet” ahead of us, but it is a lovely evening and a highlight of the Trust year.

**Sue Burley**

## The Rest of the Winter Programme 2010

All events to take place at St Peter's RC Church Hall, Chequer Road, Doncaster

**Thursday 18 February 2010 at 7.30 pm** at St Peter's RC Church Hall  
Sue Clifton on "An Embroidered Family History in Wall Panels"

**Thursday 18 March 2010 at 7.30 pm** at St Peter's RC Church Hall  
Professor Clyde Binfield on "Twentieth Century Dutch"

### **i** and we've added an Extra Date !

**Thursday 15 April 2010 at 7.30 pm at St Peter's RC Church Hall**

**Social Forum with refreshments:** an informal opportunity for all members to discuss what we do, don't do and maybe ought to do, as well as a chance to get to know each other.

## Local History Fair Saturday 26 September 2009

This year's Local History Fair was a one-day event held at Doncaster Museum, Chequer Road.



The Trust's stand had a good position on a corner, with plenty of space for a panoramic display. We felt that numbers of visitors, and therefore our sales, were down on earlier years. We wondered if that might be because of the slightly earlier date.

A great variety of local heritage groups were represented, and it was good opportunity to meet like-minded people. There were some interesting conversations – most friendly, and some grumpy. "There are no decent buildings left" provoked the response from Peter Coote in this issue.

Thank you to the members who helped man the stand.



### **Hickleton Hall** **John Dabell 15 October 2009**

We enjoyed a terrific talk on the development of Hickleton Hall from the 16th century, and the history of its owning families. The Hall, built 1745-8, is contemporary with Doncaster Mansion House, and also by James Paine.

John had produced his own drawings which enhanced a well-researched and very professional PowerPoint presentation.

Although now a resident of Darfield, he was brought up in Hickleton, the son of miner who became a joiner for the estate after being injured at Hickleton Main Colliery.

## “There are no decent buildings left in the town.....”

You sometimes hear people say, “They have demolished all the best buildings in Doncaster in the last 30 years.” If you respond to this comment by asking, “Which buildings do you mean?” the answer usually includes the following: The Reindeer, The Guildhall, The Old Library, The Education Offices (Old Infirmary). Sometimes it’s Postlethwaite and Stacey’s, The Angel and Royal or Hodgson and Hepworth’s. It is true that these were major losses to the town.

Yet, have you noticed something about this list? Nearly all the buildings mentioned were demolished in the 60s, forty years ago. Any readers aged under 50 won’t even remember them.

This article tries to dispel the myth that we have lost all our decent buildings. Indeed, a walk round town following our Town Trail takes well over an hour and can often take longer. And the Trail only includes *some* of the key buildings - many others are excluded for reasons of space.



I like to think that the reason we still have so much to look at is because of the Doncaster Civic Trust. The reality is that although we have been involved in many campaigns and objections over the years, in fact it is the Planning Authority or English Heritage who makes the final decisions. Because other people and organisations may object to schemes as well, it can be difficult to measure our impact exactly. Nevertheless, it is clear that we have made a substantial difference.

One of the most interesting streets is High Street, and I am now going to take you on a stroll along it to look at our involvement over the years. Setting off from our logo building, Clock Corner (left), we soon reach, on the right, what is now Teddy’s Amusement Arcade. This was once Carter Longbottom, ironmongers, and has a shop front dating from 1848. We succeeded in getting this building listed. In 1984, though, we were concerned to see shopfitters working for new owners Pizzaland removing the frontage without permission. We alerted the authorities and the shop front was made good.



Next door is a shop with Georgian bow windows, the former Parkinsons (left), and the subject of the Trust’s longest-running campaign, to prevent its demolition. It was empty from 1960 to 1976 but was saved by our actions and then restored.

Two doors on now, and we reach Lloyds TSB. Formerly the National Provincial Bank (right), this was threatened with demolition and replacement with a multi-storey office block in 1976. We objected to this proposal and secured its listing. Today it is a valued part of the Conservation Area.



Crossing over the junction with Priory Place, we walk past the Mansion House until we reach 44 High Street. This building was once Sheard Binnington, and later Eyres. Due to our endeavours the shop front with its decorative eagle was restored. Unfortunately it eventually fell empty and semi-derelict. We publicised its plight in our Trust Topics in 2002, and today it is a restaurant.



Next door is the portico to the former Subscription Rooms (left). It was threatened with demolition, but after much endeavour we secured its spot listing in 1973. It now serves as an entrance to Priory Walk.

Beyond are a series of shops (below left) and the Blue Building. In 1964, all the properties from 44 High Street to the Blue Building were threatened with demolition. Although the Trust objected to this major scheme outline permission was granted. Fortunately, the company decided not to proceed and today all the buildings have been renovated, with the Blue Building being a flagship for the Council.



The former Woolwich Building Society received an award from the Trust for the renovation in 1977 (right).



Crossing to the other side of the road, we were concerned when the former Saxone shop was being radically altered. Eventually, its historic frontage was retained. Turning left, back towards Clock Corner, we pass 18 High Street which was the subject of letters to the press in 1979 as we battled to secure the preservation of its Edwardian shopfront. This was successful and today it is occupied by an optician.



We cross the end of Scot Lane now, and soon reach the NatWest Bank (left). Designed by York architect Walter Brierley, it has a magnificent banking hall, easily Doncaster's best commercial interior. When the Bank wished to divide it up, we objected and the development was refused.



Beyond, we reach our last stop, the 16th century former cottages (left). In early 1991 we campaigned to prevent the construction of a shopping street from High Street to the Market Place which would have resulted in the demolition of Brooke's, a listed building in the Market Place. The High Street cottages were not directly threatened but we thought the new street might jeopardise their future. However, in May 1991 the cottages were listed. Ministerial intervention saved Brooke's and the line of the proposed street was changed, although the scheme did not go ahead.

In 1997 the Trust objected to the planned demolition of the black and white building next to the old Picture House. Here, our views were not accepted. It was demolished alongside some undistinguished 60s buildings. The replacement property is certainly better than the latter.

The High Street has many buildings of high quality and the Trust has fought hard for all of us to enjoy them. We have done more than object to schemes. We have put plaques on four of the buildings giving historical information. We have published the 'Town Trail' (right) and 'Know the High Street'. All of this work means that Doncaster's High Street continues to be a street of which we can be proud.

Some of you may now be wondering why the first few buildings I mentioned at the start of this article were also not preserved. The answer is 'changes in climate and attitudes'. Most of them could have been retained and I believe that, today, many would have been. But in the 60s, and indeed well into the 70s, it was thought that most old buildings could be swept away to be replaced by shiny new ones, regardless of their value to the town. We now know this to be wrong but for many people it was a strong belief. Phrases like 'improving the environment' were many years away from entering the language, and 'conservation-led regeneration' was yet to be coined by English Heritage. Trust members were often regarded as eccentric preservationists.



Two key changes over the years have been, firstly, English Heritage deciding on the fate of listed buildings. Local Authorities no longer have this power. Secondly, the designation of Conservation Areas which were established by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. Doncaster was slow to designate areas at first but we prompted the local authority by publishing a pioneering document in 1973 outlining the importance of using the legislation and suggesting South Parade and Thorne Road as good starting points.

On the High Street, the threat to the Lloyds TSB building mentioned above galvanised the Council into action when they realised they had little control over demolition close to the Mansion House. In 1977 they made High Street a conservation area. This gave them much greater control because demolition in a conservation area requires Conservation Area Consent.

Many local authorities began to show a keener interest in the designation and management of conservation areas, although balancing this against the needs of development is never easy.

Despite all of this, we must not be smug or content. No one has control over demolition of unlisted buildings outside conservation areas. Even within them, there will always be threats to our historic fabric and work for the Trust to do. 20th century buildings in the town are being demolished as I write, but at least now there is a full debate and the Trust has been able to comment.

We need to be proud of what we have in the town and what we have achieved in the Trust. Doncaster's history is recognised nationally by others, such as the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) which referred to 'our rich heritage' in a recent document.

And so, to end this article, next time you hear someone saying that we have lost all our decent buildings, don't nod and agree; tell them to look at what we have today, not just in the High Street but throughout much of the town centre.

**Peter Coote**



## Disobeying Orders – Imaginative Transformations of the Classical

Professor Robert Harbison –

Doncaster's inaugural civic lecture was delivered by Professor Robert Harbison in the splendid setting of Sir Gilbert Scott's Grammar School, now the Hall Cross School library.

The disappointingly small audience, made up almost exclusively of Trust members, enjoyed an original presentation of how the orders of classical architecture were used, developed and abused, through the Renaissance to more recent times.

We were shown that the Greeks developed three orders: Doric, Ionic and Corinthian; then the Romans added a further two: Simple and Composite. The Doric capital is undecorated, the Ionic has two volutes, the Corinthian has acanthus foliage, and the composite has both volutes and acanthus. The Simple is the most basic, with no capitals.



The Greek Doric, with its flattened cushion of a capital, was considered to be a picture of physical forces. Fine examples still remain at Paestum, in Southern Italy (left).



The Parthenon (above right), at the Athens Acropolis, was the culmination of a long development resulting in a remarkably sophisticated building. It was 30 years in building, followed by much rebuilding. There are no straight lines in the building – it is all subtle curves. The columns are irregularly spaced; they are not vertical – they would meet at a point in the sky. The steps are too high for stairs for humans, and they are not level, but slightly curved. The columns both taper and bulge.

The entire building is a series of optical corrections. It teems with fascinating variation and lively mouldings, yet is wonderfully precise.

The later phases of Classical architecture showed that the Romans were becoming impatient with harmony, so elaboration and mannerism were introduced. There were radical experiments in Lebanon with almost unrecognisable transformations of classical elements.

1000 years on, the Italian Renaissance architects concentrated on the forthright geometry of cubes, spheres and squares, with decorative classical elements.

Figurative elements were added by sculptors, without which the buildings would have appeared bare. The Brunelleschi interior we saw was colourless and austere, like an architectural print.

Bramante's Tempietto and Michelangelo's Library in Florence were full of amazing inventions and unexpected turns using arches, planes, voids and even upside-down elements. The building's function became "a tissue of anxieties". Disobeying the rules had created an uneasy and provocative space, which was almost mentally uncomfortable. Another building, by Borromini, included a broken pediment, and opportunities were taken to complicate things, like a convex projection on a concave façade.

Professor Harbison considered the English "Protestant" Baroque to be stern by comparison with its European counterpart. He showed buildings by Hawksmoor: one with rusticated columns which he thought contradictory and another with massive keystones above openings which made the basic elements problematic. He thought Soane's building, disguised by his collection of fragments of buildings, was a surreal juxtaposition.

Moving forward to the 20th century, he said some had compared Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye to a Greek temple, set in the landscape with its white paint representing the ancient limestone.

A building by Alvar Aalto in Helsinki used columns, "the ultimate architectural element" which were metal-clad to represent the fluting on stone classical columns. The weathering of the metal had produced an aging effect, and so giving a sense of the past.

## Doncaster and the Classical

The lecture ended with a series of Doncaster buildings. The Professor had visited the town centre and done the Town Trail (and a bit more) with me a few weeks earlier. He left us with his architectural critique.

The former Co-op Emporium contained an unexpected mix of old and new materials: brick, tile and glass, and its façade was like three giant columns, with two broken.



The former Gaumont cinema was like a late descendent of the Parthenon. He liked the appealing curve of the frieze, and the colonnade which had been glazed and enclosed the café.

The Hall Gate United Reformed Church created an amusing and lively effect, but violated every architectural principle. It had tryglyphs but no columns, feeble volutes, and decorative rosettes stuck wherever it was considered a blank space needed to be filled.



## Doncaster and the Classical



A pair of former house on South Parade, one half brick, the other render, was evidence that builders unify, but owners divide.

2 South Parade was where the Palladian window design had been developed into an elongated Venetian door, and it worked very well. It was pure symbolism for the sake of the architecture.



Elmfield House was considered a bit of a bodge; perhaps the ground and first floors should be switched? And whose idea was the blue paint?

The Corn Exchange had the look of a 19th century Parisian station. The pediment perched above the curved roof line, and the round windows in the upper wall were most odd. He suggested that its architect must have been given the granite columns!



In the end, though, the Professor thought that all sins against the Classical were to be forgiven. It was a very interesting talk, beginning with the basic classical elements, working through their development in the Renaissance, and looking at their impact on some Doncaster buildings.

The event suggested a number of things that would have to be done differently if another similar lecture is to be sponsored by the Trust. It should start at a time later than 6 pm, which was clearly too early for many people; advertising and press releases must be more intensive, with a longer lead time; and October might be better than September, to be clear of late holidays and the start of the academic year.

**Archie Sinclair**

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# The History of Doncaster Royal Infirmary

## Garry Swann 19 November 2009



We learned of Doncaster's first dispensary, sited in Frenchgate close to what would later become Greyfriars Road. The building was designed by William Lindley in 1793, 5 bays and 2 storeys, and built in brick in the Georgian style.

It was built by Thomas Anelay for £660. It would have been a prominent building on the northern edge of town, considered an attractive site before the coming of the railways and the building of North Bridge. In charge was an apothecary, and later a specialist in homeopathy.

By the middle of the 19th century, advances in medicine demanded that, as well as a dispensary, an infirmary was needed to provide surgical and nursing care. The disturbance from the railway was another reason to develop a new larger building on a different site.

In 1867, work was under way building the new infirmary and dispensary, to be run separately, off Wood Street, fronting Whitaker Street. This was later re-named Princegate as part of the mid 1960's Golden Acres (Waterdale) re-development. The building was designed by local architects Brundell and Arnold, the builder being another Thomas Anelay, the grandson of the first builder, and it was opened on 1st July 1868, becoming the Doncaster General Infirmary and Dispensary.



This building was extended in 1905 to provide nine more beds. After a visit the following year from Princess Christian, daughter of Queen Victoria, she became the patron, and permission was granted for the use of the word "Royal" in the name. So D R I was born.

We saw images of surprisingly poor accommodation, particularly for out-patients.

The 1868 Infirmary off Wood Street

A new X-ray machine was installed with little of the health and safety precautions that are routine today.

The Health Service was created in the 1940's, but before that, treatment at the Infirmary was usually in return for a regular subscription, a kind of health insurance. With the growth of mining, industry and the railways, there were many workers contributing, and a growing number of industrial injuries to treat.

The central site off Wood Street offered no opportunity to extend the premises, so from the 1920s onward the prospect of a new building and site were being discussed. The old guard favoured staying in town and acquiring more buildings, whereas the workers' representatives wanted a brand new modern building on a large site.

They told the old guard that, if they didn't join them, they would go it alone (and take their subscriptions with them). Apparently, this is how the Mexborough Montague Hospital came about, we heard.

Miss Beckett-Dennison had left The Hall and its gardens, on South Parade, to the Infirmary, to be used as hospital staff accommodation initially, and then to be sold to raise money for the development of another site.

And indeed, another large site was found for the D R I on Thorne Road. We saw an artist's aerial view of a huge complex, only a part of which was built in the first phase. The foundation stone was laid on 12 October 1926 by Edward, Prince of Wales, the future Edward VIII.



However, the work did not proceed because of lack of funds and the depression in industry.

Major fund-raising was undertaken to enable a start on site, and the first part of the building was opened in 1930.

Scrivens' 1930s postcard of "The New Infirmary"

When the war started in 1939, huts were erected to cater for casualties, and these remained into the late 1960s. After the war, with the NHS in place, money was provided for new operating theatres and clinics. But the long-term plan was for a series of District General Hospitals throughout the country, so designs were done for a large new hospital that would adjoin the 1930s buildings. This started in the mid-1960s, and has been growing apparently continually ever since.

It has had a new children's hospital, a private hospital and a cancer treatment block. Gary told us that more changes may have to be made to get the children's hospital nearer to the babies in the women's hospital, somehow.

And it's all on the site allocated in the 1930's. It seems unlikely that the single or two-storey buildings can remain that way. The hospital is like a town, Gary said, it has everything from a plumber and electrician to, now, its own archivist.



The new ward block 1967

Garry retired and became the Honorary Archivist, and it is his collection of photographs that adorns some of the corridor walls. He is always pleased to be offered people's images to copy, to add to the archive, he said.

The history of the D R I was a fascinating story, covering many interesting aspects, from the people and the politics to the buildings and the builders.

**Archie Sinclair**

## **① From Civic Trust to Civic Society Initiative Changes to the National Body for Civic Societies**



*I would urge members to read this article.*

**During 2010 we will have to decide whether to join the new body. We have always paid to support The Civic Trust (in 2008 this cost was £110). We will examine the proposals to be announced next month and how they would affect us. The Executive Committee will decide whether the new costs can be contained within our budget. However, if joining the new body would involve an increase in the annual subscription, this would be a decision for members at the AGM in November 2010.**

**Archie Sinclair (Chairman)**

*The following text was circulated in 2009 by the new body, the Civic Society Initiative.*

### **About The New Civic Society Initiative (in its own words)**

#### **What has happened?**

The Civic Trust closed in April 2009. For 50 years it had supported civic societies and seen a mushrooming in their number and influence. Its loss generated a groundswell of concern for the civic movement from many partners. The Prince of Wales spoke forcefully of the opportunity “to build something even stronger – a powerful community movement which can address the challenges of a fast-changing world and remain a steadfast champion of the fabric and character of our nation’s cities, towns and villages.” With the generous support of other organisations and financial backing from over 130 civic societies the Civic Society Initiative was born in June 2009 to help find a way forward.

#### **Why does this matter?**

Civic societies’ roots go back to the 1840s and they have a proud history. Yet, in a fast changing world, their influence has declined. Local decisions are shaped by external forces which cannot be reached by individual civic societies. While some prosper, many societies lack funds and struggle to find volunteers. Others have closed. Societies want advice and support on a huge range of issues – from influencing planning and transport decisions or setting up websites, to finding funds and meeting with other civic societies. In some places new organisations are springing up to address issues previously tackled by civic societies. Yet the potential of the civic society movement is unique. With over 1,000 local organisations and 250,000 members working together it should be a force to be reckoned with.

#### **What is being proposed?**

The Civic Society Initiative has worked with over 800 civic societies. It has held 14 public meetings across the country, conducted a major survey and talked to other organisations to find out what people think is needed. Its conclusion are summarised in a special report – *Own The Future*. This shows strong support for a new national body to champion the civic movement in England and support civic societies. The plans are to establish the new body in April 2010. It needs to be small, responsive to civic societies and independently funded.

## **What's the urgency?**

Funding for the Civic Society Initiative runs out in May 2010. Without this practical support it will be very difficult to set up a new national body, leaving civic societies in England without a collective way of influencing government policy and priorities, and lacking a reference point for support and advice. Civic societies have only a few months to decide.

## **What will it cost?**

To provide what civic societies are looking for needs between £300,000 and £400,000 each year. This is the minimum required to provide the full range of services and support being asked for, together with effective lobbying and campaigning. It provides for minimum staffing levels and modest office accommodation. A lower budget would require a trade-off between providing support or lobbying and campaigning.

Civic societies want the body to be independent so they will need to provide this core funding. This is a significant change. Civic societies never paid the full cost of the services they received from the Civic Trust. This meant it became dependent on others for its resources. It is sadly unrealistic to think that other core funding can be found without strings attached, while additional fundraising from government, business, philanthropists and charitable trusts is likely to be limited to supporting one-off projects.

## **What will it cost my society?**

The fairest way to fund the new national body is by a per capita fee based on each society's membership. This treats large and small civic societies equally. The fee will be in a range of £1 to £3 per individual member. £1 will provide basic information services and limited campaigning. £3 will provide the full range of what civic societies want. Each civic society will decide how to raise the money – through increased membership fees, charges from events, fundraising, corporate support or other methods. Some societies are already budgeting for these changes and many have offered their support. It is recognised, however, that this will be difficult for some societies in the short term and transition arrangements are being investigated.

## **We only charge a few pounds – how will we cope?**

A number of civic societies charge less than £5 for membership and some are concerned any increase will hit their membership numbers. Yet people join organisations because of what they do and the results they achieve. Low subscriptions can restrict what societies can achieve and, in consequence, their profile within the community. Civic society membership fees are often falling behind those of other organisations which achieve more and see their membership grow. Societies will also be able to promote membership better as a result of joining up because they will offer more to new members.

## **So what's next?**

The details of the new arrangements are being finalized in consultation with civic societies over the next few months. The majority of those governing the new national body will be drawn from civic societies. You will be able to put forward people to serve as trustees of the new body and your society will have a vote on who is appointed. There will be a final announcement by February 2010 and this is when your society will be asked to join the new national body. The plan is to launch the new body in April at an event to which all civic societies registered with the Civic Society Initiative will be invited.

## Planning Matters

Each month the members of the Trust's Planning and Conservation sub-committee get together to decide if we wish to comment on relevant planning applications. Recently we have had to change the way we work because the Doncaster Council's Planning Department now puts all applications on its web site. This means we no longer have paper plans to study. Instead, after many years of following our well-established procedures, we look at the applications on a laptop. This has some advantages but we are still getting used to the new system.

The use of the computer has enabled us to look at more applications than previously and we have objected to a few of these.

In October we objected to an application by Vodafone to erect a high pole and antennae on land within the highway near the Infirmary. We felt that this would dominate the view along Thorne Road and impact on the appearance of a nearby historic building - the Cumberland Hotel.

We objected to an application by Lacota, once known as Edwards, on Hallgate. They applied to erect a new illuminated fascia sign, which we felt was too large and would dominate the façade. The application was amended and then approved by the Council.

In November, we suggested that plans to convert 38-40 Netherhall Road to form one shop with flats above could be carried out in a more sympathetic way. In particular we thought that there was no need to lose two of the last remaining bay windows on this road. We suggested that these features could be retained by converting them into doors.



photo English Heritage

Applications relating to listed buildings are always interesting, but the issues are not necessarily easy to address. We had planned to comment on an application relating to 21 High Street, Doncaster, which is currently a pub called "Number Fifteen" (left). For many years it was a furniture shop, but some people still call it the Lyceum, as it was a café of that name for many years. In 1841 it was altered when it opened as the Victoria Rooms, a rival to the Subscription Rooms across the road.

Today it still has a grand room at first floor level. The application was to change the use of the two upper floors to Use Class C1 (hotel/guest house). We were concerned about the change of use, yet historic buildings do need to be fully used or they are likely to deteriorate. However, we were concerned about the building works affecting the main room and decided to object. Fortunately, the application has now been withdrawn.

On Avenue Road, the new owner of the former care home, Nightingales, wished to add extensions to the property in a style similar to the main building. This property was painted over when it was a private house and we suggested that it should be cleaned to reveal the original brickwork. This would improve the appearance of the house as well as enabling the new extensions to match the cleaned building.

We also objected to proposals to build four flats at 141a Bawtry Road. We felt that it was not appropriate to build flats in this location and we also objected to the fact that this was an outline application in a conservation area.

Generally, we only object to a few applications. Many of them are reasonably satisfactory and sometimes we welcome them. A recent application was to improve the amenities of housing in the Woodlands Conservation Area.

These houses, part of the model village of 1907-11, do not have rear gardens, and instead they have a service road immediately adjoining the dwellings, and a large central area of shared open space. It is proposed to create private rear gardens with car parking space, and construct a new rear access road beyond the gardens. The open space would remain, but reduced in size. This is another part of the programme to improve the environment and amenities for residents in “The Squares”.

## Planning and Conservation Sub Committee

### Best Laid Plans? The Sikh Temple



Colin Harwood's approved design



The completed building

After the complimentary piece about the new Sikh Temple in Newsletter 37, its architect Colin Harwood rang to explain that the building that we now see is not exactly that which he designed. He said that significant elements were omitted, altered or added, in the time between its design and completion, to the detriment of the scheme. He considered this unfortunate, and that there ought to be an obligation on applicants to build in strict accordance with the plans as approved.

All architects are keen to see their designs fully and correctly implemented but, once a scheme has received planning approval, the permission goes with the land and its owner. Planners are concerned primarily with land use, scale, form and materials. They would normally allow detailed changes, often as minor amendments. If changes were considered significant, a further application might be approved. And internal design changes are no concern of planning officers.

Once an owner has gained planning permission, there is nothing to compel them to retain the same architect to produce constructional drawings and/or certify the building work. In fact, the client could dispense with professional services altogether, and almost self-build. For architects, this is sad but true. The full role of the architect is becoming dangerously undervalued.

The issue of alterations between design and completion is not a new one. Observant readers will already have noticed the changes between the artist's impression of the D R I and the actual completed building, on this issue's cover. Like one of those “Spot the Differences” competitions.

# The Back Page - Demolition Special

Four Town Centre buildings which were cleared in 2009 for major developments



Boys' Elementary School, Chequer Road 1906



Beechfield School (Girls and Infants), Chequer Road 1927



Gaumont Palace/Odeon Cinema 1934



Doncaster Technical College 1958

