

OPC's Planning Committee wishes to make a statement about the situation surrounding Danetree House on Odiham High Street as a result of the owner and applicant suggesting that members of the public approach OPC, through its Chairman, for information on their ongoing dispute with Hart DC.

While OPC's Planning Committee welcomes moves to restore and repair Danetree House and has not objected, in principle, to the various applications to achieve this end that have been submitted to date, it is concerned with the publicly critical and adversarial approach that appears to be taken by the owner and applicant of Danetree House to the process by which those applications have been determined by Hart DC.

The Planning Committee would expect the applicant to consider carefully the clear and concise guidance given in Hart DC's response to each submitted application, ideally with the assistance and guidance of a planning consultant. By doing so progress might be made in a way that both satisfies the case officer and Conservation Officer for each application and also the applicant. It is important to recognise that planning permission or Listed Building consent is only granted when the deciding LPA is satisfied, either by direct consideration by Hart DC's planning committee or by delegated decision making power passed to officers, that proposals sufficiently meet planning policy - this hurdle is faced by all applicants whether seeking approval for works to listed or unlisted buildings within Hart and Danetree House appears to have been treated no differently in this respect.

The matter of public health and safety with relation to exposure to asbestos risks identified in Hart DC's recent letter to OPC raises further concerns for the Planning Committee, although these concerns may fall outside of the Planning Committee's remit. However, the committee would confirm its confidence that Hart DC is appropriately progressing its involvement to ensure that any future risks to members of the public or construction contractors are minimised.

Mark Faulkner,

Chair, OPC Planning Committee