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Please reply to:

Mr Scott Jones
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My Ref: DE/2018/0030

Your Ref:

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Date: 10 May 2018

Dear Richard,

PRE APPLICATION ENQUIRY – DE/2018/0030 - THE CORBYN HEAD HOTEL

Thank you for your enquiry, which concerns the demolition of an existing hotel, and its replacement with a new hotel comprising around 150 rooms, spa facilities, restaurant, bar, and associated development.

This advice is given in response to your request for pre-application advice for the above development proposal, and is based on the information submitted. Whilst Council officers endeavour to give the best advice, it should be recognized that all planning applications are the subject of formal consultation procedures to enable third parties and statutory consultees to make representations. This process may introduce new material considerations. Moreover, the policies and guidance against which planning applications are assessed may change over time. I therefore reserve the right to alter the opinion given should new material issues come to light in future. Moreover, the advice given in this letter is that of the named officer and does not bind the Council in determining any subsequent planning application that may be submitted.

Principle of Development

The site is located within a Core Tourism Investment Area (CTIA) and the creation of new, high quality tourism attractions and facilities is in accordance with Policy TO1 of the Torbay Local Plan. The proposal is also aligned with the strategic aims and objectives of Policy SS1 (Growth Strategy for a prosperous Torbay). The proposed replacement of a hotel with an enhanced hotel facility is considered to be acceptable in principle.

Urban Design / Visual Impact

We met earlier this week to discuss the proposal. Following the advice of the Torbay Design Review Panel (TDRP), particular attention was given to design. There is some difference of opinion regarding the correct approach to take in terms of the proposal's bulk, massing, and degree of visual separation, and you indicated that more work would be done ahead of the

next TDRP meeting. I will therefore refrain from providing more detailed design advice at this time.

I will however take the opportunity to refer you to the aspirations of Policies DE1 (Design) and DE4 (Building Heights) of the Torbay Local Plan. In particular, Policy DE1 requires that major development be informed by a townscape and/or landscape assessment, and discusses the importance of proposals relating to the surrounding built environment in terms of their scale, height, and massing. There is also a clear emphasis on high quality architecture, along with a distinctive, but also sensitive, palette in terms of materials. The proposal and supporting information should also address Policy DE4, which requires that development responds to the prevailing height (the most commonly occurring height) within a location, unless there are sound design or socio-economic reasons for a deviation. It is, in any case, recommended that the socio-economic benefits of the proposal be clearly explained to support a future planning application.

Highways, Access, and Parking

In terms of visibility splays, for a strategic route, splays of 70m (with a 2.4m setback) should be achieved in both directions, and the Highway Authority argue that this standard ought to be achieved in this location. In relation to the proposed delivery access off Livermead Hill, the Highway Authority have raised some concerns in terms of visibility and traffic conflict, and recommend that other arrangements be explored. It is noted that, at present, there only appears to be a pedestrian access point in this location.

The principle of improved pedestrian movement around the Livermead Hill area is supported, particularly in light of the ambition to encourage walking and other sustainable modes of local travel, as outlined within Policy TA1 of the Local Plan. The implications of the proposals for the railway line should be robustly explored. Early consultation with Network Rail is recommended to ensure that issues and delays are unlikely to arise during the planning application process.

Policy TA3 (Parking requirements) and Appendix F of the Torbay Local Plan outline the expected levels of parking to support given types of development. Hotel development should be supported by 1 space per bedroom together with appropriate provision for coaches and for the setting down and picking up of guests. As the area is relatively remote from public parking, I would advise that measures to increase the provision of parking on site be given serious consideration. It may be challenging to secure the 1:1 policy position but measures to increase parking capacity within the development and thus limit the impact upon nearby residential streets should be fully exploited.

Drainage

As Torbay is classified as a Critical Drainage Area, a site specific flood risk assessment will be needed to support any planning application.

Within the Torbay Local Plan (Policies ER1 and ER2) there is a hierarchy for dealing with surface water run-off, with infiltration techniques being the preferred method of surface water

drainage. As the site of the proposed development is unlikely to be suitable for infiltration drainage, a controlled discharge off site should be investigated. This should initially look at discharging flows to a watercourse/main river but if this is not possible, then discharge should be to a surface water drainage system, and only if no other system is available, a combined sewer system may be explored.

Alternatively, as the proposed development is located near to coastal waters you may wish to investigate the possibility of discharging surface water run-off directly to coastal waters. The discharge rate from the site to coastal waters may not need to be restricted, however, details of how you would remove contaminants prior to discharging to coastal waters will be required. In addition, it is likely that the Environment Agency would have to be consulted on any discharge to coastal waters.

The surface water discharge rate from the site to a watercourse, surface water system, or combined sewer must be limited to the Greenfield run off rate for the 1 in 10 year storm event with attenuation designed to ensure there is no risk of flooding to properties or increased risk of flooding to adjacent land for the critical 1 in 100 year storm event, plus 40% for climate change. It should be noted that where the Greenfield run-off rate for the site is below 1.5l/sec we would accept a discharge rate of 1.5l/sec.

As a final note on drainage, if it is proposed to use permeable paving on the site, the supporting documentation should confirm whether ground conditions are suitable to accommodate it. Infiltration testing in accordance with BRE365 must be undertaken at the proposed location of the permeable paving. In addition, the infiltration testing must be undertaken at the proposed formation level of permeable paving. A desk-based study of ground conditions will not be acceptable. If the ground conditions are suitable for permeable paving, this must be designed to demonstrate that there is no flood risk on or off the site for the critical 1 in 100 year storm event, plus 40% for climate change.

Amenity

Policy DE3 (Development amenity) of the Torbay Local Plan seeks to ensure that all development be designed to provide a high level of amenity and that it should not unacceptably impact upon the amenities of neighbouring occupiers/uses. There appears to be sufficient distance across the railway line, to the rear of the site, to limit any likely material impacts on neighbours.

To the south, there is concern in terms of the likely impact of the proposal on the occupiers of The Corbyn Apartments. The original scheme showed a parking deck in close proximity to side windows, which could result in an unacceptable level of harm. However, the design is evolving and the relationship appears to be improving across the southern boundary to adjacent apartments. Careful consideration should be given to the potential impacts on the outlook, privacy, and access to light of neighbours.

Arboriculture

There appears little arboricultural constraint at the site, with vegetation limited to the rear of the existing building, alongside the railway line. The landscaping potential of the site appears limited, and hence it will be necessary to make the most of the opportunities available to the front of the proposed building. This point was iterated within the TDRP comments.

Protected Species

There appears little potential for ecological constraint at the site. A planning application would need to be supported by an up-to-date extended phase 1 habitat survey. There may be potential bat roosting opportunities within the building and/or trees that form part of the ecological corridor that is the railway line. Proposals should seek to provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancements, such as bat and bird boxes within the development, as per Policy NC1 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Torbay Local Plan.

The Council will also need to duly assess any individual or cumulative impact upon the Torbay Marine SAC, in-line with Policy ER2 (Water Management) and NC1 of the Torbay Local Plan.

I trust the above provides some clarity on a number of relevant issues. The Council looks forward to continued positive dialogue to help evolve what could be a very important regeneration scheme for Torbay.

Yours Sincerely

Robert Brigden

Senior Planning Officer