

## **PLANNING - PRE-APPLICATION DEVELOPER PRESENTATION**

**Pre-application presentation to Members:  
Hotel - 27-29 Station Road  
4 August 2010 at 10am Guildhall**

### **Attendees:**

Councillors Dryden, Hipkin, Dixon, Stuart, Merchant-Daisley, Walker, Howell, Saunders, Wright, Znajek and Blair.

### **Officers:**

Sarah Dyer – Development Control Manager.  
Melanie Jones – Panels and Event Co-ordinator

### **Presenters:**

Colin Brown – Januarys  
Michelle Sweeney – Oppermann Associates  
Niall Meagher – IPML on behalf of the O'Callaghan Group.

<b>FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL</b>
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### **1 Apologies**

None

### **2 Declaration of Interests**

Personal Interest: Cllr Sheila Stuart works in Station Road.

### **3 PRE-APPLICATION PRESENTATION BY THE DEVELOPER - RED HOUSE HOTEL**

Presentation by Red House Project Team

Colin Brown described the background of the scheme, planning history and the reasons for refusal (against officer recommendation) given at Planning Committee in February 2010.

<http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public/councillors/minutes/2010/0210PLAN.pdf>

A new application will be submitted within the next two weeks. A presentation would be made to the Design & Conservation Sub-Panel later that day. The scheme received a 'Green' verdict from the Sub-Panel last time.

Colin Brown and Michelle Sweeney described the amendments made to the scheme. This was followed by questions from Members.

Michelle Sweeney presented the design of the building and Colin Brown discussed traffic and parking arrangements.

The amendments include:

- The breaking down of the overall visual mass (including removing the 7<sup>th</sup> floor)
- Re-organising the public space.
- Basement car parking provision replaced with a revised valet arrangement with NCP at the Cambridge Leisure car park to secure parking provision in line with City Council Car Parking Standards.

Traffic and parking (Colin Brown)

Due to the scheme's very central location, it is expected that most guests will be arriving using non-car modes. The valet arrangement would be for up to forty spaces, which conforms with the City Council's Car Parking Standards. This is a very secure and workable solution. The risk of spillover parking into neighbouring streets has been looked at as part of a commissioned survey on parking. Residents Parking areas, Short Stay and yellow-lined areas will be off-limits to hotel guests. In need of the certainty of being able to park, the design team are confident that guests arriving by car will use the valet service.

### **Member questions.**

Cllr Dryden: How much will the valet service cost guests?

Colin Brown: With this kind of arrangement, a discount rate for guests is usually agreed with the car park operator – possibly 10%. This will need to be agreed with NCP.

Cllr Hipkin: The applicant has clearly gone to some trouble to improve the height, scale and massing of the scheme. However, the public realm area to the front reveals real tension between a hospitable, comfortable area and vehicular use. The area is heavily weighted towards traffic circulation with minimal landscaping.

Michelle Sweeney: CGI (computer graphics) is a very cold medium. The continuation of high quality materials will make it a good public realm. Linear kerbs are flush with the roads. Delivery traffic will be controlled.

Cllr Hipkin: Why kerbs? This is an indication of traffic use. Is there anything you can do to reduce this as a traffic circulation area?

Cllr Howell: On the traffic issue, did you take into account the streets on the other side of the railway line that have no parking restrictions? There would be traffic peaks at checkout time in the morning. Your examination of traffic flows seems to be based on the current situation, not on the future CB1 situation.

Colin Brown: We don't anticipate many guests arriving by car. In terms of the parking areas surveyed, these were within a 400-meter radius of the site. To reach the other side of the railway line would require a good knowledge of the city layout. The hotel staff would be part of a travel plan, discouraged to arrive by car. In terms of traffic peaks, hotel arrivals and departures would be spread over a longer period. Guests at checkout would have had to provide a pre-arranged time for their car to be collected. In terms of overall traffic impact, all committed development has been factored in.

Cllr Blair: There is little sense of the hotel in the context of the station site or that that the parking concerns raised at Planning Committee have been addressed. City centre parking charges are designed to discourage long-stay parking. This arrangement must be affordable; otherwise visitors will be forced to park on the streets. Are you also underestimating the numbers arriving by car? If arriving as a group or family, a car would be cheaper than the train and much easier for those travelling with small children or heavy luggage. Surely a successful parking scheme would need to be tied with the proposed CB1 car park?

Colin Brown: The proposed CB1 multi-storey car park would be exclusively for station users, as agreed within Section 106 conditions.

Cllr Wright: There will be hopefully a better bus interchange as a result of the CB1 redevelopment scheme, but this is a small city. The car is still the preferred mode of transport in Cambridgeshire. Have you given much consideration to cycle parking and cycle flows?

Colin Brown: We can't be precise about how many arrive by different modes. We have sought to ensure we conform to the maximum numbers as quoted in

the parking standards of the Local Plan. We may need to have an agreed parking tariff. €10 per night is the standard rate currently used in Ireland.

Cllr Dryden: Have you used the Park & Ride?

Cllr Hipkin: This is an excellent service. There will also be the Guided Bus.

Cllr Dixon: Most families will arrive by car. A hefty charge will encourage people to go to another hotel. The installation of a ramp would at least slow cars down at the entrance and protect cyclists and pedestrians. Will there always be spaces at the Cambridge Leisure car park? Have you estimated the proportion of visitors arriving for business or as families?

Colin Brown: NCP believe they can serve all needs. A similar system is already in operation at the Hotel du Vin on Trumpington Street.

Cllr Walker: The Park & Ride is an obvious service to promote. What about the congestion and traffic flows to and from the Leisure car park? Would people want to wait for their car? How much would be made from the conference trade? Would the height of the hotel be lower or higher than Great Eastern House? There are all kinds of permutations that will put pressure on local residents and cause tension.

Cllr Merchant-Daisley: The parking estimations seem to be based largely on good faith and a lot of assumptions. You hope it's going to work out which is a real cause for concern. Cambridge has real traffic problems and more research on this needs to be done.

Colin Brown: We are conscious there is a need for good hotel accommodation in Cambridge, and we have chosen to locate this scheme in one of the most sustainable locations in the city.

Cllr Howell: Would staff cycle parking be restricted?

Colin Brown: This would be gated.

Cllr Howell. In terms of the valet scheme, more quantitative assurance is needed. You need to go through six sets of lights to get to the Leisure car park for example.

Colin Brown: Guests will have to give a pre-determined time when they need their car on departure. This is a management issue that will need to be worked through but we cannot see that this is inoperable.

Cllr Wright: The impact this scheme will have on main cycle flows is a concern. Also, there is the under-providing of decent cycle racks. Addressing this would mean the provision of a real service. You mentioned there would be ten staff in the hotel at any one time? Also, you've altered the angles of the solar panels. What will this do to your renewables targets?

Cllr Hipkin: Your hotel chain sounds quite up-market. Would the hotel restaurant or leisure facilities be open to the public? Would it have a community function?

Cllr Znajek: I'm concerned that a hotel of this size could be run by ten people.

Michelle Sweeney: We were working on the basis of providing cycle spaces for 50% of the staff. There should be a maximum of twenty staff in the hotel at any one time.

Colin Brown: Our view is not to impact on cycle flows. Guest cycle racks are likely to be misused by those reluctant to park in the multi-storey. This is a management issue.

Michelle Sweeney: The solar panels are set at the lowest pitch before performance and efficiency are compromised. This is a drop from 45 degrees to 25 degrees.

Niall Meager: You are correct on performance. We are still providing the required 10% renewables. This is a 3-star hotel and very much seen as a community facility with business and family use. The business facility, which we have to provide - like the leisure facility - is small. We will however discuss the potential for community use with the client.

Colin Brown: Thank you all for attending this presentation. We have been encouraged by your comments and your demonstration of attention to detail. We acknowledge that there are still concerns, such as with the valet parking. We will investigate Park & Ride usage. The promotion of alternative transport modes will be important. We will break down the traffic data and will look forward to submitting the application shortly.