HG/JC/2294

1st May 2019

Kirklees Council
Development Management
PO Box B93
Huddersfield
HD1 2JR

Dear Sir/Madam

The Redevelopment of the George Hotel,
St George's Square, Huddersfield, HD1 1JA.

Please find enclosed a planning application for the redevelopment of the George Hotel. The proposed development comprises the refurbishment of the building to bring the upper floors back into use as an aparthotel, the ground floor for a mix of commercial units and the basement for a commercial spa and space for the reinstatement of the Rugby League Museum.

The proposed development includes external works to improve access into the ground floor commercial units and to prevent conflict with the commercial uses and the residents on the upper floors of the building.

The Council will be aware that planning permission was granted in September 2015 for the change of use of the building to a mixed use scheme comprising hotel, function rooms, dental centre, educational facility, 11 apartments, basement spa and roof top shop/diner.

Since then our client has commissioned extensive market research which concludes that the continued use of the building as a hotel is no longer financially viable, however, due to the lower overhead an apart hotel would be a profitable operation for the building.

An apart hotel combines the best parts of a hotel with luxury apartments, and will cater for longer term visits ranging from a week to several months at a time. The benefit is that the staff overhead required to run such an facility is significantly lower than a hotel due to the lower turnover of guests in the building.

The proposals seek to retain uses that will allow public access into the building on the ground floor and basement of the building, with a mix of function rooms, bars/restaurants and coffee shops; however market intelligence advises that a degree of flexibility is required to survive in a challenging market. The market research has shown that in its current format commercial uses will not be attracted to the ground floor, so the proposals include revised internal layout and minor changes to the exterior of the building to improve accessibility, servicing and circulation within the building, as well as security for the upper floors.

Acumen Designers & Architects Ltd
Headrow House | Old Leeds Road | Huddersfield | HD1 1SG
t: 01484 546000 e: info@acumenarchitects.co.uk www.acumenarchitects.co.uk
Co. Reg. No. 4444841 VAT Reg. No. 789 7543 52

The mix of uses now proposed for the building comprise uses that were previously approved with the expired 2015 consent, albeit with the hotel use being replaced with the apart hotel.

In summary the proposals comprise:-

Fourth Floor – 7no. rooms for apart hotel
Third Floor – 15no. rooms for apart hotel
Second Floor – 15no. rooms for apart hotel
First Floor - 13 rooms for apart hotel

Ground floor
3no. separate commercial units, for Restaurant & Function Room, bars and coffee shop.
New shared toilet facilities and revised circulation and lobby for apart hotel

Basement
Ancillary storage space for commercial unit 3
Former Rugby Heritage Museum
Spa
Plant and Machinery room.

Enclosed with this planning application are a full set of drawings which highlight the proposals, as well as a Planning and Heritage Impact that identifies the significance of the Grade II* listed building, identifies the proposed alterations and comments on the impact of the changes on the heritage asset.

We believe the proposed layout comprises a viable mix of uses that will secure the long-term use of the building, safeguarding the fabric of the building as well as a prominent landmark within the town centre. The mix of uses provide a viable use for the building whilst attempting to provide uses which continue to allow public access into the building to appreciate its architectural character as well as the historical significance of the building in the roots of Rugby League.

The proposed development will create footfall within the town centre and specifically within St. George's Square, contributing towards the town's vitality and viability.

As a back drop to the proposed development of The George Hotel it is important to understand the shift in the retail and leisure offer in Huddersfield Town Centre with the greatest demand for units being to the south of the town centre, around the Kingsgate shopping centre. The recently approved cinema in the Kingsgate centre and the leisure proposals for the stadium will further draw interest away from St. George's Square, so flexibility by all parties will be required to secure the redevelopment of this prestigious building and help restore the balance of land use in Huddersfield Town Centre.

I hope you agree that the attached drawings are sufficient for you to validate and subsequently approve this planning application.

For and on behalf of Acumen Designers & Architects Ltd

Yours faithfully

REDACTED

Hamish Gledhill BSc (Hons), Dip TP, MRTPI