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| <b>Report To:</b>           | <b>The Planning Board</b>   | <b>Date:</b>       | <b>5th June 2013</b>                     |
| <b>Report By:</b>           | <b>Head of Regeneration and Planning</b>  | <b>Report No:</b>  | <b>13/0087/IC</b>                        |
|                             |   |                    | <b>Local Application<br/>Development</b> |
| <b>Contact<br/>Officer:</b> | <b>David Ashman</b>   | <b>Contact No:</b> | <b>01475 712416</b>                      |
| <b>Subject:</b>             | <b>Proposed two storey extension to existing hotel to provide an additional 22 bedrooms, with alterations to car parking and landscaping at<br/>Premier Inn, James Watt Way, Greenock</b> |                    |  |

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The site of the Premier Inn and the associated restaurant/pub (“The Point”) and car park extends to 0.8 hectares. Located on the waterfront, it is situated immediately to the east of Misco, to the north of McDonald’s restaurant and to the west of the dockside flats on James Watt Way.



## **PROPOSAL**

The application seeks planning permission for a 22 bedroom extension, to be built perpendicular to the hotel at the western end of the site and within the car park. With bedrooms over two levels, the extension will have the appearance of a three storey building due to undercroft parking. The extension is to be finished in facing materials to match those on the existing hotel.

## LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

Local Plan Policy SA2(b) - James Watt Dock (South Quay) and A8 Corridor (West)  
Relevant extracts only.

Inverclyde Council, as Planning Authority, will support the development of sites within Sub Area (b) identified on the Proposals Map, where proposals are in accordance with the following mixed use planning policy framework. Development must recognise and not obstruct the potential to renovate, convert and re-use the 'A' listed Sugar Warehouses.

Land Uses

Site A: James Watt Dock (South Quay), including Sugar Warehouses

- (a) Residential Flats;
- (b) Business (Offices and Light Industry) (Use Class 4);
- (c) Assembly and Leisure (Use Class 11);
- (d) Hotels and Hostels (Use Class 7);
- (e) Residential Institutions (Use Class 8);
- (f) Non-Residential Institutions, including Education (Use Class 10);
- (g) Maritime-based commercial enterprises, including provision for marina berthing facilities; and
- (h) Retail or Food and Drink (Use Classes 1 and 3), where ancillary to any of the above uses.

Design

- (o) The Council will require the design and finishing of all new buildings in this area, and especially those fronting onto the A8 trunk road, the docksides and the waterfront, to be of a high standard, reflecting the prominence of the development opportunity sites and their importance with regard to the image of Inverclyde as a whole.

## CONSULTATIONS

**Scottish Water** - No objection. A series of advisory notes are suggested.

**Head of Environmental and Commercial Services** – The Roads Development Guide indicates that for the hotel and adjacent pub/restaurant an appropriate combined level of parking is 1 space per 2.5 bedspaces (62 rooms/124 bedspaces/49.6 spaces), 1 space per 3 hotel staff (6 staff/2 spaces) and 10 spaces per 100 sq.m pub/restaurant public areas (545sq.m floorspace /54.5 spaces). 106.1 spaces are required and 106 spaces are proposed. It is noted that a survey indicated a peak demand of 68 spaces at any one time (on a Sunday 5-6pm). Thirteen cycle racks are required. Confirmation of Scottish Water's acceptance of the development should be submitted.

**Transport Scotland** - No objections.

## PUBLICITY

The nature of the proposal did not require advertisement.

## SITE NOTICES

The nature of the proposal did not require a site notice.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The application was the subject of neighbour notification. Seventeen objections have been received. The points of objection may be summarised as follows:

### Built form concerns

- potential adverse impact on the future expansion plans of a neighbouring business.
- overdevelopment of the site as the capacity of the hotel is increasing by 50%.
- the size of the development is without context.
- unattractive gable fronting James Watt Way.
- loss of light.

### Parking/vehicular issues

- increase in traffic levels delaying access onto the trunk road (exacerbating a present issue) and creating difficulty for nearby residents accessing their properties.
- inadequate parking provision.
- concerns over construction traffic.

### Amenity issues

- adverse impacts related to a neighbouring cctv system and possible implications for privacy of the hotel rooms.
- loss of trees creating a privacy issue.
- impacts on privacy of nearby residences.
- loss of view/detriment to the landscape.
- Increase in noise levels.
- Increase in litter.

### Miscellaneous issues

- increase in anti-social behaviour from a greater number of pub patrons (late night noise).
- potential Building Standards fire and noise issues.
- access from adjacent land may be required to construct the extension.
- possible interruption to services, especially water (existing pressure drops are experienced during full occupancy of the hotel).
- adverse impacts on the valuation of properties.
- concerns over land titles.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The material considerations in determination of this application are the Local Plan, the consultation responses and the representations.

Hotels are a use supported by policy SA2(b). Furthermore, the proposal is for the extension of an existing use. I consider the proposal to be a high quality design, complementing the existing hotel, and there are no objections in principle to access arrangements to the site, which remain unchanged. The position of the proposed extension will have no impact on the safe and effective pedestrian and cycle routes running through the site. The consideration of these issues satisfies me that the proposal accords with the Local Plan. It remains to be considered whether or not there are any material considerations which suggest that planning permission should not be granted.

With respect to the consultation replies, issues relating to disabled parking, cycle racks, drainage, lighting and recycling may be addressed through conditions on a planning permission.

Turning to the points of objection, I note that they relate to the 3 key impacts; the development potential of the adjacent business premises, the amenity of nearby residents and site capacity and operational issues.

The proximity of the proposed extension to the common boundary has potential implications for future development by the neighbouring business, in particular on the land between the existing building and the proposed extension, which it considers may be prejudiced if the amenity of bedroom accommodation is unacceptably impacted. At the closest point there are bedroom windows within 1.5 metres of the boundary, but I note the shape of the boundary between the properties means that a full length, full height extension to Misco equidistant from the common boundary and along its full length is unlikely to occur. Alternatively I recognise that there could, nevertheless, be a partial side extension or other development such as a plant compound within the area available. This raises concerns over the impact on the proposed extension bedrooms. In concluding on how to satisfactorily address this issue I am influenced by two factors. Firstly, occupants of the hotel bedrooms will be transient and will predominantly occupy rooms at night; and secondly the applicant has confirmed that the application has been submitted in the knowledge that in the future there is a potential that the adjoining landowner could apply for a development equidistant to their boundary. This would be a consideration in the assessment of any future application. As matters stand, there are no windows on the Misco building that would experience a loss of light.

Moving on to consider impact on residential amenity, the nearest flatted dwellings are approximately 100 metres distant and will not experience loss of light or impact on their privacy. Addressing noise, the hotel, "The Point" restaurant and McDonalds are established operations which pre-date the construction of the flats. The A8 trunk road lies to the rear of these flats. Any additional noise from the occupants of 22 hotel bedrooms, either from the patrons themselves or associated vehicles has to be seen within this context. Concerns that residents will suffer from a loss of view and property value may not be considered as a determining factor. Potential increased litter is conjecture that does not form a basis for refusal.



Increasing the capacity of the hotel by 50% does not in itself constitute overdevelopment. There is adequate parking provision for the extended hotel and, as a built form, the extension will be viewed within the context of the existing hotel and against the backdrop of the Misco building to the west. Although higher than the existing hotel the extension has been carefully designed to "step up" from it and therefore it does not dominate. The elevation to James Watt Way cuts into the existing slope further helping to address its greater height relative to the existing hotel. Its maximum height is below the apex of the Misco building. The gable elevation fronting James Watt Way is punctuated by windows and a gable feature close to the apex. On landscape setting, trees within the car park and on the boundary will be affected, but I do not consider this impact merits refusal of planning permission.

With respect to parking and traffic manoeuvring considerations, I note that the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services is satisfied that the level of parking equates to the Roads Development Guide and exceeds surveyed peak demands. Furthermore, Transport Scotland has also indicated no objections. Parking on-road by residents has been noted for some time and the access to the parking spaces for the hotel is closer to the trunk road than the flats.

I therefore conclude that having assessed the proposal against the Local Plan and having taken into consideration the other material considerations, there are no matters which are of sufficient weight to convince me that planning permission should not be granted.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the application be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. That prior to their use samples of all facing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.
2. That all surface water drainage from the site shall be treated in accordance with the principles of the Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Manual (C697) (CIRIA 2007). Before development commences, details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority of the maintenance regime for the water detention areas.
3. All external lighting on the application site should comply with the Scottish Government Guidance Note "Controlling Light Pollution and Reducing Lighting Energy Consumption".
4. That the applicant shall submit to the Planning Authority a detailed specification of the containers to be used to store waste materials and recyclable materials produced on the premises as well as specific details of the areas where such containers are to be located. The use of the development shall not commence until the above details are approved in writing by the Planning Authority and the equipment and any structural changes in place.
5. That prior to the extension hereby permitted being brought into use, 6 disabled parking spaces shall be marked out and 13 cycle racks shall be provided.
6. That prior to the commencement of development, details of flood resilience measures in the proposed plant and linen rooms shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

## **Reasons**

1. In the interests of achieving a complementary finish to the existing hotel.
2. To control runoff from the site to reduce the risk of flooding.
3. To protect the amenity of the immediate area, the creation of nuisance due to light pollution and to support the reduction of energy consumption.
4. To protect the amenity of the immediate area, prevent the creation of nuisance due to odours, insects, rodents or birds.
5. To ensure appropriate disabled and cycle parking provision.
6. To ensure that potential flooding risk is minimised.

Stuart Jamieson  
Head of Regeneration and Planning

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Application form and plans.
2. Inverclyde Local Plan
3. Consultation replies
4. Letters/e-mails of representation.



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