

Agenda Item A5	Committee Date 2 November 2009	Application Number 09/00730/FUL
Application Site Arndale Shopping Centre Royalty Mall Morecambe Lancashire	Proposal Demolition of units 53-67 Euston Road and creation of a mixed use development consisting of A1 retail units and C1 hotel use	
Name of Applicant JAP (Morecambe) LLP	Name of Agent Harris Partnership	
Decision Target Date 2 November 2009	Reason For Delay N/A	
Case Officer	Mr Andrew Drummond	
Departure	No	
Summary of Recommendation	Refusal	

1.0 The Site and its Surroundings

1.1 The 0.11 hectare application site is located in the centre of Morecambe. The site is currently fully developed with 8 small retail units forming the southern entrance to the Arndale Centre off Central Drive. As the entire site is developed it contains no landscaping.

The boundaries are formed by Central Drive (east), Euston Road (north), New Town Square (west) and the retail units of Royalty Mall (south). Though the area is generally flat, the application site slopes gently downwards from west to east. There is a 2m fall along Euston Road from the main square to Central Drive.

1.2 The site forms part of the Arndale Centre and is surrounded on 3 sides by other retail units. The Victorian terraces across Central Drive to the east are the exception, as they are predominantly residential although there are a few business premises within.

Vehicular access can be gained along Central Drive immediately to the east of the application site, though they would need to park up at the library or Pedder Street car parks and walk back to the site as parking along Central Drive is prohibited. Euston Road, which forms the site's northern boundary, is a pedestrianised street. Pedestrians can gain access to the proposal from this walkway whilst deliveries can utilise the service bay behind Royalty Mall to the south.

1.3 The site is within Morecambe Town Centre as defined in the Lancaster District Local Plan, though the site lies just outside the primary retail frontage. Central Drive forms part of the Primary Bus Corridor and the site is located about a 5 minute walk from both the bus and train stations in Morecambe. Poulton Conservation Area is situated a short distance away to the north and west of the site.

2.0 The Proposal

2.1 The application seeks planning permission for a mixed use development comprising new retail space and a hotel, and modifications to retail units 47 to 51 within the Arndale Centre. To facilitate this development, 8 retail units (nos. 53 to 67) would be demolished. These are 2 storey (approximately 7.3m) buildings that take the form of 4 modular blocks each stepped up in response to the

topography.

The submission states that this is the first phase of a wider strategy to improve the retail offer and enhance the public realm within Morecambe Town Centre.

- 2.2 It is proposed to create 607 sq.m of new retail space (an additional 234 sq.m as an existing 373 sq.m of retail floorspace would be lost) over both the ground and mezzanine floors and 1,308 sq.m of hotel accommodation over 3 upper floors. The 60-bedroom hotel would comprise 45 double rooms, 12 family rooms (which is purposely more than a standard Travelodge offer given its location) and 3 accessible rooms, and accessed by 2 lifts from a ground floor foyer/reception.

The double height retail space measures upto 7 metres in height on the Euston Road / Central Drive corner and facilitates the installation of the proposed mezzanine floor. With 3 further floors above, the proposed scheme would be 5 storeys high (17 metres extending to 18.4m for the service core). Some of the hotel bedrooms would be cantilevered over the pedestrianised Euston Road by up to 2m. The elevations would be finished in a mix of ivory coloured render, silver/grey coloured brickwork and a limited amount of buff coloured stone. Aluminium framed curtain-wall glazing would be utilised at ground and first floor levels on blue bricks.

Units 47-51 would be modified by rendering the existing brown brickwork and installing treated timber louvers to the upper level casement windows. The parapet would be refaced in sand coloured clay tile cladding system.

- 2.3 Pedestrian access will continue to be via Euston Road. In terms of parking, no car or cycle parking is proposed. It is proposed to utilise the existing service yard for deliveries, servicing (laundry services etc) and waste collection. This is accessed from Central Drive.
- 2.4 No landscaping or boundary treatments are proposed as the proposed building almost fills the entire application site. However, to accommodate the building 3 trees along Euston Road would be lost.

The applicant proposes a financial contribution towards the agreements and implementation of a wider public realm strategy. No fixed measures are proposed.

The 2.3m high palisade fencing is to be retained to the south separating the servicing area from the public highway.

3.0 Site History

- 3.1 A relevant application relating to this site has previously been received by the Local Planning Authority:

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
09/00284/ADV	Erection of various signage	Withdrawn

4.0 Consultation Responses

- 4.1 The following responses have been received from statutory and internal consultees:

Consultees	Response
County Highways	<p>The Highway Authority has concerns about the submitted Transport Assessment in relation to trip generation by the proposal, parking accumulation with regards the nearby car parks as no parking is proposed, and the impact of the additional service vehicles and their manoeuvres.</p> <p>There are also key omissions within the scheme - no drop-off/pick-up area is proposed and no secure covered cycle parking is incorporated into the scheme.</p> <p>If approved, County require improvements to the pedestrian link between the scheme and the bus/train stations, including crossings.</p>

County Planning	The development conforms to the Regional Spatial Strategy, especially relating to the regeneration of Morecambe and the provision of hotels in coastal locations. However, attention is drawn to renewable energy generation to meet at least 10% of the development's predicted energy requirement and the need to reduce construction waste and make provision for the development's ongoing waste generation (segregation of waste).
County Archaeology	No comments.
County s106 Officer	No contributions sought with the exception of transport measures raised by County Highways.
Environment Agency	No objection.
United Utilities	No objection to the proposal provided the site is drained on a separate system, with only foul drainage connected into the foul sewer. Surface water should discharge to the soakaway/watercourse/surface water sewer. They also suggest that consideration be given to the installation of sustainable drainage systems; they request that the impermeable area on the site is not increased (and preferably decreased); and they provide advice regarding grease traps and discharges from loading and storage areas.
Police	The applicant should undertake to achieve 'Secured by Design' for this development. It is recommended that the building is well illuminated and that there is adequate CCTV coverage of all external access areas. The proposed building does incorporate straight building lines with limited recesses and this will increase natural surveillance around the building. Wall mounted recessed lighting is shown on the plans and this is less likely to be subject to criminal damage. However, they should be constructed of a vandal resistant material.
Fire & Rescue	No comments received during the statutory consultation period.
Morecambe Chamber of Trade	No comments received during the statutory consultation period.
Morecambe Town Council	No objection.
Morecambe Hotel and Tourism Association	The Association question the appropriateness of a Travelodge type hotel in Morecambe as they cater for travellers moving from one place to another rather than visitors wishing to holiday in the resort. Such hotels are more appropriate in edge or out of centre locations, not in the centre of small resorts. The Association welcomes and accepts the need for additional quality accommodation to enhance the resort, but not a hotel that provides accommodation on a room only basis to transient visitors. Furthermore they have concerns about the pressure of car parking on the town centre car parks as no car parking is being provided as part of the proposal and the submission makes reference to the generation of "up to 60 cars per day".
Environmental Health Service	No objections.
Public Art Officer	Request the sum of £70,000 to commission a Lead Artist or Public Art Consultant to produce a masterplan or public art strategy for the development site. The lead artist or consultant would work as part of the design team to consider opportunities for public art that support the integration of the new development into the existing setting, enhance the public realm and contribute to place making through cultural development.

5.0 Neighbour Representations

5.1 1 item of correspondence relating to this proposal has been received, raising concerns regarding the height of the proposed building in relation to its surroundings, the loss of daylight and privacy to adjacent properties, and the prospect that the development would set a precedent for other similar

scaled buildings.

6.0 Principal Development Plan Policies

6.1 National Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Guidance Notes (PPG)

PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) - provides generic advice for all new built development. Sites should be capable of optimising the full site boundary and should deliver an appropriate mix of uses, green and other public spaces, safe and accessible environments and visually pleasing architecture. The prudent use of natural resources and assets, and the encouragement of sustainable modes of transport are important components of this advice. A high level of protection should be given to most valued townscapes and landscapes.

PPS6 (Planning for Town Centres) - seeks to promote the vitality and viability of town centres by planning for the growth and development of existing centres and promoting and enhancing existing centres, by focusing development in such centres and encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all.

The objectives which need to be taken account in the context of this are:

- to enhance consumer choice by making provision for a range of shopping, leisure and local services, which allow genuine choice to meet the needs of the entire community, and particularly socially-excluded groups;
- to support efficient, competitive and innovative retail, leisure, tourism and other sectors, with improving productivity;
- to improve accessibility, ensuring that existing or new development is, or will be, accessible and well-served by a choice of means of transport;
- to promote social inclusion, ensuring that communities have access to a range of main town centre uses, and that deficiencies in provision in areas with poor access to facilities are remedied;
- to encourage investment to regenerate deprived areas, creating additional employment opportunities and an improved physical environment;
- to promote economic growth of regional, sub-regional and local economies;
- to deliver more sustainable patterns of development, ensuring that locations are fully exploited through high-density, mixed-use development and promoting sustainable transport choices, including reducing the need to travel and providing alternatives to car use; and
- to promote high quality and inclusive design, improve the quality of the public realm and open spaces, protect and enhance the architectural and historic heritage of centres, provide a sense of place and a focus for the community and for civic activity and ensure that town centres provide an attractive, accessible and safe environment for businesses, shoppers and residents.

The main town centre uses to which this policy statement applies are retail, leisure, entertainment facilities, the more intensive sport and recreation uses, offices, arts, culture and tourism.

PPG13 (Transport) - encourages sustainable travel, ideally non-motorised forms of transport such as walking and cycling, but also other means like public transport. The use of the car should be minimised. This can be encouraged by the location, layout and design of new developments.

6.2 Regional Spatial Strategy - Adopted September 2008

Policy **DP2** (Promote Sustainable Communities) - fostering sustainable relationships between homes, workplaces and other concentrations of regularly used services and facilities, improving the built and natural environment, conserving the region's heritage, promoting community safety and security including flood risk, reviving local economies especially in areas in need of regeneration and housing restructuring such as Morecambe, promoting physical exercise through opportunities for sport and formal / informal recreation, walking and cycling.

Policy **DP4** (Make Best Use of Existing Resources and Infrastructure) - development should accord with the following sequential approach: first, using existing buildings (including conversion) within settlements, and previously developed land within settlements.

Policy **DP5** (Reduce the Need to Travel, Increase Accessibility) - development should be located so as to reduce the need to travel, especially by car, and to enable people as far as possible to meet their needs locally. All new development should be genuinely accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, and priority will be given to locations where such access is already available.

Policy **DP7** (Promote Environmental Quality) - understanding and respecting the character and distinctiveness of places and landscapes, the protection and enhancement of the historic environment, promoting good quality design in new development and ensuring that development respects its setting, reclaiming derelict land and remediating contaminated land and use land resources efficiently, maximising opportunities for the regeneration of derelict or dilapidated areas, promoting green infrastructure and the greening of towns and cities.

Policy **RDF3** (The Coast) - enhance the economic importance of the coast and the regeneration of coastal communities in ways that safeguard, restore or enhance and make sustainable use of the natural, built and cultural heritage assets of the North West Coast and address issues of environmental decline and socio-economic decline.

Policy **W5** (Retail development) - promote retail investment where it assists in the regeneration and economic growth of the town and city centres. In considering proposals and schemes any investment made should be consistent with the scale and function of the centre, should not undermine the vitality and viability of any other centre or result in the creation of unsustainable shopping patterns.

Policy **W6** (Tourism and the Visitor Economy) - seek to deliver improved economic growth and quality of life, through sustainable tourism activity in the North West. Focus should be on the regeneration of the North West's coastal resorts as priority locations for major footloose tourism development, where tourism is a critical component of the economy.

Policy **W7** (Principles for Tourism Development) - ensure high quality, environmentally sensitive, well-designed tourist attractions, infrastructure and hospitality services, which improve the region's tourism offer, support the provision of distinct tourism resources that harness the potential of sites and their natural attributes, encourage and facilitate regeneration, and improve the public realm.

Policy **RT2** (Managing Travel Demand) - measures to discourage car use (including the incorporation of maximum parking standards) should consider improvements to and promotion of public transport, walking and cycling. Major new developments should be located where there is good access to public transport backed by effective provision for pedestrians and cyclists to minimise the need to travel by private car.

Policy **RT9** (Walking and Cycling) - encourage the delivery of integrated networks of continuous, attractive and safe routes for walking and cycling to widen accessibility and capitalise on their potential environmental, social and health benefits.

Policy **EM10** (A Regional Approach to Waste Management) - promote and require the provision of sustainable new waste management infrastructure, facilities and systems that contribute to the development of the North West by reducing harm to the environment and improving the efficiency of resources (waste management principles set out in Policy EM11).

Policy **EM16** (Energy Conservation & Efficiency) - ensure that the developer's approach to energy is based on minimising consumption and demand, promoting maximum efficiency and minimum waste in all aspects of development and energy consumption.

Policy **EM18** (Decentralised Energy Supply) - new non residential developments above a threshold of 1,000m² and all residential developments comprising 10 or more units should secure at least 10% of their predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources.

Policy **CNL4** (Spatial Policy for North Lancashire) - secure the regeneration of Morecambe through the development of tourism and the restructuring of the housing market.

6.3 Lancaster District Local Plan - Adopted April 2004 (saved policies)

Policy **S1** (District's Retail Hierarchy) - new shopping development will be permitted within the District centre of Morecambe.

Policy **TO2** (Tourism Opportunities) - the Council will direct new visitor attractions to Morecambe centre. Proposals which would prejudice the possibility of achieving this will not be permitted.

Policy **E35** (Conservation Areas and their Surroundings) - development proposals which would adversely affect important views across a Conservation Area or lead to an unacceptable erosion of its historic form and layout, open spaces and townscape setting will not be permitted.

Policy **T9** (Providing for Buses in New Developments) - seeks to locate development, which will significantly increase the demand for travel as close as possible to existing or proposed bus services (i.e. within a 5 minute walk or 400m).

Policy **T26** and **T27** (Footpaths and Cycleways) - Requirements to include cycle and pedestrian links for new schemes.

Policy **R21** (Access for People with Disabilities) - requires disabled access provision.

6.4 Lancaster District Core Strategy - adopted July 2008

Policy **SC1** (Sustainable Development) - Development should be located in an area where it is convenient to walk, cycle or travel by public transport between homes, workplaces, shops and other facilities, must not result in unacceptable flood risk or drainage problems, does not have a significant adverse impact on a site of nature conservation or archaeological importance, uses energy efficient design and construction practices, incorporates renewable energy technologies, creates publicly accessible open space, and is compatible with the character of the surrounding landscape.

Policy **SC2** (Urban Concentration) - 95% of new employment floorspace to be provided in the urban areas of Lancaster, Morecambe, Heysham and Carnforth.

Policy **SC5** (Achieving Quality in Design) - new development must reflect and enhance the positive characteristics of its surroundings, creating landmark buildings of genuine and lasting architectural merit.

Policy **SC6** (Crime and Community Safety) - Developments should be pedestrian friendly, incorporate Secured by Design principles, avoid car dominated environments, deliver safe high quality public realm and open spaces, and achieve greater use of pedestrian and cycle networks.

Policy **SC7** (Development and the Risk of Flooding) - Development must not expose workplaces, homes and public areas to unacceptable levels of flooding.

Policy **ER2** (Regeneration Priority Areas) - The key area identified for regeneration is central Morecambe where a tourism, housing renewal and heritage led regeneration is prioritised.

Policy **ER4** (Town Centres and Shopping) - to maintain the vitality and viability of its town centres, provide services as locally as possible and minimise the need to shop by car. Morecambe Town Centre to develop local comparison and convenience shopping goods for the District north of the River Lune and retaining an important role as a visitor destination.

Policy **ER5** (New Retail Development) - new comparison retailing will be focused on meeting the regeneration needs in Central Morecambe.

Policy **ER6** (Developing Tourism) - Maximise the potential of tourism to regenerate the local economy, especially by creating a quality leisure offer in central Morecambe.

Policy **ER7** (Renewable Energy) - To maximise the proportion of energy generated in the District from renewable sources where compatible with other sustainability objectives, including the use of energy efficient design, materials and construction methods.

Policy **E1** (Environmental Capital) - Development should protect and enhance nature conservation sites and greenspaces, minimise the use of land and non-renewable energy, properly manage environmental risks such as flooding, make places safer, protect habitats and the diversity of wildlife species, and conserve and enhance landscapes.

Policy **E2** (Transportation Measures) - This policy seeks to reduce the need to travel by car whilst improving walking and cycling networks and providing better public transport services.

7.0 Comment and Analysis

7.1 Proposed Uses

The mix of retail and hotel uses in a town centre is appropriate in planning policy terms. The provision of larger retail units in place of smaller ones in this context is also acceptable. Indeed this was identified as a requirement in the District's 2006 Retail Study. The retail space being proposed is of a scale that relates to the role and function of the town centre within the wider retail hierarchy and the catchment that it serves. Though views from the various consultees may disagree with the appropriateness of a budget hotel in this location, it is clearly reasonable in policy terms. A diversity of uses within a town centre contributes to its vitality and viability. It also has the potential to boost Morecambe's tourism offer. No catering facilities are proposed in the hotel encouraging visitors to use local eateries and drinking establishments, thereby supporting local businesses. This would be an economic benefit to the town centre.

7.2 Regeneration

As the application states the Arndale Centre has lacked private investment in recent years resulting in high levels of vacancy, low levels of maintenance and an unsatisfactory environmental quality. Investment is therefore welcomed and encouraged in Morecambe Town Centre, bringing vitality to an area in need of regeneration. The use of brownfield land in a regeneration priority area is very much supported in national, regional and local planning policy. The regeneration required is not just to the buildings but also to the public realm, which is looking tired at best. Though this is discussed later in the report, it should be noted that the applicant is also seeking to re-brand the centre with new signage as proposed in an advertisement application (Ref: 09/00284/ADV). However this application has been withdrawn, as it became apparent to the applicant that the proposed advertisements were unlikely to gain support from the local planning authority due to their scale and appearance. It should also be noted that the applicant is currently viewing this proposal as a Phase 1, with 2 further phases to follow to create a shopping centre that meets the needs of locals and retailers.

The hotel would also create about 16 jobs, providing an employment benefit. Travelodge generally recruit locally at all levels and provide training opportunities.

7.3 Design and Massing

Though the supporting documents state that the proposal enhances and enriches the building fabric, responds to its surrounding context, strengthens the character of the area and responds to its gateway location, the design is very limited, in our view, in terms of achieving these aspirations. The context has been investigated and documented by the applicant, and though this cannot be argued against, the interpretation of these facts is somewhat disappointing. The site does need regenerating and some of the materials and architectural detailing (such as the vertical emphasis to the development) are appropriate. However, the scheme proposed is stretched over 5 floors to a height of 18.4m, over twice the height of the 2 storey (9m high) retail units on the opposite side of Euston Road and also significantly higher than the larger retail units to the south (11m). Though there are other taller buildings in the vicinity of the application site, including the 4 storey Victorian buildings opposite the site to the east (15.5m), the 5 storey (c17m) retail/residential block known as Anderton Court, and the permitted (though yet to be implemented) 5 storey (16.5m) Plaza scheme, the height of the proposal in its immediate setting is inappropriate.

Its height and location makes it a landmark building yet the architecture and the proposed palette of materials does not reflect this. Instead, this tall building looks out of place both in its immediate

setting and when viewed from neighbouring areas, thereby adversely affecting views across the nearby Conservation Area. Its height, though not assessed by the applicant in terms of daylight and sunlight, will cast considerable shadows northwards over Euston Road making the public realm a dark and cold place to be instead of a warm welcoming environment. The height of the proposal, which would create an imbalance to Euston Road, was discussed at length during pre-application discussions and officers put forward alternative suggestions which have been dismissed by the applicant with little comment. These alternative suggestions also considered further issues such as the gateway location and the tired look of the site's surroundings. Though the Design and Access Statement recognise that the Arndale Centre buildings fail to address this gateway position on the prominent junction of Euston Road and Central Drive, the proposal does little to change this. In other words, the proposal fails to respond to its location. The east elevation, the one most visible to people travelling into Morecambe along Euston Road, is little more than a 17m high blank wall. Whilst it is appreciated that this has been designed to protect the privacy of those properties opposite, greater detail should have been afforded to this elevation. Similarly officers expressed concern over the adjacent units as the proposal is situated between these two buildings. In our view no attention has been given to these buildings or to the adjacent service yard. These issues must be addressed otherwise the proposal will fail to take this opportunity to deliver a gateway building of architectural merit. Instead it would create an excessively tall, mediocre building between two dated, uninspiring properties, and the gateway to Morecambe would remain inadequate and unimaginative. To generate the investment required in Morecambe Town Centre, this building in this location must be impressive in terms of design and appropriate in terms of scale and orientation. Inadequate designs will not be accepted solely because of the desire to regenerate the site.

7.4 Public Realm and Landscape Impacts

The application also refers to the improvements to Euston Road being a key feature in the regeneration of Morecambe Town Centre. Whilst the submission does not make any fixed proposals, it makes clear that the applicant is willing to collaborate with the City Council in agreeing and helping to finance a strategy for environmental improvements. This is welcomed. However, in addition to the proposal failing to relate to the surrounding buildings, the submission equally fails to create the relationship required between the proposal and the public realm. As mentioned above, the proposed scheme would cast a significant shadow over the public space. Furthermore, it is proposed to remove of 3 existing trees on Euston Road, which would adversely affect Euston Road in the short term until the agreed strategy was implemented.

Therefore the impacts on the public realm and landscape assets are unacceptable.

7.5 Amenities (Daylight and Privacy)

The applicant has attempted to address the issue of privacy by proposing a tall flank wall to the eastern elevation with little fenestration, and the few windows that do punctuate the solid treatment would have obscured glazing. However, as discussed above, this creates a poor gateway feature onto Euston Road and Central Drive, the main access into Morecambe.

As for sunlight and daylight, no assessment has been made of the proposal. Given its height, orientation and overbearing nature, it is very likely that the scheme would have a significantly detrimental impact on the public realm to the north. This would make Euston Road a dark, cold place instead of the welcoming, light space that is required at the entrance to the town centre's primary shopping area.

7.6 Sustainability

The submitted Sustainability Statement sets out the applicant's aspiration relating to energy efficiency and renewable energy. With regards to the former, references are made to the building's orientation, insulation, use of materials with a low embodied energy, low emission boilers and efficient lighting. Furthermore other environmentally friendly measures are listed such as recycling materials, minimisation of construction waste, responsibly sourced materials, locally sourced materials and the use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) in the public realm. On the latter issue of renewable energy the applicant has understandably dismissed certain technologies due to the site location and the proposed use of the development (biomass, ground source heat pumps, water conservation and rainwater harvesting). The options identified which are more appropriate and practical according to the submission are solar photovoltaic systems, solar thermal

hot water systems, combined heat and power (CHP), air source heat pumps and wind turbines.

The applicant acknowledges the importance of minimising the development's impact on the environment, but they do not commit themselves to any of the above technologies or measures as they may have adverse economic or visual impacts. Therefore though they also recognise the need to provide at least 10% of the development's predicted energy requirement through on site generation, the proposal does not incorporate any of the above into the design. However, if the scheme were to gain planning permission appropriate conditions should be attached to ensure regional planning policy is satisfied.

7.7 Servicing and Parking

The application makes no provision for parking with the emphasis being on the utilisation of the existing town centre car parks on Pedder Street and adjacent to the library. Given the nature of a hotel, the demand for parking will be for overnight parking, though any visitor requiring long term parking will need to park elsewhere. The above-mentioned short term car parks may have adequate capacity to accommodate any increase of demand created by the additional retail floorspace, but this not be assessed. However, the proposal does not provide any secure, covered cycle parking and associated shower facilities for staff. Such measures help to reduce reliance on motorised trips and should be provided. Nor does the proposal include an area for drop-offs/pick-ups as often associated with hotel accommodation.

Furthermore, no refuse stores are proposed to serve the retail units. Stores are only provided for the hotel, where refuse will be collected from the service area to the south of the building. This service area will also be used for deliveries, laundry collections and other service requirements of both the hotel and retail elements. Despite Officers asking the applicant to address the poor frontage to Central Drive, unfortunately no improvement works are proposed for this service area. County Highways has raised concerns on the suitability of the service yard and its access arrangements to accommodate the extra demand created by the proposed development because again this has not been assessed as part of the application.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 For a few years the priority has been to attract investment to Morecambe, and it may be argued that in some cases, the need for regeneration has outweighed the design quality considerations. However, this is clearly a 'Gateway' location, and one that will set the tone for future developments within the vicinity.

Pre-application discussions with the applicant indicated that the Local Planning Authority will not accept poor design. Though the submission differs from the scheme tabled during pre-application discussions, many of the design comments raised by planning officers have not been addressed. Whilst some issues have been resolved in part, the overall proposal remains sub-standard and of inappropriate scale.

8.2 The Service will not accept poor designs in Morecambe despite the desire to regenerate the site. The architectural legacy for future generations would be compromised by this proposal, and it would undoubtedly set a standard for similar buildings of inappropriate proportion and poor design in relation to its surroundings.

For these reasons, the proposed scheme is recommended for refusal.

Recommendation

That Planning Permission **BE REFUSED** for the following reasons:

1. The proposed building is poorly designed with insufficient reference to its surroundings, and therefore contrary to PPS1 and PPS6, Regional Spatial Strategy Policy DP7, and Core Strategy Policy SC5.
2. The height of the proposed building is unacceptable and its scale and orientation (given its increase in height) has not been adequately assessed in daylight and sunlight terms, especially in relation to the adjacent public space. Therefore the proposal would be contrary to PPS 1.

Human Rights Act

This recommendation has been reached after consideration of the provisions of The Human Rights Act. Unless otherwise stated in this report, the issues arising do not appear to be of such magnitude to override the responsibility of the City Council to regulate land use for the benefit of the community as a whole, in accordance with national law.

Background Papers

None.