

From: Michelle Good
Sent: 17 November 2015 11:55
To: Steve Weaver
Cc: Peter Marshall
Subject: FW: Acolaid Case APP/14/01225

Afternoon Steve,

Sincere apologies – I thought I had issued this to you previously. Happy to discuss further if you think it appropriate.

Application No. APP/14/01225

To: FAO Michelle Good

Date: 12 October 2015

Site Address: Market Parade Development Site, Market Parade, Havant

Proposed Development: Outline application with all matters reserved for demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of site to erect 130No. apartments and 1126sqm of ground floor commercial/retail space (Use Classes A1-A5 and B1(a)) and associated service, access and 58 private residential basement parking spaces (indicative height of building between five and thirteen stories).

Landscape (Transport & Implementation Team) Consultation

The development principle for a mixed-use development that will help to reinvigorate this part of Havant Town Centre is regarded as both positive and timely.

Having reviewed the proposal content in further detail, however, I have specific concerns regarding the following:

- Visual impact of this landmark building is not sufficiently nor rigorously demonstrated
- Building height increase to 13 storeys is disproportionate in scale with the historic townscape character and street-scene
- Significant height difference compared with surrounding built-form scale will adversely impact public realm quality with excessive over-shading and wind funnelling.
- Proposed ground floor façade levels do not maximise connectivity with Havant Station Forecourt
- Building capacity increase will adversely impact on the public highway for delivery, maintaining and servicing
- Basement car park has unresolved usability, security and safety issues.

Visual impact of the landmark building

From a landscape perspective, I fully appreciate that an attractive, contemporary building can successfully contribute a focal point for a key town centre destination. Equally, a landmark building can benefit public realm legibility and help to make a place more memorable. Unfortunately, the submitted application does not sufficiently or rigorously demonstrate the visual impact of the proposed building.

For example, the Architectural Report includes visuals identified as 'Massing view and skyline impact from the North of the Railway and across the Park from Park Road' – but I am unconvinced as to the accuracy of these.

One of these visuals appears to demonstrate the building would be obscured from view by mature trees within Havant Park. Yet the application states *"By providing a feature tower, rail commuters can identify this as a point of entrance to the town and also a visual link to the bus terminal which is currently lacking."* Besides the density of mature trees in Havant Park, I anticipate existing Meridian Centre building mass will further obscure views of this feature tower from the Bus Station. This suggests the application will not deliver a landmark visible from the Bus Station?

Conversely, I anticipate the feature tower will be significantly visible from the East – West Street junction within St Faiths Conservation Area and as a high rise backdrop against the Havant UFC Church when travelling along North Street. I suggest this more sensitive viewpoint warrants some further consideration in terms of visual impact.

Similarly, I note views of the building have been generated with CAD or perhaps SketchUp – unfortunately, the viewpoints are substantially elevated and do not sufficiently represent a pedestrian eye-level view of the proposed building scale relative to adjacent built-form. Equally, the 'extruded' form of adjacent buildings perhaps detracts from the reality that several have pitched roofscapes that are quite different to that represented within the application.

An artistic, rendered visual of the northern façade appears sunlit, with the ground floor level with the station forecourt – aspects that are inaccurate somewhat misleading.

Building scale relative to historic townscape character

Havant Borough Core Strategy Policy - CS16 High Quality Design

- 1 Responds to, draws inspiration from and respects local context and:
 - c) Uses the characteristics of the locality to help inform the design of the new development including heights, massing, existing buildings lines, plot widths and depths, materials and proportions of windows and doors;

In considering the above policy, I am concerned the proposed 13 storey height is excessive and disproportionate to scale of the local context and historical architectural character. The Havant Town Centre Urban Design Framework section for Market Parade indicates a landmark tower element up to 8 storeys – a height that would still be substantially taller than surrounding buildings, but much more proportionally relative to the scale of public realm and width of street. To illustrate my point – taller towers in larger cities work because they sit in context with other buildings of considerable mass, where the broader streets and civic scale open spaces provide a visual balance. In Havant, the Station Forecourt, North Street and Market Parade are comparatively narrow spaces – hence, will gain most benefit from built-form of scale relative to the SPD recommendation.

Building height impact on public realm quality

I fully appreciate the railway station is a key arrival point for Havant and agree that a quality building will contribute a memorable reference to help reinforce place identity. I would emphasise the 'gateway to the town' can only be achieved by comprehensive and coordinated regeneration of the whole Market Parade site and associated public realm. It is vital that the proposed increase of capacity associated with this application will not hinder or disadvantage prospects for regenerating the remaining site.

Anticipating a typical storey height of 3 metres, the proposed building would rise to height of over 39 metres (128 feet) to the southern side of the station forecourt. As previously mentioned, this forecourt is not particularly generous in area. I am concerned that visitors will arrive at a station forecourt dominated by the height of the building that over-shaded for most of the day and adversely impacted by a down-draught winds.

Unfortunately, the tallest element of the proposed building corresponds with the narrowest cross-section of the Market Parade approach to Havant Station. I am concerned the proposed building arrangement maximises this pinch-point and will channel the prevailing south-westerly wind through the funnel shape of Market Parade – reducing public realm comfort and potentially discouraging usage.

The amenity deck space proposed at first floor level will rarely receive any direct sunlight because it is surrounded by a six storey façade to the West, South and East. Relatively small in proportion to the surrounding façade heights. Rather than a tangible amenity for residents, it seems this void will comprise more of a light well for adjacent building facades.

Building connectivity with Havant Station forecourt

Havant Town Centre Urban Design Framework (adopted SPD) (p.42) outlines the Market Parade redevelopment as a *'landmark mixed residential and leisure development, which addresses the park and the station, and creates new stronger links between the station, the park and the retailing core'*.

Understandably constrained by the current application redline boundary, the proposed ground floor façade adjacent to the Station will sit more than a metre lower than the station forecourt, which is further obscured by metal balustrade. To function effectively, the proposed application appears reliant upon significant adaptation of the forecourt space – something that may not be feasible nor desirable for rail user accessibility.

The proposal needs to further demonstrate how it can more effectively and appropriately create a new and stronger link with the station.

Current application limitations aside, it is clear that future scope to adapt or to partially raise the ground floor levels would achieve a more mutually beneficial solution e.g. Enhanced headroom clearance and perhaps extent for the constrained

basement car park, as well as a more efficient and attractive connection between the station and potential retail premises.

Building capacity impact on the public highway

There appears substantial reliance on servicing, delivery and maintenance from public highway. Given a significant building height and capacity increase, I am concerned that residential and commercial servicing demand (e.g. waste collections and deliveries) will place excess pressure upon functionality of the existing highway network and associated public realm.

There isn't sufficient space to accommodate such a high number of refuse bins on collection days without causing a significant obstruction to the highway and public realm. Equally, from my discussions with colleagues in HBC Operational Services, the route for accessing bins appears inefficient and inconvenient for such a high volume.

Basement car park usability, security and safety

Accepting the parking layout may adapt further as the building structural design progresses, I comment as follows:

- Tandem spaces are inappropriate, particularly given the lack of space for a simple reverse-release manoeuvre.
- All parking bays require a minimum 6 metre clearance access zone (several do not meet this requirement).
- An appropriate number of disabled parking bays are required.
- A one-way circulatory route is preferable for safe legibility and to reduce risk of obstruction congestion.
- Access control for the vehicle ramps is unclear – how will unauthorised access (by vehicle or on foot) be prevented?
- The steep vehicle ramps directly abut public highway – how will accidental slips / falls be prevented without provision of a level safety zone?
- Sufficient pedestrian visibility and protection from emerging vehicles is required.
- Ramp length indicates a 2.2 metre depth below existing ground levels – is this sufficient for headroom clearance and ground-slab construction?
- Basement cross-sections are required to demonstrate levels relative to proposed ground floor, adjacent public highway and the access ramp.
- There appears to be cycle storage provision within the basement – how will cyclists access / egress the basement?
- Pedestrian routes and access points require clear definition and segregation from vehicle routes.
- Pedestrian access cores require compliance with secure by design principles.

Redline boundary

Some of the proposed balconies appear to overhang beyond the extent of the redline boundary.

If you should have any queries, please don't hesitate to call.

Kind Regards

Michelle Good CMLI
Senior Landscape Architect