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Borough Council



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# THE WISH TOWER RESTAURANT SITE, KING EDWARDS PARADE

## Planning Advice Note

February 2009



Eastbourne Borough Council  
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Eastbourne  
East Sussex BN21 4TW

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## **THE WISH TOWER RESTAURANT SITE, KING EDWARDS PARADE**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This advice note has been prepared to provide informal planning advice to potential developers. It is intended to provide up to date information on the matters which developers will need to take into consideration in formulating proposals for the site. The Council produced a Planning Brief for the site in July 2000. This dealt with the relevant policies and constraints which affect the site, the design principles which should be applied to redevelopment proposals and access and servicing considerations. This remains the approved planning guidance.
- 1.2 The Wish Tower Restaurant is situated on the seafront of Eastbourne. It sits next to the 'Wish Tower' which is one of a number of Martello Towers which were built to protect the coastline in the early nineteenth century, and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The Wish Tower restaurant was constructed in 1960 and the Borough Council is the leaseholder of the site from the Chatsworth Estate on a 999 year lease granted in June 1885. The restaurant is currently sublet until 31 March 2010.
- 1.3 This advice note has been prepared to provide planning information and advice for prospective developers of the Wish Tower restaurant site. It contains information on the Borough Council's planning policies and constraints which apply to the site, as well as guidance on how the Council wishes to see the site developed.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The site of the Wish Tower Restaurant occupies a prominent position on the seafront and represents a major opportunity for more intensive development to provide an enhanced tourism offer. It is located within the Town Centre and Seafront Conservation Area.
- 2.2 The existing building on the site currently functions as a restaurant/café/sun lounge, used by both local residents and tourists. The existing building is of little architectural merit and does not relate well to, or enhance the setting of the ancient monument. The Council considers that there is considerable potential for alternative development to create a more suitable structure to complement the Wish Tower, with a

use which will provide an attraction to visitors and enhance the character and appearance of this part of the seafront.

### **3.0 Description of Site**

- 3.1 The Wish tower Restaurant covers an area of approximately 1000 square metres. The Restaurant and adjoining sun lounge comprise a single storey structure measuring approximately 41.5 metres by 19 metres, and is 4.5 metres high. Attached toilets and other ancillary accommodation measure 26 metres by 6.7 metres, and are 2.7 metres high.

### **4.0 Policies**

- 4.1 The Eastbourne Borough Local Plan was adopted in September 2003. The Plan policies were reviewed in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), and policies still relevant were 'saved' in September 2007, until 2011, or until replaced by new policies in the Local Development Framework. Any development at the site will need to conform with these saved Local Plan policies.

- 4.2 Whilst all policies in the Plan should be considered in relation to development proposals, the following policies are considered to be particularly relevant:

- Policy UHT1 – Design of New Development
- Policy UHT2 - Height of Buildings
- Policy UHT4 – Visual Amenity
- Policy UHT8 – Protection of Amenity space
- Policy UHT10 – Design of Public Areas
- Policy UHT13 – External Floodlighting
- Policy UHT15 – Protection of Conservation Areas
- Policy UHT17 – Protection of Listed Buildings and their Settings
- Policy UHT20 – Archaeological Sites and Scheduled Monuments
- Policy TO5 – New Tourist Accommodation
- Policy TO7 – Preferred Area for Tourist Attractions and Facilities
- Policy TO8 – New Tourist Attractions and Facilities
- Policy TO9 – Commercial Uses on the Seafront
- Policy US5 – Tidal Flood Risk

The full policies can be read in the Eastbourne Borough Plan 2001 – 2011. The Plan can be viewed on the Council's website at [www.eastbourne.gov.uk](http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk)

## **5.0 Development Principles**

### **Design**

- 5.1 The new building to replace the current restaurant should be of a contemporary design using modern materials to contrast and not confuse the understanding of the historic tower (see 5.11 for guidance on the Scheduled Ancient Monument issues). The building should not be higher than the existing building, to maintain the dominance of the Tower in views, but construction could include an extension downwards, by means of excavation, to the level of the Tower's original moat, which coincides with the level of the seafront's raised promenade. The footprint of the new building should be broadly similar to the existing restaurant and sun lounge, although it may be possible to extend into the courtyard area. The impact of this could be mitigated through a design aimed at retaining or restoring the character of the Tower.
- 5.2 Drawings identifying development guidelines and the maximum site area within which the development could be accommodated are included in Appendix 2.

### **Acceptable Uses**

- 5.3 Hotel (Use Class C1), restaurant/café (Use Class A3) with public use for non residents (if hotel use), public access should be maintained to the Ancient Monument and seafront promenade.

### **Non Acceptable Uses**

- 5.4 Residential (Use Class C3), Retail (Use Class A1) except ancillary to acceptable use eg. Gift shop in hotel or café. Industrial and office (Use Classes B1, B2, and B8). Residential Institutions (Use Class C2), Assembly and Leisure (Use Class D2).

### **Public Use**

- 5.5 A use by members of the public should be maintained. This can take the form of a pay per use such as restaurant/café,

but there is no requirement to retain the current free sun lounge. Public access should be retained along the seafront at all times.

### **Highways Issues**

- 5.6 A Transport Assessment will be required to ascertain the likely impact of the proposed development, in terms of the need for vehicular access, the provision of operational and non operational parking and servicing requirements.

### **Travel Plan**

- 5.7 This should aim to encourage the use of alternative modes of transport other than the private car, such as improved access by public transport, improvement of pedestrian links, provision for cyclists, introduction of an employee car club and the implementation of a car valet service. The Plan should be secured by a legal agreement.

### **Access and Parking**

- 5.7 The opportunity to provide additional on site parking to serve a new development is restricted by the location of the Wish Tower and the open space and gardens surrounding the site. The following options should be considered as ways of tackling the access and parking issues on the site:
- Provision of drop off facilities close to the entrance of the development.
  - Improvement of turning/manoeuvring facilities at the drop off and servicing areas.
  - Provision of disabled parking close to the development.
  - Provision of parking facilities in an alternative location nearby with a courtesy valet service.
  - Introduction of a staff 'car club' facility.
  - Improvement of pedestrian access from nearby roads.
  - Restrictions on servicing times. (see 5.9 below)
  - Improvements to accessibility and convenience of nearby public transport.
  - Provision of cycle facilities and/or measures to encourage cycling.
  - Courtesy parking permits or reimbursement of the cost of on street parking used by visitors.

## **Servicing**

- 5.9 Existing provision for servicing the site is substandard, with poor access from King Edwards Parade, the nearest public road, and restricted turning facilities outside the building which conflict with other users during busy holiday periods. Therefore as part of the Transport Assessment, details of all proposed servicing arrangements should be provided. This should consider restricting delivery times to periods when conflict with other users can be minimised and improving the turning facility for delivery vehicles.

## **Construction**

- 5.10 The site is in a particularly sensitive location on the seafront and the potential for disruption and disturbance resulting from demolition and construction is likely to be high. A detailed method statement will be sought to deal with issues arising from the construction phase of the development.

## **Scheduled Ancient Monument**

- 5.11 Due to the proximity of the site to the Wish Tower, scheduled ancient monument consent will be required from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. English Heritage will also need to be consulted. A Conservation Statement has been prepared which provides more detail on the historic character and importance of the Wish Tower, which is included in Appendix 3. The key aspects of the historic character which should inform future changes affecting the structure or the setting of the Wish Tower are:
- First and foremost the tower was a defensive structure. This aspect has been eroded by the external stair and by the infilling of the moat and removal of part of the glacis. Excavation of the moat to its original level and reinstatement of the glacis and retaining wall is highly desirable and could be achieved with a building under a grass roof.
  - Access to the Tower should remain via the original entrance, preferably with a light weight bridge over the moat or with a lightweight staircase.
  - Any new building must leave the monument as the dominant structure and allow its historic function to be understood. A new building/structure must be no higher than the existing restaurant building. The historic context of the monument is that it was seen rising from a shingle beach, and relied on

intervisibility with neighbouring towers for mutual supporting fire.

- Changes to the Tower need to respect the ancient monument scheduling and preserve the legibility of its form and function. For this, recent new intervention should be seen as such and probably use modern materials and contemporary design to contrast and not confuse the understanding of the historic structure. For the same reasons any new building would also need to be designed in a contemporary manner using modern materials, rather than attempting to copy the historic form.
- An impact assessment will be required which will identify any issues arising from the redevelopment within the vicinity of the Tower; the need and justification for works to the Tower and any beneficial and adverse impacts of new building. Where adverse impacts are shown, it will be important to identify measures to reduce or mitigate against them.

### **Archaeology**

- 5.12 A desk based assessment (DBA), in accordance with the Standards for Archaeological fieldwork, recording and post-excavation work in East Sussex County Council, will be required, (particularly Annex E). This should include an impact assessment – an archaeologist providing advice on past impacts. Further archaeological field evaluation and mitigation of impacts through design changes and/or archaeological fieldwork may also be required, in accordance with government guidance on archaeology and planning in PPG16.

### **Flood Risk**

- 5.13 Any development proposals should be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. Developers will be expected to show that development can satisfy the requirements of the Environment Agency on ensuring the site is adequately protected from tidal flood risk.

### **Coastal Erosion**

- 5.14 The policy for this location on Eastbourne seafront, in the Shoreline Management Plan, is to 'Hold the Line', which will be achieved by maintaining and upgrading the current sea defence structures. No development should reduce the

integrity of the coastal sea defences. The site is protected from the sea by a substantial seawall and shingle beach. Beach levels in the vicinity of the Wish Tower are maintained by shingle re-charge and this is expected to continue. The risk of erosion in the short to medium term is therefore considered to be low.

- 5.15 There will however be a risk from the results of wave action and/or wind blown or sea thrown shingle or debris, particularly during periods of stormy weather conditions. Forecasts of rising sea levels and increased storminess due to climate change are likely to further increase the risk. There is therefore a possibility of both structural and non structural damage (broken windows for example). If current beach levels are maintained this risk is not considered to be a particular problem, but developers will be required to submit a Coastal Erosion Risk Assessment to show how the issues of erosion and direct or indirect sea action, will be dealt with in the design of the sea facing walls and windows and the provision of safe entry/exit under extreme conditions.

## **6.0 Services**

### **Sewerage**

- 6.1 There is currently no capacity problem with existing uses on the site. If there is any significant increase in the discharge to the sewerage network proposed, the developer will be required to submit a capacity assessment. There is an existing surface water sewer in the vicinity which will require protection should the development area be extended.

### **Water**

- 6.2 Contact: South East Water, 1-3 Barclay Court, Market Place, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1DB. 01444 448200

## **7.0 Contacts:-**

- Casper Johnson. County Archaeologist, East Sussex County Council, County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes East Sussex, BN7 1UE. 01273 36176
- David Reynolds. Senior Sustainable Development Planner, Environment Agency, Guildbourne House, Chatsworth Road, Worthing, East Sussex, BN11 1LD

- Paul Roberts, Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage, Eastgate Court, 195 – 205 High Street, Guildford, GU1 3EH. 01483 252000
- David Sims. Development Analyst, Southern Water, Southern House, Yeoman Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN13 3NX,
- Penny Shearer. Economic Development Manager, Eastbourne Borough Council. 01323 415030
- Robert Collingham. Estates Surveyor, Eastbourne Borough Council. 01323 415264
- Graham Kemp. Highways Manager, Eastbourne Borough Council. 01323 415245
- Lisa Rawlinson, Principal Implementation Officer, Eastbourne Borough Council. 01323 415250
- Annie Wills. Tourism, Development (& Communications) Manager, Eastbourne borough Council. 01323 415410