

SITE VISIT REPORT: MONDAY 20 November 2023

Committee Members: Alderman, Boyle, Coyle, Scott, Stewart, S McKillop (Vice Chair) and; Councillors Anderson, C Archibald, Hunter, Kennedy, McGurk, McMullan (Chair), Peacock, Nicholl, Storey, Wallace and Watton

LA01/2016/1328/F- Land south of 120 Ballyreagh Road, Portstewart BT55 7PT

Proposed by Ald Scott, Seconded by Cllr Kennedy

App Type: Full Application

Proposal: Full application for a Hotel and Spa Complex (including conference and banqueting facilities, holiday cottages, North West 200 visitor attraction (including exhibition space, tourist retail unit (c.150 sq m) and office space), demonstration restaurant, car/coach parking, access/junction alterations, landscaping, private sewerage treatment plant and water bore holes together with associated apparatus/infrastructure works on land south of 120 Ballyreagh Road (A2), Portstewart, BT55 7PT

Present: Ald Boyle, Coyle, Scott, Stewart and Cllrs Archibald, Hunter, Kennedy, Storey and Watton

Officials S Mathers, G Doherty

Apologies: None

Comments:

Site visit commenced in Pits area to the east of 120 Ballyreagh Road. S Mathers advised that the application was for, broadly, a proposed hotel, 9 holiday cottages, a demonstration restaurant and car parking. He showed the site location plan (Drawing 01 Rev 07A) and pointed out the extent of the application site. S Mathers identified that the spur of the application site running east towards No. 100 Ballyreagh Road was not included within the extent of development shown in the Site Layout Plan (Masterplan) Drawing 04G.

S Mathers showed the Portstewart Map from the Northern Area Plan (Map 3/05a) and identified the location of the settlement development limit, pointing out the intervening part of the golf course between it and the application site boundary.

S Mathers showed the Site Layout Plan (Masterplan) Drawing 04G and pointed out (both on the plan and on site) the principal elements of the hotel building, the 9 holiday cottages, the demonstration restaurant, the car park areas and the access. It was pointed out the hotel had two principal entrances and where these were. The three parts of the "T" shape plan of the hotel were identified: the NW200 area and conference facilities; the leisure and pool area and; the bedroom accommodation. He showed the Front (north elevation) Side (west) and Rear (south) Elevation Drawing (Drawing 36) of the hotel building. Pointing to the front (north) elevation, he stated that the hotel building was mainly three storey with a height of 11.5 metres rising to a highest point of 13.5 metres.

The site visit resumed at the access point to the immediate west of no. 120 Ballyreagh Road. S Mathers showed the Site Layout Plan (Masterplan) Drawing 04G and pointed out (both on the plan and on site) the location of the proposed access. He stated that the access was a new access in lieu of the existing access at this location. He added that while this did not accord with the terms of Policy AMP 3 of PPS 3 Access, Movement and Parking, it was nonetheless considered acceptable for the reasons provided in Addendum 2. Members asked where the strip of ground was that Jim Allister MLA referred to at the Pre-Determination Hearing on Friday 17 November 2023. S Mathers showed the Land Registry Map showing Folio 12451 Co Londonderry. Members looked at the area on the ground and observed that while a portion of the strip fell within the public road/ footpath, part of it extended beyond the edge of the public road/ footpath. Members asked what the position was of the Planning Department on the matter. S Mathers advised that it was under consideration and would be addressed in a further Addendum report (Addendum 4).

The site visit resumed at Ballygelagh Village on the access road to the immediate west of nos. 2 and 3 Ballygelagh Village. S Mathers showed the Site Layout Plan (Masterplan) Drawing 04G and pointed out (both on the plan and on site) the key elements of the proposal; the hotel building, the 9 holiday cottages, the demonstration restaurant and the car park areas. He pointed out the roof of no. 120 Ballyreagh Road as a reference point to identify the location of the access. Pointing out (both on plan and on site) S Mathers identified the specific location of the single storey holiday cottages and the split-level holiday cottages. After pointing out the location of the demonstration restaurant (both on the plan and on site), Members asked about the levels on the site. S Mathers, referring to Drawing 04G, pointed out the site level to the immediate front of the demonstration restaurant was 29.5 while that the hotel building entrances was 19.55 and 19.68. Members asked how the demonstration restaurant was to be constructed relative to the changing topography on this area of the site. S Mathers pointed out how this was to be achieved referring to the Demonstration Restaurant East Elevation North Elevation Drawing 27. He

stated that the original proposal, at pre-application stage, was for this to be a restaurant but due to the outworking of the public consultation, this was changed to a demonstration restaurant which would provide cookery lessons. Members asked if the small hill with gorse (whin) bushes to the south-east corner of the site was to be maintained. S Mathers confirmed that it was.

Members queried whether the development would change the view from some of the properties at Ballygelagh Village. S Mathers advised that it would. He added that the impact on the amenity of these dwellings, including the visual impact, was considered in processing the application.

S Mathers asked whether Members wished to convene at another location to consider the application from there. Members advised that this was not required.