

KDC

PLANNING COMMITTEE

(30th Meeting)

(Meeting by live video conference on Microsoft Teams due to COVID-19 restrictions)19th June 2020**PART A (Non-Exempt)**

All members were present, with the exception of Connétable D.W. Mezbourian of St. Lawrence, Deputy S.M. Wickenden of St. Helier, Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour and Deputy L.B.E. Ash of St. Clement, from whom apologies had been received.

Deputy R. Labey of St. Helier, Chairman (not present for item No. A1)
 Deputy G.J. Truscott of St. Brelade, Vice Chairman
 Connétable P.B. Le Sueur of Trinity
 Deputy R.E. Huelin of St. Peter
 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence

In attendance -

P. Le Gresley, Director, Development Control
 L. Davies, Planner
 G. Duffell, Principal Planner – Development Control
 T. Ingle, Principal Historic Environment Officer
 T. Stone, Research and Project Officer, States Greffe
 K.de Carteret, Committee and Panel Officer, States Greffe

Note: The Minutes of this meeting comprise Part A only.

IFC 2, IFC
 Jersey
 Esplanade, St
 Helier

P/2019/1556

A1. The Committee, considered a report in connexion with an application to construct a 7-storey office building, including basement car park, with retail (Class A) and food and beverage (Class B) on ground floor level at IFC 2, International Finance Centre Jersey, Esplanade, St Helier. The application site was on the former Esplanade car park and would form part of the ‘quartet’ of IFC buildings intended (initially by the 2008 Esplanade Masterplan) for the site. The application also included additional public open space on its south side, connecting to the existing landscaped area, Trenton Square. The Committee had visited the application site on 18th June 2020.

A site plan drawings and 3 dimensional model were displayed. The application site was located within the Built-Up area, Town centre and Town of St. Helier, it was on a Primary Route Network and was in the vicinity of listed buildings and the historic sea wall. Policies SP1, SP2, SP3, SP4, SP5, SP6, SP7, GD1, GD4, GD5, GD6, GD7, GD8, GD9, NE1, BE2, BE5, BE10, EO1, TT4, TT7, TT8, TT9, TT10, TT11, NR1, NR2, NR7, WM1, WM5, LWM2, LWM3, and Objective EO1 of the 2011 Island Plan were relevant.

The Committee noted that the original 2008 Esplanade Masterplan had been withdrawn and superseded in December 2019 by the Southwest St. Helier Planning Framework (the Framework). The general development principles for the Framework, GP1, GP2, GP3, GP4, GP5 and GP6 were applicable to the whole IFC site, although it was noted that the IFC had not been included in the 'key opportunity' sites identified by the Framework (in order to reflect the existing structures and remaining anticipated applications for the IFC).

The Committee was advised that IFC 2 was the fourth and final element of the quartet of buildings to form part of the masterplan for Jersey's International Finance Centre. The application site was to the north-west of the IFC1 building and north of IFC5, which had both been completed, and the site was to the north-east of the approved IFC6 building (on which construction was scheduled to commence in 2020).

The scheme for IFC2 proposed a 7-storey building which would provide a total of 13,250 m² (142,621 sq ft) floor space for office use. The principal entrance would be on the Esplanade (north) side of the building, and there would be retail units on the ground floor which would have direct access from the public space to the south. The Committee noted that the application was in line with earlier IFC submissions, each of the 4 buildings on the IFC site was different, but the design and resemblance of IFC 2 correlated with the original Masterplan concept. The application had been highly commended by the Jersey Architecture Commission, who had concluded that IFC 2 would sit well in its context. The building design was described as a 'bold' approach, with the use of columns, a colonnade at ground floor level, colour, and detailing such as the articulation of bay windows which would give the building a distinct and appropriate character. It was confirmed that high quality paving and surfacing would be used and that any street furniture would be consistent with the rest of the IFC site.

The Committee noted that there would be a basement carpark with 42 parking spaces for building occupants, 156 bicycle spaces (120 for building occupants and 36 for public use), showers and changing rooms. The entrance ramp to the basement car park (approved under P/2013/1209) would access the Esplanade and would be shared with the entrance to the underground car park for IFC6 and, if subsequently approved, the public underground car park that was expected to be proposed for the adjacent development site to the west. The wall of the car park ramp would be planted and designed to reflect a green cliff edge. The building would be the tallest of the IFC complex, but it was noted that in the vicinity, No. 37 Esplanade, on the north side of the Esplanade (a distance of approximately 30 metres) was also 7-storeys in height. At roof level IFC2 would also have an enclosure for a mechanical plant and services.

It was explained that a significant aspect of the scheme was the enhancement, and extension to the north-west, of Trenton Square as a public space, which provided connectivity for the surrounding IFC buildings. The gap between buildings IFC 2 and IFC 6 was 18 metres wide and referred to as the 'green street', its design and incorporation had been praised by the Jersey Architecture Commission. The Historic Environment Team had also welcomed the retention (and in parts reinstatement) of the original sea wall on the Esplanade side of the site.

Statutory consultations had taken place with Growth, Housing and Environment (GHE) Transport, GHE Drainage, Environmental Health, the Historic Environment Team, Parish of St. Helier Roads Committee, and Jersey Fire and Rescue. No objections had been raised by the consultees, but a number of comments had been made and acknowledged.

The application was recommended for approval, subject to the imposition of certain conditions detailed within the officer report and on the basis of the entering into a Planning Obligation Agreement, pursuant to Article 25 of the Planning and Building (Jersey) Law, 2002 (as amended), to secure the following –

- A financial contribution of £238,500 towards a package of public realm improvements, sustainable transport initiatives (as identified by the GHE transport consultation response), payable prior to first occupation.

It was recommended that the Director, Development Control be authorised to grant planning permission under the powers delegated to him, subject to conditions and the completion of the Planning Obligation Agreement (POA) referred to above. In the event that such an agreement could not be reached within a timeframe to be specified, the application would be represented to the Committee.

5 letters of representation had been received in connexion with the application.

The Committee heard from Mr. J. Baker, representing The Jersey Action Group, who referenced his 24 page letter of objection, a copy of which had been provided to the Committee. Mr. Baker explained that he would not re-iterate all of the points set out in the letter, but that he would highlight a number of salient points. Mr. Baker stated that the exclusion of the IFC2 application site from the key opportunity sites identified by the Framework should not be accepted by the Committee. He opined that the site was effectively placed ‘in limbo’ between the Masterplan and the Framework and suggested that, as the application for IFC2 was subsequent to IFC6, it should have fallen within the Framework review. He quoted from the report produced by the Independent Planning Inspector, Mr. P. Staddon, which stated that: *“I am currently unconvinced that the 2008 Masterplan can be regarded, in Planning terms, as viable and deliverable”*. Mr. Baker suggested that there had been an arrangement ‘behind closed doors’ so that the States of Jersey Development Company (JDC) could continue the quartet of buildings in the IFC based on the superseded Masterplan. He further reminded the Committee that the 2008 Esplanade Masterplan had stated that any submitted application should be accompanied by an environmental impact assessment. He explained that the assessment provided as part of the application for IFC2 was a ‘generic quantitative risk assessment’, and that no specific health and environmental impact assessment had been undertaken by an independent third party.

Mr. Baker referenced the changes to business practice that had occurred as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and suggested that the requirement for office space, such as that to be provided in IFC2, would be reduced in the future. He contended that IFC1 and IFC5 had unlet space and suggested that this demonstrated little need for further provision. Mr. Baker held that the tenants in the IFC site were not new international clients to the Island, but businesses that had already occupied space in St. Helier and had been enticed to the IFC through the JDC taking on ‘onerous’ dilapidation costs for their previous offices and because of links between the tenants and the JDC directors. He also referenced the report titled *‘The States of Jersey Development Company’* published by the Comptroller and Auditor General (on 5th June 2020) which he suggested had disproved the claims of JDC profit as there had been a lack of transparency in reporting that the land had been provided by the Government of Jersey at no cost to the company.

In conclusion, Mr. Baker asked the Committee to either impose a moratorium on further development and for the IFC2 site to be included within the Framework or, alternatively, for a public consultation to be undertaken on the plans for the area. He advised that he would be submitting a formal complaint to the Minister for the Environment in respect of the application.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Baker for his contribution, but highlighted that it was not within its remit to consider commercial aspects of the application which he had highlighted and that the Committee was to consider the application in respect of planning policy only. Following queries from members of the Committee, the Director, Development Control, explained that the Minister had approved the South West Supplementary Planning Guidance and would have been aware that the IFC parcel of land deliberately sat outside the Framework. He advised that this was part of the planning policy landscape that the Committee had to take into account when forming its decision.

The Committee heard from Mr. C. McCarthy, who advised that he wished to speak in opposition to the application. Mr. McCarthy advised the Committee that his main objection to the application was the impact that coronavirus had on the context of the application (including its impact on public consultation). Mr. McCarthy referenced concerns about the lack of a specific environmental impact assessment, particularly as the site was known to be infected with asbestos, and he stated that it would be irresponsible, especially for the JDC as a Government funded body, to pursue the application and development of the site without the review. He advised the Committee that the environmental impact assessment submitted as part of the application was a 'generic' assessment that had been undertaken with the assumption of a 4-storey building on the site and that this had been used to justify an increase to 7 storeys. He stated that it was a breach of human rights not to complete an up to date assessment with the relevant policies. Mr McCarthy opined that he had attempted to alert the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel to this issue but, this had been impacted by Covid-19 and, also, he felt that the Scrutiny Panel had a conflicting role in that it was representing both the Environment and Infrastructure. Mr. McCarthy suggested that the plans for the IFC site had been made when the Masterplan (referred to as the Hopkins masterplan) was concurrent, however, he suggested that the application exceeded the limits set down in that document and opined that this would therefore cause harm. He referenced that the Island Plan was also shortly due to be updated and that this should be considered before approval was provided. Mr. McCarthy concluded that the changes imposed and the dismissal of public safety in respect of the application for IFC2, infringed upon the democratic rights of people in Jersey.

The Committee heard from Mr. L. Henry, Managing Director, JDC who advised the Committee that he would try to respond to all comments. In response to queries from the Committee, Mr. Henry advised that various statutory consultees had provided a number of comments in connexion with the application and he confirmed that these had been addressed, for example, there were extensive areas around each building at the IFC, including IFC2 to accommodate access for off-street window cleaning. Regarding the basement car park ramp, he confirmed that access would be shared between IFC2 and IFC6, but that each building was standalone and, therefore, the IFC6 access was not dependant on approval for IFC2 to be secured.

Mr. Henry stated that he was surprised that both previous speakers, Mr. Baker and Mr. McCarthy, had suggested that no environmental impact statement had been submitted and explained that this had been undertaken and it was publicly available on the planning portal. He refuted the suggestion that the JDC was misleading the Committee and advised that the revision to the Masterplan in 2011 that had resulted in the adoption of the Framework, had envisaged a 7-storey building on the location of IFC2.

In response to the concerns which had been raised in respect of environmental contamination and asbestos, Mr. Henry confirmed that the JDC took its responsibilities very seriously and its procedures were set out within the application documentation, including a construction environmental management plan which set out strict requirements for the excavations from the site. Mr. Henry described a number of the measures that would be in place for the excavation, including the requirements for trucks transporting the excavated material to be properly covered and undergo a thorough wheel washing treatment in a special wash. He also advised that the site had monitoring stations to ensure that there was no excess dust in the environment. He advised that the monitoring records would be publicly available at the Environment Department. In response to requests for further information on the environmental impact assessment of the site, Mr. Henry explained that the excavations on the IFC site were a single layer basement level and confirmed that this was above the water table. The Committee was advised that dampening down of excavated material on the site was undertaken in windy periods, as necessary. There were appropriate personnel on the site to ensure that the excavation was monitored for pockets of ash *et al.* that had to be sectioned off and treated. Mr. Henry further explained that excavated material was transported safely to La Collette, where there were procedures in place with GHE for storing any contaminated material in an appropriate cell.

Mr. Henry advised that there would be an independent Environmental Consultant (procured by JDC) to provide industry best practice to deal with the contamination of the site. That individual would set out the protocols which the Contractor had to adhere to, monitor the results from the dust and air monitoring stations, and share the information with the Environment Department. He confirmed that, as the Environmental Consultant would not be working for the Contractor, they were able to report any issues as they saw fit. He advised that there was also day to day monitoring on the site, controlled by the Contractor, who was obliged to ensure the adherence of all personnel to relevant procedure.

Mr. Henry acknowledged that the Committee had stated that commercial demand for the site was not in its remit for consideration, however, he confirmed that he had spoken to a number of businesses who had all indicated an intention to retain office space in the post Covid-19 period. He explained that the retention of face to face contact was important for businesses and certain aspects, for example the training of new staff would need to be undertaken in an office environment. He advised that of the 3 million square feet of office space in St. Helier, only 6,000 square feet of this was 'grade A', therefore, as businesses' leases expired, they took the opportunity to relocate to better quality space.

The Committee queried why the IFC2 site had been excluded from the key opportunity sites of the Framework. It was suggested that because IFC1 and IFC5 had been completed, IFC6 had been permitted as a consented scheme, and it was known that plans were in development for IFC2, it would have been illogical for the boundary to include the whole of the former Esplanade car park, however, the Director, Development Control explained that this was a planning policy decision in which he was not involved, and was therefore unable to comment or confirm the rationale for the decision to the Committee.

The Committee heard from Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier, who spoke in favour of the application. The Connétable suggested that the application would complete the quartet group at the IFC site and opined that the building was modest in scale, with an attractive design that would provide spaces where people would enjoy working and spending time. He further suggested that the offering of open, publicly accessible, space in the complex was generous in comparison to private schemes. The Connétable advised that his one concern related to the vehicle access to the basement carpark, which would cross a busy pedestrian footpath on the Esplanade and therefore requested that pedestrian designation be prioritised in that area.

Having considered the application, the Committee endorsed the officer recommendation to approve the application, subject to the imposition of the conditions detailed within the officer report and on the basis of the entering into of a POA, as detailed above.

Randalls
Limited, PO
Box 43, Clare
House, Clare
Street, St
Helier

P/2019/0781

A2. The Committee, considered a report in connexion with an application which sought permission for the demolition of Randalls brewery, residential buildings and various site structures. The majority of the application site was located on a corner plot in St. Helier, bordered by Clare Street to the north, Savile Street to the east, Cannon Street to the south and Aquila Road to the west. There was an additional section to the north of Clare Street, which currently housed the existing Randalls office buildings. It was proposed to construct 32 x one bedroom residential units and 59 x 2 bedroom residential units with associated basement parking and landscaping, together with the construction of one retail unit and associated facilities on the south-west of the site. It was proposed to refurbish and convert the listed property, Clare House, from its current use as an office to 5 x one bedroom residential units and convert outbuildings and construct a link to form an office. Various external alterations were proposed to Clare House and outbuildings to include the installation of rooflights and replacement of roofs, in addition to various improvements to the public realm. The Committee had visited the site on 18th June 2020.

A site plan, drawings, and 3 dimensional model were displayed. The application site was located within the Built-Up area, regeneration zone, and Town of St. Helier, it was on a Primary Route Network, the site included Listed Buildings (28-30 Cannon Street and Clare House and its outbuildings) and was in the vicinity of a number of other listed buildings. Policies SP1, SP2, SP3, SP4, SP6, SP7, GD1, GD3, GD4, GD5, GD6, GD7, HE1, HE2, HE5, NE1, BE5, E1, EIW3, H4, H6, TT2, TT4, TT8, TT9, NR3, LWM2, LWM3 and WM1 of the 2011 Island Plan were relevant.

The Committee recalled that part of the site was currently used as a warehouse for Randalls brewery and distribution centre and that the application to demolish the buildings provided an opportunity for regeneration of the urban area and the removal of the applicant's industrial business as a 'bad neighbour' from a residential part of Town. The scheme included the proposed renovation of the Grade 3 listed Clare House and its outbuildings and, in addition to the removal of the industrial business, there would be demolition of certain residential properties, including Albert and Agnes flats and 3 Grade 4 Listed cottages (Nos 28-30 Cannon Street).

The Committee considered that the site was an underused brownfield site in an area of Town zoned for regeneration. The scheme would deliver 96 new homes, office space and retail units that would have a positive impact on the surrounding area. The scale of the proposed scheme ranged from 2-storeys (with a pitched roof), to 4-storeys (with a recessed roof). It was noted that the density of the development was considered to be the highest that could be achieved without having an unacceptable negative impact on the surrounding area and on the setting of nearby and adjacent listed buildings, which included: 1 Clare Street (Grade 4), All Saints Church (Grade 3), 22-23 The Parade (Grade 3), L'Etacquerel (Grade 3), 13 Aquila Road (Grade 3), and 11 Surville Place (Grade 3).

The Committee considered the transport aspects of the scheme. It was noted that the proposed car parking for the site comprised 74 spaces (for 96 units) which fell short of parking guidelines, however, it was not considered that this would lead to unacceptable problems of traffic generation, safety or parking due to the comprehensive package of measures to encourage alternative transport choices, the sustainable location of the development, and the current Island Plan policies (GD1 and SP6) which sought to reduce dependence on the car. The Committee specifically noted that a car club would be set up and utilised in the area for the use of the residents. Additionally, there would be provision of 110 cycle spaces for residents and a series of public realm improvements to the surrounding streets including additional cycle racks for employees and visitors.

Statutory consultations had taken place with Environmental Health, the Natural Environment Team, the Historic Environment Team, Operational Services-Drainage, the Parish of St. Helier, and Growth Housing and Environment (GHE) Transport. The Committee noted that the Historic Environment Team (HET) was not supportive of the application due to the proposed loss of Grade 4 listed 28-30 Cannon Street and the anticipated adverse impact on the setting of other listed buildings. It was accepted that the application was contrary to Policy HE1, however, the Committee was advised to consider whether the benefits of the scheme outweighed the harm caused by the loss of the 3 cottages.

In conclusion, it was recommended that permission be granted, subject to the imposition of certain conditions detailed within the officer report and on the basis of the entering into a Planning Obligation Agreement, pursuant to Article 25 of the Planning and Building (Jersey) Law, 2002 (as amended), to secure the following –

- 2 x bus shelters - £23,000;
- 8 x street lights - £36,000;
- Improvements to cycle and walking routes - £138,546;
- Resurfaced footpaths around the site £34,710;
- Footpath widening and re-surfacing at Savile / Cannon Street - £23,850;
- 2 x raised tables on Savile Street;
- Tree maintenance - £1,500;
- Car club for 3 years - £20,000; and

- All footways, unloading bays beyond the development boundary but within the red line [of the plan] to be ceded to the relevant Highway Authority.

It was recommended that the Director, Development Control be authorised to grant planning permission under the powers delegated to him, subject to conditions and the completion of the Planning Obligation Agreement (POA) referred to above. In the event that that such an agreement could not be reached within a timeframe to specified, the application would be represented to the Committee.

No letters of representation had been received in connexion with the application.

The Committee heard from Ms. T. Ingle, Historic Environment Officer, who explained that her input had been sought on a number of provisional plans for the planning application (3 sets of comments had been provided since May 2019). Ms. Ingle advised the Committee that the application had adapted considerably since the first review by her team, however, she noted 2 main concerns for the Committee's attention on the presented application. Firstly, the loss of listed buildings at 28-30 Cannon Street and, secondly, the impact the development would have on its setting. The Historic Environment Officer noted that the case made for the demolition of the Grade 4 listed buildings was that they were modest and had already been altered for their original form. However, she expressed concern about this approach and argued that the properties retained a heritage value, provided scale for the street, and suggested that repurposing them as part of the development scheme and viability study had not been fully explored. Whilst the application proposed renovation for the Grade 3 listed Clare House, the Committee was advised that the Court had established [through the case of *De Montfort House*] that gains to one listed building could not be offset against the loss of another. She maintained that, in the opinion of the Historic Environment Team (HET), the scheme could go ahead in an altered form with the retention of 28-30 Cannon Street and advised that the community and regeneration gains from the scheme were not sufficient to balance out the loss of the listed buildings.

The Historic Environment Officer acknowledged that the design of the scheme in Aquila Road and Clare Street was a good fit for its setting, however, she opined that the corner block 'E' between Cannon Street and Savile Street would benefit from being 'tuned down' in terms of mass and scale. The corner of Cannon Street and Savile Street currently comprised of a feature curved wall and the proposed block 'E' had been designed to reflect that. The Historic Environment Officer also suggested that the 'link' building between block 'E' and the outbuilding in Savile Street remained too large. The Committee was reminded that setting was a key component to HE1. The Historic Environment Officer suggested that the Parade Gardens (as a listed place) could take the scale of the new development, however, that other adjacent listed buildings such as All Saints Church, 22-23 The Parade (housing the Parade Bars), and it's adjacent building also needed to be considered in the context.

In response to queries from the Committee, the Historic Environment Officer explained that 28-30 Cannon Street was a remnant of mid-19th Century development in St. Helier. Whilst the buildings were small, modest, and lacked symmetry they provided a reminder of the original street line and scale and retained many original window and door openings. She suggested that if the HET did not fight to keep modest buildings, the history of the area would be lost.

The Committee heard from Mr. A. Gibb, representing the Jersey Architectural Commission (JAC), who clarified that he did not want to speak either in favour of, or against the application. He reminded the Committee that the role of the JAC was to encourage good design and to make buildings and spaces better. Mr. Gibb explained that the JAC had reviewed 3 previous versions of the design for the scheme, most recently in January 2020, and was pleased that a number of its comments had been incorporated to the application (such as the height reduction in certain parts of the site and the re-use of granite on the walls of Aquila Street). However, he confirmed that the latest version of the design had not been specifically presented to the JAC and suggested that, whilst it was improved, it had not been finessed. He provided a summary of the JAC comments on the final design and suggested that fewer units and a lower density would relieve a number of 'pinch points' on the site.

Mr. Gibb referred the Committee to the gap between block 'C' and block 'D' of the proposed application site, which was a space of 10 metres. He explained that the JAC had concerns about the prevalence of natural light for the bottom 2 storeys of block 'D' due to the height of block 'C' and suggested that the applicant should consider rotating block 'D' so that the residences faced east / west to improve the daylight in the properties closer to the ground level. Mr. Gibb also referred the Committee to the gap between block 'E' and block 'C', which was a space of 5 metres and suggested that the balconies on this stretch would have an unappealing view of a blank wall. Mr Gibb opined that the connection between Cannon Street and Savile Street was 'clunky' and that further changes to the design of the town house on Savile Street could improve the juncture.

Mr. Gibb referenced the proposed loss of the listed buildings at 28-30 Cannon Street and explained that the retention of listed buildings was preferred in a townscape area. He asked the Committee to consider the viability figures used as a case for the demolition of the listed buildings and, also, whether viability (as a commercial aspect) was relevant to the Committee's planning consideration. Mr. Gibb concluded by advising the Committee that it should not support regeneration for the sake of it, but that it had a responsibility to consider good design of new places and homes for the Island.

The Committee was mindful that it was required to assess the scheme presented to them. In response to queries from the Committee, the Principal Planner advised that the viability study would not be shared publicly, due to commercially sensitive information, however, advised the Committee that it had been reviewed by the Planning and Building Services Department in advance of the recommendation.

The Committee heard from Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier, who spoke in favour of the scheme. He confirmed that the St. Helier Roads Committee had been consulted and was pleased with various elements of the design, particularly the planting and provision for road improvements. The Connétable referenced the Roads Committee's request for pedestrian crossings and opined that these should be incorporated to ensure easy access to and from the development from Savile Street and Cannon Street. Connétable Crowcroft explained that he welcomed the provision of 96 homes in the regeneration zone, but recognized that the assembly of such a site would create a compromise (in this case with the demolition of 28-30 Cannon Street), however, he opined that the best of the historic buildings on the site would be retained.

The Committee was advised that the Chief Executive Officer of the Jersey Chamber of Commerce, Mr. M. Norton (who was unable to attend the meeting) had provided a written statement in support of the application. The Director of Development Control read the following statement to the Committee:

'Any significant historical values or significance is something not taken lightly by an organisation that began some 72 years prior to the buildings that might cause any issue, as we began in 1768. No doubt these buildings were built to address the needs of the 1840's. What we now have is the needs of 2020 to 2035. Chamber also rarely speaks to this Committee, having only done so once before, however we do look at this proposed regeneration very much in the round. This is regeneration that has taken 15 years, it proposed 96 very much needed 1 and 2 bedroom housing in a Brown field site, earmarked as a zone for regeneration. It would also supply to the public realm, office space and retail, whilst removing unsightly industrial buildings from the neighbourhood. The positive effect on the local environment and on the regeneration of this area, is matched by benefits of such an investment will play in the much needed economic recovery of the Island as a capital project that will give a much needed boost to local employment. It must also be noted that for an owner who is also a leading employer within the hospitality sector, we must acknowledge the importance of their fiscal planning and future investments, of which this regeneration is central. Clearly the urgent housing needs of our Island population are paramount in this proposal and weighing these overwhelming considerations, as we must, the Jersey Chamber of Commerce is supportive of this much needed rejuvenation of the area and great benefit it will give. We would urge the Planning Committee to support the officer recommendation and support this appropriate and measured regeneration'.

The Committee heard from Mr. I. McDonald of Axis Mason Limited, on behalf of the applicant. Mr. McDonald discussed the benefits of regenerating a brownfield site in the Town centre, including the removal of its current commercial use and related vehicle movements. He advised that the scheme would make the area a more desirable place to live and that it would improve the setting of adjacent buildings by enhancing the streetscape and repairing the town landscape, including the restoration of Clare House. Mr. McDonald advised the Committee that there had been significant consultation with the JAC and the Principal Planner on the development which had resulted in a better design for the application scheme. Mr. McDonald advised that there was a large percentage of dual aspect apartments in the development and that access to light and balconies had been key aspects of the scheme, together with the regeneration of Clare House and its courtyard. He referenced the sustainability of the site, including the ecological value, new urban gardens and planning schemes. Mr. McDonald emphasised that the scheme sought to provide pleasant spaces that were worthy of residence.

The Committee heard from Mr. A. Farnham, MS Planning, who addressed the heritage concerns and argued that the loss of the listed buildings was justified by the other benefits of the scheme. He advised that the retention of 28-30 Cannon Street had been considered, however, the viability study had indicated that keeping the buildings would result in the loss of 17 homes and significant financial loss, therefore, making the scheme unviable. Mr. Farnham suggested that 28-30 Cannon Street was of limited value as it had undergone significant changes and that the setting had already been significantly eroded. The scheme was noted to have significant regeneration benefits for the other 2 listed buildings on the site, Clare House and its adjacent outbuildings (former stables). The overall height of the development was below that of All Saints Church and, therefore, he advised that the scale was retained by the design. He concluded by advising that the removal of 28-30 Cannon Street had to be taken in context with the other benefits of the scheme.

The Committee heard from Mr. M. Stein, MS Planning, who provided further representation for the application. Mr. Stein referenced the letter from HET dated June 2020, which acknowledged that policy HE1 allowed for demolition of listed heritage buildings if it was balanced against wider community benefit. He suggested that other policies carried more weight than HE1, and that there were overwhelming public benefits as a result of the scheme. Mr. Stein identified 6 definable benefits to the Committee – the first was that it fulfilled the Island Plan’s special strategy to use the Town’s more sustainable sites and reduce the pressure to develop on green fields (the equivalent space was estimated to be approximately 6-7 acres). Secondly, the scheme provided a mixed use of residential and commercial purposes. Third, he advised that there were meaningful enhancements to the surrounding streets. Fourth, the scheme would secure the restoration of a listed buildings of a higher grade than those that were to be lost. Fifth, there would be provision of affordable homes and, finally, he advised that the project would be an important scheme to assist with the post pandemic recovery. Mr. Stein emphasised that an alternative scheme would not be financially viable and, therefore, overall there was a compelling case for approval of the scheme based on the balance competing policy objectives.

The Committee heard from Mr. G. Reid, Managing Director, Randalls, the applicant company. Mr Reid reported that Randalls had been at the heart of life in Jersey for over 200 years, providing hospitality. He explained that the Clare Street site and warehouses were no longer suitable for the needs of the business, as it was inappropriate to have a distribution company operating from within a residential area with narrow streets. The Company sought to redevelop the site to provide homes for Islanders and remove the current disruption from the site for their neighbours. Mr. Reid maintained that the development would allow Randalls to reinvest profits in its Jersey hospitality business at a critical time following the devastating impact of Covid-19 on the industry.

Having considered the application, the Committee endorsed the officer recommendation to approve the application, subject to the imposition of the conditions detailed within the officer report and on the basis of the entering into of a POA, as detailed above.