

Esplanade Quarter: amendment to the Masterplan

March 2011

Introduction

In July 2010 the Minister granted outline consent for the scheme to develop the Esplanade Quarter. Subsequent to that approval the Waterfront Enterprise Board (WEB) have been pursuing the development of the site through discussions and negotiations. The development will not begin on site until such time as pre-let agreements are in place with occupants of the proposed buildings.

Proposed amendment

The work carried out by WEB has revealed that the emerging demand for commercial office floor space requires some amendments be made to elements of layout, and the size scale and location of the open spaces and buildings in the eastern section of the site.

Assessment and determination

In considering the changes the Minister has been determined that the core principles behind the master plan should not be compromised in any way and commissioned Hopkins Architects (authors of the master plan) to test and revise the proposed changes.

That work has now been completed, and the Minister is satisfied that the changes are acceptable and that the principles which define the master plan will not be compromised. The Minister has resolved to approve the amendments and to adopt them as an addendum to the Esplanade Quarter master plan (MD-PE-2011-0029).

In reaching this conclusion the Minister required that an amended site plan was prepared and a computer generated “fly through” completed that accurately illustrated the implications of the new arrangement of buildings and squares. This work was subsequently assessed by the officers of this department and was reviewed by the Waterfront Design Group (WDG) who have been advisors to the Minister throughout the preparation and eventual approval of the master plan.

Both parties support the proposed changes. Some consultation has taken place with stakeholders but this will be repeated in depth when detailed applications are submitted.

The changes represent amendments to the detail and scale of some of the buildings and open spaces. They do not depart however from the broad concept of the master plan which is to provide a new waterfront with streets, and squares with a firm emphasis on design quality and place making. New modern office floor space is part of that concept.

The sinking of La Route de la Liberation will not be the works that signal the start of the construction of the Esplanade Quarter. The sinking of the road will be a later phase. It is expected that detailed applications will be submitted in June 2011.