



# **JMS Planning & Development Ltd**

**PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

**IN SUPPORT OF RESTORATION PROPOSALS**

**BY**

**MORGANS DEVELOPMENTS LTD**

**AT**

**BELLE VUE ROYAL HOTEL, MARINE TERRACE,**

**ABERYSTWYTH, SY23 2BA**

Document: Planning, Design and Access Statement

Client: Morgans Developments Ltd

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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement is submitted on behalf of Morgans Developments Limited (*“the applicant”*) in support of an application for full planning permission and listed building consent at the Grade II listed Belle Vue Royal Hotel, Marine Terrace, Aberystwyth, SY23 2BA (*“the application site”*) for restoration and renovation works for the continued use of the site as a hotel (C1 use).
- 1.2 The works are necessary following a fire at the adjacent premises (Ty Belgrave House hotel) on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018, which spread to the application site. This caused extensive fire and water damage and affected the structural condition of the building. The northern part of the hotel was completely destroyed, which has left a gap in the terrace.
- 1.3 The proposed works include reconstruction of the fire damaged north end of the hotel to re-establish the terrace, remedial works to the front façade, creation of a new entrance door, insertion of large glazed windows at ground floor level, demolition of the rear extension and its replacement with a three-storey building with fourth storey setback, creation of a swimming pool and spa facility at ground floor level, rearrangement of the plan-form internally, creation of a basement car park with entrance from Corporation Street, replacement windows, re-roofing and other associated works.
- 1.4 The submission of this application follows the submission of an application for listed building consent to repair and refurbish the hotel (ref. A190608), which was approved in February 2020. This consent has not been partly implemented and is therefore extant.
- 1.5 It is considered that the proposals are of significant benefit. Namely, the proposals will:
- Seek the sympathetic restoration of a heritage asset to bring the building back into use;
  - Secure the long-term future of the building;
  - Infill the terrace with a very high-quality design, which will benefit the Conservation Area and setting of the listed building;

- Deliver high quality visitor accommodation to support the local economy and reintroduce jobs on the site;
- Attract more tourists into the area which will result in wider spend in the local area;
- Re-activate the frontage of the building which will help contribute to the vitality and viability of the town;
- Improve access (including wheelchair access) into and throughout the building;
- Deliver sustainable development in a highly accessible, sustainable location in accordance with relevant planning policy at a national, regional and local level.

1.6 This Statement sets out a brief description of the site and surroundings at Section 2 and its planning history at Section 3. Details of the proposed scheme are set out in Section 4, with details of consultation carried out to date provided in Section 5. An overview of relevant planning policy is contained at Section 6. Section 7 of this document sets out the overall review of relevant planning issues and the justification for the proposals, whilst Section 8 provides a conclusion in respect to the proposed application for planning permission and listed building consent.

## SECTION 2: SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The application site is located in the heart of Aberystwyth, the largest town in Ceredigion and a priority area for focused intervention by the Welsh Government to fulfil its role as the 'Capital of Central Wales'. Within the town, the site is located on Marine Terrace, in a highly prominent location facing the promenade and seafront. There is also additional access to the rear via Corporation Street which was used for deliveries and servicing pre-fire.

2.2 The application site is a mid-terraced, Grade II listed building (ref. 10281) of four storeys (three storeys plus attic), with an additional basement level. The application site has an established hotel (C1) use. The listing description notes that the property is shown on the 1834 map, and at an early date *"it established itself as the main hotel in the town"*.

2.3 In terms of the exterior, the listing description states the following:

*"Three-storey basement and attic mixed 11-bay (1+3+7) painted stucco front with part rusticated ground floor. To left incorporating the former cross range and right-hand pavilion of No 24; right-hand seven bays are stepped up. Slate roofs, bracket eaves and ridge cresting to cross range roof with pediment treatment to gable end; rubble chimney stacks. Sash windows replaced by modern glazing but retain architraves with scrolled and moulded keystones; some blocked to second floor, modern bay to left. Modern loggia forward to the street and entrance offset to right; sash and casement windows to basement.*

*Part scribed stucco right gable end; rubble rear with mixed rendered courtyard buildings reached off Corporation Street; arched headed stained glass windows."*

2.4 There is no listing description for the interior of the hotel, thereby implying that the building's significance relates more to the exterior. The listing description also notes the reason for designation being *"included for group value"*, hence recognising the historic value of the wider terrace.

2.5 Like most of the properties in the terrace, the pre-fire aesthetic of Belle Vue Royal Hotel retains similar features in terms of its fenestration and decorative porches. The building has simple and solid proportions, large paned sashes and high-level ridges on deep eaves typical of the period. The main elevations benefit from a balanced and symmetrical façade with the main entrance door being central and in line with the windows above.

2.6 Before the fire, the property formed part of a wider terrace and was attached to Ty Belgrave House hotel to the north. However, the north end of Belle Vue Royal Hotel was destroyed by the fire and part of the building has been demolished as a result. There is now a gap in the terrace which disrupts the continuity of the streetscene.



Figure 1: Google Streetview of the application site and adjoining terrace, June 2017



Figure 2: Google Streetview of the application site and adjacent building, August 2022

2.7 In terms of the surroundings, the seafront has many Victorian and Edwardian buildings, many of which are in hotel / guest accommodation use. The site is bordered by Marine Terrace and the promenade to the north-west; Ty Belgrave House Hotel to the north-east; the Libertine cocktail bar to the east; Corporation Street to the south-east; and Gwesty



Cymru Hotel to the south-west. The nearest residential occupiers are on Corporation Street, to the rear.

- 2.8 There are a number of other listed buildings surrounding the application site including 18-20 Marine Terrace (Grade II listed), 15-17 Marine Terrace (Grade II listed), Belgrave House at 24 Marine Terrace (Grade II listed), Grosvenor House at 66 Marine Terrace (Grade II listed), and the Libertine Cocktail Bar at 56 Terrace Road (Grade II listed).
- 2.9 Access to the site by public transport is excellent – Aberystwyth bus and train stations are located approximately 0.4 miles (7-minute walk) south-east of the site.
- 2.10 The site is centrally located within the Town’s Conservation Area as defined within the Local Development Plan (LDP), adopted in April 2013. It is located just outside of the town centre boundary, however it is within the settlement boundary.
- 2.11 The site is in an area that is at very low risk of flooding from rivers, the sea and surface water (less than 0.1% chance each year) according to the National Resources Wales website.

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## SECTION 3: PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 A review of the application site's planning history has been undertaken which is detailed below:

Application Reference	Proposal	Decision
A190608	Part reconstruction of fire damaged North end of Hotel.&nbsp; Works to include re-building of party wall, rear elevation, front elevation, gable and roof, with replacement of UPVC windows to front elevation.	Approved 28/02/2020
A140792 (PP) + A140793 (LBC)	Proposed retention of stone facing to existing porch with proposed replacement of the existing upvc windows to single storey structure to the left-hand side of the porch with new powder colour coated metal. New rendered block wall to this single storey to match existing.	Approved 02/03/2016
A061463LB	Newidiadau Alterations	Approved 02/10/2007
840471	Replacement of windows, alterations to elevations	Approved 03/07/1984
770962	Formation of staff bedrooms and improvements to existing staff rooms.	Approved 21/09/1977

3.2 As indicated above, the property benefits from listed building consent for restoration and renovation works following the fire. These works included new roof and chimneys to part of the building, part replacement of windows, re-rendering of damaged elevations, replacement masonry walls, replacement eaves, fascia and soffits and replacement of rainwater pipes. This consent has been implemented by virtue of the works undertaken to the front elevation of the building in terms of the replacement masonry walls.

3.3 Also of note, the uPVC windows and alterations to the elevations were granted planning permission in July 1984, which was before the building was listed.

3.4 In terms of the surrounding context, an application for refurbishing and reinstatement works to Grosvenor House has already been approved and works have been completed. Due to the police investigation and insurance claim, applications for both the Belgrave House Hotel and



the Belle View Royal Hotel were delayed. However the Belgrave House Hotel has now been completed and is operating again.

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## SECTION 4: THE PROPOSAL

### General approach

- 4.1 The proposals seek a sensitive approach to the listed building, with a focus on preserving historic elements where possible to ensure that the historic significance is conserved insofar as possible. The sympathetic approach will ensure that the character and fabric of the main listed building is salvaged and the building returned to its former glory. Features of worth left within the building such as the stain glass windows, stairs, cornices, skirtings etc. will all be re-used or replicated within the new scheme. It is likely that
- 4.2 Due to the fire and water damage, there is little left of the original fabric of the building internally, including ceilings and walls within the hotel. As a result, the original plan-form has been largely destroyed. The front façade also requires significant remedial works, however the original fenestration and fabric on the upper levels will be retained. The rear of the hotel is to be demolished and replaced with a similar footprint, albeit of greater overall height and massing to accommodate the modern standards required within a hotel setting and provide the number of bedrooms which is needed to make the business viable.
- 4.3 The proposed works also seek to reconstruct the fire damaged north end of the hotel to re-establish the terrace. The new building will be very similar to the previous, in that it will be of the same height, scale and massing. The features will be very similar, the main exception is that instead of a window at ground floor level in this section, a new entrance will be created from street level which will enable access to the hotel lobby area and this being the main reception area.
- 4.4 Specifically, the following works are proposed:

### External works

- 4.5 **Front façade:** Creation of new front entrance in the new north end. New entrance door to bar / restaurant surrounded by zinc standing seam cladding. Lowering of window sills at ground floor level and installation of large glazed windows (with zinc standing seam cladding



surrounds) to facilitate activation at street level. Insertion of 3 no. large zinc standing seam cladding dormer windows at third floor level to allow access onto balconies, surrounded by frameless glass balustrades. Retention of 3 no. traditional dormers at third floor level. Installation of balconies at first floor level, surrounded by frameless glass balustrades. General clean-up and painting of front façade (off-white) to match previous.

- 4.6 **Rear façade:** New rear extension of three storeys with fourth storey setback, to accommodate new hotel rooms. Creation of new vehicular access to car park from Corporation Street. High level narrow windows at ground floor level, to allow privacy for pool and spa area. Installation of anthracite grey aluminium windows to first and second floors. Materiality comprises black facing brick and brick details, with zinc standing seam cladding surrounding the windows.
- 4.7 **Basement:** Creation of covered car parking area to accommodate 27 car parking spaces and associated ramp from Corporation Street.
- 4.8 **Roof:** Installation of new natural roofing slates at front part of hotel to match existing. Dark grey Evalon roofing system below parapet walls to rear.
- 4.9 **Chimneys:** The re-construction of the chimneys above the ridge line to replicate the existing chimneys.
- 4.10 **Exterior windows / doors:** New hardwood timber doors / sash windows (painted white) to match previous. New anthracite grey aluminium windows / doors at ground level. The installation of new large dormers in the attic rooms facing the seafront. Windows which are facing the front elevation to be replaced by UPVC windows as previously granted for the hotel (existing windows are UPVC).

#### Internal works

- 4.11 **Basement:** Creation of cinema and store room in reconstructed part of building. Creation of stairwells and lifts for access from basement to main hotel. Use of existing spaces to front of basement as ancillary areas to the hotel.

- 4.12 **Ground floor level:** Creation of main entrance / lobby area within newly constructed north end. General rearrangement of plan form to create restaurant and bar area to front (with separate restaurant entrance for non-hotel guests) with ancillary spaces behind. Creation of new spa area and associated plant.
- 4.13 **First floor level:** General rearrangement of plan-form to create 23 hotel rooms with en suites, staff room and ancillary spaces. Creation of new stairwells and lifts.
- 4.14 **Second floor level:** General rearrangement of plan-form to create 23 hotel rooms with en suites including one suite with mezzanine), staff room and ancillary spaces. Creation of new stairwells and lifts.
- 4.15 **Third floor level:** General rearrangement of plan-form to create 11 hotel rooms (including 3 apartments) with en suites, staff room and ancillary spaces. Creation of new stairwells and lifts.
- 4.16 **Floors:** The floor levels will reflect previous levels.
- 4.17 **Ceilings:** Ceilings will be re-plastered and replicated with large covings and decorated to replicate the architectural moulding along with new ceiling roses around the lights.
- 4.18 **Walls / internal partitions:** As the internal walls and partitions have been substantially destroyed as a result of the fire, these are to be replaced at each level.
- 4.19 **Doors:** Again, as the internal doors have been extensively destroyed as a result of the fire, these are to be replaced and replicate the original hardwood doors.
- 4.20 **Ad hoc works:** Ad hoc works will include electrics, water pipes, heating, fire suppression systems etc. It is proposed to include solar panels on the roof within the courtyard area.

## SECTION 5: CONSULTATION

- 5.1 A pre-application consultation was submitted to the Local Planning Authority in the summer of 2023. Negotiations are progressing with regards to the design of the listed building and the alterations proposed.

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## SECTION 6: PLANNING POLICY

- 6.1 This Section of the Planning Statement sets out an overview of relevant planning policy relevant to general planning matters.

### **National Planning Policy**

#### Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021)

- 6.2 Future Wales: National Plan 2040 is the Welsh National Development Framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a Development Plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate resistance, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of the communities.
- 6.3 Future Wales is a Spatial Plan, which means it sets a direction of where we should be investing in infrastructure development for the greater good of Wales and its people. Future Wales sets the challenges of delivering these improvements to the public, private and third sectors. It makes clear the importance of planning new infrastructure and development in such a way that they are complementary rather than competing priorities, and showing opportunities are maximised and multiple benefits are achieved.
- 6.4 The Plan refers to the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the requirement that development and use of land contributes to improving the economy, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Future Wales is the highest tier of Development Plan setting out the National Development Framework and is focused on solutions to issues and challenges at a national scale. Its strategic nature means that it does not allocate development to all parts of Wales, nor does it include policies on all land uses. It is framework which will be built on by Strategic Development Plans at a regional level and Local Development Plans at Local Authority level. Plans are required to be in conformity with Future Wales and must be kept up-to-date to ensure they and Future Wales work together effectively.



6.5 Planning decisions at every level in the planning system must be taken in accordance with the Development Plan as a whole, Future Wales forms part of this Development Plan and replaces Wales Spatial Plan. Future Wales seeks to align and maximise its contribution to the Well-Being Wales objectives and ways of working as set out in the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and takes a sustainable approach to development.

6.6 Future Wales is set out in five parts. Firstly, an Introduction followed by an Overview of Wales, which sets out the four regions of Wales which are given further consideration later in the report. Thirdly, the report sets out ambitions and how these are going to be achieved, followed by Strategic and Spatial Choices and then detailed in relation to the regions.

6.7 Future Wales sets out a clear vision of what it seeks to achieve by 2040 in 11 outcomes. These are as follows:

- (i) A Wales where people live and work in connective, inclusive and healthy places;
- (ii) A Wales where people live in vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services;
- (iii) A Wales where people live in distinctive regions that tackle health and socio-economic inequalities through sustainable growth;
- (iv) A Wales where people live in places with a thriving Welsh language;
- (v) A Wales where people live and work in towns and cities which are a focus and springboard for sustainable growth;
- (vi) A Wales where people live in places where prosperity, innovation and culture are promoted;
- (vii) A Wales where people live in places where travel is sustainable;
- (viii) A Wales where people live in places with world class digital infrastructure;
- (ix) A Wales where people live in places that sustainably manage their natural resources and reduce pollution;
- (x) A Wales where people live in places with biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems;
- (xi) A Wales where people live in places which are decarbonised and climate resilient.



- 6.8 Policy 1 (Where Wales Will Grow) supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales. The policy sets out three Regional Growth Areas – this includes Mid Wales and Aberystwyth – and states that these areas will grow, develop and offer a variety of public and commercial services at a regional scale.
- 6.9 Policy 2 (Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking) confirms that the growth and regeneration of towns and cities should positively contribute towards building sustainable places that support active and healthy lives, with urban neighbourhoods set at compatible and walkable organised around mixed-use centres and public transport and integrate with green infrastructure. Urban growth and regeneration should be based on the following strategic placemaking principles, which include:
- Creating a rich mix of uses;
  - Building places at a walkable scale with homes, local facilities and public transport within walking distance of each other; and
  - Increasing population densities with development built at urban densities that can support public transport and local facilities.
- 6.10 Policy 3 (Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration) identifies that the Welsh Government will play an active, enabling role to support the delivery of urban growth and regeneration. Notably, the policy recognises that the public sector must show leadership and apply placemaking principles to support growth and regeneration for the benefit of communities across Wales.
- 6.11 Policy 6 (Town Centre First) confirms significant new commercial, retail, education, health, leisure and public service facilities must be located within town and city centres and should have good access by public transport.
- 6.12 Policy 25 (Regional Growth Areas – Mid Wales) echoes Policy 1 and states that sustainable growth and development in Regional Growth Areas, including Aberystwyth, will be supported.



6.13 Policy 26 (Growing the Mid Wales Economy) supports the growth and development of existing and new economic opportunities across Mid Wales.

6.14 Whilst this document forms part of the Development Plan it is largely at a very high level and the broad principles should be reflected down into more local policies within the Development Plan. Notwithstanding, it is still a material consideration in the determination of the application.

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12) (February 2024)

6.15 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 12 sets out the vision for Wales as set out in the Well-Being of Future Generations Act; a more prosperous Wales; a resilient Wales which supports healthy, functioning ecosystems and recognises the limits of the global environment; a healthier Wales; a more equal Wales; a Wales of more cohesive communities; a Wales of vibrant culture, and a globally responsible Wales. The document embeds the spirit of the Act by moving towards a low carbon, resilient society, of providing secure and well-paid jobs and of building well connected environments for everyone in Wales that improves lives, health and enhances well-being.

6.16 PPW sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government and is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs), Welsh Government Circulars and policy clarification letters which together with the PPW provide the National Planning Policy Framework for Wales (paragraph 1.1).

6.17 The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and culture wellbeing of Wales as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation. A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places (paragraph 1.2).

6.18 The PPW promotes action at all levels of the planning process, which is conducive to maximising its contribution to the well being of Wales and its communities. It encourages a



wider, sustainable and problem-solving outlook which focuses on integrating and addressing multiple issues rather than on an approach which is fragmented, un-coordinated and deals with issues in isolation (paragraph 1.3).

- 6.19 The Well-being of Future Generations Act places a duty on public bodies to carry out sustainable development, with the concept of sustainable development being at the heart of planning policy since 2002. However, the concept has been expanded under the Well-being Act and it requires improvement in the delivery of all four aspects of well-being; social, economic, environmental and cultural. The Well-Being Act has established seven well-being goals which are intended to shape the work of all public bodies in Wales; a global responsible Wales; a prosperous Wales; a resilient Wales; a healthier Wales; a more equal Wales; Wales cohesive communities; and a Wales of vibrant culture and providing Welsh language.
- 6.20 Paragraph 1.18 confirms that a planned approach is the most efficient way to secure sustainable development through the planning system and it is essential that plans are adopted and kept under review. Legislation secures a presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise to ensure that social, economic, cultural and environmental issues are balanced and integrated.
- 6.21 Everyone engaged with or operating within the planning system in Wales must embrace the concept of place making in both plan making and development management decisions in order to achieve the creation of sustainable places and improve the well-being of communities (paragraph 2.1).
- 6.22 Sustainable placemaking is the goal of the land use planning system in Wales; they are the output of the planning system rather than the process of achieving them. All development decisions, either through Development Plan policies choices or individual development management decisions should seek to contribute towards the making of sustainable places and improving well-being (paragraph 2.2).
- 6.23 The planning system should create sustainable places that are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcomingly, healthy and friendly. Development proposals should



create the conditions to bring people together making them to want to live, work and play in areas with a sense of place and well-being, creating prosperity for all (paragraph 2.3).

- 6.24 The planning system is the key mechanism for delivering sustainable places. It provides a critical mechanism where opportunities for long term benefit and integrated decision-making meet, allowing preventative and proactive solutions to be found (paragraph 2.5).
- 6.25 Planning policies, proposals and decision must seek to promote sustainable development and support the well-being of people and communities across Wales. This can be done through maximising their contribution to the achievement of the seven well-being goals by using the five ways of working, as required by the Well-Being of Future Generations Acts. This will include seeking to maximise the social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits, whilst considering potential impacts when assessing proposals and policies in line with the Act's sustainable development principle (paragraph 2.8). The most appropriate way to implement these requirements through the planning system is to adopt a place making approach to plan making, planning policy and decision making (paragraph 2.9).
- 6.26 Key planning principles to achieve the right development in the right place include growing the economy in a sustainable manner, making better use of resources, facilitating accessible and healthy environments, creating and sustaining communities and maximising environmental protection and limiting environmental impact.
- 6.27 Paragraph 2.20 acknowledges that in considering social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits there may be occasions when a proposal may not meet all of the desired outcomes or that a specific outcome will not be achieved but wider well-being should be supported.
- 6.28 The impact and challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic is recognised with the need to ensure people's well-being is at the heart of planning and decision making. PPW seeks to lead the way to recover in a positive manner through '*Placemaking*', with social considerations, economic considerations, cultural considerations and environmental consideration at its heart.

- 6.29 Section 3 is centred around '*Strategic and Spatial Choices*'. Paragraph 3.3 recognises that good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. Paragraph 3.5 goes on to note that good design is inclusive design and proposals should place people at the heart of the design process, acknowledge diversity and difference, offer choice where a single design solution cannot accommodate all users, provide for flexibility in use and provide buildings and environments that are convenient and enjoyable to use for everyone.
- 6.30 Paragraph 3.9 states that the special characteristics of an area should be central to the design of a development. In areas recognised for their particular landscape, townscape, cultural or historic character and value it can be appropriate to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. In those areas, the impact of development on the existing character, the scale and siting of new development, and the use of appropriate building materials (including where possible sustainably produced materials from local sources), will be particularly important (paragraph 3.10).
- 6.31 Paragraph 3.56 notes that planning authorities should work with landowners to ensure that suitably located previously developed sites are brought forward for development and to secure a coherent approach to their development. To incentivise the appropriate re-use of previously developed land, planning authorities should take a lead by considering and identifying the specific interventions from the public and/or private sector necessary to assist in its delivery.
- 6.32 Section 5 focuses on '*Productive and Enterprising Places*' and covers the economic components of place making but noting that these are complementary to those of the Active and Social, and Distinctive and Natural themes and collectively the three themes come together to contribute towards the national sustainable place making outcomes. Productive and enterprising places are those which can raise our economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being by providing well-connected employment and sustainable economic development. These places are designed and sited to promote healthy lifestyles and tackle climate change. This is done by making them easy to walk and cycle to and around, accessible by public transport, maximising the use of non-renewable sources and using renewable and low carbon energy sources.

- 6.33 For planning purposes, the Welsh Government defines economic development as the development of land and buildings for activities that generate sustainable long-term prosperity, jobs and incomes. The planning system should ensure that the growth of output and employment in Wales as a whole is not constrained by a shortage of land for economic uses (paragraph 5.4.1).
- 6.34 Economic land uses include the traditional employment land uses (offices, research and development, industry and warehousing) as well as uses such as retail, tourism and public services.
- 6.35 Section 5.5 considers tourism and recognises that tourism can be a catalyst for regeneration, improvement of the built environment and environmental protection (paragraph 5.5.1).
- 6.36 The planning system encourages tourism where it contributes to economic development, conservation, rural diversification, urban regeneration and social inclusion, while recognising the needs of visitors and those of local communities. The planning system can also assist in enhancing the sense of place of an area which has intrinsic value and interest for tourism (paragraph 5.5.2).
- 6.37 Much of the existing provision of facilities and accommodation for tourism occurs in urban locations, including historic and coastal towns and cities. There will be scope to develop well-designed tourist facilities in urban areas. The sensitive refurbishment and re-use of historic buildings also presents particular opportunities for tourism facilities in all areas (paragraph 5.5.4).
- 6.38 Paragraph 5.5.7 identifies that planning authorities should adopt positive approaches to proposals which utilise previously developed land for tourism uses, particularly in relation to urban regeneration.
- 6.39 Section 6 has regard to '*Distinctive and Natural Places*', and includes narrative on the historic environment. Paragraph 6.1.4 explains that the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 provide the legislative

framework for the protection and sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales. PPW provides the national planning policy framework for the consideration of the historic environment and this is supplemented by guidance contained in Technical Advice Note 24.

- 6.40 Paragraph 6.1.6 notes that the Welsh Government's specific objectives for the historic environment seek to (inter alia) safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved, and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, whilst the same time helping them remain vibrant and prosperous.
- 6.41 Any decisions made through the planning system must fully consider the impact on the historic environment and on the significance and heritage values of individual historic assets and their contribution to the character of place (paragraph 6.1.9).
- 6.42 In relation to listed buildings, paragraph 6.1.10 recognises that there should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of a listed building and its setting. For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 6.43 Applicants for listed building consent must be able to justify their proposals, show why the alteration or demolition of a listed building is desirable or necessary and consider the impact of any change upon its significance. This must be included in a heritage impact statement, which will be proportionate both to the significance of the building and to the degree of change proposed (paragraph 6.1.13).
- 6.44 Paragraph 6.1.14 identifies that there should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas or their settings.

6.45 Preservation or enhancement of a conservation area can be achieved by a development which either makes a positive contribution to an area's character or appearance or leaves them unharmed. Mitigation measures can also be considered which could result in an overall neutral or positive impact of a proposed development in a conservation area (paragraph 6.1.16).

#### Technical Advice Notes (TAN)

6.46 The Technical Advice Notes (TANs) provide guidance on a range of specific topics. The pertinent TANs in relation to the application site are considered to be:

- TAN11 – Noise
- TAN12 – Design
- TAN13 – Tourism
- TAN18 - Transport
- TAN23 – Economic Development
- TAN24 – Historic Environment

6.47 TAN11 (Noise) provides advice on how the planning system can be used to minimise the adverse impact of noise without placing unreasonable restrictions on development or adding unduly to the costs and administrative burdens of business.

6.48 TAN12 (Design) provides advice on how 'Promoting sustainability through good design' and 'Planning for sustainable building' may be facilitated through the planning system. Good design is not inevitable. It requires a collaborative, creative, inclusive, process of problem solving and innovation. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to grasp opportunities to enhance the character, quality and function of an area, should not be accepted, as these have detrimental effects on existing communities.

6.49 TAN13 (Tourism) recognises that hotel development can bring benefits for the local community and support amenities and activities for residents and tourists. Such development should be compatible with neighbouring uses. The advice note also recognises that many historic buildings are used as hotels. Carefully designed additions can be achieved without adversely affecting the historic fabric or character and maintain an historic building in viable use. In addition, the note identifies that moderately sized extensions to an existing



hotel or public house, including the addition of bedroom accommodation, can help ensure the future viability of such businesses.

- 6.50 TAN18 (Transport) recognises that there should be integration between land use, planning and transport to promote resource and travel efficient settlement patterns, minimise the need for travel and foster social inclusion.
- 6.51 TAN23 (Economic Development) requires the planning system to recognise the economic aspects of all development and states that planning decisions should be made in a sustainable way which balance social, environmental and economic considerations. It sets out advice on how economic benefit should be weighed, particularly when balanced against social and environmental objectives. The advice note confirms that economic land uses include the traditional employment uses (i.e. B classes) as well as tourism and others.
- 6.52 TAN24 (The Historic Environment) provides guidance on how the planning system considers the historic environment during development plan preparation and decision making on planning and listed building applications.

A Vision for Growing Mid Wales – Strategic Economic Plan and Growth Deal Roadmap (May 2020)

- 6.53 Growing Mid Wales is a regional partnership and engagement arrangement between the private and public sectors, and with Welsh Government. The partnership seeks to represent the region's interests and priorities for improvements to the local economy. The Vision document sets out the economic strategy for Mid Wales.
- 6.54 Regarding tourism, the document recognises that the sector employs over 23,200 people in Mid Wales and has grown significantly over the past ten years. However, the tourism offer needs investment to generate higher value returns for the economy. The document goes on to acknowledge that capitalising on opportunities to strengthen the tourism offer will spur wider economic growth potential. This will change perceptions of Mid Wales and will attract new business to the region, give indigenous businesses and people the confidence to invest, strengthen career pathways and enable longer-term assurances for investment and support.

Ceredigion Local Development Plan 2007-2022 (April 2013)

6.55 There are three parts to the Ceredigion Local Development Plan (LDP) – Volume 1 Strategy and Policies, Volume 2A Settlement Group Statements; and Volume 2B Proposals Maps.

6.56 On the adopted proposals map, the application site falls within the defined settlement boundary of Aberystwyth and is located within the Conservation Area. Aberystwyth is also identified as a Strategic Regeneration Area, a Settlement Group and an Urban Service Centre.

Volume 1 Strategy and Policies

6.57 The LDP sets out a vision, which states (inter alia):

*“Through sustainable development and protection of its resources, Ceredigion will also be recognised for its enhanced environment and will provide and ensure appropriate and high-quality housing and a strong, diverse and progressive economy.”*

6.58 There are a number of objectives within the LDP, which set out how the Vision will be achieved. Objective 4 is, ‘To encourage and promote a year-round sustainable, environmentally friendly tourism sector throughout Ceredigion that is supported by a good accommodation base that caters for a wide range of markets and provides a range of facilities for all seasons.’ In addition, Objective 6 is, ‘To sustain and enhance a high-quality built environment which; allows for innovative design, reflects a sense of place, is easily accessible, useable, safe to live in and helps improve the health and wellbeing of its communities.’

6.59 Policy S01 (Sustainable Growth) confirms that growth will be focused to deliver stronger, more sustainable communities.

6.60 Policy S02 (Development in Urban Service Centres (USCs)) states that USCs provide sustainable locations where development will be permitted which, in relation to



Aberystwyth, contributes to the maintenance of its national significance and its role as a strategic centre for Mid Wales; and supports current objectives and action plans relating to its Strategic Regeneration Status.

- 6.61 Policy LU16 (Tourism Accommodation) supports the development of new hotels within USCs and resists a change of use of hotels to alternative uses, unless a number of criteria can be demonstrated.
- 6.62 Policy LU17 (Tourism Facilities/Attractions) supported the development of new tourist facilities and attractions provided they (inter alia) relate well to an existing settlement, benefit the local economy, benefit the community and are available for use by the wider community where possible.
- 6.63 Policy LU18 (Retail Proposals Countywide) permits new retail or commercial uses where it is of an acceptable scale, will not have an unacceptable retail impact, and will not adversely affect amenity.
- 6.64 Policy LU19 (Retail Proposals in Urban Service Centres) confirms that development of new retail or commercial land or buildings in the USCs will be permitted provided that it accords with Policy LU18, and it does not have a significant negative individual or cumulative impact on the vitality and viability of the existing town centre.
- 6.65 Policy DM03 (Sustainable Travel) requires development to minimise the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport in Ceredigion. Parking provision for all modes of transport should be in accordance with Ceredigion SPG.
- 6.66 Policy DM04 (Sustainable Travel Infrastructure as a Material Consideration) states that the complementary development of existing transport infrastructure with potential to provide for more sustainable travel will be a material consideration in all development.
- 6.67 Policy DM06 (High Quality Design and Placemaking) supports high quality design that respects its location and surroundings. In particular, development should promote innovative design whilst having regard to local distinctiveness; complement the sites and



surroundings in terms of layout, views, scale, height and proportion; respect existing layouts and densities; contribute to inclusive communities; protect the amenity of surrounding occupiers; and encourage the re-use of material.

- 6.68 Policy DM07 (Conservation Areas) requires that development within Conservation Areas have regard to Conservation Area Appraisals, where available.
- 6.69 Policy DM09 (Design and Movement) supports development that encourages appropriate through movement. In particular, active frontages at ground level are encouraged in non-residential development.
- 6.70 Policy DM19 (Historic and Cultural Landscape) specifies that development affecting landscapes or buildings which are of historical or cultural importance and make an important contribution to the character and interest of the local area, will be permitted where the distinctive appearance, architectural integrity or their settings will not be significantly adversely affected. Where possible, development should enhance these qualities and special character.

Volume 2A Settlement Group Statements

- 6.71 Aberystwyth is included in Group 3. It is recognised as the county's largest settlement, and as a Settlement of Primary National Importance consistent with its role as a strategic centre for Central Wales, and its national significance for Wales. The document recognises that, because of the town's national importance, the area is expected to see a greater than anticipated level of economic growth.
- 6.72 The Aberystwyth area has been designated a Strategic Regeneration Area. Full implementation of a Regeneration Action Plan, to the point of exit, is forecast to take 5 years, beginning in 2010/11 and ending in 2015/2016. This builds upon a lot of the work undertaken as part of the Aberystwyth Masterplan which was meant to guide the sustainable development of the town.

Aberystwyth Place Plan SPG (2019)

- 6.73 This document sets out different themes and key principles for the town. Of note, key themes include the local economy and culture and heritage. There is a drive to optimise the seafront whilst also maintaining the architectural character of the town by restoring and conserving historic shopfronts and features.

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## SECTION 7: PLANNING ISSUES

7.1 This Section of the Planning Statement considers the key general planning issues in respect of the application proposal.

7.2 The relevant general planning issues are:

- The principle of the development;
- Job creation and economic development;
- Design and townscape;
- Heritage;
- Structural;
- Access;
- Transport and highways;
- Amenity of adjoining occupiers;
- Waste storage and collection;
- Flooding

### **The Principle of the Development**

7.3 Planning Policy Wales's primary objective is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation and resultant duties such as the socio-economic duty. A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places.

7.4 The proposal will bring a fire-damaged, listed hotel back into use. Currently, the building is in disrepair, and the longer it remains this way, the more deteriorated it will become. It is therefore in the Council's interest, as well as the public's interest, to renovate the site to bring it back into order as a functioning hotel.

- 7.5 The site is in a highly prominent position and currently detracts from the seafront and promenade as a result of its run-down and fire-damaged appearance. This has a negative impact on the surrounding conservation area and listed buildings, and clearly detracts from its own Grade II listed status. Its repair and renovation will bring the building back into use and secure the survival of the building for future generations. This is in line with Chapter 6 of PPW, which states that, *“There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation of listed buildings. The continuation of reinstatement of the original use should generally be the first option when the future of a listed building is considered.”*
- 7.6 The impacts of the proposals will be wide-reaching and hugely beneficial. The proposals will restore the heritage asset and ensure the long-term viable use of the near original function of the building, in line with national planning policy and guidance. The proposals will also improve the building’s appearance whilst improving the appearance of the wider streetscene and conservation area. This will also improve the setting of surrounding listed buildings and the overall seafront and promenade area. Some demolition to the rear of the building is required, however this is considered acceptable given that this is the less significant part of the listed building and given the high-quality design approach (discussed further below). In addition, this part of the building was badly damaged by the fire and is not structurally sound. Therefore, a demolition and re-build of this part of the building is the most sensible approach. It also provides the hotel operator with an opportunity to make a more efficient use of the application site, and to improve the internal circulation and overall plan-form.
- 7.7 The re-opening of the hotel will also contribute positively to the local economy, by creating a significant number of local jobs, both during the construction and operational phases (discussed further below). Furthermore, the proposals will lead to an increase in visitor footfall, drawing more tourists into the town, both to the hotel itself as well as the surrounding area. This will have positive knock-on effects in terms of surrounding businesses, as the tourists will spend their money in other shops, restaurants, and on various activities. In this way, the proposals will act as a catalyst to help stimulate redevelopment and regeneration of other sites in Aberystwyth. This will help to underpin and enhance the vitality, viability and general health of the wider town centre. The local economy will therefore hugely benefit from the proposals, and this accords with various national and local



planning policy aims and objectives which require development to contribute to improving the economy, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

- 7.8 Aberystwyth has been designated as a Regeneration Area by the Welsh Government, with one of the aims being to re-invigorate the seafront and the promenade. The town is also a priority area for focused intervention by the Welsh Government to fulfil its role as the ‘Capital of Central Wales’. The proposal is consistent with these aims and the investment brought by the proposal will contribute positively to the regeneration of the town centre. Additionally, a proposal of this nature would allow the renovation of the listed building to take place, without the need for public subsidy.
- 7.9 In terms of the use, the hotel use is already established on site and has been for a significant period of time – indeed the listing description notes that the property established itself as the main hotel in the town at an early date. Since the fire, no intervening uses have been introduced into the building. This, coupled with the fact that it has only been vacant since the fire in 2018 and that the building is still physically intact, means that the previous use as a hotel has not been abandoned in planning terms. Therefore, the lawful use of the application site remains as a hotel (C1). The proposals do not seek to change this, and the site will continue in hotel use. However, there will be an uplift in the number of hotel rooms and the creation of an ancillary spa / pool, and a publicly accessible bar / restaurant at ground level, the justification for which is set out below.
- 7.10 The application site is located within the settlement boundary and adjacent to the town centre boundary. Settlement boundaries are designated to ensure that development relates to the existing built form and takes place in the most suitable locations. The LDP notes that settlement boundaries are provided to make clear the acceptable geographical spread of development and it is expected that all development will come forward within the settlement boundary.





- 7.11 In addition, Aberystwyth is an Urban Service Centre (USC), which LDP Policy S02 recognises as being a sustainable location. The policy permits development in this location which contributes to the maintenance of its national significance and its role as a strategic centre for Mid Wales; and supports current objectives and action plans relating to its Strategic Regeneration Status.
- 7.12 The proposals will only help to elevate the profile of the town and its role as a strategic centre, through its sympathetic and high-quality restoration. The proposals are therefore wholly in accordance with LDP Policy S02.
- 7.13 The application site is in a highly accessible location, with both bus and train options available a few minutes' walk from the site. It is also adjacent to the Town Centre boundary. This sustainable location accords with national policy and provides an option for hotel guests and visitors to travel to the site via a sustainable means. The location is therefore entirely appropriate for the development – the proposals will optimise the site compared to its pre-fire state and ensure that the site is being used in an efficient manner. This is compliant with various planning policy, including Planning Policy Wales which supports proposals which utilise previously developed land for tourism uses, particularly in relation to urban regeneration.
- 7.14 The future hotel demand outlook in Aberystwyth is strong enough to absorb the uplift in hotel rooms on the site. This is demonstrated by continued high occupancy levels and demand for high quality accommodation in Aberystwyth. Currently, there is a good level of tourist accommodation in the town, however the majority of this is at the budget or mid-range end of the scale. For example, there are a number of guest houses which are under £100 per night. There is also a Four Seasons Budget, Premier Inn, The Glengower, Queensbridge Hotel, the Marine Hotel and Spa and Richmond Hotel, all of which are 2- or 3-star hotels. There are a few 4-star hotels, which include Castle Hotel and Ty Belgrave House. Gwesty Cymru Hotel is the only 5-star hotel in the town.
- 7.15 The proposals seek to refurbish the hotel to a 5-star standard, which would make it only the second 5-star hotel in the town. The inclusion of the pool and spa will further add to the luxury status of the hotel. Again, there are not many hotels with spas in the town – indeed,



only the Marine Hotel boasts a spa as part of its offer. Therefore, it is considered that there is sufficient scope and demand for such a luxury hotel option, and the proposals will only seek to elevate the reputation of Aberystwyth. It is also considered fitting that such a prestigious, listed building should accommodate a higher end hotel.

7.16 Finally, the provision of the proposed publicly accessible bar and restaurant will activate the ground floor which will enhance the vitality and viability of the promenade and town. It is considered that this offer will complement the hotel and surrounding land uses. The public access element also allows more people to visit and enjoy the heritage asset, which is a notable benefit of the scheme.

7.17 As such, it is considered that the application proposal accords with numerous national and local planning policies, including policies 1, 2, 3, 25 and 26 of the National Plan 2040; Chapter 5 of PPW; TAN 13 and TAN23; and LDP policies SO1, SO2, LU16 and LU17. On this basis, it is considered that the application proposal represents sustainable development and accordingly there is a presumption in favour of the granting of planning permission for this application.

#### **Job Creation and Economic Development**

7.18 The application proposal will provide for significant job creation- approximately 80 new jobs are anticipated to be created. This follows a number of years where the site has been derelict as a result of the fire. This is therefore a material uplift, which will have far reaching and beneficial impacts on the local economy.

7.19 In addition, there will be jobs created through the construction of the premises and associated “linked” spending in the town during the construction process.

7.20 This is therefore a material consideration in the determination of the application and aligns with national planning policy objectives which seek to grow and develop the economy in a sustainable manner.

#### **Design and Townscape**

- 7.21 Materiality: The proposed materials will contribute to the historic interest and cultural significance of the area. In regard to the front façade, the off-white render is similar to the hotel in its pre-fire state and complements the surrounding properties. Similarly, the proposed natural roofing slates which match the existing roof are a sympathetic design response to the local context.
- 7.22 The frameless glass balustrades will ensure the balconies are sophisticated while being inconspicuous, particularly from long-range views. The proposed zinc standing seam cladding surrounds and Anthracite grey aluminium windows / doors will introduce more modern materials to the façade. However, it is considered that they will provide an interesting contrast to the more traditional materials, whilst still ensuring a very high-quality aesthetic. This accords with LDP design policy DM06 which supports innovative design whilst having regard to local distinctiveness.
- 7.23 The proposed hardwood timber window frames are an improvement in comparison with the current uPVC windows, which detract from the architectural significance of the listed building. This is therefore a significant benefit, both for the heritage asset itself, as well as the wider streetscene and conservation area.
- 7.24 The large glazed windows at ground floor level will allow hotel guests and customers within the restaurant / bar area to look out and enjoy the views of the seafront, whilst also allowing passers-by to view the activity inside the building and perhaps draw them in. This will help to enliven and activate the street frontage and, in turn, the wider promenade.
- 7.25 Having regard to the rear façade, the proposed materiality comprises a mixture of traditional brick and more modern zinc cladding and aluminium windows. This juxtaposition helps to create an innovative design whilst respecting the surrounding character.
- 7.26 Overall, the proposals incorporate the highest quality materials which respect (and not necessarily replicate) the local architectural character. The development will be constructed to the highest standards, incorporating the principles of good design, thereby complying with LDP Policy DM06.

- 7.27 Form and layout: The proposed form and layout have regard to the pattern and grain of the existing streets and makes a positive contribution to the existing prevailing character. Of note, the proposed footprint of the rear extension follows the existing building line and adjacent properties on Corporation Street. Separation distance and layout therefore follow an established precedent and are acceptable in principle.
- 7.28 The proposed new northern end extension will seek to largely replicate the previous part of the building before it was destroyed in the fire, replicating its footprint and building line. This will fill the current gap in the terrace, thereby having a positive effect on the wider streetscene and conservation area.
- 7.29 There are no changes proposed to the form and layout of the main front façade as this will remain as existing.
- 7.30 Overall, the proposed form and layout is entirely appropriate given the context, and follows already established building lines.
- 7.31 Height, scale and massing: As mentioned, above, the proposed new infill building on the front façade (northern end extension) largely replicates the previous building on this part of the site pre-fire, including in terms of its height, scale, massing and fenestration. Its construction will infill the gap and re-balance the front façade of the hotel, and in turn the wider streetscene. The proposed design will complement the site and surroundings and respect existing densities, in line with LDP Policy DM06.
- 7.32 The new rear extension will add additional height to this part of the building – three storeys with a fourth storey setback in comparison with the existing two storeys. However, this reflects and responds to the surrounding townscape and urban context – the majority of buildings on Corporation Street comprise three storeys, with some (including the building opposite at no. 4 and the adjacent bar, The Libertine) comprising four storeys. Therefore, the proposed rear extension is not considered excessively tall or bulky. Rather, it will better integrate with its surroundings and give the hotel a stronger presence in the streetscene.

- 7.33 Overall, the proposals respect the surrounding context and are wholly in accordance with policies TAN12 and LDP Policy DM06

### **Heritage**

- 7.34 Detailed analysis of the relevant planning policies relating to the heritage context is set out in the accompanying Heritage Statement. However, at a very high level, the proposals will allow a much-valued Grade II listed building to be salvaged following the fire and brought back into beneficial use. The proposals will enable the preservation of its features of special interest, by seeking repairs and refurbishing elements with like-for-like materials where possible to protect the character of the listed building. This will ensure that there is no adverse impact on the character, fabric or identity of the listed building. The continued conservation of the heritage asset is also a public benefit, in accordance with national and local planning policy.
- 7.35 The proposed design will also enhance the Conservation Area by improving the appearance of the listed building, and in turn the wider streetscene. There is currently a gap in the terrace as a result of the part of the building that was lost due to the fire. The sympathetic reinstatement of the terrace will have substantial benefits in terms of the wider Conservation Area setting.
- 7.36 Overall, the proposals are in accordance with national and local planning policies, specifically Section 6 of Planning Policy Wales which stipulates the general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of a listed building, conservations areas and their settings, as well as TAN24 and Local Plan policies DM07 and DM19.

### **Structural**

- 7.37 A Structural Report is submitted in support of this statement. This confirms that the rear wings of the buildings and the rear element are structurally not sound and require major remedial works. In terms of feasibility of the whole scheme, the recommendation is to remove these and re-build.

## Access

- 7.38 A separate Access Statement is submitted in support of the application. However, in summary, the proposed layout incorporates the principles of inclusive design and ensures the hotel is useable and accessible for all. Stairwells and lifts are provided on each level, including to the basement car park, to ensure connectivity throughout the building. Step-free access is provided via the main hotel lobby – this will also allow non-hotel users to access the restaurant / bar area. A number of hotel rooms are wheelchair accessible, and accessible car parking spaces will be provided.
- 7.39 Overall, there is improved access and circulation compared to the hotel in its pre-fire state. This is a significant public benefit and complies with policy that supports disabled access and inclusivity.

## Transport and Highways

- 7.40 Public transport: The hotel is located within the town, with good access to both bus and train links. As such, the site is highly accessible. The proposed development reflects the objectives of national policy which promotes sustainable placemaking and encourages development which reduces reliance on the private car. Overall, the proposal accords with Local Plan Policy DM03 and Policy DM04 which require development to minimise the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport.
- 7.41 Parking: Whilst the hotel in its pre-fire state did not incorporate private parking, the proposals incorporate a basement car park for 27 vehicles. Whilst staff and guests will be encouraged to travel to the site by more sustainable transport modes, this is not always possible. The incorporate of car parking will dissuade on-street car parking which can negatively affect the streetscene, particularly along the more prominent Marine Terrace.
- 7.42 Deliveries and servicing: The deliveries and servicing strategy will be similar to the previous hotel in terms of the number of vehicles. A delivery area is proposed to the rear of the hotel, which can be accessed via the passageway from Corporation Street. Deliveries and servicing vehicles will use this area, rather than entering via the front entrance, to ensure separation



from guests and other users of the hotel. Overall, the proposals will not result in any adverse impact in this regard.

### **Amenity of Adjoining Occupiers**

- 7.43 Noise: The site is in the settlement boundary and lies adjacent to (but just outside of) the town centre boundary, and is surrounded by other commercial uses including hotels, restaurants, bars, takeaways and shops. Therefore, due to the nature of these uses, the built-up urban location and the site's location on the seafront, some degree of noise is to be expected.
- 7.44 The primary sources of noise in the area are waves breaking on the beach during the day and night, pedestrians' voices from the promenade, vehicles travelling along Marine Terrace and seagulls squawking. At night the sound of breaking waves is dominant as there are very few vehicle movements along Marine Terrace.
- 7.45 The neighbouring buildings on Marine Terrace are both in hotel use, therefore similar noise levels arise from these sites. The nearest residential properties are to the rear, on Corporation Street. There will be some noise arising as a result of plant for the pool and spa, which is located on ground floor, as well as vehicles entering and exiting the basement car park. There will also be some noise arising from the restaurant and bar, however this will close at an appropriate time each evening so as to ensure no adverse impact on surrounding neighbours. In addition, the restaurant / bar area is located to the front of the building, therefore there will be no adverse impact on residential occupiers. There will also be some noise from guests entering and existing the hotel, but again, this will be at the front of the hotel on Marine Terrace, therefore no disturbance to residential occupiers is expected.
- 7.46 The building has been in hotel use for a significant period of time, and the noise levels will largely be in line with previous noise levels at the site. It is not expected there will be a material increase in noise levels compared to that arising from the hotel in its pre-fire state. There are also a number of surrounding hotels, bars and restaurants, all of which will create some level of noise. Again, this is to be expected in such a location, and so any noise rising as a result of the proposals is considered to be acceptable.

- 7.47 Daylight and sunlight: The proposed development has a comparable footprint to the hotel in its pre-fire state. However, there will be additional height as a result of the rear extension – the rear building is two storeys at present, but the proposals will result in three storeys with a fourth level setback. This reflects surrounding building on Corporation Street, which are predominantly 3-4 storeys in height. In addition, the urban grain is naturally tighter in town centre and urban locations. The proposals are therefore acceptable given the context, and will not impact on daylight levels to neighbouring properties to an unacceptable degree.
- 7.48 Overlooking and privacy: The proposal introduces balconies at first floor level and the third floor at the front of the hotel. The building faces the seafront, therefore there is no potential for increased overlooking and/or loss of privacy in respect of the front façade.
- 7.49 Having regard to the new rear extension, this follows the same footprint as the existing. There will be an increased height to the rear and additional windows, however the building maintains the same separation distance from the opposite terrace as surrounding buildings on Corporation Street. There is therefore an existing precedent and, whilst there may be increased opportunity for overlooking onto the terrace opposite, it is considered satisfactory in the urban environment. Notwithstanding, the Applicant is happy to accept a condition to partially obscure the upper windows on the rear façade, should the Council consider this to be an issue.
- 7.50 In summary, the proposed scheme is not considered to have any adverse impact on the living conditions of neighbouring properties. The site is in the settlement boundary and surrounded by other hotels and complementary uses. Furthermore, the site has been in hotel use for many years. Overall, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in amenity terms.

#### **Waste Storage and Collection**

- 7.51 A bin store is provided to the rear. Sufficient bins will be provided for the waste created by the hotel – this will include general bins and recycling bins. Waste collection will take place



from Corporation Street – the bins will be wheeled out by the hotel staff via the external passageway on bin collection days.

### **Flooding**

- 7.52 The site is in an area that is at very low risk of flooding from rivers, the sea and surface water (less than 0.1% chance each year). The site is also already developed and the proposal does not result in a building footprint which is materially larger. As a result, a Flood Risk Assessment is not required.

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## SECTION 8: CONCLUSIONS

8.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement is submitted on behalf of Morgans Developments Limited in support of an application for full planning permission and listed building consent at the Grade II listed Belle Vue Royal Hotel, Marine Terrace, Aberystwyth, SY23 2BA. The proposals are for restoration and renovation works for the continued use of the site as a hotel, following a fire which caused extensive damage in July 2018.

8.2 The proposed works include reconstruction of the fire damaged north end of the hotel to re-establish the terrace, remedial works to the front façade, creation of a new entrance door, insertion of large glazed windows at ground floor level, demolition of the rear extension and its replacement with a three-storey building with fourth storey setback, creation of a spa facility at ground floor level, rearrangement of the plan-form internally, creation of a basement car park with entrance from Corporation Street, replacement windows, re-roofing and other associated works.

8.3 It is considered that the proposals are of significant benefit. Namely, the proposals will:

- Seek the sympathetic restoration of a heritage asset to bring the building back into use;
- Secure the long-term future of the building;
- Infill the terrace with a very high-quality design, which will benefit the Conservation Area and setting of the listed building;
- Deliver high quality visitor accommodation to support the local economy and reintroduce jobs on the site;
- Attract more tourists into the area which will result in wider spend in the local area;
- Re-activate the frontage of the building which will help contribute to the vitality and viability of the town;
- Improve access (including wheelchair access) into and throughout the building;
- Deliver sustainable development in a highly accessible, sustainable location in accordance with relevant planning policy at a national, regional and local level.

- 8.4 Overall, the proposals are in accordance with relevant planning policy at a national, regional and local level and delivers sustainable development. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the proposals are approved without delay.

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