

Agenda Item	6.7
Report No	PLS/072/18

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: South Planning Applications Committee

Date: 18 September 2018

Report Title: 18/01248/FUL: Vastint Hospitality B.V.
Former Swimming Pool Site, Glebe Street, Inverness

Report By: Area Planning Manager – South/Major Developments

Purpose/Executive Summary

Description: Erection of hotel development with associated landscaping, car parking & ancillary uses

Ward: 14 - Inverness Central

Development category: Major

Reason referred to Committee: Major Development

All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

Recommendation

Members are asked to agree the recommendation to **Grant** planning permission as set out in section 11 of the report.

1. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1 The application relates to the construction and operation of a 168 bed hotel with associated restaurant, bar and leisure facilities. There is no known brand but it is likely to be a 4 star rated operator.
- 1.2 The proposed building is of rectilinear form developed on a T-plan footprint. The west (river) elevation steps from 3 to six storeys culminating in a cantilevered 'tower' feature at the north-west corner adjacent to Friar's Bridge. On the north elevation the building steps in, back from the bridge, with the building continuing at six storeys. A riverside roof terrace is proposed. On the riverfront the building is set back from the flood wall, to allow for access and maintenance.
- 1.3 The main entrance to the hotel, both vehicular and pedestrian, will be from Glebe Street with the front door directly opposite the end of Friar's Street. Vehicular access, for servicing and guest parking, is to be taken from the existing access to the site. There will be a total of 65 car parking spaces, three of which are accessible, and 24 cycle spaces. The ground immediately to the west, along the river, and south, along Glebe Street, will be landscaped to form both public and outdoor guest space as part of proposed public realm improvements.
- 1.4 A key project principle of this development is use of the latest cross laminated timber (CLT) technology. The building is of modular lightweight construction which means that it can be assembled relatively quickly and therefore cost effectively while having a lighter environmental footprint; reduction of construction waste and better thermal efficiency than more traditional construction.
- 1.5 External cladding materials proposed are a combination of large format reconstructed stone panels with expanses of glazing on ground floor elevations and large format ceramic panels on the elevations above. Windows are aluminium framed within classically spaced and proportioned openings. Projecting aluminium fin features will surround window openings. Larger glazed areas are incorporated within the 'tower' and at upper floor level around the junction between the two blocks. The elevations are terminated by 1100mm high parapets, continuing the classical design theme.
- 1.6 The rooftop plant will be hidden behind louvered/mesh screens. Bin stores are located at the north-east corner of building. A dedicated service layby is located adjacent to these. Surface water drainage from the development will be discharged, without attenuation, directly to the River Ness via an existing outfall. Car park construction will incorporate SuDS principles and have a level of treatment prior to discharge. Foul drainage will connect to the existing public sewer.
- 1.7 Pre Application Consultation: The applicant held a public consultation event on 07 February 2018 at the Royal Highland Hotel. No formal pre-application advice was sought from the Service.
- 1.8 Inverness Design Review Panel: The applicant presented its initial proposal for the site to the Design Review Panel on 25 January 2018. The Panel's report, dated 08

February 2018, is contained within Appendix 2. The Executive Summary states:

The Panel welcomes the opportunity to comment at an early stage on design options for this prominent riverfront site, whose development has significant potential to shape future of the city centre. This is an exciting development opportunity involving the first large-scale use of CLT/modular construction in the city. It is extremely important, however, that the use of CLT, in particular its repetition of modular elements, should not limit the development's ability to respond sensitively to the site's historic riverside setting. Sensitive articulation of building mass is a key priority. Design must achieve a balance between the repetition/massing of the modular system and the variety/distinctiveness of modelling and elevational treatment that is characteristic of surroundings. This report highlights a need for modelling, articulation and differentiation on all facades to achieve a sensitive response to views, streets and spaces. It advises that the tallest building mass should be located on the north-west corner of the site. The proposed emphasis on connecting ground floor accommodation and activity to the public realm is welcomed and encouraged, along with proposals for tree planting and landscaping. It is important that development delivers a high quality, attractive public realm with a focus on promoting public safety, including enhancements to the underpass below Friar's Bridge.

1.9 Supporting Information:

- Design and Access Statement
- Drainage Impact Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Ground Conditions Statement
- Pre-application Consultation Report

1.10 Variations:

1. Scheme design amended 17.07.2018. Key changes:
 - Amended plan form - Friar's Bridge elevation stepped back - plan is now T form
 - Amendment to heights/elevations to reduce massing
 - Remove drop-off/parking from Glebe Street frontage/increase public space/realm
 - Altered tower element
2. Further design changes made 27.08.2018. Key changes:
 - Further refinement to the elevations/tower element

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The site comprises a relatively level triangular shaped parcel of vacant land that extends from the Shore St roundabout junction at Friar's Bridge towards the River Ness. The site was the location of the former Inverness public baths but has lain vacant for some years.

2.2 Friar's Bridge defines the northern boundary of the site. The existing cycle/footway along the River Ness forms the west boundary and Glebe Street its south-east. An existing retail and commercial development directly abuts the development site at its eastern most edge. This has an existing vehicular access onto Glebe Street for

delivery of goods and fire escape. Uses within the immediate area are predominantly residential with housing located to the south on Glebe Street, Friar's Street and Douglas Row. This is reflected in the scale of building that is between two and three storeys in height.

- 2.3 The site is located within the Inverness (Riverside) Conservation Area. A number of listed buildings lie within the vicinity; most notably the Category B group of properties on Douglas Row.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- | | | | |
|-----|------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 3.1 | 21.01.2010 | Hotel development (08/00353/FULIN) | Planning
Permission
Granted |
| 3.2 | 20.01.2014 | 5 storey hotel development with restaurant, bar facilities with associated car parking and access (13/03235/FUL) | Withdrawn |
| 3.3 | 11.10.2016 | Erection of 60 residential units along with open space, parking and associated infrastructure (15/02556/FUL) | Planning
Permission
Granted |

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 4.1 Advertised: Section 65: Affecting the Setting of Conservation Area
Section 34: Schedule 3

Date Advertised: 06.04.2018 & 17.07.2018

Representation deadline: 07.08.2018

Timeous representations: 8

Late representations: 0

- 4.2 Material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

a) Principle:

- Glad to see site redeveloped
- Hotel use appropriate
- Support the modular design and technological innovation

b) Design:

- Inappropriate height
- 6 storey will overwhelm the 2 storey housing on Glebe Street
- Disappointingly box-like (flat roofs) and ordinary
- Concerns regarding bulk and massing
- Require careful consideration to detailed design
- Not as anticipated in the Inverness Conservation Area Management Plan (2015)

- Need better visualisations
- c) Visual impact:
- Detract from the beauty of the riverfront
 - Need better visualisations
- d) Traffic/Parking:
- Concern over increased use of Friar's Street and Douglas Row - implication for access and egress
 - Impact on parking in the vicinity - specifically Friar's Street and the courtyard parking in the street
- e) Other:
- Poor level of consultation on proposals

4.3 All letters of representation are available for inspection via the Council's eplanning portal which can be accessed through the internet www.wam.highland.gov.uk/wam.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 **Crown and City Centre Community Council** "have previously commented on applications for this site including hotel use and more recently residential flats. The principle of an hotel use in the context of the current proposal is well established and we believe supported by the Council's current policies for the town centre. The CC has also strongly expressed the wish that this town centre site is much in need of redevelopment and it has taken an inordinate time to get a spade in the ground. The principle of the use and the need to develop this site is therefore very much supported and represents a further major tourist investment in the town centre at a time when other town centre uses are in serious decline.

Among members of the Community Council there have been some misgivings regarding the scale of buildings and the type of architecture suggested for the site. Similarly in this case there has been comment regarding the block style suggested for the hotel within the prominent Riverside Conservation Area. It is recognised that the application has gone through a consultation process including consideration by the Design Review Panel. A final view will require to be taken by the Planning Director and possibly Committee in due course.

While it is not intended to object to the proposal, there was a desire to see detailed articulation of elevations and the careful choice of facing materials and riverside landscaping."

5.2 **Transport Scotland:** No objection subject to conditions relating to the need for Travel Plan, details of external lighting, landscaping along the trunk road, foundation structures and drainage connections.

5.3 **SEPA** advise that the site is located on land protected from flooding by the River Ness Flood Alleviation Scheme. It notes that while the design standard was 1 in 100 years plus allowance for climate change and an additional allowance for

freeboard since being built it has been demonstrated that the scheme actually exceeds 1 in 200 years including a 600mm allowance for freeboard. SEPA supports the conclusion of the Flood Risk Assessment submitted in support of the application to set the finished floor levels at 4.45m AOD which is 600mm higher than the 1 in 200 year plus climate change flood level for the site. It highlights that as existing ground levels on the site vary from 3m to 4.5m that such a finished floor height should be achievable without significantly elevating the building.

SEPA has no objection to the proposal on flood risk grounds providing that the existing and proposed site section drawing is one of the approved plans.

5.4 **Contaminated Land Team** indicate that the site/part of the site has an historic use as a yard and depot which has been shown to have resulted in land contamination, with some investigation work having been carried out but not yet completed. No objections subject to conditions.

5.5 **Historic Environment Team (Archaeology)** advises that proposal lies within an area of archaeological interest and that while construction and demolition of the former swimming pool may have removed some evidence for earlier occupation at the site there remains the potential for buried archaeological features and deposits to survive. Having said that, the risk of surviving buried features is not considered such that full excavation is required but the advice provided is that it is important that the nature and extent of any features are identified and recorded before they are impacted by the development. Site clearance work should therefore be carried out under archaeological supervision.

Historic burial markers and memorials have been built into the existing brick wall bounding the carpark that backs onto Friars Bridge. It is not clear at this stage whether they will be impacted. Any proposed alterations will need to ensure that the stones are removed, protected and reset within the landscaping scheme and a method statement setting out how this would be achieved is required to be submitted for approval.

No objection subject to conditions.

5.6 **Transport Planning Team** consider that the revised layout which has only one access to the site to be an improvement. It comments that the drop off area to the front of the main entrance is acceptable and will work well with preferred access arrangements; cars accessing the site from Friar's Street being oriented towards Academy Street and directed away from Douglas Row.

It comments that the car parking layout appears acceptable (subject to detailed dimensions). Three disabled spaces would meet with Council guidance and cycle parking acceptable. Transport Planning believe the service layby to be well located.

Further information on parking bay dimensions and arrangements for access and egress to the development for servicing and access to neighbouring land is requested as are proposals for a travel plan, improvements to pedestrian refuge at the Chapel Street junction and active travel routes.

- 5.7 **Flood Risk Management Team** requests that the site section plan be included as an approved plan to ensure that the finished floor levels are no lower than 4.45m AOD. It is content with the general principle of the proposed drainage, which will utilise an existing outfall to the river. However, it requests, by condition, further details in respect of run-off rates.

In addition a condition to ensure that a minimum buffer strip of 3m from the flood defence wall kept free from development to allow for future maintenance of the flood defence wall is requested. It advises that storage of materials within this area during construction is not to be permitted.

- 5.8 **Access Officer** comments that the path west of the site and the steps leading onto Friar's Bridge are core paths. It is recommended that both routes remain open and free from obstruction or encroachment before and during construction. It is suggested that if necessary this could be achieved by condition.

6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the application

6.1 Highland Wide Local Development Plan 2012

- 28 - Sustainable Design
- 29 - Design Quality & Place-making
- 30 - Physical Constraints
- 31 - Developer Contributions
- 34 - Settlement Development Areas
- 42 - Previously Used Land
- 43 - Tourism
- 44 - Tourist Accommodation
- 51 - Trees and Development
- 56 - Travel
- 57 - Natural, Built & Cultural Heritage
- 58 - Protected Species
- 59 - Other important Species
- 60 - Other Importance Habitats
- 61 - Landscape
- 63 - Water Environment
- 64 - Flood Risk
- 65 - Waste Water Treatment
- 66 - Surface Water Drainage
- 70 - Waste Management Facilities
- 72 - Pollution
- 73 - Air Quality
- 74 - Green Networks
- 75 - Open Space
- 77 - Public Access

6.2 **Inverness Local Plan 2006 (as continued in force 2012)**

N/A

6.3 **Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2015**

Policy 1 - Promoting and Protecting City and Town Centres

Policy 2 - Delivering Development

IN10: Site at Glebe Street

6.4 **Highland Council Supplementary Planning Policy Guidance**

Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013)

Inverness City Centre Development Brief (February 2018)

Developer Contributions (March 2013)

Flood Risk & Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013)

Green Networks (Jan 2013)

Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (March 2013)

Construction Environmental Management Process for Large Scale Projects (August 2010)

Managing Waste in New Developments (March 2013)

Physical Constraints (March 2013)

Public Art Strategy (March 2013)

Standards for Archaeological Work (March 2012)

Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)

7. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Inverness City Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2004)

7.2 Inverness Conservation Area Management Plan (2015)

7.3 Scottish Government Planning Policy and Guidance

- Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)
- Designing Streets
- Creating Places
- PAN 61 - Sustainable Drainage Systems
- PAN 68 - Design Statements
- PAN 75 - Planning for Transport
- PAN 77 - Designing for Safer Places
- PAN 1/2011 Planning and Noise

8. PLANNING APPRAISAL

8.1 Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 8.2 Under Section 59 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Planning Authority must have regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 8.3 Under Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, it is the duty of the Planning Authority to ensure that, within conservation areas, development proposals preserve or enhance the character and appearance of a conservation area.

Determining Issues

- 8.4 This means that the application requires to be assessed against all policies of the Development Plan relevant to the application, all national and local policy guidance and all other material considerations relevant to the application.

Planning Considerations

- 8.5 The key considerations in this case are:
- a) compliance with the development plan and other planning policy
 - b) design quality, the Inverness Conservation Area and impact on the setting of adjacent listed buildings
 - c) amenity of neighbouring residents
 - d) flood risk and drainage (construction & operation)
 - e) contaminated land
 - f) parking and access (incl. public rights of way)
 - g) archaeology
 - h) any other material considerations.

Development plan/other planning policy

- 8.6 Both the Highland wide Local Development Plan (2012) and Inner Moray Firth Local Plan (2015) support proposals that will maintain and/or strengthen the vitality and viability of the City Centre. The former supports use of previously used land. It also supports tourist accommodation where it can be located without adverse impacts on neighbouring uses. The site is identified within the Development Plan for, amongst other uses, a hotel. It is considered that such a use will strengthen the vitality and viability of the City Centre and in principle would be acceptable.
- 8.7 The site is not specifically referenced within the current Inverness City Development Brief (January 2018) and does not form one of the sites with detailed development guidance. However, the design is expected to take into account the placemaking principles set out within the guidance including; requirement for contextual analysis, protecting key views, safeguarding setting of built heritage, height, scale, massing, provision of active frontages, permeability, high quality materials, public realm and open space to name a few.

- 8.8 Subject to the proposal demonstrating a high quality design and having no significant adverse impact on the local character and historic and natural environment; on individual and community residential amenity; and existing infrastructure then the proposals would comply with the development plan.

Design Quality, the Inverness (Riverside) Conservation Area and setting of listed buildings

- 8.9 A key characteristic of the Inverness (Riverside) Conservation Area is the relationship of the main streets, which run parallel to the river, the connecting streets, which lead towards the river, and the significant buildings and views along them that combine to provide the City with its unique identity and sense of place. The value of the City's townscape is evident in views into the Old Town, especially from the west bank of the river. The river is central to the identity of the city and to its visual character. Development is expected to take this into account and protect views to and from the river, river bank and/or bridges. The Castle, the Town House, the Town Steeple and the various church spires are key buildings on the Inverness skyline. It is important that new buildings do not detract from their distinctiveness.
- 8.10 The Inverness Old Town Conservation Area Management Plan, approved by the City of Inverness Area Committee in June 2015 and therefore material to the determination of this application, sets a framework for the management of change in the built environment based on a detailed understanding of the character of this important part of the Inverness (Riverside) Conservation Area. It identifies key issues for its sensitive management as well as principles and guidelines that will be applied to future decision making.
- 8.11 It recommends that development guidance is prepared for the Glebe Street site to address matters of scale, height, massing, the context of the prominent site on the riverside, key views, materials and site permeability. Specific development guidance for this site was contained within the previous version of the Inverness City Centre Development Brief, used in previous decision making on this site, but is not contained within the most recent City Centre Development Brief, which instead expects development to be appraised against a number of placemaking principles.
- 8.12 The Inverness Old Town Conservation Area Management Plan states that proposals for Glebe Street '*should make a distinctive and positive contribution at the north of the conservation area, while respecting the hierarchy of key buildings/structures in the Inverness city centre. Large masses of uniform height (as built during the later 20th century in the vicinity of Bridge Street) should be avoided. Some vertical features or emphasis could contribute to the townscape; however, the small scale of the riverside buildings in Douglas Row and on the opposite bank of the Ness at Huntly Street and Friars' Place should be respected. A proposal on this site should have a strength of presence, of the highest design quality and should enhance the relationship of the site to the river, including fully recognising the importance of the riverside pedestrian route leading to Riverside Street, north of Friars' Bridge.*' This statement remains relevant to the consideration of the proposal against the placemaking principles contained within the Inverness City Centre Development Brief.

- 8.13 In summary, what is expected is a building that does not detract from the existing key qualities of the riverfront, that respects the key views and the lower scale buildings adjacent to and on the opposite side of the river, will not be a single large mass of uniform height having an elevational treatment that relates well to the pattern of the surrounding historic fabric and one that utilises high quality materials. Not only however should it relate well to the river frontage but provide an opportunity to create a new street frontage on Glebe Street.
- 8.14 The development proposal has gone through a number of iterations in an attempt to address these design requirements. With a CLT approach the most efficient way to deliver development is to have uniformity, a single rectangular mass being ideal. In recognition of the guidance, advice of officers and the Design Review Panel, and comments from public consultation, and having taken into account the site context, different options have been explored in order to accommodate the client brief for around 170 rooms.
- 8.15 The options considered by the design team ranged from a single block facing the river at 8 storeys in height, to an L-shaped plan form at six storeys, then to a preferred option that stepped the riverfront elevation from seven to three storeys. The stepped arrangement addressed the need to break down the mass and improve the relationship with the properties on Douglas Row. The application was submitted on this basis. However, it was considered that the L-shaped plan form meant that the building did not make a positive contribution to Glebe Street, with the space between the street and building dominated by parking. In addition the elevation presented to Friar's Bridge was a single monolithic rectangular form, something that the guidance seeks to avoid. It was also considered that the 'tower' feature on the north-west corner needed to be enhanced.
- 8.16 In response to this, the design team has pulled the Friar's Bridge wing forward within the site, relocated the parking to the rear and provided a larger landscaped area to the street that is considered a large improvement to the public realm as well as greatly enhancing the legibility of the hotel entrance and attractiveness of the outside space for hotel patrons. While ideally the block running west-east could have been cranked slightly to run more parallel with Glebe Street this would have had a knock on effect on the arrangement of the building core, resulted in a more awkward junction arrangement on the upper floor, affected the access arrangements and added to cost.
- 8.17 Further refinement to the design has improved the balance to massing on the riverfront elevation, given more definition to the 'tower' on the north-west corner and extended the parapets to provide an obvious termination to the walls.
- 8.18 While there were initial reservations over the use of modern ceramic materials for the cladding, the proposed product is of high quality and given that the panels will be large format will work well with the scale of the building. Although natural stone would have been preferred in this location it would have been cost prohibitive on this site which is visible from all aspects. The ceramic panel will be used for all elevations which overall is a preferred approach. The materials are appropriate to this contemporary design.

- 8.19 It is considered that as a result of the changes made to the proposal since the initial submission that the building has a more balanced design. It now has an active frontage to both the river and Glebe Street, which provides an opportunity to considerably improve the streetscape and public realm. The building sits back from Douglas Row and the stepped arrangement to the riverfront means that the massing does not adversely impact on the setting of adjacent listed buildings, nor does it compete with other large structures along the riverfront. The enhanced 'tower' on north-west corner provides more of a nod to the distinct vertical features that characterise the conservation area. While a building of some scale, the existing key view to Ben Wyvis from the river and Castle Hill will be uninterrupted. The view from the Ness Bridge north towards the Black Isle will be interrupted but the building will not obscure the view or significantly skyline. It is considered that a building of scale is required in this location given its location adjacent to the A82/Friar's Bridge.
- 8.20 Representations made against the proposal by members of the public consider that this contemporary approach is not appropriate for the site. On the other hand the Design Review Panel is more supportive. The planning history of the site is also relevant, with planning permission already granted for substantial contemporary buildings in this space. It is recognised that design is largely a subjective matter. However, having assessed the proposal against the placemaking principles set out within the Inverness City Centre Development Brief (Appendix 3), and taking into account the planning history, it is considered that the proposals would comply with the Brief, subject to achieving high quality landscaping and public realm improvements, including public art, which are matters that can be secured through condition and/or contributions. While introducing change, it is not considered that the proposed development will have a significant adverse impact upon the character or appearance of the conservation area overall or the setting of adjacent listed buildings.

Residential amenity

- 8.21 The proximity of the building, particularly on Glebe Street, to residential properties opposite raises concern for the potential for neighbouring residents to be affected by a loss of daylight and sunlight. In response, a request was made of the applicant to provide an assessment of this. The solar assessment undertaken confirms that, while there will be an impact on some properties, when considered in the context of the consented development, which although lower sits closer to these properties, the impact will be no worse for those affected but in some scenarios fewer properties will be affected.
- 8.22 Notwithstanding, at six storeys, it is understandable that the building could be perceived as overwhelming. This is however considered to be compensated by the creation of an improved relationship between the entrance/public areas of the hotel and Glebe Street with a large extent of landscaped area that will make a positive contribution to the streetscape and public realm.
- 8.23 The development will introduce change to the area and with that will be an increase in noise and activity. No details of likely plant or machinery noise has been provided, which is likely to be dependent upon operator requirements, but

Environmental Health is content that this can be dealt with by condition. The increase in activity through increased footfall may not be welcomed by all but does provide the opportunity for this area to contribute more to the vitality of the City and over time perhaps benefit from increased investment. In addition the scheme will provide natural surveillance of the riverfront walkway/underpass and steps to Friar's Bridge thereby improving security within this area.

- 8.24 The impact of construction on residents needs careful consideration and it is suggested that some form of community consultation by the developer is necessary to ensure that residents are not unduly inconvenienced. This can be sought by condition. The issue of working hours and construction generated noise is a matter for Environmental Health. However, it is reasonable for a project of this scale to require the developer to provide construction environmental management plans to include measures to protect residents from dust and noise, as well as ensuring that other forms of pollution can be adequately controlled.

Flood risk and drainage

- 8.25 The site lies behind the recently finished River Ness Flood Scheme; above pavement level behind a secondary flood wall. While this has, disappointingly, prevented the development from having direct frontage access to the river itself, the site is protected from flooding. On the basis that finished floor levels are set at 4.45m AOD, which is around the existing ground level, SEPA and the Flood Risk Management Team have no objection to the proposals. The Flood Risk Management Team has asked that an area at least 3m back from the flood wall remain clear at all times to allow for maintenance. These matters can be controlled by condition.
- 8.26 Surface water drainage from the building will be discharged, without attenuation, directly to the River Ness via an existing outfall. The car park will have a level of treatment prior to discharge to the same outfall. The Flood Risk Management Team was concerned that this outfall did not exist but the applicant has confirmed this to be the case and consequently the Flood Risk Management Team is now content that the drainage solution is appropriate subject to clarification on flow rates. This can be confirmed prior to the commencement of development.
- 8.27 Foul drainage will connect to the existing public sewer.

Contaminated land

- 8.28 The Council's Contaminated Land Team has highlighted that the previous use of the site has resulted in land contamination. While some investigation work has already been carried out this work is yet to be completed. Subject to a condition requiring this matter to be adequately dealt with the Contaminated Land Team has no objection.

Parking and access

- 8.29 Access to the site was initially proposed from Chapel Street into Glebe Street with drop-off and an element of parking provided to the front of the building. The repositioning of the building has removed the parking from the front and resulted in

an improved access to the car park behind. It is now proposed that drop-off provision will be on-street. This will be separate to and located further east than the existing on-street residents parking bay.

- 8.30 This now presents an opportunity to direct traffic to the site from Academy Street via Friar's Street, rather than encourage a right turn onto Glebe Street from Chapel Street. It also means that traffic will be naturally dissuaded from continuing along Glebe Street and onto Douglas Row, which has restricted access, since vehicles will be facing the opposite direction. Transport Planning is content with this arrangement, believing it will work well subject to an appropriate scheme of mitigation to include an operational management plan and advance directional signage.
- 8.31 There are 65 parking spaces. This is a shortfall of 53 spaces. There will therefore be a requirement for these to be compensated through payment of developer contributions towards active travel improvements in accordance with the requirements of the City Centre Development Brief.
- 8.32 Transport Planning requested clarification on how the adjacent properties will be accessed. Indeed this is a specific issue that has been raised by the owner of the warehouse unit to the south of the access point. The revised proposal provides for retention of third party rights of access here and sufficient space for deliveries. While there is potential for access to be compromised by inappropriate parking, these are matters that can be addressed as far as the operator is able to through provision of an operational traffic management plan. Access for maintenance purposes to the northern area of land (currently owned by the Council) can be taken from Chapel Street or through the proposed car park following discussion with the owner. However, it is understood that discussions are underway for the sale of this portion of land from the Council to the developer. This would resolve any potential conflict.
- 8.33 Transport Scotland has no objection subject to a requirement for a Travel Plan and conditions to protect its own infrastructure.
- 8.34 The Council's Access Officer has identified the need to maintain access on the core path that runs along the riverfront and onto Friar's Bridge. This is a matter that could be controlled by condition.

Archaeology

- 8.35 With the amendment to pull the development away from Friar's Bridge, there will be no impact on the existing brick wall of Friar's Bridge and its in-built burial markers and memorials. As these will not be affected by the new development, the concern raised by the Council's Archaeologist has been addressed. A condition can secure the careful potential for buried archaeological features

Other material considerations

- 8.36 The site is situated adjacent to the River Ness which itself has connectivity to the River Moriston Special Area of Conservation (SAC); the qualifying interests of which are Atlantic salmon & freshwater pearl mussel. While there is potential for

construction activity to affect the qualifying interests the risk would be low and any activity likely to affect the water environment would be controlled by SEPA in any event. The development is unlikely to have any significant effect on the SAC.

- 8.37 There are no specific proposals for public art as part of this application although the City Centre Development Brief does consider that there is potential to include public art within planned public realm improvements. The application, as revised, does include considerable space that will contribute to public realm and there is potential for public art to be included with this. It is anticipated that these matters can be addressed by condition.
- 8.38 One representation raised the issue of lack of consultation. However, the applicant has undertaken the consultation required by the Regulations, having held an event on 07 February 2018 at the Royal Highland Hotel.

Non-material considerations

- 8.39 None

Matters to be secured by Section 75 Agreement

- 8.40 1. Contributions towards active travel within the City in accordance with the City Centre Development Brief equating to £3,220 per space (as at Q3 2017).
- 8.41 The applicant has four months from the date that the Council's solicitor writes to the Applicant/Applicant's solicitor indicating the terms of the legal agreement, to deliver to the Council a signed legal agreement. Should an agreement not be delivered within four months, the application shall be refused under delegated powers.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The principle of hotel development is supported by the Development Plan. A number of comments from the public, as well as the Community Council, welcome the redevelopment of the site.
- 9.2 It is however clear that there are concerns regarding the scale, height and massing of the proposed building with some advising that a contemporary design approach is not appropriate for the conservation area. Although contemporary in approach, the building reflects many of the key features of historic buildings within the City Centre, particularly the classical window proportions and regularity that provides strong horizontal emphasis. The elevational treatment is of quality. This is also the case for the materials proposed for the façade and although there were initial reservations over the use of ceramic cladding this will enable a consistent approach to be taken for all elevations and is therefore welcome. The massing of the building has been improved from earlier iterations and it is considered that the building will add visual interest to this corner of the conservation area without impacting significantly on views. The separation from Douglas Row will ensure that the setting of these listed buildings is not adversely impacted and overall as a high quality modern development the proposal will not have an adverse impact on the

character of appearance of the conservation area.

- 9.3 The history of the site must be given due consideration. There is an extant permission for residential development that is of contemporary design; the height of which ranges from three to seven stories. A contemporary approach is an entirely appropriate response and one of the key requirements of the Inverness City Centre Development Brief. It is considered that the development accords with the principles contained within the Brief. The proposal presents an opportunity to considerably improve the public realm of Glebe Street and create an attractive and vibrant riverside development.
- 9.4 There will be no significant adverse impact on community or residential amenity, or existing infrastructure. Indeed, the proposal will improve active travel opportunities within the vicinity. Traffic generated can be appropriately managed to avoid conflict with residential streets and parking.
- 9.5 In summary, the proposal will bring back into use this long standing vacant site within the City, provide a modern quality building that respects the key characteristics of the riverfront of Inverness and will make a positive contribution to the vibrancy of the City.
- 9.6 All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

10. IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Resource: Not applicable
- 10.2 Legal: Not applicable
- 10.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): Not applicable
- 10.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever: Not applicable
- 10.5 Risk: Not applicable
- 10.6 Gaelic: Not applicable

11. RECOMMENDATION

Action required before decision issued	Y
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Notification to Scottish Ministers	N
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Conclusion of Section 75 Obligation	Y
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Revocation of previous permission	N
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Subject to the above, it is recommended that planning permission be

GRANTED, subject to the following:

Conditions and Reasons

1. No development or work shall commence until a detailed specification for all proposed external materials and finishes (including trade names and samples where necessary) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Thereafter, development and work shall progress in accordance with these approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

2. No development shall commence until details of a scheme of hard and soft landscaping works for the site including the area at the south boundary have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Details of the scheme shall include:
 - i. all earthworks and existing and finished ground levels in relation to an identified fixed datum point;
 - ii. the location and design, including materials, of any existing or proposed walls, fences and gates;
 - iii. all soft landscaping and planting works, including plans and schedules showing the location, species and size of each individual tree and/or shrub and planting densities; and
 - iv. a programme for preparation, completion and subsequent on-going maintenance and protection of all landscaping works.

All landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme. All planting, seeding or turfing as may be comprised in the approved details shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the commencement of development, unless otherwise stated in the approved scheme.

Any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, for whatever reason are removed or damaged shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of the same size and species.

For the avoidance of doubt, the landscaped area, particularly along Glebe Street, shall include at least one piece of public art and seating for public use.

Reason: In order to ensure that the approved landscaping works are properly undertaken on site.

3. Public access to any Core Path within, or adjacent to, the application site shall at no time be obstructed or deterred by construction-related activities, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Council's Access Officer as a temporary measure required for health and safety or operational purposes. Under such circumstances, any temporary obstruction or deterrent shall cover only the smallest area practicable and for the shortest duration possible, with waymarked diversions provided as necessary.

Reason: In order to safeguard public access during the construction phase of the development.

4. No development shall commence until a scheme to deal with potential contamination within the application site has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:
 - i. the nature, extent and type of contamination on site and identification of pollutant linkages and assessment of risk (i.e. a land contamination investigation and risk assessment), the scope and method of which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Planning Authority, and undertaken in accordance with Planning Advice Note 33 (2000) and BS10175:2011+A1:2013 Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites - Code of Practice;
 - ii. the measures required to treat/remove contamination (remedial strategy) including a method statement, programme of works, and proposed verification plan to ensure that the site is fit for the uses proposed;
 - iii. measures to deal with contamination during construction works;
 - iv. in the event that remedial action is required, a validation report that will validate and verify the completion of the agreed decontamination measures;
 - v. in the event that monitoring is required, monitoring statements shall be submitted to at agreed intervals for such time as is considered appropriate by the Planning Authority.

No development shall commence until written confirmation has been received that the scheme has been implemented, completed and, if required, monitoring measurements are in place, all to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure that the site is suitable for redevelopment given the nature of previous uses/processes on the site.

5. The ground floor finished floor level of the development hereby granted planning permission shall be no less than 4.45 metres AOD.

Reason: In the interests of flood prevention.

6. An area of a minimum buffer width of 3 metres shall be provided between the footprint of development and the existing flood prevention wall and retained in perpetuity in order to provide access for maintenance and repair of the wall, all to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority. No development shall commence until details of the buffer strip has been submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to retain access for repair and maintenance of the flood wall.

7. No development or work (including site clearance) shall commence until proposals for an archaeological watching brief to be carried out during site clearance and excavation works, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter, the watching brief shall be implemented as approved.

Reason: In order to protect the archaeological and historic interest of the site.

8. No development shall commence until full details of the drainage design, including pre and post development runoff rates, are submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt there should be no increase in the rate and volume of runoff into the River Ness from the pre-development scenario. Sensitivity testing of the network should include a submerged outfall based upon 1 in 200 year tidal water levels (including climate change) in the River Ness.

Reason: In order to ensure that the drainage design is appropriate.

9. No development shall commence until a Construction Environmental Management Document (CEMD), in accordance with The Highland Council's Guidance Note on Construction Environmental Management Process for Large Scale Projects (August 2010) (as amended, revoked or re-enacted; with or without modification), has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The CEMD shall be submitted at least two months prior to the intended start date on site and shall include the following:

- i. Change control procedures to manage/action changes from the approved CEMD and Construction Environmental Management Plans;
- ii. Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) for the construction phase, covering:
 - a. Pre-commencement species surveys;
 - b. Pollution Prevention and Control;
 - c. Dust Management;
 - d. Construction Noise Assessment and Mitigation Plan in accordance with BS5228 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites - Part 1: Noise;
 - e. Construction Vibration Assessment and Mitigation Plan in accordance with BS5228 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites - Part 1: Noise;
 - f. Site Waste Management;
 - g. Surface and Ground Water Management i.e.;

- i. Drainage and sediment management measures from all construction areas; and
 - ii. Mechanisms to ensure that construction will not take place during periods of high flow or high rainfall.
- h. Emergency Response Plans; and
- i. Other relevant environmental management as may be relevant to the development.
- iii. A statement of responsibility to 'stop the job/activity' if a breach or potential breach of mitigation or legislation occurs; and
 - iv. Methods for monitoring, auditing, reporting and the communication of environmental management on site and with client, Planning Authority and other relevant parties.

Thereafter, development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Schedule of Mitigation, Construction Environmental Management Document and any Construction Environmental Management Plans approved thereunder.

Reason: In the interests of the protection of the environment and amenity of residents during construction.

- 10. No development shall commence until a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) has been submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Authority in consultation with the relevant Roads Authority(s). The CTMP, which shall be implemented as approved during all period of construction, must include:
 - i. A description of all measures to be implemented by the developer in order to manage traffic during the construction phase (incl. routing strategies), with any additional or temporary signage and traffic control undertaken by a recognised suitably qualified traffic management consultant;
 - ii. The identification and delivery of all upgrades to the public road network to ensure that it is to a standard capable of accommodating construction related traffic and the operational requirements of the development to the satisfaction of The Highland Council;
 - iii. A procedure for the regular monitoring of road conditions and the implementation of any remedial works required during construction periods.
 - iv. Details of any upgrading works required at the junction of the site access and the public road. Such works may include suitable drainage measures, improved geometry and construction, measures to protect the public road and the provision and maintenance of

appropriate visibility splays.

- vi. Details of appropriate traffic management which shall be established and maintained at the site access for the duration of the construction period. Full details shall be submitted for the prior approval of The Highland Council, as Roads Authority.
- vii. Wheel washing measures to ensure water and debris are prevented from discharging from the site onto the public road;
- viii. Appropriate reinstatement works shall be carried out, as required by Highland Council, at the end of the construction of the development.
- ix. Measures to ensure that construction traffic adheres to agreed routes.

Thereafter the approved Construction Traffic Management Plan shall be implemented in full, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

11. The design and installation of any plant, machinery or equipment shall be such that any associated noise complies with NR20 when measured and/or calculated within any nearby living apartment, and no structure borne vibration is perceptible within any nearby living apartment.

Reason: In order to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

12. No development shall commence on site until a scheme for the enhancement of the pedestrian refuge island on Glebe St at its junction with Chapel St has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The agreed scheme shall be implemented prior to first occupation of the hotel hereby granted planning permission.

Reason: In the interests of pedestrian safety.

13. No part of the development shall be occupied until a comprehensive Travel Plan that sets out proposals for reducing dependency on the private car has been submitted and approved in writing by the planning authority, after consultation with Transport Scotland, as the Trunk Roads Authority. In particular this Travel Plan shall identify measures to be implemented, the system of management, monitoring, review, reporting and the duration of the plan.

Reason: To be consistent with the requirements of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and PAN 75 Planning for Transport

14. No part of the development shall be occupied until a comprehensive Operational Traffic Management Plan (OTMP) has been submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Authority in consultation with the relevant Roads Authority(s). The OTMP, which shall be implemented as approved during

the operation of the development, must include:

- i. A description of all measures to be implemented by the developer/operator in order to manage traffic during operation of the development hereby granted planning permission, with proposals for any additional signage and traffic control. In particular this should include:
 - A scheme for, and provision of, suitable advance directional signage/signage to promote the use of Friar's Street as the principal access to the development and discourage access directly from Chapel Street;
 - A scheme for, and provision of, suitable signage to prevent, as far as is possible, traffic egressing the site onto Douglas Row;
- ii. Review of, and potential upgrades of, existing waiting restrictions;
- iii. Measures to prevent, guests or delivery vehicles, impacting upon the parking/deliveries area of the adjacent warehouse building.

Thereafter the approved Operational Traffic Management Plan shall be implemented in full, and any agreed measure maintained, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of road safety and to protect, as far as possible, the interests of neighbouring occupiers from an increase in traffic to the area.

15. Details of the lighting within the site shall be submitted for the approval of the Planning Authority, after consultation with Transport Scotland, as the Trunk Roads Authority.

Reason: To ensure that there will be no distraction or dazzle to drivers on the trunk road and that the safety of the traffic on the trunk road will not be diminished.

16. Prior to commencement of the development, details of the frontage landscaping treatment along the trunk road boundary shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Authority, after consultation with Transport Scotland TRBO.

Reason: To ensure that there will be no distraction to drivers on the trunk road and that the safety of the traffic on the trunk road will not be diminished.

17. Details of the piled foundations of permanent structures within the site shall be submitted for the approval of Highland Council, after consultation with Transport Scotland.

Reason: To prevent interaction between the piled foundations of the A82 Friar's Bridge, and the foundations of the hotel building and / or any other permanent structures on site.

18. There shall be no drainage connections to the trunk road drainage system.

Reason: To ensure that the efficiency of the existing trunk road drainage network is not affected.

19. No development shall commence until a Waste Management Strategy has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. This shall detail an approach to sustainable waste management in the operation of all aspects of development and; identify bin collection points and off-street bin stores; set out procedures to ensure that no refuse or recycling materials associated with the development are stored or places for collection on the public highway or pavement, except on day of collection; the proposed collection schedule for refuse and recycling; identify size of and routes for waste collection vehicles, management of these routes and any conflicts between vehicular movements and pedestrians; and details of any required infrastructure. Thereafter the strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the development is appropriately serviced and the waste management arrangements do not have an adverse impact on the amenity of the area.

20. No development shall commence until a community liaison group is established by the developer, the terms of reference of which shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The group shall act as a vehicle for the community to be kept informed of project progress as well as liaising over certain site specific construction matters that may have an impact on the local community in relation to noise from construction activities and construction traffic. The liaison group, or element of any combined liaison group relating to this development, shall be maintained until the development has been completed, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

Reason: to ensure that the local community is kept apprised of environmental matters relating to the development of the site.

REASON FOR DECISION

It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

TIME LIMIT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PLANNING PERMISSION

In accordance with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended), the development to which this planning permission relates must commence within THREE YEARS of the date of this decision notice. If development has not commenced within this period, then this planning permission shall lapse.

FOOTNOTE TO APPLICANT

Initiation and Completion Notices

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) requires all developers to submit notices to the Planning Authority prior to, and upon completion of, development. These are in addition to any other similar requirements (such as Building Warrant completion notices) and failure to comply represents a breach of planning control and may result in formal enforcement action.

1. The developer must submit a Notice of Initiation of Development in accordance with Section 27A of the Act to the Planning Authority prior to work commencing on site.
2. On completion of the development, the developer must submit a Notice of Completion in accordance with Section 27B of the Act to the Planning Authority.

Copies of the notices referred to are attached to this decision notice for your convenience.

Major Development Site Notice

Prior to the commencement of this development, the attached Site Notice must be posted in a publicly accessible part of the site and remain in place until the development is complete. This is a statutory requirement of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts and associated regulations.

Accordance with Approved Plans & Conditions

You are advised that development must progress in accordance with the plans approved under, and any conditions attached to, this permission. You must not deviate from this permission without consent from the Planning Authority (irrespective of any changes that may separately be requested at the Building Warrant stage or by any other Statutory Authority). Any pre-conditions (those requiring certain works, submissions etc. prior to commencement of development) must be fulfilled prior to work starting on site. Failure to adhere to this permission and meet the requirements of all conditions may invalidate your permission or result in formal enforcement action.

Flood Risk

It is important to note that the granting of planning permission does not imply there is an unconditional absence of flood risk relating to (or emanating from) the application site. As per Scottish Planning Policy (paragraph 259), planning permission does not remove the liability position of developers or owners in relation to flood risk.

Scottish Water

You are advised that a supply and connection to Scottish Water infrastructure is dependent on sufficient spare capacity at the time of the application for

connection to Scottish Water. The granting of planning permission does not guarantee a connection. Any enquiries with regards to sewerage connection and/or water supply should be directed to Scottish Water on 0845 601 8855.

Septic Tanks & Soakaways

Where a private foul drainage solution is proposed, you will require separate consent from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). Planning permission does not guarantee that approval will be given by SEPA and as such you are advised to contact them direct to discuss the matter (01349 862021).

Local Roads Authority Consent

In addition to planning permission, you may require one or more separate consents (such as road construction consent, dropped kerb consent, a road openings permit, occupation of the road permit etc.) from the Area Roads Team prior to work commencing. These consents may require additional work and/or introduce additional specifications and you are therefore advised to contact your local Area Roads office for further guidance at the earliest opportunity.

Failure to comply with access, parking and drainage infrastructure requirements may endanger road users, affect the safety and free-flow of traffic and is likely to result in enforcement action being taken against you under both the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

Further information on the Council's roads standards can be found at: <http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/roadsandtransport>

Application forms and guidance notes for access-related consents can be downloaded from:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads_and_pavements/101/permits_for_working_on_public_roads/2

Mud & Debris on Road

Please note that it is an offence under Section 95 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to allow mud or any other material to be deposited, and thereafter remain, on a public road from any vehicle or development site. You must, therefore, put in place a strategy for dealing with any material deposited on the public road network and maintain this until development is complete.

Construction Hours and Noise-Generating Activities

You are advised that construction work associated with the approved development (incl. the loading/unloading of delivery vehicles, plant or other machinery), for which noise is audible at the boundary of the application site, should not normally take place outwith the hours of 08:00 and 19:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays or at any time on a Sunday or Bank Holiday in Scotland, as prescribed in Schedule 1 of the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971 (as amended).

Work falling outwith these hours which gives rise to amenity concerns, or noise

at any time which exceeds acceptable levels, may result in the service of a notice under Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 (as amended). Breaching a Section 60 notice constitutes an offence and is likely to result in court action.

If you wish formal consent to work at specific times or on specific days, you may apply to the Council's Environmental Health Officer under Section 61 of the 1974 Act. Any such application should be submitted after you have obtained your Building Warrant, if required, and will be considered on its merits. Any decision taken will reflect the nature of the development, the site's location and the proximity of noise sensitive premises. Please contact env.health@highland.gov.uk for more information.

Protected Species – Halting of Work

You are advised that work on site must stop immediately, and Scottish Natural Heritage must be contacted, if evidence of any protected species or nesting/breeding sites, not previously detected during the course of the application and provided for in this permission, are found on site. For the avoidance of doubt, it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly kill, injure or disturb protected species or to damage or destroy the breeding site of a protected species. These sites are protected even if the animal is not there at the time of discovery. Further information regarding protected species and developer responsibilities is available from SNH: www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-species

Signature: Nicola Drummond
Designation: Area Planning Manager – South/Major Developments
Author: David Mudie
Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.
Relevant Plans: Plan 1 - KEP-XX-XX-DR-A-4050-0001 REV 1 - Location Plan
Plan 2 - KEP-XX-XX-DR-A-4050-0002 REV 2 - Site Plan
Plan 3 - KEP-XX-XX-DR-A-4050-0003 REV 3 - Section Plan
Plan 4 - KEP-XX-00-DR-A-4050-0110 REV A - Ground Floor Plan
Plan 5 - KEP-XX-01-DR-A-4050-0111 REV 2 - First Floor Plan
Plan 6 - KEP-XX-02-DR-A-4050-0112 REV 2 - Second Floor Plan
Plan 7 - KEP-XX-03-DR-A-4050-0113 REV 2 - Third Floor Plan
Plan 8 - KEP-XX-04-DR-A-4050-0114 REV 2 - Fourth Floor Plan
Plan 9 - KEP-XX-05-DR-A-4050-0115 REV 2 - Fifth Floor Plan
Plan 10 - KEP-XX-RL-DR-A-4050-0116 REV 2 - Roof Plan
Plan 11 - KEP-XX-EL-DR-A-4050-0110 REV 2 - Elevations
Plan 12 - KEP-XX-EL-DR-A-4050-0111 REV 2 - Elevations

Plan 13 - KEP-XX-EL-DR-A-4050-0112 - Elevations - Detail

Plan 14 - KEP-XX-EL-DR-A-4050-0113 - Elevations - Detail

Plan 15 - KEP-XX-VS-DR-A-4050-0012 - Visual

Plan 16 - KEP-XX-VS-DR-A-4050-0013 - Visual

Plan 17 - Visualisation

Plan 18 - Visualisation

Inverness Design Review Panel

Panel Report

Hotel Proposal
Glebe Street, Inverness

8 February 2018

This report is the view of the Inverness Design Review Panel and is not attributable to any one individual. It does not prejudice any of the organisations represented on the Panel forming a differing view about development proposals at a later stage.

Executive summary

The Panel welcomes the opportunity to comment at an early stage on design options for this prominent riverfront site, whose development has significant potential to shape future of the city centre. This is an exciting development opportunity involving the first large-scale use of CLT /modular construction in the city. It is extremely important, however, that the use of CLT, in particular its repetition of modular elements, should not limit the development's ability to respond sensitively to the site's historic riverside setting. Sensitive articulation of building mass is a key priority. Design must achieve a balance between the repetition/massing of the modular system and the variety/distinctiveness of modelling and elevational treatment that is characteristic of surroundings. This report highlights a need for modelling, articulation and differentiation on all facades to achieve a sensitive response to views, streets and spaces. It advises that the tallest building mass should be located on the north-west corner of the site. The proposed emphasis on connecting ground floor accommodation and activity to the public realm is welcomed and encouraged, along with proposals for tree planting and landscaping. It is important that development delivers a high quality, attractive public realm with a focus on promoting public safety, including enhancements to the underpass below Friars Bridge.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report relates to proposed development of a 180-bedroom hotel at Glebe Street, Inverness. It should be read in conjunction with meeting papers and 3-D models that describe the Moxy brand, construction system and project brief, and illustrate the wider site context, design concept, layout, massing and elevational studies, along with options for material palettes.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. In taking forward this proposal the Panel recommends that the design should:
- Achieve a sensitive balance between the repetition/massing of the CLT modular system and the variety/distinctiveness of modelling and elevational treatment that is characteristic of this important location;
 - Take steps to avoid any replication of existing large monolith blocks that are at odds with the city centre's traditional urban grain;
 - Ensure the design of all elevations/frontages/facades (including rear elevations) feature articulation and differentiation in massing and elevational treatment and respond sensitively to surrounding views, streets and spaces;
 - Position the tallest mass at the north-west corner of the site;
 - Make use of roof terraces to provide attractive outdoor space for public/guest use;
 - Enhance the underpass below Friars Bridge - including the provision of attractive, high quality lighting;
 - Maintain a strong focus on:
 - connecting ground floor accommodation/activity with the public realm;
 - opportunities for tree planting/soft landscaping;
 - Consider advice in Para 5.4 in progressing public realm design.

3. OVERVIEW

- 3.1. The Panel welcomes the opportunity to comment on design proposals for this important vacant site whose development plays a significant role in shaping the future of Inverness city centre. It appreciates the developer's commitment to securing Panel advice at an early stage in the design process together with the high standard of presentation material put forward by the design team, in particular their 3-D massing models and material samples. The Panel thanks the team for a well-considered introduction to the scheme.
- 3.2. The Panel considers this to be an exciting development opportunity on a difficult site with a long planning history. It acknowledges the opportunities and benefits of using CLT /modular construction for development of this type and scale. It cautions, however, that the development context differs from the usual setting for this type of hotel and construction method.
- 3.3. The Panel is particularly concerned that the use of CLT, particularly its repetition of modular elements, should not limit the development's ability to respond sensitively to the historic riverside setting. The use of CLT must be carefully handled to:
- respect and enhance the uniqueness of this context;
 - achieve a sensitive balance between the repetition/massing of the modular system and the variety/distinctiveness of modelling and elevational treatment that is characteristic of this important location.
- 3.4. Attention is also drawn to:
- The overarching priority to safeguard and enhance the character of the Conservation Area;
 - The change in development plan policy since planning permission was last granted for development on this site, which includes placemaking guidance for development in the city centre ([Inverness City Centre Development Brief](#)).

- The benefit of using the Council's pre-application advice service, which maps out the wide range of considerations to be taken into account when determining a planning application for a specific use/site.

4. BUILT FORM: MODULAR CONSTRUCTION, MASSING, ARTICULATION

- 4.1. Sensitive articulation of building mass is a key priority. Above all, the development must avoid replicating large monolith blocks of uniform height that characterise some 1960s/70s buildings in the city centre and are at odds with the urban grain. For this reason, of the proposals put forward, Option 3 is the most appropriate because its massing begins to respond to the scale of the riverside context and goes some way towards mitigating the uniformity of the modular system.
- 4.2. The scale, massing and position of the frontage facing Friars Bridge are a particular concern because the proposed elevation is too severe, too uniform and too high. The elevation facing Friars Bridge needs to be studied and articulated to the same extent as the emerging river elevation.
- 4.3. The north-west corner of the site is the most appropriate location for the tallest mass. This corner presents a significant opportunity to break up the building mass and should be designed accordingly, including opportunities for corner windows. From there, the building should step down in both directions - towards Douglas Row and the Shore Street roundabout. An illuminated parapet sign is unlikely to enhance the historic setting.
- 4.4. The creation of roof terraces at lower blocks providing attractive outdoor space for public/guest use is strongly encouraged.
- 4.5. Modelling, articulation and differentiation must be a feature of all facades, including the rear elevation of blocks that will be visible from both river banks.
- 4.6. All diagrammatic massing studies/elevations should be worked up to achieve a sensitive response to surrounding views, streets and spaces. Views from Friars Street and Bank Street should be taken into account to strengthen the relationship with and visibility from the surrounding street network. Massing studies must take roof plant into account and areas of blank walling must be avoided.
- 4.7. The proposed articulation between ground and upper floors is welcomed, along with the use of high quality materials at ground floor level. The juxtaposing of contrasting cladding/rainscreen materials may be appropriate in some areas, provided this is handled sensitively.

5. THE PUBLIC REALM

- 5.1. The emphasis on connecting ground floor accommodation and activity to the public realm is welcome and encouraged, in particular:
 - The close relationship between ground floor level and the level of the river walkway;
 - The proposed new, high quality public open space at the corner of Glebe Street and Douglas Row, and the location of the principal hotel entrance fronting onto this space.
- 5.2. The Panel also welcomes proposals to:
 - Extend the line of riverside trees, providing new trees are semi-mature and an appropriate species of street tree;

- Retain all existing trees;
- Introduce appropriate high quality soft landscaping that enhances the existing streetscape, including views into and out of the site.

- 5.3. To increase public safety the Panel strongly recommends expanding the scope of public realm improvements to cover enhancements to the underpass below Friars Bridge, including attractive, high quality lighting.
- 5.4. In progressing this proposal the developer is encouraged to:
- ensure that all open space within the footprint of the site is designed to be publicly accessible and an integral part of the public realm;
 - incorporate public art into the design of lighting, seating and paving – and consider ways of linking these to the ongoing River Ness Public Art Project;
 - ensure that benches and other seating are associated with entrances, bars and restaurants (to deter anti-social behaviour);
 - ensure public realm design, in particular parking areas, takes account of views from hotel bedrooms;
 - enhance the setting of the historic gravestones on the northern edge of the site.
- 5.5. The benefits of extending the active frontage by means of a second entrance off the river walkway is recognised, although attention is drawn to the potential security risk of any public access that is remote from a reception desk or other hotel function monitoring people entering and leaving.

Appendix 3 – Assessment against the criteria of the Inverness City Centre Development Brief (ICCDB)

Criterion B1 is related to footfall generating uses being sequentially considered with city centre first principles being applied. The proposal accords with this criterion.

Criterion B2 sets out that developments including a mix of uses will be supported on sites identified on map 3.1 of the ICCDB will be supported if they accord with table 7.1 of the ICCDB. The site is not identified within the map and is single use development therefore this criteria does not apply. The criteria in table 7.1 of the ICCDB are considered elsewhere in this report.

Criterion V1 sets out that footfall generating uses at ground floor level will be preferred land use at ground floor. The proposal accords with this criterion.

Criterion V2 relates to increasing 24/7 activity. This proposal will increase activity within this part of the City at all hours but without significant impact on neighbouring residents. The proposal complies with this criterion.

Criterion V3 relates to the adaptive reuse of Inverness Castle. This criterion is not applicable to the proposal.

Criterion V4 sets out developments for new retail and leisure uses will be supported in key opportunity sites identified on map 4.1 of the ICCDB if they accord with table 7.1 of the ICCDB. The site is not identified on map 4.1 and does not fit with this criteria. The criteria in table 7.1 of the ICCDB are considered elsewhere in this report.

Criterion V5 relates to riverside activity. The proposal will lead to an increase in activity within this part of the riverside which is currently not used. The proposal accords with this criterion.

Criterion L1 sets out residential developments will be supported in key opportunity sites identified on map 5.1 of the ICCDB if they accord with table 7.1 of the ICCDB. The site is identified as a site for new residential development on map 5.1, on the basis of the previous permission, but the criterion is not applicable to this development.

Criteria L2 and L3 relate to exemptions for conversions. This criterion is not applicable to the proposal.

Criteria L4 relates to houses of multiple occupation. This criterion is not applicable to the proposal.

Criterion A1 requires integration of new development with priority routes for active travel improvements. The site is accessed from Chapel Street which is identified as a key route for active travel. Work is required to improve the existing pedestrian refuge at the junction of Chapel Street and Glebe Street. Future contributions will be sought to enhance active travel improvements along Chapel Street/Academy Street.

Criterion A2 requires developments to promote new or enhanced facilities for walking and cycling. The proposed development includes appropriate cycle storage, will provide enhancements to public realm along Glebe Street.

Criterion A3 relates to the wayfinding strategy. This criterion is not applicable to the proposal.

Criterion A4 relates to seeking contributions towards active travel improvements. The proposal will make a contribution to active travel improvements.

Criterion A5 relates to Inverness Railway Station. This criterion is not applicable to the proposal.

Criterion A6 identifies the issues which will be taken into account in determining parking requirements in the City Centre. Transport Planning has undertaken this exercise and the findings are that a commuted sum towards active travel improvements is required.

Criterion D1 relates to the development of underused or neglected heritage assets. This criterion is not applicable to the proposal.

Criterion D2 sets out that where current uses are not viable the redevelopment will be supported subject to it providing the development is high quality and makes a positive contribution to the visual and spatial character of the surrounding area. The building that was on this site has already been demolished.

Criterion D3 requires all new development to accord with the key place making principles set out in table 7.1 of the ICCDB. These are considered in turn below:

Principle 1 - Contextual Analysis - contextual analysis of the site has been provided within the Design Statement which accompanies the application.

Principle 2 - Key Views - is addressed in paragraph 8.19 of the report. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principle set out.

Principle 3 - Historic Buildings and Spaces - the development creates space between the proposed hotel and the Category B listed buildings on Douglas Row. The new building is set back sufficiently and steps down from six storeys to three on the riverfront elevation which reflects the more domestic scale of these historic buildings. This approach respects the setting of the listed buildings.

Principle 4 - Contemporary Design - the building is of a contemporary design but responds positively to the historic features and context of the City, through the use of detailing and material choice. In particular the ordered fenestration and use of banding at floor junctions and on the parapets gives a strong horizontal emphasis to the building like so many of the Victorian buildings in the City. The use of large format cladding in a blonde stone like texture again reflects that predominant character yet in a very modern way.

Principle 5 - Block Structure and Permeability - The proposal, as amended, has created more of a street block, albeit only on two sides as a result of Friar's Bridge which, as well as the flood wall, limits permeability. There is however permeability within the ground floor

of the building with its outside terrace on the corner of Douglas Row and Glebe Street and main entrance opposite Friar's Street.

Principle 6 - Height, scale and massing - The height, scale and mass is considered appropriate. The site requires a building of scale, given the proximity to the bridge, and the 'tower' on the north west corner gives a nod to the vertical features of the Inverness riverside skyline - the church spires. The massing on the riverside wing has been broken down by stepping the building down towards Douglas Row. While the massing on the other wing remains rectilinear stepping back 10m from Friar's Bridge reduces the mass when viewed from the bridge itself. The detailing (glazed areas/balcony) around the junction of this block and the riverfront block breaks down the mass on the Glebe Street side. There is a challenge with height/scale given the proximity to two/three storey housing but when looked at in context there are some significant buildings within the vicinity that do not make this proposal look out of place.

Principle 7 - Frontages - The proposed development appropriately addresses the River Ness and Glebe Street. On the riverside there is a continuous active frontage wraps around onto Glebe Street. This is where the food and beverage offering will be located and this corner at the riverfront will be where most activity will be centred.

Principle 8 - Elevational Treatment - The design changes made to the scheme have improved the elevational treatment - as indicated in Principle 4. It is considered the proposal accords with this principle.

Principle 9 - Materials and Colour - it is considered that the range of materials now proposed is appropriate. Final details of the materials can be secured by condition.

Principle 10 - Access - it is considered that the proposed development will be easy to access for pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people. Active travel routes require upgrading and this proposal is expected to contribute to that.

Principle 11 - Parking - the proposed development contains car parking although a shortfall has been identified. This has been accepted by Transport Planning subject to a commuted sum. Servicing arrangements have also, in principle been accepted by Transport Planning. The level of cycle parking provision is appropriate.

Principle 12 - Public Realm - The revised scheme creates a large area of open space that can contribute to the public realm. There is potential for this to include public art. Further details of the landscaping/public realm improvements and public art can be secured by condition.

Principle 13 - Open Space - open space is proposed within this development. This will by and large be publically accessible..

Principle 14 - Trees and Planting - some limited planting is proposed. The final details of landscaping can be secured by condition.

Principle 15 - Security - It has been highlighted by the Design Review Panel that it may be beneficial to improve the underpass and consider the stair for security purposes.

Criterion D4 relates to specific development sites. This criterion is not applicable to the proposal.

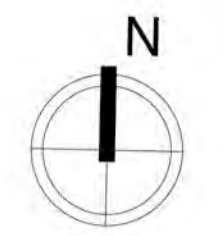
Criterion D5 seeks to ensure that significant developments incorporate public art. The development will deliver landscaping/public realm works. This provides an opportunity to secure an appropriate scheme of public art.

Criterion D6 relates to alteration, reinstatement or improvement of shopfronts. This criterion is not applicable to the proposal.

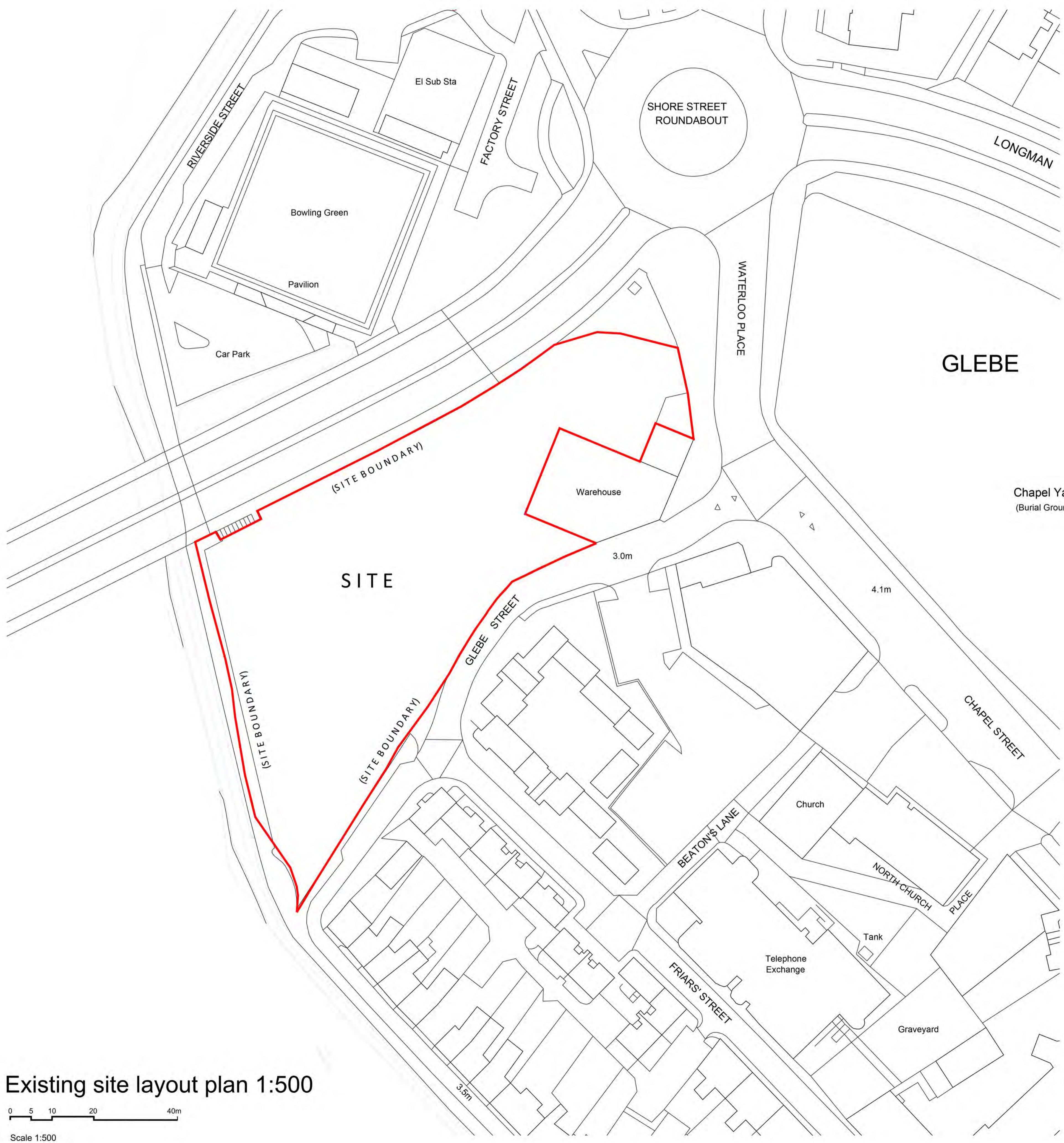
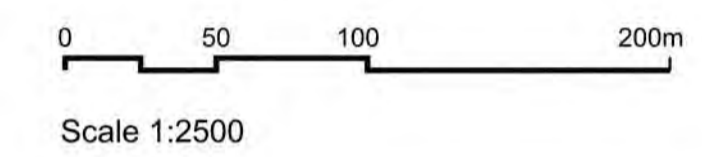
Criterion D7 seeks to ensure that sufficient off-street bin storage is provided. Based on the submissions provided by the application, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in this regard..

Criterion D8 seeks to safeguard and enhance landscape structure, green infrastructure, and avoid impact on the condition of the River Ness. It is considered that the existing landscape structure will not be adversely affected. Exact details of the landscaping can be secured by condition.

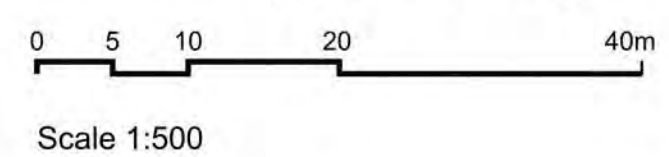
Criterion D9 requires consideration of developments that may impact on air quality. The uses proposed are unlikely to impact on air quality. Therefore this criterion is not applicable to the proposal.



Location plan 1:2500



Existing site layout plan 1:500



Rev	Description	D/r	CHK'd	Date	
1			ST	EM	20/08/18

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Client
Vastint Hospitality B.V.

Project
**Hotel
 Gleebe Street
 Inverness**

Drawing
**Existing Site Plan and Location
 Plan**

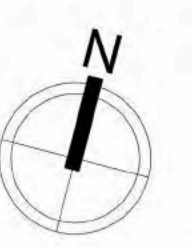
Project No.
P17149

Drawing No.
KEP-XX-XX-DR-A-4050-0001

Status
PLANNING

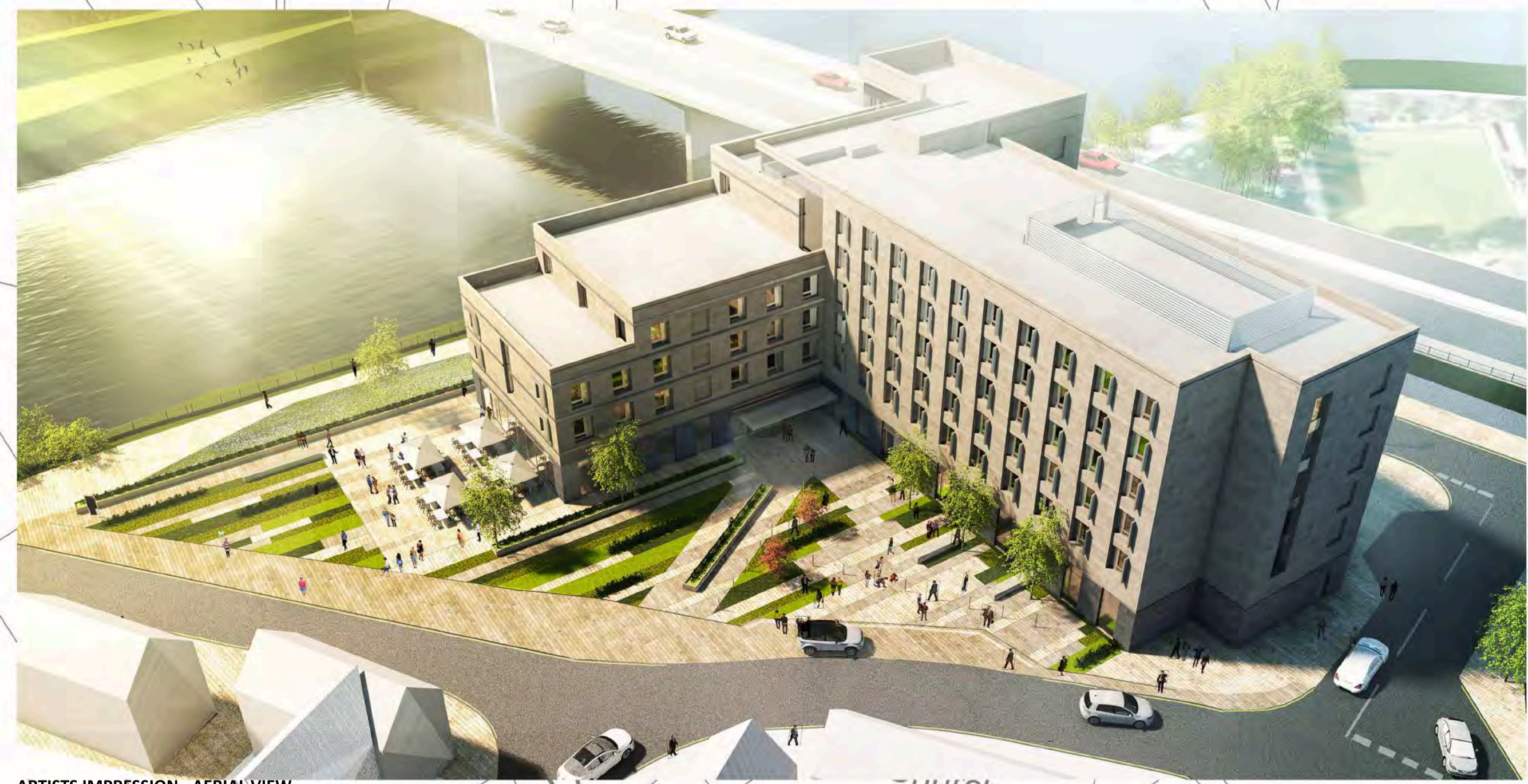
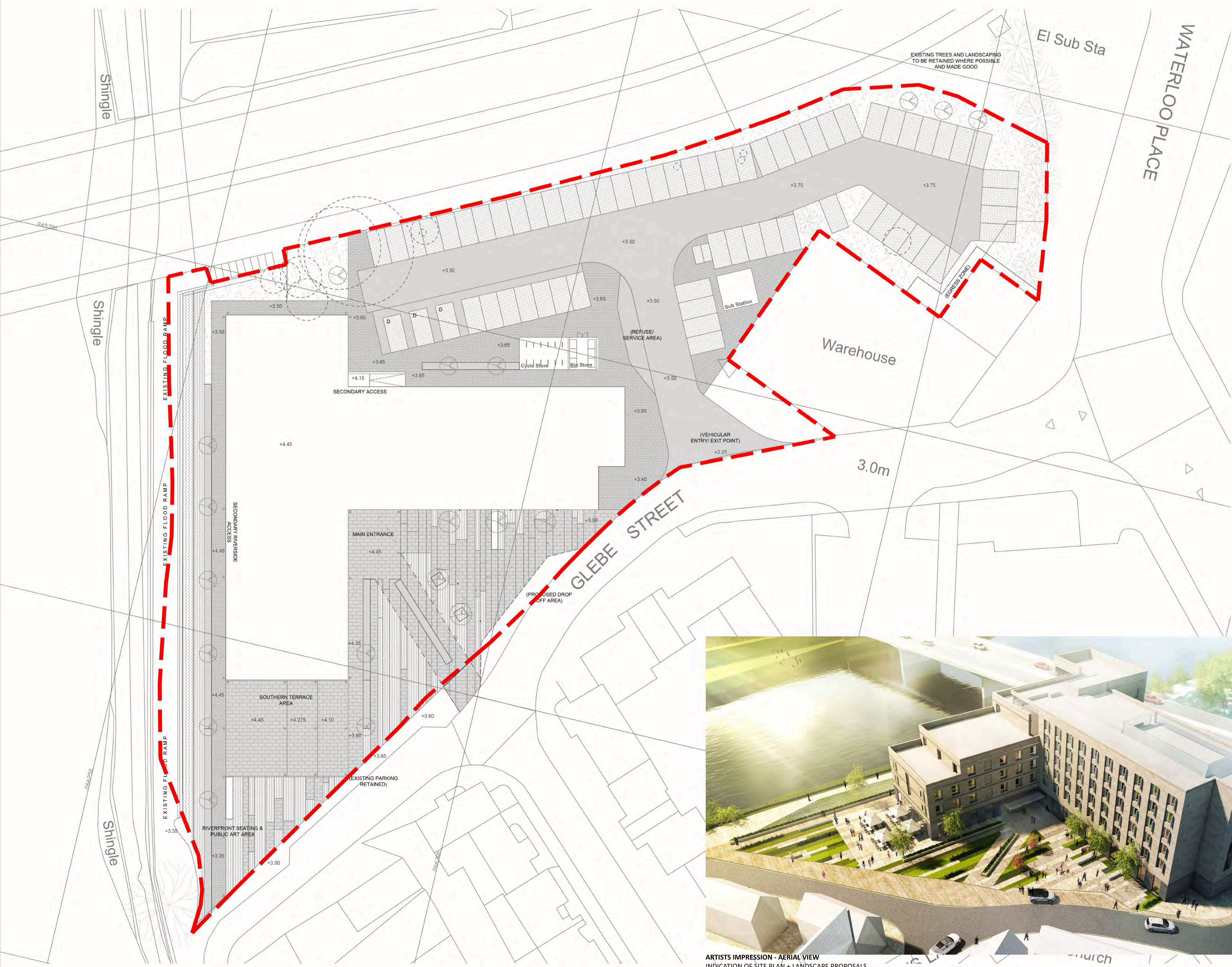
Created • AM
 Date • 03/09/18

Checked • FRACD
 Scale • As indicated
 @ A1



- KEY**
- SITE BOUNDARY
 - EXISTING TREES TO BE RETAINED
 - EXISTING TREES TO BE REMOVED
 - ACCESS ROAD (TARMAC)
 - VEHICULAR PAVING TO PARKING BAYS (CONCRETE TBC)
 - PEDESTRIAN PAVING (MATERIAL TBC)
 - BOLLARDS WITH INTEGRATED LIGHTING
 - FEATURE LIGHTING TO BUILDING PERIMETER
 - PROPOSED TREES
 - PROPOSED FEATURE TREE
 - FORMAL HEDGEROW/ PLANTER
 - WILDFLOWER MEADOW/ GROUNDCOVER/ ORNAMENTAL PLANTING
 - SEATING
 - NATURAL STONE PAVING (MATERIAL TBC)
 - AMENITY GRASS

NOTES
 65 CAR PARKING SPACES INDICATED (INCLUDING 3 ACCESSIBLE SPACES)
 2 MOTORCYCLE SPACES INDICATED
 12 CYCLE STANDS INDICATED (24 SPACES)
 LOCATION OF HISTORIC BURIAL MARKERS AND MEMORIALS TO FRIARS
 BRIDGE WALL TBC.



ARTISTS IMPRESSION - AERIAL VIEW
 INDICATION OF SITE PLAN + LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

2	Proposals updated following feedback from The Highland Council	ST	RMD	23/08/18
1	Proposals updated following feedback from The Highland Council	ST	RMD	11/07/18

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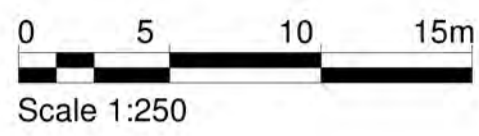
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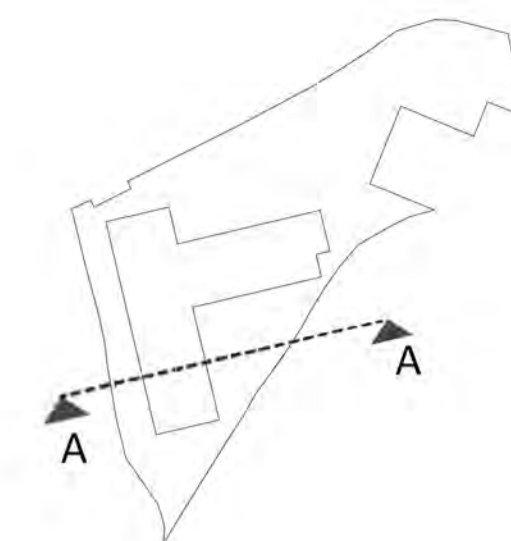
Project
**Hotel
 Glebe Street
 Inverness**
 Drawing
Proposed Site Plan

Project No.
P17149
 Drawing No.
KEP-XX-XX-DR-A-4050-0002

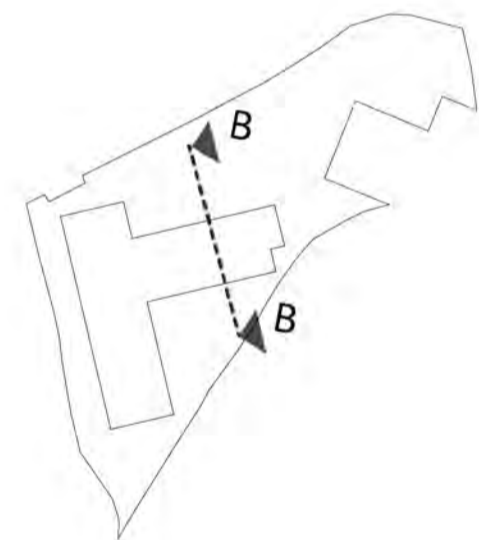
PLANNING
 Date: 03/09/18
 Scale: 1:250 @ A1



--- EXISTING SITE LEVEL
 - - - PROPOSED SITE LEVEL



Section A-A
 1 : 200



Section B-B
 1 : 200

Rev	Description	D/n	CHK'd	Date
3	Proposals updated following feedback from The Highland Council	ST	RMD	23/08/18
2	Site levels included and existing ground line highlighted	AM	ST	30/07/18
1	Proposals updated following feedback from The Highland Council	ST	RMD	11/07/18

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Project
**Hotel
 Glebe Street
 Inverness**

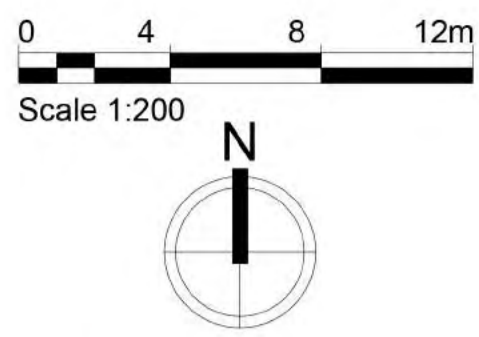
Drawing
**Existing and Proposed Site
 Sections A & B**

Project No.	Drawing No.	Rev
P17149	KEP-XX-XX-DR-A-4050-0003	3

Status
PLANNING

Created	Checked	Rev
AM	RACD	A200
03/06/18	Scale	@ A1

Date
 03/06/18
 Scale
 @ A1



- KEY:**
- STAIR / LIFT
 - BAR / RESTAURANT / MEETING ROOMS
 - ANCILLARY
 - CIRCULATION

GROUND FLOOR LEVEL +4.450M
 GROUND FLOOR AREA CIRCA
 1,405M² GIFA

2	Proposals updated following meeting with THC on 09/09/18	ST	EM	16/09/18
1	Proposals updated following feedback from The Highland Council	ST	RMD	11/07/18

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Project
**Hotel
 Glebe Street
 Inverness**

Drawing
Ground Floor Plan

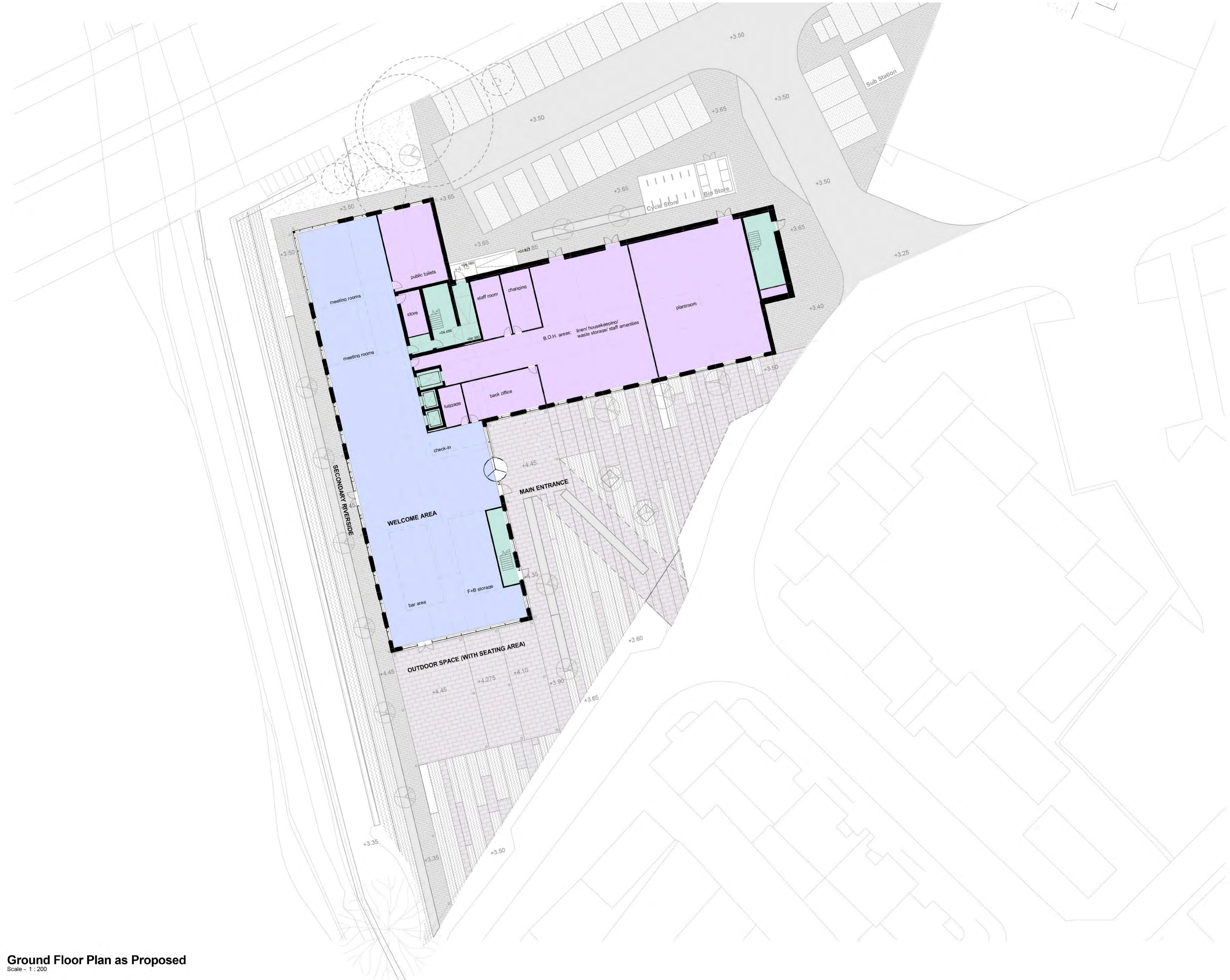
Project No.
P17149

Drawing No.
KEP-XX-00-DR-A-4050-0110

Status
PLANNING

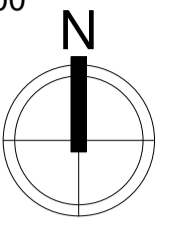
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 Date: 03/06/18

Checked: RMD
 Scale: As indicated



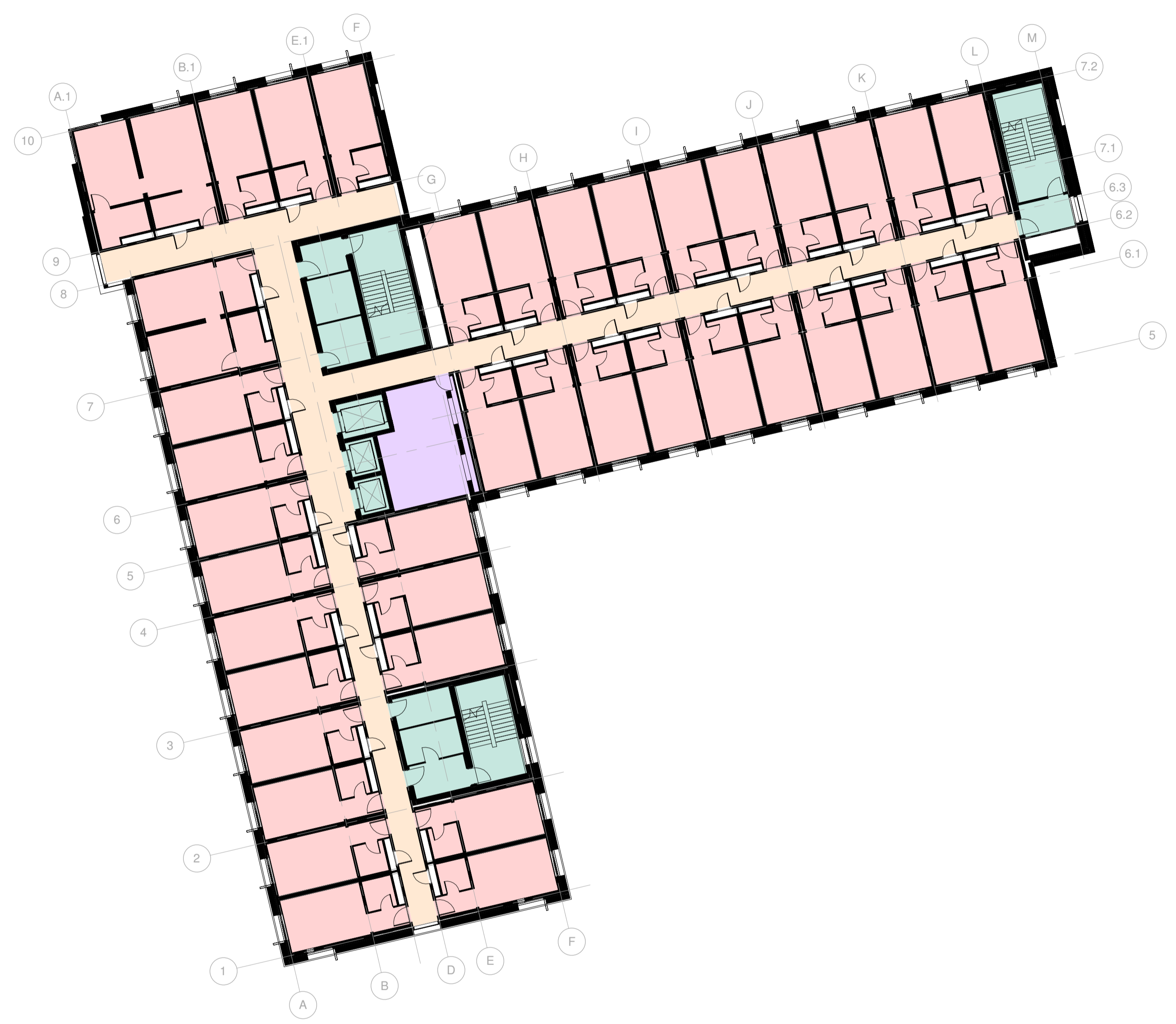
Ground Floor Plan as Proposed
 Scale - 1 : 200

0 4 8 12m
 Scale 1:200



- KEY:**
- BEDROOMS
 - STAIR / LIFT CORE
 - ANCILLARY
 - CIRCULATION

FIRST FLOOR LEVEL +9.180M
 FIRST FLOOR AREA CIRCA 1,407M²
 GIFA
 FIRST FLOOR - 40 BEDROOMS



Rev	Description	D'r	CHK'd	Date
2	Proposals updated following meeting with THC on 09/08/18	ST	EM	16/08/18
1	Proposals updated following feedback from The Highland Council	ST	EMD	11/07/18

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Client
Vastint Hospitality B.V.

Project
**Hotel
 Glebe Street
 Inverness**
 Drawing
First Floor Plan

Project No.
P17149
 Drawing No.
KEP-XX-01-DR-A-4050-0111
 Status
PLANNING

Created: AM
 Date: 03/08/18
 Checked: RACD
 Scale: As indicated
 Rev: 2