

Date: 2nd April 2008

Ms Danielle Devlin
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*Adm - and sent 4/4/08
"receiving attention"
R. Man*

Department: Finance & Property Services
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Our Ref: VS/MJ/
Your Ref:

Dear Sirs, *DD rec'd 4/4*

I refer to your recent exchange of emails and telephone conversations with Mathew Jones of Drivers Jonas, property and planning advisors to Slough Borough Council.

I understand that you have received a formal application from a third party requesting that the original Slough Town Hall building be statutorily listed. From your discussions with Mathew, we are also aware that you have received representations indicating that the Town Hall could be under "imminent threat" of demolition. I therefore write to clarify our current position in respect of both the emerging planning application being prepared by Drivers Jonas and our future programme for the site.

Current Use of the Town Hall

The Town Hall complex in Slough comprises both the original 1930s Town Hall building and a number of later (1970s) extensions, as well as portakabins which are currently located towards the central part of the site.

The buildings on site are currently in active use, and occupied by the majority of Slough Borough Council's civic functions. Overall a total of over 700 staff are located within these offices. The existing Civic offices also provide access for the public to attend meetings and consultations with Officers.

With regards to the original section of the Town Hall, this is currently used for a range of civic functions, including the Council's main Chamber which is used as a venue for regular Council meetings and committees (e.g. Planning Committee and Scrutiny Committee).

Within the wider Town Hall complex, there are a small number of vacant areas of office floorspace. This situation has arisen as a typical result of internal department restructuring over time, and is a common feature of public sector office accommodation of this type and age.

Planning Application: Current Position

Drivers Jonas, along with a number of other specialist consultants, are currently preparing an outline planning application for the redevelopment of the Town Hall site. This will seek to secure outline planning permission for residential development across the whole site.

As part of the preparation of the planning application, significant work has been put into preparing evidence (both architectural and commercial) to demonstrate that there would be limited merit in retaining the Town Hall as part of any redevelopment of the site. This evidence has included the preparation of an independent architectural assessment of the Town Hall (dated 21 February 2008) which has been prepared by Anthony Walker of DLG Architects, a copy of which has previously been provided to you by Drivers Jonas. The information and evidence prepared will be submitted in support of the forthcoming outline planning application.

All consultants are currently instructed to prepare the application for submission in early April 2008.

Future Programme for the Site

Subject to the receipt of outline planning permission, which is expected to be issued by around mid to late 2008, the Council will be seeking to dispose of the Town Hall site. Following disposal of the site, (the contracts for which are expected to be completed by mid 2009) the current re-location programme is that the Council will remain in the current offices until such time as alternative office accommodation has been found, although a broad date of March 2009 has been identified by which Council functions will commence vacating of the older existing buildings on the Town Hall site.

Following purchase of the site, the future owner/ developer will be required to submit a detailed planning application before re-development of the site could commence. Our "best-guess estimate" is therefore that the demolition of the Town Hall site will not commence until all relevant approvals are in place for the redevelopment of the site, which is unlikely to be before mid to late 2009.

I hope that the above provides a useful update of the current position in respect of the site, the proposed timescales for re-development, and clear confirmation that there is certainly no imminent threat of demolition of the existing Town Hall building. For clarity, it is worth re-stating that the Borough Council would not contemplate the commencement of demolition of the existing Town Hall buildings until all relevant approvals have been received.

I trust that the above information is useful in your consideration of the listing application. I would be grateful if you could ensure that any responses are provided to us through Drivers Jonas (Mathew Jones, on 0121 237 4409) in the first instance. We would be pleased to provide any necessary additional information as required.

Yours faithfully


PP **Michael Jennings**
Head of Asset Management