

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 2013

### DEPUTATION REGARDING THE MEDINA HOUSE PLANNING BRIEF

Signed by Mr Miles Rose and Mrs Ruth Rose, on behalf of many local residents.

Dated 19 September 2013

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My name is Tezel Bahcheli. I am a chartered town planner acting for Mr and Mrs Rose, who represent many of the local residents of the area and who support the proposed Medina House Planning Brief.

They are grateful to the City Council for preparing the brief and affording Medina House the protection it deserves. In particular, the principle behind the brief to support development proposals that provide for the re-use of Medina House is fully supported.

We are happy to see that English Heritage supports the retention of Medina House, and that it recognises the contribution it makes to the Cliftonville Conservation Area. The emphasis placed on the qualities of the building itself, and the wider recognition of its place in the Conservation Area, is welcomed.

We hope that this, combined with the previous planning inspector's comments, will provide sufficient grounds to refuse planning permission for the demolition of the building.

Although we had requested that the planning brief states categorically that any proposals to demolish the building would be refused, we understand the Council's reasoning and hope that the additional English Heritage comments will help in that regard.

The brief also provides some guidance for any new building on the site adjoining Medina House. Knowing the pressures on the site it is imperative that the brief is prepared for all eventualities. It is therefore essential that the planning brief maintains the scale, form and character of building across the whole site.

We are grateful to the city council for its work with Cluttons on the economic viability of the planning brief proposals. This work is vital. It tests the assertion made in the previous planning application that retaining and converting Medina House is not viable. From the work undertaken by Cluttons, we now know that conversion is economically viable. We have been informed in the press that a fresh application to demolish the building will be submitted shortly, so we hope that the assessment undertaken will stand up to scrutiny.

You will therefore understand some of the concerns locally about the future of Medina House and the wider site. It is our view that the guidance on the scale, form and character should cover the whole site, whilst requiring the retention and conversion of Medina House.

Another of the issues of concern has always been the potential impact of new development on the amenities of local residents. The site lies in a sensitive location, with an intimate scale of terraced cottages directly behind and larger scale buildings flanking the site. A building taller than the existing would block light and result in loss of privacy for a great many local residents. The brief recognises this and the statements within the brief to this effect are welcomed by this deputation.

We would like to raise the question of the policy context for the brief. The Council relies on existing Local Plan policies, such as HE6, HE8 and QD27, to underpin the brief. As the City Plan progresses, Local Plan policies will be superseded. We would like to ask whether members are certain that sufficient protection is afforded the site in the post Local Plan period, as these policies are replaced?

Thank you again for the continuing support for the retention of Medina House and we hope members will adopt the planning brief to guide future development proposals.

