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Date: 4 July 2024 at 12:42:35 BST
To: Diana Freestone <enquiries@friends-of-lewes.org.uk>
Subject: RE: SDNP/23/02973 Redevelopment of Lewes Bus Station

Dear Roger and Peter,

I am writing in response to your letter dated 3rd June.

As you point out 'design' can be subjective and this is just one element to be considered as part of the current planning application.

In relation to my comments to date, there has always been contemporary architecture at different periods throughout the history of Lewes, otherwise we would still have only medieval buildings or medieval style buildings. Lewes is not a museum and so should be able to accommodate buildings which speak of the era in which they are built.

We do not expect all new buildings to simply copy what has gone before in Lewes. What we do expect is that new development respects its context and meets high standards of design quality, which I believe this proposal does achieve.

With its corner location, and the extra setting space this provides, and the fact that there are adjacent, existing taller buildings makes the scale of this building acceptable from a design point of view. There is no denying it is a large building, but the quality of its design, its materiality and its articulation help make its size more acceptable, still human in scale and it will make a positive contribution to this part of Lewes.

One of the characteristics of Lewes is that it contains an eclectic mix of building styles and a large range of materials which have developed over centuries, including inside the Conservation Area. The High Street is a good example of this.

There is also a balance to be struck between expecting some familiar features and locally characteristic materials while also accepting that a contemporary design is not likely to, for instance, have a medieval or Victorian style chimney feature, as this would be inappropriate.

A fair account of the materials used in this development would acknowledge that most of the materials which will be experienced by the public can be classed as 'traditional'. In addition, it is considered that the quality and extent of the 'public realm' proposed as part of the application is an improvement.

The comments you, and others, have made to date will be part of the Case Officer's consideration when they weigh up all the issues, including impacts to the Conservation Area, as part of their recommendation to Planning Committee. Ultimately, it will be for Planning Committee to decide in due course.

Best wishes

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