
Strategic Sites in association with Huddersfield Technical College

Proposed Development at the Waterfront Quarter, Huddersfield

02 April 2008

Justification statement concerning the development proposals by Strategic Sites in association with Huddersfield Technical College for the site at Huddersfield Waterfront

1 SCOPE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 National listed building legislation [Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990] and the national policy guidance of Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 *Planning and the Historic Environment* [PPG15] require that a justification is set out for planning applications that affect listed buildings or their settings and conservation areas.
- 1.2 This report was sought from Roger Wools & Associates on behalf of Strategic Sites in Spring 2008. It builds upon earlier involvement with the development site in association with Ramsden and Colne Developments a planning permission for which site was minded to be approved subject to a S106 agreement on 22nd September 2006 that was not finalised. Strategic Sites in association with the Huddersfield Technical College has progressed the design of development for the site with the original designers DLG Architects and a revised proposal of April 2008 responding to the specific requirements of the new brief is now presented.
- 1.3 In January 2006 Roger Wools & Associates (RWA) was asked to give an independent review of the heritage assets associated with the site and to contribute to the justification statement for the development in terms of the

heritage issues that are considered to be relevant. This present statement (April 2008) addresses the proposed development in relation to:-

- impact on the listed buildings of the site and adjacent areas
- impact on any conservation area
- urban design issues.

- 1.4 The associated reports dated April 2008 from landscape architects Camlin Lonsdale and also that of architects DLG Architects have informed this heritage report and these set out the earlier research undertaken into the history of the site and the search of local authority records which has guided the development of the proposals. This present RWA report builds upon that work and addresses a formal assessment.
- 1.5 The objective of this report is to comply with the guidance of Planning Policy Guidance No. 15 *Planning and the Historic Environment*. The report also informs the clients, Ramsden and Colne Developments and also the Local Authority on the heritage implications of the development proposals and to enable the decision maker make a judgement as to the appropriateness of those proposals. It does not aim to give a townscape assessment which is provided as the separate accompanying submitted reports by *Camlin Lonsdale* and *DLG Architects* or to set out an exhaustive record of features of the site which may be conditioned as part of any planning approval. It is envisaged that if development of the site with clearance of some buildings is considered appropriate, any recording exercise as agreed between the local authority and the developers would be presented before development commenced.
- 1.6 After formal approval of the application in September 2006 discussions with consultees including British Waterways, English Heritage, residents advised design changes. The introduction of Huddersfield Technical College with a specific design brief for the buildings at the heart of the site initiated significant design changes. A revised design in response to the College and to responses of consultees has resulted and this is now presented.

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- 1.7 Huddersfield Technical College in introducing a ‘civic’ or ‘community’ function to the site has created the need for a landmark building. The changes that seek to address comments from consultees has enabled the scheme to better relate the open space focus of the site – the ‘Square’ of the development to the Grade II* listed Folly Hall Mill on the opposite side of the canal. Building heights have also been varied to lessen the impact on dwellings in Manchester Road and to better relate to aspects of civic design including the public open spaces.
 - 1.8 Consultations with British Waterways (BW) resulted initially in a feasibility study to remove the ‘lid’ of the canal and the results were positive. The scheme now opens up the canal with improvements for boats and for the environment of the development. However continuing liaison with BW has favoured a new canal lock in the centre of the proposed square with temporary mooring facilities to BW requirements.
 - 1.9 English Heritage wished for the listed Folly Hall Mill to play a more dominant role in views from the development to the south side of the river and the enlargement southwards of the ‘square’ and the moving of Building ‘M’ to the west has allowed this aspiration to be realised.
 - 1.10 The residents of Manchester Road expressed concerns over building heights and distances and the Huddersfield Technical College (HTC) buildings were redesigned to lower Building D and to move Building F away from Manchester Road.
 - 1.11 This iterative design process is summarised in the DLG Architects Design and Access Statement at Section 4.
 - 1.12 With regard to the Huddersfield Technical College presence on the site the design changes resulted in the reduction of the height and mass of the buildings towards Manchester Road; an increase in public open space fronting onto Manchester Road; and the creation of better views and a wider public access way between the plaza (the water front square) and the college buildings.

2 THE CONTEXT OF THE SITE

- 2.1 The application to regenerate the Waterfront area of the centre of Huddersfield involved negotiation with the Local Authority and consultation with English Heritage prior to the initial submission. Whilst the scheme of September 2006 achieved support and was fully approved further discussion as noted in Section 1 of this report led to further design initiatives to enhance the proposals.
- 2.2 The environmental conditions of the present site are highly unsatisfactory in terms of the industrial and degraded townscape, the open parking lots within the site, the setting of the primary listed building of Folly Hall Mill (not within the development boundary) and the lack of pedestrian permeability through the site from Castle Gate and Manchester Road to the canal-side and the River Colne. The canal is located within a relatively modern culvert with poor conditions for boating traffic and a loss of former views of the canal from within the present site. It is within this context that the proposal for development affecting the settings of listed buildings and views from other listed buildings is put forward.
- 2.3 The development site is described in the statements of Camlin Lonsdale and DLG Architects. I note that it is triangular in shape with the longest side forming the southern bank of the River Colne. The shorter east side is made up by part of Chapel Hill and land to the rear of properties on Chapel Hill that are outside the development site. The northern boundary towards the Town Centre is formed by Manchester Road.
- 2.4 Within the site is the route of the operational Huddersfield Narrow Canal that is culverted for much of its route across the site. British Waterways issued an operating instruction in November 2004 with regard to projects where heritage issues would be involved. The actions of the design team have been assessed against the check list that is set out in the instruction and have been assessed as having complied with the instruction.
- 2.5 The supporting Design and Access Statement of DLG Architects (2008) describes the development of a series of inter-related buildings facing onto the three sides of the large triangular plot. Buildings positively address these

boundaries and a large area of public realm space is proposed towards what could be seen as the centre of gravity of the site fronting the Grade II* listed Folly Hall Mill.

- 2.6 The heritage planning context is that the whole development site lies outside any conservation area and sufficiently far away not to affect the setting of any conservation area. The site is however close to a Grade II* listed structure that forms part of the historic fabric of the riverside. There are no alteration proposed to any listed structure, and it is the immediate setting of the Grade II* listed building that is the relevant planning issue with the related issue to be assessed of the impact on development upon views from more distant listed buildings including the Grade II* Church of St Thomas.

3 HERITAGE ASSETS OF THE SURROUNDING AREA

3.1 The history of the development site was first considered by the design team in the early stages of the initial design process. The listed buildings were identified by DLG Architects and historic maps were consulted. The submission by Camlin Lonsdale (Section 1.1) shows the most significant map evidence of the site in 1904 when it was fully developed. The uses comprised the following:-

- Isthmus Mill
- Engine Bridge Dye Works
- Towing path and lock
- Housing to Chapel Hill to the south of the

- Huddersfield Narrow Canal to the south of

- Albion Iron Works
- Canal Company buildings
- Warehousing with open area and cranes
- Dale Street housing
- Manchester Road housing

3.2 The building of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal close to the north of the River Colne left a narrow strip of land on which Isthmus Mill was built and appropriately named. The canal was not enclosed by a culvert until the mid 20th-century. A lock associated with the River also had been built within the site by 1904.

3.3 The map evidence clearly shows that surrounding areas had also been fully developed. To the south of the river the large Folly Hall Mill continued to occupy its site with Centre Mill alongside. Centre Mill has been recently demolished for a car park to serve the new Casino leisure development.

3.4 To the north, Manchester Road was lined by housing on its north side with a school close to the church and a cinema close to Castle Gate. Today, the school has been demolished but the cinema remains in white terracotta in the context of a terrace. Most of the housing has been demolished except for this eastern part of Manchester Road.

Huddersfield Town Centre

- 3.5 The site area is included within the Huddersfield Town Centre Inset Plan of the local Unitary Development Plan. The inset plan shows the location of the central conservation areas and the nearest boundary fronts Castle Gate to the north of the Manchester Road junction. Given the nature of the topography and the intervening Ring Road and the existing development of Chapel Hill, I do not consider that the setting of any central conservation is affected by the proposal.
- 3.6 Of the out-of-centre conservation areas, the nearest would be at Gledholt and this is too far away to be affected. I conclude that no setting of a conservation area would be affected.

The setting of Listed Buildings

- 3.7 The location of listed buildings in proximity to the site have been noted in section 1 of this report. For completeness they are:
- Folly Hall Mill Grade II*
 - No 36 Chapel Hill (west) Grade II
 - The Grey Horse Public House, Dale St. Grade II
 - Nos. 6-20 Chapel Hill (west) Grade II
 - Church of St Thomas, Manchester Road Grade II*
 - The Greyhound Hotel 16 Manchester Road
 - 18 Manchester Road Grade II
 - 20-44 Manchester Road Grade II
- 3.8 With regard to whether the setting of any of the nearby listed buildings encompasses all or part of the development site, as opposed to views being able to be had from the listed building of the site, there is only one building that I consider where the residual magnitude of the effect would be major; that is the Grade II* Folly Hall Mill building. The other Grade II* building is the Church of St Thomas but as it is located 80 metres beyond the site boundary the residual effect would be only moderate. The Grade II buildings of Chapel Hill would be

affected to a minor degree given their lower status. The remaining Grade II listed buildings on Manchester Road would similarly be affected to a minor degree.

3.9 The nature of the impact whether it would be beneficial or adverse and the overall assessment of the proposal balanced against policy issues is undertaken in Section 9 of this statement.

3.10 With regard to the statutory list for the listed building where there is most impact, Folly Hall Mill, it reads:-

PRINCIPAL MILL BUILDING AT FOLLY HALL MILL, FOLLY HALL (west side)
HUDDERSFIELD, KIRKLEES, WEST YORKSHIRE

Date listed:	29 September 1978
Date of last amendment:	29 September 1978
Grade	II*

FOLLY HALL
5113
(West Side)
Principal mill building
at Folly Hall Mill

FOLLY HALL 1. 5113 (West Side) Principal mill building at Folly Hall Mill SE 1416 SW 3/562 SE 1515 39/562 II* 2. Early C19. Ashlar fronted. Pitched slate roof. 5 storeys and attics. Moulded eaves cornice. Parapet. 17 ranges of industrial windows with glazing bars. 2 end ranges have round-arched windows and are crowned by boldly moulded pediments. Central 3 ranges are also crowned by a pediment, in the tympanum of which is a 5-light Venetian window with glazing bars, the outer 2 lights lower than the others. Side elevations have 5 window ranges.

3.11 Of the remaining listed buildings, whilst principal views from some have the potential to be affected by development notably from the Manchester Road properties and secondary rear views from Chapel Hill, these may represent views rather than effects upon the formal settings of these buildings. These views should be considered in any appraisal of the development proposals but should be distinguished from aspects of their settings.

3.12 The Church of St Thomas lies to the west of the development site boundary and present views (2008) to the south opposite the churchyard are of an unrelated development site that has seen recent development. These recent developments significantly restrict views to the south-east towards the proposal site and indeed block views further towards Folly Hall Mill. In fact the mill cannot be seen from the south side of the church because of modern intervening development. There is no defined historic view or relationship that

is known between the Church and the group of a dozen or so mills on either side of Chapel Hill of which Folly Hall Mill was just one. The photograph at DLG Section 4 page 14 gives an excellent impression of the area in the 1950s.

- 3.13 However views of the upper parts of the tower of the Church of St Thomas may be seen from parts of the development site. I do not consider that these are other than townscape views and are unrelated to the building's formal setting.

4 THE PROPOSALS

- 4.1 I refer to the Design and Access Statement of DLG Architects dated April 2008, the Landscape Strategy document prepared by Camlin Lonsdale and the Planning Statement of Knight Frank. Within these three documents full descriptions of the site are set out and the proposals are fully described. To avoid duplication this statement does not repeat that information but does refer to diagrams, plans and illustrations contained in the DLG and Camlin Lonsdale documents.
- 4.2 The proposal is to clear the site of all buildings since no structure has been identified as worthy of retention. Works will be undertaken to the river bank and also to the route of the canal which is culverted for much of its course across the site. The opportunity will be taken through the development process to open up the present enclosed canal and to create a new canal lock at the east end of the site. A new fixed bridge and swing bridge will be provided.
- 4.3 The waterfront is a location that affords great potential for the regeneration of an inner city area. Examples of sites being successfully developed include sites in Manchester and Salford, with schemes now approved for Leeds Canal Basin and for Wakefield Waterfront. The Huddersfield Waterfront area was even until the 1950s, the location of numerous large mill buildings of which Folly Hall Mill is the residual example. The character of the area therefore was of large mills of 6 or more storeys with a high density and tight urban grain. The proposal seeks to re-establish that character but interpreted in a modern architectural style. It is hoped that will act as a catalyst for the area including the derelict Grade II* Folly Hall Mill opposite the site.

Site description

- 4.4 In précis the site is triangular and in the west and moving east, at the apex where Manchester Road and the River Colne are parallel, three separate residential blocks are proposed to be sited in comparison with two in the earlier scheme. It is considered the change would assist in breaking down the mass of the development and afford greater views through the scheme. The north and south elevations of these blocks align with respectively the frontage of Manchester Road and the river bank. Buildings A & B (7 & 8 storeys) also would be aligned with the newly revealed canal. Between the two blocks A & B there is potential for a pedestrian river crossing to the south bank if and when that is developed.
- 4.5 Building C (storeys) continues in similar form as residential leading to Building E (8 storeys) as office accommodation approaching the main building of HTC.
- 4.6 The main façade of Building L (6 storey offices potentially for KMC) at the east end of the site, is aligned to form the east elevation of a new square that would contain the revealed canal basin to the north and the river to the south. Building L serves 3 functions in townscape terms in firstly presenting a short frontage to the river, secondly forming the side of the ‘Square’ and thirdly by being set back from Chapel Hill to allow views of the gable of Folly Hall Mill to be seen from the area of Chapel Hill.
- 4.7 In the previous proposal Building D was to be located on Manchester Road east of the junction with Outcote Bank at a point where at present the quality of the townscape is particularly poor. Here the Council’s present building lacks a presence onto the street and to the north part demolition of properties for road widening has removed a sense of enclosure to the street.
- 4.8 The present proposal for the Huddersfield Technical College building replaces buildings D, F and J.
- 4.9 The proposal for the Huddersfield Technical College Building is made of up three elements being a tapering block to front onto Manchester Road linked to the east to the main building set back with a frontage open area onto Manchester Road. The tapering block would reintroduce a sense of enclosure formed by historic properties on the south

side before road widening and replace the Council's inferior building. This point in the road is particularly important as it occurs at the midpoint of the concave sweep of Manchester Road as it descends. The proposal would add an urban sense of scale to this open and bland route out of the town. To the south of Building D the access road and the façade of Buildings C and E would allow views towards the Church (as shown in DLG presentation).

- 4.10 The main Huddersfield Technical College Building is within the heart of the site and has 3 main circulation levels. There is a link to the Manchester Road level with an intermediate level and at the lower level entry onto the public square. The influence of the fall of the site from north to south will be dealt with separately in a later section. This main HTC Building forms the north side of the Square and to its left (west) a pedestrian route extends down from Manchester Road towards the swing bridge over the canal and crossing the newly opened canal proceeds to a proposed crossing point of the river. From this crossing spectacular views would be possible of the weirs and of Folly Mill rising immediately above the observer.
- 4.11 To return to the main HTC Building, its positive benefit is that it forms enclosure to the north side of the proposed Square and has a 'civic presence' within the site. It is linked to a wing building that is parallel to Chapel Hill and approaches Manchester Road and forms enclosure to the public open space facing onto Manchester Road opposite the small group of listed buildings and the public house. This wing Building is located to the rear of the Chapel Hill listed buildings and the landscape area associated with it would provide a positive impact upon the present bleak outlook of this part of Manchester Road and the rear of Chapel Hill.
- 4.12 Building K is approximately 'L' shaped on plan and its southern side aligns with the canal that is proposed to be opened up from its present culvert. The building is located with its east façade onto Chapel Hill and that would be beneficial in assisting to restore the present lost streetscape and sense of enclosure previously provided by historic properties. The other positive feature of this building is that it forms the north-eastern corner of the canal Square and encloses the view.

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- 4.13 Between the canal and the river would be Building M with a defined use for leisure/office purposes. This is proposed as a tapered shaped block that is directly related to the river frontage, forms the west side of the Square and has a frontage parallel to the canal side to the north. This has been designed in response to English Heritage's opinion that views of Folly Hall Mill from the 'square' are of the highest importance.
- 4.14 The revised design of the enlarged Square responds to specific English Heritage requests thus allowing open views to be had of the north face of Folly Hall Mill and the river.
- 4.15 The remaining major change from the earlier proposal is that Building E2 which was designed to be a landmark building at the turning point of the River Colne has been omitted. The present scheme is considered to allow Folly Hall Mill to be the more dominant south side of the Square (Plaza) and to enable the HTC Building to be the more dominant building at the higher part of the site to the north.
- 4.16 A CD is available which illustrates the proposals and allows a 'fly through' visualisation of the development. This is useful for the views of Folly Hall Mill and for understanding the scale and quality of the public realm including the new public Square.
- 4.17 Camlin Lonsdale in their submission describe the high quality of landscaping and the appropriateness of the materials and treatment of surfaces adjacent to the canal and riverside. The landscape proposals are an integral part of the quality of the public realm proposals.
- 4.18 Section 6 of the DLG Architects Design and Access Statement submission refers to building heights and this is of relevance to this statement because of the proximity of listed buildings at Folly Hall Mill and Manchester Road. At page 53 of DLG's submission, it gives a table of building heights. The statement relates how the buildings steps down to be below the eaves line of the listed Mill at a distance of 30 metres. At the water's edge in the vicinity of the Mill the height is of 4 storeys rising to Manchester Road. The perspectives demonstrate that the buildings are below the eaves height of the Mill and allow it to dominate the southern part of the Square. These relationships are considered to be appropriate in terms of the impact on the listed Mill.

5 PRIMARY PLANNING LEGISLATION

5.1 The authority for the plan led system in England and Wales is provided by Section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) that states;

“If regard is to be had to the development plan; for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts; the determination must be in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise’.

5.2 In making an assessment of the proposal in context with conservation or heritage planning legislation, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is currently relevant. It states at Section 66 (1):-

‘In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses’.

5.3 The development site is located in proximity to several listed buildings and Section 66 is therefore relevant. However, no alteration is being made to a listed building. The issue to be assessed is the affect of the proposed development upon the setting of any of the listed buildings.

5.4 As noted the presence of listed buildings around the development site requires that the effect of development upon the setting of the listed buildings be assessed. In Section 3 of this statement it is emphasised that the distinction between the definition of ‘setting’ and that of visibility through views should be clearly established.

6 RELEVANT NATIONAL AND LOCAL HERITAGE POLICIES

- 6.1 Planning Policy Statement 1 [PPS 1 *Delivering Sustainable Development* at paragraphs 17 to 20] addresses the impacts of development. It states that the protection and enhancement of the environment are material considerations in determining planning applications and appeals. Good design of buildings and spaces is considered at paragraphs 33 to 39 and PPS1 states that design should be encouraged but the guidance goes on to advise that Local Authorities should not attempt to impose a particular architectural taste or style arbitrarily but should promote local distinctiveness. They should not concern themselves with matters of detailed design (paragraph 38) except where such matters have a significant effect on the character of areas and where this is supported by clear plan policies or supplementary guidance.
- 6.2 Planning Policy Guidance Note PPG 15 *Planning and the Historic Environment* expresses the Government's commitment to effective protection of the historic environment. It is presently under review with the Draft Heritage Bill being laid before Parliament on 02 April 2008. Whilst no weight should be given to the suggested changes the amendments have been borne in mind in this appraisal. PPG 15 states that physical survivals of our past are to be valued for their own sake as a central part of our cultural heritage and sense of national identity. There is the belief that there is a close link between controls over conservation areas and development control decisions, consequently development and conservation issues will generally need to be considered together.

Listed Buildings

- 6.3 Whilst no listed building is directly affected at Paragraph 3.5, the guidance sets out the four criteria which are relevant generally to all listed building applications. In summary, they are;-
- 6.3.1 the importance of the building
 - 6.3.2 particular physical features of interest

6.3.3 the building's setting

6.3.4 any community benefits that the proposal would provide

6.4 PPG 15 continues at paragraph 2.16:-

‘.....The setting is often an essential part of the building's character, especially if a garden or grounds have been laid out to complement its design or function. Also, the economic viability as well as the character of historic buildings may suffer and they can be robbed of much of their interest, and of the contribution they make to townscape or the countryside, if they become isolated from their surroundings, e.g. by new traffic routes, car parks, or other development.

6.5 At paragraph 2.17 the guidance states:-

‘...(setting) should not be interpreted too narrowly: the setting of a building may be limited to obviously ancillary land, but may often include land some distance from it. ... The setting of individual listed buildings very often owes its character to the harmony produced by a particular grouping of buildings (not necessarily all of great individual merit) and to the quality of the spaces created between them. ... A proposed high or bulky building might also affect the setting of a listed building some distance away, or alter views of a historic skyline. In some cases, setting can only be defined by a historical assessment of a building's surroundings...’

6.6 It is therefore important as noted in this statement that the distinction between setting and views is made in any analysis.

Conservation Areas

6.7 No conservation area or its setting would be affected by the proposal.

6.8 With regard to the use of the site for industrial sheds and as an open car park, paragraph 4.17 of PPG 15 with reference to conservation areas does however state;

“Many conservation areas include **gap sites**, or buildings that make no positive contribution to, or indeed detract from, the character or appearance of the area; their replacement should be a stimulus to imagination, high quality design,

and seen as an opportunity to enhance the area. What is important is not that new buildings should directly imitate earlier styles, but that they should be designed with respect for their context, as part of a larger whole which has a well-established character and appearance of its own.” (my emphases).

- 6.9 The proposal site is not within a conservation area but this extract does emphasis that the site is an opportunity site in terms of the townscape of Huddersfield. There is therefore an opportunity to enhance the area through this development. The test therefore is to consider if any demonstrable harm would be caused to the character and appearance of the River Colne valley area.

Local Policies and Listed Buildings

- 6.10 Local policies that are relevant to this statement are BE2 for new development and BE3 relating to listed buildings.
- 6.11 Policy BE2 considers development in terms of height, mass, scale, density materials, layout and design.
- 6.12 Policy BE3 reviews applications where they may be implications for the settings of listed buildings.

Design Guidance

- 6.13 The Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) published in association with the Commission on Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) two guidance documents which considered the role of the good design of construction works upon the environment. ‘By Design; a guide to PPG3’ and ‘By Design; Towards Better Practice’ consider the processes of procuring good design schemes and also sets out topics for designers to consider. These have been consolidated.
- 6.14 With regard to the built cultural heritage, the inter-relationship of high standards of design with historic areas is considered to be important. The role of retained historic buildings is valued and the enhancement of historic areas by appropriate development

is promoted. With regard to detail guidance from CABI the general principles are as set out below.

6.15 'By Design' states that there are 7 objectives of urban design being:-

- Character; a place with identity
- Continuity and enclosure; of spaces promote street frontages and enclosure
- Quality of the public realm; outdoor spaces
- Ease of movement; permeability and transport
- Legibility; a place with a clear image
- Adaptability; a place that can change
- Diversity; mix of compatible developments

6.16 Under the topic of 'Aspects of Development Form' 'By Design' notes:-

- Layout: broad settlement plan
- Layout Urban Grain; pattern of blocks and plots
- Landscape; open space, planting
- Density and mix; amount of development
- Scale; height; height related to views & buildings
- Scale; massing; volume of the building related to others
- Appearance; details; building elements
- Appearance; materials; materials related to the area

6.17 In 'By Design' Section 2 with regard to the first of the urban design objectives of 'Character – a place with its own identity'. Guidance is set out to sustain local distinctiveness and it states:-

'The scale, massing and height of proposed development should be considered in relation to that of adjoining buildings; the topography; the general pattern of heights in the area; and views, vistas and landmarks.'

6.18 In the following section I relate these criteria to the proposed development.

British Waterways Operating Instructions; Heritage and Property Development

- 6.19 In November 2004 British Waterways issued an operating instruction with regard to projects where heritage issues would be involved such as with scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas. The theme of the guidance is that a balance between property development and heritage conservation needs to be achieved.
- 6.20 A sequential check list of actions and consultations is set out in the instruction and projects are recommended to adhere to sustainable re-use, adaptation or conservation of heritage assets where appropriate. Whilst no historic building is directly affected by the proposal the setting of Folly Hall Mill which has a close association with the waterway is affected.

National Guidance on Tall Buildings

- 6.21 English Heritage and CABE jointly published a consultation paper 'Guidance on Tall Buildings' dated June 2001. Whilst this is now somewhat out of date because of the changing national policy to tall buildings there is set out a long list of criteria that should be considered for evaluation. These in summary are the relationship to:

- Context
- Ancient Monuments
- Listed buildings
- Conservation areas
- Archaeology
- Historic parks
- World Heritage Sites
- Open spaces
- Important views
- Transport
- Architectural quality
- Contribution to open spaces
- Function and fitness
- Sustainability

6.22 English Heritage considers that the location for a tall building should be shown to be appropriate in terms of its effects upon the heritage. For CABE it will be the quality of the design in its own right and whether it enhances the local environment. In July 2002 a report of the Committee of the House of Commons on Tall Buildings was also published. In summary there is an acceptance of the principle that tall buildings should be clustered together and not spread about a city skyline thus diluting their impact.

7 THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA AND THE HERITAGE ISSUES

- 7.1 The character and appearance of the area has changed dramatically since the mid 20th-century with the demolition of all but one of the stone built mills of 6 or more storeys that lined the river valley in this part of Huddersfield. The aerial photograph DLG 4.4 (site attributes) clearly demonstrates with the aerial photograph of the present day in DLG that the application site and the immediate is now composed mainly of single storey industrial sheds.
- 7.2 Not only has this meant that Chapel Hill and Folly Hall have lost the former sense of urban scale when viewed in the valley but that views from the north in particular and Manchester Road are of the saw-toothed roof lights of acres of industrial buildings. This has slightly less impact from the high ground to the south-east of the site.
- 7.3 The only buildings which relate to this former multi-storey scale are the listed Mill and the Casino development both on the south bank. The application site is therefore an opportunity site and although not within a conservation area typified by the description in PPG15 of a 'gap site'.
- 7.4 Section 3 of this statement sets out a description of the location of listed buildings within the surrounding area. There are varying degrees of proximity to the site and sensitivity to development within it.
- 7.5 The character of the area may be summarised as follows:-
- The serpentine nature of the River Colne and its weirs
 - Industrial development on the north bank
 - Canal water course hidden from view (with listed bridge beyond the site)
 - Listed building of the Folly Hall Mill
 - Older industrial development on the south bank of the river
 - Multi-storey building of the Casino on the south bank

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- open car parking within industrial plots that detracts from the appearance
 - lack of public realm spaces or public use
 - lack of pedestrian permeability
 - views into the site from Manchester Road and from the south

7.6 The character of the application site is therefore of an industrial site which has inappropriate uses for an inner town site in a prime location alongside the river banks. The former sheds and wharfage buildings and the impressive multi-storey mills have been demolished for over 30 years and the area has the appearance of a site awaiting more appropriate development.

The Architectural Vision

- 7.7 The design of the proposal is related to the historical development of the area. This former character as shown by photographs of the wider area in the documents of DLG Architects was of mills of 6 or 7 storeys set in close proximity to each other following the course of the River Colne and served by the canal. Folly Hall Mill is the only remaining mill and it is considered that the proposal is a recreation of this lost character but in a contemporary manner.
- 7.8 It is considered highly significant for the design of buildings within the proposal for the *context* and *setting* of the listed buildings to have been acknowledged. The influence or visual impact of the context cannot be under-estimated and it is unusual in such an urban context that the area has little positive character in terms of surrounding buildings. Folly Hall Mill makes a strong impact but this occurs at only one end of the site and in any case the present impact is a negative one of a decayed building which has lost its associated buildings and site area.
- 7.9 Given the generally agreed view that there were few strong characteristics of the site except for its sloping land form to the river bank there is an opportunity to build a new character to reflect the former character of multi-storey mill construction set in contrast to the former smaller canal structures.

7.10 The applicant's architects DLG in co-operation with Camlin Lonsdale Landscape Architects have concluded that the site would benefit from new multi-storey development but designed in terms of its footprint and layout to maximise the area of public realm space and to safeguard the relationship of the river waterfront to the canal quayside areas further back. The lengthy consultations between the applicant's architects and the Council's design officers have resulted in the submitted scheme, which with the introduction of the Huddersfield Technical College as a major use for the site has resulted in major changes but of a highly beneficial nature.

8 ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECT OF THE DEVELOPMENT

- 8.1 Within this section I assess the proposal for its effect upon the heritage assets being the listed buildings and I also assess aspects of the urban design issues.

Impact on the listed buildings

- 8.2 There are four groups of listed buildings or individual listed buildings, the settings of which could be affected. They may be further divided into two categories; firstly those within close proximity to the development area and secondly those further away.

Folly Hall Mill

- 8.3 Talking the first, Folly Hall Mill is the most important as a Grade II* structure and the only remaining mill of a significant wider group. Folly Hall Mill ('the Mill') has however lost its historical context both in terms of its curtilage but also in that the activity of trade has long ceased and nothing exists of the wharfside buildings with material and goods stores that brought life to the area and gave the watercourse its purpose and economy. Historically the area of the application site which forms part of its setting is a modern industrial landscape and the canal heritage appears irrelevant to the design and function of buildings which have been erected in the latter half of the 20th-century.
- 8.4 Buildings M (west), main HTC (north), K (north-east), L (east) form the enclosure to the canal square which will be the new public space with cafes and restaurants. This is set opposite to the north-east elevation of the listed Folly Hall Mill and would have a strong direct visual relationship with it. From this public space the façade of the Mill dominate the space as may be deduced from the perspective drawing No. 4 in the Design and Access Statement (DACS). This relationship has been evolved in the later stages of the scheme to fully take into account the views of English Heritage.
- 8.5 The form of Building M would be set to the west of the Mill with its feature corner tower. As shown in DLG's computerised views the small corner tower

would act as a townscape feature at the turn of the corner of the square to produce a an example of lively townscape.

- 8.6 In terms of the setting of the Mill there would be a major beneficial impact in terms of change and given the appropriate heights of proposed buildings set back from the Mill and of Building M being below the eaves of the Mill the effect would be positive. Building L in its configuration (6 storeys) is below eaves level of the Mill at the bankside.
- 8.7 I conclude from these appraisals that whilst there would be a radical change to the setting of Folly Hall Mill but that change would be highly beneficial. This judgement is because the existing low quality development would be replaced by high quality buildings and landscape that would be a far more appropriate setting. Whilst the existing setting is made up of low level buildings, the environs from approximately 1850 to 1960 were of 6 or more storey buildings. I consider the proposal to be highly beneficial to the setting of the Grade II* Mill.

Church of St Thomas

- 8.8 The Grade II* church on Manchester Road lies beyond the site boundary by about 80 metres. The Council has recently granted permission for a building of nondescript appearance directly opposite the churchyard. The application proposal now before the Council would site Building A of 7 storeys within 100 metres of the church building. The relationship between the tower of the church and Building A has been subject to consultation with English Heritage and DLG Architects drawings show the reduced height with regard to levels. Even at the reduced 7 storeys, the proposed development would not be built in front of the church, the graveyard or the housing to its east. Views of the church would still be possible from across the valley to the south and conversely from the church to the valley.
- 8.9 Views to the south-east would be of the end of Building A at 7 storeys but at a distance of 90 metres. Given the past context of 6/7 storey mills on the site and the fact that existing building block any views from ground level. It is my

opinion that whilst the change in the setting would have a moderate impact there would be no harm to the setting. The improvement to the quality of the built environment that would result however would enhance the area.

Manchester Road

- 8.10 Listed buildings Grade II occupy part of the northern side of Manchester Road and opposite the proposed main HTC Building . Following comments from residents the proposed location of the building has been moved south away from the existing housing and heights adjusted. The present view from the terrace is of the Councils offices and has a negative effect upon the area. The proposal with a substantial area of soft and hard landscaping in association with the building would curtail views from the upper floors to the southern hillside but provide an enhanced prospect. The new large area of public realm space would be beneficial to the wider setting of these listed buildings.
- 8.11 The judgement to be made is whether this is an issue for the setting of the building or for views. I consider that it is more related to views than the immediate setting given the intervening road and the nature and the lower status of the listed buildings. DLG Architects drawing with site section illustrates the main HTC Building in relation to the roof ridge of this terrace. The original intervening distance has been increased and the top floor is recessed to lessen the impact. The wing of the main HTC Building reduces in height towards Manchester Road.
- 8.12 The development would introduce a 5/6 storey building into the local scene and whilst this would introduce a significant change in views from the listed buildings, views towards the listed buildings would not be impaired. In terms of an environmental statement the residual impact would be considered to be minor. Given a careful choice of materials and of the detail design being of high quality the resultant building with the high quality landscaping would enhance the existing scene. I consider that in the statutory use of the term the settings would be preserved.

Chapel Hill

- 8.13 The remaining listed buildings are those of Chapel Hill Grade II. At present they are in a degraded condition that appears to be of longstanding. Views through to the rear of the properties is of industrial sheds and open parking and this is inappropriate. Past views would have been of mill buildings and housing in Dale Street.
- 8.14 The proposal is for the HTC Building to be set 20 metres behind the lower half of the terrace and at an approximate height of 3 storeys above the eaves of the terrace. The views from the rear of the listed buildings are of secondary importance but these would be of the masonry retaining wall of the building that aims to reflect the existing retaining wall of Manchester Road. It is proposed that a landscaped square be introduced between this building and Building K in the vicinity of the listed buildings. This would assist in integrating Chapel Hill into the scheme. It is however views towards the frontage street elevations from the east that are of more interest. Buildings K (3 storey) and L (5/6 storeys) would provide the new street context towards the river at the bottom of Chapel Hill.
- 8.15 Views of the lower listed frontages of Chapel Hill would be in the context of the new higher development behind. The contrast would be apparent, however within the town of Huddersfield there is a considerable diversity of building heights where historic buildings are in close proximity with modern development. The main HTC Building addresses Manchester Road and sits comfortably set back with that street frontage. The fall in the land to the south therefore ensures that building heights to Chapel Hill will be exaggerated. As in other areas of Huddersfield where the land has sharp falls, the juxtaposition of buildings facing different streets creates contrasts of height that in townscape terms are of interest. I consider that this would be the case with the proposed buildings and Chapel Hill.
- 8.16 The fly through package of views contains several views of relevance to the heritage issues. A view from the River Colne Bridge (Folly Hall) in the application documents shows the relationship between the listed Mill and the

form of Building L (5/6 storeys). It is considered that the reduction in height of Building L above the car parking level at its closest point to the Mill is appropriate and provides a satisfactory urban context to the canal side.

- 8.17 Building M of 4 storeys is located on the opposite bank to the listed Mill with which it would have a positive visual relationship. It is considered that this would be a beneficial factor especially in views from the river footpaths and proposed bridges and that in terms of the planning test the setting of the Grade II*listed building would be enhanced as would the character and appearance of the area.

The public realm

- 8.18 The application site and the surrounding area does not at present have a coherent character and its appearance is diverse with industrial sheds and Folly Hall Mill. The primary positive features of the area are its listed buildings whilst its negative factors include buildings and car open parks developed over the last three decades. The impact on the wider area will be derived in the main from the relationships of the proposed new development to the river, the restored canal, listed buildings and adjacent highways. These have been reviewed except for matters of landscaping.
- 8.19 The landscape proposals address the public realm and include the new canal basin and new open stretches of the canal that would provide mooring points and places of access to the water. Bridgeworks are proposed to better link pedestrian routes into and through the development. These works involve no intervention in terms of the listed building fabric but would greatly improve the opportunities for the public to interact with the waterside both of the canal and the river with its weirs. The more direct pedestrian links to the city centre again are seen as positive initiatives to integrate the present isolated water frontage into the day-to-day life of the town. The design of the bridges is shown as highly contemporary but responds to the traditions of canal engineering.
- 8.20 Whilst the appearance of the local area will be changed in a dramatic sense by the proposal, it is considered that this will be a positive and enhancing

development that will create a new character for the area that in turn will benefit the appearance and life of the town centre and indirectly its historic areas.

By Design

- 8.21 The *By Design* criteria form a long list that in this review have been described without specifically addressing the headings. I refer to paragraph 6.13 of this report and the criteria as set out.
- 8.22 I conclude that the proposal would result in an area with a distinct character with a high quality of the public realm in terms of outdoor spaces created. Permeability of pedestrian movement through the site has been designed and linkages established to the town centre and through to St Thomas's Road. There is also a range of accommodation provided with possible flexibility.
- 8.23 The layout results in spaces which have the potential to be attractive and to which the landscaping proposals have responded. Whilst the scheme achieves a desirable density the footprint of buildings allows for a high degree of public space.
- 8.24 The heights of the development have been related to historic precedent of the tall mill buildings and also to important views and listed buildings and is assessed as appropriate. Following productive consultations the massing of the blocks also as with Building L acknowledges the relationships to buildings and views.
- 8.25 The matters of details and materials are available to be dealt with as a condition to the planning permission and a subject of negotiation with the Local Authority. Broad agreement has however been reached between officers and the schemes architects.

9 ASSESSMENT AGAINST POLICY

- 9.1 It is stated in PPG 15 that the historic environment cannot in practice be preserved unchanged and that it is the management of change that is of importance.
- 9.2 PPG 15 is written in the context of Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which states that ‘it is desirable’ that development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 9.3 I assess the development as proposed not to cause harm to the character or appearance of the River Colne valley. Further in removing unsightly car parking lots and industrial sheds which are uncharacteristic of the heritage of the valley and in providing quality public realm areas of landscape and a development which fits within the specific town centre local context, there would be positive benefits in visual terms to the area and its listed buildings.
- 9.4 With regard to Section 66 of the relevant 1990 Act relating to the granting of Planning Permission for development which may affect a listed building or its setting, the affect of the proposal upon views to and from the Mill, the church and other listed structures has been considered and conclude that there would be no harm caused to their setting because of distance and the manner in which the development is designed.
- 9.5 It is noted that the oval tower of the previous proposal is now omitted to enable the Folly Hall Mill to be highlighted as a distinctive feature that would act as a landmark and relate to the former presence of the industrial heritage and the change of direction in the river.
- 9.6 With regard to the public realm, the development in removing the industrial sheds and open car parking and in providing a high quality landscape setting would result in there being an enhancement to the local scene.

Local Policies

- 9.7 In the review of the affect that the proposed building would have upon the character and appearance of the settings of the listed buildings, I analyse the design of the buildings, their locations and the influence upon views. With regard to specific local policies as set out in the Local Plan, those policies namely BE3 reflect the guidance of PPG15 and have been considered. I conclude that the proposal satisfies the local heritage policies.

British Waterways Operating Instructions; Heritage and Property Development

- 9.8 The operating instruction issued by British Waterways in November 2004 with regard to projects where heritage issues would be involved such as with scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas is relevant. It was issued after the design process had been underway however the theme of the guidance was that a balance between property development and heritage conservation requires to be achieved.
- 9.9 The heritage consultations and assessments undertaken for this current proposal at Huddersfield Waterfront requires to be assessed against the checklist of actions and consultations as set out in the British Waterways instruction. DLG design statement records the close consultation with British Waterways and the positive initiatives that are now presented to re-expose the canal to public view by excavating the culvert. Having undertaken this exercise I am satisfied that the heritage process of the application has complied with the instruction.

Tall Buildings Guidance

- 9.10 The English Heritage/CABE guidance and the Parliamentary Report conclude that tall buildings may enliven a city scene and provide a considerable degree of visual interest. They may also form landmarks within a townscape and designate areas of particular importance. There is an acceptance of the principle that tall buildings should be clustered together and not spread about a city skyline diluting their impact.

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- 9.11 I consider that this approach is correct and appropriate to the town centre of Huddersfield and also to the specific site at Huddersfield Waterfront. If single tall buildings were to be permitted I consider there would be a dilution of the contribution of these tall buildings and that as English Heritage/CABE conclude the centre of towns and cities would be harmed.
- 9.12 In summary, having assessed the proposal against national and local policies I conclude that the development whilst bringing a major change to the local area and the setting of listed buildings, would greatly enhance the area and would not result in any significant harm. The development would therefore abide by these policies.

10 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 10.1 The proposal site occupies a position within the Huddersfield Waterfront area that covers a relatively extensive area south of the centre of the town of Huddersfield. The site is not within the boundaries of a conservation area or contains any listed buildings.
- 10.2 However the surrounding area as a whole contains several groups or individual listed buildings and structures of diverse character that are associated with the 19th-century development of the Huddersfield. Most notable is the Grade II* Folly Hall Mill.
- 10.3 The proposal site is located on the north bank of the canal and the north bank of the River Colne where they run in parallel. The site is presently used for industrial sheds and open areas of car parking. Lower development now considered of inappropriate character was built in the latter half of the 20th-century. Only the listed Mill relates to the operation of the canal itself with many other similar mills of comparable height having been demolished since the 1950s. These were together of architectural interest and in my view would have made a positive contribution to the area. The use of the site now for open car parking and industrial uses is considered inappropriate and significantly detracts from the appearance of the waterfront area.

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- 10.4 The local area has seen the demolition of curtilage buildings to Folly Hall Mill and the building of the Casino complex, otherwise no development except car parking has taken place. Notwithstanding the quality of the listed structures there is therefore some difficulty in identifying an established positive character for the area as a context for new development.
- 10.5 The site has an important location close to the Town Centre area although partially visually contained and borders the two primary watercourse within the town. There is therefore an opportunity for an enhancement of the canal and riverside with development in association with the provision of public open space. The character of the local area although not well defined would be strengthened through regeneration.
- 10.6 The proposal is for 7 buildings plus the three-block main HTC Building, varying in heights between 3 and 9 storeys and utilising the falls in the land across the site. Two new bridges could be built to increase accessibility to the waterfront areas and beyond. Car parking which presently constitutes an eyesore in the area would be transferred and be mostly visually contained in the undercroft areas beneath Buildings A, B, C, E and L. The scheme is urban in nature and it is a principle of the design that a sense of openness to the canal side and river areas is promoted and the townscape of the quayside is reinterpreted in a contemporary manner with high quality landscape elements. The design reflects the urban grain of the recent town centre development whilst respecting the presence of the nearby listed buildings.
- 10.7 The English Heritage/CABE guidance favours a clustering of tall buildings in towns and cities and also seeks an assessment of their impact. Whilst 8 or 9 storeys is not the scale of multi-storey construction of primary concern to CABE, I have read the submissions of DLG Architects and Camlin Lonsdale and I conclude that this application by *Strategic Sites in association with Huddersfield Technical College* has satisfied the guidance in its approach.
- 10.8 The design has gone through a long process of discussion and negotiation with the Council's design and conservation team along with other consultees. This

process has been assessed against the operating instruction from British Waterways with regard to heritage assets and has complied with those instructions. The opportunity is being taken to proposed the opening up of the canal to public view after having been culverted for 40 years.

- 10.9 The application will be required to satisfy the statutory test of whether the new development preserves the settings of any listed buildings.
- 10.10 It is conclude that the proposed design and layout of the development scheme demonstrate that they have been prepared with due regard to consultations; that they reflect the emerging contemporary architectural character of the Huddersfield Town Centre and enhance the residual character of the historic waterfront area and satisfy the policy tests.
- 10.11 With reference to design issues, the character of development and its heights are relevant considerations and it is considered that these issues have been satisfactorily addressed. It is however important to sustain an urban sense of development with generous ground level open space within the historic context of the quayside and in this regard it is considered that the proposal is appropriate.
- 10.12 An assessment of views from local viewpoints as identified by the Architects and Landscape Architects concludes that there will be an enhancement of the townscape. Views of the site from public viewing areas are possible and it is judged that the new buildings would be assimilated into the general townscape of the emerging River Colne Valley area.
- 10.13 The effect of the proposal on the area has been considered and whilst conservation area guidance is not applicable paragraph 4.17 of PPG 15 is appropriate for the opportunity that the application site presents:-

“many areas include gap sites, or buildings that make no positive contribution to, or indeed detract from, the character or appearance of the area; their replacement should be a stimulus to imagination, high quality design, and seen as an opportunity to enhance the area.”

10.14 This justification concludes that the proposed development follows the spirit of this guidance and meets the tests contained within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Section 66, PPG 15 and the local development plan in that the setting of listed buildings would be preserved.

Roger Wools & Associates

02 April 2008