SOUTHAMPTON
CITY COUNCIL

DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL

5th May, 2020

Confidential Briefing Note

Owing to COVID-19 restrictions the Panel commented independently on the scheme and the comments received are listed below

APPLICATION No: 19/01145/FUL

ADDRESS: Car Park Adj Tagus House Maritime Walk, Ocean Way Southampton

- The revised proposals, which amounts to a relatively small reduction in height, does not satisfactorily address any of the panel's previous concerns.

- The massing of the building does not fit into any context that currently exists (or is planned) and is hard to justify without a full masterplan. From the 3d context CGIs, the building looks awkward and somewhat stranded, further reinforcing the design panel's concerns. If the site had a marina frontage, height might be more justifiable against the waterside.

- When other adjacent sites are redeveloped in years to come, this proposal would form an unnecessary constraint that would severely compromise this important and potentially prestigious city quarter. Creating spaces around which buildings sit, will be crucial to making a quality piece of urban design with a true sense of place that contrasts with the 1980s 'business park' character of this existing part of Ocean Village.

- The lack of resolution to spaces at ground level (which is essentially a car park and service area) further reveal the compromises of designing a large building on a small site that does not comprehend its future setting.

- The amended DAS is very clear on all aspects of the design apart from the central issue which is: Why a tall building in this specific location in the City? In the absence of this there is no justification for the Panel to change its previous opinion.

- It appears they have looked to reduce some of the height on the towers. But this makes no real impact on the overall form and volume of the three towers. This is not responding to the overarching issues the panel had at the last meeting. The big question is, can this part of Ocean Village and Southampton either take or justify a

tower. It is concerning when you study the Townscape element of the document, that all of the recent new schemes in Ocean Village are beginning to compete and overshadow one another. If you look at page 38, this for me is the most revealing set of images, their scheme absolutely towers over and dwarfs the Harbour Lights Cinema.

- The tower is still way to bulky in its overall form. A tower might work on this site if it was one element and it was elegant, but this is not.

- The tower does nothing to at ground level, the landscaping and public realm could be an amazing offer to this part of Ocean Village if there was a fantastic public plaza created under the towers.

- They have avoided addressing the panel's fundamental question and issue, which is to review and justify the tower through some forma of over-arching masterplan review.

- A tall building might be ok in this location but would want the ground floor to respond to the site in some way? Instead the 3 elements of the tower hit the ground and the rest of the external space is then given over to car parking. This is poor and should respond to the street including greater active frontage

- The building still doesn't offer much at ground level. The recent changes appear to be minimal.

- The reduction and change in mass from that presented as a symmetrical form in March 2019 go some way to improve the scheme, but the justification for height is still lacking. The 'elevational datum diagrams' begin to describe a contextual response, but the verified views illustrate that the proposal will dominate from a number of viewpoints.

- Without a masterplan, it is hard to know whether this is the right site for a tall building. Given it is one block removed from the waterfront, should it be judged as a counterpoint to the Moresby Hawkins tower, or as the first in a number of new towers creating a completely different skyline?

- A masterplan is needed before this proposal could be supported.