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Sent: 08 July 2021 10:15

To: Angela Leckie <angela.leckie@manchester.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: 130446/FO/2021 FRT Comments and Planting

Hi Angela,

Having discussed with the team I set out below responses in red to the various queries regarding planting and biophilia associated with the hotel proposals at Renaissance:

- Obviously much of the appeal of the proposed external alterations is the proposed planting and as such we need more information on the technical side of this. To what extent would the proposed 'greenery' be based on planting within planters and on living green walls (plants that are inserted into a growing medium and then placed on the wall of buildings) (thinking in particular the area around the roof plant enclosures).

All external planting shown needs to be "live" to meet current building regulations for surface spread of flame. False planting will not meet this requirement and is not in line with the brand's sustainability intentions.

All areas including the elements around the roof plant enclosures are proposed to be formed from linked eaves mounted planter boxes with soil medium and integrated irrigation system. The only living wall is that proposed below the canopy of the new main entrance area.

A number of potential manufacturers' systems have been reviewed as part of the design development. We are due to meet the preferred supplier onsite this week to discuss the scheme in greater detail to allow them to progress detailed technical proposals. We would seek for technical details to be subject to a pre-occupation condition of approval.

I WANT PLANT plants is the preferred supplier and is a multi-disciplinary Horticultural company. They are the inventors, manufacturers, principal contractor and installer, and provide ongoing aftercare service. Being Manchester based is important as this better assures the ease of long-term maintenance of the installations.

- What technical input has there been about the structural capacity of the building to accommodate the proposed planting, soil capacity, weight of planters etc, how has the size of the planters proposed been assessed as being sufficient to achieve the visual appearance as illustrated within the submission.

Structural assessments have been made by MJMC to the various rooftop levels and entrance. Modifications are required to the Blackfriars entrance structure to support the weight of planters when wet with other areas of mass concrete construction already providing suitable load-bearing capacity. Entrance structure modifications will be incorporated into the revised soffit and fascia proposals previously submitted.

- What would the maintenance strategy be in terms of upkeep, watering, replacement etc.

Watering is to be via a permanent irrigation line linked to the building water supply. Monitors will detect the moisture level of the soil to ensure that it is not over or under watered.

Access requirements are being discussed with the preferred supplier to ensure that adequate building-mounted safety systems are provided to facilitate ongoing access for maintenance (mansafe systems etc). Lower level areas are proposed to be accessed direct from the back of a vehicle with a cherry picker attachment. All final requirements will be dictated by the final technical proposals and the chosen planting specifications.

- How viable in the long term are trees in planters as shown - will these be species which would specifically be suitable for this type of growing medium as there are many examples around the City Centre where trees in planters are struggling.

Any trees will be specified to provide longevity and to suit their environment.

- Has there been engagement with any companies who specialise in these types of installations?

Yes (see above). All planting species, containment and support systems will be bespoke to this job, specified to provide year round kerb appeal yet to withstand the Manchester environment and installation locations.

- There really isn't much detail on any of this within the submission and there appears to be some inconsistencies in terms of the visuals and the plans e.g no planters etc indicated on rooftop of mezzanine plant room - can this be looked at.

I will look into this and revert. For clarity, the visuals are an artist's impression. The proposals on the elevations take precedent.

I hope this is sufficient to address your comments in this respect but please let me know if you have any further queries.

Regards,
Ed

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