

**Cllr. Tom Druitt**  
**BH2019 02865 - Nile House, Nile Street**

**21<sup>st</sup> October 2019**

I understand you're the case officer for the Nile House rooftop application. I am writing to support the application and ask that it comes to planning committee so that it can be properly discussed.

The building in question requires renovation to bring it up to modern standards and the only way that is possible is to incorporate an enabling development. The applicant has worked hard to incorporate the views of the council's Heritage team and has come up with a design that is very sympathetic to the conservation area. It will improve the availability of high quality office space in the city centre and support the local economy.

**11<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

I write regarding the Nile House rooftop proposals (app: BH2019/02865). As a Ward Councillor I am concerned about the negative effect on businesses, residents and tourists of empty properties and keen to see progress here. Nile House sits in a key location and when occupied, its large work force will contribute significantly to the local economy and vibrancy of Nile Street. This large office is currently empty awaiting planning to know how to move forward with refurbishment. Three of the ground floor retail tenants have recently vacated, due to the challenging retail market and I am concerned that empty buildings are a magnet for crime and antisocial behaviour.

I have taken a keen interest to ensure the proposals to reinvigorate this c.25,000ft office block are implemented as soon as possible. I write because I have found out that the determination of the planning application is delayed, without a clear deadline. I appreciate officer's pressures but must comment when resourcing decisions will effect local ward issues.

When I requested to see the proposals, I pushed for the best and most sustainable overall outcome for the City. I was pleased to see that the owner and architects are seeking to use a modest roof extension to drive an exciting new vision for the whole building.

The application was validated on 25th Sept 2019, with a determination date of 20th Nov 2019, now passed. I requested that it be called to committee but in all honesty had seen the appropriate range of evidence and expected a delegated approval. A full set of reports were all present, including BREEAM, and a description of the roof extension's role in attracting a new level of tenant (much needed in this area and not many offices big enough to achieve). It was clear that this 'minor' application held the key to a significant building regeneration.

Having sought another update, I now see that the application is to be outsourced, a planning letter (copied to me by the applicant) states the 'application has been assessed as being suitable to benefit from this initiative', it notes that not accepting the process 'could however result in further ongoing delays to the

determination of your application'. I consider this application to be urgent, am concerned by any further delay, and am keen to keep pressure on all involved to deliver the obvious benefits to my ward.

Furthermore, I am comforted that the application has had due consideration and despite an objection from the conservation team (solely roofline from long Prince Albert Street views) has received unequivocal support from CAG (found online and copied here for clarity):

BH2019/02864 and BH2019/02865 Nile House Nile Street Brighton BN1 1HW  
OLD TOWN CA part GRADE II

Formation of additional level to create office space (B1) incorporating replacement roof plant, reinstatement of chimney, balustrade terrace to West elevation, installation of solar panels and associated works.

This application was introduced by the Brighton Society

The Group recommended APPROVAL and added the following comments;

- The application was well planned with the additional floor set back thus not interfering with the views north up Black Lion Street nor east along Prince Albert Street
- Support the reinstatement of the chimney to the westerly listed section with a terracotta pot added. This item is advised to be not short, to be in keeping with those originals elsewhere in the CA. A reclaimed item would be preferable.

This application has been carefully formed and surely neared planning officer resolution. Therefore, I respectfully request it stays with the case officer for a timely determination. If it needs to take the time of the planning committee then I have already written (within the consultation period) to request it gets that hearing and confirming my support.

I look forward to an update on how we can determine this important application as soon as possible.