



18 July 2021

Permanent Secretary for Planning  
Ministry of Commerce,  
Planning and Infrastructure  
P.O. Box 113  
Grand Cayman KY1-9000

Attn: Mr. Isaac Rankine  
Via email: [isaac.rankine@gov.ky](mailto:isaac.rankine@gov.ky)

Director of Planning Mr. Haroon Pandohie  
Via email: [haroon.pandohie@gov.ky](mailto:haroon.pandohie@gov.ky)

Cc: Planning Officer Marco Whittaker  
Via email: [Marco.Whittaker@gov.ky](mailto:Marco.Whittaker@gov.ky)

Dear Mr. Pandohie

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A 10 STORY 268,173 SQ. FT. HOTEL; MIXED USE W/ (2) RESTAURANTS/BARS; (2) POOLS; PROPANE GENERATOR ; (2) UNDERGROUND LPG STORAGE TANKS ON BLOCK 14BH PARCEL 167.

**re: Decision of Central Planning Authority made on the 23rd June 2021  
(Decision posted on 13th July 2021 - P21-0363 HPW INVESTMENTS LTD)**

I am in receipt of the decision letter from the Central Planning Authority and you will have received notice that due to health issues, my cousin, [REDACTED] would be appointing someone on her behalf. She has appointed me to act as her spokesperson for this matter, supported by Amplify Cayman.

Since the CPA Meeting she attended, my cousin has done more research and has even more concerns regarding this project. With all transparency, as the Minutes of the Meeting 23rd June have not yet been published and the matter is again before the CPA on 21st July, I take this opportunity to address the concerns regarding reasons for the CPA decision which we believe to be a matter of public interest.

Referring to the points in your letter:

Point 4 (a) The authority determined the proposed hotel is in keeping with the existing commercial character of the area which includes many multi-storey commercial buildings.

Excluding South Church Street, there are as many as 30 small modest single storey dwellings spread out over approx. 100 acres around the proposed site area with just one modern office block (Citrus Grove). The remaining commercial buildings on Goring Avenue are either car parks, vacant lots or small commercial buildings that complement the historic architecture preserved in the area (see photo below).



Point 4 (b) The Authority sets out that The Cayman Islands Parliament recently amended the Development and Planning Regulations to allow buildings with a height of 10' storeys/130' in the General Commercial zone 1 and the proposed building is located in that zone.

The zoning in this area was just approved in Feb 2021 with little consultation and without an overall area plan. The applicant indicated that the application had been under discussion with the Ministry of Planning, Commerce and Infrastructure for the past two years. Representatives from the Ministry were in attendance. This is supported by the following

article but there is no mention of hotel development in George Town: <https://www.reallife.ky/editorial/george-town-revitalisation>. Following the elections in May 2021 the policy guidance set out by the new government is clear that they intend to revisit our planning laws and regulations to update the National Planning Framework which in turn may create a strategic policy for the capital of George Town which was not taken into consideration when the board made their decision.

Point 4 (c) The authority determined that there is no historic overlay in George Town therefore the provisions of Regulation 16 of the Development and Planning Regulation (2021 Revision) do not apply.

The National Tourism Plan, our Constitution and other government policies speak importantly to preserving Caymanian heritage and culture. This area is home to one of the earliest settlements in George Town, dating back to the late 1790's. According to CINA's Public Records' Records, the 1802 Census states there was a Sarah Nixon, widow with 3 family members and 4 slaves of William Nixon who lived in 'the Hogstye's' which includes what is now known as Goring Ave. In fact, the previous administration's Minister for Culture assisted the National Trust in saving and relocating one of the old Nixon homes to next to Mission House in Bodden Town. A list of historic homes and sites documented on the National Heritage Register were recommended by [REDACTED] to the CPA for review at the last meeting and can be sourced here: <https://caymanislandsnationaltrust.pastperfectonline.com>.



No consultation was undertaken with [REDACTED] nor the Cayman Islands National Trust by either the applicant or the authority to review the cultural heritage of George Town and specifically the district in and around Goring Ave which to our knowledge is not part of the George Town Revitalisation Plan. [REDACTED] is the owner of "Merrendale", a two-story wattle and daub family home built in 1865 which is adjacent to the John Merren / Albert C Panton House built ca 1894. As heritage and culture is an integral part of the George

Town Revitalisation Plan (under the Ministry and the Planning Authority), who intend to seek historic city designation from the UK, then this decision is a contradiction of policy.



Point 4 (d) The Authority determined that there was no evidence provided to demonstrate that the proposal would have a materially detrimental effect on the ability of the objector to enjoy the amenity of her property.

It is unclear how the Authority came to this determination without any modelling studies being conducted in regards to height, privacy, ventilation, shadowing and natural light which are part of the other material considerations the board are to consider under section 2.6 of the Development Plan 1997. They also did not provide a visual of the flight path zoning which one can see in the



image, that an open air rooftop deck so close to the flight path zone may be potentially hazardous without evidence otherwise. It is certainly going to have a significant impact to the visual aspect both from land and air.

According to the notes we have from the CPA Meeting, I would also like to raise that the Department of Environmental Health did not recommend the hotel for approval. This was highlighted and it is unclear why the meeting commenced in contradiction to the request. Concerns about lack of infrastructure to support the impact of development growth do not appear to have been discussed in the context of the hotel and are a key component missing from this approval process, as are population trends, capacity studies and land availability covered in the 1997 Development Plan as well as for part of the recent debate surrounding the Cruise Port Referendum.

The Plan speaks to a further inconsistency regarding Sect 3.02 of Commercial Development Zones where the Authority will require a standard of design, construction and landscaping

which reflects the local architectural heritage. My cousin has no objection to development on the said property, **but it should not be more than 5-7 stories and should be designed in such a way that it compliments the local architecture and cultural heritage of George Town.** To deviate would be destructive.

She reminded me that her uncle, the late Mr. H. O. Merren, Jr., built the first hotel (Bayview Hotel) in George Town in the 1950's. It was 2-stories (not uncommon since the early 1800's),



located directly across from the Port, and fit perfectly within the local architecture. After his death, his wife sold the property. It was redeveloped and is now known as The Island Plaza.



As you can see this hotel is not in character with the local architectural heritage or Caribbean design, it does not celebrate the Island's rich cultural heritage (as set out in the National Tourism Plan) and it does not align with the seafaring heritage theme adopted by the George Town Revitalisation Plan. The Tourism Ministry advising the proposed hotel is in the busy Central Business District of George Town- we disagree in that the area is a residential community with housing for many of our elderly residents which includes an historic church and a primary school with small children.

We kindly request that you continue to take all these issues into consideration while reviewing the application, the zoning, the proposed height of this project and the parking together with the many concerns raised by the wider public as it affects the capital of George Town.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

cc: [Redacted email address]

cc: [amplifcayman@gmail.com](mailto:amplifcayman@gmail.com)

cc: Premier and Members of Parliament