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2 September 2015

Dear Bernadette

Perth City Hall : meeting with Perth & Kinross Council 25 August 2015

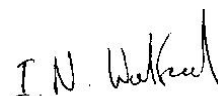
As agreed, I am writing to follow up our helpful discussion on 25 August.

You confirmed that officer recommendation to the Council meeting of 1 July had identified two bids which in the view of officials appeared potentially viable and therefore worth exploring fully. You informed us, however, that under scrutiny at the Council meeting members were unconvinced of the viability of either bid. Consequently, the Council deferred a decision to the next meeting in October in order that the issues raised then can be clarified. We agree that the process should continue until its conclusion

We discussed the various scenarios that could still arise, including that of the Council being minded to again seek demolition. It was agreed that the overarching 'test' of any such application would be reasonableness; ie, it would be for the Council as applicant to demonstrate it had acted reasonably within the terms of the Scottish Historic Environment Policy ['SHEP'] tests.

We explained that should an application be made after 1 October the functions currently carried out by Historic Scotland will have transferred to Historic Environment Scotland ['HES']. Under the new arrangements, HES would be a consultee. This means that were HES minded to object to an application, the case would be notified to Scottish Government to consider call-in. Ministers would however have the right to call-in an application in any case even if HES were not to object.

We noted at the meeting your position regarding the marketing as a long leasehold (125 years) rather than freehold and we are aware that commercial property is commonly held on such a basis. Our interest is in finding a sustainable long term future for historic buildings irrespective of who owns them.



IAN WALFORD

