



Lee Bay Hotel Site

Design Guide



Adopted – August 2020

Foreword

This 'Design Guide' for the Lee Bay Hotel site has been prepared as a result of concerns over the continued deterioration of the building and its extensive grounds over many years and its negative impact on the protected landscape character and surrounding heritage assets. The document is intended to set out a positive solution for the redevelopment of this previously developed site by identifying a number of key design requirements whilst recognising that this must be achieved through regard to adopted planning policies and the site's associated constraints.

It has been prepared in consultation with the local community through Lee & Lincombe Residents Association and Ilfracombe Town Council as well as the North Devon Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Manager and the prospective developer.

Its adoption by the Council at Strategy and Resources Committee on 3rd August 2020 gives it weight as a material planning consideration in the decision making process when any formal planning application is submitted for determination.

Lee Bay Hotel Site – Constraints and Requirements

Planning Policy Context

FACT / CONSTRAINT	POLICY IMPLICATION	REQUIREMENT
WITHIN/ACROSS SITE		
Within Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	NPPF #172, ST09, ST14, DM08A & A1, A2, A5 (AONB MP) – great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the AONB’s landscape and scenic beauty which has the highest level of protection – applications for major developments should be refused other than in exceptional circumstances where it is in the public interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design must not harm the AONB’s special landscape character and special qualities • Justification of public interest for any major development here
Within Heritage Coast	NPPF #173, ST09, ST14, DM08A & A1 (AONB MP) – major development is unlikely to be appropriate unless compatible with its special (undeveloped) character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design must not harm the Heritage Coast’s special character, recognising that part of the site is ‘previously developed land’, as defined in the NPPF
Lee Bay Hotel non-designated heritage asset	NPPF #197, ST15, DM07 & E1, I2 (AONB MP) – the scale and degree of loss of significance needs to be weighed in a balanced judgement against the public benefits of the scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design must balance public benefits for any development against the scale and degree of loss of significance • Encourage proposals that preserve the setting of the heritage asset or which better reveal its significance – NPPF #200
Within Coast and Estuary Zone (NDTLP)	ST09(7) – development within the undeveloped coast and estuary will be supported where it does not detract from the unspoilt character, appearance and tranquillity of the area, nor the undeveloped character of the heritage coasts, and it is required because it cannot reasonably be located outside the undeveloped coast and estuary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design on undeveloped parts of the site must not detract from its unspoilt character, appearance and tranquillity • The footprint of the former hotel building is considered to be within the Developed Coast. Re-development will be supported in principle where it will not detract from the character of the protected landscapes and environmental assets

<p>Within Lee Conservation Area (Character Appraisal adopted 2018)</p>	<p>Para 69 – Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Area) Act 1990, ST15, DM07 & E1, I2 (AONB MP) & Lee Conservation Area Character Appraisal – need to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the conservation area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development must utilise materials and density that preserve or enhance the area’s special character and appearance including the green valley through the site
<p>Lee is recognised as a Rural Settlement</p>	<p>ST07(3) & DM24 – appropriately located development of a modest scale is enabled to meet locally generated needs – speculative development is not supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dwellings should be designed to meet needs of identified households with local occupancy connections and/or affordable homes unless supported by a robust viability justification for the comprehensive regeneration of the site
<p>Within Landscape Character Type 4C: Coastal Slopes and Combes with Settlement incl. Seascape Character</p>	<p>ST14 & DM08A – special qualities of LCT 4C include linear settlements within the landscape, some with farmsteads in village centre, traditional vernacular of cob, Morte slates, thatch, whitewash and stone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development must use designs and materials that conserve the area’s special qualities • Development must be compatible with the character of the local area in terms of design, scale and materials and must take account of the strategy for the host landscape character type
<p>Flood zones 2 and 3 across centre of site</p>	<p>NPPF #155 & ST03 & A5 (AONB MP) – development should be directed away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Any development proposals within FZ2 or FZ3 must satisfy the sequential test and exception test. Where development is justified in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New dwellings and buildings should not be located within flood zones 2 and 3. Other less vulnerable uses may be acceptable there depending upon their use and function
<p>Protected species known to be present</p>	<p>Para 40 of 2006 NERC Act – duty to have regard to biodiversity in carrying out their functions ST14, DM08 & B1, I6 (AONB MP) – conserve protected species and the habitats on which they depend</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design to make adequate provision to safeguard protected species and to provide a net gain in biodiversity across the site • Light pollution should be minimised in accordance with ecological best practice

Japanese Knotweed present	Para 14 of Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 – Japanese knotweed is listed on schedule 9 (non-native species) where it is an offence to plant or cause it to grow in the wild B2 (AONB MP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive regeneration of the site should ensure existing Japanese Knotweed is removed completely across the entire site and not allow it to escape or cause it to grow on adjoining land
Brownfield Site	NPPF #118(c) & ST02 – re-use is encouraged where environmental constraints will allow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that environmental and heritage constraints are not adversely impacted by redevelopment
Vacant Building Credit	NPPF #63 & ST18 & I3 (AONB MP) – the provision of affordable housing may not be delivered as part of the development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VBC only applies where the building has not been abandoned, which is a matter of legal interpretation to be assessed when a formal planning application has been submitted Factors to consider around abandonment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the physical condition of the building; ii) the length of time that the building had not been used; iii) whether it had been used for any other purposes; and iv) the owner’s intentions Implications of VBC and delivering affordable housing must be balanced against the need to secure a long-term viable future for this heritage asset (NPPF #202)
Building for Life 12	NPPF #129 & DM04(2) – practicalities of achieving a successful BfL12 score when a large part of the site requires conversion of a heritage asset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimise design outcomes that will minimise ‘amber’ scores and avoid ‘red’ scores, whilst safeguarding the site’s heritage assets The achievement of high design standards in respect of character, function and sustainability

Tourism	NPPF #83 & DM18 – are there opportunities to reinstate the former hotel? Policy would support the principle of new and the expansion or rationalisation of existing tourism accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convert existing redundant building back to a high-quality hotel / tourist accommodation, if viable • There is an opportunity to create a publicly accessible beach carpark, public open space and associated facilities
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ADJACENT TO SITE		
Adjoining the Old Mill (grade II listed building)	Para 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Area) Act 1990 – special regard should be paid to the desirability of preserving the listed building and its setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain as much of the existing hotel building as possible, especially the western half which is closest to the listed building subject to structural advice
Within the setting; Smugglers Cottage & White House (grade II listed buildings)	Para 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – special regard should be paid to the desirability of preserving the listed buildings and their settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain as much of the existing hotel building as possible, especially the western half which is closest to the listed buildings subject to structural advice
South West Coast Path (SWCP) along NW boundaries	ST09 & DM05 – South West Coast Path is a national trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard the route, safety and accessibility of the existing public right of way • Safeguard and enhance views in to the site from the national trail • Provide new connection(s) to SWCP where practical to do so
Public footpath 36	Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000, ST10 & DM05(2) – legal public right of way must be maintained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard and enhance the route, safety and accessibility of the existing public right of way which runs along the southern boundary • Provide new connection(s) from the site to PROW 36 where practical to do so from the site perimeter

Marine Conservation Zone along the coast	Marine & Coastal Access Act 2009 & ST14 & D2, I4 (AONB MP) – allows Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) to protect a range of nationally important marine wildlife, habitats, geology, where specified features within the MCZ are protected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure development does not have an adverse impact on marine wildlife, especially inshore waters and beach habitats
Adjoining Zone 7d02 of Shoreline Management Plan 2	ST09 & D1 (AONB MP) – Zone 7d02 (Lee) proposes to maintain and improve the defences to continue protecting Lee, through holding the line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the proposal to ‘hold the line’ at Lee is not compromised
Restricted width and alignment of roads serving the site	DM05 & I5 (AONB MP)– require safe and well-designed vehicular access and egress that consider the needs and accessibility of all highway users including pedestrians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design the access to secure highway safety and ensure there is sufficient capacity on the approach roads recognising the historic use of the site

Lee Bay Hotel Site – Site and Design Considerations

Context

The Lee Bay Hotel has been disused since it ceased trading in 2005 and its present dilapidated condition, together with the overgrown gardens, do not reflect its former status as a hotel, or the well-maintained character of buildings elsewhere in Lee. There have been various proposals to develop the site, some of which retained parts of the original hotel, and others which proposed complete demolition. These proposals have all included elements of new build within the grounds. In principle, the Council are generally supportive of a viable comprehensive regeneration of this site to enhance its character and appearance and to deliver public benefits to the local community.

Design Considerations

Whilst the hotel is identified as a non-designated heritage asset, it is generally accepted that the eastern end of the existing hotel is not of sufficient architectural quality or interest to merit retention. However, the western end of the core building (excluding some modern unsympathetic extensions) does retain many significant arts and crafts features, and includes use of local materials. Because of these characteristics, it complements, contributes to and ties in well with the special character and appearance of the Lee Conservation Area and the setting of nearby listed buildings. Therefore the western core of the building should be retained, whilst there is scope for exploring opportunities for new replacement buildings to the east.

As part of any redevelopment, there are opportunities for enhancement in the areas immediately adjacent to the building, particularly the stone paved area close to the beach. Here the arts and crafts style use of local stone features could be used to enhance both the public realm and the hotel facilities. There is an opportunity to remove the crude flat roofed extension on the north-west end of the building, which would again enhance both the design and appearance of the building itself as well as the experience of a visitor because the panorama of Old Mill, beach and gabled end of the Hotel reveals itself on emerging westwards down the lane.

The valley is relatively open and views across it are a key feature within the conservation area and local Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Any new development within the grounds of the former hotel should seek to retain this sense of open space, and follow the dispersed settlement pattern prevalent within the rest of the Conservation Area. Flood zones cross the centre of the site (east to west) which restrict opportunities for new dwellings and buildings there. More vulnerable uses such as housing must be directed to areas of lower flood risk to the north of the site. Proposals for less vulnerable uses within areas at risk of flooding may be acceptable where adequate and appropriate flood resilience and mitigation measures arise from land modelling as part of a strategy to provide flood risk betterment. Existing buildings on site are not at risk of flooding, therefore the location of the current buildings on the site should provide a guide to the siting of any new buildings, including if the eastern part of the former hotel building is demolished.

In addition to maintaining the contribution made to local landscape character by open space, any new development should also seek to reinforce the character of the Conservation Area by use of local, traditional materials and appropriate detailing. Any development must achieve a high quality design. It is particularly important to use building forms that reflect and complement the eclectic and varied building styles present within the village. The density of development will need to reflect that of the rest of the village, which is typically low.

Proposed landscaping for the site as part of any redevelopment needs to complement the open character across the centre of the site whilst protecting the conservation area's special open character and appearance. It also needs to incorporate planting species that enhance the local landscape character, can survive in a coastal environment, as well as contributing to the redevelopment's biodiversity net gain.

The South West Coast Path follows the main road adjoining the northern and western site boundaries passing the former hotel buildings, whilst footpath 36 follows the southern site boundary. New connections from the site to these adjoining footpaths should be provided where feasible. A new footpath through the site to join these footpaths would be supported.

Residential Considerations

Lee is recognised as a Rural Settlement where development is enabled at a modest scale to meet locally generated housing needs. Any new-build housing should be occupied only by households with an established local connection to Lee as set out in the local plan, subject to consideration of any robust viability justification that is integral to the comprehensive regeneration of the site.

Any new homes within the converted hotel building can provide open market housing without local connection ties. If the whole site delivers 5 or more new dwellings, there will be a requirement to deliver a proportion of affordable homes based on the recent Lee housing needs survey, subject to viability and updated assessment of any vacant building credit.

Site Address: Former Lee Bay Hotel, Lee, Ilfracombe
Policies: ST07(3) and DM24
Total Site Area: approximately 1.8 hectares
Developable Site Area (Residential): approximately 0.3 hectares

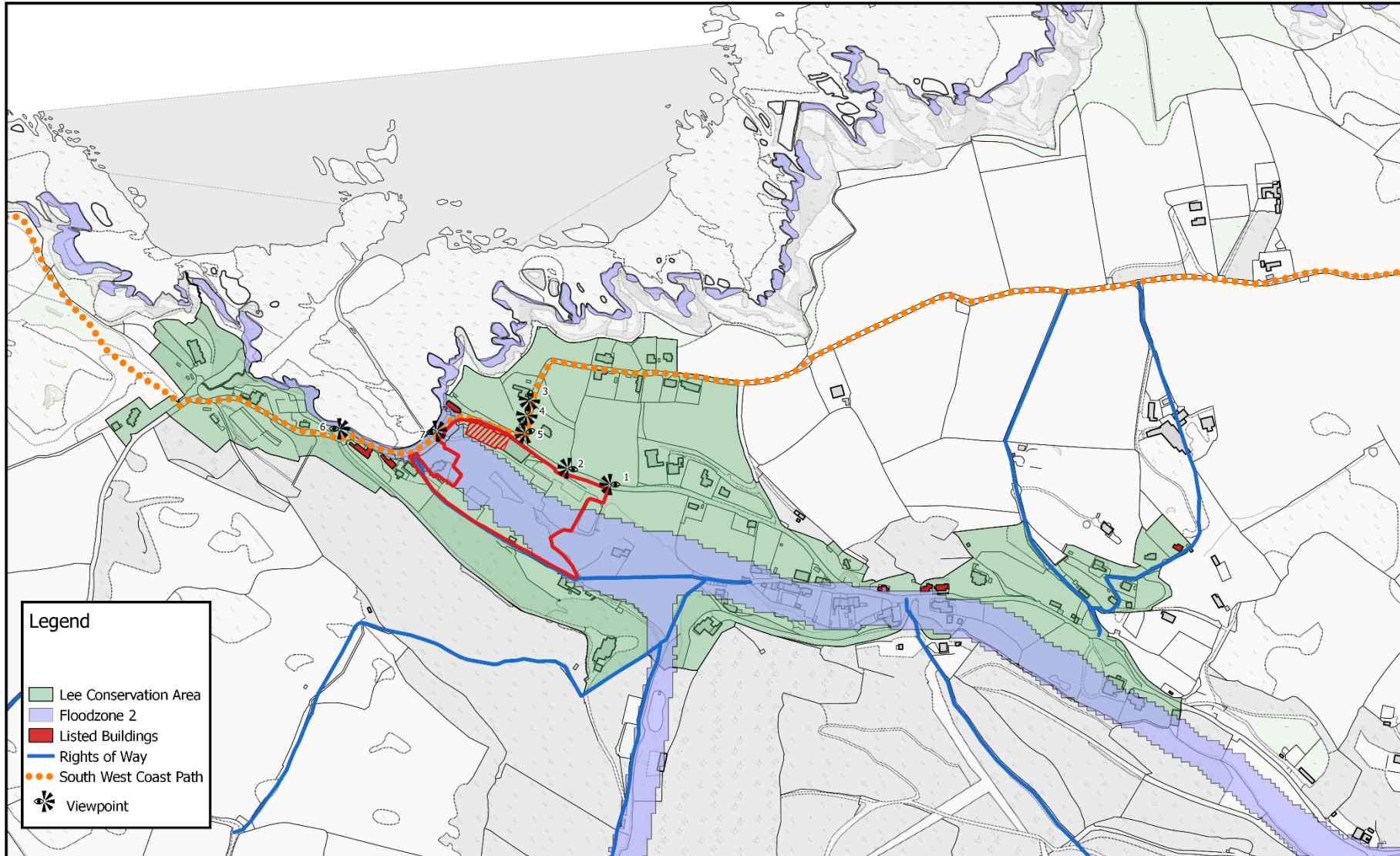
Site: location plan



Site: aerial photo



Constraints and Opportunities Map for Redevelopment of Lee Bay Hotel site



Key Views of Lee Bay Hotel site



Viewpoint 1



Viewpoint 2



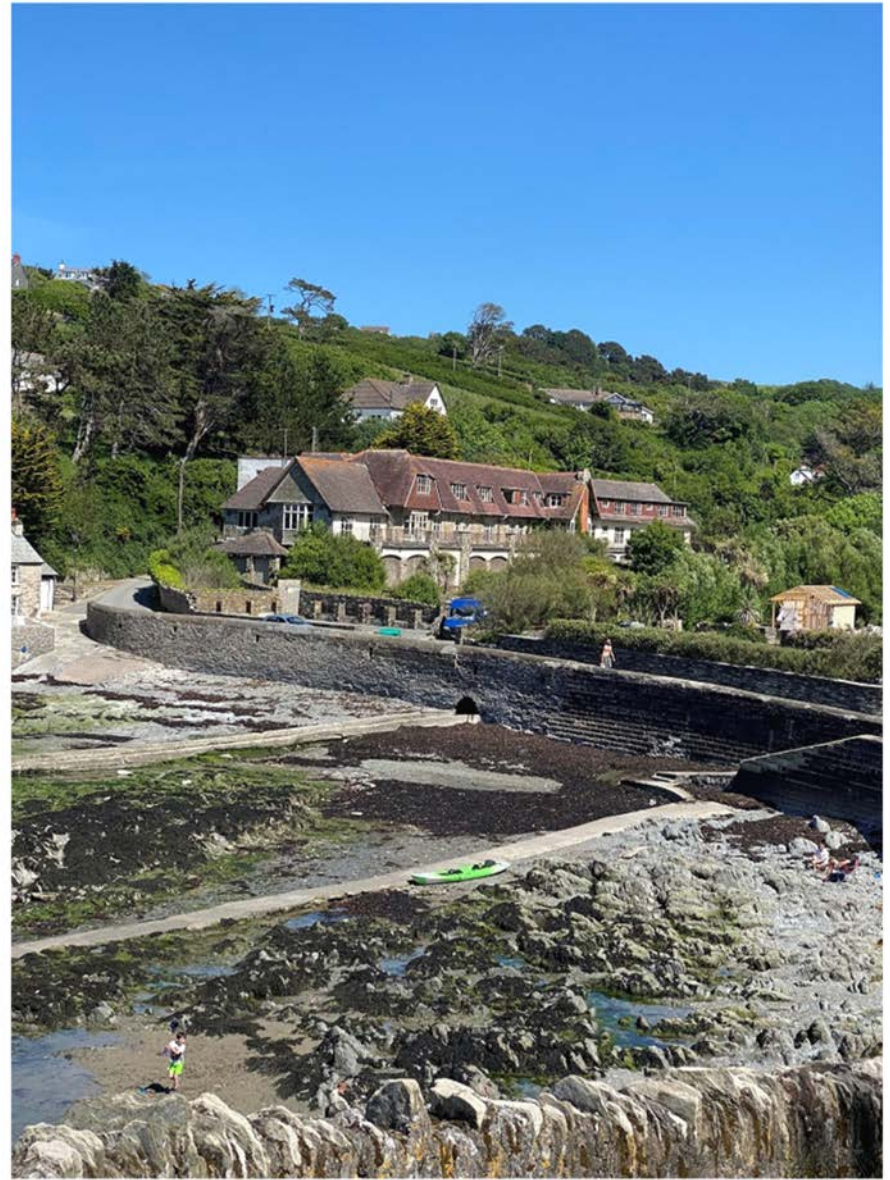
Viewpoint 3



Viewpoint 4



Viewpoint 5



Viewpoint 6



Viewpoint 7

Lee Bay Hotel Site – Design Requirements

In addition to the design requirements set out below, development will also be supported by BfL12 (if major) and independently assessed by a Design Review Panel, funded by the developer. As a major development in the AONB it will need to demonstrate compliance with the requirement of only being permissible in 'exceptional circumstances where it is in the public interest', as well as being compatible with the 'special character' of the site and the surrounding landscape, and providing public benefit.

Site Layout:

- Where possible, retain and convert the historic core of the original hotel building (western building) to create residential and/or commercial uses
- Demolish the later eastern extension and redevelop with well-designed houses on a similar footprint that reflects existing architectural qualities within Lee. Detached or semi-detached housing may be appropriate here but terraces are unlikely to be acceptable
- No new dwellings to be located south of the watercourse
- Detached or semi-detached properties may be appropriate on part of the former car park along the main road frontage
- South facing elevations should be designed to optimise opportunities for solar gain
- No new buildings to be sited in areas at risk of flooding
- A range of densities may be acceptable but the development must reflect the dispersed character of the settlement with clear open spaces between buildings

Scale / Bulk / Height:

- Provide a mix of house types and sizes that reflect local needs
- Any new build development should not exceed the height of the original hotel building to be retained

Roofscape:

- Maintain a varied roof-scape, with different roof forms and roof materials to add interest when viewed from elevated positions around the village

Vehicular / Pedestrian / Cycle Access:

- Re-use the existing site entrance as a single point of vehicular access
- Create new pedestrian access to/from Footpath 36 along the southern site boundary
- Create new pedestrian access to/from South West Coast Path along the northern or western site boundary
- Provide an appropriate scale and range of car parking on site to meet anticipated needs for residents
- Retain and upgrade the existing public car park to the rear of Wrinklewood for tourism and local community use

Green Infrastructure:

- Retain and enhance the open character of the grounds and provide public benefit for tourism and local community use including provision of a public footpath along one side of the stream that runs through the grounds to the bay
- Incorporate landscape planting that can survive and flourish in a coastal environment and will enhance the local landscape character
- Ensure re-development delivers a biodiversity net gain
- Preserve and enhance the watercourse running through the site, removing culverting where possible

External Materials / Appearance:

- Reflect the local vernacular character of Lee including use of natural stone walling of a style used extensively throughout the village
- Any external lighting needs to be designed to minimise light pollution on the AONB and to safeguard protected species
- Any sense of 'urbanisation' through the design of pavements, and street and security lighting must be avoided

Waste Management / Recycling

- Provide adequate off-street storage space for wheeled bins and recycling facilities
- Bin / recycling storage should be integrated within the development whilst siting and landscaping should reduce its visual impact
- Improve sewage treatment facilities within the site, serving the site and neighbouring properties