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When calling or telephoning please ask for: David Taylor

My Ref:DBT /let/nhood43

Your Ref:

Dear Sir

Subject: Coastal Footpath and Hooe Lake bridge link

Thank you for your letter dated 29 June with respect to the above matter. In order to clarify things, I feel it would be useful to explain the planning background to this issue.

The foot and cycle bridge link was first raised in the Hooe Lake Planning Study 1993. This was a non statutory study, but which was adopted as policy by the Council. The foot/cycle bridge was subsequently incorporated as Proposal 107 into the First Deposit Local Plan 2001 (FDLP). The bridge link was also referred to as part of Proposal 104 for development of Hooe Lake Quarry.

This document was never formally adopted, and did not progress beyond First Deposit consultation stage, as the government of the day abandoned the old Local Plan system in favour of Local Development Frameworks (LDF). This document and a number of planning policy documents including the Hooe Lake Planning Study were however accorded limited planning status in the determination of planning applications, pending being superseded by Local Development Framework documents. On the 13 July 2010 this situation changed when a report was agreed by Cabinet to formally abandon the FDLP and other studies and briefs including the Hooe Lake Planning Study. The result is that there is no draft proposal, or policy with relation to this bridge link.

The S106 Planning Obligation imposed on the Old Wharf planning permission made provision to allow a bridge connection to that side of the inlet if it was required, but no more than that.

The previous documents will provide a useful starting point for discussions on the emerging LDF, however we will need to demonstrate that any proposal that is put forward is likely to be deliverable.

The cost of a bridge would likely to be in excess of a million pounds, and funding would likely to have to have been from several sources including public finance. In discussing this with colleagues from transport, it is clear that this is not a priority link, and in present financial circumstances could not be supported.

It is also beyond the scope of any individual development to pay for this bridge, as there are a number of other community benefits that private development is expected to contribute towards, including affordable housing, schools, open space, nature conservation, essential and strategic transport infrastructure etc.

Public opinion will however be able to be expressed on this and other local issues, through the Sustainable Neighbourhood Consultation process in December and January 2010 /2011 which depending upon government reforms to the planning system will set the planning framework for this part of the city for the coming years.

I hope that this answers your enquiry if however you require any points of clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Spatial Planning Co ordinator