

## Esplanade Quarter

### Purpose of the Report

In July 2010 the Minister granted outline consent for the scheme to develop the Esplanade Quarter. Subsequent to that approval the Waterfront Enterprise Board (WEB) have been pursuing the development of the site through discussions and negotiations. The development will not begin on site until such time as pre-let agreements are in place with occupants of the proposed buildings. The work carried out by WEB has revealed that the emerging demand for commercial office floor space requires some amendments be made to elements of layout and scale within the easternmost section of the scheme. In considering the changes the Minister has been determined that the core principles behind the master plan should not be compromised in any way and commissioned Hopkins Architects (authors of the master plan) to test and revise the proposed changes. That work has now been completed, and the Minister is satisfied that the changes are acceptable and that the principles which define the master plan will not be compromised.

In reaching this conclusion the Minister insisted that an amended site plan was prepared and a computer generated “fly through” completed that accurately illustrated the implications of the new arrangement of buildings and squares. This work was subsequently assessed by the officers of this department and was reviewed by the Waterfront Design Group (WDG) who have been advisors to the Minister throughout the preparation and eventual approval of the master plan. Both parties support the proposed changes. Some consultation has taken place with stakeholders but this will be repeated in depth when detailed applications are submitted.

The changes represent amendments to the detail and scale of some of the buildings and open spaces. They do not depart however from the broad concept of the master plan which is to provide a new waterfront with streets, and squares with a firm emphasis on design quality and place making. New modern office floor space is part of that concept. The sinking of La Route de la Liberation will not be the works that signal the start of the construction of the Esplanade Quarter. The sinking of the road will be a later phase. It is expected that detailed applications will be submitted in June 2011.

### Recommendation

Approve the amendments to layout, and the size scale and location of the open spaces and buildings in the eastern section of the site and adopt as an addendum to the Esplanade Quarter master plan.

### Reason for decision

The proposed changes are compatible with the concepts and principles as set out within the master plan and reflect emerging demand for new office floor space within the Esplanade Quarter.

## Action Required

Inform WEB that the Minister is prepared to accept the proposed changes provided they accord with the plans and other illustrations submitted as part of this work and that the master plan should be amended accordingly.

## Legal and Resource Implications

None

Signed: Richard Williamson Principal Planner