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To: Councillor Milne, Convener; Councillor Finlayson; Vice Convener; and Councillors Boulton, Corall, Cormie, Grant, Greig, Jaffrey, Lawrence, MacGregor, Jean Morrison MBE, Samarai, Jennifer Stewart, Thomson and Townson.

Also, for information, as Local Members:- Councillor May and Councillor Nathan Morrison

Town House,
ABERDEEN, 20 August 2014

PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – PUBLIC HEARING

The Members of the **PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** are requested to meet in the Town & County Hall, Town House on **THURSDAY, 28 AUGUST 2014 at 9.30 am.**

JANE G. MACEACHRAN
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

BUSINESS

- 1 Former St Nicholas House, Broad Street - Mixed use development including office, hotel, retail, restaurant, leisure, civic space including car parking, access, landscaping, infrastructure and public realm improvements (Pages 1 - 104)
Reference Number - 140698

THE HEARING PROGRAMME WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE MEETING

Website Address: www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Martyn Orchard on 01224 523097 or email morchard@aberdeencity.gov.uk, or Martin Allan on 01224 523057 or email mallan@aberdeencity.gov.uk

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Agenda Item 1

Planning Development Management Committee

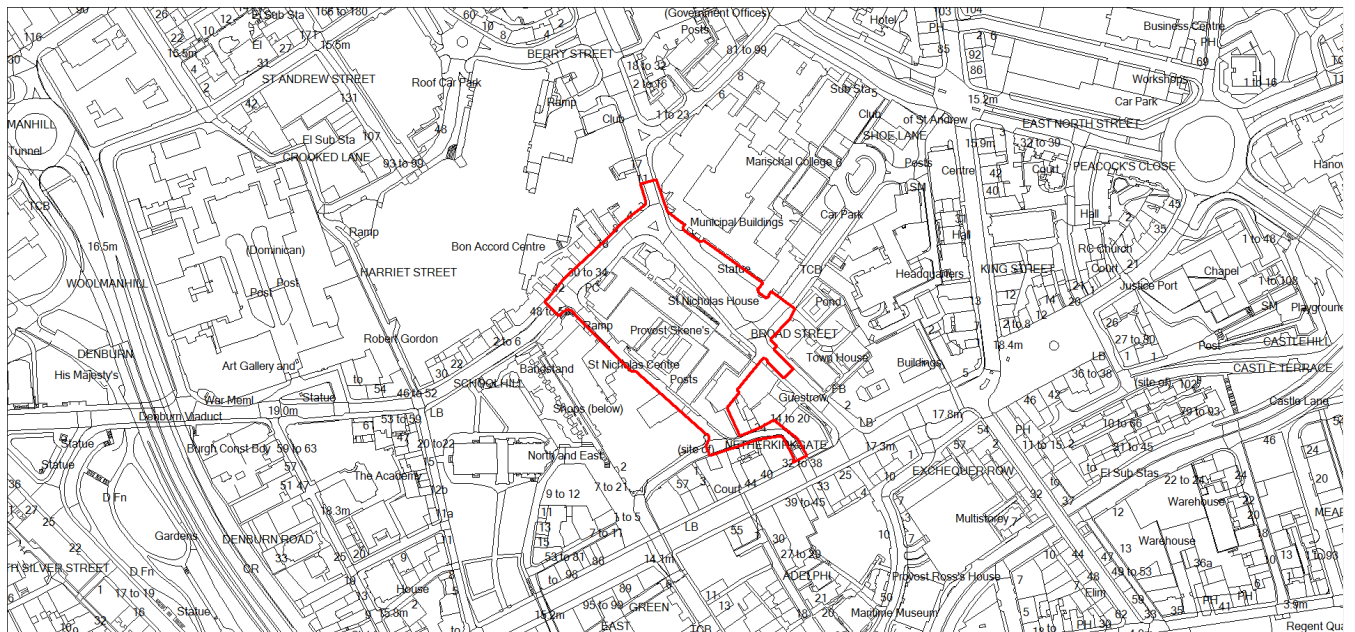
FORMER ST.NICHOLAS HOUSE, BROAD STREET, ABERDEEN

MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING OFFICE, HOTEL, RETAIL, RESTAURANT, LEISURE, CIVIC SPACE INCLUDING CAR PARKING, ACCESS, LANDSCAPING, INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

For: Muse Developments Ltd

Application Type : Detailed Planning Permission
Application Ref. : P140698
Application Date: 13/05/2014
Officer: Gavin Evans
Ward : George Street/Harbour (A Morrison/N Morrison)

Advert : Section 60/65 - Dev aff
LB/CA
Advertised on: 28/05/2014
Committee Date: 24/07/14
Community Council : Comments



RECOMMENDATION: Defer for Public Hearing

DESCRIPTION

The proposed development relates to the Council's former HQ, St Nicholas House, along with the section of Broad Street between Upperkirkgate and Queen Street.

Broad Street runs north-west from the eastern end of Union Street, providing connection to Upperkirkgate and Gallowgate. To the west lie the Bon-Accord and St Nicholas shopping centres, with the Kirk of St Nicholas, Robert Gordon's College and Aberdeen Art Gallery beyond. On the northern side of Broad Street lies the category 'A' listed Marischal College, which was extensively renovated to act as the Council's HQ from 2011.

The St Nicholas House site and the adjacent St Nicholas Shopping Centre are excluded from the Union Street Conservation Area, which surrounds them on all sides. The Conservation Area incorporates the eastern side of Broad Street, the northern side of Upperkirkgate, the southern side of Upperkirkgate and the land to the west of the St Nicholas Centre. The northern side of Upperkirkgate is characterised by a series of townhouses, between 3 and 4 ½ storeys, the majority of which are listed (category 'B' and 'C').

St Nicholas House was a building of modernist design comprising a 14 storey tower and a long, 3 storey wing projecting along its Broad Street frontage and wrapping around onto Upperkirkgate. The tower was sited opposite Broad Street's junction with Queen Street. Flourmill Lane runs to the rear and gave access to basement car parking. A pedestrian path, under the projecting 3-storey wing, allowed for access through from Broad Street to Flourmill Lane, passing a landscaped area in front of the category 'A' listed Provost Skene's House, originally dating from the 16th century, which lies at the centre of the site and is considered a rare surviving example of the early burgh architecture. At time of writing St Nicholas House is in the final stages of demolition, opening up previously obscured views of Provost Skene's House and Marischal College.

RELEVANT HISTORY

A Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN), ref P131473 ,was submitted to the Council on 7th October 2013 for a, *'Mixed use development including office, hotel, retail, restaurants, leisure, civic space including car parking, access, landscaping, infrastructure and public realm improvements'*.

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening opinion request was submitted in 2013 by CBRE on behalf of Muse Developments, to determine whether or not an Environmental Statement (ES) would be required for a, *"Mixed use development including office, hotel, retail, restaurants, leisure, civic space, car parking, access, landscaping, infrastructure and public realm improvements"*. Aberdeen City Council confirmed in November 2013 that an ES would not be required.

A separate application for Listed Building Consent, ref P140755, has been lodged with the Council. This seeks consent for the following works:

'removal of steps and balustrade to front of Provost Skene House, re-profile and renew surface finishes between the balustrade and Provost Skene House and re-location of stone arch'.

This application is pending determination at the time of writing.

PROPOSAL

Detailed planning permission is sought for a mixed use development including the following: office, hotel, retail, restaurant and leisure uses; civic space; car parking; access routes; landscaping; other infrastructure; and public realm improvements.

The development essentially involves: the formation of three new buildings (two office and one a hotel) surrounding Provost Skene's House; an area of public open space laid out via the pedestrianisation of Broad Street; a new garden space around Provost Skene's House; and a covered courtyard space enclosed by the northernmost of the two office buildings. The siting of buildings and the presence of pends allow for a pedestrian route, running south-east to north-west, which is loosely based on the historic Guestrow route. Two below-ground levels, accessed via Flourmill Lane, would accommodate 250 car parking spaces.

16,264sqm of office floorspace would be provided, along with 2,193sqm of retail (class 1) and restaurants (class 3), and a 4-star hotel (125 bedrooms). Service laybys would be formed in Flourmill Lane, though it is proposed to allow servicing via the Broad Street frontage during certain hours.

The Broad Street frontage would be defined by the two office buildings, between which a break in the frontage would allow for access to and views of Provost Skene's House, which would be set within an area of public open space. Additional accesses are provided via 'pends' off Broad Street into both office buildings. Ground floors within the office buildings are set back behind a colonnade along the Broad Street frontage, which is intended to provide shelter. The majority of ground-level floorspace within these buildings would be in retail and leisure use, including restaurants, the only exception being reception spaces for the offices above.

Office 02, to the south-eastern corner of the site, would achieve a height of 27.75m above ground level to its rooftop (7 storeys) plus rooftop plant above, with the massing of the building broken up at several points by setting upper floor accommodation back from the building's footprint. This is particularly evident in the division separating the two office buildings, where office 02 presents 5 storeys to the internal pedestrian route, with 6th and 7th floor accommodation set further back.

Office 01 occupies the northern end of the site, enclosing a central covered atrium space on all sides and presenting frontage to Broad Street, Upperkirkgate

and Flourmill Lane, as well as providing the immediate backdrop to Provost Skene's House. This building varies in height due to both the fall in ground levels between Broad Street and Flourmill Lane and the top 2 floors of accommodation being set back from the building frontage in places, but achieves a height of 24.75m (6 storeys) plus rooftop plant above, along with a further lower floor level providing a retail unit at the corner of Upperkirkgate and Flourmill Lane.

The proposed hotel building, L-shaped in plan and providing accommodation across 7 above-ground floors, would be sited in the south-western corner of the site, adjacent to the junction of Flourmill Lane and Upperkirkgate. It would achieve an overall height of 23.7m to roof level, plus plant above, reflecting the lower floor-to-ceiling height of the hotel building. Pedestrian access from the Netherkirkgate end of Flourmill Lane to Broad Street would be provided via the formation of new pedestrian steps. Stepped access is also shown between Flourmill Lane and the area around Provost Skene's House.

The elevations of the two office buildings are to be principally finished with granite cladding and glazed curtain walling, with the massing of the buildings broken up through the varied use of these materials. A random window pattern is shown in granite-clad sections. Ground floor levels feature a greater proportion of glazing, reflecting the presence of retail, restaurants and reception areas. The hotel building would be finished in a ceramic granite cladding, with a more regular window pattern.

Proposals for the composition of the pedestrianised civic space involve granite paving, with sculpted benches and seating edges also in granite. The edges of the pedestrianised space, at Queen Street and Upperkirkgate, are defined by similar benches. Trees, uplift in evenings, would be sited at the Queen Street end of the space, intended to form a strong edge and shelter the space. A series of lawns, both at ground and elevated levels, would sit within this space. A water feature and external seating are also indicated.

Supporting Documents

All drawings and the supporting documents listed below relating to this application can be viewed on the Council's website at

<http://planning.aberdeencity.gov.uk/PlanningDetail.asp?ref=140698>

- Pedestrian Level Wind Microclimate Assessment
- Design and Access Statement
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Planning Statement
- Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report and appendices
- Desk-based Archaeological Assessment
- Sustainability and Low Carbon Development Statement
- Heritage Statement
- Public Realm Strategy

- Landscape Surface Finishes Plan
- Phase 1 Habitat Survey
- Transport Assessment
- Travel Plan
- Drainage Assessment

On accepting the disclaimer enter the application reference quoted on the first page of this report.

PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

The proposed development has been the subject of pre-application consultation, as required for applications falling within the category of 'major developments', defined in the relevant 'Hierarchy of Development' Regulations. The extensive consultation undertaken has exceeded the minimum statutory requirements, and has included the following;

- Three separate public events, held at Aberdeen Art Gallery in October 2013, December 2013 and April 2014;
- Advertisement in local newspapers (Evening Express and Press and Journal) 7 days ahead of each public event;
- Invitations sent to key consultees and interested parties two weeks in advance of first event;
- After each event, exhibition materials were put on display at Marischal College's main reception;
- Sessions at local schools and colleges to coincide with the first public event;
- An exhibition bus visiting local communities, coinciding with the first public event; and
- Dedicated website at www.marischalsquare.co.uk

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The application has been referred to the Planning Development Management Committee because it has been the subject of more than 20 objections, and is a development in which the Council has a financial interest, due to its ownership of the St Nicholas House site. These factors trigger a report to Committee to seek a decision on whether or not a public hearing should be held.

CONSULTATIONS

Roads Projects Team – A response has been provided in relation to the submitted Transport Assessment (TA). This advises that the TA does not contain sufficient information to allow a conclusion to be reached on the impact of the development. A full response, including details of necessary contributions towards the Strategic Transport Fund, is to be provided under separate cover.

Further information or revision is sought in the following areas:

- Provision of accessible through routes
- Appropriate design of junctions
- Capacity and design of replacement bus timing points and coach drop-off area
- Arrangements for servicing of the development, including arrangements in the event that the development comes forward in advance of the pedestrianisation of Broad St
- Access/barrier arrangements at the proposed car park access
- Arrangements for the managing of car parking spaces within the development
- Consideration of existing cycle facilities and proposals for infrastructure necessary to support the development (including off-site)
- Pedestrian signposting
- Traffic modelling exercises and results
- Information required in relation to construction plan, including phasing, network changes, temporary TROs etc.

Environmental Health – No objection to the redevelopment of the former St Nicholas House site, however advise that comments relating to pedestrianisation of Broad Street will be provided separately.

Air Quality - Note that the development and its associated traffic would have a negligible impact on air quality. States that the development represents a 'medium' risk to human health as a result of dust emissions associated with the construction phase, however appropriate mitigation measures can reduce emissions so that impact would be negligible.

Notes that the main air quality concern arises from traffic displaced as a result of the pedestrianisation of Broad Street. Identifies increases in NO₂ and PM₁₀ concentrations at West North Street and King Street, where current air quality objectives are already significantly exceeded. Whilst the submitted assessment identifies both beneficial change and detrimental change for certain properties, it ultimately concludes that overall impact would be negligible. It is noted, however, that this assessment did not make reference to detrimental change occurring at locations where levels already exceed air quality objectives.

Noise – Notes potential to cause noise nuisance from building services and plant, deliveries, traffic, amplified music and patrons visiting the development. Noise from building services and fixed plant can be controlled by appropriate building design and deliveries by restricting their timings. Retail units, restaurants and cafes as proposed are likely to play only background music, and would not be expected to open late at night, and on that basis amplified music is not envisaged to cause nuisance. Impact arising from additional roads traffic and patrons of the development are considered to be insignificant.

Advise that a noise assessment will be required to determine the effect of the re-routing of traffic on noise levels at parts of Kings Street and Union Street, which

are currently Candidate Noise Management Areas (CNMAs), and being considered as potential Noise Management Areas (NMAs).

Odours – Restaurant and hotel uses are identified as being likely to give rise to cooking odours. It is therefore requested that suitable filtrated extraction systems be incorporated as part of the design and that any terminal point be at the highest part of the buildings.

Developer Contributions Team – Given the extensive public realm works included within the proposed development, and the benefits attributable to the redevelopment of the site, it has not been considered appropriate to seek additional financial contributions towards core path network or public realm improvements.

Highlights requirements for developments to make a fair and proportionate contribution to the Strategic Transport Fund, which ensures the delivery of a package of road and public transport interventions where the cumulative impact of new development is likely to cause increased congestion. This site is liable for contributions to the STF, with the exact level of contribution to be determined through consultation with the Council's Roads Projects Team.

Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure (Flooding) - No comments provided Scottish Water have no objections to the application.

Notes that attenuation volumes designed are acceptable to ACC, however as the receiving combined sewer is owned by Scottish Water, it is appropriate to seek their approval. Notes that the proposal does not include the expected level of treatment for roof water but, as the system discharges to a Scottish Water combined sewer, concludes that it is for Scottish Water to determine whether they will accept this arrangement.

Education, Culture & Sport (Archaeology) – Recommend that a condition, requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation.

Scottish Environment Protection Agency – No objection. Encourage the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) rather than discharging surface water to a combined sewer. Recommend consultation with Scottish Water to establish that there is available capacity in the public sewer for surface water run-off from the development. Recommend a condition, requiring submission and agreement of a site-specific Construction Method Statement.

Scottish Water – No response received at time of writing.

Historic Scotland – No objection. Express satisfaction that the proposed development would not have any significant adverse impact on the setting of Provost Skene's House, Marischal College and Greyfriar's Church. Indeed, state that the setting of these listed buildings and the wider setting of the Conservation Area can be positively transformed by the proposed development.

Generally content that the development would sit comfortably in the existing setting, and are pleased that the scheme seeks to better integrate Provost Skene's House with intimate vistas and connections, notably from Broad Street. Would welcome further discussion of the treatment for the proposed Provost Skene's House gardens. Note that a separate response will be provided in response to LBC application P140755 concerning relocation of the arch and wall. Would welcome clarification of the proposals for the public space/pedestrian lane at the immediate rear/north of Provost Skene's house in terms of any works directly impacting on the building and landscape surfacing/street furniture and lighting.

As a separate matter to the current applications, HS would welcome clarification from ACC on its intentions for the re-opening of Provost Skene's House and any associated proposed works.

Architecture and Design Scotland (A+DS) – A+DS have provided feedback to the design team via 3 separate workshop sessions, held in August 2013, January 2014 and May 2014 respectively. In their most recent project appraisal report, issued June 2014, the panel summarised as follows:

- The scheme generally appears to have evolved positively throughout the workshop series. Generally the designs as submitted as part of the planning application have the potential to form the basis of a good scheme, within the commercial constraints of the project. However, there are still specific areas of the designs that the Panel felt could be developed further and which would benefit from further refinement. These were generally felt to be more detailed aspects of the scheme, and which the applicants asserted could be dealt with during the next stage of design development. Based on the forum workshop process carried out to date, and on the assumption that the issues discussed at the workshop and as set out in the full form of A+DS's response will be addressed, A+DS find the project to be 'well considered and supported'.

Aberdeen City and Shire Design Review Panel – The local Design Review Panel considered the proposal in December 2013, though it should be noted that the proposal has changed since that time. The Panel was generally supportive of the proposal as a whole, but noted that there was insufficient detail available regarding proposals for traffic management. The need for consideration of microclimate was highlighted, with particular emphasis on the effects of wind on the pedestrian environment. The main points highlighted in relation to the design merits of the proposal were as follows:

- Views between Schoolhill and Marischal College should be maximised.
- Pedestrianisation of Broad Street was questioned, and the impact this would have on bus routes and traffic movements requires to be fully assessed and appropriately managed.

- Active uses within the development were welcomed, and the use of individual entrances to shops was encouraged to maximise the extent of active frontages.
- Attracting people to the development was highlighted as a challenge. The purpose of the 'Guestrow' route was questioned and, with modification, was identified as a potential way to attract footfall into the development.
- Effects of wind should be assessed to ensure there are not significant adverse effects on pedestrian environment.

Community Council – The local City Centre Community Council objects to the proposed development in its current form, making the following observations;

- Highlights the desire for less buildings and a greater area of open space, expressed by many at consultation events;
- Acknowledges that the land was sold as a development site and accepts the scale of the civic space to be provided;
- Nevertheless retains reservations about the traffic management implications of Broad Street's pedestrianisation;
- Sees merit in the provision of much needed hotel rooms.
- Accepts that demand for office space appears to be for 'new build' rather than conversion of existing buildings, such as those on Union Street, but expresses disappointment at this situation.
- Identifies the gardens around Provost Skene's House as potentially creating a nice, quiet space, but states reservation about the size/scale of the development, particularly along the Upperkirkgate frontage.
- Supportive of 24-hour access through the development, on the understanding that appropriate security measures will be in place.
- Understands that Provost Skene's House would be visible through gaps in the layout, but would be keen to see the main opening made larger. Any loss of commercial floorspace could be made up via an increase in height on the Union St side of the development.
- Would like to see more detail on how spaces could be enlivened, for example through the use of coloured lighting and water features.
- The scale of the development is much greater than had been first thought, and insufficient consideration has been given to the treatment of the proposed civic space.

REPRESENTATIONS

43 letters of representation have been received. The points raised relate to the following matters –

Consultation

- Views expressed at consultation events have been ignored
- Muse have either over-stated the level of public representation or failed to make all comments publicly available

Parking, traffic & accessibility

- Car parking within the site is insufficient to serve the proposed development
- Where will visitors to the area park?
- Traffic modelling suggests gridlocking within the network
- The submitted Transport Assessment has not adequately taken account of the impact of the proposed closure of Broad Street on the wider city centre
- Access and parking arrangements for hotel are queried
- Access to the Bon-Accord Centre car park and vehicle access to the John Lewis store would be made more difficult and routes more convoluted
- Disabled car parking on Queen Street is some distance from the square - the disabled car park which existed opposite M&S should be reinstated
- Journey times will be increased by the pedestrianisation of Broad Street, making existing city centre retail premises less accessible
- Potential impact on pedestrian movement between the Bon Accord and St Nicholas Centres

Pedestrianisation

- Pedestrianisation of Broad Street will cause traffic congestion elsewhere
- Disruption to public transport routes and increased journey times
- Concern over how the proposal will affect Police Scotland operations from Queen Street
- The pedestrianisation proposal appears to be premature to a full assessment of the alternative options to achieve similar objectives, and also to an agreed City Centre Masterplan

Design proposals

- Blocks views of Marischal College and Provost Skene's House and acts as a barrier between the two historic buildings
- Design is unsympathetic to its surroundings
- This proposal repeats the mistakes of St Nicholas House
- The proposal represents overdevelopment of the site
- The design, scale, height and massing of buildings remains excessive
- These proposals do nothing to promote the city as a tourist attraction
- Buildings should have more curves to reflect the waves of the sea
- Support for a tall, iconic building
- Buildings should incorporate rooftop activity (e.g. cafés and restaurants)
- Queries whether the water feature in front of Provost Skene's House will remain (sculpture designed by Thomas Bayliss Huxley Jones – currently understood to be in storage per ACC Structure Trail publication)
- Concern over treatment of Flourmill Lane (retained purely as a service lane, rather than introducing linkages with the aim of introducing active frontages and enhancement of this environment in future)
- The layout is well-considered, but less successful in elevation
- Building heights are too uniform, giving a bulky appearance to the whole
- Elevations are like those of any number of other buildings in Scotland
- Building heights should be increased to reduce footprint, open up the site and allow for more green space

- Buildings will cast Broad St into shade for long periods
- The proposed development will ruin the city's skyline

Impacts arising from the proposed development

- Potential impact on existing retail premises - Union Street, George Street etc.
- The opening hours of any cafes/bars should be restricted
- There is no 'need' for new retail uses or hotel – existing vacancies on Union Street suggest that there is no market for additional retail.
- Demolition works have breached noise restrictions – assurances are sought regarding the control of noise during construction
- Re-routing of traffic will have adverse impacts on air quality and will cause noise pollution
- The height of new buildings will create a canyon effect between the development and Marischal College, funnelling wind to uncomfortable levels
- ACC's own STAG appraisal has failed to adequately assess noise and air quality considerations
- Limited mitigation measures are proposed to address impact of diversions

Suggestions for alternative proposals

- The site should be laid out as a largely open civic plaza/civic green space
- Any new open space should incorporate a fountain, statues, benches, flowers etc
- Union Street buildings should be restored and rents made affordable to encourage shops to be located on the main street

Other

- The Council/developer's primary motivation is money
- Money was wasted on consultation as a decision has already been made
- The plans were very difficult to view online due to the size of files
- Arrangements for viewing plans at Marischal College were poor
- Assurances are sought that the integrity and professionalism of the planning service has not been compromised by the Council's interest in the site
- Councillors urged not to vote along party-political lines
- It was understood that the site is held in the 'common good'

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy and Guidance

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

SPP sets out national planning policies for operation of the planning system and for the development and use of land. Principal policies relating to sustainability and placemaking are of relevance, as are subject policies including those on the promotion of town centres; supporting business and employment; and valuing the

historic environment. SPP also sets out policy principles in relation to promoting sustainable transport and active travel, and facilitating the transition to a low carbon economy.

Creating Places

This is the Scottish Government's policy statement on architecture and place, which contains policies and guidance on the importance of architecture and design.

Designing Streets

A Scottish Government policy statement putting street design at the centre of placemaking. It contains policies and guidance on the design of new or existing streets and their construction, adoption and maintenance.

Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP)

This sets out Scottish Ministers' policies for the historic environment, and complements Scottish Planning Policy. Underlines the requirements of section 59(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 that the planning authority, in determining any application for planning permission for development that affects a listed building or its setting, is required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (SDP) 2014

The SDP sets out a series of key objectives for the growth of the City and Aberdeenshire. The SDPA recognises the importance of the City Centre as an asset, and highlights that its regeneration is vital for the economic future of the area, stating a need to attract more major office developments to the city centre. It is also stated that there needs to be a strong focus on improving the quality of the city centre's shopping, leisure, commercial and residential environment, with partial pedestrianisation of Union Street having an important role.

A stated objective of the plan is provide opportunities which encourage economic development and create new employment in a range of areas that are both appropriate for and attractive to the needs of different industries. This must be balanced against another key objective to make sure new development maintains and improves the region's important built, natural and cultural assets.

The SDPA sets targets for major employment and service developments in strategic growth areas to show that they are easy to access by walking, cycling or using public transport, and Travel Plans for such developments should reduce the need for people to use cars.

Aberdeen Local Development Plan

C1: City Centre Development – Regional Centre

Development within the City Centre must contribute towards the delivery of the vision for the City Centre as a regional centre as expressed in the City Centre Development Framework. As such, the City Centre is the preferred location for

retail, commercial and leisure development serving a city-wide or regional market.

Proposals for new retail, commercial, leisure and other city centre uses shall be located in accordance with the sequential approach referred to in the Retailing section of the plan and in the relevant 'Hierarchy of Centres' supplementary guidance.

C2: City Centre Business Zone and Union Street

The City Centre Business Zone is the preferred location for major retail developments, as defined in policy RT1. Policy C2 seeks to encourage the retention of existing retail uses within the City Centre Business Zone, and in instances where it has been satisfactorily demonstrated that there is a lack of demand for continued retail use, new uses must enhance or adequately maintain daytime vitality and an active street frontage. Proposals to use basement and upper floor levels for retail, residential and other uses compatible with a city centre location will be encouraged in principle.

I1: Infrastructure Delivery and Developer Contributions

Development must be accompanied by the infrastructure, services and facilities required to support new or expanded communities and the scale and type of developments proposed. Where development either individually or cumulatively will place additional demands on community facilities or infrastructure that would necessitate new facilities or exacerbate deficiencies in existing provision, the Council will require the developer to meet or contribute to the cost of providing or improving such infrastructure or facilities

T2: Transport impact of development

Policy T2 requires that new developments demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise the traffic generated. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will be required for developments which exceed thresholds set out in the associated 'Transport and Accessibility' Supplementary Guidance. Maximum car parking standards are set out in the associated supplementary guidance.

D1: Architecture and Placemaking

Policy D1 sets out that, in order to ensure high standards of design, new development must be designed with due consideration for its context and make a positive contribution to its setting. It also notes that landmark or high buildings should respect the heights and scale of their surroundings, the urban topography and the city's skyline, and should aim to preserve or enhance important views.

D3: Sustainable and Active Travel

New development will be designed in order to minimise travel by private car, improve access to services and promote access to services and promote healthy lifestyles by encouraging active travel. Development will maintain and enhance permeability, ensuring that opportunities for sustainable and active travel are both protected and improved. Access to, and movement within and between, new and

existing developments will prioritise transport modes in the following order – walking, cycling, public transport, car and other motorised vehicles.

Street layouts will reflect the principles of Designing Streets and will meet the minimum distances to services as set out in Supplementary Guidance on Transport and Accessibility, helping to achieve maximum levels of accessibility for communities to employment, essential services and areas of recreation. Existing access rights, including core paths, rights of way and paths within the wider network will be protected and enhanced. Where development proposals impact on the access network, the principle of the access must be maintained through the provision of suitable alternative routes.

D5: Built Heritage

Proposals affecting Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings will only be permitted if they comply with Scottish Planning Policy. In relation to development affecting archaeological resources, further details are set out in the 'Archaeology and Planning' supplementary guidance document.

D6: Landscape

Development will not be acceptable unless it avoids;

- significantly adversely affecting landscape character and elements which contribute to, or provide, a distinct 'sense of place' which point to being either in or around Aberdeen or a particular part of it.
- obstructing important views of the City's townscape, landmarks and features when seen from busy and important publicly accessible vantage points such as roads, railways, recreation areas and pathways, and particularly from the main city approaches.

RT1: Sequential Approach and Retail Impact

All retail, commercial, leisure and other development appropriate to town centres should be located in accordance with the hierarchy and sequential approach as set out below and detailed in the 'Hierarchy of Retail Centres' supplementary guidance.

Tier 1 – Regional Centre

Tier 2 – Town centres

Tier 3 – District centres

Tier 4 – Neighbourhood centres

Retail Parks

Proposals serving a catchment area that is city-wide or larger shall be located in the City Centre, preferably in the City Centre Business Zone.

Proposals serving a catchment area of a size similar to that of a town centre or district centre shall be located in a town centre or a district centre, but may also be located in the City Centre Business Zone.

NE3: Urban Green Space

Permission will not be granted to use or redevelop any parks, playing fields, sports pitches, woods, allotments or all other areas of urban green space (including smaller spaces not identified on the Proposals Map) for any use other than recreation or sport, unless an equivalent and equally convenient and accessible area for public access is laid out and made available in the locality by the applicant for urban green space purposes. In all cases, development will only be acceptable provided that:

1. There is no significant loss to the landscape character and amenity of the site and adjoining areas;
2. Public access is either maintained or enhanced;
3. The site is of no significant wildlife or heritage value;
4. There is no loss of established or mature trees;
5. Replacement green space of similar or better quality is located in or immediately adjacent to the same community, providing similar or improved benefits to the replaced area and is as accessible to that community, taking into account public transport, walking and cycling networks and barriers such as major roads;
6. They do not impact detrimentally on lochs, ponds, watercourses or wetlands in the vicinity of the development; and
7. Proposals to develop playing fields or sports pitches should also be consistent with the terms of Scottish Planning Policy.

Note - Only larger areas of Urban Green Space are zoned as NE3 on Proposals Map

NE6: Flooding and Drainage

Where more than 100sqm of floorspace is proposed, developers will be required to submit a Drainage Impact Assessment. Further detail is contained in the relevant 'Drainage Impact Assessments' supplementary guidance. Surface water drainage associated with development must:

1. be the most appropriate available in terms of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems principles; and
2. avoid flooding and pollution both during and after construction.

Connection to the public sewer will be a pre-requisite of all development where this is not already provided, and private wastewater systems in sewered areas will not be permitted.

NE9: Access and Informal Recreation

New development should not compromise the integrity of existing or potential recreational opportunities, including access rights, core paths, other paths and rights of way. Core Paths are shown on the ALDP proposals map. Wherever appropriate, developments should include new or improved provision for public access, permeability and/or links to green space for recreation and active travel.

NE10: Air Quality

Applications for development which has the potential to have a detrimental impact on air quality will not be permitted unless measures to mitigate the impact of air pollutants are proposed and can be agreed with the Planning Authority. Such planning applications should be accompanied by an assessment of the likely impact of development on air quality and any mitigation measures proposed. Attention is drawn to the associated 'Air Quality' supplementary guidance.

R6: Waste Management Requirements for New Development

Details of storage facilities and means of collection must be included as part of any application for development which would generate waste. Further details are set out in the 'Waste Management' supplementary guidance.

R7: Low and Zero Carbon Buildings

States that all new buildings must install low and zero-carbon generating technologies to reduce their predicted carbon dioxide emissions by at least 15% below the levels required by the 2007 building standards. Further guidance, including exceptions and routes to achieving 'deemed compliance' is set out in the associated 'Low and Zero Carbon Buildings' supplementary guidance.

Supplementary Guidance

City Centre Development Framework
Transport and Accessibility
Archaeology and Planning
Hierarchy of Retail Centres
Drainage Impact Assessments
Air Quality
Waste Management
Low and Zero Carbon Buildings
Aberdeen City and Shire Design Review Panel

Other Relevant Material Considerations

The Bon-Accord Quarter Masterplan, whilst not carried forward as supplementary guidance to the current Local Development Plan, provided guidance on the scope for the redevelopment of this area of the City Centre. The City Centre Development framework makes reference to the Bon-Accord Quarter Masterplan.

HEARING GUIDELINES

Under 38A (4) of the Planning Act, the planning authority may decided to hold a hearing for any development not covered by the mandatory requirements and to give the applicant and any other person an opportunity of appearing before and being heard by the committee. In June 2010 the Council agreed guidelines on 'When to hold public hearings in relation to planning applications'. The circumstances in which it is appropriate to hold a public hearing prior to determination of a planning application (where a pre-determination hearing is not statutory) are: where the application has been the subject of more than 20 objections; and, the Council has a financial interest; and / or, the application is a departure from the development plan.

This proposal has attracted a total of 43 objections, and therefore clearly exceeds the threshold stated in the first of these criteria.

The Council is the owner of the St Nicholas House site, and is a Joint Venture Partner in the proposed Marischal Square development, and therefore has a direct financial interest in the outcome of the application.

The combination of these two factors alone is sufficient to trigger a requirement for this report, the purpose of which is to establish whether officers consider a public hearing should be held and to make a recommendation to members accordingly. No recommendation is being made at this time in respect of the determination of the application. A later report will be presented to a future committee making such a recommendation.

Turning to consideration of whether the proposal represents a departure from the Development Plan, it is recognised that the St Nicholas House site is identified as an 'Opportunity Site' in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. Its designation, OP118, does not specify the type of use or development envisaged on the site, simply stating that the site would become vacant on the City Council's departure to Marischal College and noting that the site lies within the area identified in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) as the City Centre Business Zone.

Within the designated City Centre Business Zone (CCBZ), policy C2 of the ALDP is applicable. Policy C2 identifies the CCBZ as the preferred location for major retail developments and encourages the retention of existing retail uses by stating restrictions on changes of use from retail (Class 1 of the Use Classes Order) to any other use.

Policy C1 (City Centre Development – Regional Centre) stipulates that development within the City Centre must contribute towards the delivery of the vision for the City Centre as a major regional centre, as expressed in the City Centre Development Framework. The policy identifies the City Centre as the preferred location for retail, commercial and leisure developments serving a city-wide or regional market.

The proposed development comprises offices, retail, restaurants and leisure uses which is consistent with policy C2's encouragement for the siting of retail, leisure and commercial uses within the City Centre. The location of retail use at the scale proposed in this City Centre location is consistent with the sequential test set out at policy RT1 (Sequential Approach and Retail Impact), which aims to ensure that new retail uses are located within existing retail centres appropriate to their catchment.

Taking these matters into account, it is concluded that the proposal does not represent a departure from the Development Plan in principle, having had regard to its zoning and the nature of the proposed uses, and that detailed assessment of the finer details will establish whether there are any areas of conflict with policy. For the purposes of this report, the proposal is not considered to represent a departure from the Development Plan.

The Council's established hearing guidelines state that the issues which require to be addressed in determining whether a hearing should be held will *include 'whether the development plan policy is up to date and relevant to the matters raised, and whether these matters are material planning considerations.'*

The Aberdeen Local Development Plan, adopted in February of 2012, and the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan, which came into effect on 28th March 2014, collectively constitute the development plan against which applications for planning permission will be considered. At this time the development plan is considered to provide an up-to-date and relevant policy framework for the determination of this planning application.

The representations received raise a wide range of issues, including the massing, scale and architectural composition of the proposed buildings; the implications of Broad Street's closure for congestion on the surrounding road network, air quality and noise pollution; the relationship between the proposals and the surrounding listed buildings, notably Provost Skene's House and Marischal College; and the potentially adverse impact on the viability of existing retail uses. These are all relevant planning considerations and relate to areas covered by the development plan.

Given the significant level of objection and the nature of the matters raised, it is considered that the most appropriate manner of addressing these concerns is to convene a hearing at which all parties will have an opportunity to state their views in front of the elected members of the Planning Development Management Committee. A recommended date of 29th August this year has been set aside for such a Hearing, subject to Committee agreement. Following any hearing a further detailed report will be prepared to allow full consideration of the proposals by a subsequent committee.

RECOMMENDATION

Defer for Public Hearing

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

This application relates to land currently owned by Aberdeen City Council, and has attracted a significant body of public representation, which raises a wide range of material planning considerations, relevant to the planning authority's consideration of the proposal against the Development Plan (Aberdeen Local Development Plan and Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan).

Dr Margaret Bochel
Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.

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ROSEMOUNT & MILE-END COMMUNITY COUNCIL

15 April 2014.

Head of Planning & Infrastructure
Planning & Infrastructure
Strategic Leadership
Aberdeen City Council
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen AB10 1AB

Dear Sir/Madam,

MARISCHAL SQUARE MASTERPLAN.

On behalf of the Rosemount & Mile-End Community Council the following observations & comments are submitted for consideration when final decisions are made by the City Council.

- 1) To make Broad Street into a pedestrian area will cause traffic congestion with a knock on effect throughout the surrounding area, especially if bus stops are relocated to Upperkirkgate. The city centre is already seriously congested & such a proposal will only add further gridlock & frustration.
- 2) Has Police Scotland response going north from the Queen Street HQ been taken into consideration from both efficiency & safety to the public ?
- 3) Disabled parking on Queen Street is some distance from the Square.
- 4) What are the arrangements for the proposed hotel in terms of traffic access & parking ?
- 5) Where are the car parks for the general public who wish to visit this area ?
- 6) Where is the traffic especially buses being re routed to if Broad Street becomes "Pedestrian Only" ?

These are general points which require to be researched in some depth as if any of these proposals are likely to be adopted & introduced the consequences could be catastrophic.

The views of the R&MECC with regard to Marischal Square is that :-

- a) It should be left as an open space with a minimum number of new buildings & those being no more than two storeys high & Broad Street remaining as it is.
- b) There is no requirement for a hotel in these plans or area..
- c) There is no need for additional shopping malls/arcades
- d) Any cafe/bar (s) should have restricted hours for closure (i.e. Midnight) to avoid adding further disorder to the city centre.

Finally, the foregoing views expressed by the members of the Rosemount & Mile-End Community Council are not isolated in the public domain at large within the City. WHY does the City Council & Councillors not LISTEN & TAKE ACCOUNT OF PUBLIC OPINION any more ??

It appears that yes we have been given the opportunity of public consultations but they prove to have little purpose, limited impact & indeed costly, when the minds of the elected members are already made up.

Yours faithfully,



(G A Duncan)

Rosemount & Mile-End Community Council.

P&SD Letters of Representation		
Application Number:		
RECEIVED 22 MAY 2014		
Nor	Sou	MAp
Case Officer Initials:		
Date Acknowledged:		

Review Note

Date 16 June 2014

Job No/ Name SCT3883

Subject Marischal Square Development

Introduction

JMP Consultants has reviewed the transportation implications associated with the proposed Marischal Square Development (Aberdeen Council Reference: 140698) on behalf of our joint clients John Lewis and F&C Reit.

The intention of this review is to inform our client's representations to Aberdeen City Council in relation to the submitted planning application.

A Transport Assessment (prepared by Fairhurst and dated April 2014) was submitted with the planning application. This has been reviewed to understand the proposed transport implications of the development along with the Aberdeen City Council Committee Report of 5th March relating to the Broad Street Civic Square Assessment which are relevant to the pending planning application. The SIAS report "Aberdeen City Centre: Broad Street Testing Report February 2014" has been reviewed in relation to the pedestrianisation of Broad Street along with the "Broad Street Civic Square: Main Transportation Study" which informed the 5 March ACC Committee to discuss the Broad Street Proposals. It is noted that the Fairhurst TA relies on the outcomes of the reports highlighted above.

Overview of Proposals and Transport Interventions

It is noted that the proposed development consists of the following land uses:

- 19,680m² GFA of Office
- 2,397m² GFA of Retail / Restaurants
- 125 Bedroom Hotel
- 5,314m² of Public Realm Space

As part of the development, it is noted that there will be the provision of 250 car parking spaces to cater for the needs of the proposed development. A key part of the development proposal is the pedestrianisation of Broad Street along the development frontage which is intended to improve pedestrian accessibility.

It is understood that the pedestrianisation of Broad Street is a Council objective and it is understood that the proposals are at the early stages of consultation with regard to the promotion of new Traffic Regulation Orders that would be necessary to affect the change. The section of Broad Street proposed for pedestrianisation falls within the planning application red line boundary.

Trip Generation

The transport assessment indicates that the proposed development will generate 480 and 475 vehicle trips in the AM and PM peak periods which is a significant increase on base traffic levels.

These vehicle movements will largely be focussed on the proposed development access point to the car park which will be via Flourmill Lane with the generated traffic subsequently routed via Upper Kirkgate.

Proposed Car Parking

It is noted that a total of 250 office-related car parking spaces are proposed as part of the proposed development although the trip generation levels suggest that the number of vehicles that will be visiting the development far outstrip the car parking that will be provided on site. The Transport Assessment suggests that this overspill car parking activity will divert to the nearby Bon Accord Centre. This would appear to be an unsatisfactory way of planning for the transport needs of a new development. We would have thought that with a limit on car parking on site, the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan would have come forward with a strategy to improve the accessibility of the site by sustainable transport modes to the point where there was not a need to rely on the infrastructure external to the site to accommodate its transport and parking requirements.

Impact on Public Bus Services

The TA states that a total of 14 public bus services (both directions) would need to be re-routed from Broad Street if it is pedestrianised. It is understood that these services would be re-routed via Upper Kirkgate where new bus stop infrastructure would be required to accommodate the services. From the "Broad Street Civic Square: Main Transportation Study" which informed the 5 March ACC Committee to discuss the Broad Street Proposals, it is understood that there are concerns over the provision of this information. The TA states that the standard bus bay lengths cannot be provided due to geometric constraints and it is only possible to provide a lay-by on the east-bound carriageway.

In a situation where a large proportion of the existing Broad Street traffic is being re-routed via Upper Kirkgate, it is concerning that sub-standard facilities will be provided on a corridor where there is a recognition of increased journey times for vehicles using the route. Marischal Square traffic will also be focussed on this corridor. We fail to see how such a scenario is improving accessibility by bus to this City Centre Area.

Pedestrianisation of Broad Street

We note that a STAG appraisal has been undertaken as part of Aberdeen City Council's consideration of Broad Street. On review of the work that has been undertaken, we would comment that Environmental Impacts such as Noise and Air Quality do not appear to have been assessed adequately within the appraisal process. In a situation where Broad Street sits close to an Air Quality Management Area and Candidate Noise Management Areas, it is difficult to understand why such impacts have not been assessed. If these effects had been scored negatively, then the ultimate scoring would have been altered and to the point of changing the final comparison of the options appraised.

The information provided within the TA report refers to the current SIAS report "Aberdeen City Centre: Broad Street Testing Report February 2014" which was produced on behalf of Aberdeen City Council to explore the options around the pedestrianisation of Broad Street. Of particular concern is the statement within that report:

"to assist with the accommodation of this traffic demand increase, the modelling has included peak spreading measures and a review of all traffic signal timing in the network. Even with these measures, the model has shown some level of instability in the 2017 Reference Case Model and subsequent test models. This instability manifests itself as traffic gridlocking within the model network whereby the modelled network cannot complete their trip due to network congestion".

The above statement suggests that due to the levels of traffic within the modelled area, the model is not providing reliable results. This is of significant concern if this is the basis upon which key decisions about the effectiveness of traffic management measures and development impacts are being based.

Also of concern is the reference within this report to the potential future pedestrianisation of a section of Union Street which we understand is an option being considered by Aberdeen City Council as well as a section of Market Street. Such a move would again significantly impact upon traffic management within the City Centre and until these City Centre Traffic Management Plans are known, it is difficult to see how new development will fit within this framework and complement existing developments. The proposals would therefore appear to be premature until such time as the City Centre changes are fully understood and assessed.

Direct Impact on Vehicular Access to Bon Accord Centre and John Lewis Facilities

The Bon Accord Centre is an established shopping centre and travel patterns to the development are well known. There are currently estimated to be over 1m vehicle entries into the car parks associated with the development (Loch Street car park – 950 spaces and Harriet Street car park – 350 spaces). Of these vehicles, it is estimated that one third approach from the south of the city and access via a route that includes Broad Street.

If Broad Street is pedestrianised then vehicles (travelling from the south of the City) will require to re-route via other less-direct routes in order to access the Bon Accord Centre Car Parks. A review of the available routes would indicate that vehicles from the south wishing to access the Car Parks would now need to re-route via Union Terrace and Schoolhill or via West North Street. This represents a diversion of 1 mile per diverted vehicle (in each direction).

The re-routing of traffic along Schoolhill will mean that the majority of traffic will now encounter the smaller Harriet Street Car Park (350 spaces) first rather than the Loch Street Car Park (950 spaces) which increases the potential for operational difficulties at the smaller parking facility. There are also concerns over a potential increase in traffic flows along Littlejohn Street and Mealmarket Street in the context of vehicles heading away from the Bon Accord Shopping Centre.

The Fairhurst TA contains telling results at Tables 8-3 and 8-4 which show that there will be a 26% increase in journey time on the Eastbound carriageway of Schoolhill and a 23% increase on the Westbound carriageway in the AM peak Period as a result of Broad Street and Marischal Square impacts. The impacts are exacerbated in the PM peak with a 45% increase in journey times on the westbound carriageway and a 22% increase in the eastbound carriageway. As Schoolhill is proposed to be the main route serving the Bon Accord Centre (as a result of the proposals), it is clear that access to this area for existing patrons of the Bon Accord Centre will be significantly affected.

It is noted that no mitigation measures are proposed with regard to the above diversion impacts with the exception of relocating one variable message sign. It is noted that reference is made to assessment work undertaken by others but the TA also states that the assessment work is on-going. Again this suggests that a decision on the proposed development would be premature until such matters are concluded.

It is of significant concern that the impact of change has not yet been fully established and it would be incumbent on this development to present a full picture of not just the impact of the new development in terms of increased trip generation in the area but to also fully understand the impact on the surrounding road network that the pedestrianisation of Broad Street will bring about along with other ACC intended City Centre schemes (Union Street / Market Street).

Summary

- It is noted that the proposed Transport Assessment seeks to demonstrate that the proposed closure of Broad Street is intended to improve pedestrian accessibility to the area. However, the proposed development proposes maximum car parking standards and generates in excess of 470 vehicle trips onto the network. In these circumstances, there would appear to be a disconnect between trying to improve pedestrian accessibility in the area and the trip generation / parking characteristics associated with the development. The same can be said of accessibility by bus where the proposal is to relocate the buses to sub-standard facilities on Upper Kirkgate while also increasing bus journey times.
- The level of impacts identified on Schoolhill are high in terms of the increased journey times associated with vehicles accessing the Bon Accord Shopping Centre. It is concerning that there is a general recognition of these impacts in the submitted Transport Assessment but no form of mitigation is proposed to address these impacts which will be felt most by customers of the Shopping Centre.
- It would appear that the development "as presented" is reliant on the closure of Broad Street as all traffic assessment work has been based on Broad Street being pedestrianised along the development frontage. It is noted that the pedestrianisation of Broad Street will require to be the subject of a separate consultation exercise and TRO process before it can be implemented. This being the case, there is no guarantee that the proposals will be successful. In these circumstances, consideration should have been given to the scenario where the proposals to pedestrianise Broad Street are not successful. This could have been addressed through the presentation of a sensitivity test where Broad Street is assumed to operate as per the existing situation.
- The submitted Transport Assessment does not appear to take account of any AWPR impacts on City Centre traffic patterns and only seeks to look at the impact of pedestrianising Broad Street. Aberdeen City Council has plans (at early consultation stage) to look at pedestrianising parts of Union Street and Market Street. Such proposals could potentially have a major impact on the assessment work that has been undertaken to date for the Marischal Square Development. It is therefore considered that a decision on the submitted proposals is premature until the impact of these other City Centre changes are understood and the traffic impacts fully assessed.
- We would consider that the work undertaken to date for the Marischal Square Development is incomplete. There is no true evaluation of traffic impacts in the City Centre associated with Aberdeen City Council's aspirations for pedestrianising City Centre Streets and the submitted Transport Assessment does not demonstrate that the impacts of the proposed and the pedestrianisation of Broad Street can be mitigated to an acceptable level. The result of this is that John Lewis and the Bon Accord Centre (and its tenants) are faced with the prospect that customer access by vehicle will be significantly affected.
- Based on the above review, it is concluded that a planning decision based on the information currently available would be inappropriate and premature until the consequences of the proposed traffic management measures are fully established.

Ref Planning Application 140698
Development Management
Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 4
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

5 Harlaw Terrace
Aberdeen
AB15 4YU

Tel [REDACTED]

22nd June, 2014

Dear Sir,

Subject : Objection Planning Application Ref 140698 Marischal Square Development

I wish to object to the Planning Application for the new development of Marischal Square.

I am particularly concerned that the shops planned for the new development will draw customers from the already struggling Union Street shops to the further detriment of Union Street. Hence the amenities of the area would be diminished by the facilities being planned for Marischal Square.

I object to the changes in the plans for the frontage of Provost Skene's House which shows the Historic Arch, stairs and walls have been removed. Thus again detracting from the amenity and attraction of this important area in the centre of Aberdeen.

I would strongly recommend the architects are asked to rethink the plans but this time giving a stronger emphasis on the desires of the people of Aberdeen and indeed the tourists to this fine city who would be enthused by having a large open square where they could sit and admire the beauty of Provost Skene's House and Marischal College.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Kathleen Hutcheon

Ref Planning Application 140698
 Development Management
 Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
 Aberdeen City Council
 Business Hub 4
 Marischal College
 Broad Street
 Aberdeen
 AB10 1AB

5 Harlaw Terrace
 Aberdeen
 AB15 4YU

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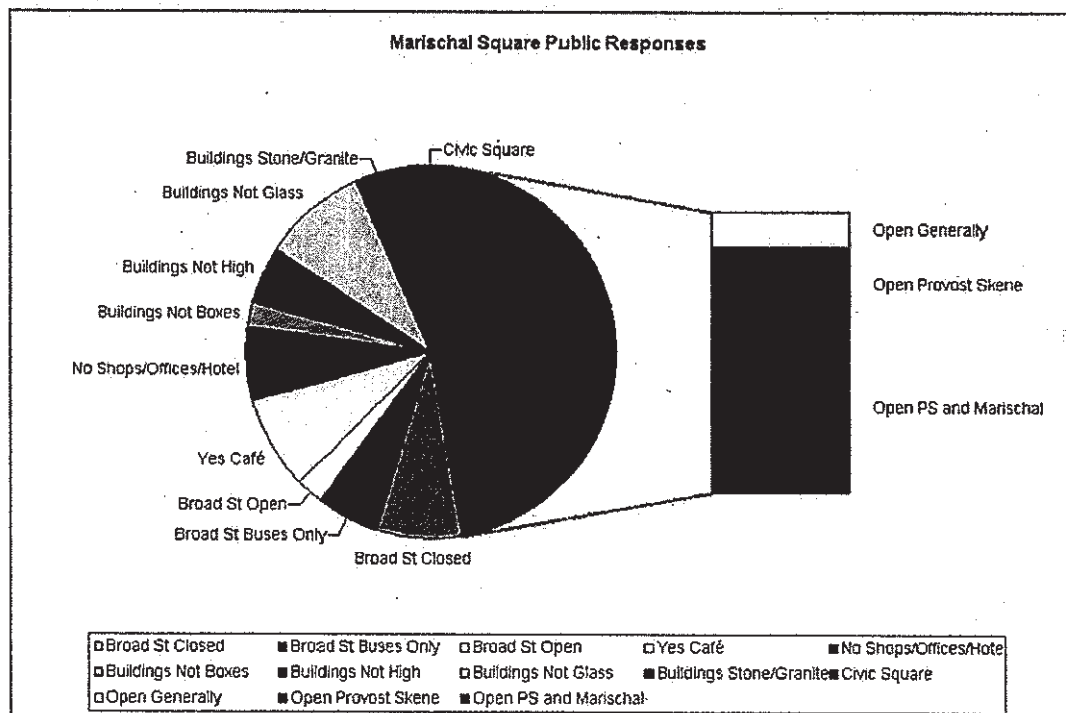
22nd June, 2014

Dear Sir,

Subject : Objection Planning Application Ref 140698 Marischal Square Development

I wish to object to the Planning Application for the new development of Marischal Square. I am concerned that the Planners of this new development completely missed an opportunity of utilising the magnificent views available of Marischal College and the historic interest generated by Provost Skene's House. Even with a little thought and using buildings of varying heights the views of Marischal College and Provost Skene's House could be created. This cannot be beyond the wit of architects to design. The present design is not compatible with the character of the area and of the city centre of which it will become a significant part. With less than major changes the large building on the corner of Marischal Square nearest Union Street could be repositioned (turned clockwise) and hence create a much larger civic square which the people of Aberdeen strongly desire.

I did an analysis of the Phase 1 Public responses and the chart below shows the result of my review of the feedback from the public who attended the Exhibitions.



One can see immediately the main desire for Aberdonians who saw the Public Exhibitions is for an open civic square where they can view Marischal Square and Provost Skene's House. This is not what is being developed.

Despite Councillor W Young stating to the P&J (date 27/5/14) that "Some people who have responded have misunderstood what the consultation was about." I would suggest they are very clear what they want and that is for the council who are representing the people of Aberdeen to take action to

3 Springbank Place,
Aberdeen AB11

Dear Sir/Madam,

Marischal Square development: Planning Reference 140698

I am concerned that the proposed development would lead to a loss of amenity and is out of character with the historic area in which it is to be sited, and that criticisms made during earlier stages of the planning process have been ignored. In particular:

1. The height of the proposed new development will mean that Marischal College itself would be overshadowed, thus making it impossible for visitors to appreciate a key part of Aberdeen's heritage;
2. More generally, it is necessary to ensure that the site is developed in such a way that it complements the architectural gems that it will adjoin. An open square would be the most obvious way to achieve this: this suggestion has been made, so it is sad to see it being ignored;
3. The current plan is for yet more retail shopping facilities, yet the city centre already has an over-supply of retail space. Union Street is blighted by pawnbrokers and money-lenders, betting shops and charity outlets, since Aberdeen simply cannot support enough legitimate retail businesses to use all the space available for them. Creating yet more retail space while there is under-used capacity in George Street and Union Street would be insane, both financially and in terms of planning. The most probable consequence would be further decline in the city centre, more un-let premises and of course an increased deficit for the city council;
4. I am also concerned that the plans do not include provision for the many bus services that currently use Broad Street to enter and leave the city centre. Any disruption to these services could easily cause severe congestion, leading to extreme and irreversible blight in the city centre.

In sum, the proposed development would squander a great opportunity. This site represents the heart of Aberdeen, and could so easily enrich the lives of residents and attract substantial numbers of visitors. Insensitive development, as planned, can only be described as criminal irresponsibility.

I trust that this objection will lead to a change in direction.

Yours faithfully,

J. David Reece (Dr.)

ensure the plans for Marischal Square are implemented in accordance with their wishes and not those of the developers MUSE.

I would also note that the feedback on these plans has been difficult to obtain. For example the Phase 11 public feedback was only available at the end of May despite repeated requests for these and yet the fact that the report is dated December 2013. Also MUSE have stated that 4000 comments have been made by the public although only 1100 have been made public. The other 2900 have not been made available despite repeated requests for their release.

MUSE also state on their website at

<http://www.marischalsquare.co.uk/index.php/proposals/initial-exhibition/provost-skenes-house>

"Provost Skene's House will be at the heart of the Marischal Square project.

The role and setting of Provost Skene's House will be given special consideration in the new development. It will be protected from the demolition then re-opened at an appropriate time. Money is being set aside for conservation work."

We now see in these plans (and those of Ref 140755) that the money being set aside appears to be for removal of the Historic Arch and other parts of the frontage of Provost Skene's House. I strongly object to this which seems to be consistent with MUSE planners attitude to denude Central Aberdeen anything of character, which includes the magnificent view of Marischal College from afar.

Thus I would suggest the information and feedback available for this significant project for Central Aberdeen has been poor and to some extent misleading.

The changes suggested above would not fundamentally endanger the financial agreements and contracts which appear to be the motivating criteria for the design which has been created.

I would strongly recommend the architects are asked to rethink the plans but this time giving a stronger emphasis on the desires of the people of Aberdeen for a design in keeping with the character of Aberdeen and providing a large open square where views of Marischal College and Provost Skene's House can be seen clearly without squinting through an alleyway between new mainly glass buildings. This would also be appreciated by the tourists to this fine city who would be enthused by the views created by the changes suggested above

Regards,



Ken Hutcheon

P&S Letters of Representation	
Application Number: 140755	86007
RECEIVED	24 JUN 2014
Nr:	500
Case Officer Initials: GTC	M/S
Date Acknowledged: 3-7-14	

Development management
Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 4
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

Queens Cross/Harlaw Community Council
c/o Ken Hutcheon
5 Harlaw Terrace
Aberdeen
AB15 4YU

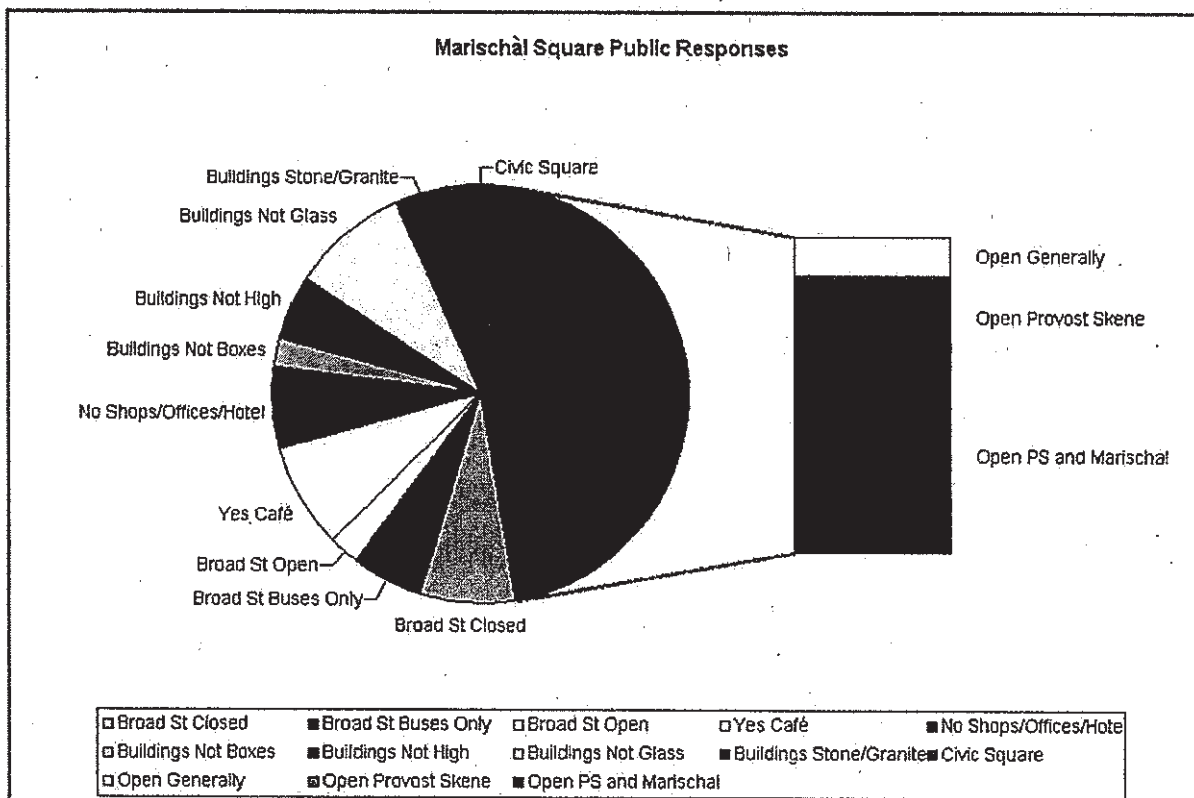
22nd June 2014

Dear Sir,

Subject : Marischal Square Planning Application Ref 140698
Objection on behalf of Queens Cross/Harlaw Community Council

We wish to object to the Planning Application for the new development of Marischal Square. As a Community Council our main concern is to ensure that the comments and objections of the citizens of Aberdeen have been taken into account. Unfortunately this does not seem to be the case.

One of our members (Mr Ken Hutcheon) has analysed the responses which were made public from the Phase 1 exhibitions and his chart is given below.



One can see immediately the main desire for Aberdonians who saw the Public Exhibitions is for an open civic square where they can view Marischal Square and Provost Skene's House. This is not what is being developed.

Our members are concerned that the shops planned for the new development will draw customers from the already struggling Union Street shops to the further detriment of Union Street.

It would seem that the Planners of this new development completely missed the opportunity of utilising the magnificent views available of Marischal College and the historic interest generated by Provost Skene's House. Even with a little thought and using buildings of varying heights the views

of Marischal College and Provost Skene's house could be created. This cannot be beyond the wit of architects to design.

Also with less than major changes the large building on the corner of Marischal Square nearest Union Street could be repositioned (turned clockwise) and hence create a much larger civic square which the people of Aberdeen strongly desire.

The present design obliterates the perspective and character of the area and further detracts from the attraction the city centre.

The changes suggested would not appear to fundamentally endanger the financial agreements and contracts which appear to be the motivating criteria for the design.

We would strongly recommend the architects are asked to rethink the plans but this time giving a stronger emphasis on the desires of the people of Aberdeen and indeed the tourists to this fine city who would be enthused by the views created by the changes suggested above.

Regards,

[Redacted signature block]

Ken Hutcheon on behalf of Queens Cross/Harlaw Community Council

P&SD Letters of Representation	
Application Number:	160698
RECEIVED	24 JUN 2014
Nor	Sou
Case Officer Initials:	GLK
Date Acknowledged:	16-7-14

Appendix 1

Relevant Policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance

Aberdeen Local Development Plan adopted in 2012

- i) Section 3.21 says that
"The skyline contributes significantly to the character of the City. Tall or large scale buildings can add to and positively enhance the identity of the City if well designed. However, they can have a detrimental effect if due consideration is not given to their context, form and massing."
- ii) Policy D1 - Architecture and Placemaking says
"To ensure high standards of design, new development must be designed with due consideration for its context and make a positive contribution to its setting. Factors such as siting, scale, massing, colour, materials, orientation, details, the proportions of building elements, together with the spaces around buildings, including streets, squares, open space, landscaping and boundary treatments, will be considered in assessing that contribution. To ensure that there is a consistent approach to high quality development throughout the City with an emphasis on creating quality places, the Aberdeen Masterplanning Process Supplementary Guidance will be applied. The level of detail required will be appropriate to the scale and sensitivity of the site. The full scope will be agreed with us prior to commencement. Landmark or high buildings should respect the height and scale of their surroundings, the urban topography, the City's skyline and aim to preserve or enhance important views."
- iii) Policy D6 – Landscape says
"Development will not be acceptable unless it avoids: 1) significantly adversely affecting landscape character and elements which contribute to, or provide, a distinct 'sense of place' which point to being either in or around Aberdeen or a particular part of it; 2) obstructing important views of the City's townscape, landmarks and features when seen from busy and important publicly accessible vantage points such as roads, railways, recreation areas and pathways and particularly from the main city approaches;..."

Adopted Supplementary Guidance is also relevant and needs to be taken into account when considering the bulkiness, massing, scale and shape of the new development when compared to some of the adjacent historic and landmark buildings.

Aberdeen City Centre Development Framework

- i) On page 9 section 1.4 Where do we want to go? says
"The City Centre has a strong character with uniformity of materials and styles, reflected in its granite buildings, the grand nature of Union Street and smaller intimate streets and public spaces just off the main thoroughfare. Much of the City Centre falls within designated Conservation Areas and it has a large concentration of listed buildings. Understanding what is of value, protecting and improving the built fabric is vital within the City Centre. The City needs quality design solutions. All development must make a contribution to the wider context of the City."

- Aberdeen Local Development Plan adopted in 2012
- Aberdeen City Centre Development Framework
- The Bon Accord Quarter Aberdeen Masterplan

Details of specific policies and paragraphs are in Appendix 1 to this submission.

In the light of these policies and supplementary guidance, which have been through extensive and wide reaching prior public engagement, it is hard to believe that the heights of buildings proposed in the application comply with existing policy. It is even harder to understand how professional people can describe in words such as "slightly" when comparing the heights of the new buildings to those of the Broad Street elevation of Marischal College and the listed buildings of Provost Skene's House and Upperkirkgate. How can it be that the applicants architect (Halliday Fraser Munro) and heritage advisers (Hurd Rolland) say in application reports that the building heights are only "slightly" higher than adjacent buildings, when in fact they are probably closer to double the height.

Flourmill Lane

The Civic Society has concerns about the height of buildings and uninteresting street level approach taken to the design of new buildings on Flourmill Lane. The opportunity of this development to improve the pedestrian experience in Flourmill Lane has not been taken, it being relegated to a delivery or service area flanked by extremely tall buildings. More could be made of access to Provost Skene's House from Flourmill Lane.

Pedestrianisation of Broad Street

We remain to be convinced that the pedestrianisation of Broad Street is beneficial to the traffic flows in Aberdeen. Increased usage of Union Terrace, Schoolhill and Upperkirkgate for bus traffic will only diminish the pedestrian experience on these streets, which at the moment is relatively pleasant.

Glazing

Much glass has been used as a building material in the proposals. If this is retained, having it mirrored will at least provide a reflection of some of Aberdeen's historic architecture from adjacent buildings.

Summary

We do not have a problem with the principle of development on this site but feel that the existing proposals do little to enhance and celebrate its historic surroundings. We have grave concerns about the scale and bulk of the proposed design. We feel that more could be done to improve Flourmill Lane and access to Provost Skene's House. We remain to be convinced about the pedestrianisation of Broad Street.

We would appreciate it if these points are taken into consideration in the council and Scottish Government's decision making on this proposal.

features. Successful contemporary examples of this are few and far between, but should be encouraged to promote a sense of identity in any new development."

The Bon Accord Quarter Aberdeen Masterplan

- i) There is a key message contained in the note on p2 about the scale of any development proposed for the Bon Accord Quarter, a message obviously felt necessary to reinforce in view of the public engagement that took place at the time:

"Note:

Illustrations and artists impressions within this document are intended to be studies of spaces and building massing. They are not intended to represent specific architectural proposals. Following the principles established in this Masterplan, there will be further design studies of architecture and urban spaces within the context of individual planning applications."

- ii) On p5 there is a question posed with an answer:

"?: The Masterplan needs to ensure that shopping centres integrate fully with their surroundings, that there is permeability within the city and that development is of an appropriate scale"

"In creating new public route connecting Marischal College with St Nicholas Kirk, the masterplan integrates the shopping centres more strongly with the public realm. In addition the new footbridge across Schoolhill enables easy accessibility between the upper levels of the city, from the new Civic Square to St Nicholas Centre and the Bon Accord Centre.

The scale of proposals is commensurate with a thriving modern city centre. There is demand from retailers and their customers for larger modern shop and urban environments with good transport connections and car parking. In all, proposals will increase the amount of retail space within the masterplan area from 55,740 sqm to 74,300 sqm, an increase of some 33%.

Building heights will respond to local context so that, for example on Upperkirkgate they do not exceed three stories. At other parts of the masterplan building heights will not exceed five or six storeys."

- iii) On p12 under the heading of **Public Realm: Analysis** the SPG states that:

"Aberdeen is a city of unique qualities and it is the intention of the masterplan to preserve and draw upon these qualities within an improved city centre environment that enhances the shopping and leisure experience. Central to this ambition is an understanding of how the unique sense of place of Aberdeen is created and how the masterplan can build upon that in the future.

Aberdeen is a city of consistent high quality architecture with the use of granite creating a visually coherent and unified consistent townscape. The three-dimensional


- ii) On p17 section 2.4.4 Buildings says
"A variety of building periods and styles contribute to the character of the City Centre, ranging from St Nicholas Kirk, 16th century Provost Ross and Skene's houses to 20th century shopping centres and civic buildings. The 19th century planned streets are lined in the main by fine granite buildings of 4 or 5 storeys. A variety of public buildings, from St Nicholas Kirk through to St Nicholas House punctuate the skyline. The dominant architectural style can be described broadly as classical or neo-classical. Notable landmark buildings include the Town House, the Salvation Army Citadel and the spires of Marischal College, St Nicholas Kirk, and Triple Kirks, as well as the Schoolhill domes of the Art Gallery, His Majesty's Theatre, City Library and St Marks. These landmarks contribute to the legibility to the City Centre and aid navigation. They are often seen as a visual symbol of Aberdeen."
- iii) On p24 section 3.5 Tall or Large Buildings and the City's Skyline says
"Tall or large scale buildings can add to, and positively enhance, the identity of the City and its skyline if well designed. However, they can have a detrimental effect if due consideration is not given to their context. The definition of a "tall building" is one that exceeds the general height of its surrounding context. A "large building" may not breach the skyline, but may be viewed as bulky and at odds with its surroundings from strategic locations. In certain circumstances as little as an additional storey height may set a development proposal out of context. It is not expected that there will be a presumption against tall buildings, indeed the City Centre is the right place for such buildings, but they should respect the height and scale of their surroundings, the urban topography and the City's skyline and aim to preserve or enhance important vistas. Further Supplementary Guidance will be prepared as part of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan to support a Tall or Large Buildings Policy."
- iv) On p32 section 3.6.12 Broad Street says
"Broad Street is flanked by the contrasting forms of Marischal College to the east, and the tower block of St Nicholas House to its west. The Bon Accord Masterplan considered this area to be the civic heart of the City with the redevelopment of St Nicholas House site, the formation of a civic square in front of Marischal College, a new courtyard to the north of Provost Skene's house and new pedestrian linkages between Marischal College and St Nicholas Kirk being key to improving the potential of this area. Further information on this can be found in section 4.2 the Civic Quarter. The formation of a civic square is crucial in providing an appropriate setting for the new City Council Headquarters at Marischal College. Uses around the square would include retail, restaurants, offices, residential, hotel, cultural and civic, creating a genuine, economically sustainable mixed use neighbourhood within the City Centre. These uses around the square must create live frontages and activities at all times of the day and evening, resulting in a successful, positive and usable public space."
- v) On p34 section 3.9 Corners talks about how to use corners in design and give a new development a sense of place which is another characteristic of Aberdeen,
"Turning a corner on urban blocks in the City Centre has often been seen as a cause for architectural celebration. Whether flamboyant turrets or simple chamfers, corners have traditionally been a focus for finely detailed masonry work, interesting and unique

GEE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 30 May 2014 16:20
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698
Name : Laura Fruhen
Address : 109 Union Grove, AB106SL Aberdeen

Telephone :
Email : 
type :

Comment : Based on the results that you have published from the pub. consultation, I do not see the issues raised by your citizens sufficiently addressed in the design changes that have been made. The results of the consultation clearly show that the public wish for an open space, height limitations and not another glass box that will obstruct beautiful views on the Provost Skene's and MC. Were we all wasting our time?

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REE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 30 May 2014 18:33
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Jane Cameron
Address : 42 Seaview Place
Aberdeen
AB23 8RL

Telephone :

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : I appreciate the city's need to develop, but this particular proposal is totally insensitive to this area and Provost Skene's House. I am not a lone voice, so wonder why the consultation appears to be ignoring the comments in favour of a more open development, allowing both the front of Marischal and Skene's House to be more visible.

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PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 31 May 2014 09:04
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Stuart Christie
Address : 7 Station Road West
Peterculter

Telephone :

Email : [REDACTED]

type :
Comment : Why are we again making the mistake of our past by making another glass and concrete box. The development should fit in with the amazing structures around it. I feel you need to find a design that is more pleasing to the eye and not just make the same mistake. Find a local design team you have Grays school of art to aid as well. Please rethink this plan as it will be our future who will be knocking it down in 40 years as another aberdeen council eyesore.

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CJE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 30 May 2014 15:46
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698
Name : Michelle Gavin
Address : 26 Cattofield Gardens

Aberdeen
Ab25 3QZ

Telephone :

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : The Broad Street part of the plans will necessitate the rerouting of most of aberdeens buses which use street. The surrounding area is already gridlocked without the additional strain. We were promised a Civic Square next to Provosts House and now it is simply a repeat of the disaster which was st Nicholas House

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GTE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 30 May 2014 14:04
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Clare Robertson
Address : 10 Esslemont Avenue
Aberdeen

Telephone :
Email : [REDACTED]
type :

Comment : The majority of responses to the stage 1 public consultation indicated that the people of Aberdeen want this area to be left open so that both Marischall College and Provost Skene's House can be visible from one viewpoint. This is not possible with the current plans. Furthermore, the number of people indicating that 'glass boxes' would be acceptable was very low. Indeed, Muse publicly stated that they had taken on board that the people of Aberdeen do not want to see another glass box in the city centre. The plans have given us just that, however, another unimaginative, unattractive glass box. It is hard to see how this is any improvement on St Nicholas House. Given the dismal state of Union Street we do not need further space for shops (Union St buildings should be restored and rent made affordable for shops to be located on the main street). With the demolition of St Nicholas House almost complete, it is possible to see how beautiful this area could be; how it could become a tourist attraction spot, showcasing historic and unique attributes of Aberdeen. Please, please don't let this area be destroyed by poor architecture as it has been for decades. This plan is not what the majority of people living in Aberdeen want for their city as outlined in the stage 1 consultation.

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PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 09 June 2014 12:03
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698
Name : Dustin Macdonald
Address : 18 Thistle Court Aberdeen AB10 1ST

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :
Comment : The City Centre Community Council, as statutory consultees, have to comment on the Marischal Square planning application put forward by Muse and designed by architects Halliday Fraser Munro.

We would like to point out that during the consultation a very large number of the comments submitted indicated the desire for a much larger open space and less development.

We would have liked a large, central, civic square, however, we realise that the land was sold as a development site with a legal requirement to provide a certain square footage of retail space, offices and a hotel. We, therefore, have to be content with the size of the proposed 'civic space' in front of Marischal College. This space, however, relies on the pedestrianisation of Broad Street, which raises concerns re: traffic management on Upperkirk gate, and the safety of pedestrians. We hope that a solution will be found.

We can see some of merit in the development i.e. the hotel will provide 125 much needed, four-star rooms in Aberdeen. We were told that businesses are looking for high quality 'new' offices in the city centre, rather than refurbishing the empty spaces in the buildings on Union Street. While this is disappointing, we have no choice but to accept that this development will provide 175,000 square feet of office space.

We think that the new gardens in the middle of the development next to Provost Skene's House will, possibly, create a nice, quiet space. However, we feel the size/scale of the development is very large and are disappointed that there doesn't seem to be much difference in heights of the various buildings. We were led to believe that the Upperkirk gate end of the development would have considerably lower elevations, however this does not appear to be the case.

We like the idea that there will be 24-hour access enabling the public to walk through the development at any time of the day or night. We understand that there will be security measures in place.

We understand that people will be able to see straight through a gap in the buildings opposite Marischal College to see a view of Provost Skene's House. The design shows the buildings on either side, raised up off the ground, with the use of lots of glass on the ground floor.

We would, however, like to see the opening between Broad Street and the centre of the development, made larger, with better integration between the two civic spaces. If this means losing commercial space we would see it added in height on to the Union Street side of the development.

We would like to see more detail on how the space could be brought to life e.g. using coloured lights on interactive pavements, lights on fountains/water features, webcams placed on the tops of buildings with screens showing live aerial views of Aberdeen.

We liked that the inspiration for the different shapes and colours of the proposed buildings came from the pre-war tenements that were there before St. Nicholas House was developed. We do, however, feel that the design is not iconic and we are disappointed that the buildings are not expected to last more than sixty years.

We feel that in the current state we object to the application on the basis that the scale of the development is much larger than first thought and that there is not enough consideration for the civic space. If our concerns were addressed we would reconsider our position

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P&SD Letters of Representation		
Application Number: 140698		
RECEIVED 10 JUN 2014		
Nor	Sou	MAp
Case Officer Initials: GEE		
Date Acknowledged: 19-6-14		

965

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 03 June 2014 09:37
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Rachel Scott
Address : 3 Dawson Wynd
Westhill
Aberdeenshire
AB32 6NR

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : I am urging Aberdeen city council to learn the lessons of the past and please don't replace St Nicholas
house with another unattractive monstrosity. You now have the most incredible opportunity to restore what is
potentially the most beautiful location in the city and protect and preserve it for future generations. Recent
demolition work has uncovered views of what should be the jewels in Aberdeen's heritage crown - Marischal College
and Provost Skene's house. Create public space around them - not a giant glass edifice. Aberdeen does not need
any more chain stores or office blocks. By all means have a few cafes around the Marischal college piazza/public
space but please whatever you do, don't squander the incredible opportunity you've been given to right the wrongs
of the past.

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PI

From: jim mckay [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 June 2014 18:33
To: PI
Subject: Provost Skene's House.

As an Aberdeen citizen I object most strongly to the Marischal Square development as a short-sighted, grubby, soul-less abortion and an unbelievably stupid missed opportunity for a long-term transformational development that would have benefited citizens and encouraged visitors for generations to come.

In particular I would object even more strongly, if that was possible, to any vandalism of Provost Skene's House. Any 'development' of Provost Skene's House would be desecration.

This is a shameful period in the history of Aberdeen City Council and so incredibly stupidly short-sighted - in forty years time this development will be being torn down as St. Nicholas House is now.

James McKay
Newpark Cottage
Kingswells
Aberdeen
AB158PQ.

"The Masterplan needs to ensure that shopping centres integrate fully with their surroundings. The scale of proposals is commensurate with a thriving modern city centre. There is demand from retailers and their customers for larger modern shop and urban environments with good transport connections and car parking. In all, proposals will increase the amount of retail space within the masterplan area from 55,740 sqm to 74,300 sqm, an increase of some 33%. Building heights will respond to local context so that, for example on Upperkirkgate they do not exceed three stories. At other parts of the masterplan building heights will not exceed five or six storeys."

On p12

"Aberdeen is a city of unique qualities and it is the intention of the masterplan to preserve and draw upon these qualities within an improved city centre environment that enhances the shopping and leisure experience. Central to this ambition is an understanding of how the unique sense of place of Aberdeen is created and how the masterplan can build upon that in the future. Aberdeen is a city of consistent high quality architecture with the use of granite creating a visually coherent and unified consistent townscape. The three-dimensional aspect of Aberdeen has developed through history, with changes in level evident in bridges and elevated streets. In addition, the distinctive typological patterns of the medieval Wynds and the Georgian and Victorian streets overlay each other, creating a unique contrast of grandeur and informality. A significant number of architectural landmarks contribute to the Aberdeen experience and help define the spaces and routes in the city centre. These include Marischal's College, St Nicholas Kirk and The Town House. The masterplan lies largely outside the Union Street Conservation Area with the exclusion of Upperkirkgate and Schoolhill and Marischal College. There are two 'A' listed buildings within the masterplan area being Marischal College and Provost Skene's House as well as several other 'B' and 'C' listed buildings on Schoolhill and Upper Upperkirkgate including the listed Robert Sivell murals in the former Student's Union."

On p22

"The masterplan will provide an improved setting for Provost Skene's House. Historically the house was tightly enclosed within the dense medieval townscape. With the redevelopment of St Nicholas House in the late 1960's this setting was lost. The objective of the masterplan is to create a smaller scale court to the main front, similar in plan to the existing garden. This court will be surrounded by 4-5 storey buildings, possibly including a hotel, with a smaller scale 2 storey building screening the loading bay and customer pick up to Marks & Spencer from the court. The rear of Provost Skenes House was, at one time a solid wall with other buildings built up against it. The workshop called for Provost Skene's house to be linked with a possible. Arts Venue or Visual Arts Centre. This could be achieved by creating a modern glazed structure or atrium to house this additional use or to provide a physical link to other spaces within the masterplan. Building heights should be no more than five storeys on to the square to match the Overall height of Marischal's College. There is the possibility that this might increase to six which is the site of the existing 14 storey St Nicholas House. The south side of the square should be broken into three or four urban blocks with clear gaps between for sunlight to penetrate the space. Elsewhere, buildings to Upperkirkgate should respond to the lower scale and general informality of the medieval and Georgian townscape and not exceed 3 storeys."

Salvation Army Citadel and the spires of Marischal College, St Nicholas Kirk, and Triple Kirks, as well as the Schoolhill domes of the Art Gallery, His Majesty's Theatre, City Library and St Marks. These landmarks contribute to the legibility to the City Centre and aid navigation."

On p24 section 3.5

"Tall or large scale buildings can add to, and positively enhance, the identity of the City and its skyline if well designed. However, they can have a detrimental effect if due consideration is not given to their context. **The definition of a "tall building" is one that exceeds the general height of its surrounding context.** A "large building" may not breach the skyline, but may be viewed as bulky and at odds with its surroundings"

v) On p34 section 3.9

"In certain circumstances as little as an additional storey height may set a development proposal out of context. It is not expected that there will be a presumption against tall buildings, indeed the City Centre is the right place for such buildings, but they should respect the height and scale of their surroundings, the urban topography and the City's skyline and aim to preserve or enhance important vistas. Further Supplementary Guidance will be prepared as part of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan to support a Tall or Large Buildings Policy."

"Broad Street is flanked by the contrasting forms of Marischal College to the east, and the tower block of St Nicholas House to its west. The Bon Accord Masterplan considered this area to be the civic heart of the City with the redevelopment of St Nicholas House site, the formation of a civic square in front of Marischal College, a new courtyard to the north of Provost Skene's house and new pedestrian linkages between Marischal College and St Nicholas Kirk being key to improving the potential of this area. Further information on this can be found in section 4.2 the Civic Quarter. The formation of a civic square is crucial in providing an appropriate setting for the new City Council Headquarters at Marischal College. Uses around the square would include retail, restaurants, offices, residential, hotel, cultural and civic, creating a genuine, economically sustainable mixed use neighbourhood within the City Centre. These uses around the square must create live frontages and activities at all times of the day and evening, resulting in a successful, positive and usable public space."

"Turning a corner on urban blocks in the City Centre has often been seen as a cause for architectural celebration. Whether flamboyant turrets or simple chamfers, corners have traditionally been a focus for finely detailed masonry work, interesting and unique features. Successful contemporary examples of this are few and far between, but should be encouraged to promote a sense of identity in any new development."

The Bon Accord Quarter Aberdeen Masterplan

On p 5

Policy D1

"The skyline contributes significantly to the character of the City. Tall or large scale buildings can add to and positively enhance the identity of the City if well designed. However, they can have a detrimental effect if due consideration is not given to their context, form and massing."

"To ensure high standards of design, new development must be designed with due consideration for its context and make a positive contribution to its setting. Factors such as siting, scale, massing, colour, materials, orientation, details, the proportions of building elements, together with the spaces around buildings, including streets, squares, open space, landscaping and boundary treatments, will be considered in assessing that contribution, to ensure that there is a consistent approach to high quality development."

Policy D6

"With an emphasis on creating quality places, the Aberdeen Master-planning Process Supplementary Guidance will be applied. The level of detail required will be appropriate to the scale and sensitivity of the site. The full scope will be agreed with us prior to commencement. Landmark or high buildings should respect the height and scale of their surroundings, the urban topography, the City's skyline and aim to preserve or enhance important views."

"Development will not be acceptable unless it avoids:

- 1) significantly adversely affecting landscape character and elements which contribute to, or provide, a distinct 'sense of place' which point to being either in or around Aberdeen or a particular part of it;*
- 2) obstructing important views of the City's townscape, landmarks and features when seen from busy and important publicly accessible vantage points such as roads, railways, recreation areas and pathways and particularly from the main city approaches;..."*

Aberdeen City Centre Development Framework

On p17 section 2.4.4

"The City Centre has a strong character with uniformity of materials and styles, reflected in its granite buildings, the grand nature of Union Street and smaller intimate streets and public spaces just off the main thoroughfare. Much of the City Centre falls within designated Conservation Areas and it has a large concentration of listed buildings. Understanding what is of value, protecting and improving the built fabric is vital within the City Centre. The City needs quality design solutions. All development must make a contribution to the wider context of the City."

"A variety of building periods and styles contribute to the character of the City Centre, ranging from St Nicholas Kirk, 16th century Provost Ross and Skene's houses to 20th century shopping centres and civic buildings. The 19th century planned streets are lined in the main by fine granite buildings of 4 or 5 storeys. A variety of public buildings, from St Nicholas Kirk through to St Nicholas House punctuate the skyline. The dominant architectural style can be described broadly as classical or neo-classical. Notable landmark buildings include the Town House, the

Broad Street/plaza. I do not believe that the heights of buildings proposed in the application comply with existing policy and certainly cannot be described as "slightly" higher when comparing the heights of the new buildings to when in fact they are probably closer to double the height. **Please can we have what we asked for - a clear view of Provost Skene's House from the street?**

Design

See appendix

As all the consultations have said so far - **NO MORE PLAIN GLASS BOXES!** While the buildings are to be built in a mix of granite and glass, fusing traditional and modern, the design of the buildings are boring and certainly do not enhance the two important historical buildings of Marischal College and Provost Skene's house. There is little to inspire. Recent plans for redevelopment of city centre projects have been met largely with derision and anger from Aberdonians and I had hoped that some bridge building would be done with more interesting designs. I can see that there has been a lack lustre attempt to reflect the pillars design of Marischal College with the granite design of the front line buildings, but they are still just boxes, with nothing to raise interest. As far as the second line, even more boring boxes, are concerned, this is not the sort of architecture which repairs the reputation of the city in terms of a city which lacks vision.

I recently visited Boston and Sydney which have glass buildings close to iconic old buildings and they used a dark reflective glass and more interesting shaped buildings. They are still glass towers, but less offensive. Can we at least have something more like this?



Realistic public access to the plans

Another matter which I will be taking up with various other parties is the difficulty of gaining access to view the plans. The files for planning were on the web, but were so large that they did not download. I told the planning department about this and they said that they were aware of it, but had no legal requirement to have the documents available on the web anyway. What's the point then? I went to Marischal College to view the plans. and I do think that a development of this importance should have had the plans more easily accessible ie on view in the reception. Instead I had to ask for someone from planning to take them to reception and he stood over me while I tried to make sense of all the documents. He was very pleasant, but never the less I felt time pressured as I was keeping him away from his desk. This whole process has had the feel of some small lip service to take into account the wishes of Aberdonians, while making minimal adjustment to the overall design.

I know that it should not matter, but there could be a change of party political leadership by the time this development is finished, what we don't want is another party coming in and blaming the

Labour coalition for a disgraceful development . By that time it will be too late to do anything. I would urge councillors to vote according to the wishes of the people they represent and not along party political lines.

Summary

I object to the plans submitted by MUSE and would ask that Aberdeen City Council refuse planning permission for this version of the development.

Yours faithfully



Dr Lorna McHattie

Appendix

Aberdeen Local Development Plan adopted in 2012



the Tobacco Merchants House
42 Miller Street
Glasgow
G1 1DT

www.scottishcivictrust.org.uk

The existing low roofline of St Nicholas House at least allows the Category A-Listed Marishal College to remain the focus of Broad Street, with the tower providing a dramatic contrast preventing St Nicholas House from being entirely subservient. In contrast, these proposals would introduce a large and tall building directly opposite Marishal College, creating a canyon-like effect, which would be to the detriment of the setting of the listed building.

In summary, while we feel that while this application makes some general moves in the right direction in terms of layout, the Trust feels that these proposals are not yet befitting of the very high quality built environment surrounding the site. We encourage the Council to refuse this application, and to work towards a more fully resolved solution with improvements in elevational treatment and massing, to better reflect the character of the surrounding area, and to ensure that the setting of several nationally important listed buildings is not negatively impacted by this development.

Chair of Trustees:
Alistair J Scott
Director:
John D A Pelan
President:
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Dunbar-Nasmith CBE

Patron:
The Prince Charles,
Duke of Rothesay,
KG KT GCB PC

Scottish Charity No.
SC012569



John Pelan
Director



Gemma Wild
Technical Officer

cc

Historic Scotland, AHSS, Aberdeen Civic Society

Trustees:
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Peter Smaitt
Paul Smart
Alexander Stoddart

P&SD Letters of Representation		
Application Number:		
RECEIVED 24 JUN 2014		
Nor	Sou	MAO
Case Officer Initials:		
Date Acknowledged:		



Aberdeen Civic Society

Comments on Marischal Square Development, Broad Street, Aberdeen

The committee of Aberdeen Civic Society has studied the proposals for the re-development of St Nicholas House by MUSE under planning application number 140698.

The Civic Society is disappointed with the proposals for the site, which sits in one of the most important and prominent parts of the city. Other cities in the UK seem to have an ability to add value and to build on existing heritage, but in Aberdeen we seem to struggle despite having inherited from previous generations some of the most beautiful buildings in the world that are built with the most wonderful materials in the world.

Aberdeen City Council made a great job of bringing back into use Marischal College; and this is an example of what can be achieved should there be a desire. However, the proposals for the re-development of the St Nicholas House site are, sadly, a different story. The council retains an involvement with the MUSE proposals for the re-development of St Nicholas House as owner of the site. It is therefore a key player in determining what happens to it. Unfortunately it appears to us that someone in a decision making capacity has been influenced by the financial projections of what could be achieved by increasing development density rather than making decisions based on what is good for such an important site in the centre of Aberdeen.

The proposals that are being brought forward should respect the existing buildings of Marischal College, Provost Skene's House and the street elevation of Upperkirkgate – but they do not. Crucially the proposals do not even respect adopted council policies for the development of the site, policies that have been through thorough and extensive public scrutiny at a time before detailed proposals were on the table for consideration.

Despite all of the prior public engagement and consultation over a great many years we feel let down at this late stage in the process for the re-development of the site. We are therefore disappointed that in making our objections known we have to point out to the council that so much of it fails to comply with their own existing and adopted policies.

We have the following detailed comments:

Scale of Development

Despite adjustments having been made as the application went through its pre-application public consultation phase, we feel that the overall density, massing and scale of the development is overpowering bearing in mind the site's important location and compared with its surroundings. Our comments relate specifically to the box-like appearance that is probably 3 storeys too high and lacking the variation and interest that is so characteristic of Aberdeen's existing skyline. The whole development needs to be more human in scale and properly take its place and setting from the buildings that are around it; the elevations, form, density, scale and massing of Marischal College and Upperkirkgate – buildings that tend to punctuate the skyline of Aberdeen rather than flatten it with large horizontal roof structures.

The following Policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance should be referred to in this context:

PI

From:
Sent: 23 June 2014 11:10
To: PI
Subject: Objection to planning application no. 140698 St Nicholas House site by R Millar

Objection to planning application no 140698

Mixed use development, on the St Nicholas House site, including office, hotel, retail, restaurant, leisure, etc.

The ideal use to which the St Nicholas House site, in its entirety, ought to be put is a large civic park from which the magnificent facade of Marischal College and the historic Provost Skene House can be appreciated from many viewpoints and from within an attractively landscaped, green environment.

Unfortunately, however, it seems that Aberdeen City Council is committed to Muse with a view to a development, on the site, which includes office, hotel, retail and leisure space.

I assume here that this may be a legally binding commitment, with certain parameters regarding utilizable space established. However, there is certainly no reason that the development should follow the congested plan which forms the subject of the current application.

The present plan shows six large blocks arranged around Provost Skene House and on front of Marischal College in a way which drastically limits the views of both. Especially in the case of Provost Skene House, it will be invisible, except for the occasional glimpse, until the visitor has negotiated chasms between the proposed blocks and is right upon it. Even then, views will be severely compromised, especially those of north-west facing side which has one of the main proposed blocks running its entire length, separated only by a narrow alley. Rubbing salt in the wound, it is proposed that the pleasant courtyard, at the house entrance, be demolished to allow for a couple of token plots of greenery.

There are, however, alternatives to all this which may go some way to part salvaging the ideal of a civic park with which I began. Drastically reduce the number of blocks, decreasing the development's footprint, leaving much more space for landscaping while keeping Broad Street as an essential thoroughfare. Correspondingly, increase the height of each of the remaining blocks or block insofar as it is necessary to fulfil any binding agreements, regarding utilizable space, already reached with the developer.

As illustration, imagine something like the London Shard, a very high but narrow tower, situated on the opposite side of Broad Street from Marischal College. Its relatively small footprint would dramatically increase the visibility of both the Marischal facade and Provost Skene House as well as leaving an extensive area for landscaped greenery. Furthermore, only something of this scale and ambition could form an appropriate compliment to the iconic Marischal facade. Such a tower's strong vertical thrust would form a counterpoint to the horizontal movement of the facade and echo of the impressive Mitchell Tower behind.

In conclusion, I simply reiterate that the ideal use for the entire area is for an attractively landscaped civic park. However, if for legal reasons this is impossible, I still object to the present application since there is so much scope for its improvement along the lines I have suggested.

Yours sincerely,

Roddy Millar

aspect of Aberdeen has developed through history, with changes in level evident in bridges and elevated streets. In addition, the distinctive typological patterns of the medieval Wynds and the Georgian and Victorian streets overlay each other, creating a unique contrast of grandeur and informality. A significant number of architectural landmarks contribute to the Aberdeen experience and help define the spaces and routes in the city centre. These include Marischal's College, St Nicholas Kirk and The Town House. The masterplan lies largely outside the Union Street Conservation Area with the exclusion of Upperkirkgate and Schoolhill and Marischal College. There are two 'A' listed buildings within the masterplan area being Marischal College and Provost Skene's House as well as several other 'B' and 'C' listed buildings on Schoolhill and Upper Upperkirkgate including the listed Robert Sivell murals in the former Student's Union."

iv) On p22 the issue about building heights is again covered and it says that:

"The masterplan will provide an improved setting for Provost Skene's House. Historically the house was tightly enclosed within the dense medieval townscape. With the redevelopment of St Nicholas House in the late 1960's this setting was lost. The objective of the masterplan is to create a smaller scale court to the main front, similar in plan to the existing garden. This court will be surrounded by 4-5 storey buildings, possibly including a hotel, with a smaller scale 2 storey building screening the loading bay and customer pick up to Marks & Spencer from the court. The rear of Provost Skenes House was, at one time a solid wall with other buildings built up against it. The workshop called for Provost Skene's house to be linked with a possible Arts Venue or Visual Arts Centre. This could be achieved by creating a modern glazed structure or atrium to house this additional use or to provide a physical link to other spaces within the masterplan

Building heights should be no more than five storeys on to the square to match the overall height of Marischal's College. There is the possibility that this might increase to six or seven storeys away from the square in the location of the proposed hotel which is the site of the existing 14 storey St Nicholas House.

The south side of the square should be broken into three or four urban blocks with clear gaps between for sunlight to penetrate the space. Elsewhere, buildings to Upperkirkgate should respond to the lower scale and general informality of the medieval and Georgian townscape and not exceed 3 storeys."

P&SD Letters of Representation		
Application Number: 140698		
RECEIVED 23 JUN 2014		
Ncr	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sou
Case Office: Initials:	GC	
Date Acknowledged:	08/07/14	

GEE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 01 June 2014 20:55
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Ulrike Waller
Address : 67 Linksview
Aberdeen

Telephone :

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : The space around the front of Marischal College should be retained as an open square. There may be a need for hotels and other commercial units in the city but these should not be tied-in to this development. There is a need for a civic square that makes the city something to be proud of rather than a square that in future times will be viewed as just another development that will need torn down and replaced with something in fashion at that time.

Architecturally and commercially more glass and steel buildings in Aberdeen may be seen as adding financial value to the city, but does nothing to promote the city abroad as a tourist destination or within our own country as a place worth seeing.

We need to think of the Aberdeen of the future and make best use of the existing features of our city. This should be a civic square as a place where people can gather for events such as Hogmanay, international markets, parades and other celebrations and should be seen as a square for the people of this city and not just an add-on in front of the Council Headquarters.

For a city the size and alleged reputation of Aberdeen, this need for a civic square, more in line with the squares of other European towns and cities is long overdue.

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GTE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 30 May 2014 19:44
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Senga MacDonald
Address : Sea Croft,
22 Loirston Place
Cove Bay
Aberdeen
AB12 3PR

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

Type :
Comment : I believe the proposed development would result in a missed opportunity to have a spectacular city centre area with the Marischal College as a centre piece. Also showing Provost Skene's to full advantage. If the area could be developed as a public open space, it would showpiece the architecture of these historic buildings. The proposed plans, whilst recognising the commercial interest, I believe the gain would be a short term one and a decision to support this would be short sighted.

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GEE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 16 May 2014 09:38
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : John Mackenzie
Address : 15 Cornhill Road
Aberdeen

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : I think the concept behind the development is entirely misconstrued. The development will be unsympathetic and inappropriate to its surroundings, oppressive in design, and hugely disruptive to vital public transport routes.

A far more strategic approach, that takes account of the heritage, reality, and future standing of Aberdeen City as a historic centre of culture and industry, would be to set out the development area as a largely open "plaza"; effectively bounded by the historic urban landscapes of Marischal College, Union Street, Provost Skene's House, and Upperkirkgate, retaining Broad Street as a thoroughfare.

I believe there is more than adequate potential to re-develop areas of Union Street in a sensitive manner to provide opportunities for modern, high-value shopping, and hotel accommodation.

I would advocate total rejection of the development plan as it stands, stepping back from the entire concept, and then setting out a new vision for a world-class focal point that is a celebration of the City, not an imposition upon it. That is something that following generations will thank us for, not a mediocre shopping and hotel complex that will blight our city centre for decades to come as a testament to short-term thinking.

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PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 22 June 2014 23:35
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Joan Muir
Address : 8 bis rue du Pic du Midi
64420 Lucgarier
France

Telephone : [REDACTED]
Email : [REDACTED]
type :

Comment : Although currently living in France (work posting), Aberdeen is our home & we have a house there so feel that we have a vested interest in any future development. I strongly object to the proposed redevelopment of the St Nicholas House site in its current form. Having watched the ongoing demolition and the opening up of the space it seems blatantly obvious that a public garden would be the ideal use for the site - NOT another retail/office complex. Especially as the proposed development seems to involve vandalising an existing historic monument? Also, I am given to understand that concerns have been expressed that a 'wind tunnel' effect will result from the proposed configuration? Based on past experience, when a new retail complex opens, existing businesses suffer - witness Union Street after the opening of Union Square - there is only so much retail demand to be shared out - just because you build more retail units, people do not have extra money to spend, it is merely diverted from elsewhere. Also, where is the parking provision for this development? I thought the site was common land, belonging to the people of Aberdeen, yet I read that the council has already signed a binding legal agreement with the developers prior to any public consultation? Which begs the question of why you are even pretending that this comment "will be taken into account in the determination of the application" as allegedly it is already a done deal? Please explain your motivation for this application and why you think it is the best possible use for the site as I have yet to hear anyone say they are in favour of it. Where is the 'civic amenity' in yet another block of offices/shop units? Can you provide figures to justify the need? Other than during Offshore Europe, is Aberdeen short of hotel beds? Would it not be a better idea to try & encourage the regeneration of Union Street? I live in hope that you will listen to opinions expressed and reconsider this ill-judged application.

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The public deserve the Civic Square they were promised, not just a blocked off road that will be overshadowed by 7 storey buildings. Provost Skene's House has been uncovered and people are delighted by this.

The public 'consultation' - The comments made during the public consultation show that the vast majority of people asked for 'open space'.

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P&SD Letters of Representation		
Application Number: 140698		
RECEIVED 23 JUN 2014		
Nor	Soa	MAJ
Case Officer Initials: GJK		
Date Acknowledged: 3-7-14		

P140098

MR. M. MACKAY,
17, JAMESFIELD
MANER,

ACHINSELL,
ABERDEEN,
AB10 7FS

10th JUNE 2014

to whom it may concern,
I don't know why your department
together (as with other plans) with
all the nonsense & money spent;
on the exhibitions about the
Marshall developments known as
"Marshall Square"

The decisions are usually already
made! The public, it Aberdeen
citizens, or the majority, clearly
wanted an ^{open} space to show off
in particular, to Govest Skene's House
with green space!

NO MORE GLASS BUILDINGS!!

That is precisely what is going
to be built!!
That is the nonsensical bit!

Why don't you listen to the citizens
that voted you in?

You are in for a big shock in the
18th September 2014 referendum!

down sincerely;

PI

From: JONATHAN RUSSELL [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 June 2014 21:39
To: PI
Subject: Planning Reference 140698

Dear Sir or Madam

I am contacting you re the planning reference above concerning the proposed development for Marischal Square.

I attended both the consultation exercises but it would seem that only a small number of people participated.

My concerns are on a number of levels.

Firstly the height of the proposal will obscure the view of Marischal College does the building need to be at such a uniform height or at such a high height at all. We have just got rid of one eyesore in St Nicholas House we do not want another.

More work requires to be done to make sure the development compliments both Provost Skene's house and Marischal College.

Most people I gather were looking for an open square and there are concerns that much of the area will be taken up with shopping and hotel facilities. Is this being done for financial reasons ?

As with other new developments in the city they have always had a detrimental effect on other shopping areas in particular both George Street and of particular concern at present Union Street

There are dangers as such that more shops would further affect the decline in shops operating on Union Street.

Has there been proper consideration of how this would affect bus services which presently use Broad street. We should be encouraging people to use buses rather than cars in coming to the city centre could this development have a detrimental affect on this goal?

There needs to be Community participation regarding the development.. Is this going to be any community representatives on the development board ? There need to be a wider base of representation in such developments which includes the common people of Aberdeen and not just vested business interests.

Yours Sincerely

Jonathan Russell
3 Springbank Place
Aberdeen

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 23 June 2014 01:26
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Jacqueline Sinclair
Address : 66 Whitehouse Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1QH

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : The development will dominate the area as the buildings are too tall. The development will not maintain the area's character and identity.

The public realm should be developed to provide an appropriate setting for Marischal College and Provost Skene's House, and provide a centre for civic activities. There is a too good to miss opportunity to provide a centre for civic activities and this could be achieved very easily without overdeveloping the site. We were promised that St Nicholas House would be demolished to make way for a Civic Square and this is not the case. Now we are told that the Civic Square will be a pedestrianised Broad Street and not on the site of St Nicholas House at all. Instead we are getting a development that is purely for maximising commercial gain and NOT the civic Square we were promised.

Mixed use it is possible provide a mixed-use development but on a much smaller scale. The Union Street end of the site would lend itself to small cafes, and the hotel, while Provost Skene's House could re-open as the Museum and very successful coffee shop it has been for years. There could still be the underground carpark.

The length of time people spend in a public space is a key indicator to its comfort. Comfort can be defined by its physical properties, such as providing a range of seating types, shelter from rain and sun - this could all be easily provided without destroying the historic feel of the area.

This development will ruin the city's skyline.

People do not really want to be overlooked on all sides by office workers and people sitting in restaurants they want space and air and a feeling of a right to be there. Creating a Civic Square on the area that was the wrap around part of St Nicholas House opposite Marischal College would have easily created a fantastic, enviable Civic Square that would showcase not only Marischal College and Provost Skene's House, but the interesting buildings on Upperkirkgate, leaving the potential for holding very large public events with the option of 'temporarily' closing Broad Street while events were on. Broad Street should not be closed off to traffic as it is well used by buses and cars and there is also the potential for open topped buses for tourists to view the world-class tourist attractions of Marischal College and Provost Skene's House.

The development is relying on the closure of Broad Street to deliver the promised Civic Square, but the closure of Broad Street will cause major traffic problems and hazards to pedestrians on Schoolhill and Upperkirkgate as these narrow streets will have to deal with the many re-routed buses that currently go along Broad Street. Broad Street is wide enough to cope with the traffic but Schoolhill is already very busy and it is quite a narrow street, therefore it makes no sense to pedestrianise Broad Street.

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 20 June 2014 22:04
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Duncan MacLean
Address : 4 Delgaty Lane
Dyce

Telephone :

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : I object due to the following:

- Broad street and Schoolhill are already congested at peak hours; closing Broad street will reduce an already marginal selection of routes around the city centre causing further congestion, pollution, extended journeys and waste of fuels.

- The proposed height of the development will leave the pedestrian area largely in the shade for more than half the year. This will lead to it being little-used and disliked.

- Aberdeen has an excess of "glass box" office/shopping developments, all of which detract from the historic granite frontages around them.

- Additional offices in this location will further tax an already overloaded road, parking and public transport infrastructure.

Regards,

Duncan MacLean.

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PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 20 June 2014 21:48
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Fred Wilkinson
Address : 7d Ferryhill Gardens
Ferryhill

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : I object to this project in it's entirety for the following reasons.

1. It will overshadow and obscure views of both Marischal College and Provost Skene's House - two pieces of our heritage we should be doing all we can to show off, and views of which should be central to any plan for a civic square at the old St Nicholas House site.
2. There seems little point in taking down the much maligned St Nicholas house to replace it with something equally, if not more unsightly and uninspiring, and which will be counterproductive to the aesthetic and ambient qualities and 'feel' that the creation of a civic square is meant to provide.
3. The amount of office space, commercial property and retail space sitting empty in and around the city centre belies claims that more of such space is needed now, or will be in the foreseeable future.
4. As well as a wasted opportunity to place our unique, beautiful, historic buildings at the focus of the civic square, this development will have no reverse gear if it is deemed by Aberdonians to be wrong, and the most worrying aspect of the 'no turning back' dynamic is the proposal to make changes to Provost Skene's house, which I gather involves removal of peripheral parts of the building such as the surrounding wall and stone arch. To anyone at least a passing interest in Aberdeen's architectural and cultural heritage, this would be considered disastrous and unforgivable.

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PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 21 June 2014 14:47
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Kerr Anderson
Address : 3056 Wanakiwin Trail,
Traverse City Michigan, USA

Telephone : [REDACTED]
Email : [REDACTED]
type :

Comment : Having been born and brought up in Aberdeen and lived there for 26 years and spent 8 years getting my education in Marischal College, I have to say that I am appalled that the City is missing the opportunity to create a true, natural City Center open space, bounded by the frontage of Marischal and the Provost's house. A superb job was done with the renovation of Marischal, why not show that to its best in an otherwise crowded downtown area.

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PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 20 June 2014 22:04
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Steven Thomson
Address : 95 Sheddocksley Road
AB166QA

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : Please please put in a park, fountain, some statues etc, and make it a tourist attraction, benches, flowers,,,,,please we have the Wonderful Marschial college all done up, lets have something adding to it. We have enough office spaces. Make it a unique zone, something that the other cities will be jealous of. Sometimes its not all about making money.

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Robert Vickers

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of Aberdeen Civic Society
Sent: 20 June 2014 10:58
To: PI
Subject: Marischal Square ref 140698
Attachments: Aberdeen Civic Society comments on planning application Marischal Square 0614.pdf

Dear Sirs

Please see attached representation from the Civic Society with regards to the Muse Marischal Square application (140698).

Kind regards

Alastair Struthers
Honorary Secretary

On behalf of
Aberdeen Civic Society
www.aberdeencivicsociety.org.uk



Gavin Evans
Case Officer
Aberdeen City Council

Our Ref: 1357

23rd June 2014

Dear Gavin Evans,

Re: 140698 Former St. Nicholas House, Broad Street, Aberdeen

Mixed use development including office, hotel, retail, restaurant, leisure, civic space including car parking, access, landscaping, infrastructure and public realm improvements

The Trust has examined this application for the above and wishes to comment as follows:

The Scottish Civic Trust supports the comments of our affiliated group Aberdeen Civic Society. Please see their response for details of relevant policies.

The Design and Access and Heritage Statements contain a significant amount of analysis of the context within which the application site sits. The urban design approach as described therefore seems well considered and reflects the historic development of this site.

The proposed layout is welcomed, with some reservations. While the St Nicholas Shopping Centre does turn its back on Flourmill Lane, we are concerned that this development proposes to retain the lane as a service/back lane. We do feel that this development could begin to make linkages here, which any future redevelopment south of the application site could build on to reintroduce active frontage to the lane and improve its general environment.

While the layout is well considered, we feel that the proposals are less successful in elevation. The design statement analysis notes the interest, variety and delicate detailing at roof level in the surrounding buildings, and the tension between lower roof levels and higher points, creating prominent towers and landmarks; none of this is reflected in the elevations proposed. A general height of 7 storeys across the site is, we feel, a significant increase over the general height in this area of 4/5 storeys, as identified on page 22 of the Design Statement. This height results in an overly bulky massing, despite the best intentions of the footprint.

In terms of design the elevations are uninspiring, looking much like any other development of this kind, in any other Scottish city centre. What is lacking here is the human scale and intimacy promised by the proposed footprint. The assessment of the historic townscape in the Design Statement suggests a dense area, with buildings that are varied in height, plot width and style, yet drawn together with familiar materials and repeated rhythms. Unfortunately these proposals have failed to achieve this diversity and are instead a large mass with little distinction between the parts and a flat horizontal roofline.

the
Tobacco Merchants
House
42 Miller Street
Glasgow
G1 4DT

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Fa
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PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 03 June 2014 21:02
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698
Name : Derek McWilliam
Address : 58A Whitehall Place
Aberdeen
AB25 2PJ

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : I strongly object to the development proposed on the grounds it constitutes over-development of the site. The proposed buildings will be sited even closer to the frontage of Marischal College than the former St.Nicholas House a [REDACTED] whilst it was in the most 3 storeys high, the proposed development is 7 storeys and more. The proposed design will create even more of a canyon funelling the wind to uncomfortably high levels. This development misses the opportunity to present Provost Skene House in an aesthetically pleasing way and if it is built it will prevent the creation of a civic square of quality bounded on the east by Aberdeen's most prominent building, Marischal College. The Council has put financial gain before the needs of the community yet again and I must emphasise my objection to the proposals as illustrated in the submission lodged.

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PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 03 June 2014 15:08
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698
Name : JAMES SINCLAIR
Address : 57 CASTLE STREET,
ABERDEEN
AB115BB

Telephone :
Email : 
type :

Comment : This development is yet another wasted opportunity to develop an extremely important public space by turning it into yet another shopping mall/office makeover of which our city centre is being destroyed in favour of money greedy developers. In its present form it has no architectural merit whatsoever nor does it have the remotest affinity with what a public space should look like. It is yet another Union Square type development, insensitive and out of character with the area. It will join the list of disasters which can be found in Guild Street, Shiprow, Castlegate and other areas throughout this city. Our so called planning department are totally out of their depth in these matters and I can only hope the Council comes to its senses and puts a stop to this quick build type of construction.

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George and Kathleen Torpey
8 Overton Park, Dyce,
Aberdeen.
AB21 7FT

E-mail 

Dear Sir or Madam,

9-0-14

Planning application No.140698

With regard to the above application I wish to express my objection to the proposals presented in their current form.

What follows are my objections, not necessarily in order of importance.

First of all the closing off of Broad Street to traffic. This would I believe to be a retrograde step. To push more traffic onto Uppergate, Schoolhill and Rosemount Viaduct has to be an ill considered proposal. These areas are already congested, to add more traffic including buses along with the associated air and noise pollution is not a viable option.

My next point is with regard to scale, extent and height of the development. What has been presented is a gross overdevelopment of what is a compact site. Failure to recognise the importance and presence both Marischal College and Provost Skenes House is unacceptable. The building proposed on Upper Kirkgate towards Provost S.H. Should be reviewed with particular regard to height and materials being proposed. The height is of particular concern to me with total loss of sight of our two jewels from Upper Kirkgate and Schoolhill.

At this point I would draw your attention to the "public

consultations" by Muse at the Art Gallery which were a farce and totally inadequate to the planning process. My belief is that no heed has been paid to the interested citizens of Aberdeen.

In view of my comments above and those of certain councillors I would seek assurances that the professionalism and integrity of the planning service has not and will not be compromised.

Yours faithfully,


George Torpey

Ref. No 714

DYSARTBANK
COUNTESSWELLS ROAD
CULTS
ABERDEEN
AB15 9QG

Planning Dept.
Marischal College
Broad St. Aberdeen.

Tel [REDACTED]
12/6/14.

Dear Sirs.

I have yet to meet anyone who wishes to see hideous St Nicholas House replaced by multiple versions in the same ilk obstructing the delightful view which is now revealed of Marischal College and Provost Skene's house. I trust that the charming water feature which adorns the Provost's house remains it does not seem to be mentioned? It was designed & believed by famous Hurley-Jones. The proposed glass boxes will undoubtedly have to be removed as well as it has already proved that they do not stand the test of time, unlike our listed buildings.

Planning participation is a myth sadly. Aberdeen Art Gallery is about to be destroyed despite the outrage in Aberdeen when all it needed was repairs. It is public knowledge that a young lady was appointed nearly a year ago to let the proposed proposals in Broad St. before they were even advertised.

Aberdeen should learn that visitors do not come to see offices en masse - they come to see our listed buildings and open spaces which make a city famous and cannot be replaced. We should cherish and repair them instead of destruction.

I enclose Jan Smart's letter, please listen. Can we also have the disabled car park which was opposite M.S. returned, it is much missed by those who need it or is it for the Council now?

Yours sincerely
[REDACTED]

66 Louisville Avenue

Aberdeen

Ab15 4TX

23 June 2014

Dear Sir/Madam

Comments on Marischal Square Development, Broad Street, Aberdeen

MUSE - planning application number 140698

I am very disappointed with the proposals for the site, especially as it is such an important city centre site in terms of strategic siting and civic value to the local population.

In general

I am not in favour of the plans as they stand. I understand that the mix of retail etc is in the Local Development Plan and that the initially promised pedestrianised plaza is no longer on the table. However, the proposed plans are very disappointing and not acceptable. This proposed development is functional but definitely not inspirational, nor aspirational and most certainly not culturally sensitive. We are in the process of knocking down a development which has been hated since it was built 50 years ago and my fear is that we are repeating this mistake on a larger scale. Aberdeen City Council has made a popular and practical move in terms of knocking down St Nicholas House and moving their offices into Marischal College. I really do applaud that decision, despite some of the criticism which was made about the funding of the development in difficult financial times. Now that St. Nicholas House is about to be completely demolished we can truly see the stunning site which is to be developed. We must make the most of it for the future reputation of the city as well as the people who live here.

In making my submission, I have taken into account Policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance, such as the Aberdeen Local Development Plan adopted in 2012. I am sure that I don't need to reference these, but I have added them as an Appendix.

Development scale

Although there have been adjustments made as the application went through its pre-application public consultation phase, I think that the overall density, massing and scale of the development is still too over-powering. The proposed buildings' design, lack the variety and interest lacks the characteristic of Aberdeen's existing skyline. The development should be more sympathetic with the buildings that are around it; the elevations, form, scale and massing of Marischal College and Upper Kirkgate – buildings that tend to punctuate the skyline of Aberdeen rather than flatten it with a large boxes (a feature which is universally hated by Aberdonians). See appendix.

Building height

One of the attributes of St Nicholas House which we hated was the height, which was out of keeping with the surrounding area. I know that the height of the proposed hotel has been reduced from 10 storeys, but even 7 is too high. Will the hotel have a roof garden? It seems unclear to me what the top level is for. It looks to me that the highest building height for frontline is 4 storeys, but we will not be able to see Provost Skene's House from Broad Street or The Kirkgate. This is something that the thousands of respondents to the 3 public consultations felt very strongly about. The plans seem to suggest that there will be a building between Provost Skene's House and Broad Street, obscuring a clear view from the proposed pedestrianised

CCE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 30 May 2014 15:56
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Genevieve Cseh
Address : 144 Spital
Aberdeen AB24 3JU

Telephone :

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : I object to the plans for more retail space building in this area. I would like to see this area devoted more to enhancing the historical landmarks which are already located here, ideally with additional open green space, rather than to more retail space and new building. While I understand the need for contributions to economic growth in the city, I believe there are other areas of the city which might benefit from that more than this particular spot. For instance, many of the shops on Union Street seem to be empty or going out of business. If the main thoroughfare in the city is unable to retain business, adding more locations will not help. It is, in fact, a somewhat risky additional expense during difficult economic times. Replacing the monolithic eyesore that was St. Nicholas House with yet more boxy, grey architecture that will obscure Provost Skene's House and divide it once more from Marischal is a mistake. Other cities celebrate their history, but it seems like Aberdeen is, at every turn, trying to suppress and hide its own. The pervasive grey granite is Aberdeen's most unique features, but it also has the tendency to make it look colourless and drab. What is required to infuse it with much-needed beauty and visual variety is a highlighting of the beautiful historical architecture which is almost nowhere else in the city as pervasive as in this particular area, with Marischal, the Townhouse, and Provost Skene's House all in the same place. These should be allowed to stand as features, ideally with added green space such as a park, rather than be hidden behind more colourless concrete and glass. There is more to life, happiness, and civic pride than shopping centres! Aberdeen already has plenty of those! I hope you will consider this option in the plans for this area of the city. On a personal note, I came to Aberdeen from the US nearly a decade ago. What made me fall in love with this city and made it unique was the sense of history and the historical architecture, NOT the shopping centres with chain stores you can find anywhere else. Thank you for your consideration of these arguments against the Muse plans.

○
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GEE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 30 May 2014 16:04
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Alan Parker
Address : 27F Richmond Walk
Aberdeen
AB25 2YT

Telephone :

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : This is an outrageous plan that will make the area in front of Marischal nothing special, or to be celebrated. It will, once again, hide the fantastic piece of history that is Provost Skene's House. Surely a much better plan would be to turn the area into a proper civic square, a city centre open space the like of which is missing from Aberdeen City.

For this reason I object to this proposal

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GEE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 03 June 2014 09:27
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Caroline Medd
Address : 26C Netherkirkgate
Aberdeen

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :
Comment : as a neighbour of this development I have already experienced your demolition contractor in breach of your noise restrictions twice and it wouldn't appear that you have any control over them. Can I get assurance that the client you will have better control in the main contractor adhering to your noise restrictions and any other construction regulations.

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Our Ref. TR/IH/1/51/2
Your Ref. 95814
Contact Iain Hamilton
Email
Direct Dial 01224 522752



ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

02 July 2014

Mr R McDonald
Fairhurst
88 Queens Road
ABERDEEN
AB15 4YQ

Enterprise, Planning &
Infrastructure
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 4
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen AB10 1AB

Tel 08456080910
Minicom 01224 522381
DX 529451, Aberdeen 9
www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

Dear Ross

Marischal Square

I write in regard to the above development and to your Transport Assessment (TA).

I note that the proposals are for a development of:

- 19,680sq.m. of office space
- 2,397sq.m. of retail or restaurant units
- 125 bedroom hotel
- 5,314sq.m. public realm space

The development includes the closure of Broad Street between Queen Street and Upperkirkgate following a decision by the Councils Enterprise Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee. Within this response I have incorporated the comments of other sections in the Council, including Transportation and Traffic Management.

Policy

I note and agree with the transport planning policy that has been taken into consideration.

Development Proposals

In addition to the site content stipulated above there are proposed a private car park of 250 spaces and 100 bicycle stands.

The TA states that possession of Broad Street may be required during construction and I would appreciate it if you would advise your clients that they should contact Raymond Moffat within the Council to discuss this further. Given the nature of Broad Street within the city centre I would advise that this be done in early course.

GORDON MACINTOSH
DIRECTOR



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Trip Generation and Distribution

The trip rates have previously been agreed following scoping. Following scoping discussions the modal split included within the TA reflects that from the 2001 census for this area and is therefore acceptable.

I had understood from scoping discussions that 10 car parking spaces would be attributed to the hotel and 240 to the office. This tends to accord with the statement in paragraph 5.3.3 that 'the hotel will have almost no parking spaces'. However paragraph 5.3.4 states that 'the hotel operator does not require any parking spaces'. Section 6.6.3 of the TA states that the hotel will have four spaces allocated. I also believe from the TA that the office is now to have 246 parking spaces. I would appreciate clarification on this issue. If the hotel does not require any parking spaces then these spaces should be removed from the development in order that the office aspect does not exceed the upper limit of the maximum parking standards. If spaces are to be retained for the hotel then it must be clearly explained how use of these spaces by others will be restricted. I must also emphasise that barrier controls will be required at the car park.

Transport Infrastructure Proposals

As part of the development proposals the section of Broad Street between Queen Street and Upperkirkgate will be closed to vehicles. This pedestrian area will link with the surrounding footways.

Pedestrian Infrastructure

Alterations will be made to the Broad Street/ Gallowgate/ Upperkirkgate junction to account for the closure of Broad Street, however the traffic signals would be retained in order to regulate the movement of buses between Upperkirkgate and Gallowgate. I note that the pedestrian route between the development and Flourmill Lane involves steps. It has been requested that a route be provided that avoids steps in at least one location, and I would again ask for this.

I note that a raised table is proposed on Flourmill Lane at the junction between Upperkirkgate and Flourmill Lane in order to maintain pedestrian levels. I have some concern with this proposal in that Flourmill Lane will remain the access route for deliveries to the St Nicholas Centre, Marks and Spencer, the development itself and a small number of other premises. A raised table would not normally be conducive to these uses. I also have maintenance concerns in respect of this with the high impact that large vehicles turning across the ramp would have. I would therefore ask that this raised provision be removed and alternative provision be provided to aid pedestrians crossing Flourmill Lane.

I note that a further raised table is also proposed at the Queen Street/ Broad Street junction. This would be wholly inappropriate as this route forms the vehicular access to Queen Street Police Station and their vehicles will need unobstructed access to respond to emergencies. I will therefore again ask that this be removed and an alternative pedestrian assistance be provided. The introduction of a raised table at the Netherkirkgate/ Flourmill Lane junction is considered to be acceptable, however will have to be designed to accommodate the types of vehicles that will be passing through this area, however it is agreed that pedestrians should be given priority.

Cycle Infrastructure

I note the proposal for cycle spaces to be incorporated into both the underground car park and the open space throughout the development. All spaces should be Sheffield type and be provided with shelters if not contained within a building or underground car park. All buildings will include showers, changing rooms and locker facilities.

Public Transport

The site is well located to take account of public transport services in the city centre. New bus stops are proposed in association with the development, following the closure of Broad Street. The standard of infrastructure that is required in city centre locations has been discussed previously with yourselves and your client. I understand that the bus operators are presently establishing the alternative routes that services will use following the closure of Broad Street, however it is likely that the majority, if not all, will make use of the new stops on Upperkirkgate. It is noted that bus stops accommodating two buses will be provided on Upperkirkgate. At this timing point ideally space for three buses would be provided, however I will consult with my colleagues in the Public Transport Unit on this matter. I will also ask that the tourist coach pick up and drop off point be moved to Queen Street. The TA mentions that alterations will be required to bus stops on Schoolhill and Union Terrace; full details of the alterations and necessary infrastructure proposed should be provided. This should also include details of the services affected.

Flourmill Lane

Section 6.5.1 of the TA states that physical restrictions will be put in place to prevent vehicles emerging from the development onto Flourmill Lane and turning left towards the Netherkirkgate. Section 6.8.7 repeats the physical restrictions proposed. These restrictions will be required in order to enforce a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) that will require to either be amended or introduced as appropriate. I am aware that discussions have commenced with my Traffic Management colleagues, however I would urge that these continue.

Servicing

A servicing strategy has been proposed which allows service vehicles to access Broad Street during restricted periods of the day and the service laybys on Flourmill Lane at all times. This accords with the principle agreed with the Council. Broad Street has high levels of pedestrian activity during parts of the day during which it is proposed to allow service vehicles access, and I would consider therefore that service vehicle access should be restricted to 0600 – 0800.

Service vehicles will enter from the Upperkirkgate and exit onto Broad Street at Queen Street, operating a one way system. A route of at least 5.5m in width will be provided and defined by surfacing materials and landscaping. I would urge that you begin discussions on the use of materials with my Roads Construction Consent (RCC) colleagues as soon as possible. The TA states that part of the identified route will be less than 5.5m and that parking on this part of the route will be prevented. I would ask what width is proposed, if there is a particular reason that the route width needs to be restricted, and how the no parking situation will be enforced. To cover the possible event that service access to the development from Broad Street proves unacceptable to the Council, I would ask that an alternative servicing plan be provided.

It is stated within the TA that access to Broad Street for service vehicles will be controlled, as per discussions with the Council. The TA should contain detail on how this control will be implemented, and how emergency vehicles will retain access at all times.

The pedestrianisation of Broad Street will be implemented in association with the development, though it is acknowledged that the TRO process may lead to works progressing at a different timescale. In the period that may occur between the opening of the development and the closure of Broad Street it is proposed to make use of either Broad Street or the layby on Upperkirkgate for the purposes of servicing. I would have some concern with use of Broad Street as this could interfere with the operation of the traffic signals and traffic movements. As is acknowledged in section 6.9.1 of the TA, the existing layby is extensively used by disabled drivers for the purpose of parking. The TA identifies that if the lay-by was used for servicing, enforcement against parking would be required. I would ask for proposals in this regard, and that the alternative disabled parking, replacing that lost by the removal of the lay-by, will be available prior to the opening of the development. As the new bus stops will require to be completed prior to the closure of Broad Street there will be a period of time that the lay-by will not be available for use for servicing, and consideration should be given to arrangements for this time period, and these should be included in the TA. I understand that all elements of the development will open at the same time, so Broad Street should never need to be used for servicing. Even if the closure of Broad Street has not been achieved, alternative permanent servicing arrangements will need to be in place prior to the development opening.

The changes to the physical nature of the road will require to undergo the Roads Construction Consent (RCC) process. I would urge you to contact Colin Burnet as soon as possible to begin these discussions.

The swept path analysis shows that vehicles emerging from the existing service accesses at Marks and Spencer and the St Nicholas Centre will clip the service bays proposed for the development. Were service vehicles to be sitting in these bays, it would be difficult or impossible depending on the positions of both vehicles for those exiting the existing service bays to do so. I note that the TA states that you consider that in practice this situation would not occur, however the technical evidence presented in the TA suggests that it will, and no evidence to the contrary is presented. I would also ask for clarification of how the proposed service bays on Flourmill Lane will be managed, in order to prevent use by other vehicles.

I have also considered the swept path analysis of movements on Flourmill Lane. At the junction with the Upperkirkgate I am prepared to accept that vehicles will cross the centre line. However, the swept path analysis clearly shows that the articulated vehicle tracked, with the benefit of a trailer with steering, will not be able to access Union Street without driving over the already narrow footway. This arrangement will, amongst other concerns, leave no refuge space for pedestrians finding themselves in this location, and we cannot be reliant on a position where vehicles have to drive over the footway. My RCC colleagues have asked that I remind you that 250mm clearance is required from the kerblines for all vehicles. However, issues in relation to the footway will require to be addressed.

Numbers of vehicles servicing the hotel have been provided, however the Council had previously asked that the TA include as accurate as possible numbers of the

total servicing of the development. The Council has previously asked for details of the types of vehicle to be used and that a likely delivery schedule be provided.

The Council has some concern that the location of the service laybys will not be close enough to some of the units, and that this may encourage indiscriminate parking for servicing. Of particular concern is the proposed convenience retail outlet. I would ask that the servicing strategy address this potential issue.

In general, with regard to servicing access the content of the TA is too vague. I will however confirm that the Council will not permit servicing from Broad Street in the event that the development is completed ahead of the road closure. The specific requirements of the food retail outlets should be taken into account. Service details including frequency, capacity and conflicts needs to be reviewed and included in the TA. This all must realistically reflect the proposed development and full detail of the servicing arrangements for the existing premises should be provided, including the St Nicholas Centre, Upperkirkgate and Netherkirkgate. It must be shown that these will not be impeded by the development or during construction.

Other Matters

I note that the car parking sign on Broad Street will be relocated, and would advise that you continue discussions with my Traffic Management colleagues in regard to this. I also note the provision of a drop off point and taxi rank on Queen Street and Broad Street respectively. At present Marks and Spencer operate a taxi phone line, with pick up from their Netherkirkgate door. Following the implementation of the development this will not be possible, and I would ask how this service will be operated.

I have considered the swept path analysis at the Broad Street/ Upperkirkgate junction, and am satisfied that the provision of traffic signals movements can be accommodated at this junction. The precise location of the stop lines etc. can be determined through the RCC process.

Further information is requested in terms of the vehicular access to the development. Essentially, section 6.5 of the TA should be expanded. I would ask that a barrier control be included at the entry and exit to the car park. I would also ask for details in regard to the parking management to be employed at the development, including how spaces will be allocated amongst buildings. The Councils car parking standards are predicated on spaces not be allocated to individual people.

Pedestrian and Cycle

Two pedestrian routes are proposed adjacent to Provost Skenes House. It would be preferable if this could be provided as one route, either ramped or with minimal steps. The main concern in regard to this point is access for the disabled as opposed to the number of routes, however if it assists the Council would be prepared to accept one route if it meant disabled access could be provided.

I note the presence of advanced stop lines at the proposed Gallowgate/ Upperkirkgate junction. Links to the surrounding cycle network are limited, and with the increased volume of traffic predicted on Schoolhill and Union Street the level of segregation is likely to be increased. I would ask for an assessment of the appropriateness for National Cycle Route One to remain on road on Schoolhill and other surrounding streets following the development given the volume of traffic that

will occur. I would also ask that the TA consider the necessary physical links and level of infrastructure from the development to the cycle network, including that on adjacent streets and further afield. This should start with a detailed review of the existing facilities. All assessment should be based on Cycling By Design. I would ask for the provision of a plan showing the location of all cycle parking, and that all cycle parking, including that for short term use, be provided with shelters.

Fingerpost signage for pedestrians should be provided within the development providing direction to individual developments. Additionally, pedestrian signage to the development as a whole should be provided on key pedestrian routes through the city centre. I would ask that the TA contain a signpost strategy for pedestrians, encompassing these points.

Traffic Regulation Orders

My Traffic Management colleagues have indicated that a temporary TRO could be brought forward for the closure of Broad Street to facilitate construction. Clearly this will in itself bring about a requirement for changes to the public transport services. I would urge that you hold discussions with the Councils Traffic Management section, Public Transport Unit, Transportation and the public transport operators using the route as soon as possible.

No mention is made in the TA that Flourmill Lane would require to be closed, and I assume therefore that this will be the case, however I would ask for your confirmation of this.

Traffic Impact Appraisal

Tables 8-3 and 8-4 of the TA present the results of the modelling exercise. I would ask for clarification of the unit of time that these results are presented in, however for the moment I will assume that these are presented in seconds.

The results of the modelling indicate that there will be increases in journey time on Schoolhill and Union Terrace in the AM and PM peaks and on Union Street in the PM peak. There are predicted to be decreases in journey time on the Gallowgate, likely as a result of Broad Street being closed.

The TA refers to the conclusions of the SIAS report, which did not make use of the agreed trip rates. These state that even with peak spreading techniques being employed and traffic signals being optimised, instability exists within the model, and traffic gridlocks within the network. It is presumed, that with use of the correct trip rates this gridlock and congestion is increased.

The model used to assess the development covers a more extensive area than that which has been listed in the TA. I would therefore ask for wider ranging results, including the key corridors of East North Street/ West North Street/ Virginia Street/ Market Street and the Denburn dual carriageway/ College Street/ Guild Street. I would also ask for the models to be submitted.

There are some increases to bus journey times of up to approximately one minute, however these are generally offset against decreases in other services. I note that a Picady assessment has been carried out of the Upperkirkgate/ Flourmill Lane junction, and I would ask for the electronic modelling files to be submitted. I also

note that a Linsig assessment has been carried out of the Upperkirkgate/ Gallowgate traffic signals, and again I would ask that the electronic models be submitted.

Travel Plan

I will respond with comments on the Travel Plan under separate cover.

Construction Plan

Lastly, I will ask that the TA contain detail of the construction plan including phasing, network changes, any temporary TRO's, access issues and servicing of the site. I understand that it is intended that all the buildings open at the same time.

At this time the TA does not contain sufficient information to allow a conclusion of the impact of the development to be reached.

I trust that you will find the comments in this letter of use, however if you wish to discuss them further, please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Iain Hamilton

GET

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 16 May 2014 04:12
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Robert Haazen
Address : c/o 90 Provost Rust Drive
Aberdeen

Telephone :

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : I Love the plans and its about time Aberdeen had some modern buildings and started to look like the Oil Capital as we are. Though I do wish that some of the architecture had more curvy styles other than square edges as the curvy style to me reflects the shapes of waves at the seaside. The curvy styles don't need to be roof bound it can be the corning, basicly curve the corners or do a curvy facade on the building. Hell do it like Dubai and have really stunning architecture like the leaning tower in Dubai, I think that building is beautifully unusual and an engineering wonder, I also know how they built it. I would love to see building projects that are unusual and unique that we can all be proud of and also a tourist attraction. I like the Idea of a nice tall building that is the tallest structure in Aberdeen and have a public Cafe or Restaurant at the top with a panoramic view of our beautiful city for all to enjoy, Families and Tourists. We need to make our city worth it. Ok enough rambling from me. Te plans have my thumbs up tho I would like to see more curvy styles included even though I know that will not happen in this project But please consider this for future projects like this one.

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GEE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 24 May 2014 09:50
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698
Name : Malcolm Pye
Address : 40 Colthill Road
Milltimber
Aberden AB13 0EF

Telephone : [REDACTED]
Email : [REDACTED]
type :

Comment : I object to making Broad Street a pedestrian precinct and diverting buses along Schoolhill as it will inconvenience bus users and cause gridlock in Schoolhill. Access to Union Street from the north has already been restricted by the building of the Bon Accord Centre and restrictions on Belmont Street and Back Wynd. On Broad Street the buses pull into laybys; on Schoolhill the buses will have to stop on the street impeding traffic movement. The busiest stop for the 19 bus is outside BHS in Union Street where a lot of people coming in from Tillydrone get off and Cults/Culter passengers get on. This proposal removes this stop. There are already pedestrian precincts in the Castlegate and on top of the St Nicholas Centre. Why do we need another? This is a council vanity project whose implications for public transport have not been thought through.

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GTE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 26 May 2014 11:23
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Jenny Wheeler
Address : 47 Gray Street
Aberdeen
AB10 6JD

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : The proposed plans are a badly missed opportunity to create a beautiful civic green space which would enhance the wonderful buildings of Marischal College, Greyfriars Church and Provost Skene's House. The design of the buildings will obscure these views and aspects in this conservation area. This is notwithstanding the previous building on the site which was an aberration. The proposed plans go a long way to recreating this situation and should be avoided at all costs.

Provost Skene's House should be a main feature of the area and should be clearly visible from all angles.

The plans do not include any provision for residential accommodation that would attract people to live in the city centre.

Traffic problems are well known in Aberdeen and this proposed development will only exacerbate these in the city centre.

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PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 15 May 2014 08:50
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : L Ross

Address : Urquhart Road

Telephone :

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : I don't agree with this site plan as it seems to once again block the view of Marischal College. After the all that money was spent on it, it should be seen! Possibly a one story shopping precinct would be a better idea? Rather than casting any more shadows around that area.

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4E

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 31 May 2014 17:43
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698
Name : Gill Johnston
Address : 10a Duthie Road
Tarves
AB41 7JX

Telephone :
Email : [REDACTED]
type :

Comment : Simply a plea that this application is considered carefully, taking in the views of so many Aberdonians and visitors who really want to retain the unfettered vista of Marischal College seen in all its glory now that St Nicholas House and its surrounds are mostly demolished. It is such a place of beauty and would be so much more valuable to citizens and visitors as a beautiful civic space, than crowded with more glass boxes. I object to this application of the grounds that public opinion is not being properly considered and many people would prefer an open civic space in which to enjoy one of the next example of granite craftsmanship in the world

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SEE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 21 May 2014 22:01
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Maureen Styles
Address : 13, Boyd Orr Close
Aberdeen
AB12 5RH

Telephone : [REDACTED]
Email : [REDACTED]
type :

Comment : I wish to register my objection to the proposed development of 'Marischal Square'. I lodged my objections after the first consultation, and was advised by Muse that public opinion had been taken into consideration. However, at second consultation it appeared that no improvements had been made. I am an Aberdonian born and bred, and it pains me to see so much of the heritage of this beautiful city being destroyed. This council has the opportunity to make amends, and give the citizens of Aberdeen a public space which they can enjoy, and be proud of. Thank you

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GEE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 31 May 2014 00:03
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Sheila Davidson
Address : 4 Balgownie Road
Bridge of Don

Telephone :

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : Please don't obscure the stunning Marischal College and historically significant Provost Skene's house with a collection of glass blocks just like the ones you have demolished. They will be dirty and dated in no time leaving us with another St Niks. Please, for once listen to the citizens of Aberdeen. This is too important to our city
○ push through, thinking only of pound signs!

○
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LEE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 02 June 2014 21:32
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140698

Comment for Planning Application 140698

Name : Edmund Smith
Address : 33 Leggart Terrace
Aberdeen
AB12 5UA

Telephone :

Email : [REDACTED]

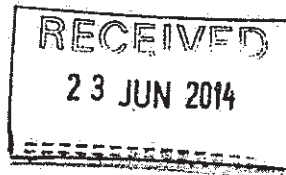
type :

Comment : I object to the re-development of this site. The recent demolition has opened up the facade of Marischal college and Provost Skenes house, allowing them to be fully appreciated. I would prefer the site to be utilised a civic office.

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20th June 2014

Mr Gavin Evans
Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 4
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB



Dear Sir

PLANNING APPLICATION – 140698
FORMER ST. NICHOLAS HOUSE, BROAD STREET, ABERDEEN

REPRESENTATION ON BEHALF OF JOHN LEWIS

I write on behalf of John Lewis in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the former St. Nicholas House, Broad Street, by Muse Developments Ltd (App reference 140698).

This representation follows the John Lewis Store Manager having already raised his concerns with Aberdeen City Council. In addition, John Lewis has also been in discussion with F&C REIT who, as we understand, share concerns regarding this proposed development.

John Lewis have traded from their department store on George Street, Aberdeen since 1989, and have a strong link with the long-established Bon Accord and St. Nicholas Centres, with John Lewis subletting their rooftop to the Bon Accord Centre for additional parking and a pedestrian bridge link between Centre and the John Lewis store. Stocking over 350,000 lines over four storeys, John Lewis are the largest retailer in the city centre and represent a significant trade draw to customers visiting the city centre and generate notable 'cross visitation' custom to other retailers in the centre.

As a department store with such a range of lines, John Lewis retail a vast array of larger, 'bulkier' goods, including electrical goods, furniture and furnishings, and also operate a very successful 'click and collect' service from the store. As such, easy vehicular access to their store and the Bon Accord Centre car park is fundamental to John Lewis's retail strategy and success in the city. Indeed, John Lewis are made aware from customer feedback that easy access (or even just the perception of easy access) is fundamental to their choice of shopping destination. The Council will also be fully aware of John Lewis's proposed upgrades to their Customer Collect service at their Aberdeen store, with the proposed installation of new customer bays and new store entrance, resulting in improved customer service, and a further investment in the city centre of circa £800,000.

John Lewis are supportive of city centre investment in Aberdeen and therefore is reluctant to object to this application, however, on their behalf, we would like to raise significant concerns regarding the details of the proposed development and their potential impact upon the customer access to the Bon Accord Centre car park and, by extension, vehicle access to the John Lewis store. These concerns are outlined below.

The Proposed Development

We understand that the proposals entail mixed use development including office, hotel, retail, restaurant, leisure, civic space including car parking, access, landscaping, infrastructure and public realm improvements, including private parking provision, all at the former St. Nicholas House site, between Flourmill Lane and Upperkirkgate, including Provost Skene's House and incorporating Broad Street.

Directors: W Baxter Allan Dip Tp MRTPI Gordon MacCallum Dip Tp MRTPI

160 West Regent Street - Glasgow G2 4RL

Keppie Design Ltd. Registered in Scotland no 159423.

www.keppiedesign.co.uk

It is noted that a key feature of these proposals is the proposed pedestrianisation of part of Broad Street, from Queen Street to Upperkirkgate, and the associated creating of a civic square between the development site and Marischal College.

It is also noted that the pedestrianisation of Broad Street has been a long-held Council ambition for a number of years, having been included in the Bon Accord Quarter Masterplan (2006), the Aberdeen City Centre Development Framework (2012), the Aberdeen City Council/Ryden sales particulars for the site and also having been subject of a full Council decision in March 2014 – all of which precede the submission of Muse Developments' application - to progress with the option of "full pedestrianisation" of Broad Street. As such, it could be seen that this aspect of the proposed development is as much, if not more, a proposal by Aberdeen City Council as it is a proposal by Muse Developments as part of the redevelopment scheme.

Impact of Pedestrianisation of Broad Street

We have reviewed the supporting information provided with the planning application, and specifically our transport advisors (JMP Consultants Ltd) have reviewed the Transport Assessment. A Review Note by JMP is enclosed with this application, and this should be read in conjunction with this representation.

Based upon the information provided by the Bon Accord Centre, it is estimated that the Loch Street Car Park receives 650,000 car visits per year, whilst the Harriet Street Car Park receives 350,000 car visits per year, totalling some circa 1 million car visits per year to the car parks that provide customer parking for the John Lewis store.

It is also estimated that the closure of Broad Street will impact upon 13% of the total usage of these two car parks i.e. 130,000 car visits per annum, with these trips originating from the south of the city and approaching the car parks via Broad Street.

This closure of Broad will require alternative routes to be found for those customers using these car parks, and the general associated dispersal of traffic around the city will result in increased congestion at alternative junctions, and therefore alternative routes to the car parks will also increase the journey times for customers. We have attached a plan which highlights potential alternative routes for those customers, including a longer and more convoluted route via Main Street North, and a route via Union Terrace which will be more convoluted and subject of increased traffic and journey times.

In addition to highlight a number of failings in the Transport Assessment submitted with the Marischal Square planning application, JMP's Review Note raises a number of significant concerns specifically in relation to the impact of the pedestrianisation of Broad Street upon customer vehicular access to the John Lewis store and the Bon Accord Centre, including:

- Suggestion that the number of vehicles visiting the Marischal Square development will far outstrip the car parking levels proposed, with overspill traffic diverting to the Bon Accord Centre and the surrounding network;
- Reference to a number of test models showing instability, and that *"this instability manifests itself as gridlocking within the model network whereby the model network cannot complete their trip due to network congestion"*;
- The closure of Broad Street will result in vehicles re-routing either via Union Terrace and Schoolhill or via West North Street, representing a diversion of 1 mile per diverted vehicle (in each direction);
- There will be a 26% increase in journey times on the Eastbound carriageway of Schoolhill and 23% on the westbound carriageway in the AM peak period as a result of Broad Street closure;
- There will be a 22% increase in journey times on the Eastbound carriageway of Schoolhill and 45% on the westbound carriageway in the PM peak period as a result of Broad Street closure;

- As Schoolhill is proposed to be the main route serving the Bon Accord Centre, it is clear existing patrons of John Lewis and the Bon Accord Centre will be significantly adversely affected by the closure of Broad Street;
- Other than the relocation of one variable message sign, no measures are proposed to mitigate against the above-noted diversion impacts;
- The Council's own STAG Appraisal has failed to adequately assess Noise and Air Quality considerations, which calls the reporting and options appraised into serious question.

This impact on traffic routes and journey times will have a significant impact upon the customer experience of those visiting John Lewis by car, and could discourage them from visiting the stores and choosing to shop elsewhere. Indeed, even if they were to continue to shop at the John Lewis store, this will be accompanied by increased congestion, longer journey times and a poorer customer experience, and would also be to the disbenefit of all users of the city centre.

Overall, it is anticipated that the proposals by Muse to pedestrianise Broad Street will significantly impact upon car travel to the car parks servicing John Lewis and increase congestion and journey times through the city centre. It is considered to be a very real possibility that this will have an adverse impact upon the retail performance of the John Lewis store and therefore have an adverse impact upon the vitality and viability of the city centre, contrary to well-established local and national planning policy.

Indeed, it is considered that the Transport Assessment has insufficiently taken into account the impact of the proposed closure of Broad Street upon the wider city centre, and specifically the vehicular access to the city's largest retailer, and the long-established retail destinations at the Bon Accord and St. Nicholas Centres. We trust that the Council will seek to remedy this during the assessment of the planning application, or indeed undertake their own wider study, in advance of making any determination on this planning application.

Policy position

With regards to the issue raised above, it is clear that there is tension between the proposed development at the former St Nicholas House, including the pedestrianisation of Broad Street, and both the letter and the spirit of both local and national planning policy relating to town centres and retail/commercial development.

As a mixed-use development including office, hotel, retail, restaurant, leisure and civic space within the City Centre Business Zone, it is noted that the proposals generally accord with Policies C1 and C2 of the Local Development Plan. However, the supporting 'Spatial Strategy' text in the Local Development Plan clearly places an emphasis on "*the maintenance of a vibrant city centre*"...and where "*it is vital for the future prosperity of Aberdeen that the City Centre is enhanced and promoted as a safe, attractive, accessible and well connected place...*" [emphasis added]. As is outlined above, it is considered that the impact of the pedestrianisation of Broad Street is that it will likely reduce the vibrancy of the city centre, and reduce the accessibility, particularly for car users accessing existing, and currently vibrant, retail destinations, including the John Lewis store.

In addition, Policy RT1 advises that "*in all cases, proposals shall not detract significantly from the vitality or viability of any first, second, third or fourth tier retail location...*". As above, whilst it is located itself in the same first tier location, it is considered that the closure of Broad Street will detract significantly from the vitality and viability of the city centre. As such, it is considered that the proposed development creates tension with Policy RT1.

In addition to the above provisions from the Local Development Plan, and in a similar vein, national planning policy, as set out in Scottish Planning Policy (February 2010), highlights the importance of accessibility, vibrancy and vitality in city centres. Para 54 advises that "*To be identified as a town centre, a diverse mix of uses and attributes, including a high level of accessibility should be provided*". Para 59 advises that "*Examples of vitality and viability indicators include...physical structure of the centre, including opportunities and constraints, and its accessibility...*" As above, it

is considered that there will be an adverse impact upon the accessibility of the John Lewis store car parks as a result of the closure of Broad Street.

Conclusions

As outlined above, John Lewis are supportive of city centre investment in Aberdeen and are therefore reluctant to object to this application, however, they do have **significant concerns** regarding the details of the proposed development, particularly that of the closure of Broad Street, and its impacts upon the wider city centre network. It has been demonstrated by JMP's Review Note (enclosed) that the pedestrianisation of Broad Street will have a significant adverse effect upon customer vehicular access to John Lewis and the Bon Accord Centre.

As such, we would recommend that Muse Developments, and indeed Aberdeen City Council, **remove the proposal to pedestrianise Broad Street** from the Marischal Square proposals, given the significant adverse impact it will have on the local road network.

Should, for whatever reason, the applicant persist with the proposed pedestrianisation of Broad Street, then it is absolutely incumbent upon the Council as planning authority to ensure that additional studies are undertaken, and appropriate mitigation measures put in place, to ensure that there is no such significant adverse impact upon the surrounding city centre road network, and particularly the impact upon customers accessing the John Lewis store (the city's largest retailer) and the Bon Accord Centre by car. If the applicants fail to demonstrate this, then we trust that Aberdeen City Council, as planning authority, will have no option other than recommending refusal of the application.

I trust all of the above is in order. Should you wish to discuss any of the above or require any further information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Mitchell
Associate

Enc JMP Review Note
 Potential Alternative Routes Plan

cc Stephen Wright / Hannah Chapman John Lewis Partnership (by email)

GVA James Barr

**COPY FOR YOUR
INFORMATION**



Ref: AM07

23 June 2014

Mr Gavin Evans
Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 4
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

206 St Vincent Street
Glasgow G2 5SG

gva.co.uk/scotland

Direct Line: 0141 305 6306

Dear Sir

**PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE 140698
FORMER ST NICHOLAS HOUSE, BROAD STREET, ABERDEEN, AB10 1GY**

REPRESENTATION BY F&C REIT

On behalf of our client F&C REIT, we hereby submit the following representation to planning application reference 140698 at Former St Nicholas House, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1GY.

Background to F&C REIT

Our client, F&C REIT Asset Management, is the asset manager of Bon Accord and St Nicholas Shopping Centres in Aberdeen. They also own approximately 20 smaller properties situated on Schoolhill, Upperkirkgate, George Street and St Andrews Street in Aberdeen City Centre.

The two centres were acquired in November 2013. Clients of F&C REIT collectively invested [REDACTED] in the commercial property sector of Aberdeen during 2013 having been attracted by the strong growth projections for the city and the region. Bon Accord and St Nicholas shopping centres have played a pivotal role in prime retail provision in the city during the last 25 years, and have an annual footfall of [REDACTED] per annum. F&C REIT intends that this role should continue and be enhanced.

Proposals

Having reviewed the planning application documents as available on the Aberdeen City Council's website, planning application reference 140698, we understand that the proposed scheme is for the redevelopment of land on the former St Nicholas House site, between Flourmill Lane and Upperkirkgate, including the Provost Skene's House and incorporating Broad Street to meet Marischal College. The proposals are for a mixed use development.

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London West End, London City, Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle
GVA Grimley Limited is a principal shareholder of GVA Worldwide, an independent partnership of property advisors operating globally.



incorporating a range of uses including retail, hotel, leisure, restaurant and leisure use. We also understand that the proposals include car parking; however this will be for private use for the office facilities.

F&C strongly support economic development within the city centre that aids the Council's objectives within policies C1 and C2 of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP), for retail use within the City Centre Business Zone. The proposals include the redevelopment and regeneration of a key site within the city centre and therefore the uses proposed can enhance this location.

F&C REIT have held discussions with John Lewis (JL) regarding these representations. We know JL also strongly support investment within the city centre but share significant concerns around the proposals, specifically the pedestrianisation of Broad Street and the transport impacts that this will create. These concerns are addressed below in further detail.

Pedestrianisation of Broad Street

We note from the supporting plans and documents, that the proposal includes the pedestrianisation of part of Broad Street as part of the civic square, subject to the successful promotion of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).

Whilst F&C REIT support the inclusion of an amenity space as part of the Muse proposals, our client **strongly objects** to the proposals to pedestrianise Broad Street. This objection primarily arises from their interests at Harriet Street and Loch Street car parks, as well as concerns around potential impact on pedestrian accessibility to both Bon Accord and St Nicholas centres.

F&C REIT and JL instructed JMP to review the transport implications of the application proposals. JMP's Review Note (enclosed) raises significant concerns in relation to the impact of vehicle access to the Bon Accord Centre and associated car parks, as well as John Lewis.

JMP's review estimates 1 million vehicle entries per annum into the Harriet Street and Loch Street car parks and of these vehicles it is estimated that one third approach from the south of the city. Accordingly the pedestrianisation of Broad Street will result in traffic from the south of Broad Street (eg. Union Street, Market Street, etc) having to divert further away from the city centre to access these car parks.

This diversion has been estimated by our client's traffic consultants to have a significant impact on those arriving by car from the south of Broad Street. In order to access the car parks, these vehicles will need to take a longer and more complicated route of access than currently required. Our client is concerned that this could have a significant impact on cars accessing their car parks, which in turn will impact considerably upon associated footfall within their centres. This is extremely concerning considering our clients future ambitions to enhance their assets at this location through further investment, as well as maintaining Bon Accord and St Nicholas centres as the prime focal point for retail provision in this part of the

city, which in turn supports investment and growth in nearby shopping streets such as Union Street.

In addition to this, there will be a similar issue for buses which will need to be redirected if they can no longer access north-south via Broad Street. It is considered that access for buses from the south may be drawn away from Union Street and that this will impact on potential footfall within the city centre retail core.

Further to this, JMP's Review Note states that proposed bus stop infrastructure along Upperkirkgate may be considered substandard in size and layout on a corridor where traffic volume and journey time will already be significantly increased by the proposals. This will only increase journey length and difficulty in access along Upperkirkgate.

This proposal could be compounded further by the Council's aspirations to achieve a part-pedestrianised Union Street in the future. Furthermore the Council's Transportation Study for Broad Street hints at other possible future measures such as restricting private vehicle access to Market Street which would compound the current proposals significantly.

Our clients also have concerns in relation to the proposed increase in journey times on Schoolhill resulting from the proposed pedestrianisation of Broad Street, as suggested within the Fairhurst Transport Assessment submitted as part of the submitted application. This assessment suggests a 26% increase in journey times eastbound and 23% westbound in the AM peak, and a 22% increase in journey times eastbound and 45% westbound in the PM peak, as a result of the Broad Street closure. It is clear therefore that access along Schoolhill to our clients car parks will be significantly affected, having a detrimental impact on customer experience and potentially discouraging visiting both our clients assets, John Lewis and other city centre stores.

Additionally this potential increase in traffic along Upperkirkgate and onto Schoolhill (as a result of not being able to drive along Broad Street) may potentially cause increased safety issues for pedestrians crossing between Bon Accord and St Nicholas centres, leading to a loss of permeability and accessibility across this desire line, that is one of the busiest crossings in Aberdeen city centre.

Pedestrian movement in and around the Bon Accord and St Nicholas Shopping Centres is monitored and analysed by F&C REIT. They are able to quantify that about 20 million pedestrians per annum cross the road between the two centres at Schoolhill / Upperkirkgate. This makes this part of the city centre very significant in terms of pedestrian usage but also in the wider image of Aberdeen as a place to visit and enjoy as a pedestrian.

It is difficult to envisage similar pedestrian usage of Broad Street, even if pedestrianisation goes ahead. Yet increased traffic along Schoolhill / Upperkirkgate could significantly affect permeability and pedestrian movement using this busy crossing between the two centres.

As a result of impacts on air quality in the same location it will also make this space less attractive to use from the perspective of pedestrians and cyclists. We would question the

compatibility of this outcome with the Council's Transport Strategy. We note that First Bus (one of the main public transport operators in the city has also publicly raised concerns on these proposals).

We quote from the Broad Street Civic Square Main Transportation Study (as presented to Aberdeen City Council March 2014; section 5.4.1) which states:

*"Due to the issues being experienced through the traffic modelling process, it has **not been possible within the timescales of this report to model air quality changes and to fully determine the impacts of the options.**" (our emphasis)*

In our view, the transport assessment submitted within the application does not sufficiently take into account the potential impact on the wider city centre of the pedestrianisation of this route and the impact this could have on footfall to other retail areas within the city centre.

We quote again from the Main Transportation Study (as presented to Aberdeen City Council March 2014; section 3) which states:

"The re-routing of the....bus services would increase the frequency of buses on these routes and would impact on traffic flows and servicing/deliveries of existing businesses along these routes"

It is our client's opinion that the civic square could be successfully created to enhance the amenity of this area, without the requirement to fully pedestrianise Broad Street at this location. We would question whether the assessment undertaken has fully appraised the potential alternatives to full exclusion of vehicular traffic from Broad Street.

We are also aware of the Council's proposed City Centre Masterplan which is due to be commissioned in summer 2014. We would suggest that this would be the opportunity to review these strategic proposals for vehicle and pedestrian movement across the heart of the city centre rather than via a stand-alone planning application for Marischal Square.

Summary

Our client wishes to **object** to the Marischal Square planning application in so far as it includes the proposed pedestrianisation of Broad Street, for the following reasons:

- The pedestrianisation proposal appears to be premature to a full assessment of all the alternative options to achieve similar objectives.
- The proposal also seems premature to an agreed City Centre Masterplan the process for which has now commenced;
- The potential impact on the pedestrian environment at Schoolhill / Upperkirkgate does not appear to have been fully assessed;
- The potential impact on users of the Bon Accord and St Nicholas Centre and the proposed investment in improving these city centre facilities;

We look forward to confirmation of the receipt of this letter and would ask to be kept informed of the progress of this application.

Meanwhile should you have any queries or wish to discuss the above, please do contact me.

Yours faithfully

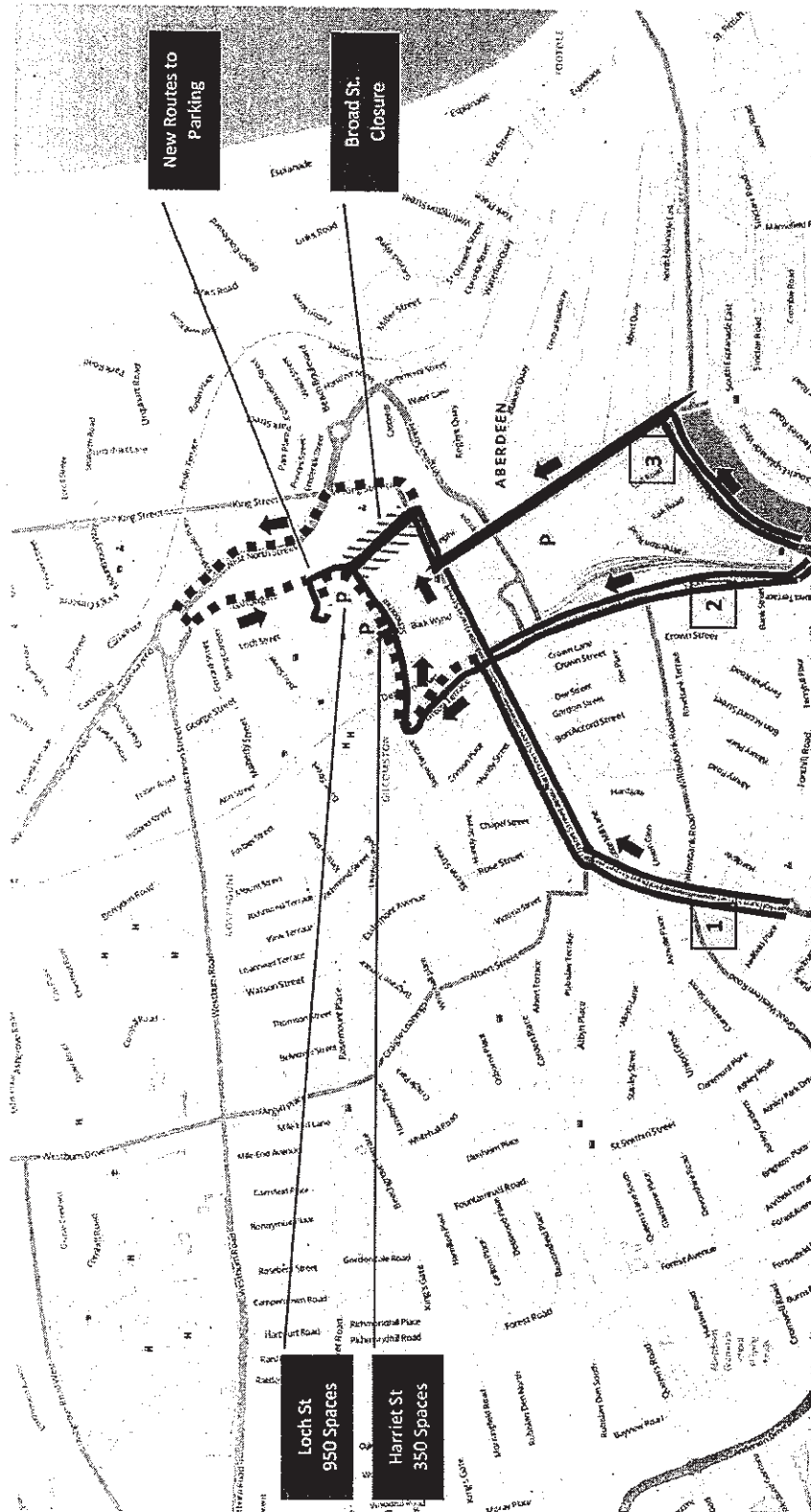


ALASDAIR MORRISON MA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI
Associate
For and on behalf of GVA James Barr

Enc.

cc Margaret Bochel Head of Planning; ACC
Joanne Wilkes and Spencer Gower F&C REIT

Pedestrianisation of Broad Street, Aberdeen



- Total entries are 1 Million per year. (350,000 Harriet St., 650,000 Loch St.)
- 1/3 of traffic approach from South of City.
- All vehicle access to Loch St from South will need to travel extra 1 mile (dotted line via West North St.) 70,000 vehicles.
- Traffic to Harriet St from South via Harbour will also travel extra mile. (58,000 vehicles)
- Loch St becomes first car park reached after diversion via West North St.
- Increased traffic wishing to use Loch St will use Schoolhill.

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