

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	City Growth and Resources
DATE	21 June 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Commemorative Plaques
REPORT NUMBER	COM/21/101
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	Richard Sweetnam
REPORT AUTHOR	Jenny Brown
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for the erection of two commemorative plaques.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Approves the erection of a plaque on the Powis Gateway acknowledging its history; and
- 2.2 Approves the erection of a plaque at 22 Waverley Place commemorating Dr Laura Sandeman (1862-1929), a doctor, social welfare pioneer and politician who lived and worked in Aberdeen from 1903 until her death in 1929.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Powis Gateway

- 3.1 The University of Aberdeen has applied for the erection of a commemorative Place plaque on the Powis Gateway.
- 3.2 The proposal is for a Place Plaque (see Appendix 1 for an example of this style) to be erected on the wall adjacent to the Gateway itself. An illustration of the intended location is provided in Appendix 2.
- 3.3 The proposed plaque and location meets the requirement for Place Plaques as set out in section 5.2 of the Plaques Policy because there is a clear connection between the place and historic events. The University of Aberdeen as the promoters for the plaque will be responsible for obtaining all necessary statutory and other third party consents to allow the commemorative plaque to be erected. The wording proposed is:

Powis Gateway was built in the early 1830s by the Leslie family, using profits from slavery. The Leslies, the lairds of nearby Powis House, owned an estate in Jamaica on which they forced enslaved African people to work. After the 1833 Act for the Abolition of Slavery, the Leslies received government compensation that also helped fund the gateway. The formerly enslaved people received nothing for their years of unpaid labour and suffering.

- 3.4 The University of Aberdeen is separately seeking relevant planning permissions for an accompanying interpretation panel to be sited on the grass within the Gateway to provide further information. The University hopes to erect both this year.
- 3.5 In submitting a nomination for an Aberdeen Place Plaque for Powis Gateway, the University of Aberdeen has undertaken a period of community consultation from 2020 to present. In June of 2020, the Deputy Director (Planning & Development) of Estates and Facilities at the University of Aberdeen, contacted both the Old Aberdeen Community Council and Old Aberdeen Heritage Society with an invitation to submit their views on the proposed commemorative plaque. The Chairman of Old Aberdeen Heritage Society, responded in July 2020 with recommendations including adopting the name “Powis Gateway” rather than “Powis Gate” or “Powis Gates” as the most appropriate term for the structure.
- 3.6 A second phase of community consultation took place in conjunction with the online public history event “Powis Gateway: Slavery and Memory in Old Aberdeen” hosted by the University of Aberdeen on 28 March 2022. The event had 110 registered attendees, with coverage in Press & Journal and other media outlets. University staff conducted a post-event survey which included questions on the importance and wording of a potential plaque. Further details can be found in Appendix 3.
- 3.7 The Council’s Planning Service and the building owners (the University of Aberdeen) have approved the location for the plaque.

Dr Laura Sandeman

- 3.8 The Aberdeen Women’s Alliance (AWA) has applied for a commemorative People Plaque to commemorate the life and work of Dr Laura Sandeman at 22 Waverley Place.
- 3.9 Dr Laura Sandeman was a doctor who came to Aberdeen to set up a practice in 1903. She took an active role in social welfare and helping the plight of the poor, particularly in the east end of the city and Torry. A biography is provided in Appendix 4.
- 3.10 The proposal is for a People Plaque (see Appendix 1 for an example of this style) to be erected at 22 Waverley Place. An illustration of the proposed location is provided in Appendix 5.
- 3.11 The proposed plaque and location meets the requirement for People Plaques as set out in section 5.1 of the Plaques Policy, as Dr Laura Sandeman lived

and ran her GP practice from the building. The AWA as the promoters for the plaque will be responsible for obtaining all necessary statutory and other third party consents to allow the commemorative plaque to be erected. The wording proposed is:

Dr Laura Sandeman, 1862 – 1929, General Practitioner and social welfare pioneer, Chief Medical Officer, Scottish Women's Hospital for Foreign Service 1915, Lived and worked here.

3.12 This plaque application is the one of several previous applications by the AWA. These include People Plaques for Caroline Phillips, Dr Agnes Thomson and Louisa Lumsden.

3.13 The Council's Planning Service and the building owners have approved this location for the plaque. The proposed location of the plaque requires the public to enter private property to view it (which contravenes 'Location restrictions' under Appendix 3 of Plaques Policy), however officers have secured written consent from current property owners and tenants for people to do so.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. All financial costs shall be covered by the nominating bodies.

4.2 Any damage to a plaque by ACC or by any other third party will be repaired by ACC as funds allow unless it is caused by the building's owner, in which case the building owner will be liable for any costs of replacement or repair, or if damage occurred due to criminal intent, in which case repair and replacements costs will be sought.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 It is noted that while the present tenants and owners have consented to allowing public access to the proposed location of the Dr Laura Sandeman plaque there is no guarantee that access will be provided by future owners/tenants.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6.2 The manufacturer of commemorative plaques is based in the UK and uses recycled aluminium sourced from within the UK, supporting sustainable procurement.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Compliance	Installation does not comply with the Council's Plaque Policy.	Officers confirm specific location on building in line with policy guidelines and in agreement with nominator and building owners.	L	Yes
Reputational	Risk of not acknowledging the significance of these aspects of Aberdeen's heritage.	Officers recommend erecting these plaques and promoting in line with the Council's Plaques Policy.	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	The proposals in this report support the deliver of Policy Statement 4 – to maximise tourism opportunities. The Commemorative Plaques Scheme encourages tourism in highlighting and promoting important heritage sites within the city.
Regional and City Strategies	The proposals within this report support the Tourism and Strategy Action Plan in encouraging tourists to engage with aspects of Aberdeen's heritage.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Full impact assessment required (Please note that the Equalities Team have introduced an Integrated <u>Impact Assessment form</u> which replaces the old EHRIA form)
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.

Other	Not required.
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10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Commemorative Plaques Policy

<https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-09/Plaques-Policy-final.pdf>

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 – Examples of People and Place plaques

11.2 Appendix 2 – Proposed location of Powis Gateway plaque.

11.3 Appendix 3 – Community Consultation for Powis Gateway

11.4 Appendix 4 – Dr Laura Sandeman biography

11.5 Appendix 5 – Proposed location of Dr Laura Sandeman plaque

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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