

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
DATE	24 May 2011
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Stoneywood Estate Development Framework and Masterplan
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/11/122

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report outlines the Stoneywood Estate Development Framework and Masterplan, prepared as a guide for the future development of land identified as Opportunity Site OP24 in the Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP).

1.2 The Stoneywood Estate Development Framework and Masterplan (April 2011) is a large document containing a lot of illustrative material and can be viewed by accessing the following link:
http://aberdeencitydev/Planning/pla/pla_masteplan_stoneywood.asp

A summary of the Development Framework is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. A hard copy of the Development Framework is available in the Members' Lounge or at the Planning and Sustainable Development Service reception on the 8th Floor of St Nicholas House.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee:

2.1 Approve the Stoneywood Estate Development Framework and Masterplan as interim planning advice, pending adoption of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, at which time it will be adopted as supplementary guidance to that Plan.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report outwith normal officer time to evaluate the Development Framework and Masterplan. The developers have met the cost of preparation of the Development Framework and Masterplan including all consultation and engagement work. The proposals will result in efficiencies in the determination of future planning applications related to the development framework and masterplan, leading to a reduction in Council staff time.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no known property, legal or equipment implications arising from this report.
- 4.2 The Development Framework and Masterplan reduce the risk of piecemeal and inappropriate development in the site area. Mixed use development and the efficient use of land will contribute towards the Council's aim of promoting sustainable development.
- 4.3 Approving the development framework will contribute to efficiencies in determining future planning applications. By encouraging acceptable forms and uses of new development to be agreed publicly, it allows more informed decision making to be made earlier, saving time and resources for staff, applicants and the public.
- 4.4 The development framework seeks to contribute towards a higher rate of new house building in the City, including 25% affordable housing provision in accordance with the proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan.
- 4.5 In accordance with the Proposed Local Development Plan, Appendix 4, The Proposed Action Programme and the Infrastructure and Developer Contributions Manual, the Development Framework and Masterplan explicitly references how the development will address requirements for cumulative and local transport infrastructure; public transport, walking and cycling; education; water; health; open space and community facilities.
- 4.6 A Strategic Environmental Assessment has been undertaken on the Stoneywood Estate site as part of the preparation for the forthcoming Aberdeen Local Development Plan.
- 4.7 An 'Environmental Screening and Scoping Report' was received by the planning authority on 15th September 2010. This has been assessed and it is considered that an Environmental Impact Assessment will be required to support any planning application for the proposed development.

5. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

Site description

- 5.1 Stoneywood Estate is located to the north west of Aberdeen, bounded to the east by the River Don and to the west by Stoneywood Road (A947). Dyce Railway Station and Aberdeen Airport are both just over 1 mile from the Stoneywood site, with the proposed location of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route also within close proximity. The

site is served by existing bus routes, and pivotally placed to provide a link of the aspirational Core Path Network and National Cycle Route.

- 5.2 Dandara Holdings Ltd acquired the Stoneywood Estate in 2010 and has assembled a multidisciplinary team to produce a development framework and masterplan for the Stoneywood Estate. Dandara aim to create a major new sustainable community in Aberdeen and are keen to showcase the quality of their product in the North East in an exemplar project. They believe that through masterplanning they can arrive at a proposal that meets the needs of the Council and local community.

Policy Summary

- 5.3 The Development Framework and Masterplan has been prepared following the Council's adopted Aberdeen Masterplanning Process and contributes to the Scottish Government and Aberdeen Local Development Plan policy aims of raising design quality in new development, through the 6 key qualities of creating successful places, namely – distinctive, welcoming, safe and pleasant, adaptable, easy to get to and move around, and resource efficient.
- 5.4 The majority of the Stoneywood site is allocated in the adopted Aberdeen Local Plan 2008 as an Opportunity Site OP95 for specialist employment use in a high quality environment with increased public access. A planning brief was approved in December 2002 supporting use as a technology park with potential hotel and leisure facility. The Stoneywood Development Framework and Masterplan supercedes the planning brief.
- 5.5 The Aberdeen Local Development Plan – Proposed Plan promotes the the Stoneywood Opportunity Site OP24, as suitable for development of 500 homes in an area with existing employment. It states that the site will be masterplanned and incorporate a replacement Primary School with additional capacity and a new Health Centre. The site covers 42.3ha.
- 5.6 This proposal helps bring forward land for development in the early phases of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan and help meet the targets and objectives in the Structure Plan, including the target of 30 dwellings per hectare as an average across the whole site.
- 5.7 There were 5 letters of representation made to the Aberdeen Local Development Plan: Proposed Plan consultation relating to the Stoneywood Estate OP24 allocation. Two representations mentioned the importance of woodland protection, one objected unless the issue of flood risk over part of the site is highlighted as a potential constraint, one requested the allocation should include provision for community allotments, and the final representation expressed support for the allocation, however that the site did not have sufficient developable

land capable of supporting a replacement primary school and that this would reduce the housing capacity of the site.

- 5.8 The Stoneywood Estate Development Framework and Masterplan is intended to act as interim planning advice, pending adoption of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, expected in Spring 2012. At this time the Stoneywood Estate Development Framework and Masterplan will be adopted as supplementary guidance to that Plan.

Key Issues

- 5.9 **Housing** – The proposals for Stoneywood include a range of housing types and sizes, including the following:

2-3 storey	Detached units
2 storey	Bespoke detached units
2 ½ storey	Terrace units
2-3 storey	Semi-detached units
2 ½ storey	'steading' units
2 ½ storey	'gardener's' detached units
4-5 storey	Flatted units / potential mixed use ground floor units

Dandara will work with the Council and the registered social landlords to provide the required level of **affordable housing** in accordance with the Local Development Plan – Proposed Plan, being no less than 25% of the total number of units.

- 5.10 **Community Facilities** – Three potential locations for mixed use centres have been identified throughout the site for their ability to promote walkable neighbourhoods. The amount of retail and service provision will depend on market forces; however these areas will have flexible ground floor units to allow these centres to adapt. Potential uses include:
- Shops / local supermarket
 - Crèche
 - Medical facility
 - Care home
 - Restaurant / Bar
- 5.11 **Education provision** – The Aberdeen Local Development Plan: Proposed Plan indicates that a primary school will be provided within the site. The Council, through its Education, Culture and Sport service, has commissioned a study to examine the implications of potential future developments at both Stoneywood (OP24) and the former Davidson's Mill, Mugiemooss Road (OP22) for education provision in the Bucksburn area. The Study will recommend a range of options for meeting the primary school educational needs generated by these developments. This study will provide viable solution(s) for accommodating primary school provision in the area, and if the need

for a primary school is identified it does not necessarily need to be located within the Stoneywood Estate potential application site. The results of the Study will be reported to the appropriate committee in due course and will be used to inform appropriate developer contributions for education provision for the Stoneywood site.

- 5.12 **Health care provision** – The site owner and developer Dandara is currently in discussion with NHS Grampian with regard to the provision of a medical facility within the Stoneywood site. As stated in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan: Proposed Plan the requirement is for a new 10 GP Health Centre and one Community Pharmacy.
- 5.13 **Environment and Sustainability** – an Environmental Impact Assessment will be required with any planning application for the proposed development. This will include technical information relating to, for example, tree survey, woodland management plan, landscape and visual appraisal, and drainage assessment.
- 5.14 **Open Space** – The development proposals exceed the Council's 'Draft Standards for Open Space in Residential Development in Greenfield Development'. The development site requires a minimum of 3.5ha of open space. However the proposals indicate that 20.69ha will be provided, incorporating both core woodland and core public spaces.
- 5.15 **Drainage and Flooding** – The site will be drained via Sustainable Drainage System (SUDs), with a separate system for foul & surface water, and SUDs for Roads. This will be approved as part of the future planning application process, and designed to meet Scottish Water and Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) regulations and standard. Early consultation with SEPA indicated that some low lying parts of the site do not meet the 1:200 year flood mapping, these are unsuitable for development and as such have been excluded from the proposed development blocks.

Design Principles

- 5.16 As stated in the policy summary (5.3 above) the Development Framework and Masterplan follow the key principles outlined in the Aberdeen City Council Masterplanning Process. The Development Framework and Masterplan promote good urban design principles to create a clear layout, define key buildings/spaces, maximize views over the River Don and promote access along it. A variety of civic spaces and informal spaces for a variety of functions will be created throughout the development. Options for the proposed conversion of Stoneywood House into apartments are included in the document. The Development Framework and Masterplan have been prepared to a high standard, meeting the local and national criteria for new developments and aiming to create a place with a sense of identity that links well with its surroundings.

5.17 **Form, scale and massing** – the Stoneywood site has a strong character defined by its estate landscape, the woodland has been assessed as part of the masterplanning process. This has led to the creation of ‘pockets’ for development within the site. This helps to protect core habitats and the historic estate landscape, but also creates a connected and walkable community. Over the site as a whole the majority of buildings will be up to 3 storeys, the 3 storey buildings will be used to define corners of streets, and overlook areas of woodland and the River Don. Within the development blocks S2 and S6 in the masterplan, up to 4 and 5 storey buildings will be used to allow concentrated development aiding the viability of the mixed use centres.

5.18 **Streets** – the proposals at the Stoneywood Estate will follow the principles of the street user hierarchy, and the majority of development is within 400m of existing bus stops. The detailed street design will follow the principles as set out in Designing Streets, Policy Statement for Scotland. The primary path network of the proposed development will also incorporate an aspirational Core Path, helping to create a continuous riverside link. Streets will form an east to west alignment to allow properties to benefit from maximum solar gain. Development should not back onto Stoneywood Road (A947), and a positive front should be created to help community integration.

The detailed street design will consider place before movement. There will be four main street types in the proposed development, all designed to meet the ‘Street Design Hierarchy’ in Designing Streets.

1. Primary Street
2. Secondary Streets
3. Estate Drives
4. Lanes/Shared Surfaces/Courtyards

5.19 **Gardens** – where possible gardens will be arranged to benefit from a south facing aspect, be suitably enclosed and garden walls/hedges should help to define streets and spaces.

5.20 **Woodland** – development will address the woodland helping to enhance the character of the Stoneywood Estate and form a relationship between the community and woodland.

5.21 **Development Blocks** – the Stoneywood Development Framework and Masterplan details each development block and how its design responds to the following topics:

- Access and connectivity
- Buildings
- Spaces
- Spatial Definition
- Parking and Servicing

Public Involvement

5.22 The masterplan process at Stoneywood has involved local people and stakeholders in the design and development processes. The consultation has been carried out following best practice guidance as set out in Planning Advice Note 81, Community Engagement and Aberdeen City Council's Guidelines for Community Engagement.

Consultation to date:-

Event / Date	Description
<p>Stoneywood Estate Community Exhibition, 25 November 2010 (Stoneywood House)</p> <p>= 70 people in attendance</p>	<p>Public event to present the evolving proposals for Stoneywood Estate. Publicised through direct invitations, local newspaper adverts, posters and press briefings. Leaflets with key information and feedback forms were available, as well as an exhibition. Members of the design team, Dandara and Knight Frank were in attendance to provide information and answer questions.</p>
<p>Meeting with Community Councils June 2010 – Bucksburn and Newhills Community Council August 2010 – Dyce and Stoneywood Community Council</p>	<p>Introductory presentations given by Dandara and Knight Frank introducing Dandara as the new site owners.</p>
<p>Workshops with Aberdeen City Council</p>	<p>Meetings have been held at regular intervals throughout the process to ensure the proposals were designed to meet the aspirations for the site, align with Council plans/policies/supplementary guidance, and keep up to date with the evolving design.</p>
<p>Meetings with Community Councils 24 June 2010 – Bucksburn and Newhills Community Council 25 August 2010 – Dyce and Stoneywood Community Council</p>	<p>Dandara met to formally introduce the client team and give an introduction to their aspirations for the Stoneywood site.</p>
<p>Aberdeen City Council Development Options Open Evening, June/July 2009</p>	<p>Prior to Dandara acquiring the Stoneywood Estate, the previous owner Kilmartin Property Group displayed evolving proposals at the event. Members of the design team and employees of Kilmartin were available to answer questions and listen to comments.</p>

<p>Stoneywood Estate Community Exhibition, 18 June 2009 (Stoneywood House)</p>	<p>The open day format displayed the work undertaken to date, initial concepts and emerging ideas. Comment forms and handouts were available and attendants were encouraged to give feedback. The comments received highlighted the key issues and concerns of the local community and the feedback has been used to help develop the proposals.</p>
--	--

Consultation feedback and masterplan response to Stoneywood Estate Community Exhibition, 25 November 2010:-

The comments received have been used to inform the finalised Stoneywood Masterplan. The Pre-Application Consultation Report which forms part of the future planning application provides a full analysis, however a summary of the key issues is below.

Issue	Response
<p>Traffic and Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concern over extra traffic generation on Market Street due to relocation of playing fields • desire for rail halt at Stoneywood and new pedestrian bridge • need to improve transport infrastructure in the area • concern over increase in traffic volume as a result of the development • the northern entrance to Stoneywood should remain a no through route 	<p>Traffic and Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there will be no net detriment to traffic flows on the road network • a Transport Assessment was undertaken which identified improvement were required to mitigate the impact of the development • acknowledge increase in traffic, and further investigation to be carried out • the northern access to site will only serve limited access to a number of houses, with no connection to Stoneywood Terrace • development is close to Dyce railway station and all housing is located within 400m of a bus route • given proximity to Dyce Station, a rail halt at Stoneywood is not considered a priority by Railtrack or First ScotRail
<p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concern about disturbance to Water Table at Area S1 	<p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an EIA has been carried out which will support future planning

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> development needs to respect and encourage wildlife drainage concerns at Polo Gardens pleased area at north to be retained as open space and footpath link provided relationship between the existing Paper Mill and proposed new housing needs to be carefully managed 	<p>applications on the site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a Drainage and SUDs strategy has been prepared to ensure drainage is dealt with effectively existing tree belt between development and Paper Mill provides an effective buffer noise and vibration impact has also been considered as part of the EIA
<p>Community / Recreational Facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> support for proposed community facility and retention of woodland concern about loss of football pitch 	<p>Community / Recreational Facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the football pitch at the southern end of the site has not been used in a number of years Polo Park has been relocated to Dandara's Market Street site along with replacement playing fields and changing facilities
<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> community needs more consultation concern regarding loss of privacy for existing residents in Polo Gardens Stoneywood House should be used as a Hotel / Conference Centre rather than converted to flats 	<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consultation was carried out by Dandara and the site's previous owners, along with the proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan process further comments will be possible once the planning application has been submitted planning standards regarding privacy issues have been addressed through the masterplan process the preferred use for Stoneywood House is still under consideration but must be appropriate for the Listed Building status

Conclusion

5.23 Following approval of the Stoneywood Estate Development Framework and Masterplan Dandara aim to submit a Planning Permission in Principle application in June 2011. This will comply with the guidance set out in the final framework and masterplan. Following this, detailed planning applications for the first phase of the development will be submitted.

6. IMPACT

- 6.1 The Development Framework and Masterplan seeks to contribute towards a higher rate of new housing in the City, including affordable housing provision in line with Community Planning Priorities. The framework also promotes sustainable travel options, such as walking and cycling, which is another Community Planning Priority.
- 6.2 The Development Framework and Masterplan contribute to the Scottish Government Priorities, in particular safer and stronger – improved opportunities and quality of life, and greener – improving the built environment and sustainable use of our natural resources.
- 6.3 The framework contributes to the following Single Outcome Priorities 1 – We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe; 10 – We live in well-designed sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need; and; 12 – We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect and enhance it for future generations.
- 6.4 The proposal contributes the 5 year Business Plan in terms of objective – Communication and Community Engagement; sharing our plans and aspirations for the city, – delivering an up-to-date plan, – facilitating new development projects to improve Aberdeen’s living environment and, – support open space initiatives.
- 6.5 The proposal is consistent with the Council’s Corporate Plan in particular with regard to delivering high levels of design from all development, maintaining an up-to-date planning framework, sustainable development and open space provision.
- 6.6 The proposal is consistent with the Planning and Sustainable Service plan, in particular engaging the community in the planning process, and the delivery of masterplans/development frameworks in line with The Aberdeen Masterplanning Process.
- 6.7 An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been prepared. In summary, many of the aims of the proposal will have positive benefits, including;
- Housing – greater provision of affordable housing in Aberdeen as a result of development.
 - Health – improved access to the River Don for leisure pursuits and opportunities for walking/cycling/exercise.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1.3 The Stoneywood Estate Development Framework and Masterplan (April 2011) is a large document containing a lot of illustrative material and can be viewed by accessing the following link:
http://aberdeencitydev/Planning/pla/pla_masteplan_stoneywood.asp

Aberdeen Local Development Plan: Proposed Plan September 2010
http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Planning/ldp/pla_local_development_plan.asp

Aberdeen Local Plan: June 2008
http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Planning/pla/pla_LocalPlan_home.asp


Aberdeen Masterplanning Process 2008 (article 22, Planning Committee Minute, 6/11/08)

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Planning/pla/pla_planningbriefs.asp

8. REPORT AUTHOR(S) DETAILS

Sandy Beattie


Team Leader – Masterplanning and Design

 01224 (52) 2155

 sbeattie@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Rebecca Oakes

Planning Trainee – Masterplanning and Design

 01224 (52) 2241

 roakes@aberdeencity.gov.uk