

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure
DATE	21 January 2014
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Persley Den (Woodside) Masterplan OP135: Consultation Results
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/13/259

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### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report outlines the results of a public consultation exercise undertaken for the Persley Den (Woodside) Masterplan: Supplementary Guidance. A summary of the representations received, officers' responses and detail of any resulting action is provided in Appendix 1 of this Report. Full un-summarised copies of representations are detailed in Appendix 2.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- (a) Note the representations received (Appendix 2) on the draft Persley Den (Woodside) Masterplan: proposed Supplementary Guidance document;
  - (b) Approve Appendix 1, which includes officers' responses to representations received and any necessary actions;
  - (c) Agree for officers to send the finalised Supplementary Guidance document to be ratified by the Scottish Government as Supplementary Guidance after the following two key issues have been satisfactorily resolved:
    - 1. Confirmation Scottish Environment Protection Agency is satisfied with the findings of the finalised Flood Risk Assessment.
    - 2. Confirmation Aberdeen City Council Planning Authority is satisfied that the development would be served by adequate public transport provision.

## 2.2 Definitions

'Supplementary Guidance' (SG) – this is adopted and issued by a planning authority in connection with a Local Development Plan, as a result any such guidance will form part of the Development Plan and therefore carries the same weight. Supplementary Guidance status for Masterplan documents is extremely important as it sets out a mutual agreement between the Planning Authority and the developer to ensure certainty in decision-making for the way a site will be developed. Without Supplementary Guidance status design principles contained in Masterplans are at risk of being undermined and/or altered leading to potential delays and complications in dealing with subsequent planning applications.

Before adoption, the SG must be publicised and a period for representations to be made specified, this includes the targeting of key consultees and stakeholders who may want the opportunity to comment (please refer to Section 5 of this Committee Report). Following the specified consultation period and as a result of comments received, relevant changes will be made to the final document as agreed by Committee (please refer to Appendix 1 & 2), and subsequently submitted to Scottish Ministers for consideration. After 28 days have elapsed, the authority may then adopt the guidance unless Scottish Ministers have directed otherwise.

## 3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Woodside site is in multiple ownership, being jointly owned by GSS Developments (Aberdeen) Ltd, Aberdeen Lads Club and Aberdeen City Council. The three respective landowners have worked together throughout the masterplanning process. A plan of the site ownership is shown in Section 1.6 of the Masterplan. As such the Council has a financial interest in the planning designation and future development of the site.
- 3.2 The developers have met the cost of preparing the Mastepplan. Any future publication costs can be met through existing budgets.

## 4 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The progression of the SG document will provide a clear strategy for decision making, allowing comprehensive guidance for both applicants and officers, thereby making a significant contribution towards the Council's aim of promoting and achieving sustainable development. Detailed area-based SG also has value in reducing officer time spent on applications discussions.
- 4.2 The Masterplan contributes towards a higher rate of new house building in the City, including affordable housing provision of 37.5%. The masterplan proposes to deliver a fixed number of 150 affordable

housing units (equating to 37.5%). This figure does vary from the 50% as specified in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan; however, the principle of delivering 150 affordable units on the site was approved as a result of the Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee meeting on 12 November 2013 (Item Number 7.8) whereby the Masterplan was approved as Interim Planning Advice. A detailed affordable housing delivery strategy will be submitted as part of any subsequent planning application.

- 4.3 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): Screening Report has been undertaken on the Persley Den (Woodside) site. The report concluded that the Masterplan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. This conclusion was confirmed by the 3 key statutory agencies through their consultation responses which were received on 6 December 2013 and the decision has been advertised. The 3 key agencies are Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and Historic Scotland.

## **5 BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES**

- 5.1 The Persley Den Masterplan has been prepared as a framework for the future development of land identified in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012) as Opportunity Site (OP135). It was produced by Halliday Fraser Munro on behalf of GSS Developments (Aberdeen) Ltd, Aberdeen Lads Club and Aberdeen City Council (Asset Management).
- 5.2 The Persley Den (Woodside) Masterplan can be viewed by accessing the following link:  
[www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning)
- 5.3 The Persley Den (Woodside) Masterplan was presented to the Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee on 12 November 2013 (Item No. 7.8) where the Committee approved the recommendations to; (a) approve the Persley Den (Woodside) Masterplan as interim planning advice; and (b) agree for officers to implement the process to ratify the Masterplan as Supplementary Guidance – this included a 4 week public consultation.
- 5.4 Bucksburn & Newhills, Northfield, Bridge of Don, and Tillydrone community councils were given advance notification of the upcoming consultation 2 weeks before the 12 November Committee meeting.
- 5.5 Key consultees were contacted regarding the public consultation. A hard copy of the Persley Den (Woodside) Masterplan was also sent to the four community councils mentioned above.
- 5.6 The following list highlights the key parties that were consulted:

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Authority	Planning Obligations
Aberdeen City Council Archaeology	RSPB: East Scotland
Aberdeen City Council Roads Development Control	Scottish Natural Heritage
Aberdeen Cycle Forum	SEPA
Aberdeen Outdoor Access Forum	Scottish Enterprise Grampian
Aberdeenshire Council	Scottish Water
ACSEF	Scottish Wildlife Trust
Bridge of Don Community Council	Sport Scotland
Bucksburn & Newhills Community Council	The River Don Trust
Forestry Commission Scotland	Tillydrone Community Council
Historic Scotland	Transport Scotland
NESTRANS	Woodside Care Home
NHS Grampian	Persley Castle Care Home
Northfield Community Council	

5.7 The Persley Den (Woodside) Masterplan was available to view and publicised via the following methods:

- Publication of document on Aberdeen City Council Website 'Current Consultations' page  
<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/consultations>
- Publication of document on Aberdeen City Council Website 'Masterplanning' page  
<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning>
- Hard copy of document available for viewing at Marischal College between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday, by contacting the Planning and Sustainable Development Reception. Relevant planning officers were also identified to be available to help answer queries from members of the public who visited the Planning Reception regarding the Persley Den (Woodside) Masterplan.
- Hard copy of the document and consultation poster made available at Woodside Library and Woodside Customer Access Point & Community Centre.
- Press Release from Aberdeen City Council issued on 18 November 2013 entitled "Consultation on Persley Den (Woodside) Masterplan".  
[http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/CouncilNews/ci\\_cns/pr\\_PersleyDenMasterplanconsultation\\_181113.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/CouncilNews/ci_cns/pr_PersleyDenMasterplanconsultation_181113.asp)
- Information giving details of the consultation and how to submit comments provided by relevant Planning Officer via radio interview with Original 106 Radio on 18 November 2013.

- Information giving details of the consultation published in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan Newsletter.
  - Letters with consultation information sent to Bucksburn & Newhills, Northfield, Bridge of Don, and Tillydrone community councils.
- 5.8 Representations on the Persley Den (Woodside) Masterplan could be submitted by email or post. A total of 14 representations were received during the consultation, from the following respondents:
- Historic Scotland
  - Scottish Water
  - Local Resident 1
  - Scottish Natural Heritage
  - Council Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Team
  - Transport Scotland
  - Aberdeen Outdoor Access Forum
  - Local Resident 2
  - Sport Scotland
  - Forestry Commission Scotland
  - Tillydrone Community Council
  - Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
  - Aberdeen City Council Archaeology Officer
  - Aberdeen City Council Roads Development Control
- 5.9 A summary of the representations received, officers' responses and detail of any resulting action is provided in Appendix 1 of this Report. Full, un-summarised copies of representations are detailed in Appendix 2.
- 5.10 It should be noted that all comments received as part of the consultation are shared with the design team, relevant Planning and Roads Officers for consideration during future planning application processes.

### **Key issues**

The following sections provide a summary of the key issues raised during the consultation and responses to such issues.

#### **5.11 Lack of sustainable travel options, including public transport**

- The Masterplan acknowledges there are difficulties with public transport provision to the site, bus operator's unwillingness to divert services and that this situation may change in the future alongside other nearby development proposals.

- Initial discussions with both bus operators and Council Roads Development Control Officers have taken place at the masterplanning stage, however it is accepted that the Masterplan document does not offer clarity with regard to how the development will be in accordance with Scottish Planning Policy, PAN 75 and the Council's Transport and Accessibility Supplementary Guidance – to provide an adequate level of public transport provision. Further work and assessment of the proposed public transport provision will be required within the Masterplan.
- A number of potential mitigation and/or compensatory options should be explored to ensuring adequate public transport provision, for example enhanced pedestrian access, dedicated routes, pedestrian/cycle bridges etc. Any such options may have other constraints and/or environmental considerations which will require assessment. The corresponding 'Public Transport Connections' section of the Masterplan document (pages 43-45) must therefore be updated accordingly and show a clear commitment to providing adequate public transport provision to serve the development in accordance with local and National planning policy.
- This must be reflected in the Masterplan document, prior to it being submitted to Scottish Ministers for consideration as Supplementary Guidance. Once adequate public transport provisions have been agreed, further details will be confirmed through the Transportation Assessment and planning application stages.
- The Persley Den Masterplan site offers good connectivity to the Core Path network and is directly associated with National Cycle Route 1. The Masterplan aims to create attractive routes and enhance existing routes to promote sustainable transport. However, further detail on how the development will promote/provide sustainable travel will be requested to supplement Section 6.7 of the Masterplan document.
- Section 12 of the Masterplan highlights the requirement for a residential travel plan leaflet to be developed as part of the development to highlight options available to residents.

## 5.12 Flooding

- A flood risk assessment has informed the production of the Masterplan, which concludes that no part of the developed site is at risk of flooding. Further details can be found in Section 4.8 of the Masterplan.
- A copy of the Finalised Flood Risk Assessment has been sent to the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) for further consultation. The Masterplan will not be progressed to Scottish Ministers for adoption as Supplementary Guidance until SEPA have confirmed they are satisfied with the findings of the Flood Risk Assessment. Feedback on this issue will be available prior to

Committee and a verbal briefing update given at the Committee meeting.

#### **5.13 Ability of local road infrastructure to cope with increased traffic**

- The Masterplan document states that a Transport Assessment will be carried out as part of any planning application to consider the potential impact of the new development. It is for the Transport Assessment to determine whether development can be accommodated on the road network and to determine the type and level of infrastructure required.
- Road schemes to alleviate congestion across the City such as the AWPR, Third Don Crossing and the Haudagain junction improvement are all progressing; however, any proposals for a specific development, such as at Persley Den, in advance of these schemes will be determined through this Transport Assessment and the appraisal process.
- Ultimately the precise level of infrastructure requirements and developer contributions for any development will be agreed with the Council, and other statutory agencies such as Transport Scotland, at the planning application stage.

#### **5.14 Objection to the proposed increase in housing units from 300 up to 400**

- The Masterplan does propose an overall increase in the number of housing units, from the OP135 allocated 300, up to 400 units. This proposed increase was detailed in the corresponding Committee Report (EPI/13/207, Item No. 7.8) at the Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure's meeting on 12 November 2013. The Masterplan presents a design solution to provide for 400 housing units on the site and it should be noted that all of the proposed housing will be located within the constraints as defined by the OP135, Green Belt and Green Space Network boundary designations.

#### **5.15 Loss of Sports Pitches**

- As part of the masterplanning process to date, the design team/developer has completed an assessment of the existing sports provision on the site (Section 4.9 of the Masterplan). This assessment has resulted in a 'package' of upgrading / replacements of pitches and financial contributions.
- Although it is accepted that the upgrading of 2 pitches would not compensate for the loss of pitch areas on the site, the Masterplan does commit to a financial contribution being made to compensate for the loss of pitches. As a result, and on the assumption that further details are obtained at the planning application stage which shows that

replacement capacity has been provided, the development proposals will comply with planning policy.

- Specific details of the proposed pitch upgrades and management will form part of a detailed Sports Pitch Assessment which will be submitted alongside any future planning application for the site, preferably at the pre-application stage. This will be developed and assessed through continued consultation with Sport Scotland. Exact details of financial contributions will be subject to a legal agreement as part of any future planning application process.

#### **5.16 Impact on wildlife**

- The value of the area for wildlife is understood and expressed through the designations of the River Don and Kittybrewster-Inverness Railways Line Local Nature Reserves, the Green Space Network and Green Belt. An ecological survey has informed the production of the Masterplan and the document recognises the importance of the wildlife designations and considerations for the site. The Masterplan aims to work with the site landscape, topography and ecological assets whilst accommodating the proposed new development. It proposes four key opportunities in this respect:
  - (1) Improve wildlife corridors
  - (2) Implementation of an ecology management programme
  - (3) Increase biodiversity
  - (4) Improve River Don water quality
- A full Ecological Survey will be submitted as part of any planning application for the OP135 site, which will include any necessary protected species surveys.
- The development proposed is maintained within the limits of both the OP135 site boundary and the boundaries of the Green Space Network and Green Belt boundaries. As a result the green space network is maintained. Detailed ecological and tree surveys will be completed and submitted as part of any future planning application which will inform the detailed layout on site, including exact sizes of proposed open spaces and green corridors in addition to the retained Green Space Network and Green Belt.

## **6 IMPACT**

- 6.1 The proposal contributes to the following Single Outcome Priorities: 1 – We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe; 2 – we realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people; 10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need; 12 – We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect and enhance it for future generations.



- 6.2 The proposal contributes to 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.
- 6.3 The proposal contributes towards the Aberdeen City Council Administrations vision for Aberdeen: 2012 – 2017, particularly creating a City which is a great place to live and bring up a family.
- 6.4 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.
- 6.5 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.
- 6.6 The proposal is consistent with the Aberdeen City Council: Strategic Infrastructure Plan regarding the step change in the supply of housing, including delivering affordable homes for both rent and sale, and enabling the private sector to deliver.

## **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Persley Den (Woodside) Committee Report (Agenda Item No. 7.8, Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee, 12/11/2013)  
<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/mgChooseDocPack.aspx?ID=2897>
- 7.2 The Persley Den (Woodside) Masterplan (November 2013) can be viewed by accessing the following link:  
[www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning)
- 7.3 Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012  
<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=42278&slD=9484>
- 7.4 Aberdeen Masterplanning Process 2008 (article 22, Planning Committee Minute, 6/11/08)  
[http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planning\\_environment/planning/planning\\_sustainable\\_development/pla\\_masterplan\\_process.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planning_environment/planning/planning_sustainable_development/pla_masterplan_process.asp)
- 7.5 Aberdeen Masterplanning Process: Update Report EPI/12/231 (agenda item 1.1, article 4, Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee, 6/11/12)


<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=140&MId=2523&Ver=4>


- 7.6 Aberdeen City Council: Strategic Infrastructure Plan (Committee Report OCE/13/033, agenda item 14, Full Council, 31/10/13)  
<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s33119/Strategic%20Infrastructure%20Plan.pdf>

## **8 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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