

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Planning Development Management Committee
DATE	20 March 2014
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan – Pitfodels and Old Aberdeen

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### 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report outlines two character appraisals and management proposals for Old Aberdeen and Pitfodels Conservation Areas as a basis for public consultation.
- 1.2 The proposed boundary alterations and guidance affecting Old Aberdeen Conservation Area is contained in Appendix 1. The draft character appraisals for Old Aberdeen and Pitfodels Conservation Areas can be viewed in their entirety on the following link:

[www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning)

### 2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (a) Approve the draft Old Aberdeen and Pitfodels Conservation Area Character Appraisals, together with the proposed boundary amendments and guidance to Old Aberdeen Conservation Area as set out in Appendix 1, as a basis for a six week consultation period;
- (b) Agree that, following completion of the public consultation, any comments received and subsequent amendments to the document be presented to a future meeting of this Committee.

#### 2.1 Definition

‘Interim Planning Advice’ – this specifies that the Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan is in the public domain and, as such, it becomes a material consideration in the determination of any planning application.

### 3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any publication and consultation costs can be met through existing budgets.

#### **4 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no known legal, resource, personnel, property, equipment, sustainability and environmental, health and safety policy implications arising from this report. Section 63 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 requires proposals affecting a conservation area to be the subject of a public meeting in the area concerned.

#### **5 BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES**

- 5.1 Conservation areas are defined in legislation as being “*an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*” (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997). Conservation area designation embraces the quality and interest of an area as a whole, rather than individual buildings within it.
- 5.2 Under current legislation, conservation area designation automatically brings the following works under planning control:
- Demolition of buildings;
  - Removal of, or works to, trees;
  - Development involving small house extensions, roof alterations, stone cleaning or painting of the exterior, provision of hard surfaces and additional control over satellite dishes; and
  - Minor works that are “permitted development” elsewhere such as replacement windows and doors
- 5.3 The *Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan* was approved as Interim Planning Advice by the Development Management Sub-Committee on 18 July 2013. The document contains an overarching Management Plan that applies to all conservation areas in the City and character appraisals for six individual conservation areas. The final agreed character appraisals for Old Aberdeen and Pitfodells, together with the specific guidance and boundary changes for Old Aberdeen (Appendix 1), will be added to this document. Footdee and Rosemount and Westburn Conservation Areas will be similarly appraised to complete the document, which is intended to be adopted as Supplementary Guidance as part of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan review. It is proposed that Union Street Conservation Area be appraised separately as part of the City Centre masterplan process.
- 5.4 The *Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012* commits the Council to producing conservation area character appraisals in order to support the built heritage planning policies, specifically Policy D4 – *Aberdeen’s Granite Heritage* and D5 – *Built Heritage*. Conservation area character appraisals define and evaluate key attributes such as buildings, streets, views and open space that contribute towards the areas’ special architectural and historic interest. As such, they provide supporting background information and are useful tools in assessing the impact of

development on the character of a conservation area, as well as often being of general interest to the public.

## **Consultation**

- 5.3 When first preparing character appraisals for Old Aberdeen and Pitfodells Conservation Areas we carried out an initial scoping consultation with local ward members; Community Councils; Aberdeen and Robert Gordon Universities and Old Aberdeen Heritage Society. There was little comment in relation to Pitfodells however, a lively interest was shown in Old Aberdeen. We made presentations to the Community Council and the Heritage Society and met Aberdeen University Estates about the character appraisal process. This early engagement highlighted issues and aspirations in Old Aberdeen, which has informed the preparation of the character appraisal.
- 5.4 The Conservation Area Character Appraisals will be the subject to public consultation and subsequently amended in light of the feedback received before being put before the Committee for final approval as Interim Planning Advice. The relevant Community Councils, heritage groups and the general public will be consulted on the document through the Council's web site; public libraries and Marischal College. Given the timing of Easter, we propose that six weeks be allowed for public consultation. As required by legislation, a public meeting will be held in Old Aberdeen to outline the proposed boundary changes. This is not required for Pitfodells Conservation Area as no boundary alterations or specific guidance is being proposed.

## **6 IMPACT**

- 6.3 The proposal contributes to the Single Outcome Priorities 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 it and enhance it for future generations.*
- 6.4 The proposal contributes to Smarter Aberdeen's aspiration of *Smarter Environment – Natural Resources* – providing an attractive streetscape.
- 6.5 The proposal contributes to the EP & I Directorate Priority 3: *Protect and enhance our high quality natural and built environment* and to the Planning and Sustainable Development Operational Priority PSD3: *Protect and enhance our heritage and high quality built environment.*

## **7 MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

There are no known risks arising from this report.

## **8 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/9/contents>



Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note 71: Conservation Area Management  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/12/20450/49052>

Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012)  
<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=42278&sID=9484>

Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan Interim Planning Advice  
[http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planning\\_environment/planning/conservation/pla\\_conservation\\_areas.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planning_environment/planning/conservation/pla_conservation_areas.asp)

## **9 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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### **Proposed alterations to Old Aberdeen Conservation Area**

It is proposed that the Conservation Area boundary will be extended to include five new additions (Plan 1):

**A land north of the River Don including parts of Balgownie Road, and the private access road to Kettock's Mill, Seaton Cottage and Glenseaton Lodge.**

The riverside setting to the north of the river Don is an extension of that to the south, which is already within the Conservation Area. In many ways, it is a better example of the riverside's historic character as it has been largely undeveloped. There are also significant views from this area across the river to the Cathedral and Seaton Park. Two listed buildings are located within the proposed extension - Glenseaton Lodge (Category B Listed) and 79 Balgownie Road (Glover House) (Category B Listed). Tree Preservation Order 65, located on Balgownie Road and Thomas Glover Place, is also within this proposed extension. The 1993 Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Report identified this area for inclusion in the Conservation Area.

**Addresses affected:** Glenseaton Lodge; Kettock's Mill and Seaton Cottage

**B 68-70 (even) and Old Aberdeen House, Dunbar Street; 3-8 (inc) St Machar Place**

Old Aberdeen House on Dunbar Street is an imposing, austere turn of the twentieth century granite building designed as a school and set in a limited former playground now used for parking. It has a strong boundary treatment of granite wall and railings. 3-8 St Machar Place comprises six largely unaltered inter war semi-detached houses laid out in a semi-circle. They are typical examples of suburban development associated with the building of the new inner ring road of St Machar Drive in the 1930s.

**Addresses affected:** 68-70 (even) and Old Aberdeen House, Dunbar Street; 3-8 (inc) St Machar Place

**C 7 – 17 (odd) University Road**

This is a group of six flatted properties whose design reads as three Victorian terraced houses. They are the only houses on University Road that are not already included in the Conservation Area and it is unclear why they were not included in the original designation. The 1993 Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Report identified them for inclusion and they still make a positive contribution, providing completeness to University Road.

**Addresses affected:** 7-17 (odd) University Road

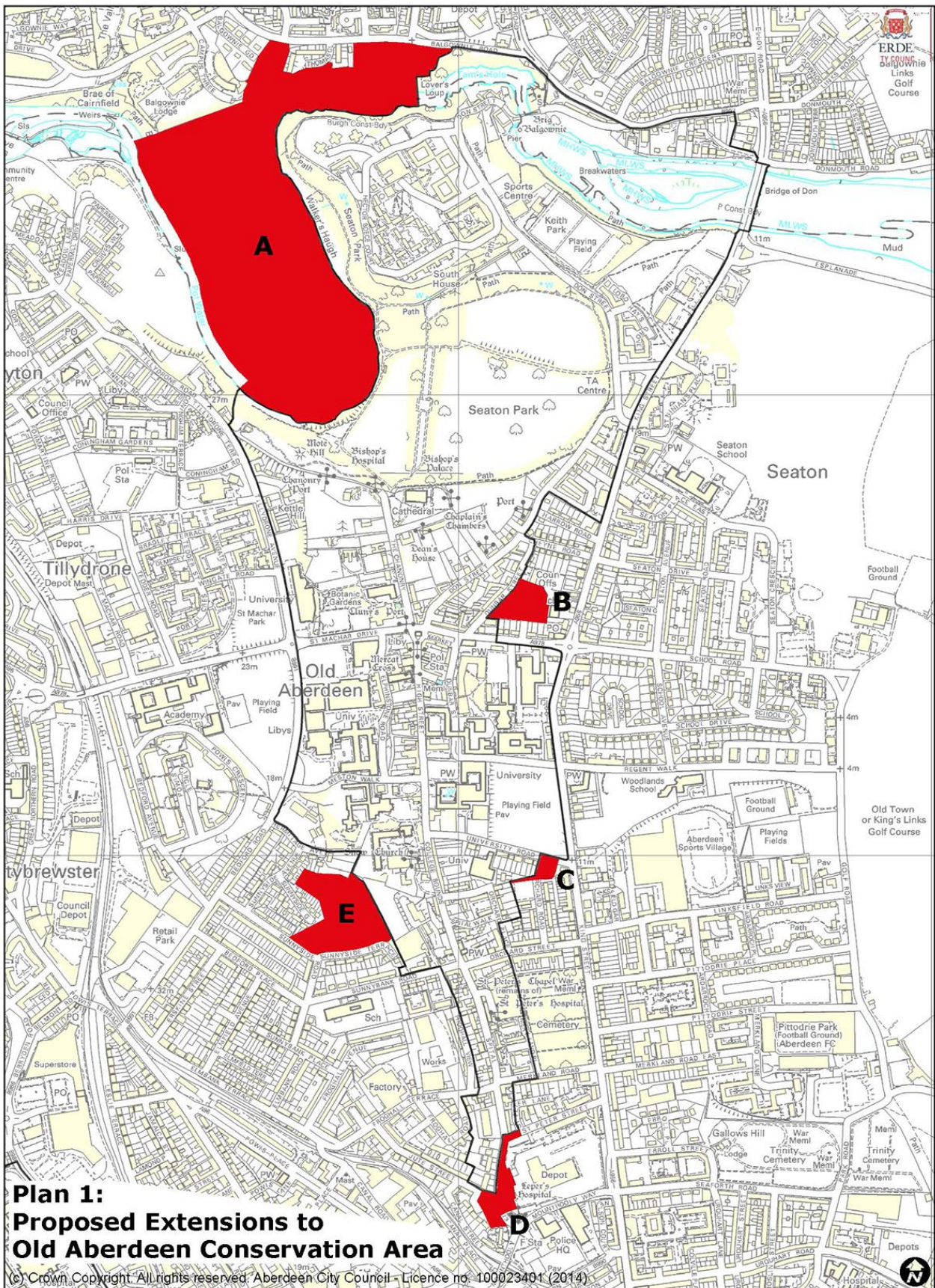
**D 9 – 21 (odd); 40 – 54 (even) King's Crescent and the western boundary wall of the bus depot on King's Crescent and 1 Jute Street**

These groupings of buildings to either side of King's Crescent mark the transition from the 20<sup>th</sup> century development of Mounthooly. The area's character changes noticeably at this point, which this proposed extension recognises. 17-21 King's Crescent and 1 Jute Street are category B listed residential terrace built in a traditional Victorian style in 1875, but of concrete making these buildings highly unusual. The bus depot's granite wall on the east side of King's Crescent is a strong linear feature, reflecting the walls on the western side. The 1993 Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Report identified most of this area for inclusion and it still makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

**Addresses affected:** 1 Jute Street; 9 – 21 (odd) and 40 – 54 (even) King's Crescent and bus depot

## **E Sunnybank Park**

Sunnybank Park adjoins the Conservation Area to the west of Firhill Road, a path that is clearly marked on 1828 map by John Wood, as is Firhill Well. Firhill Place lies within the Conservation Area and a path in front of these properties links College Bounds to Sunnybank Park to the west. The park adds much to the contemporary character of the Conservation Area, providing valuable public open space, as well as being of historic importance in its own right.



**Plan 1:  
Proposed Extensions to  
Old Aberdeen Conservation Area**

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