

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,



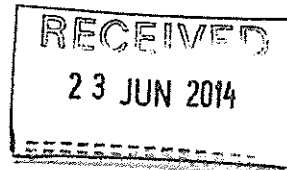
(G A Duncan)

Rosemount & Mile-End Community Council.

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

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.

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)

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.

GVA James Barr

**COPY FOR YOUR
INFORMATION**



Ref: AM07

206 St Vincent Street
Glasgow G2 5SG

23 June 2014

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

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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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.

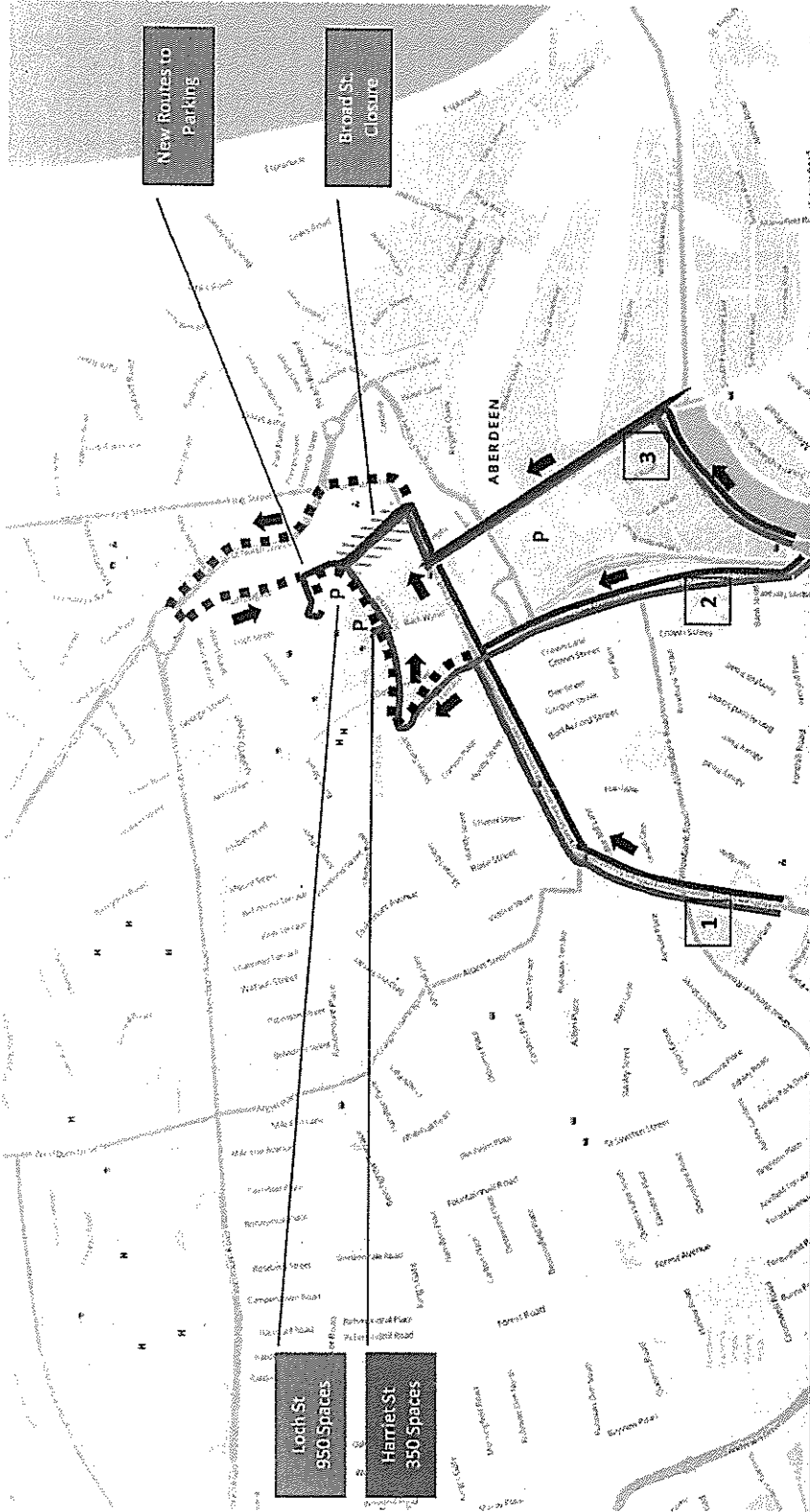
We are also aware of the Council's proposed City Centre Masterplan which is due to be commissioned in summer 2014. We would suggest that this would be the opportunity to review these strategic proposals for vehicle and pedestrian movement across the heart of the city centre rather than via a stand-alone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

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.

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

Tel 01224319891

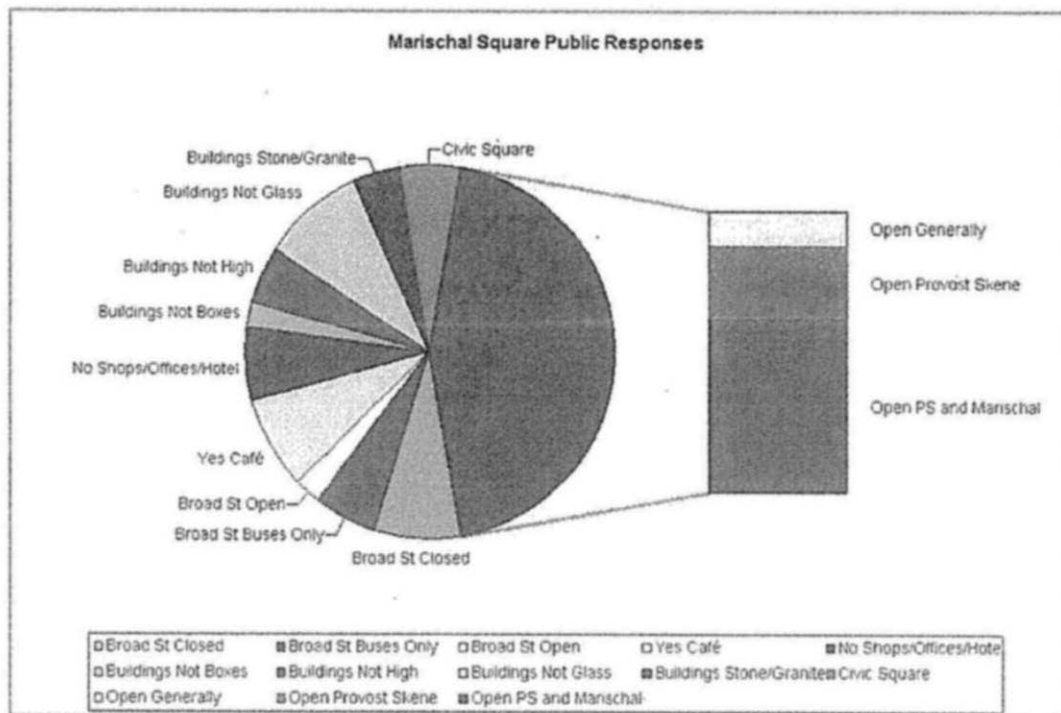
22nd June, 2014

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

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

RASC Letters of Representation	
Application Number	140698
RECEIVED 24 JUN 2014	
NER	SOU
Case Officer: P:Raz	GTG
Case Acronyms: 3-7-14	

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.)

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

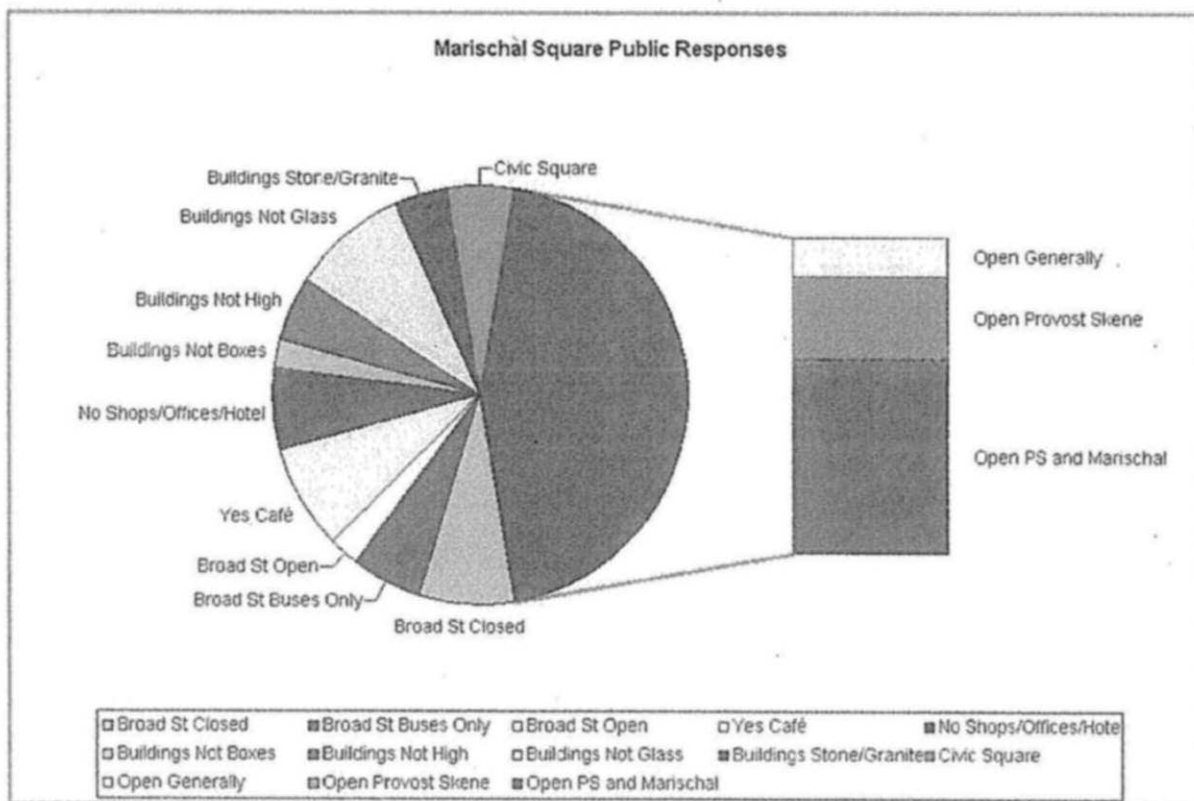
22nd June 2014

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.

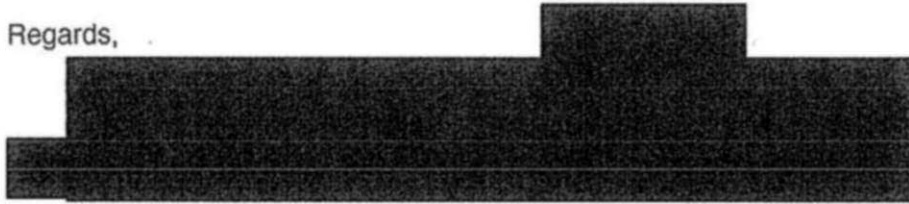
Also with less than major changes the large building on the corner of Marischal Square nearest Union Street could be repositioned (turned clockwise) and hence create a much larger civic square which the people of Aberdeen strongly desire.

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,



Ken Hutcheon on behalf of Queens Cross/Harlaw Community Council

P&SD Letters of Representation	
Application Number:	140698
RECEIVED	24 JUN 2014
Nor	Sou
Case Officer Initials	ELC
Date Acknowledged	16-7-14

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:

- 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.

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."

- 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

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

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
		M/Sp
Case Office: initials: GC		
Date Acknowledged: 08/01/14		

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

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

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

"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."

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.

945

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: 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 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: GGE		
Date Acknowledged: 19-6-14		

GE

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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LTE

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 this 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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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 : 

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 hand 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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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 : [REDACTED]

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 the 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 : 
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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