

Consultation Responses

Old Aberdeen

Conservation Area

Rebecca Kerr

Subject: FW: Draft Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal

From: Muriel Jaffrey
Sent: 31 March 2014 09:10
To: Bridget Turnbull
Subject: RE: Draft Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Good Morning Bridget,

Thank you for your e-mail and attachment.

As I said at the Planning Meeting I am disappointed that Cheyne Road and Harrow Road are not included. As a lifetime member of St. Machar's Cathedral I was speaking to members of the congregation and they all thought that these two roads were in the Conservation Area.

I was the Councillor for Donmouth Ward up until the Boundary Commission changed the Wards and my Ward extended as far in King Street to Seaton Place. My current Ward takes in the whole of Bridge of Don but does not go over the Bridge as it did before.

The Planners did not want Lids built in my old Ward and the only way they got permission was to put on a slate roof because it was in the Conservation Area and that is why I cannot understand that Cheyne and Harrow roads are so much nearer St. Machar's Cathedral than Lids and are not in the Conservation Area.

Kind regards,

Muriel

Baillie Muriel Jaffrey
Elected Member for Bridge of Don.

Telephone Number [REDACTED]
Mobile Number [REDACTED]

From: Bridget Turnbull
Sent: 27 March 2014 15:07
Subject: Draft Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal

The Council's Planning & Development Management Committee recently approved a draft character appraisal for Old Aberdeen Conservation Area. We are now undertaking a six week public consultation exercise on the document that starts on Monday, 31 March and ends at noon on Monday, 12 May.

Please find attached a letter giving more details about the consultation exercise and a general leaflet. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Regards

Bridget Turnbull
Senior Planner (Masterplanning, Design & Conservation)
Planning & Sustainable Development, Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 4, Ground Floor North, Marischal College, Broad Street
Aberdeen AB10 1AB

Direct dial: 01224 523953

Website: www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning

Rebecca Kerr

From: Susanne Steer [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 April 2014 09:44
To: LDP
Subject: Old Aberdeen and Pitfodels Conservation Area Character Appraisal Consultations

Good morning

Thank you for giving Scottish Water the opportunity to comment on the Old Aberdeen and Pitfodels Conservation Area Character Appraisal Consultations. As the contents will not have an impact on the provision of water and drainage, Scottish Water does not have any comments at make at this time.

Kind regards,

Susanne

Susanne Steer | Development Planner - Asset Demand Planning | Asset Strategy

Scottish Water | The Bridge | Cumbernauld Road | G33 6FB

T: 0141 414 7778 | M: [REDACTED]

E: [REDACTED]

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Rebecca Kerr

From: Cowe, Ian [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 April 2014 13:08
To: LDP
Subject: Old Aberdeen and Pitfodels Conservation Areas - Draft Character Appraisals

Dear Sir/Madam

I write in support of the expansion to the Old Aberdeen and Pitfodels Conservation Areas. The expansion of these areas will include a great number of town and garden trees, town trees provide amenity, but also valuable habitat for a variety of priority species present in Aberdeen. Greater protection for these trees is welcomed by the Forestry Commission.

Regards
Ian Cowe

Ian Cowe - Development Officer
Forestry Commission Scotland
Portsoy Road
Huntly
AB54 4SJ

Phone: 01224 441664
Mobile: [REDACTED]
VoIP: 41664

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Rebecca Kerr

From: Webadmin [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 May 2014 22:44
To: LDP
Subject: FW: Draft Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal
Attachments: OACC comments on draft Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal - Final_25May2014.docx

From: Webadmin [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 May 2014 22:35
To: 'idp@aberdeencity.gov.uk'; 'sbeattie@aberdeencity.gov.uk'
Cc: Jim Noble; Ross Grant [REDACTED]; Ramsay Milne (rmilne@aberdeencity.gov.uk); Andrew May (andrewmay@aberdeencity.gov.uk); Jean Morrison (jemorrison@aberdeencity.gov.uk); Nathan Morrison (namorrison@aberdeencity.gov.uk)
Subject: Draft Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Dear Sir and Madam

Old Aberdeen Community Council comments on the draft Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal

The Old Aberdeen Community Council has reviewed the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal in detail and have to report that we found the document seriously wanting. Our review comments are detailed in the attached document. We would be most pleased to meet up with you to discuss these comments at a mutually convenient time.

It would be helpful if you could confirm receipt of this submission.

Yours sincerely

Dewi Morgan
For Old Aberdeen Community Council

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Tel: [REDACTED]

Old Aberdeen Community Council comments on the draft Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Introduction

The Old Aberdeen Community Council has carefully reviewed the draft document; '*Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan; Old Aberdeen*' dated March 2014 and while we acknowledge and appreciate that a lot of effort has been made to collect and collate a wide range of facts and strongly felt opinions concerning Old Aberdeen, the end result just does not deliver the comprehensive or forward looking report that we had expected and that the Conservation Area requires.

General Comments

1. Whereas the 1993 Conservation Area Report made firm policy statements as regards the conservation area, this new document offers no commitments or policies for maintaining and enhancing the unique character of the area; yet we had been advised the report would carry statutory weight with planning matters. The Old Aberdeen Community Council had hoped to see a protective line taken and design guidance provided:
 - To champion the enhancement of the character of the conservation area and safeguard its special features
 - To develop specific recommendations regarding the external treatment and modification of property within the Conservation Area
 - To presume against further change of use in the High Street for other than residential or retail
2. The overall tenor of the document is flat and seemingly indifferent to the changes occurring to the Conservation Area. While a good number of threats and weaknesses are helpfully identified, there are few recommendations as to how the identified issues should be managed or improved.
3. Area B, the prime historic heart, requires a much fuller and more sensitive description if it is to capture the 'sense of place' felt by residents and fondly remembered by staff and students. This would also serve to redress the increasingly held view that Old Aberdeen is the University.
4. There is a puzzling complete absence of description and comment regarding the Old Aberdeen Town House, whose original design and subsequent changing use is quite a useful illustration of the changing influences within the burgh. It is also seen by many organisations as an iconic Georgian building, not least the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland, which uses the building as its emblem.
5. Little comment has been made about the deteriorating condition of the granite sett roads, where they survive. This is a key characteristic of the area yet is in great danger of being progressively patch repaired out of existence. We consider that this should be formally identified in the 'Negative Factors' section for the Character Areas; Spital and Old Aberdeen Core.
6. While the report comments on the increase in houses of multiple occupation, it does so passively, yet this is not due to "... a decrease in family residential use ..." as suggested in para.3.2.4. This is due to residential families being squeezed out by the high demand brought about by ever increasing student population resulting in the high prices that a HMO landlord can afford to pay for a property in the current taxation structure. This is an issue that is in the process of causing permanent change to the Conservation Area Character of

Old Aberdeen yet is not even discussed as a negative issue. We consider that this should be formally identified in the 'Negative Factors' section for the Character Areas; Spital, Old Aberdeen Core and Hillhead/King St North. It may also be impacting the Balgownie area.

7. There is little comment on the significant changes being brought about to the visual degradation of the Area by the increase in UPVC windows and doors, burglar alarms, the visibility of TV dishes and aerials. This has been effectively permitted by the ACC watering down their guidance notes on these issues. Are there any recommendations to be made? Perhaps a review and strengthening of ACC Technical Advice Notes would be a good start. In the early stages of this process, there was some discussion about developing an information sheet for householders within the Conservation Area. The Old Aberdeen CC and the Old Aberdeen Heritage Society both considered this to be an excellent idea and have advised our willingness to distribute such a document, perhaps on a yearly basis. However, there is no such recommendation.
8. We believe that the document needs major revision and we feel it would be best if it was withdrawn from the approval cycle until it has been further developed and thoroughly re-edited, to be followed by a second period of public consultation before it can be presented to the relevant committee.

Proposed changes to the area subdivisions

The OACC supports the subdivision into five character areas in principle, but challenges specific details as follows:

- a. The use of the word 'campus' to describe the University lands is really not acceptable. Originating in the USA to describe college or school grounds, the word has been adopted in the UK, firstly by the new universities; Sussex, Stirling, York etc. where the word can be appropriately used in its original meaning to describe a greenfield academic site, but laterally has been used by Aberdeen University. The Old Aberdeen Community Council and many residents contend that Old Aberdeen is not a campus; it is an ancient township of which the university is now the major, but not only, element. While we understand that 'campus' serves as a useful portmanteau word to describe the physical whole of the university, it does raise strong barriers, both emotional and cartographical and we urge its replacement with 'Modern University Zone' or equivalent. The word 'campus' is used some 53 times within the document.
- b. The central area of Old Aberdeen was previously designated 'The Heart' but has now been changed to 'Old Aberdeen core' which is rather passionless. We would like to revert to 'The Heart', please.
- c. The Modern University Zone character area has been extended up Tillydrone Avenue to encompass the houses 54 to 88. Many of these houses are now in private ownership so indicating that their land as 'University Campus' or 'Modern University Zone' is not likely to be appreciated. It might be noted that while some of these properties were built by the University, we understand that others were built by Major Hay (of Seaton House). We also consider the partial inclusion of Tillydrone Road, the mediæval route to the north and west is also inappropriate. We ask that the northern boundary of the Modern University Zone should be to the north of the Zoology building, before no.54 – as per the 1993 report.
- d. The Modern University Zone runs down the middle of St Machar Drive to King Street whereas the 1993 Report retained the Mission and Barn within the Heart. It would be courteous to move the line south a bit such that The Mission (a privately owned place of worship), The Barn and also 593-595 King Street can be part of The Heart.

Proposed extensions to the Conservation Area

The Old Aberdeen Community Council has no objections to the proposed Conservation Area extensions, and actively supports the extension to include Old Aberdeen House in Dunbar St and the cul-de-sac 3 to 8 St Machar Place.

We would appreciate hearing why you have not taken into consideration the areas the OACC suggested for extension;

- St Peter's Cemetery which includes listed gate houses and covers the site of the original 'Spital'
- The properties on King Street between the Cemetery and University Road as fine examples of Victorian terraced housing.

Comments on the text of the Appraisal

General comments:

- Paragraph numbering is a mess with all five of the Character descriptions using the same numbering.
- Photographs are of poor quality, sometimes repetitive and often miss the key characteristics. Description is sometimes incorrect.
- Maps are badly coloured in such a way that, although probably adequate at high definition, lose all detail once the file has been turned into a compact PDF file.

Page 3, para 1.1; 'Buildings at Risk': Wallace Tower is in Tillydrone Road, not Avenue

Page 3, para 1.2; Old Aberdeen was an independent burgh until 1891; present text suggests that Old Aberdeen combined with Aberdeen in 1830. Last sentence; please delete 'campus'.

Page 4, photo bottom left shows 'Powis Gate'.

Page 5, para 2.1' capitalise road in 'Bedford road'

Page 5, Para 2.2, first column; Suggest the use of the familiar title 'Aulton' could do with explanation

Page 5, para 2.2, second column; The sentence 'The following timeline shows the development of Old Aberdeen up to the creation of Parson Gordon's plan in 1661' is not borne out by the maps which start (on the next page) from 1866, but perhaps refers to the text on page 7. Text and pagination needs to be revised.

Page 7: Need to be consistent with 'century' – suggest all in lower case

Page 7, 7th Century para: delete 'the' before 'popular folklore' and small 's' for shepherd's crook please.

Page 7, 14th century – should be 15th century

Page 7, 16th century – ‘Canon’s masses’ should be ‘canon’s masses’

Page 8, left column, last sentence; ‘Sunnybank’ – delete extra ‘n’.

Page 8, right column, first paragraph, “... New Aberdeen to envelop the Old Aberdeen, ...” – delete ‘the’.

Page 8, right column, bottom paragraph, change “... two large university campuses”. to “two large university areas” (or zones)

Page 9, C: Regent Walk’, not ‘Regent’s Walk’. Add Tillydrone Avenue as part of boundary

D: King Street, not King Road

E: Add: Balgownie (i.e. the houses!)

Page 11, This map is intended to show the two Group Area listings in Old Aberdeen. This is very confusing as it:

- uses the same colour as used for Category A and Category B individual buildings,
- The map key calls them categories when they are simply Group Areas
- there is no explanation as to what the Group Area listing is all about.

In fact, there is no mention on the Scottish Heritage site regarding Group Areas so we suggest this needs to be checked out to confirm if the category is still extant and, if so, please provide explanatory text and use different colours.

Page 13, map; overly heavy blue completely masks the occasional green. A much lighter blue is necessary. This is a common problem on many of the plans

Page 13, upper photo is not St. Margaret’s Convent. Now flats, but formerly known as St Martha’s Home for Girls

Page 14, para 3.2.1; first paragraph, about half way down, text needs sorting: “... stood alone in surrounded by generous grounds ...” and 6 lines from bottom: “... hiding the front the gardens and obscuring ...” – delete the second ‘the’.

Page 14, para 3.2.1; second paragraph, first line: This block is not a sheltered housing complex, rather it is council housing which includes a few retirement homes to the east Aukland Place. (also called sheltered housing in paras 3.2.5 and 3.3.5)

Page 14, para 3.2.3, bottom paragraph, second line; add the word ‘sit’: “.... Juxtaposed with buildings which sit hard against ...”

Page 14, para 3.2.4, 4th line: this is not sheltered housing

8th line: there are in fact two fast-food takeaways, not ‘several’.

Page 15, para 3.2.5 5th bullet – this is not sheltered housing

Page 18 para 3.3.4; Line 11, not ‘light industrial warehouses’ this is the FirstBus depot

Bottom line – this is not ‘sheltered housing’

Page 21, para 3.1; first para; we expected the ancient 17th-18th century walls to have received a bit more attention that this? (we do note the comments in para 3.2.3)

Page 21, para 3.1; please correct to 'Spital'

Page 22, para 3.1; 2nd para, first line should be 'Orchard Street' not 'Orchard Road'

Page 23 "... the University's botanical gardens" does not correctly describe the garden. From their web page: "The Cruickshank Botanic Garden is a partnership between the University and the Cruickshank Charitable Trust".

Page 23, para 3.1, First para, second and third sentence. This description wipes out Tillydrone Road which is a medieval route of equal importance to Don Street as a route north.

Page 23, para 3.1, last para, resolve temporary reference to "(Plan ?)".

Page 25, top right photo. This is a near repeat of the one on page 8 – suggest there are plenty of other candidates.

Page 25, para 3.2.2 We would like to see included here an appraisal of the boundary walls that are a characteristic of the core of Old Aberdeen.

Para 27, para 3.2.3, second paragraph, 1st line – 'storeyed', not 'storied'
7th line – delete 'neighbouring'

Page 27, para 3.2.4; near bottom; 'Place names', not 'Places names'

Page 27, para 3.2.4. As noted above, we consider this take on the 'decrease in Family residential use' is inaccurate and needs realignment.

Page 27, para 3.2.5; Last bullet; "Unsympathetic road layouts e.g. The Orchard". This example not understood; The Orchard seems to be a well laid out development, ideal for young families. Unfortunately it has recently been all but turned over to let properties

Page 29, Para 3.3.2, second line: traffic lights are on College bounds, not the High Street

Page 29, Para 3.3.2, Bottom of first paragraph; we fully support your call for comprehensive traffic management review.

Page 29, para 3.3.2 Last paragraph, 'other historic routes' – this misses out the important mediaeval route north - Tillydrone Road.

Page 29, para 3.3.2 Last paragraph, a rogue semi-colon after 'mediaeval' needs to be ejected.

Page 29, Para 3.3.2 – It is notable that there is simply no discussion on the deteriorating condition of the granite sett roads

Page 30, para 3.3.2; second sentence: "There do not however have an adverse..." should be: "They do not however have an adverse..."

Page 30, para 3.3.3; the Appraisal does not notice that the characteristic kerbstones in the area are laid horizontally; i.e. with a deep horizontal face, but relatively shallow downwards.

Page 33, para p3.5, bullet 10, 'Benholm' not 'Blenholm'

Page 35, para 3.2.1.1, line 11; "... five story and single storey" should be "five storey" etc.

Page 37 photos and text: Hunter Court not Hunters Court
Coopers Court, not Cooper's Court
Hunter Court was purpose built as student accommodation, not converted.

Page 37, Second para; only some of these houses were built by University – in 1947, not 1950s. Others were built by Major Hay in 1920s. Paragraph should be re-written.

Page 39 para 3.2.1.2 'MacRobert' paragraph – 3rd line from bottom; storeys not storys
'Edward Wright' paragraph – annexe not annex

Page 39 para 3.2.1.2 There is no mention in this section that the Edward Wright Building Annexe is designated as a temporary building that has had its permitted life extended a number of times!
(Reference planning applications 050963 and 010011)

Page 41, photos; 4 almost identical photos of the new library. A bit more variety please!

Page 41, para 3.2.3; poor grammar on 4th line; "... build line along either of this street and there is ..."

Page 43, para 3.3.1; second last line – the word 'as' is missing between "... view such... the Geography department .."

Page 44, para 3.3.2; Meston Walk not Meston Way

Page 44, para 3.3.3, Last sentence is incorrect; no part of Elphinstone Road is cobbled.

Page 45, para 3.3.4, (also para 3.3.5, photo below, see also pages 46 and 47) The description of the square in front of the new library as the 'civic space' and 'civic square' seems inappropriate as 'civic' pertains to citizens or the city. The University does not use this phrase anywhere on their web site. It may be open for the public to use but is not owned by the public.

Page 45, para 3.3.6; should mention the disparate range of street lighting. Along the ancient Meston Walk, the lighting is particularly inappropriate.

Page 46, para 3.4.1; Last sentence is incomplete and please note that many of the referenced houses on Tillydrone Avenue are not University owned.

Page 48, para 3.1, 3rd line to the north from Chanonry, not south

Page 49, para 3.2.1, 1st line; delete 'next'

Page 50, para 3.2.1, first para; the 1984 complex was not built "... within the walled garden ...", but "... within the former stable block alongside the walled garden ...".

Page 51, para 3.3.5, third line; should be "... are clad." (would be nice to add the type of cladding material too).

Page 51, para 3.3.5 about half way down; '.... which gives help gives the overall area a character ...' delete 'gives'

Page 54 Last line regarding the 'cycle path' This is part of a discredited exercise in ACC's past whereby grant money was paid for 'creating' cycle paths. This 'cycle path' is completely inappropriate; the road is too narrow; there is no means of returning on a cycle path, the lines will not be repainted once they have worn off. Please do not give validity to this farce.

Page 58

Para 3.4.4 suggests that the drainage problem in Seaton Park is long term normality. It is not. The park was being used for football in winter until just a few years ago and the lack of resolution is now killing trees and greatly damaging the park and compromising its usability. We ask that this section is reworded in the following terms:

"Flooding on the East side of Seaton Park where the land is at its lowest has recently become a serious problem, making acres of park land unusable and killing trees and grassland and flooding access paths. While this is worst during the winter months, the ground now remains damp and boggy and thus all but unusable throughout the year".

Page 58, para 3.4.4, 2nd bullet; sentence not complete

Page 59 – bridge is 14th century, not 13th

Page 61, para 3.2.2; bit of a puzzle, this; where is 'Grade A listed Cruickshank Lodgings'? Cannot find it on Google maps, ACC Interactive Map, Post Office Post Code Finder or within Historic Scotland's database of listed buildings.

Pages 59 & 60; again as mentioned elsewhere, maps are all but unreadable

Page 60, para 3.2.1, Don St; 5 lines from bottom; 'crowstepped' gabling not 'crowstack'

Page 61; suspect that the photo of Cottown of Balgownie has been reversed

Page 66, left photo shows 257 Don St. This is not Rocky Bank.
Middle photo does not look much like the Brig

Page 69, para 4, first sentence in error, reference to Pitfodels and that no boundary alterations are proposed.

Page 69 onwards – SWOT analysis

We ask that the following is added as a 'Threat' to the SWOTs for; Spital, Old Aberdeen Core, University Zone, Hillhead/King St North:

"The increase in the number of HMO properties at the expense of family homes is causing a significant shift in the area demographics".

We ask that the following is added as a 'Threat' to the SWOTs for; Spital, Old Aberdeen Core,:
"The deteriorating condition of the granite sett roads".

We ask that the following is added as a 'Weakness' to the SWOTs for; Spital, Old Aberdeen Core,:
"The increasing prevalence of uPVC windows and doors, and the increasing intrusion of burglar alarms, TV and satellite aerials on visible walls and roof lines".

We do not consider the east-west permeability to be a weakness – it is a feature of the village;
Please remove.

Page 74, B; St Machar Drive was built in the early 1920s with St Machar Place in late 1920s.

Page 76, left column: Duncan's Place no longer exists – University built over it with RC Chaplaincy.

Page 77 Benholm's Lodging, not Lodge

Conclusions

Overall, the Old Aberdeen Community Council is deeply disappointed in this document which we were advised is intended to carry statutory weight with planning matters, yet offers no guidance or policy proposals.

The document has not been adequately reviewed and edited, thus contains typographical errors, factual errors and significant omissions.

We believe that the document needs major revision and should be withdrawn from the approval cycle until it has been further developed, followed by a second period of public consultation before it can be presented to the relevant committee.

Dewi Morgan
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Old Aberdeen Community Council
25th May 2014

Rebecca Kerr

From: Dominic Fairlie [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 May 2014 10:56
To: LDP
Cc: Alastair Struthers
Subject: Old Aberdeen - Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan -
Comments from Aberdeen Civic Society

Dear Sir/Madam,

Aberdeen Civic Society has the following comments on the above report:

1. We have concerns about the continued commercialisation of Old Aberdeen at the expense of the residential population. The residential population, particularly the non student element, is a very important aspect of maintaining viability and vibrancy of Old Aberdeen as a mixed use area. We would like to see any proposals for Old Aberdeen, particularly the historic areas, to respect this and limits should be put onto the amount of change of use of existing properties for uses other than residential.
2. Old Aberdeen is a jewel in Aberdeen and should be respected as this. Within the small area that is Old Aberdeen there are a number of different areas, each of which is small in itself, perhaps only a street or part street. This contributes to its charm. For example, the Chanonry is very different to the High Street. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan should make the differences clear and ensure they are retained.

We trust you will take these comments into account in your further consideration of the Plan.

Regards

DOMINIC FAIRLIE

Chairman
Aberdeen Civic Society

Rebecca Kerr

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 May 2014 11:50
To: LDP
Subject: Old Aberdeen Conservation Area

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am responding to the consultation on the above proposals on behalf of Friends of Sunnybank Park.

We are broadly in favour of the proposed extension to Old Aberdeen Conservation Area and are pleased at the additional protection it will give to the green space at Sunnybank Park.

Yours faithfully,

N.J. Mills (Dr.)
Secretary,
Friends of Sunnybank Park

Our ref: PCS/132566
Your ref: CAA_OldAb_Consult
ati

Laura Robertson
Masterplanning, Design and Conservation Team
Planning and Sustainable Development
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 4
Ground Floor North
Marischal College
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If telephoning ask for:
Alison Wilson

26 May 2014

By email only to: ldp@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Dear Ms Robertson

**Public Consultation
Draft Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal**

Thank you for your consultation e-mails which SEPA received on 27 March 2014 and 17 April 2014. We have no comments to make on the Draft Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

If you have any queries relating to this letter, please contact me by telephone on 01224 266656 or e-mail at planning.aberdeen@sepa.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Alison Wilson
Senior Planning Officer
Planning Service

Rebecca Kerr

From: Donaldson, Angus A. M. [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 May 2014 16:16
To: LDP
Cc: Donaldson, Angus A. M.
Subject: Strategic Overview and management Plan & Old Aberdeen Conservation Area – Draft Character Appraisals

Dear Bridget

Strategic Overview and management Plan & Old Aberdeen Conservation Areas – Draft Character Appraisal

I refer to the above documents and welcome the opportunity to provide a response on behalf of the University.

The University supports the purposes and objectives stated in the two related documents and equally appreciates the importance of reviewing what it is that makes up the special character of the Old Aberdeen Conservation area.

The University recognises that Old Aberdeen is and should remain diverse and also that the University forms part of a wider community which we respect. In saying this old Aberdeen is largely the way it is because of the historic development and continuing presence of the University. That for the University to thrive it must continuously adapt, evolve and respond to the environments and markets in which we now operate.

The University has recently undertaken appraisal work of the Kings campus to assist our future estate thinking and to help ensure that the Kings College Campus can be developed in a cohesive manner. This work has incorporated current best practice as well as National and Local policy and guidance. Using this work and reviewing the appraisal documents we would make the following comments and representations:

Context

- The analysis within sections 1,2 and 3 is comprehensive.
- The character areas are clearly and thoroughly presented although there are a few factual inaccuracies some of which are listed below. I think the document requires re proofed.

Character Areas

- Character Areas Area A, B, part D and E appear reasonable.
- I think detailed and reasoned justification is required for Area C inclusion.
- I would request that the developed Hillhead Hall site be removed from the Area D, or reasoned justification for its inclusion given.
- Further explanatory text is required to justify/ make the case for the extensions particularly Area E. I think the onus is on the Council to make a strong case.

Policy Context

- I would have expected expect specific reference and cross reference with policies such as Creating Places and Designing places particularly the six qualities of successful places . These are truly commendable qualities. The documents may build on wider policies but this needs to be detailed. I see these qualities as a sound foundation for the conservation area.
- I would suggest one “conservation” document as at the moment there is too much reliance on cross referring to the separate strategy document which then only talks in generalities. I suspect that most people are not going to sit with the two documents open and cross-refer. I found this confusing.
- There is a gap/disconnect between the high level document and the analysis of what is on the ground. You can't easily point to a specific new way of management that relates to a particular part of the conservation area.
- A number of issues included in the SWOT analysis contradict and while commendable are not deliverable , for example , resource efficient where there is no reference to Sustainability or how environmental initiatives will be approved within the conservation area documents. I believe this matter however uncomfortable to deal with needs to be addressed. Alterations to buildings in order to comply with modern energy conservation standards also contradicts conservation standards. I believe that compromise is required and a progressive attitude taken with environmental improvements.

SWOT Analysis

- After each SWOT analysis there need to be some proposals on how weaknesses/ threats are to be addressed.
- Area B , we object to the University been presented as a threat and a weakness. I contest that the University is a good custodian of our built and cultural heritage and has invested significantly in its preservation. Accordingly i recommend that positive statements in the strengths and opportunities sections should be included to reflect these points.
- Area B/C it is inappropriate to float Master plans in this document.
- Area B/C – Opportunities better and clearer paths through and between spaces , optimisation for inside/outside interfaces, more shelter , Public amenities (by ACC) , more creative lighting, i can expand on these opportunities.
- Weakness- Disability compliance issues with movement in East west direction. The high street presents a barrier to the disabled in terms of paths , kerbs and the High street itself

Comments for inclusion / consideration

- Traffic management review – a radical rethink is required - example: Poynton Shared Space.
- Disability Compliance relating to pedestrian movement around conservation area , a radical review is needed
- Energy conservation – Environmental legislation and standards has the requirement for installing or providing facilities ie bike shelters this needs recognised. Again a radical and forward thinking approach is needed.

- Seton park – Much more needs to be presented in the report to focus on and to reverse the decline in this facility.
- Signage – why does 'all' road signage have to comply with the transport department standards and rules. Why can't there be a new standard for Conservation areas? Aberdeen already has distinctive street name signage.
- Car parking – unless there is a complete and coherent public transportation system in place, there will always be a reliance on car travel.

Factual points

- Significantly our name is the University of Aberdeen.
- The Botanic Garden is not owned by the University but is an independent trust.
- Hunters Court was not converted it was a new build.
- Taylor building 3 blocks.
- Lack of open space on the East side of the campus- there is large open space in front of the kings pavilion.
- Character Area D – Hillhead will be redeveloped by time report concluded as we are in final phases of upgrade.
- Picture and names on page 50 incorrect.
- Opinion on HMO - i would argue incorrect, as now merely regulating what has always been the case.
- Photos – some photos in the report should be updated ie Hillhead refurbishments.

I trust you will give these matters your consideration and would welcome discussion on these.

Best wishes

Angus Donaldson

The University of Aberdeen is a charity registered in Scotland, No SC013683.
Tha Oilthigh Obar Dheathain na charthannas clàraichte ann an Alba, Àir. SC013683.

9 Florence Court
[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]

May 21st 2014-

Masterplanning Design and Conservation
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 4
Marischal College
Aberdeen

Old Aberdeen Conservation area appraisal

This document has only just come to my attention and there is not time for me to make a detailed study of it before putting forward some observations but there are a couple of points I would like to make. I should say that my interest in the area is that I lived there during the 1930s---1960s and have retained an interest in it since then. I am also a former Chairman of Aberdeen Civic Society.

I commend the document for its detailed description of the fabric of the area which will stand in good stead for planners of the future. I hope that several factual inaccuracies will be corrected and some slipshod writing edited before the document is finalised. There is however to my mind one enormous flaw in the approach taken. It seems to me that while the physical aspects of the area are dealt with in great detail there is very little indication of the human aspect of the area. I do not see that a proper appraisal of the area can be made without considering the people who live and work there. There is a reference to the threat of university expansion increasing in area B and this is certainly a problem which has to be faced. I would like to have seen a general statement from the Planning Department about this and other problems relating to human activity in the areas concerned. I realise that this may not have been in the original remit, but I do not see how an effective appraisal and management plan can be produced without taking into account the human activity in the area. I would really like to have seen a policy statement based on the physical aspects combined with the needs of the local population. Surely that is what good planning is all about.

On a more specific point, I would like to have seen more reference made to the tourism aspect of the area. It is mentioned briefly in connection with the Brig o Balgownie but is ignored in the other areas, Old Aberdeen is the jewel in the crown of

Aberdeen and not enough attention has been given to making it easy for tourists to visit or to feel welcome

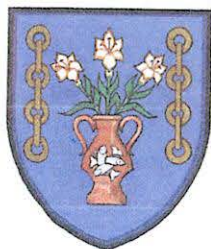
I am sorry that time has not allowed me to go into the document more thoroughly but hope my observations will be considered.

Yours sincerely

(Mrs Caroline Gimingham)

RECEIVED

23 MAY 2014



OLD ABERDEEN HERITAGE SOCIETY



Masterplanning, Design and Conservation
Planning and Sustainable Development
Aberdeen City Council

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
25th May 2014

Dear Sirs,

Draft Character Appraisal for Old Aberdeen Conservation Area - Consultation

I enclose the Society's comments on this Draft Appraisal.

We wish to make it clear, however, that we consider this document not fit for purpose as a basis for a Character Appraisal for Old Aberdeen Conservation Area. It is in need of comprehensive revision.

The purpose of this Character Appraisal, we understand, is to appraise, or evaluate the character of Old Aberdeen, in order to develop strategies, design guidance or policies to "preserve and enhance" the character of the Conservation Area.

We believe that this document manifestly fails to do this.

Although it provides a detailed list of physical structures and geographical features of Old Aberdeen, there is little actual evaluation, or appraisal, of its character. Some of the main elements of character which make Old Aberdeen the gem that it is, are barely mentioned. This failure to portray character is a serious underlying deficiency in this document; clearly, without an adequate evaluation, it is impossible to form adequate policies to preserve and enhance that character.

Further, in order to provide proper protection for the Conservation Area, the Appraisal must take full and serious account of the pressures which threaten its character. There are two major pressures in Old Aberdeen which are increasingly having a detrimental effect on its character, and yet they are barely mentioned.

As a result of its failure adequately to portray the character of the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area, and of its failure adequately to assess the threats to that character, this draft document also fails in its main purpose, viz. that of preserving and enhancing this Conservation Area by the inclusion of adequate policies specifically designed for its protection and enhancement.

At a time when the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area is facing unprecedented pressures, this lack of policies to safeguard its character means also that this document actually increases those pressures. In part, this is due to the removal of some essential policies which have been either explicit or implicit in the previous Appraisal from 1993;- in particular from among those relating specifically to the "Heart" or "Historic Core" of Old Aberdeen. On the other hand, pressure is increased by the lack of robust new policies to deal with ever-growing, newer threats.

This document also increases the pressures on Old Aberdeen by its re-drawing of the boundaries of two of the Character Areas, which has meant that certain properties which have always been in the "Heart" area

have been annexed, without justification, to the "Modern University Campus" area. This in effect assigns to these properties a quite different character and standing in the Conservation Area, and thus lessens the level of protection which they are afforded.

We address these issues in the accompanying pages of "Main Concerns" along with concerns about presentation within the document. Points relating to specific issues mentioned in the document are included in the Appendix.

The enclosed Appendix to our main comments has been made necessary by the sheer number of errors, inconsistencies, omissions and other deficiencies in this document, which clearly had to be dealt with separately. There are a large number of factual errors of all kinds, indicating inadequate research, but there are also a large number of editorial and other errors, and errors associated with presentation.

The numbering of paragraphs and sections is not only confusing but misleading, and some of the maps are illegible; the content of one or two even contradict each other on the question of boundaries. Finally there is very obvious inconsistency in titling of the Character Areas, which appear in different versions in the course of the document. All the above deficiencies are ones which could easily have been noticed and corrected had the document been adequately proof-read and edited.

In recognition of this document's deficiencies, the Society requests that the Draft Character Appraisal is not presented to the next Committee, but instead is comprehensively revised and re-edited, and put out for public consultation a second time before being submitted for Committee approval.

Yours faithfully,



(Mrs) B. McPetrie

Planning Secretary

Main Concerns

Inadequate Portrayal of Character

The Appraisal contains details of many physical features, but contains few evaluative terms, which would help to evoke character.

Words such as 'secluded' or 'tranquil' of some parts; 'cloistered' or 'silent' for others; 'busy', 'jostling' or 'deserted'; 'semi-rural', 'reminiscent of a country village'; 'village within a city', etc. So many epithets or evaluative terms could enrich this Appraisal and convey the atmosphere;- the character as well as the appearance.

There is little mention of the importance of setting other than in the context of immediate physical surroundings. The patterns of past use and activity, for instance, are an important part of the historic environment, as is the present function or use of a place. Not much is said in the Appraisal of these aspects of character. This would be particularly helpful in appraising the character of places which have been centres of activity, and would highlight many more aspects, for instance, of the character of High Street and the surrounding area.

On a more basic level, there is actually a lack of description of some of the key features or areas in Old Aberdeen. There is really no evaluative description of the Botanic Garden, no mention of the evocative nature of Tillydrone Road, or the 'countryside' character of parts of Seaton Park, or of its wildlife. In particular, there is little in the way of description of the character of the Aulton. Principal Sir Thomas Taylor described this as having "its own unique and distinctive character as a mixed village community", and famously pledged that it would not become "an academic suburb". Leslie MacFarlane and Agnes Short also wrote warmly of how the Aulton "still retains the sense of a living and self-contained community".

The life of this community is possibly the central feature of the character of Old Aberdeen, and yet there is no indication of its importance in the Draft Character Appraisal, and the corresponding importance of maintaining the viability of this community, in order to preserve its "village character", indeed, to enhance it.

Threats to Character

This distinctive aspect of the character of Old Aberdeen has increasingly been under pressure from two sources: on the one hand, the continued expansion of the University, and on the other, the proliferation of houses in multiple occupation. The first is having an effect on various parts of Old Aberdeen, but a marked effect in particular on the High Street, where there has been a steady change of use from homes and shops to University departments or offices. This has brought about the depopulation of some parts of the High Street and a loss of vitality, and these together are having their effect on the life of the community, and so on the character of Old Aberdeen.

It is our view that the Conservation Area Character Appraisal could be a means by which this trend could be halted, and the character of the High Street protected. We wish to suggest that a new policy, specific to the High Street, should be added to the Appraisal Management Plan, which would put in place a presumption against change of use from dwelling-house or shop to office use.

The second source of pressure on Old Aberdeen is more widespread, and is a rapidly growing threat to the sustainability of Old Aberdeen as a settled community. Family homes, when they come on the market, are increasingly bought up by buy-to-let landlords, at prices which exclude the average family, and are then turned into houses for multiple occupation almost exclusively for temporary residents. This trend has seen parts of Old Aberdeen increasingly deserted at some times of the year, which has clearly affected its character. The corresponding loss of permanent residents. (who are more likely to take a long-term interest in the area), and particularly the loss of families, is in the process of completely changing the character of the community. This is a problem which is affecting every part of Old Aberdeen, and this threat must be recognised as such in the Character Appraisal, and any possible measures instigated to address it without delay.

There are, of course, many other pressures on Old Aberdeen, and it is essential that these are identified and addressed in the Character Appraisal. The consultation document, however, only contains two policies specific to Old Aberdeen, and it is our view that there should be several more. In particular, there is a need for a policy similar to that in the 1993 Appraisal, and specific to the High Street, laying down the strictest control over shop-signs, shop-fronts, advertisements and signage. The ancient and substantial boundary walls of St Machar Drive and the Chanonry should also be given particular protection, as they were in the last Appraisal, with a firm policy not to allow them to be breached. If these policies are not reiterated in the new Character Appraisal, then protection is actually being removed by the new Appraisal, and consequently the character of Old Aberdeen is under threat. We request that these two policies, specific to Old Aberdeen, be added to the document.

Proposed Changes to Boundaries of Character Areas

It is a matter of serious concern that the Draft Character Appraisal seeks to make significant alterations to these boundaries without either explanation or justification. The existing boundaries have served Old Aberdeen well, and there is no suggestion that these are in any way no longer appropriate.

Why then, are changes proposed to these boundaries such that certain properties in "The Heart" or "Historic Core" area would be transferred to the "Modern University Campus" area? None of these properties can by any stretch of the imagination be said to share the 'character' of a 'Modern University Campus':-

The Houses in Tillydrone Avenue are family homes, not campus buildings. Furthermore they are not modern, the latest of them dating from around 1952, and the earliest built in 1924. Lastly, they can not be described as 'University' either, as several are privately owned. Nor were they even built by the University; two were built by Major Hay of Seaton Estate.

It is preposterous to even consider removing these old-fashioned family houses, all of traditional design, and most in granite, to a "Modern University Campus" character area.

"The Barn" and "The Mission" on St Machar Drive can in no way be said to share the character of a "Modern University Campus" either.

"The Barn" is not a campus building. It is a dwelling-house. Furthermore it is not "modern" either; it dates from 1830.

Lastly, it is a historic, category 'B' listed building, built of granite.

"The Mission" is also a historic granite building, which does not fit the "Modern University Campus". Nor is it part of a "campus"; nor is it University-owned. It is an independently-owned place of worship, does not belong to the University, and is not modern.

What justification can there be for moving all these properties out of "The Heart" area and annexing them to the "Modern University Campus" institutional buildings, whose chief characteristic is that they are all "concrete, tall and/or bulky buildings" (p.47 of the Draft appraisal)?

It can not be said, furthermore, that this transfer is of little consequence. It matters. Character Appraisals are influential documents ("likely to be the main form of conservation guidance" PAN 71), and as supplementary guidance, have statutory weight.

The assigning, therefore, of particular properties to a particular character area will mean something in the event of a planning application for that property or for property adjacent to it.

The transfer of "The Barn", "The Mission", and the houses at Tillydrone Avenue to the "Modern University Campus", therefore is not a matter of little import. The proposed alteration in boundaries which would bring this transfer about could have consequences which would be detrimental to the amenity of these properties and/or detract from their character and setting.

The Society wishes to make a formal request that those boundaries or sections of boundaries affecting the aforementioned properties be restored to their original place (as delineated in the 1993 Conservation Area Report), so that "The Barn", "The Mission" and the houses on Tillydrone Avenue are restored to the "The Heart" or "The Core" Character Area.

Concerns about Presentation

Text

A significant deficiency in the document relates to the matter of balance of content in the text itself, and in the illustrations.

This is a document whose aim is to highlight, (with a view to protecting), the special character of Old Aberdeen, which derives mostly from its wealth of historic buildings, ancient thoroughfares, secluded green spaces, and its long history as a community.. It is a matter of concern, therefore, that the greatest number of pages amongst the descriptions of Character Areas is actually given over to the analysis, one by one, of more or less every single institutional building in the "Modern University Campus".

By contrast, the "Heart" or "Historic Core" Area is under-represented, and there are some glaring omissions. No mention is made of Old Aberdeen Town House, the main focus of High Street, and the heart of the ancient Burgh, in spite of all that it represents in the political and communal life of Old Aberdeen.

Another important building which has been omitted is the category 'A' listed Bede House, in Don Street, and little is said, indeed, of the character of Don Street itself.

In the Chanonry, surely special mention should be given at least to No.9, Mitchell's Hospital, an unique category 'A' listed building of historic importance – and of course, the mediaeval Chaplain's Court.

There are, of course, many other buildings of particular historic, cultural or architectural importance all around the "Historic Core" of Old Aberdeen, and a few words about some of these, along with those already mentioned, not only would be welcome, but would also help to restore some balance in this document as far as discussion of individual buildings is concerned.

The real anomaly in this Draft Appraisal, as regards the content of the text, is the disproportionate amount of space devoted to modern institutional buildings at the expense of the traditional and historic buildings which are by far the most characteristic of Old Aberdeen.

It is a matter of concern that a document whose aim is to identify what is special about our Conservation Area, and to protect and enhance it, could allocate well over a quarter of its description sections to an in-depth look at the products of modern University expansion in Areas 'C' and 'D'. Yes, some of them are interesting, and worth reading about, but not to this extent in a document of this kind, and of this importance.

Illustration of Text

The selection of photographs which feature in this document is deficient in a number of ways:-

(a) This element of the Draft Appraisal is even more unbalanced. Out of 99 photographs in the main text, no fewer than 33 depict modern University buildings, amenity space and fixtures. How can this be justified in any way? The illustrations in any text, of course, are the most prominent feature in a document and are the first impression one gets of its content; a document of this kind, however, relies even more heavily on accuracy, quality and balanced representation in its illustrations, as such a large part of the whole question of "character" and "appraisal" is visual. In the case of this report, anyone who did not know Old Aberdeen well, would assume that much of its character was expressed in the form of modern institutional buildings.

In an incredibly widespread and diverse Conservation Area, stretching from King's Crescent to Balgownie, it is completely inappropriate that this document should place such an unrepresentative emphasis on institutional buildings of the last fifty years.

(b) There are notable omissions of all kinds:-

There are very few vistas, or long views, of streets in the Conservation Area, and this should be remedied, as such views often say more about the character of an area than pictures of individual buildings. Again, this is a matter of balance; notable omissions are views looking up or down High Street; the splendid length of the Chanonry from St Machar Drive to the Cathedral; the enchanting Tillydrone Road; a longer view of the row of cottages at the Cottown; a view of the stretch of Hillhead Terrace and Boa-Vista Place, and, of course, a view of the southernmost section of Don Street.

As to individual buildings, it is astounding that, in 77 pages, the Appraisal nowhere includes a photograph of Old Aberdeen Town House, the very heart of this ancient Burgh. Other buildings which are notable by their absence include the historic Bede House and Bishop's Gate in Don Street, along with Mitchell's Hospital and the ancient Chaplain's Court in The Chanonry. What about Cluny's Port, which incorporates so many features characteristic of Old Aberdeen? In the Spital,; perhaps Applebank House, or Primrose House. And, back in the heart of Old Aberdeen, what about either the ancient Cromwell Tower or Round Tower at King's College?. Or the truly splendid Art Deco Sports Pavilion which is a well-known landmark. Perhaps this could be combined with a view of King's Crown across the playing-fields, as referred to in the text?

Returning to High Street, one or two further illustrations of individual houses would be welcome, such as the 'A' listed 96 High Street, or the fascinating Greenlaw Court, with its unusual pend. Perhaps we could see more of the closes and wynds which are so characteristic of the Aulton. Lastly, there is a notable absence in the main text, of photographs of the traditional shops in the High Street. (The University's Conference and Events Office, a former shop, does not count!). It is subjects like these shops, and cafe, along with views of the general sweep of High Street, and of the Town House also, which are needed in the Draft Appraisal, to represent the "village community" character of the heart of this ancient Burgh. These are clearly lacking, and the result is that probably the most characteristic views of Old Aberdeen are missing from this document, which aims to portray its character.

Depictions of particular characteristic features are also missing, eg. the magnificent 17th century walls which form the boundary of the Botanic Garden on St Machar Drive, and the westmost boundary of No.13 Chanonry; the "cherry-caulking"; the crowstepping; the Seaton brick detailing. Good quality photographs of these and other such important features are surely a must for a document such as this.

Moving on from the built environment, what about a photograph of the beautiful Botanic Garden? Characteristic views here might feature either the Sunken Garden, or the exquisite rock and pond garden. In Seaton Park, there really should be a more complete picture of the River Don, which contributes so much to the character of the area, both in the Park and at Balgownie. Perhaps it could be featured at both locations. At the Park, the view of St Machar's Cathedral from the riverside is also a well-known, characteristic view, and the walled garden, being the only remaining part of Seaton House, and an important feature, should surely be worthy of inclusion.

We do not suggest that all the places mentioned above are included; merely that a more representative selection be chosen. If space is at a premium, then perhaps one or two of the four photos of the New Library could be dropped, given that it is, arguably, the least characteristic of the Aulton. Also, as suggested earlier, a fair number of photographs of modern University buildings could be omitted.

Titling

Titling of character areas is inconsistent, with different versions of titles for Areas 'C' and 'D' on different pages of the document.

As for the new title for Area 'B', we wish to make a request for the return of the original name "The Heart", or "Old Aberdeen Heart", instead of the "Core". The word "core" has negative associations and overtones, which are really not appropriate to an area as full of warmth and beauty as Old Aberdeen. It is

our view that the term "Old Aberdeen Heart" is infinitely preferable, and should continue as the title for this character area.

Terms of Description

The last matter we wish to raise is the use of certain terms which seem inappropriate. The term "burgage plots" is unfamiliar; the term used more often locally is "lang-rigs" or "lang-rig feus". If there is a specific reason to use "burgage plots" instead, then so be it, but it doesn't sound authentic for Old Aberdeen. The term "campus" is most definitely alien to the character of Old Aberdeen, and indeed to the character of an ancient Scottish University

The term "residential building" crops up constantly throughout the text of this document. Certainly it can be a useful term when describing buildings of which there is no distinguishing feature, but it should not be used as a blanket term for anywhere that people live. In particular, it is unnecessary and inaccurate to call a Hall of Residence or a block of student accommodation anything other than just that.

As for describing the family homes in Tillydrone Avenue or the historic dwelling-house in St Machar Drive "residential buildings", there is no justification at all for using this term.

So please could this document speak not of "residential buildings" in these circumstances, but specifically, and more accurately, of Halls of Residence, blocks of student flats, or of dwelling-houses and family homes. To call them such is to assign to them their particular character, which in the context of a Character Appraisal is clearly very important.

OLD ABERDEEN HERITAGE SOCIETY

The accompanying document is an appendix to the Society's main representation and comments on the Draft Character Appraisal for the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area.

There are, unfortunately, a very large number of errors, inaccuracies and omissions in the Draft Appraisal, as well as problems with various aspects of its presentation. There are also many instances of items which need clarification.

As this Character Appraisal is to form part of the next Local Development Plan, and will carry statutory weight, it is, of course, vital that it does not contain inaccuracies and omissions.

As there are so many of these, we have listed them in this separate Appendix.

We have also taken the opportunity to include our comments on specific matters raised in the Draft Appraisal, which we have included under the relevant sections.

25 May 2014

OLD ABERDEEN HERITAGE SOCIETY

Appendix to Main Comments on Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Draft Character Appraisal

(Errors and omissions which need to be rectified,
statements which need clarification
and other comments on specific points)

p.3 - 1.2 - lines 5-9

The implication here is that St. Machar's Cathedral and its predecessors were built for "religious study". Although there was certainly a lot of study, the main purpose of this ancient Cathedral was (and is) surely that of worship, rather than study.

p.3 - 1.2 - line 14

The term "burgage plots" seems foreign in the context of a Scottish mediaeval town. The term used by most historians for this feature in Old Aberdeen is, we believe, "lang-rig feus".

p.3 - 1.2 - 2nd para - lines 1-4

This is incorrect. It was an independent town, and burgh of barony, until it officially merged with 'new' Aberdeen in 1891.

p.3 - 1.2 - 2nd para - lines 7-8

In order to differentiate between Old Aberdeen and the University 'campus', we suggest that "which is situated in Old Aberdeen", be added after "campus".

p.3 - 1.1 - Profile - under 'Buildings at Risk'

Benholm's Lodging, (or the Wallace Tower), is situated in Tillydrone Road, not Avenue.

p.4 - Bottom photo

This is Powis Gate, not Powis Lodge, (which stands between Crombie Hall and College Bounds, and is home at present to the Rocking Horse Nursery).

p.5 - 2.1 - line 5

Capital 'R' for 'Road.'
Also add 'Firhill Road' as a boundary.

p.5 - 2.2 - 2nd para - line 6

Surely the 'Spine' stopped at the Town House; where it divides in to two roads.

p.5 - 2.2 - 2nd para - next column

Surely “lang-rig feus” are “burgage plots”.

p.5 - 2.2 - 2nd para - 5th last line

“remain”, not “remains”.

p.5 - 2.2 - 2nd para - 2nd last line

Mediaeval “lang-rigs”.

p.7 - 2nd para

- More probably 5th - 6th century.
- Remove “the” before “popular”.

p.7 - 2nd para - line 5

Small ‘s’ for ‘shepherd’.

p.7 - 2nd para - last sentence

Is it really the case that most historians do not believe in the existence of St. Machar? Perhaps it is more the case that there is uncertainty about which, if any, historical figure he can be identified with. We also suggest removing “because it is so widely believed”.

p.7 - 3rd para - line 5

The word “so-called” is redundant.

p.7 - 5th para - line 1

Not late 14th century, but late 15th century (1495)

p.7 - 5th para - line 4

This suggest that The Chanonry also was an “academic enclave”. Surely it was a “religious enclave”.

p.7 - 6th para - line 4

Insert “Roman” before Catholic to be correct

p.7 - 6th para - line 5

Small ‘c’ for ‘canon’; apostrophe after the ‘s’.

p.7 - 6th para - line 6

This suggests that the churches as well as the canons' manses were also converted in to 'secular residential use', which is not the case.

p.7 - General

'century' at the beginning of each paragraph must have either a small 'c' or a capital, not a mixture.

p.8 - 1st para - line 5

It consisted not of 'just one street', really, but at least three - the mediaeval spine, culminating in the Town House; Don Street, leading to the lands of Seaton and on to Balgownie, and the Chanonry, leading to both the Cathedral 'Close' and to the ancient Tillydrone Road, leading north-west.

p.8 - 2nd para - 8th line from bottom

"lang-rigs" is better.

p.8 - 2nd para - 5th last line

"residential" not needed.

p.8 - 2nd para - 2nd last line

Remove stray 'n' from 'Sunnynbank'.

p.8 - 3rd para - 4th last line

Remove 'the' before 'Old Aberdeen', and also the 'to' in the previous line.

p.8 - 4th para - 4th last line

Suggest this is re-worded with an addition to read "modern teaching, administrative and student accommodation buildings" which more accurately describes the 'campuses' east and west of High Street. 'Areas', however, would be a better term.

p.8 - 4th para - 2nd last line

'building' needs an 's' on the end.

p.9 - 'C' - remove 's' from 'Regent's'

- the description of the boundary of this area is insufficient and inaccurate.

p.9 - 'D' - It is King Street, not 'Road'.

p.9 - 'E' - please add 'Balgownie village' and 'Cottown of Balgownie'.

p.10 - Plan

Tillydrone Road should be delineated in green, not orange, as it is shown quite clearly on Parson Gordon's map of 1661, and was a main route north-west.

p.13 - Upper photo

This is not St. Margaret's Convent, but what was built as St. Martha's children's home, becoming in the 20th century a local authority hostel. It was then refurbished as a group of flats by Langstane Housing Association.

p.12 - 2nd para

"Mounthooly" is a short road linking the roundabout with King's Crescent (to the north-west) and with Mounthooly Way - the new road which leads to King Street.

Perhaps this should read: "After following the road north from Mounthooly, King's Crescent is ..."

p.14 - 3.2.1 - 5th line

Remove 'residential'.

p.14 - 3.2.1 - lines 5-9

The buildings in King's Crescent are not "mainly large", but mostly cottages or modest villas, the exception being no.39.

It is not the case that many plots show evidence of having been subdivided in the past. Viewton Place is the only example in King's Crescent.

p.14 - 3.2.1 - line 14

Remove "in"

p.14 - 3.2.1 - 2nd para

This complex facing on to the Spital was never sheltered housing. There was some sheltered housing once in Merkland Place and Auckland Place to the east, but now, we believe, there is none there either.

p.14 - 3.2.1 - 2nd para - 4th last line

- not so much a rear extension; part of the original building.
- next line - 'Association' should read 'Trust'

p.14 - 3.2.2 - 1st para - last line

Move apostrophe to after 'workers'.

p.14 - 3.2.3 - last sentence

Should be "St. Margaret's Convent and its Chapel".

p.14 - 3.2.4 - 2nd sentence

Not "sheltered accommodation".

p.14 - 3.2.4 - 6th last line

Only two fast-food takeaways.

p.15 - 3.2.5 - 2nd last point

Not "sheltered" housing.

p.15 - 3.2.5 - last point

Should read: "poor condition of the A-listed Chapel and adjoining building"
(The Convent Houses, to the north, are not in poor condition.)

p.16 - 3.3.1 - first line

This wonderful view of Marischal to the south when climbing the Spital Hill is mentioned in the text, but not shown on the plan.

p.16 - 3.3.1 - line 10

From this position, there is also a splendid view of the Meston Building amidst forest trees and, in the distance, the wooded hills of the far reaches of Bridge of Don.

p.17 - 3.3.2 - 2nd para - last line

Remove "on".

p.17 - 3.3.3 - last sentence

Add "in" before 'good', and "are" before 'cracked'.

p.18 - 3.3.4 - line 4

'Some' rather than 'the'.

p.18 - 3.3.4 - line 7

Should read "St. Margaret's Convent, with its Chapel and"

p.18 - 3.3.4 - 7th line from bottom

Not 'warehouses' but 'bus sheds'.

p.18 - 3.3.4 - last sentence

Not "sheltered"

p.19 - 3.3.6 - 2nd sentence

'Voluntary Housing Trust'

p.21 - 3.4.3

The fact that some trees 'obscure' views of the houses is not necessarily to be counted as a 'negative factor'. It can be seen as a form of 'framing' a view of the houses, and also contributes to the 'country within town' feel of some of King's Crescent.

p.21 - 3.5

'Spital' with only one 't'.

p.21 - 3.5 - General key characteristics

"Trees within enclosures" seems inadequate to describe the wonderful wealth of mighty forest trees in King's Crescent. These are no ornamental trees; and there should be mention of how they frame views and beautify this road with their overhanging branches.

p.22 - 'B' - Old Aberdeen Core

There should be mention also of Firhill Place, Regent Walk (south), Orchard Walk and Place, Clark's Lane.

Tillydrone Road - the whole of this ancient mediaeval highway should also be part of Area 'B'.

Area 'B' ought also to include "The Mission" and "The Barn" on St. Machar Drive, and the group of houses on Tillydrone Avenue south of its junction with Tillydrone Road.

p.22 - 3.1 - 1st para - last sentence

St. Machar Drive was built in the 1920s, not the 1930s.

p.22 - 3.1 - 2nd para - 1st line

"Orchard Street", not "Road".

p.23 - Map

The northern half of Tillydrone Road is not included here in the 'Old Aberdeen Core'. This is unjustifiable. The whole road is of historical and aesthetic value.

p.23 - 3.1 - 1st line

“boundary walls” of the Chanonry gardens in general are mentioned, but special attention must here be drawn to the wonderful ancient boundary walls only to be found in this section of the Conservation Area, Area ‘B’. These 17th century, extremely substantial walls with distinctive sloped coping are characteristic of this, the most historically significant ‘core’ of Old Aberdeen. There are two striking examples in long stretches; on the east side of the Chanonry when approaching the Cathedral, forming one boundary of no.13, The Chanonry; and along the north side of St. Machar Drive, forming the boundary of the Botanic Garden. The garden walls of 81, High Street are of similar, distinctive, style and age, and are one of the major features in the characteristic views of High Street looking south a little way down from the Town House.

p.23 - 3.1 - 2nd line

The Botanic Garden is actually jointly owned and managed by the University and the Cruickshank Trust. Suggest “also contains the Cruickshank Botanic Garden” instead.

p.23 - 3.1 - 4th line

Capital ‘C’ for Cathedral

p.23 - 4th line onwards

This description makes it sound as if there is no further road beyond the Chanonry here, as if it somehow comes to a halt at the entrance to Seaton Park. As can be seen on all the old maps, however, this part of the Chanonry was in fact the first part of the mediaeval road to the north-west; the equivalent of Don Street to the north-east. When looking at Old Aberdeen’s ‘Y’ shaped street pattern, Don Street stretches out to Balgownie and then to the North, while the Chanonry at this point continues in to Tillydrone Road, leading to the Tillydrone Motte, and once through an old settlement there, to the north-west. These were two mediaeval roads of similar importance, but Tillydrone Road has barely been mentioned in this Appraisal, and its character has certainly not been described - despite its historical significance, and picturesque, rural quality.

p.23 - last line

“Don St.” and “Dunbar St.” would be better.

p.24 - 3.2 - 2nd line

‘burgh’ rather than ‘burgage’.

p.24 - 3.2 - 4th line

‘lang-rig feus’ better than “burgage plots”.

p.24 - 3.2.1 - line 5

“statuses”. Would it be less clumsy to say, perhaps, “varying uses and different levels of social status”.

Between p.24 (finishing “larger units”) and p.25 (3.2.2 “Materials”)

On the original draft which was issued in March, there were four more photographs, and two short paragraphs on the High Street and Chanonry. These were removed two weeks in to the Consultation (when the maps and plans were added and some of the errors corrected).

It is not clear whether these two paragraphs and photographs were omitted by mistake or on purpose, but perhaps they might be useful. Certainly this is just about the only mention of the Town House, remarkably.

p.25 - Photo of 13, Chanonry

There is a similar one on p.8. Do we need two? Perhaps another interesting Chanonry house instead? - e.g. no.12 (Tillydrone House) or the flat-roofed no.15, or the handsome no.8? Or indeed the mediaeval Chaplin's Court.

p.25 - 3.2.2

This section should end with a paragraph on the use of various materials in boundary walls in Area ‘B’ - highlighting those characteristic of the ‘historic cove’, especially the use of Seaton brick along with other materials (e.g. at 81, High Street); often above though sometimes on its own (as at 2, The Chanonry).

p.26 - 3.2.3 - line 10

Needs a semi-colon after ‘grounds’, at least.

p.26 - 3.2.3 - line 11

This building (“Powis Gate”) has not been the Music Dept. for some years. It was general offices and study rooms for a while, and now, we believe, is a Faculty office.

p.26 - 3.2.3 - last line

Should read “around the manses in the Cathedral close”. Then add “Another fine example can be found at 81, High Street.”

p.27 - 3.2.3 - 2nd para - 1st line

Semi-colon needed after “vary”.
“storeyed” not “storied”.

p.27 - 3.2.3 - 2nd para - 3rd line

Remove “are”

p.27 - 3.2.3 - 2nd para - 7th line

Remove "neighbouring" (duplication). Add a semi-colon after "neighbours".

p.27 - 3.2.4 - 1st para - 4th line

More accurate to say "used for teaching, administration, or student accommodation purposes".

p.27 - 3.2.4 - 1st para - last 2 lines

Amend "to" to "and".
Remove "time".

p.27 - 3.2.4 - 2nd para - 1st line

Remove 's' from "places names"

p.27 - 3.2.5 - point 2

Add "and frontages of offices which were once shops".

p.27 - 3.2.5 - point 3

- Add "and/or neglected" after "empty".
- Insert after this another point: - "empty and neglected land on Don Street, mostly unused for decades." The one positive purpose it provided - a row of garages for local residents - was demolished years ago.

p.27 - 3.2.5 - "Negative Factors"

Add another point:-

"unsympathetic and intrusive University building spanning Church Walk, one of the closes, with a modern "corridor" building of some depth, which has made this lane in to a dark, dismal place, with no view to the other end.

And another point:-

"Associated building and formation of car park meant the loss of a significant portion of the adjoining lang-rig gardens."

And other point:-

"Some depopulation of High Street and College Bounds and loss of vitality owing to conversion of University properties to departmental or office use, replacing homes or shops".

And a last point:-

"Future sustainability of the Old Aberdeen community threatened by increase in HMOs, which reduces the number of permanent residents, who are needed to make the local shops etc. viable, and to work over the long term for the good of the community."

p.28 - 3.3.1

Mention should be made of the key views up and down the picturesque Tillydrone Road as it meanders up and over the hill.

p.28 - 3.3.1

Also an important key view to be added is that from the Tillydrone Roundabout area looking eastward along the length of the magnificent stretch of ancient Chanonry boundary wall, now enclosing the Botanic Garden.

Also views of King's College, Pavilion and the Round Tower, from gaps in the wall in King Street, and lovely oblique views of these from various points in University Road, especially from the south side.

Also views across the tennis courts to these buildings, and from near the western end of University Road, on the south side, looking obliquely, at the pavilion and various college buildings.

An important 'glimpse' is that looking east up Spital Walk, to the rear of Orchard Cottage, its hedge, and lawn with cherry trees.

Another fine view of King's Crown can be had from Elphinstone Road, looking obliquely through gaps between the High Street houses.

Mention should be made also of the unexpected glimpse of the Cathedral spires looking up Cheyne Road from King Street.

p.28 - 3.3.2 - 1st para - lines 4-5

Should read "Don Street, Dunbar Street (formerly the East Back Gate), and Elphinstone Road (formerly the West Back Gate).

p.28 - 3.3.2 - 1st para - line 8

Should read "St. Machar Drive (part of which was formerly Cluny's Wynd)."

p.28 - 3.3.2 - 2nd para - 3rd line

Suggest:- Insert "granite flagstone" before "pavements".

Also not "the High Street" here. The section of road between University Road and Meston Walk is called "College Bounds"; No. 1, High Street is the first house north of Meston Walk.

p.29 - 2nd line

Not High Street, but College Bounds.

p.29 - lines 8-9

Parenthesis needed from before "chicanes" to after "road".

p.29 - 2nd para - line 2

- Insert "Cathedral" after "Machar's" for clarity.
- Remove 's' from 'help'

p.29 - 2nd para - line 4

Comma needed after "east" and after "closes" on next line.

p.29 - 3rd para - line 6

"in themselves" is redundant after the use of "intrinsic".

p.29 - last 4 lines

"Way finding" does not need to be 'improved' - except perhaps at Church Walk, where the ugly overhead modern link building spanning it completely blocks the view to Elphinstone Road, so that one can't tell at first glance that it goes right through.

Other than that, there is no problem with "way finding". There are a host of lanes and closes or ways through on either side of High Street, which clearly lead to east or west.

As for the supposedly "weak east west routes across the university's Campus area", - what does this actually mean? If it means routes from one side of the 'Modern University Campus' to the other, on the backlands of the opposite side of High Street, then the current wording is inappropriate - simply because the area in between these two University areas is not part of the University Campus:- it is the High Street, the 'public realm' and buildings of the ancient burgh.

More to the point, this section of the Appraisal has missed the point of the High Street and its closes and lanes. Much of its charm derives from the "quirkiness" of its various lanes, from their unexpected appearance on either side, from the fun of weaving one's way in and out of different lanes to reach each destination.

It is not difficult to find one's way east or west, and for new students ample maps are provided showing the location of University buildings.

We do not need 'stronger' east west routes. To open up new lanes, or widen existing ones would destroy the authenticity of Old Aberdeen.

This 'strengthening' of 'way finding' has nothing whatever to do with the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area, in the context of its historic core. We request that the final sentence of this page is therefore omitted.

p.30 - 3.3.3

Pavements in Don St. were modernised in the 1980s and do not reflect its historic character.

p.30 - 3.3.5 - 2nd line

Semi-colon needed after 'signage'.

p.31 - 3.3.6 - 4th line

Insert "from" after "detracts".

p.31 - 3.3.7 - 2nd line

'College' needs a capital 'C'.

Add another point, as 'negative factor':-

Inappropriate, modern slab pavements in Don Street"

Also:- - inappropriate free-standing sign in front of the Town House
- unsympathetic lamp-standards in several roads.

p.32 - 3.4.1 - lines 2 & 3

What is a "grassed open setting"?

p.32 - 3.4.1 - line 5

Should read "Botanic Garden" (Capitals, and no 's').

Also this Garden is not on the corner of St. Machar Drive and Don St, but of St. Machar Drive and The Chanonry.

There should surely be a portrayal here of the special character of the Botanic Garden:- especially its secluded nature.

p.33 - 3.4.2 - 1st para - line 6

Capital 'B' and 'G' needed for 'Botanic Garden'.

p.33 - 3.4.2 - 2nd para - line 6

It actually links Spital, not College Bounds, to the start of Firhill Road which leads to Sunnybank Park.

p.33 - 3.5 - Key Characteristics:-

- Could we have "lang-rig" development instead, please?
- "Complete town", yes, but more than that; also a "burgh of barony".
- "historic street layout" - suggest "and street surfaces" is added.
- add "Historic village community from earliest times."
- 7th point. Capital 'C' for 'Cathedral'.
- 9th point - the word "campus" is inappropriate here; can we suggest "Aberdeen University historic buildings centred on King's College."
- 10th point - not "Blenholm's" but "Benholm's"
- add "on the mediaeval Tillydrone Road".
- 12th point - Insert "Old" before "boundary"
- after "many of them", "ancient" should be inserted for clarification.

p.33 - (Key Characteristics, continued)

There is no reference here to the Town House of Old Aberdeen as a "key feature". Both the Cathedral and King's College are mentioned, but remarkably, the third main element of Old Aberdeen has been left out. There ought, of course, to have been some description of its character in an earlier section, but in this section, we suggest the addition of:-

- "Town House of this Burgh of Barony, the main focus of the High Street".
- "A wealth of historic buildings, many of them listed."

p.34 - 'C' - "Modern University Campus"

Title - is missing the word "Modern" which is meant to be part of its title (see list of character areas, p.9, and titles of plans on pp.34, 35, 42, 43, 44, 46)

Plan - We are glad to see on this plan (and on the plan on p.35) that the whole of Tillydrone Road is excluded from the "Modern University Campus", and included in the Historic Core, but this is at variance with the plans in Area 'B' section of this Appraisal, which show the northern half of Tillydrone Road not in the Core Area. (pp.22-23) The plan of Character Areas on p.9 seems to show the whole of this ancient road firmly in the 'Old Aberdeen Core' character area. This is where it should be, but corrective work must be done on the various maps and plans which confuse this issue.

p.34 - 3.1 - 1st para - lines 1-3

Add "and administrative" after "academic".

"Residential buildings" here is inappropriate and unnecessary. All of these are blocks of student flats.

This should read "The character area incorporates the modern academic and administrative buildings and also modern student accommodation."

p.34 - 3.1 - 1st para - 2nd sentence

"development along Tillydrone Avenue" should apply only to the Zoology Building. This is a University academic building just across from all the others.

It is inappropriate and illogical to annexe to this Character Area the group of family homes further down Tillydrone Avenue. First, these homes do not all belong to the University - some are privately owned. Secondly, they are not campus buildings. Thirdly, they are not modern, the earliest dating from the 1920s.

The boundaries of Character Areas 'B' and 'C' must be re-drawn to restore these homes to Area 'B' - "Old Aberdeen Core".

p.34 - 3.1 - 2nd para - line 2

Replace "were" with "have been".

p.34 - 3.1 - 2nd para - 8th line

Remove apostrophe from "Art's"

p.34 - 3.1 - 4th para - lines 1-3

The amenity space is not “within” the “buildings”. Also “residential buildings” here again would be better expressed as “student accommodation”, which conveys their actual nature more correctly.

Suggest “There is some amenity open space in between the academic and administrative buildings, and the student accommodation to the east of the historic spine.”

p.34 - 3.1 - 4th para - 2nd last line

“architecturally” not “architectural”

p.35 - 3.2.1 - 1st sentence

This introductory sentence (“All of the buildings within this area show the evolution of architecture from circa 1950 to the present day”) demonstrates clearly that some areas have been wrongly taken out of the “Old Aberdeen Core”, and removed to this “Modern University Campus” area. This applies especially to “The Mission”, a 19th century building with a rich history, (and a place of worship), not owned by the University), and “The Barn”, an early 19th century Category ‘B’ listed dwelling house, also with a rich history. Neither of these buildings are “modern”, nor are they “campus” buildings.

Specifically, however, they pre-date the stated age of the buildings in this Character Area by over a century. These two buildings must be returned to the “Old Aberdeen Core” area, where they were correctly situated in the Character Appraisal document which has served Old Aberdeen well over the years.

p.35 - 3.2.1.1 - “Residential Buildings”

This should be re-titled “Student Accommodation” to reflect the nature of those buildings which should be in this Character Area, and to exclude the family houses which should not.

p.35 - 3.2.1.1 - line 9 - no ‘s’ on ‘Hall’
line 10 - “is”, not “are”
line 11 - “storey”, not “story”

p.36 - 1st para - 3rd line

It is not an “extension” to Crombie, but an “addition”.

Same line - no ‘s’ on ‘Hall’

p.36 - Photos:-

Bottom Left - No longer a Refectory, now part of the Music Dept..
Also - no ‘s’ on ‘Hall’

Top Right - no ‘s’ on Hall
Also disappointing that this photo does not show any distinctive part of this “A-listed” building.

p.37 - Photos:-

Top Left - no 's' on 'Hunter'
Bottom Left - no 's' on 'Cooper'

p.37 - Text - 1st Para

Not 'Cooper's Court' but 'Cooper'

p.37 - 1st Para - 1st sentence

It is incorrect to say that both these buildings were converted from study blocks. The present "Cooper Court" was built as an Arts Block in 1966, then for many years used as, and known as, "The Study Block". It was converted to student flats many years later. "Hunter Court" was never a study block; it had no previous use, but was purpose-built as student accommodation.

p.37 - 1st para - last line

- no 's' on 'Cooper'.
- and we are unaware of a "timber finish" on Cooper Court.

p.37 - 2nd para

First and foremost, these family homes should not be included in this Character Area. They have nothing whatsoever in common with the modern student accommodation blocks which precede them in this section.

There can be no justification for removing these houses from the 'Heart' of "Old Aberdeen Core" Character Area, and assigning them to the "Modern University Campus" Character Area.

They share nothing in character with the other buildings in this section. They are not 'campus' buildings; they are not 'modern' (built between the 1920s and 1952), and they are not all University houses either; some are privately owned. They are all family houses, and should be removed from the "Modern University Campus" section, and returned to the "Old Aberdeen Core" or "Heart" where, with good reason, they have been up until now.

Having said this, it is necessary to correct the errors in the paragraph describing these houses:-

line 2 - this was hardly an "estate"; just a few attractive family houses.

line 3 - Incorrect:- They were not built in the "late 1950s", but in 1947 (the terrace), and 1952 (the cul-de-sac).

last 2 lines - the house referred to here, with harling finish, is, in fact, quite obviously two houses. They are also quite obviously different in every respect from the pink and grey granite houses, and clearly not built at the same time. They were not, as stated, built by the University in the "late 1950s", but by Major Hay of Seaton House in 1924.

The misdescription in this paragraph, and the historical and architectural errors are a clear indication that these family homes have been wrongly annexed in to the “Modern University Campus”. It should be asked why this was ever thought to be a justifiable change, and why it has been pursued at all.

p.38 - 3.2.1.2 - 4th para - last line

The arcaded bridge is not over Regent Walk, surely, but over the continuation of Dunbar Street. Regent Walk is perpendicular to this road, just beyond the southernmost block of the Taylor Building.

p.39 - Photos:-

Top right - “MacRobert”, not, “McRobert”

p.39 - 1st para - 2nd line

an ‘s’ to go on ‘storey’

p.39 - 2nd para - 1st line

p.40 - 5th para - line 4

Add 's' to 'storey'

p.40 - 5th para - line 5

Insert 'roof' after 'slate'.

p.40 - 3.2.4 - this must be wrong numbering. Next page is 3.2.3

p.40 - 3.2.3 - 1st line

"to the west of" is misleading geographically, suggesting that Elphinstone Road is further west than the University buildings. Perhaps "The main road separating the old burgh from the western section of the university expansion" would be clearer.

p.41 - 3.2.3 - 4th line

There is a word missing after 'either'.

p.41 - 3.2.3 - 2nd para - line 2

"of student accommodation" after "development", or just call them "Halls of Residence", which is what they were.

p.41 - 3.2.3 - 2nd para - line 4

- 'residential blocks' is not descriptive. "Halls of Residence" would be, and is clearer, and factually correct.
- no 'e' on 'Johnston', and remove 'a'.

p.41 - 3.2.3 - 2nd para - lines 3-7

This sentence shows a lack of appreciation of the design of Johnston and Crombie Halls of Residence. Both were designed by the renowned architect Sir Robert Matthew, who deliberately placed these buildings in the backlands of the campus, to avoid imposing on the character of High Street and College Bounds.

A guide to the new Crombie Hall states that "the architectural character of the Hall has been influenced by the atmosphere of the township of Old Aberdeen."

In Matthew's own press release from 1960, he says:-

"The scale of building in Old Aberdeen is generally small, and a large part of the town's charm lies in its informality; these considerations have influenced the design of the Halls of Residence ... laid out informally".

On the Historic Scotland listing, it is mentioned that "the character of Crombie Hall was influenced by the small-scale informal civic character of the University.

Sir Robert Matthew clearly had a much better understanding of the true character of Old Aberdeen than the architects of some more recent University buildings.

Matthew deliberately set these Halls well back from the street, amongst wooded grounds, and deliberately laid them out informally, in order to reflect the informality of Old Aberdeen, which is such a large part of its charm.

The character of these Halls, therefore, if seen in context, is not one of “random incoherence”. They were carefully thought out, in siting and layout, and make for a very pleasing whole, where there is surely no problem with “wayfinding” at all.

What must be understood is that it is in keeping with the character of Old Aberdeen that that the University buildings are individual, some set in their own grounds, facing this way or that. This is not a modern “campus university”, where buildings are placed in straight lines with broad approaches and pathways, and formal squares. This University is situated in an ancient township which has a truly informal atmosphere, and the best buildings in the University reflect this.

This preoccupation with “orientation” and “wayfinding” has no place in Old Aberdeen.

p.41 - 3.2.3 - 2nd para - lines 7-9

We suggest here also that “to the east of the University” gives the impression that Dunbar Street runs past the other, eastern side of the development. This road is not to the east of the University, but to the east of the High Street, and is actually to the west of the new buildings. Perhaps “to the east of the Old Town” or “to the east of High Street” would be clearer.

It should be noted that the road layout here is similar simply because Elphinstone Road (historically called the “West Back Gate”) and Dunbar Street (historically the “East Back Gate”) formed the west and east boundaries of the ancient burgh, where walls enclosed the back of the mediaeval “lang-rigs” where the inhabitants each had their own crofts or land. These roads are of ancient origin.

p.41 - 3.2.3 - 2nd para - last 2 lines

This is written as if “inconsistency with orientation” of buildings were a bad thing. Surely, however, it is this “mixture of orientation” that makes the east side of the University area so interesting, and characterful. The one building which is, however, damaging to the “sense of place” is the “temporary” Edward Wright Building “Annexe”. This is completely out of place, and has ‘temporarily’ replaced the north part of the carefully planned landscaping of lawns, paths and cherry trees which used to surround the Edward Wright Building on its east elevation. This Annexe also intrudes on views from the south-west, of the category ‘B’ listed dwelling house known as “The Barn” to the north. The other ugly intrusion in to the landscaped area is the walled area surrounding what may be a generator or suchlike, and other unsympathetic ancillary building. If these were moved to somewhere more suitable, and the “Annexe” removed, and the landscaping reinstated as promised, this area would see a huge improvement.

p.42 - 3.2.3 - last sentence

This sentence demonstrates with the greatest clarity that “The Barn”, “The Mission”, and the houses on Tillydrone Avenue are of a completely different character from those of the so-called “Modern University Campus”. The modern institutional buildings of this character area are indeed “all large and bulky buildings with no uniformity to size or scale”. “The Barn”, “The Mission” and the family houses in Tillydrone Avenue do not fit this description in any way, and should not be added to this character area.

p.42 - 3.2.4 - 2nd sentence

This is not strictly correct. Some of the University’s modern buildings have seen a change in use:- e.g. Cooper Court - from study block to student accommodation; Johnston Hall Refectory, now housing a section of the Music Department; the Edward Wright Annexe, built as a block of laboratories, then used as postgraduate rooms, and now as offices. Perhaps it would be better to say “Most of these”.

p.42 - 3.2.5

last line - no ‘s’ on ‘Hall’

p.43 - 3.3.1 - 2nd para

Not “where three important buildings ... are on campus”, as if Old Aberdeen were a campus with University buildings dotted around it. It is not. These buildings are situated on either side of a distinct community, and the heart of an ancient burgh. Suggest “where ... are situated” instead.

p.43 - 3.3.1 - 3rd para - 2nd last line

Insert ‘as’ after ‘such’

p.44 - 3.3.2 - 1st para - line 3

not “Meston Way”, but “Meston Walk”

p.44 - 3.3.2 - 2nd para - line 3

“Annex” needs an ‘e’

p.45 - 3.3.3 - lines 1-2

Remove “on due to”, and insert “by”

p.45 - 3.3.4

Which “private grounds” are referred to? If this is a reference to the trees belonging to the homes at Tillydrone Avenue, then this is an acknowledgement that these family homes are indeed “private grounds”, and not part of any “Modern University Campus”.

p.45 - 3.3.5 - Signage

It should be mentioned that the institutional signage is of very variable quality.

p.45 - 3.3.7

As noted earlier, we regard this matter of wayfinding and navigation as of little importance, and further, it is a distraction from the real issues relating to Conservation.

p.46 - 3.4.1 - last sentence

This is not a "residential amenity open space". It is the "village green" belonging to these family homes, which are not all owned by the University.

p.47 - 3.4.3 - 1st sentence

"Useable open space to the east" will be provided when the Edward Wright "Annexe" is removed and the landscaping restored. This should make a huge difference to the area. The remaining part of landscaped open space, referred to here, is hemmed in at present by the ugly, tall Annexe, and marred by unsightly ancillary buildings, which need to be moved.

This is, surely, why these benches are not regularly used. The area has lost its "sense of place" since the Annexe was erected. There used to be attractive grassy banks along the length of the west side of the car park, which, covered with wild flowers, made an attractive elevated border for the landscaped area. These banks were removed when the "Annexe" was built in their place, and would be an asset to the area if replaced when the Annexe is removed.

p.47 - 3.5

Characteristics" not "-ises"

p.47 - 3.5 - line 2

Inconsistency here in titling once more - should be "Modern" University Campus.

p.47 - 3.5 - General - first point

A key characteristic of the "Modern University Campus" character area is indeed that of "concrete tall and/or bulky buildings." This characteristic, however, is completely absent from the family homes at Tillydrone Avenue and "The Barn", and "The Mission", a main reason why they must obviously not be included in this Character Area.

p.47 - Photo

"The Quad" is perhaps not the best description. That title would normally be applied to King's. We believe that this area is formally called "The Ronald Scott-Brown Quadrangle" as indicated on a recent sign.

p.48 - 'D'

Inconsistency in titling again. Here "Seaton Park" is included in the title. Elsewhere in the document it is sometimes omitted.

p.48 - 3.1 - line 1

"Owing to" rather than "due to".

p.48 - 3.1 - line 3

The steep decline is "to the north", not "to the south".

p.49 - 3.2.1 - 2nd line

"dates", not "date"

p.50 - lines 3-4

The Seaton Stables "complex" was not built in the walled garden, but beside it.

p.50 - line 5

Insert "at" after "cottages".

p.50 - 2nd para

Surely there were not "several student accommodation complexes" built on Don Street? (unless one includes Hillhead). To the best of our knowledge, the Sir William Wallace Wynd development is not student accommodation. That leaves the 'Liberty Living' complex adjacent, which is, indeed "a lost opportunity to create a living street frontage", and, further was built right up to the pavement line, in breach of planning permission.

p.50 - 3rd para

This first sentence needs clarification. Does this refer to the blocks of flats? Why call them "residential buildings", which is not descriptive?

p.51 - 3.3.5 - 3rd line

'clad', rather than 'cladded'

p.51 - 3.3.5 - 6th line

Suggest remove "gives" and move "overall" to after "greater" - "which helps give the area a greater overall coherence."

p.53 - 3.3.1

The view of the Cathedral from the riverside at the start of the path leading to Balgownie is also impressive, and worth mentioning.

p.55 - 3.3.4 - 1st line

“within”, not “with”

p.55 - 3.3.5

The second sentence does not make sense. Needs re-writing
Last sentence needs a semi-colon before “examples”.

p.55 - 3.3.7 - last point

These banners have been in place for many years, and no planning permission has been sought.

p.57 - 3.4.3 - 1st line

comma after “hectares”

p.57 - 3.4.3 - in general

Surely Seaton House should be named? And a word or two about the Hay family, to whom it belonged, and of whose estate it was the central feature. The Seaton Park of today formed most of the original Seaton Estate.

Perhaps, for a start, there should be added, at the end of the first paragraph, - “The boundary walls of the estate remain, however, as well as the walled garden.”

p.58 - 3.4.4 - 2nd point

Incomplete

p.58 - 3.4.4 - 3rd point - 2nd last line

“use” not “us”

p.58 - 3.5

“Characteristics” not “ises”

p.58 - “General” - point 7

Add “including exceptional stretches of tall Seaton Brick walls”

p.59 - 3.1 - 1st para - 4th last line

Not 13th century, but 14th century Brig (1329)

p.60 - 3.2.1 - 1st para - 5th last line

Not "crowstack" but "crowstepped" surely?

p.60 - 3.2.1 - 1st para - 4th last line

"Balgownie Hall Cottage"

p.60 - 3.2.1 - 1st para - 2nd last line

Should read "Cruickshank's"

p.60 - 3.2.1 - 2nd para - line 7

"pane" not "pano"

p.61 - 3.2.2 - 1st para - line 6

's' needed on "Cruickshank"

p.63 - 3.2.4 - 2nd last line

Full stop needed after 'recreation', then new sentence.

p.63 - 3.3.1

Mention should be made of the fact that it is used to be possible to see the Brig from the north bank as well as the south, and these views need to be restored.

Also there used to be a wonderful view from the Brig to the new Bridge of Don, and beyond, to the sea. This has been lost by lack of tree management. Equally there was an enticing view of the ancient Brig from the southern part of the new Bridge. That too, has been lost.

p.66 - Photos

no.1 - This may be 257, Don St., but it is not "Rocky Bank"

no.2 - Is this the Brig?

Is there to be no picture of "Donbank House" which is so important, historically, to this whole area?

p.66 - 3.3.6 - 4th last line

Semi-colon required after 'benches'

p.68 - 3.4.7 - last line

"creating not "creative"

p.69 - 1st paragraph

Refers to Pitfodels Conservation Area, not Old Aberdeen.

SWOT Analyses - pp.69-73

These analyses are utterly inadequate to “provide a basis from which to develop strategies” to “conserve, enhance and protect” the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area. In such a diverse area, so richly endowed with important features, it is simply not realistic to allot only one page to each character area, with very minimal descriptions of the strengths, weaknesses etc. These tables also seem to restrict the number of items, as well as the content of each. They need expansion.

Meanwhile, our comments are as follows:-

p.69 - Area ‘A’ (Spital)

Strengths - significant “number”, not “amount”
- add “enclosed, well-wooded and planted front gardens in King’s Crescent”

Weaknesses - 1st point - Capital ‘C’ for ‘Convent’
- 2nd point - “of” not “or”
- 3rd point - Capital ‘N’ for ‘Nursery’
- add “missing and/or damaged railings and gates in King’s Crescent”
- add “lack of street trees in Spital”

Opportunities - 4th point - Capital ‘C’ for ‘Convent’
- 5th point - Capital ‘N’ for ‘Nursery’
- add “restoration and repair of boundary walls, railings and gates, especially in King’s Crescent.”

Threats - 1st point - add “and railings”
- 2nd point - Capital ‘C’ and ‘N’ needed
- add new point - “proliferation of HMOs, and the corresponding reduction in the number of permanent residents, which threatens the settled character and viability of the community”

p.70 - Area ‘B’ - “Old Aberdeen Core”

Strengths - 1st point - “burgh” better than “burgage”
- 3rd point - “King’s College, St. Machar’s Cathedral, and the Old Aberdeen Town House, in particular
- 7th point - add “and a haven for wildlife, full of birdsong”
- 8th point - ‘c’ in middle of ‘Cruickshank’,
- Capital ‘B’ and ‘G’ needed, and no ‘s’ on ‘Garden’.
- add new point - “picturesque and semi-rural mediaeval Tillydrone Road”
- add new point - “distinctive character of a ‘village community’”

Weaknesses - 2nd point - remove “over dependence on”, and replace with “increasing intrusion by”

- 4th point - just 'closes', not 'burgage' closes
- 6th point - this is not a weakness - it is part of the charm of an ancient burgh
- add the following new points:
 - 1) "Empty and neglected properties, High Street and Don Street."
 - 2) "neglected tennis court"
 - 3) "Loss of homes and shops to University departments and offices"
 - 4) "unauthorised and inappropriate changes to door furniture."
 - 5) "increasing presence in High Street of signs with University logo, which detracts from its identity as the main street of an ancient burgh."

- Opportunities
- 3rd point - not necessary
 - 4th point - 'c' in middle of 'Cruickshank'
 - Capital 'B' and 'G' needed, and no 's' on 'Garden'
 - 5th point - just 'closes' - no 'burgage'
 - add new point - "encourage change of use from office to home or shop, to foster the 'village community' character of High Street."
 - add new point - "create policy with presumption against change of use from residential to office, in either High Street or College Bounds."
 - add new point - "restore granite flagstone pavements to Don Street"
 - add new point - "restoration of tennis court"
 - add new point - "encourage University to let their empty properties - in particular to families, or permanent residents, to promote the 'village community' character of High Street"
 - add new point - "32-34, Don Street (former slater's yard and site of former University garages) - opportunity to improve and enhance this long derelict site"
 - add new point - "sensitive, modest-sized development on site of former Dunbar Hall of Residence".

- Threats
- 1st point - "lang-rig feus" rather than "burgage plots"
 - 2nd point - add "but also the gardens of other listed and historic buildings"
 - 5th point - add "partly because of the increase in the number of HMOs, and therefore the loss of year-round custom from permanent residents."
 - add new point - "possible loss of the only all-year-round tennis court through lack of maintenance."
 - add new point - "loss of houses in High Street and College Bounds to University offices departments, or similar."
 - add new point - "proliferation of HMOs, and corresponding reduction in the number of permanent residents, which threatens the settled character and viability of the community."
 - add new point - "neglect of listed buildings and other property in several areas of "The Core".
 - add new point - "insensitive, over-development of site of former Dunbar Hall of Residence".

p.71 Area 'C' - 'Modern University Campus'

- Strengths
- 2nd point - this is somewhat debatable.
 - 4th point - these are not "residential properties", but "houses", and should not be in this character area, but in 'B'.
 - 5th point - no 's' in 'Regent'
 - Capital 'S' for 'Street'
 - Add "Meston Walk"
 - add new point - "Grade 'A' listed Crombie Hall, designed by eminent architect Sir Robert Matthew."
 - add new point - one or two very fine departmental buildings

- Weaknesses
- 1st point - not "disjointed", just "interesting"
 - 3rd point - no 's' on 'Building'
 - 4th point - as noted before, this does not seem to be a problem
 - 6th point - no 's' on 'Cooper'
 - add new point - Elphinstone Road flats, which have hemmed in this section of Elphinstone road and deprived the Fraser Noble building of its original, attractive landscaping.

- Opportunities
- 1st point - the public realm should not be the subject of University development. Also 'way finding' should not be given such prominence.
 - 4th point - "by removing the Edward Wright 'Annexe', and reinstating the landscaping and trees"
 - 5th point - for whom is this an 'opportunity'? This is not an opportunity for preserving or enhancing the Conservation Area. Development here would mean the loss of a valuable piece of open space, shrubs and fine trees which act as natural landscaping for the Zoology Building, and as a "buffer" zone to protect the amenity of the adjacent homes.

- Threats - 2nd point - replace "inappropriate" with "any". This is a very real threat, as this is a very small space right next to family homes.

p.72 - Area 'D' - Seaton Park / Hillhead / King St. North

- Strengths
- add "magnificent stretch of lofty Seaton brick boundary wall on upper Don Street and similar round the park walled garden."
 - add "superb, uninterrupted views of east end of the Cathedral from Don Street just beyond the junction with Harrow Road."

- Weaknesses
- 6th point - "Don Street and King Street" would sound better
 - add new point - ugly and brash unauthorised signs/banners in Don Street

- Opportunities
- 2nd point - explain "SUDS" please
 - 5th point - remove "r" from "peninsular"
 - add new point - "remove ugly and unauthorised signs/banners in Don Street"

p.73 - Area 'E' - Balgownie

Weaknesses - 8th point - add "and no view now from new Bridge of Don"

Opportunities - 5th point - add "and from new Bridge of Don"

Threats - 3rd point - there ought to be a presumption against any further porches

Proposed Boundary Changes to Conservation Area

p.74 - We heartily support the addition of both these areas to the Conservation Area, and are particularly pleased to see St. Machar Place and Old Aberdeen House included. The houses in St. Machar Place have an exquisite charm about them, both in layout and design, and we shall be delighted to see them afforded this protection.

We would, however, reiterate our request that area 'B' should include also the remainder of the east side of Dunbar Street, as obviously any development there affects the character of the Conservation Area on the opposite side of the Street.

We further request that it should include also the house at the corner of Cheyne Road and Don Street, which faces on to Don Street rather than to Cheyne Road, and also no.88, Don Street, and no.106, Don Street, both of which, for some unfathomable reason, have been left out of the Conservation Area, and must be the only two houses (along with the one on Cheyne Road / Don Street corner) in the whole of the length of Don Street, from St. Machar Drive to Balgownie, which are excluded. As they are handsome houses, very much of the style of those on the other side of the road, they should be included, particularly as any development on the east side will of course have a significant effect on the setting and character of the west side, which is in the "Old Aberdeen Historic Core" character area.

p.74 - 'B' - last line of paragraph

Note:- St. Machar Drive was built in the early 1920s, not the 1930s. The St. Machar Place houses were built in the mid 1920s.

Also, in the previous line, surely "suburban" is not the correct word here. This area is not in the suburbs. Perhaps "early" development instead? - or just "development"?

p.75 - We fully support the inclusion also of Areas 'C', 'D', and 'E' in the Conservation Area.

Could there perhaps also be a short addition in the paragraph on Area 'D', to the effect that the bus depot's granite wall on the east shows evidence of former buildings belonging to one of the best-known granite merchants in area which was once famed for its granite yards?

p.75 - 'D' - 4th line of paragraph

Insert "a" before "Category B"

p.75 - 'E' - 4th line of paragraph

This is incorrect. Firhill Place does not adjoin College Bounds. This part of the mediaeval spine is actually the northernmost section of the Spital. Also, Firhill Place links this not to Sunnybank Park, but to the start of Firhill Road, which then leads to Sunnybank Park.

We suggest the alternative wording:- "links this northern part of the Spital to Firhill Road to the west, which then leads to Sunnybank Park."

p.75 Proposed Management Plan guidance

U2 - This Guidance must also apply to other listed buildings in the Conservation Area which have large gardens, in order to protect their character.

U3 - While the Society is keen to see the preservation and enhancement of these closes, and the opening up of those which have been blocked by modern institutional buildings, we are concerned at the repeated reference to possible "new development" in relation to these historic features of the mediaeval burgh.

We are particularly concerned at the second last sentence:-

"Where appropriate the introduction of new development that reflects the pattern of traditional closes will be positively encouraged."

This sentence should be omitted. Such a statement of intent could open the door to "new development" just about anywhere along the High Street, where a landowner wished to make money out of their property by erecting new buildings. All that might be required would be to make it "reflect the pattern of traditional closes and lanes", and thus be deemed "appropriate", and there would be a policy in place seemingly backing the venture. This sentence is unnecessary, and also could endanger the integrity of the High Street.

Surely, in any case, there is nowhere remotely suitable for such "new development". The only parts of High Street where such development could possibly occur would involve breaching historic walls to drive a way through existing gardens of listed buildings, which, of course would be entirely unacceptable.

The whole concept of creating new closes or lanes in such a historical gem of a street is mistaken. The existing closes and lanes are all important, historically, to the High Street, but any new one would be a modern intrusion in terms of the historic layout of the burgh.

We fully support, however, the opening up, in the most sympathetic manner, of existing closes, such as Church Walk (partially obscured), and the close to the north of it.

In conclusion, we repeat that we wish to see the second last sentence of Policy U3 omitted from this document

We also wish to see less emphasis on "new development" in this paragraph, and more on preserving and enhancing the closes, as is required for some of the most

historically important features in the very heart of the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area.

Also, we would like to see the term "Burgage plots" replaced with the more traditional Scots term "lang-rig feus".

p.76-77 List of Streets in the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area

p.76 - NB - "Duncan's Place" was entirely demolished in the 1970s. It was bought in its entirety, we believe, by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Aberdeen, and the new Chaplaincy was built over the area where these houses once stood.

p.77 - Tillydrone Road - "Benholm's Lodging", not "Benholm's Lodge".

To Masterplanning, Design and Conservation Team, Planning and Sustainable Development
Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Aberdeen City Council Business Hub 4 Ground Floor North,
Marischal College Aberdeen AB10 1AB 22 August 2014.

To whom it may concern. I have read with great interest the March 2014 Old Aberdeen Management Plan. I was born in Old Aberdeen, grew up in the area, have been connected with St Machar's Cathedral (as an elder) for more than fifty years and a Cathedral guide over the same period. More to the point I have recently retired after twenty-five years as a Scottish Blue Badge Guide during which time I have escorted thousands of visitors either by coach or walkabout through Old Aberdeen.

I am astonished that in 77 pages of much repetition of given facts, that there is **so little hard information** about what you see as the way forward for the actual High Street, Chanonry and Don Street as opposed to the burgage plots and Chanonry gardens.

Market Lane shows conservation and development. The old houses, formerly facing School Road (now St Machar's Drive), restored and entered from Market Lane, the east end now a University car park and workshop with a general tidying up of the walls. There is a nice view of the Old Town House from the east. Market Lane and the Town House could be spoiled if there is an unsympathetic replacement of the former bus shelter/public toilet building standing between Market Lane and Baillie's Place.

There is much hand-wringing about **the loss of traditional closes**, of weak views down the closes, of insensitive developments on burgage plots. Most of these have occurred in the last forty years and surely the City Planning Authority would have had the chance **to stop/amend the plans** before these now deemed insensitive buildings were erected.

The growth of Aberdeen University is stated to be an opportunity for a masterplan. The discussions in the Management Plan re the East and West Campuses indicate that that particular bus has left the station.

There seems to be a fixation on the lack of easy east-west movement and this may be true for the University Campus **but hardly stands up for the High Street**. On the west side, from the Town House we have St Machar's Drive, Thom's Place, Douglas Lane and Meston Walk in some 300 yards. On the east side, St Machar's Drive, Market Lane, Grant's Place, Wagril's Lane and Regent Walk.

The fate of Benholm's Lodging and of the Seaton Park toilet block is noted as areas of concern. Surely these belong to the City and their fate is safe in their capable hands. I hope that the Conservation Plan will cover any University development on the site of Dunbar Hall of Residence.... a second chance to get it right.

I heartily endorse suggestions to improve and enhance the Sunnybank Park.

Opportunities.. a greater potential for tourism. I wish it were so, but the High Street is open to traffic and I imagine that will continue. In former years, with the co-operation of both the Cathedral and University authorities, the Scottish Tourist Guides successfully ran Old Aberdeen Walkabouts on Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evenings. It was a pleasure to work in quieter and safer conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity of bringing some matters to your attention

Yours sincerely Walter Duncan



Masterplanning, Design and Conservation,
Planning Department,
Aberdeen City Council.

Tillydrone Avenue
18th May 2014

Response to:
Consultation on Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Draft Character Appraisal

We the undersigned residents of Tillydrone Avenue, object strongly to the proposed changes in the boundaries of Character Areas 'B' and 'C' in the above document, which would place our houses in the "Modern University Campus" Character Area.

The change in boundary is inappropriate, illogical and unjustified. It would remove our family homes from the "Heart" or "Core" Character Area, and align them with modern institutional buildings for teaching, administration and student accommodation, in a Character Area named "Modern University Campus".

Our grounds of objection are as follows:-

- 1) These are not "campus buildings", but attractive family homes. Nor are they even "modern", having been built in 1924, 1947 and 1952.
- 2) These houses do not all belong to the University. Some are privately owned.
- 3) Not all of them were even built by the University. The earliest were in fact built by the Hays of Seaton.

The proposed designation of "Modern University Campus" in no way reflects the character of this neighbourhood. Further, as the proposed document would form part of the Local Plan, this misrepresentation of our group of family homes could well have negative consequences for those who live here..

We reiterate our strong objection to this misrepresentation.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

88 TILLYDRONE AVE

"

[Redacted]

54 TILLYDRONE AVENUE

54 TILLYDRONE AVENUE

60 Tillydrone Avenue



Masterplanning, Design and Conservation,
Planning Department,
Aberdeen City Council.

Tillydrone Avenue
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[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

MR TIM SMITH.

[Redacted]

MRS SALLY SMITH.

[Redacted]

60 TILLYDRONE AVENUE -
60 Tillydrone Avenue

TIM RASMUSSEN, 62 Tillydrone Avenue
Akiko Rasmussen 62 Tillydrone Av
84, Tillydrone Avenue.

84, Tillydrone Avenue

Masterplanning, Design and Conservation,
Planning Department,
Aberdeen City Council.

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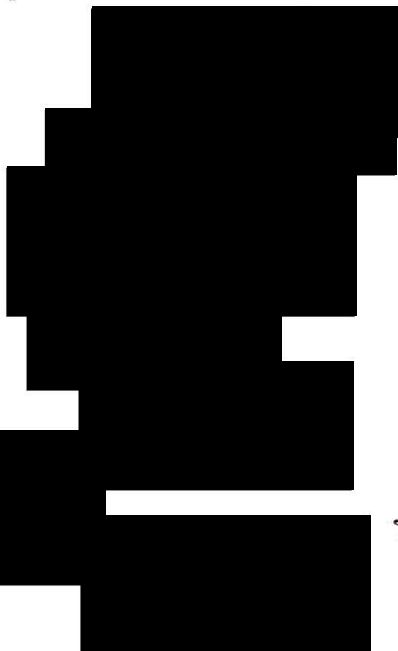
FEDERICA AVELLA
DAVIDE SIMONIS

FERGUS WHATLEY

DOUGLAS MARSHALL
MAYID YAZDANI

S. KAWETHY

GEORGE CHERNKARA



78, Tillydrone Ave

"

70 Tillydrone Ave

70 "

72 " " "

72, " "

76 Tillydrone Ave

P

Masterplanning, Design and Conservation,
Planning Department,
Aberdeen City Council.

Tillydrone Avenue
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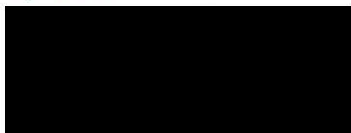
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PETER FRAYERS , 82 TILLYDRONE AVE
M. Smith



KIMEKA VARZI



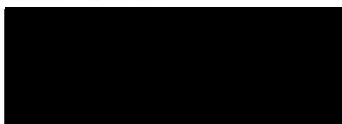
80 TILLYDRONE
AVENUE

Nahid [unclear]



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Debraan Varzi



11

Masterplanning, Design and Conservation,
Planning Department,
Aberdeen City Council.

Tillydrone Avenue
18th May 2014

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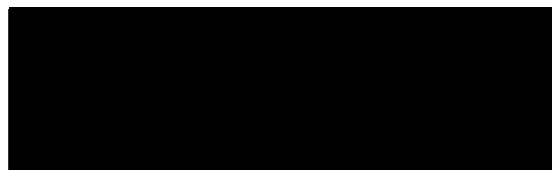
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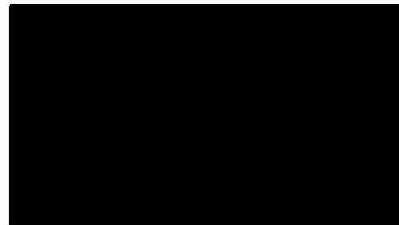
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We reiterate our strong objection to this misrepresentation.

DR HELEN LYNCH
86 TILLYDRONE AVENUE



EWA RITCHIE
56, TILLYDRONE AVENUE



SEYED MAHDI FAZELI

66, TILLY DRONE AVENUE



Rebecca Kerr

From: Dr David Galloway [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 May 2014 15:47
To: LDP
Subject: Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal 2014, COMMENT

Dear Sir

The Saltire Society, Aberdeen and NE Branch has recently been advised of the consultation document circulated as part of the forward planning process by the City of Aberdeen Council in respect of the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area.

My understanding is that comments relating to the Consultation have to be lodged with Council by today, Monday 26th May 2014.

Please find the comments that our members have made in respect of the Character Appraisal.

Acknowledgement of receipt of this document would be appreciated.

Yours faithfully.

Dr D B GALLOWAY

Chair and Convenor, Saltire Society, Aberdeen and NE Branch.

mob: [REDACTED]

fax: 01224 311618

Commentary on the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal, 2014

Introduction:

The introduction gives a clear overview of the historic importance of Old Aberdeen as a conservation area in the City of Aberdeen.

This area of the city represents over two thousand years of growth and evolution, tho the importance of medieval building and street design, expanded in the 18th and 19th centuries are key to present day appearances.

Location, History and Development:

The location of the Conservation Area is clearly demarcated but the inevitable development of the car and bus as mechanisms of transport has noticeably impacted adversely on the character of the Area.

Character:

Character areas A and B covering Spital and Old Aberdeen Core are well outlined and in general the negative features detailed could be addressed with benefit and little in the way of increased expenditure.

In Character Area C, however, relating to the Modern University Campus, there is clear evidence of a lack of coherent planning by the University authorities, dating back to the early 1950s. This includes the Environment overall, Residential Buildings such as Kings Hall, Johnston Hall and the Elphinstone Road Flats as well as the spread of Academic Buildings including the Regent Building and University Office, Taylor Building and others culminating in the most recent Sir Duncan Rice Library seen by some as a "bold intervention in the Conservation Area" and by others as a building totally out of sympathy and character with the rest of the Old Aberdeen area. Despite this, consultation has taken place between the City Planners and the local community, including the Old Aberdeen Heritage Society, prior to the Draft Document summarising the present Character Appraisals. However it does appear to be disappointing that the clear thrust of the earlier Consultation document (1993) has not been noted in detail, in that the disappearance of High Street shops and residences has continued over the past 15 years, leaving some properties empty (15 High Street) or used for other functions including business activity (21-22 High

Street) . This in itself is worrying and will require redress by the City Council if meaning is to be given to the current Character Appraisal. Some of these issues are addressed by the SWOT analysis (p.71).

Character Area D and E, including Hillhead and King Street North also involve University activity, but the development of Seaton Park and refurbishment of student accommodation at Hillhead could and should be carried out with the knowledge and involvement of the local community. Similarly, the Balgownie area has presently significant advantages as part of the Old Aberdeen community and here again considerable improvements could be achieved with only modest expenditure but a requirement for thought and careful planning.

Management:

The SWOT analysis summarises the key features of each of the five areas described within the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Appraisal.

The striking feature to us is that there is limited evidence of understanding between the local community, whether the Heritage Society or individuals within the Old Aberdeen area, and the University of Aberdeen and the City Council where the joint purpose should be the preservation of a unique area of the City of Aberdeen and the integrity of a real and viable village community.

This should be corrected as a matter of urgency prior to the next step of the consultation process.

Dr DBGALLOWAY
Chair and Convenor,
Saltire Society,
Aberdeen and NE Branch.

email: [REDACTED]
fax: 01224 311 618

Rebecca Kerr

From: Ewen Cameron [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 May 2014 15:47
To: LDP
Subject: Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal Consultation

Hello

Now that lead responsibility for Designed Landscapes has passed to Historic Scotland, we have no substantive comment to make on the appraisal of the built elements of the Conservation Area. However, green/open space and green networks are important parts of any "landscape", not only because of the obvious opportunities for leisure and recreation of the resident population, but also because of the contribution they make towards habitat networks and the movement of species that depend on them e.g. otter moving along the River Don corridor.

We are content that the appraisal has identified these within the Conservation Area.

Sincerely

Ewen Cameron

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Tha am post-dealain seo agus fiosrachadh sam bith na chois dìomhair agus airson an neach no buidheann ainmichte a-mhàin. Mas e gun d' fhuair sibh am post-dealain seo le mearachd, cuiribh fios dhan manaidsear-siostaim no neach-sgrìobhaidh.

Thoiribh an aire airson adhbharan gnòthaich, 's dòcha gun tèid sùil a chumail air puist-dealain a' tighinn a-steach agus a' dol a-mach bho SNH.



HISTORIC SCOTLAND
ALBA AOSMHOR

By email

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Our ref:
Our Case ID: 201400461
Your ref:
CAA_OLDAB_CONSULTATION

30 May 2014

Dear Ms Turnbull

Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Thank you for your consultation dated 28 March. These are our observations:

We welcome this new appraisal for the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area, one of Scotland's most outstanding historic townscapes.

We agree with your format for the appraisal and appreciate the need for completing this in line with your Council's commitments under the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012. As a management tool we are content that the appraisal sets out the special historic and architectural character of the conservation area that is desirable to preserve and enhance. It stresses Old Aberdeen's rich distinctiveness as a once independent town, the physical evidence of which remains very strong and generally well preserved. We have a few suggestions for the appraisal:

Section 1, part 1.2 Summary of Significance

- You may wish to also stress the separate burgh status of Old Aberdeen, from the late 14th century to late 19th century.

Section 3 Character Area A: Spital, 3.2 Built Environment

- include short description of key buildings, notably St Margaret's Convent (Category A listed) This would be consistent with the Built Environment parts for Character Area's C, D and E which include descriptions of key buildings.

Section 3 Character Area B: Old Aberdeen Core

- Plan 1: Listed Buildings. We suggest expanding this to include, in the map and text, the 3 Scheduled Monuments, St Machar's Cathedral, Market Cross, and Tillydrone Motte.



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- 3.2 Built Environment - elaborate on the wide range of building types including highly dignified civic, university, and ecclesiastical buildings; elegant Georgian town houses and manses; and the humbler vernacular cottages; plus the strong presence of distinguished gateways (gate piers, arched gateways, gate lodges); high boundary walls, cast ironwork (railings, gates etc), and granite sett streets.
- Include descriptions of key buildings. Notably - Kings College Chapel ; Kings College quadrangle group (Category A and B listed); St Machar's Cathedral (Scheduled Monument and Category A listed); St Machar's Gate Lodges (Category B listed); Town House (Category A listed); Market Cross (Scheduled Monument and Category B listed); 81 High Street (Category A listed); Kings College Sports Pavilion (Category B listed); Mitchell Hospital, 9 Chanonry (former Almshouses, Category A listed); Powis Lodge and Gateway (category B listed); Chaplain's Court, 20 Chanonry (Category B listed); 60 Cluny's Port (Category B listed); and St Machar Bar, 97 High Street (Category B listed).
- 3.2.2 Materials - We have no evidence for this, but the strong presence of natural clay pantiles might have an early association with the Seaton brick and tile making industry and Bishop Elphinstone's visits to the Low Countries. More recently, we understand that pantiles were used a lot in the 1960's extensive restoration work in Old Aberdeen, reflecting a desire to reinforce Scottish vernacular (See The Aberdeen Guide - Ranald MacInnes, page 190)
- 3.3.1 Views/vistas/glimpses – You may wish to include longer distance views from outside the conservation area, including any notable wider views of St Machar's Cathedral and Kings' College Chapel.
- 3.4 Natural Environment – include Snow Churchyard and St Machar's graveyard.
- 3.5 Key characteristics – For the bullet point list, also include Kings College quadrangle and setting, Snow Churchyard, distinguished gateways, and granite setted streets.

Section 3 Character Area C: University Campus

- 3.5 Key characteristics bullet point list – Strong presence of mid 20th century to 21st century University buildings.

Section 3 Character Area E: Balgownie , 3.2.2

- 1st paragraph, last sentence, Category A listed (not Grade A listed)
- Generally need to stress the high importance of the A listed Brig o'Balgownie as a key feature of the character area, as well as the overall CA. Include its description in the Built Environment section and mention it specifically as a key characteristic in part 3.5 (in addition to the views of it, already mentioned). (See 'The Lost City - Old Aberdeen' Jane Stevenson, pages 42-43)



Section 4 Management

- Typo in 1st paragraph. Old Aberdeen. Not Pitfodels
- 4.1 SWOT analysis, Character Area B – Old Aberdeen Core. Strengths, last two bullet points. Suggest you put these under the heading of 'strong vernacular quality, and say 'natural clay pantiles' to stress the vernacular. Opportunities. 2nd bullet point include Conservation Plan preparation, Urban Design strategy, and Management Partnership Agreements. Threats, include visual impact of new development /tall buildings on the setting of Old Aberdeen Core, notably from the growth of Aberdeen University in Character Area C.
- Character Area C – University Campus. Weaknesses, include lack of Masterplan approach and Urban Design/Heritage Management strategy. Opportunities, 1st bullet point, include Urban Design/tall buildings strategy and Management Partnership Agreements. Threats, last bullet point, you may wish to state 'uncoordinated piecemeal development impacting adversely on the conservation area'

Section 4.2 Proposed Boundary Changes

- We agree

Section 4.3 Proposed Management Plan guidance

- We agree with the proposed additional specific guidance for Old Aberdeen. It would also be desirable to include guidance for managing major new developments, notably University redevelopment/expansion proposals directly impacting the CA and affecting its setting. This could tie in with a University Masterplan/Conservation Plan/Management Partnership Agreement. You might also wish to include specific guidance for protecting and enhancing streetscape – the granite setts, boundary walls, gateways, cast iron railings, etc.

We hope these comments are helpful. We would be very happy to discuss further.

Yours sincerely

Michael Scott
Senior Heritage Management Officer