

SUMMARY

This report to the Pre-Application Forum (the Forum) is in respect of a potential in principle planning application promoted jointly by Telereal Trillium and BT PLC (the Applicant) for the demolition and redevelopment of the BT engineering centre for student accommodation and flatted residential development at Froghall Terrace, Aberdeen (the Application Site)

In accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, the Applicant submitted a Proposal of Application Notice (the Notice) that was validated by the Council on the 28th of April 2015. The scope of the proposed consultation was considered inadequate and a revised approach was deemed acceptable by the Council on the 28th of May 2015.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Sustainable Development that the Forum:

1. Note the key issues identified at this stage;
2. If deemed necessary seek clarification, amplification or explanation on any particular matters; and
3. Identify relevant issues that they would like the Applicant to address in any future application

APPLICATION SITE & RELATIONSHIP TO THE ABERDEEN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Application Site

The site is a rectangular shaped parcel of land on a north-south axis totalling some 2.78 hectares in area (i.e. road frontage width of 150 metres and depth of 185 metres).

The Application Site is currently used as a BT engineering centre and comprises an office building dating from the latter half of the twentieth century set within the south-western quadrant of the Application Site, together with a large surface area used for vehicle parking and general operational use. However, the north-eastern aspect of the Application Site is marked by a landscaped area. Access is via two points off Froghall Terrace. The eastern access is level to the Site, whilst the western approach falls into the Site significantly from the road level, due to the changing levels.

In terms of delineation, the northern, western and southern boundaries are marked by residential development and the eastern aspect is also defined by housing on Froghall View; however, this is at a higher level.

Relationship to the Aberdeen Local Development Plan

Under the scope of the adopted Aberdeen Local Development Plan the site constitutes an Opportunity Site (i.e. OP104) where a mix of uses are deemed appropriate. This designation is not carried over into the proposed replacement Local Development Plan, which is due to a large part of the Opportunity Site having secured planning permission for residential development that is now completed.

In terms of zoning, both within the adopted and replacement Local Development Plan the Site covered by a mix use designation. On this basis either a singular or multiple uses including, albeit not limited to, residential, commercial, office is deemed acceptable subject to a number of factors (e.g. regard to the existing uses and character of the surrounding area and avoid undue conflict with the adjacent land uses and amenity).

PROPOSAL

Whilst the Notice describes the proposed development as “*demolition and redevelopment of site for student housing and residential development*”, it is devoid on the level of student accommodation and number of residential units. The initial concept designs submitted prior to the lodging of the Notice provided for two blocks of development; the northern area of the Application Site encompassed the student housing in the order of 450 units; whereas, the southern part of the Application Site (i.e. fronting Froghall Terrace) provides the residential element, originally envisaged as totalling some 94 units.

Since the production of the Notice the Applicant has been engaged in a number of design meetings with the Council considering the overall mass, form, disposition, scale, and context of the proposed development. Whilst this process continues, there is limited clarity at this juncture on either the number of student and residential units to be provided. As the Notice is the precursor to an ‘in principle application’ and in order to provide aspects of certainty the matters of general appearance, form and amenity space for both the student accommodation and housing has formed part of the discussions with the Applicant.

It has to be said at this juncture Officers are unaware of the matters which the Applicant is seeking to reserve for later agreement with the Council. This will be clarified at the application stage.

CONSIDERATIONS

It is considered that the main issues raised by the potential application are likely to be:

- Whether the principle of the development is acceptable;
- If acceptable in principle, whether the application in the form envisaged by the Applicants represents a sustainable and appropriate form of

development allowing for its location, proposed uses, 'design', form, adaptability, presence, amenity, and affect upon the character of the surrounding area;

- Impact upon amenity of surrounding uses;
- Physical and social infrastructure impacts / requirements; and
- Impact upon highway network, parking, and servicing.

Aspects of the planning policy framework at the national level against which the application is likely to be assessed, include albeit not limited to, include the National Planning Framework 3, Scottish Planning Policy, Scottish Government policy Creating Places as well as the emerging Low Emissions Strategy for Scotland.

In terms of the extant and emerging Aberdeen Local Development Plan the planning policy schedule, which is not exhaustive, includes:

Adopted Aberdeen Local Development Plan:

- T2 - Managing the Transport Impact of Development Transport Assessments and Travel Plans required also Supplementary Guidance (SG)
- I1 - Infrastructure delivery and Developer Contributions
- D1 - Architecture and Placemaking
- D2 - Design and Amenity
- D3 - Sustainable and Active Travel
- D6 – Landscape
- H2 – Mixed Use Areas
- H3 – Density
- H4 – Housing Mix
- H5 – Affordable Housing
- NE4 - Open Space Provision in New Development
- NE6 – Flooding and Drainage
- NE8 - Natural Heritage

- R6 - Waste Management Requirements for New Developments
- R8 - Low and Zero Carbon Buildings

Supplementary Guidance to the Aberdeen Local Development Plan

- Affordable Housing
- Drainage Impact Assessments
- Infrastructure and Developers Contribution Manual
- Landscape Guidelines
- Low and Zero Carbon Buildings
- Open Space

Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan:

- D1 - Quality Placemaking by Design
- D2 - Landscape
- I1 - Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations
- T2 - Managing the Transport Impact of Development
- T3 - Sustainable and Active Travel
- H2 – Mixed Use Areas
- H3 – Density
- H4 – Housing Mix
- H5 – Affordable Housing
- NE4 - Open Space Provision in New Development
- NE5 – Trees and Woodland
- NE6 - Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality
- R6 - Waste Management Requirements for New Developments
- R7 - Low and Zero Carbon Buildings
- C11 - Digital Infrastructure

The Applicants will be requested to submit sufficient information to demonstrate that the site can be developed having regard to the identified mains issues, including:

- Pre-Application Consultation Report
- Planning and Sustainability Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Urban Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal
- Transport Assessment and Green Travel Plan
- Management Plan for the operation of the student accommodation
- Contaminated land report
- Heads of Terms for section 75 Agreement on Affordable Housing Provision
- Construction Management Plan
- Drainage Impact Assessment
- Energy - Zero/Low Carbon Energy Statement
- Waste Management Plan
- Vertical Sky Component and Average Daylight Factor Report

PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

The Notice described the proposed Pre-Application Consultation and following discussions with Officers the consultation approach was agreed on the 28th of May 2015.

During the discussions on the scope of the engagement process the Applicant undertook a public consultation event on the 20th of May 2015 at St Stephen's Parish Church, Powis Place between 3:00 pm and 7:30 pm. The event was advertised within the Evening Express on the 12th of May 2015 and invitations were extended directly to the Froghall, Powis and Sunnybrook and Old Aberdeen Community Councils, together with the local MSP and councillors, and local residents

As part of the internal consultation process the Roads Development Management requires the submission of a Transport Assessment and the Environmental

Health Department require the production of a contaminated land report as also made comments on the construction hours.

CONCLUSION

This report highlights the main issues that are likely to arise during the decision-taking process. This list is not exhaustive and further matters may arise when the application is received, and consultees and the public have the opportunity to comment.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee note the key issues at this stage and advise of any other issues.

Dr Margaret Bochel
Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.