

163 Hardgate

Aberdeen

AB11 6XQ

22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016

Dear Sirs

**Reference: 161051/DPP**

**Proposal: Demolition of the existing Victoria Road Primary School and erection of 56 residential units, along with open space, parking and associated infrastructure**

I refer to the above and I am very disappointed that a new application has been submitted for the demolition of Victoria Road Primary School.

The fact that the previous application was recommended for refusal should have been deterrent enough.

I notice that in the recent application the number of parking spaces within the development have been reduced to promote sustainable travel. Whilst it is good to promote sustainable travel, it cannot be enforced, therefore should the residents of this development not use sustainable travel this will have a knock on effect to parking in the surrounding areas, namely, Victoria Road, Abbey Place, Abbey Road and Baxter Street, where, at this present time parking is difficult enough.

Also I note that access to the development would be from Victoria Road and Abbey Road. Abbey Road has traffic calming measures in place and as discussed at the public hearing earlier this year, this would make it difficult for the emergency services to access the Abbey Road entrance. However, as mentioned by one of the members of the council on the panel at the public hearing, the emergency services could "use their cutting equipment to remove the bollards". Ideal, when there is a fire or someone is seriously ill on the development. We'll be with you shortly; we just need to remove these bollards. Ridiculous!!

Viewing the proposed layout of the development it seems there is very little room for manoeuvre should a fire engine or engines be called and I very much doubt (as they will have to access Abbey Road via Baxter Street) that they would be able to do a 3 point turn on Abbey Road to get back up Baxter Street.

Aside from all of this and before any of this can take place, the proposal is to knock down a structurally sound granite building. What Aberdeen was built on, granite! This would contravene Policy D.4 of the present Local Development Plan. Planning Officers have stated in a formal report that the loss of a substantial and unique granite building cannot be accommodated within the policy.

These buildings should be kept as an irreplaceable piece of the granite heritage of Old Torry. There are good examples involving former schools that have been restored and brought back into new uses in Aberdeen, Causewayend, Frederick Street, and Commerce Street.

Whilst Victoria Road Primary School may not be converted back in to a school, there are numerous future uses that would meet the local needs, for example:

A) Conversion into low-cost homes and/or offices for small business.

- B) A community hub with a focus on health, wellbeing, arts and small workshops and also linked to the sports centre.

Also at the present time, numerous groups use The Old Torry Community Centre, one of those groups is the Torry Heritage Group. We have amassed a huge amount of photographs and other items over time but are restricted in what we can display due to the needs of other groups. If Victoria Road Primary School was converted in to a community hub, we could display our collections on a permanent basis, a museum if you like, which would attract more visitors and tourists to the area.

Finally as I've said before and I shall say it again, how much longer can we continue to call Aberdeen the Granite City, if we continue to demolish perfectly sound granite buildings?

Yours faithfully



Pamela Swanson