

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee
DATE	20 April 2010
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Cove Masterplan and Charrette Report
REPORT NUMBER	EPI/10/096

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report outlines the Cove Masterplan and Charrette Report prepared as a guide for the future development at Cove.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 2.1 Approve the Cove Masterplan and Charrette Report as Supplementary Planning Guidance for the sites identified as Opportunity site OP8 and Opportunity site OP9 in the Aberdeen Local Plan 2008.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 There is a small area in the north of the OP9 site which is understood to be held in the Housing Revenue Account. The site immediately to the north of OP8 is also in Council ownership. No agreement is in place between the developer and the Council as landowner to include this area in the developer's masterplan.

### **4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- 4.1 The Cove Masterplan supports the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan policies and targets for housing allocations in the North East until 2030.
- 4.2 The Cove Masterplan seeks to contribute towards encouraging a higher range of new house building types in the City, including affordable housing provision. Affordable housing will be provided in line with Policy 42 of the Aberdeen Local Plan 2008 in that 10% of the development will be affordable.

- 4.3 The Cove Masterplan requires a mix of uses on the site, including business, open space, leisure and retail. This will aid improving quality of life for the newly created and adjacent neighbourhoods through the enhanced provision of and access to community facilities. The Cove Masterplan follows national design guidance and aims to create a place with an interconnected walkable neighbourhood.
- 4.4 In accordance with Policy 83 of the Aberdeen Local Plan 2008, Developer Contributions will be sought. This will include, but not be limited to, community facilities, drainage, recreational and amenity open space, sports facilities and providing for a choice of transport modes.
- 4.5 An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been prepared, the results of which are attached to the masterplan for consideration and used with the masterplan, and during assessment of future planning applications.

## **5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no property, legal and equipment implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 The Cove Masterplan reduces the risk of piecemeal and inappropriate development in the Opportunity Sites. The efficient use of land will contribute towards the Council's aim of promoting sustainable development.
- 5.3 Approving the Masterplan will contribute to efficiencies in determining future planning applications made in accordance with the plan. By encouraging acceptable forms and uses of new development to be agreed publicly, it allows more informed decision making to be made earlier, saving time and resources for staff, applicants and the public.
- 5.4 A Strategic Environmental Assessment has been undertaken on OP8 and OP9 sites as part of the preparation for the forthcoming Aberdeen Local Development Plan (see Section 9 for reference).

## **6. REPORT**

### **Background**

- 6.1 Scotia Homes and Stewart Milne Homes commissioned the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment, and an American urban design consultancy Urban Design Associates, to conduct a participatory planning process with the Cove Community Council and Aberdeen City Council. This process set out to find the most appropriate form of development for the identified Opportunity Sites, and to develop design concepts.
- 6.2 The participatory planning process has included two key design efforts:
  - Enquiry by Design: 13-15 May 2008

- Site Design and Modelling Charrette: 22-26 September 2008
- 6.3 Scotia Homes and Stewart Milne Homes have subsequently met with Aberdeen City Council, to present and discuss the development of the masterplan and receive feedback. The Cove Masterplan and Charrette Report is the product of this process.

### **Policy Considerations**

- 6.4 A planning policy review has been prepared to inform and complement the Cove Masterplan and Charrette Report, and details the relevant National, Regional and Local policies to be considered.
- 6.5 The sites are zoned as suitable for residential use in the current Aberdeen Local Plan 2008 as Opportunity Site OP8 and Opportunity Site OP9. Appendix 5 of the Local Plan states that the  
*“Cove brief needs re-visiting and a new masterplan required incorporating housing, community uses and greenspace”*
- 6.6 The City Council adopted Housing Land Release Supplementary Planning Guidance in October 2008 (article 11, Policy and Strategy Committee Minutes, 11/10/08), which allows the OP8 site to be released for development subject to planning approval and masterplan preparation.
- 6.7 The Masterplan has been prepared following the Aberdeen Masterplanning Process, approved in November 2008, and contributes to the Aberdeen City Council Design Campaign’s aims of raising design quality in new development (see Section 9 for references).
- 6.8 A waste management licence still exists over part of the OP9 site. Discussions are ongoing between the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and the developer to resolve such issues. This is a legal process separate to the planning process.

### **Public Consultation**

- 6.9 As outlined above, the public consultation process included two key events. Both events were advertised in the local press and within the community with the distribution of 1000 flyers as well as an article in the Cove Chronicle. Invites were also distributed to interest groups including the community councils, schools, churches and the Blue Horizon Youth Project. The proposed masterplan was also on display in Loirston School during the 2009 Cove Gala. In total over all the events, attendance was in excess of 100. The results of the two key events are summarised below.

#### **Enquiry by Design**

This experience helped provide a vision for the future of Cove by means of community meetings and individual interviews. People were asked to comment on what they valued most about Cove, the main problems and the aspirations they had for the future. The results of this process are

contained within the Cove Masterplan and Charrette Report; however three key themes emerged which have been incorporated into the final Cove Masterplan and Charrette Report.

- (1) **Open Space** – protect, enhance and interconnect proposed and existing open space.
- (2) **Street Network / Traffic** – improve vehicular circulation in, to and from Cove.
- (3) **Centres** – create walkable neighbourhoods emphasising links to the key proposed and existing centres in Cove.

### **Site Design and Modelling Workshop**

The second stage in the public participation process concentrated on the sites themselves, how the 3 identified themes could work in the final layout design, and inform key principles of the masterplan.

## **6.10 Principles of the Cove Masterplan**

The Masterplan and Charrette Report detail a number of key design principles that must be adhered to in future planning applications. These are:

- provide a variety and choice of housing – semi-detached, detached terrace housing, and flats;
- create walkable and interconnected neighbourhoods;
- provide clearly defined open space, including parks of various clearly defined types and sizes;
- concentrate development around a high street with a mix of commercial uses in a traditional Scottish form;
- provide an additional connection to Wellington Road;
- ensured minimum density of 30 units per hectare across the site, with higher density towards the neighbourhood centre, in accordance with the Structure Plan;
- create more efficient use of land;
- reserve land for a train halt at OP8 (Stationfields);
- clearly define architectural styles as determined by the Cove Masterplan and Charrette Report, e.g. Victorian, Scots Baronial, Coastal Vernacular, and, Arts & Crafts.

## **6.11 Key Issues**

The Cove Masterplan and Charrette Report highlights options for the way in which Loirston Green could be used to connect the OP9 site to the existing Cove centre. It should be made clear that following public response to this issue this connection will be a pedestrian footpath only.

An option is illustrated highlighting improvements to the existing Cove civic centre. Although the developer has no control over the existing civic centre area, the proposals remain as an aspiration to improve the quality and organisation of what is currently a disparate group of buildings with poor public realm.


## 6.12 Next steps

The following information is not covered by the Masterplan and Charrette Report, but will be required to support future detailed design and planning application processes:

- Noise and air quality assessments;
- Phasing programme and strategy;
- Transport assessment, including evaluation of new intersection at Wellington Road, impact on local road network, allowances for service access to commercial buildings, and public transport routes;
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, along with ecological and habitat appraisal;
- Evaluation of setbacks and appearance along Wellington Road;
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems to meet the requirements of PAN 61: Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems;
- Coordination with Scottish Water and SEPA regarding foul drainage.


## 7. REPORT AUTHOR(S) DETAILS

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## 8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 The Cove Masterplan and Charrette Report (Mach 2010) (*available in Members Library*)
- 8.2 Planning Policy Review and Community Engagement Analysis – Background Information to the Cove Masterplan and Charrette Report. (*available in Planning and Sustainable Development*)
- 8.3 Aberdeen Local Plan 2008 (8.3 – 8.8 *available on ACC Website*)
- 8.4 Aberdeen Local Development Plan: Interim Environmental Report October 2009
- 8.5 Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009
- 8.6 Housing Land Release (2006-2010) Supplementary Planning Guidance (October 2008).

- 8.7 Aberdeen Masterplanning Process November 2008 (article 22, Planning Committee Minute, 6/11/08).
- 8.8 Aberdeen City Design Campaign (article 20, Planning Committee Minute, 10/07/08).