

PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PRE-APPLICATION FORUM

ABERDEEN, 6 December 2018. Minute of Meeting of the PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PRE-APPLICATION FORUM.
Present:- Councillor Boulton, Convener; Councillor Councillor Jennifer Stewart, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Allan, Cooke, Copland and Sandy Stuart (as substitute for Councillor Cormie).

INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURE NOTE

1. The Forum had before it the procedure note and guidance for members on the operation of Forum meetings.

The Forum resolved:-

to note the procedure note and guidance for members.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 2 NOVEMBER 2017

2. The Forum had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 2 November 2017 for approval.

The Forum resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

ABERDEEN MARKET - MARKET STREET ABERDEEN - 181656

3. The Forum had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, on a submission of a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) by Montagu Evans on behalf of their client, PATRIZIA, for a proposed major development consisting of demolition and redevelopment of the existing site to form a mixed use office-led development with Class 1 (retail), Class 2 (Financial, Professional and other services), Class 3 (Food and Drink), public house and Class 11 (Assembly and Leisure) with landscaping, public realm, car parking and associated development/works, at Aberdeen Market, Market Street, Aberdeen, 181656.

The report advised that the application largely related to the Aberdeen Indoor Market which was situated between Market Street, Hadden Street and the Green. The main market building dated back the early 1970s and was set over four and five stories, with taller core elements on the stair and service cores.

The report also noted that the following properties also formed part of the site boundary:-

- 6 Market Street (an adjoining retail unit)
- 91 – 93 Union Street (former BHS retail premises)
- 101 – 105 Union Street (retail units and vacant associated upper stories)

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The proposal was classed as a major development and consisted of demolition of the market building and redevelopment of the resulting site to form a mixed use office-led development, with associated Class 1, 2, 3, 11 and public house uses with landscaping, public realm, car parking and associated development.

The Forum heard from Pamela Grant (PATRIZIA) and Ian Fraser (Halliday Fraser Munro, HFM) in regard to the proposed application. Fraser Littlejohn (Montagu Evans) and Stephen Diack (Architect HFM) were also in attendance to answer any questions from members. Ms Grant explained that PATRIZIA invested all over Europe and wanted to provide sustainable developments. She indicated that the applicant was also keen to incorporate street art to the site and support local artists. Ms Gray advised that the applicant bought the building in 2010 and hoped to bring new life into the historic heart of Aberdeen.

The Forum also heard from Ian Fraser, Halliday Fraser Munro, who explained that at present, the building did not serve much of a purpose within the city with no active frontage and added very little to the area of The Green. Mr Fraser advised that the applicant was keen to take account of public realm and wished that the redevelopment be at the top end of the market, with Class A facilities. Mr Fraser explained that they hoped to open up breathing space to Market Street and noted that the redevelopment would bring between 800 and 1100 people into the city centre every day.

The Forum then heard from Matthew Easton, Case Officer, who addressed the Forum and provided details regarding the planning aspects of the application and responded to questions from members. Mr Easton explained that there were a number of relevant policies in regard to the proposed application. Mr Easton advised that as the proposal was expected to see a loss of retail space, that Policy NC2 was relevant (City Centre Retail Core and Union Street) and noted that it would only be acceptable if:-

- (a) The new use contributes to the City Centre Masterplan;
- (b) Makes a positive contribution to the vitality and viability of the city centre;
- (c) It does not undermine the principal retail function;
- (d) The applicant can demonstrate a lack of demand for continued retail use of the premises;
- (e) The new use does not create over provision and/or clustering of a particular use in the immediate vicinity which would undermine the character and amenity of the centre; and
- (f) The alternative use does not conflict with the amenity of the neighbouring area.

Mr Easton also highlighted that the City Centre Masterplan redevelopment envisaged redevelopment of the Aberdeen Indoor Market to be replaced by a more contextually appropriate development of buildings and spaces and key criteria for any redevelopment of the market included:-

- (i) Enhanced active frontages on Union Street, Market Street, Hadden Street and The Green;

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- (ii) Continued retail use at Union Street level and a mix of retail, food and drink and leisure uses at Hadden Street level;
- (iii) Appropriate scale and quality of design given the site's conservation area setting and Union Street setting.

In regard to the layout and design, Mr Easton advised that the building was expected to be around nine storey's tall and it was therefore important that its visual impact on the surrounding area and from further afield was considered carefully. The site also sits within the historic core of the city centre and is part of the Union Street Conservation Area.

In regard to consultation, it was noted that public consultation was undertaken by the applicant at a drop-in event in the former BHS store, on Union Street on 1 November 2018. Display boards were available which showed the context of the site, the aims of any development and a brief overview of the emerging proposals.

Finally, it was noted that as part of any application submitted, the applicant had been advised that the following information would need to accompany the formal submission:-

- Air quality assessment
- Archaeology report
- Design and access statement
- Drainage Impact Assessment
- Lighting Strategy
- Noise Assessment
- Planning Statement
- Pre Application Consultation Report
- Sustainability/Low and Zero Carbon Buildings Statement
- Townscape Visual Impact Assessment
- Transport Assessment
- Wind Assessment.

Members then asked a number of questions of both the applicant and the case officer and the following information was noted:-

1. There was an appetite for improvement in the area and engagement with other owners in The Green was very important;
2. The public realm enhancements were also very welcomed;
3. It was important to look at lighting strategies in the area as well as the potential for a water feature;
4. It was suggested that the applicant liaise with Jamie McNamara who is the lead officer for the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme;
5. There wasn't such a demand for larger department stores now so the applicant was looking to retain the use of retail but with smaller units;

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6. In regard to vacant office spaces at present, they are looking to provide Class A office space, which is more efficient with the use of open space etc, more agile working environment and a lot of the empty buildings don't offer the same benefits;
7. The applicant was currently engaging with Aberdeen Inspired.

The report recommended:-

That the Forum –

- (a) note the key issues identified;
- (b) if necessary, seek clarification on any particular matters; and
- (c) identify relevant issues which they would like the applicant to consider and address in any future application.

The Forum resolved:-

- (i) to request that the applicant liaise with Jamie McNamara, Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme Project Officer in regard to the application;
- (ii) to request that the applicant engage with the other owners in the Green in regard to the appetite for improvements in the area and also possible lighting strategies;
- (iii) to note that the Forum supported the potential water feature and the green wall;
- (iv) to note that development in the area was welcomed; and
- (v) to thank Ms Grant and Mr Fraser for their informative presentation.

- **Councillor Marie Boulton – Convener**

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