

**REPORT TO:** CITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - 28 MARCH 2011

**REPORT ON:** FORMER EASTERN PRIMARY SCHOOL SITE - SITE PLANNING BRIEF

**REPORT BY:** DIRECTOR OF CITY DEVELOPMENT

**REPORT NO:** 122-2011

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to inform members of the findings of the public consultation on the Draft Site Planning Brief.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- approves the Site Planning Brief; and
  - refers the Brief to the Development Management Committee for approval as supplementary guidance to the Development Plan.

## **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 There are no financial implications for the Council in terms of this report.

## **4 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Education Committee at its meeting on 22 November 2010 (Report 658-2010 refers) approved the permanent relocation of the Eastern Primary School to the old Grove Academy building on Camperdown Street.
- 4.2 The City Development Committee of 6 December 2010 (Report 648-2010 refers) approved the Draft Site Planning Brief for public consultation in order to gauge the local communities' opinions on the draft planning guidance for the redevelopment of the site.
- 4.3 The key points of the Draft Site Planning Brief are:
- To promote conversion of the Category A Listed buildings for housing only;
  - The retention and re-use of the main school building and ancillary buildings;
  - To encourage a small number of houses along the northern boundary of the site.
- 4.4 A copy of the Draft Site Planning Brief was placed on the City Council webpage and 56 letters outlining the content of the Draft were forwarded on 7 December 2010 inviting comments from the owners of neighbouring properties as well as the interested parties of Broughty Ferry Community Council, Dundee Civic Trust and Historic Scotland.
- 4.5 Following a consultation period of eight weeks comments from the residents of three neighbouring properties were received:

- a A resident of Whinny Brae wrote in general support of the brief and sought information on the future planning and site marketing processes, as well as clarification on ownership and listed building status of a single garage on Whinny Brae, which is within the curtilage of the site.

The garage is owned by Dundee City Council and Notice has been served on the tenant. The garage is unlisted by Historic Scotland and the Draft Site Planning Brief emphasises this.

- b A resident of Rowanbank Gardens wrote advising that the northern portion of the site had been acquired for the school grounds in the 1960's and requested that any new housing on the northern part of the site should have a visual harmony with the existing houses in Rowanbank Gardens.

The Draft Site Planning Brief suggests that a housing development on the northern boundary should achieve a visual harmony with both the existing houses of Rowanbank Gardens and the school building by following the general building line of Rowanbank Gardens and through the careful use of cladding materials, colour and roof lines etc.

- c A resident of Rowanbank Gardens wrote in support for residential redevelopment only and to request that no vehicular access to the site be taken from Rowanbank Gardens. They also expressed some concern about possible noise pollution from the relocation of the electricity substation, and that as the school is to relocate, the upper part of Whinny Brae could be redesigned to make better use of what is currently a redundant roadway.

The Draft Site Planning Brief states that vehicular access into the site should be improved and that the only realistic area for improvement is the existing entrance on Whinny Brae by relocating the electricity substation and demolishing the unlisted garage. It is anticipated that if the electricity substation is relocated it will be placed in a discrete location on-site and contained within a standard casing with no noise pollution.

If new houses are to be built on the northern part of the site it is likely that they will access from Rowanbank Gardens, though it is anticipated that up to four semi-detached dwellings can be built in this area to the requirements of the Development Plan. The change of use from a school to residential use will see a significant reduction of vehicular traffic on Rowanbank Gardens and Whinny Brae.

Ideas for the improvement to the upper part of Whinny Brae are outwith the terms of this Site Planning Brief.

- d Historic Scotland wrote to 'welcome Dundee City Council's commitment to facilitating an appropriate and sensitive new use for this important building and consider that the planning brief will be a valuable tool in achieving that aim.' As well as providing an update on current listed buildings legislation Historic Scotland have requested that a Conservation Plan accompany a Design Statement as part of a planning application for the site. Historic Scotland have also stated their willingness to be involved in the pre-application meetings, advocated by the Site Planning Brief, in advance of a planning application being made.

- e The Broughty Ferry Community Council stated that 'It seems like an excellent brief that extols the virtues of the site ...' and believes that the limitation to residential use only should better safeguard the fabric of the buildings. The Community Council also suggested that any new houses built on the site should be constructed with natural stone, slate roofs and hardwood windows.

The Brief seeks high quality construction materials that will visually complement the existing context of the former school and neighbouring residential buildings alike.

- f No comment was received from Dundee Civic Trust.

- 4.6 As a result of the consultation the only revisions to the Draft Site Planning Brief have been to emphasise that the single garage on the site is un-listed and that a Conservation Plan must accompany a planning application for the site.
- 4.7 The level and nature of response to the public consultation indicates support and satisfaction with the Draft Site Planning Brief.
- 4.8 The Site Planning Brief will form part of the site marketing documents and will be a material consideration in assessing redevelopment proposals.

## **5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.

There are no major issues.

## **6 CONSULTATIONS**

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Director of Finance, Assistant Chief Executive and Director of Education have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

## **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Dundee City Council - City Development Committee Report No 648-2010, Former Eastern Primary School Site Draft Site Planning Brief.
- 7.2 Dundee City Council - Education and Policy & Resources Committees Report No 384-2010, Review of Grove Office and Eastern Primary Accommodation.

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GH/NMcD/MM

1 March 2011

Dundee City Council  
Tayside House  
Dundee

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **SITE PLANNING BRIEF**

#### **FORMER EASTERN PRIMARY SCHOOL SITE, BROUGHTY FERRY**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Dundee City Council's decision in 2010 to relocate the Eastern Primary School presents an opportunity to promote the re-use of this site, which includes the category A-listed former school building, in the popular residential area of Broughty Ferry.
- 1.2 This Site Planning Brief has been prepared as supplementary planning guidance to the Dundee Local Plan Review 2005. This Brief provides the planning parameters to ensure successful comprehensive quality redevelopment of the site by promoting the re-use of the existing buildings for mainstream housing and identifying an area within the site for a new housing development.

## **2 LOCATION**

- 2.1 The site, in the Forthill conservation area, is within a well established and popular residential area to the immediate north of Monifieth Road at the cross-roads with St Vincent Street and Whinny Brae. The site is bounded to the north, east and west by the suburban housing of Rowanbank Gardens and Whinny Brae.
- 2.2 The site's proximity to high quality local amenities and transport connections to the city centre is excellent. The local district shopping centre amenities of Brook Street, the regular service bus stops on Monifieth Road, the train station at Gray Street, the beach and public parks are all a few minutes walk away.

## **3 THE SITE**

- 3.1 The site extends to 0.46 Ha and comprises the Category A-listed former school building, its ancillary out-buildings and the former play-ground area. The main building lies close to the west boundary of the site with the former playground to the east and north. All the ancillary buildings, which include the former toilet block, play sheds and shelters that run along the eastern boundary, as well as the boundary details, are included within the listing.
- 3.2 Near the north-west corner of the site is an electricity substation and an unlisted single garage with harled walls under a pitched slate roof. Subject to appropriate agreements the electricity substation could be relocated to a less obtrusive position and the garage demolished to improve vehicular access into the site.
- 3.3 The roadway level at Rowanbank Gardens, to the north of the site is some 2m higher than the finished ground level of the former play-ground area.
- 3.4 Existing vehicular access is from Whinny Brae, though improvements to its width and visibility may have to be made if this access is to be retained. However, it is unlikely that a new vehicular access will be taken off Rowanbank Gardens due to the level difference between Rowanbank Gardens and the site.

- 3.5 The small group of trees to the southern boundary with the Monifieth Road are part of the setting of the listed building and are covered under the Forthill Conservation Area designation. If removal of the trees is proposed, notice must be given to the Council who have a period of 6 weeks to object or consent to their removal.

#### **4 THE FORMER EASTERN PRIMARY SCHOOL BUILDING**

- 4.1 The former school was built to the designs of James H Langlands with William G Lammond and James H Langlands Jnr in 1911 in the Art Nouveau style for the Dundee Schools Board. The school was the first of its type in Dundee to be built with steel beams, though was otherwise traditionally constructed with "snecked bull-faced" sandstone with smooth quoins and dressings under a slate roof and with cast iron down pipes and typical 6-pane timber casement window arrangements.
- 4.2 The form of the building is basically a double height classroom arrangement on either side of a wide central corridor arranged over 3 main floors, (ground, second and fourth), with the first and third floors as intermediary floors comprising a corridor with accommodation at either end of the building. It is thought that these two floors are an integral part of the original design whereby teaching could be surveyed by the headmaster without being noticed. A boiler room and cellar running the length of the main corridor can be accessed down external steps close to the main entrance and could provide additional storage and a communal heating system.
- 4.3 The gross internal floor area is 2,460 sqm including circulation corridors.
- 4.4 The school building is considered to be in good structural order and will only cease to function as a school in 2011.
- 4.5 The buildings are listed as nationally important for their construction and architectural appearance and will continue to be an important reminder of schooling in the wider area. As such, it is anticipated that the original external appearance will remain largely unaltered through renovation and re-use.
- 4.6 Adaptation to the fabric of the building must be undertaken carefully and sensitively and have minimum impact on the special interest of the architectural and historic character and setting of the building. However, the opportunity should be taken to remove insensitive accretions such as the extensions, fire screen walls, visible wiring and inappropriate ironmongery etc.
- 4.7 The interiors of the building are listed and the sympathetic re-use of the listed buildings is likely to be a complex undertaking. It is strongly advised that prospective developers regularly liaise with the Conservation Officer in order that important internal detailing is retained, and areas where there is more flexibility for change are agreed.

#### **5 FUTURE USE**

- 5.1 Housing is the prevailing use in the popular surrounding area and is considered the appropriate future use of this site.

## 6 STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1 This Brief provides clear planning parameters to ensure the successful comprehensive redevelopment of the site in relation to the surroundings. No planning application will be considered which does not fully address the entire site, though it is anticipated that the site can be developed in two parts.
- 6.2 Proposals for the development of housing, through either conversion or new build will be required to meet with the following Local Plan standards:

### a The Former School Building

- 1 The former school buildings should be sympathetically and imaginatively converted in order to have minimum impact on its architectural and historic interest, character and setting. Any alterations to the listed buildings should be shown to restore or enhance their architectural character.
- 2 The site is within the area designated as 'Suburban' and flatted developments are acceptable through conversions of buildings of merit within this area.
- 3 Flats created within the listed buildings should have generous internal space standards with at least 2 or more bedrooms and should be in excess of 60 sqm internally. However, the existing internal configuration of rooms and window positions will guide the future internal arrangement and number of dwellings that can be created. It is anticipated that the internal floor areas and volumes of some dwellings will greatly exceed the Local Plan requirements and add to dwelling choice in the wider residential area.
- 4 The general floor to ceiling heights within the former school building are double height and it is anticipated that the creation of mezzanine levels, where appropriate, within the double height space could provide attractive accommodation within flats. The existing layout of the former school building may offer the opportunity for vertical sub-division as well as the more typical horizontal sub-division.
- 5 In curtilage car parking must be provided at a minimum of 150%, one space dedicated to each flat with the remainder for visitor car parking, and in addition secure indoor storage for bicycles should be provided for each flat as well as appropriate stores for domestic waste and recyclable goods. It is anticipated that the out-buildings arranged along the eastern boundary could be utilised for storage and/or garaging.
- 6 Residential redevelopment proposals must plan for a high quality living environment by providing attractive outdoor space for residents whilst respecting the architectural integrity of the former school building. Communal garden space must have an area representing 10 sqm per dwelling, or 100 sqm whichever is the greater, within the former school building, and other areas of private, or semi-private, garden ground should be created wherever possible.

**b New Houses**

- 1 A small number of new houses could be built along the northern boundary to the site. In consideration of the level difference between the site and Rowanbank Gardens, this area may lend itself to the erection of 3-storey town houses which could resolve the existing level difference and provide visual harmony with the former school building.
- 2 If new houses are proposed for the northern portion of the site they must have 3 or more bedrooms or a minimum gross internal floor area of 100 sqm as well as space for at least 2 cars with all houses having a garage.
- 3 It is anticipated that all new houses will have appropriate storage for domestic waste and recyclable goods incorporated into their design.
- 4 For new houses it is desirable that a minimum of 160 sqm of usable garden ground is provided.
- 5 All road markings associated with the existing school must be removed by the developer.

**7 CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS**

- 7.1 No limitation is placed on the use of new construction materials. However, it is expected that new materials used for the conversion of the listed building will be of a high quality on a 'like for like', or complementary basis, with the existing materials. Stone masonry boundary walls and railings will be retained and repaired in matching materials.
- 7.2 Materials for restoring or repairing specific features of the listed building must use the same traditional materials ie natural stone and slate, lime mortars and cast iron rainwater goods. Such work should have regard to British Standard BS7913 - Guide to the Principles of Building Conservation and to Historic Scotland's 'The Scottish Historic Environment Policy (2009)' and Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (1998) Appendix 1. In particular reference should be made to Appendix 1 paragraphs 1.2.4 - 1.2.11 in respect of window design and treatment, and to paragraphs 2.1.1 - 2.1.4 in relation to interiors. Whilst there is no specific mention of schools and education buildings there is valuable guidance on the reuse and treatment of special or non-residential buildings at paragraphs 5.1 - 5.5.
- 7.3 New development within the grounds should use a palette of materials predominantly similar in colour to those of the surroundings buildings in order to provide visual coherence. New development should draw reference from some of the architectural detailing of the listed building or be sufficiently contemporary in style to contribute a 21st century addition within the setting of the listed building. Standard kit designs are unlikely to be acceptable within the setting of the listed building.

**8 SUSTAINABILITY**

- 8.1 The City Council actively promotes and encourages developers to embrace sustainable development principles and the appropriate reuse of the former school buildings is at the heart of sustainability. In the subdivision of the buildings,

developers must design to maximise passive solar gain and where possible exceed the current Building Standards in relation to energy efficiency and water use.

- 8.2 To encourage recycling all dwellings should have adequate space for the storage and use of recycling bins etc. The range of existing out-buildings provides an opportunity for household and waste storage.

## **9 DRAINAGE**

- 9.1 Early liaison with Scottish Water is recommended to ascertain the drainage requirements of the site. However, it is anticipated that surface and waste water from the former school building will use the existing drainage network and that any new housing developed on the site will connect into the existing network. There is no opportunity within the site to create a water attenuation area.

## **10 THE DESIGN STATEMENT, CONSERVATION PLAN AND PRE-APPLICATION MEETINGS**

- 10.1 A Design Statement and Conservation Plan must be submitted with a planning application for this important site and comprehensive guidance on the preparation and content of Design Statements is provided in the Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note 68 "Design Statements". Guidance on the preparation of Conservation Plans is available at [www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/conservation-plans.pdf](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/conservation-plans.pdf).
- 10.2 The use of pre-application discussions between relevant Dundee City Council City Development Department Officers and the developer/agent is essential to ensure that at the outset of the development process the possibilities of the site are known.