

**REPORT TO:** CITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - 24 JANUARY 2011

**REPORT ON:** FORMER FIRE STATION, STRATHMORE AVENUE - DRAFT SITE PLANNING BRIEF

**REPORT BY:** DIRECTOR OF CITY DEVELOPMENT

**REPORT NO:** 13-2011

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to seek approval of an Amendment to the Approved Site Planning Brief for the Former Fire Station, Strathmore Avenue, Dundee.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee
- approves the amendments to the Approved Site Planning Brief;
  - refers the amended Site Planning Brief to the Development Management Committee as a material planning consideration

## **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising from approval of this report.

## **4 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Reference is made to Report 553-2006 and Agenda Note AN1-2007 where the Former Fire Station, Strathmore Avenue, was approved for consultation purposes and subsequently approved as supplementary planning guidance to the Dundee Local Plan 2005.
- 4.2 Following this approval, the site was marketed. It then came to light that 3 water mains have sterilised part of the site and these have now been identified on the accompanying Plan. The Plan has also been amended to remove the electricity substation at the south eastern corner which requires access to be maintained.
- 4.3 The site is located on Strathmore Avenue, opposite the junction of Lawton Road. The site is currently owned by the City Council and the buildings were last occupied by the Environmental Health & Trading Standards Department. The site was declared surplus to requirements in 2006 and subsequently the opportunity has arisen for the sale and redevelopment of the site.
- 4.4 The Site Planning Brief sets clear guidelines for the redevelopment of the site, landscaping and existing and proposed trees.
- 4.5 The Amended Site Planning Brief is attached to this report. No consultation will be carried out on the amendment, as there being no comments on the principle of housing when the first consultation took place in 2006.

## **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. The major issues identified are:

### Sustainability

The Site Planning Brief accords with the Council's Sustainability Policy, particularly the key principles of "Transport and Travel" and the "Built Environment". The draft Brief anticipates the redevelopment of redundant greenfield land, and highlights the opportunity to provide pedestrian links within a location already accessible by public transport and close to local services and amenities.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

The current Building Standards require any development to meet certain criteria in terms of the Sustainability Principles of "Environmental Legislation", and "Energy and Water use".

### Anti-Poverty

The Brief promotes the provision of a range of different types and sizes of housing to provide choice.

### Equality Impact Assessment

The Brief falls outwith the need for an Equality Impact Assessment and its contents are believed to have no effect on equal opportunities.

### Risk Management

The Brief has no implications on Risk Management.

## **6 CONSULTATIONS**

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

## **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Dundee Local Plan Review 2005  
Report 553-2006  
AN1-2007

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12 January 2011

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **FORMER FIRE STATION, STRATHMORE AVENUE - SITE PLANNING BRIEF**

#### Introduction

The decision by Dundee City Council to market the Former Fire Station site presents the opportunity to realise a high quality and imaginative development on this "brownfield site."

This site planning brief has been prepared as supplementary planning guidance to the Dundee Local Plan Review 2005 providing guidance to prospective developers to arrive at an informed and comprehensive solution for the redevelopment of this site.

Further design guidance is also to be found within the Dundee Urban Design Guide.

#### Location

The site lies north of the Inner City and benefits from excellent transportation connections, access to recreation facilities and primary and secondary schools.

The site is approximately 0.25 hectares in area and contains a vacant former fire station and ancillary buildings. Last in use as council offices, the buildings have been deemed surplus to requirements by the City Council. The site faces south onto Strathmore Avenue, a road linking Strathmartine Road with Harefield Road with a mixture of buildings in community uses and a mixture of public and private sector dwellings beyond. To the north are the leafy grounds and traditional buildings of Kings Cross Hospital, to the east a hotel, and to the west areas of well established detached, semi-detached and flatted housing.

Constructed in 1932 the former fire station building is an interesting and prominent building on the streetscene of both Strathmore Avenue and Lawton Road. Positioned at the front of the site the building has a commanding view south along Lawton Street to Dundee Law. Although not Listed this distinctive building still retains the large station doors to the front and rear, and balconies across the front and rear elevations. The rear of the site contains some ancillary buildings and a large yard area.

The site is not allocated for housing in the Local Plan but is identified in the Local Plan Proposals Map as being within a Suburban area. In Suburban areas the Local Plan seeks the development of houses only, although the Local Plan does accept the development of flats through the conversion of buildings of merit where the conversion to houses is not suitable or achievable. In this case the former fire station building is considered to be of merit and worthy of retention. The Council would not disregard the conversion of this building to flats subject to sufficient evidence that it is not suitable for conversion into townhouses.

The Dundee Local Plan Review 2005, particularly at Policy 4, Policy 55 and Appendix1, sets development standards to be interpreted regarding the site and the surrounding context. In accordance with Policy 55, the Dundee Urban Design Guide 2001 sets out the specific design principles for the formulation of an appropriate site layout and built form.

### House Type/Mix

The Council considers two options for the redevelopment of this site. One is to retain and convert the main former fire station building and develop a small number of houses on the remainder of the site. The other option is to clear the site and develop it all for housing.

The option to retain and convert the main building is driven by the design and prominent position of the building on Strathmore Avenue and Lawton Road. If it is to be retained it should be converted into townhouses. A flatted conversion would be an acceptable alternative subject to evidence that it is not possible to convert into townhouses. Given the suburban location the remainder of the site shall be developed with detached, terraced or semi-detached houses only. To add interest to the development these should be of varying types and sizes.

The clearance of the site would allow the whole site to be developed. If this option were pursued, only housing would be acceptable. This would be in the form of detached, semi-detached or terraced housing. Again the development should comprise a mix of dwelling types and designs.

Appendix 1 of the Local Plan requires 75% of housing in new developments to contain, as a minimum, 3 or more bedrooms or to have a minimum gross internal floor area of 100 square metres. Flats should have generous internal space standards and 2 or more bedrooms.

### Form

This is a prominent location and any development must be sympathetic to the form and layout of existing development in the surrounding area. The site lends itself to a small housing development to the side and rear of the retained and converted building or to a small housing development across the whole site. It is suggested that 2-3 bedroom houses may offer the best mix for this site; built as two-storey houses with potentially a third storey in the roof profile.

Dwellings to the front of the site should be set back at least 5m from the footway edge to allow space for landscaping in the interests of the visual appearance of the streetscene and to respect the existing building line. If retained, the distinctive main building shall be converted into townhouses or flats with the characteristic ground floor doors, and the front and rear balconies imaginatively incorporated into the scheme.

If the existing buildings are demolished the Council seeks a creative redevelopment of this prominent site. Given the views of the site from Lawton Road and out of the site towards Dundee Law any redevelopment must respect this important vista and developers should show how they have arrived at their design solution for this part of the site.

The Local Plan requires that in the interests of privacy houses are sited to ensure that there is a gap of 18 metres between facing windows of habitable rooms.

The developer should consult the Tayside Police Architectural Liaison Officer in order to achieve Secured by Design consistent with other requirements in this brief.

Three water mains run north to south of the side of the site. Any development, (parking areas and private gardens) must be at least 6 m from these pipes. This is so that any future repair and maintenance can be carried out as well as to ensure that properties are protected

from any future excavation works associated with the pipes. Access to the Electrical Sub Station must also be maintained.

### Materials

If it is to be retained the materials on the main fire station building should influence those on the new buildings and be appropriate for the surrounding area. Any other form of development should use materials that are appropriate for this location. The use of sustainable construction systems and techniques will also be encouraged to promote good environmental practice with the redevelopment of this brownfield site.

### Sustainability

The Council actively promotes sustainable development and would encourage developers to embrace the principles of sustainable development. In this case developers are encouraged to site and orientate houses to maximise passive solar gain and where possible exceed the Building Standards in relation to energy efficiency and water use. To encourage recycling all dwellings should provide adequate space for the storage of recycling bins.

### Amenity Garden Area

Appendix 1 of the Local Plan requires new housing development in suburban locations to provide a minimum private useable garden ground area of 120 square metres and for 40% of the whole development to have more than 160 square metres of private useable garden ground. If flats are created in the fire station building they should be served by a communal garden. This shall comprise a minimum of 100 square metres of private useable space.

### Parking

Appendix 1 also sets out the requirements for levels of car parking within new developments. All houses must provide 1 car parking space within the curtilage whilst houses with three or more bedrooms should have at least 2 car parking spaces. In addition 50% of houses should have a garage or provide space for a garage. Flats shall be provided with a minimum of 150% car parking.

### Access

The development will provide a single point of access from Strathmore Avenue. This will lead onto a shared surface driveway that will allow safe and easy access to the parking facilities for all properties. A separate pedestrian access may also be provided.

### Landscaping

Due to the prominence of the site on the streetscene of Strathmore Avenue and Lawton Road the development will be required to provide a high quality landscaping strip along the front of the site. In the interests of the amenities of the occupiers of the new dwellings and those in the existing neighbouring dwellings the landscaping along the western boundary of the site shall be retained and improved where appropriate.

Additional Information

**Dundee Local Plan Review 2005** (*Approved August 2005*)

**Dundee and Angus Structure Plan 2001-2016** (*Approved October 2002*)

**Dundee Urban Design Guide**, Planning and Transportation Department, Dundee City Council, 2002

**Dundee Sustainable Development Guide for Construction**, Sustainable Construction Working Group, Dundee City Council, 2006

**Dundee - Streets Ahead**, Planning and Transportation Department, Dundee City Council, 2005

**The Development Quality Service: A User's Guide**, Planning and Transportation Department, Dundee City Council, 1998 (*revised September 2006*).

All available to download via the Planning and Transportation section of the City Council website - [www.dundee.gov.uk](http://www.dundee.gov.uk)

Useful Links

Locate Dundee [www.locate-dundee.com](http://www.locate-dundee.com)

Dundee Information Portal [www.dundee.com](http://www.dundee.com)

Dundee City of Discovery [www.cityofdiscovery.com](http://www.cityofdiscovery.com)

Dundee Partnership [www.dundeepartnership.com](http://www.dundeepartnership.com)

