

REPORT TO: PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE - 26 JUNE 2000

REPORT ON: URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY FOR DUNDEE: REPORT OF CONSULTATION

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION

REPORT NO: 354/2000

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Urban Design Strategy for Dundee was approved by Committee on 13 December 1999 and the Director of Planning and Transportation was remitted to undertake consultation with relevant Council Departments, Amenity Societies and Developers in order to define workable Urban Design Guidelines to progress the aims of the Urban Design Strategy.
- 1.2 The Director was also remitted to report back on progress to the Committee in six months and this report gives members an update on the feedback received from the consultees to date.
- 1.3 In the light of the responses, it is proposed to submit the Revised Urban Design Strategy to Committee in August together with a statement of Urban Design Policy for inclusion in the Local Plan.

Thereafter, the intention is to bring the fully illustrated Urban Design Guidelines to Committee for approval in December.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to;
 - a note the very positive feedback received from the consultees and the strong statements of support for our Strategy from the Royal Fine Art Commission and Dundee Civic Trust in particular.
 - b to note the significant issues raised by some of the responses and remit officers to fully consider these in seeking to refine Urban Design Policies Guidelines.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications for the City Council in approving this Report.

4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Urban Design Strategy has positive implications for Local Agenda 21.
- 4.2 The overall Aim of promoting characterful and socially diverse forms of development can help to ensure that "Settlements are 'human' in scale and form" and that "Diversity and local distinctiveness are valued and protected."
- 4.3 The compact land-use patterns generated by mixed-use development can reduce the need for travel and consequently the volume of traffic on our streets. Thus, "Access to facilities, services goods and people is not achieved at the expense of the environment....." and "Health is protected by creating safe, clean, pleasant environments....."
- 4.4 The Strategy contains objectives that ensure "The diversity of nature is valued and protected" and "Pollution is limited to levels at which natural systems can cope."

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Good Urban Design supports Social Inclusion by virtue of promoting lively mixed-use, mixed-tenure areas, safe and attractive streets and land-use patterns which reduce isolation and are suitable for public transport systems.

6 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 Following approval of the Urban Design Strategy in December 1999, correspondence was entered into with eighteen consultees from February 2000. The most significant issues arising to date are outlined below.

- 6.2 The **Royal Fine Art Commission** was very positive about the Urban Design Strategy, finding it worthwhile and easily read and understood. The Commission is particularly supportive of our aim to reinforce local distinctiveness by encouraging imaginative contemporary architecture and discouraging 'off-the-peg' designs. The Commission considers that all parts of the city are important to those who live or work there and encourages the Council not to confine the thrust of the Urban Design Strategy solely to "prominent or sensitive" sites but to adopt the Strategy on a wholesale basis. The Commission also recommends the adoption of a per cent for Art Policy to ensure an adequate capital contribution is safeguarded for Public Art from Developers.

- 6.3 The **Dundee Civic Trust** response was highly complimentary. The Strategy was praised as providing accurate analysis of today's urban environment and setting out the aims in a clear and forthright manner.

The Civic Trust anticipates difficulties in persuading developers to commit themselves to the aims of the Urban Design Strategy but pledge their full support in our efforts to do so.

- 6.4 The **Dundee Institute of Architects** offer encouragement and constructive criticism in their response. On a general level the DIA believe the Urban Design Strategy can only succeed if complementary traffic management and commercial regimes are also in place. The Institute consider some of the terminology in the Strategy rather ambiguous and suggest more frequent use of Architectural Competitions as a means to produce dynamic and imaginative designs.

On a more detailed level DIA identify omissions in the Strategy and suggest more guidance be offered on:-

- ecological issues in site planning and construction
- the potential of old buildings for reuse or conversion
- addressing the access requirements of disabled people

- 6.5 In their response **Bett Homes** stated that the aims of the Urban Design Strategy may need to be tempered by economic reality in areas which are not attractive to developers. Bett Homes did not consider the Strategy to be of great relevance to them as a normally greenfield developer. However, further correspondence is currently in train which clarifies how we expect the Urban Design Strategy would affect development in suburban contexts.

- 6.6 The **Leisure and Parks Department** have responded offering advice as to how the Urban Design Strategy could dovetail with their Public Open Space Strategy and, in due course, with the emerging Urban Woodland Strategy. Leisure and Parks consider that the Urban Design Strategy treats open space mainly as an aesthetic asset or as a venue for events rather than places in their own right which can each have unique characters depending on their function and landscaping. The Leisure and Parks Department identify a need for a Landscaping Policy and Policy for Play Areas.

7 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Support Services, and Director of Corporate Planning have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Report No 640/1999
- An Urban Design Strategy for Dundee

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24 May 2000

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