

**REPORT TO: PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE –  
28 JUNE 2004**

**REPORT ON: NORTH LINDSAY STREET DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION**

**REPORT NO: 372-2004**

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval of a draft site planning brief for the North Lindsay Street area as the basis of consultation with interested parties and for pursuing a comprehensive redevelopment of the site.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- a approve the attached draft site planning brief for the purposes of consultation;
  - b remit the Director of Planning and Transportation to consult with the other owners and interested parties on the terms and content of the draft site planning brief;
  - c remit the Director of Planning and Transportation to report back on the results of the consultation exercise within a period of two months; and
  - d remit the Director of Planning and Transportation to put forward the final brief as a basis for the assembly of the development site.

## **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION**

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising from the approval of this Development Brief.

## **4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The development of this strategically important site within the city will contribute to the viability and vitality of the city centre's emerging Cultural Quarter. The City Centre will be further enhanced by addressing a key theme of Dundee 21 "places, spaces and objects combine meaning and beauty with utility".

## **5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The promotion of a mix of uses at a site well served by public transport supports an objective of Social Inclusion. Pedestrian permeability is an important objective within the area.

## **6 BACKGROUND**

- 6.1 Dundee City Council has identified the former DC Thomson's warehouse in North Lindsay Street as a potential site for a replacement for its Tayside House office accommodation. There are other properties in this area which should be included within the area covered by the Brief, which would provide for the better overall planning of this area both in terms of its use and environmental attractiveness. The site identified and subject of this planning brief covers an area which the Planning

Authority considers the minimum necessary to achieve the optimum flexibility in the proper planning of this area.

- 6.2 In order to secure the optimum area of ground to develop a first phase development for offices, it will be necessary to acquire properties at 26-36 North Lindsay Street, by Compulsory Purchase Order if necessary.
- 6.3 The site is bounded by North Lindsay Street to the east, the Marketgait to the west, the Overgate (Overgate Lane to the south) and South Ward Road to the north. The area of the site is 1.28 hectares.
- 6.4 Purpose of Brief and the guidance contained therein is:
- evolve a shared vision and consensus for action;
  - identify development opportunities;
  - promote and market the site;
  - confirm acceptable land use policy options;
  - promote high standards of design and inspire better and more imaginative architecture;
  - augment the principles of Dundee City Council's Urban Design Guide;
  - support the process of land assembly;
  - provide a context for dialogue with prospective developers/users;
  - provide a framework for Development Quality decision making; and
  - form the basis for assembling the development sites.

## 7 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning), The Director of Economic Development and Scottish Enterprise Tayside have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

## 8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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Director of Planning & Transportation

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Ian Mudie  
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IGSM/PMJ/KMSA/North Lindsay Street

17 June 2004

Dundee City Council  
Tayside House, Dundee

## **NORTH LINDSAY STREET AREA DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**

### **1 VISION**

- 1.1 This prominent location in the city centre occupies an important site adjacent to a principal road junction on the city's Inner Ring Road, immediately to the north of the Overgate, Dundee's principal shopping and visitor destination. However, the site contains a disparate range of uses and buildings much of which are vacant and gives a negative impression. The opportunity exists to comprehensively redevelop this area to add a new dimension to the west end of the city centre by providing new uses with increased employment opportunities and a much improved frontage for the western edge of the city centre.

### **2 PURPOSE OF BRIEF**

- 2.1 The guidance in this Brief has been prepared to;
- Evolve a shared vision of consensus for action
  - Identify development opportunities
  - Promote and market the site
  - Confirm acceptable land use policy options
  - Promote high standards of design and inspire better and more imaginative architecture
  - Augment the principles of Dundee City Council's Urban Guide
  - Support the process of land assembly
  - Provide a context for dialogue with prospective developers/users
  - Provide a framework for Development Quality decision making

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Dundee City Council has identified the former DC Thomson's warehouse in North Lindsay Street as a potential site for a replacement for its Tayside House office accommodation. There are other properties in this area which, if acquired and redeveloped, would provide for the better overall planning of this area both in terms of its use and environmental attractiveness. The site identified and subject of this planning brief covers an area which the Planning Authority considers the minimum necessary to achieve the optimum flexibility in the proper planning of this area.

### **4 SITE FOR DEVELOPMENT**

- 4.1 The site is bounded by North Lindsay Street to the east, the Marketgait to the west, the Overgate (Overgate Lane to the south and South Ward Road to the north). The area of the site is 1.28 hectares

### **5 POLICY REVIEW**

- 5.1 A number of National and Local policies and guidelines apply which will require to be considered by prospective developers;
- Scottish Executive "A Policy on Architecture for Scotland" and "Designing Places"

- Dundee and Angus Structure Plan Finalised Written Statement 2002. Environmental Policy 6 requires new developments to make a positive contribution to the identity, character and quality of the built environment
- Dundee Local Plan 1998
- Dundee Urban Design Guide

#### 5.2 Dundee Local Plan 1998 General Policies apply

- Policy BE1 – Design quality
- Policy BE2 – Townscape Policy
- Policy BE3 – Use of Materials
- Policy BE24 – Public Art
- Policy H10 – Design of new housing
- Policy H15 – Energy efficiency

#### 5.3 Dundee Local Plan Specific Policies and Proposals

- Policy S30 – Area of no change – in areas of no change it is not anticipated that any change to the existing primary uses will take place during the plan period.
- Policy S5 – Secondary Retailing Area (covers the Multi Storey Car Park only).

5.4 Since the Adoption of the Local Plan, Dundee City Council has approved a Report on who to accommodate future comparison retailing floorspace requirements as identified in the Retail Review 2003. The site covered by this Brief is one of these areas where this floorspace could be sited.

## **6 SITE AND CONTEXT APPRAISAL**

### 6.1 Context

- a The sites surrounding uses are generally mixed in character but dominated by the extensive Overgate shopping centre to the south, one of the key developments in the city centres successful regeneration. The Overgate is of a particularly high quality and sets excellent standards in terms of urban design. The Overgate presents generally good frontages to the ring road.
- b A variable stay car park operated by NCP lies to the east of the site. Various development interests have come forward for this site and its future redevelopment should be promoted. Several unsuccessful attempts have been made to improve the environment of this car park.
- c To the north, the uses are primarily related to the evening economy with nightclubs, bars and restaurants prevalent. There is also a garage and partially occupied office block. The frontages are typically unassuming.
- d To the west is the Inner Ring Road part of the city's strategic road network. The city's emerging Cultural Quarter lies beyond the Ring Road.
- e Beyond the immediate surrounding area lies the city centres office sectors of the Ward Road/Meadowside and South Tay Street areas.

## 6.2 Site Characteristics

- a The principal building on the site, occupying an elongated frontage to North Lindsay Street is a vacant warehouse formerly owned by DC Thomson. Built in 1909 it is mostly four storeys in height, of sandstone construction and a Grade B Listed Building. There are extensive shed type buildings and yard to its rear.
- b To the south of this building and abutting it, is a 2 close 4 storey sandstone tenement, also Grade B Listed, containing various mixed uses, including 15 flats, an HMO, 2 restaurants/takeaways and offices.
- c One of the city centre's principal electricity sub stations is located next to the tenement.
- d Immediately to the north of the Overgate Centre is a 285 space variable stay NCP multi storey car park, accessed directly from West Marketgait. Part of the original 1960's Overgate redevelopment, it is a prominent building occupying a corner site. As such this monolithic concrete structure presents a particularly poor frontage to the Inner Ring Road. The car park is part of the Overgate Centre and a new pedestrian bridge spanning Overgate Lane gives direct access from the car park to Debenhams, the principal anchor store at the west end of the Overgate. The ground floor of the car park is used as a windscreen replacement centre and a base for Shopmobility.
- e Occupying a corner site on the Westport Roundabout is a single storey shed type building occupied by discount supermarket Lidl. For such a prominent location this building is wholly inappropriate. In terms of use, however, a discount supermarket performs an important function for many sectors of the City Centre.

## 6.3 Continuity and Enclosure

As previously stated this overall street block contains a fairly disparate group of undistinguished buildings both in terms of their individual appearance, massing and grouping, largely as a result of their piecemeal development dating from the 1960s. The exception is part of the former DC Thomson warehouse at 38 North Lindsay Street.

## 6.4 Quality of Public Realm

The B Listed frontages presents an imposing façade to North Lindsay Street, forming an important streetscape. The quality of the remaining frontages is very poor particularly to West Marketgait. However, this strong edge to both the city centre and the expansive and very busy Westport junction is an important consideration in townscape terms requiring a landmark development of an appropriate scale and design. Internally within the site there are no particular qualities of space.

## 6.5 Ease of Movement

### Vehicular

The principal access/egress to this sector of the City Centre is taken from the Westport Roundabout via South Ward Road and North Lindsay Street, which bounds the north and east of the site. There is currently little scope for the removal

of this exceptionally well used vehicular route which gives access to almost 1000 parking spaces at Overgate and North Lindsay Street. Any opportunities to address the existing 'pinch point' on South Ward Road (at its junction with North Lindsay Street) should be pursued as part of the redevelopment of the site.

The Overgate Centre is serviced from a ramp to rooftop level from West Marketgait. The access to the former DC Thomson building and Lidl is from South Ward Road. Access to the Shopmobility premises, contract car parking and the substation is taken from Overgate Lane via North Lindsay Street.

### Pedestrian

Access to the site will be possible from any of the sites surrounding streets. There are no pedestrian routes through the site which means the site is presently impenetrable. The principle accesses to the Overgate from the north is from North Lindsay Street/Willison Street through an attractive open space/car park.

## **7 OPTIONS FOR FUTURE USE**

- 7.1 This is an extensive site which could potentially accommodate a number of uses. It is the intention of Dundee City Council to relocate its offices to this area to facilitate the demolition of Tayside House. The site is also adjacent to the Overgate. The presumption is therefore that the site should be redeveloped primarily for offices and retail. There has been considerable recent interest in student housing for several sites in the City Centre, including this particular site. As both Abertay and Dundee Universities have now agreed to seek the development of other sites, this site will no longer be considered appropriate for this use.
- 7.2 Offices – The former DC Thomson warehouse has been purchased by Dundee City Council and will form the main part of the site for new offices. However, as this brief covers a much larger area, greater flexibility can be afforded in the layout of these offices to potentially achieve a better planning solution for this area.
- 7.3 Retail – Lendlease have previously considered the feasibility of expanding the Overgate Centre northwards across Overgate Lane. There are, however, some limitations to overcome to achieve this principally the presence of the vehicular service ramp and the substation. However, most logically any extension will require to abut the present Overgate and connect into it.
- 7.4 Car Parking – Ideally the present outdated and unsightly NCP multi storey car park should be redeveloped. Its design and layout are very poor by modern standards. It is, however, very well located being accessed directly from the Inner Ring Road and strengthens Debenhams retail location. Nevertheless, any comprehensive development of this site should take the opportunity to redevelop this multi storey car park. At the very least the Overgate should be encouraged to remodel the elevations. Dedicated car parking will not be a requirement for any proposed uses on the site, other than a limited provision for purely operational purposes.
- 7.5 Leisure Uses – Any expansion of the leisure market within the city centre will be welcomed. This site is close to present evening economy uses and is therefore ideally located to boost these uses further. It has been previously intimated that leisure uses could form part of any extension to the Overgate Centre. Uses which should be considered include Cinema, Leisure/fitness, Nightclub – a commercial

leisure complex incorporating a casino, amusement centre, bar and restaurant, entertainment facilities might be an example of facility which could be developed.

- 7.6 Open Space – The square nature of the site and the potential relationship between the uses as suggested above, suggests that the area might benefit from a central open space core in the form of a small pocket park or atrium. This could be the focus for pedestrian routes into the through the site, and help to address the sites present impermeability.

## **8 PLANNING AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES**

### 8.1 The broad intentions are

- To develop an overall integrated layout of uses, capable of being implemented in discreet phases if required.
- In the first instanced to utilise the former DC Thomson warehouse as the site for the Council's new offices.
- To allow for any possible extension to the Overgate Centre northwards towards the office site, the offices becoming a key pedestrian generator for any retail expansion.
- To seek the redevelopment of the existing multi storey car park to create a less intrusive plan form than presently exists to achieve better integration with the Overgate Centre and to present a better façade to the Marketgait.
- To develop a visually powerful and dynamic architectural statement for the site facing the Marketgait/Westport junction.
- For any of the Marketgait frontages the development should be of a suitable urban scale to reflect the site's visual prominence both in terms of the Marketgait and adjacent Cultural Quarter.
- Retain the Grade B Listed façade to North Lindsay Street of the former DC Thomson warehouse.
- Retain the existing building line.

### 8.2 Site Layout

- A governing factor in the proposed use of the former DC Thomson warehouse for replacement Council offices, on the east side of the site.
- Also any possible future extension to the Overgate Centre would logically take place northwards from the present Overgate, linking by means of a mall through to the existing mall.
- The leisure element, with its potential to create a visual landmark, should occupy a site at Marketgait/Westport.
- For the reasons outline in 7.5 above, any open space should be centrally located.

### 8.3 Height and Massing

The general maximum height of any buildings should be circa 16 metres largely to respect the four storey scale of the Listed Buildings and general Marketgait frontages. However, in order to achieve the required dynamic architectural statement for the Westport site a taller building would be acceptable in principle.

#### 8.4 Materials and Detailing

The materials to be selected can be traditional and/or contemporary in nature, but should avoid creating a pastiche solution which is considered inappropriate for this site. Well detailed glazing is also encouraged, mirror glass or masked glass to create dummy openings will not be acceptable. The use of innovative materials will be acceptable if appropriate and so long as the selection of materials and detailing takes account of durability and ease of maintenance. Materials should be of good texture, colour and pattern and be lively and attractive.

### **9 THE DUNDEE URBAN DESIGN GUIDE**

9.1 Prospective developers should refer to this important guidance document. This has been produced to set criteria for developers and designers embarking on new projects, and aims to raise design expectations for development in Dundee.

9.2 A number of particular references in the guide are brought to the developers attention;

- Sustainability – the retention and reuse of already built structures where appropriate and practical.
- New buildings – these should be well designed, flexible and outwardly expressive as to their purpose. An agenda of imaginative and innovative contemporary architecture is sought to discourage “off the peg” design. Existing buildings should always be considered for regeneration rather than demolition wherever practicable.
- Public Art – All major new buildings in prominent locations will be subject to a Percent for Art Policy whereby a percentage of the project costs must be used to enhance the artistic content of the project.
- Design Statement – these are needed at the Planning Application stage to demonstrate that the local context has been appreciated and fully appraised and that the development proposals are based on consistent design principles.

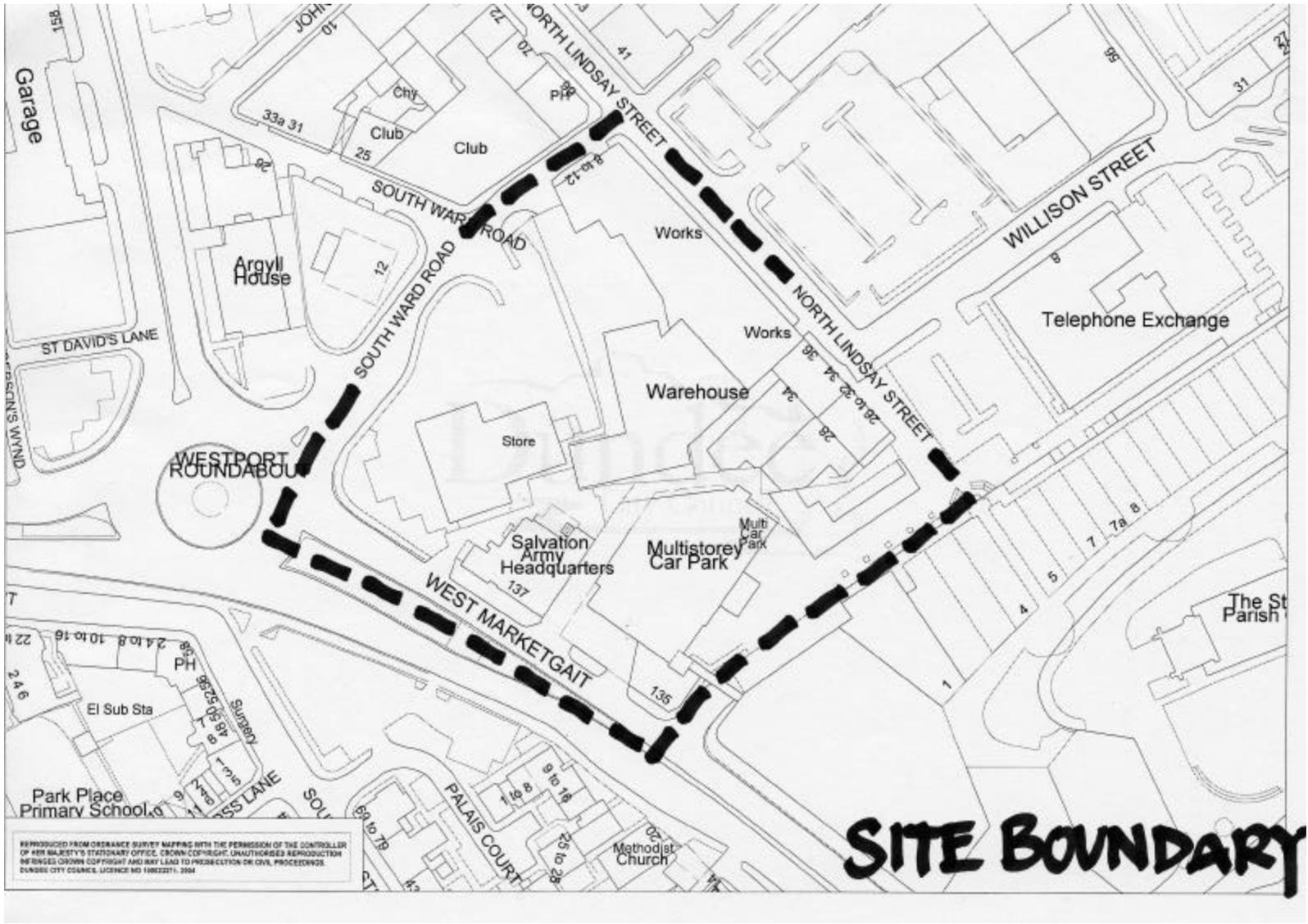
### **10 THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

#### 10.1 Land Ownership

Other than the tenement properties at 26-36 North Lindsay Street, the site is only in four main ownerships and this should assist in achieving a comprehensive approach to its redevelopment.

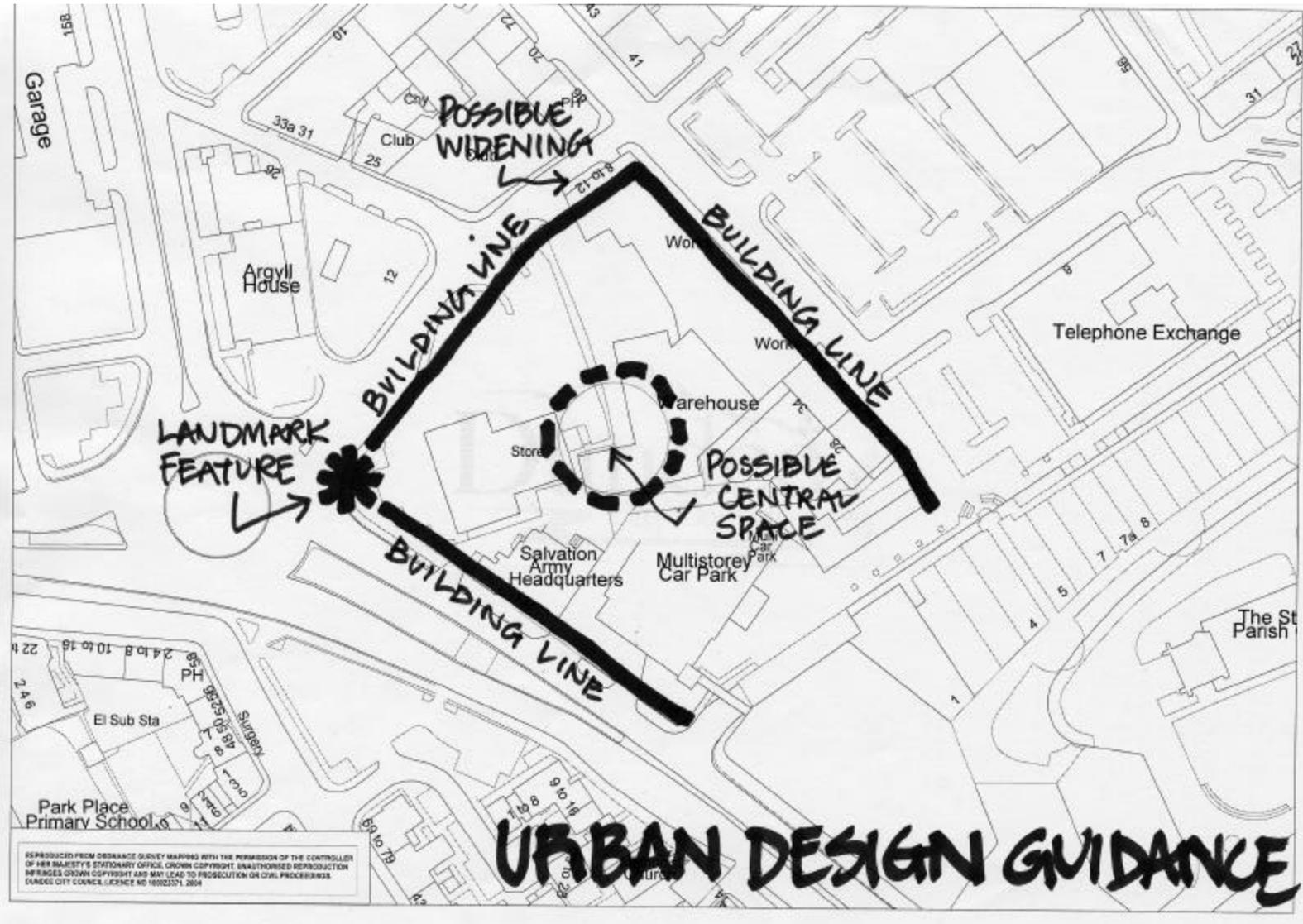
#### 10.2 Site Assembly

Given the importance of a coordinated design for and approach to the redevelopment of the site, the Council will in principle be prepared to exercise its Compulsory Purchase powers to ensure a comprehensive development of the area.



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# URBAN DESIGN GUIDANCE