

REPORT TO: PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE - 11 JUNE 2007

REPORT ON: TAY STREET LANE - DRAFT SITE PLANNING BRIEF

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION

REPORT NO: 269-2007

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval on the draft Tay Street Lane Site Planning Brief and to proceed to consult with owners and interested parties.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- a approve the draft Site Planning Brief for consultation;
 - b remit the Director of Planning and Transportation to consult with the local communities and interested parties on the draft Site Planning Brief; and
 - c remit the Director of Planning and Transportation to report back on the result of the consultation at the November Committee meeting.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 A proportion of the Tay Street Lane area is Council owned and this Brief has the potential to influence the value of the site.

4 SUSTAINABILITY POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This draft 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 brownfield land, and explores the opportunity for greater pedestrian permeability in the Tay Street Lane area, within a location already accessible by public transport and close to local services and amenities.
- 4.2 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.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Wide ranging consultation and engagement upon the draft Site Planning Brief will proceed with the owners and interested parties to ensure that their needs and views on the Tay Street Lane are taken into account.

6 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 The Cultural Quarter Site Planning Brief was approved in 2001, Committee Report 329-2001 refers, for the purposes of promoting the development of a site comprising the former Burns and Harris printing works, the neighbouring car rental premises, the

former Palais building at 31 South Tay Street and the Grade C(s) Listed mews buildings on Tay Street Lane.

- 6.2 The Cultural Quarter Brief has provided the basis for some redevelopment of the Tay Street Lane area. In 2001, planning permission was granted for a 6storey office building on the site of the former Burns and Harris printing works and it is anticipated that this landmark office development will act as a catalyst to bring forward further development in this important part of the Cultural Quarter.
- 6.3 A number of significant sites in the surrounding area now have planning consent for development, which include: an extension to the Overgate shopping centre; a 114 bedroomed hotel and office development at the corner of West Marketgait and Nethergate; and a coffee and music house within the former Forbes Music Shop at 91 Nethergate. These developments continue to demonstrate the viability and diversity of uses and functions within the Cultural Quarter Area.

The redevelopment of the Burns and Harris site is underway and it is timely to review and expand the aspirations of the approved 2001 Cultural Quarter Site Planning Brief.

The draft Tay Street Lane Site Planning Brief illustrates the potential of brownfield development sites in multiple ownerships, anticipates a high standard of redevelopment in keeping with the status of the surrounding area, and encourages a diversity of land uses and pedestrian permeability adding to the vitality of the wider Cultural Quarter area. The primary aims of the draft Site Planning Brief are to:

- a identify a strategic approach to redevelopment within the Tay Street Lane area in order to create and maximise development opportunities that extract the full range of townscape, access and land use benefits from these sites;
 - b outline the expectations for the uses of new and existing buildings, specifically in relation to the creation of a mix of uses that will draw people into this area in the daytime and in the evening;
 - c improve permeability through the area by creating new pedestrian routes from South Tay Street and West Marketgait;
 - d promote quality landscape opportunities for open space and public realm within the study area;
 - e promote a lighting and signage strategy to aid legibility and create a distinctive and inviting environment;
 - f encourage discussion among landowners of the sites identified in the draft Site Planning Brief and developers to consider a comprehensive redevelopment proposal for the study area; and
 - g identify potential for the City Council to invest in environmental improvements.
- 6.4 The draft Site Planning Brief is appended to this report.

7 CONSULTATIONS

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

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Dundee Cultural Quarter, West Marketgait/Long Wynd Brief - Committee Report 329-2001 refers.

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11 May 2007

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APPENDIX 1

CULTURAL QUARTER - DRAFT TAY STREET LANE SITE PLANNING BRIEF

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The emergence of a Cultural Quarter within Dundee in 2001 gave another spatial definition to an area already classed as an "Outstanding Conservation Area" by recognising the rich diversity of modern buildings and their dynamic uses that contribute to the built environment and social character of the place. Such modern uses gain strength from their proximity and compatibility with one another and provide particular opportunities for the city. It is the purpose of this Site Planning Brief to draw attention to the development opportunities within the Tay Street Lane area for new buildings, new spaces and new connections that can add further diversity to the uses within the Dundee Cultural Quarter.

2 GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

- 2.1 This Site Planning Brief focuses on the area in and around Tay Street Lane in the heart of the Dundee Cultural Quarter. The geographical area regarded as the "Cultural Quarter" within Dundee City is centred on South Tay Street and bounded: to the east by the Marketgait roadway and the city centre; to the south by the fringes of the Waterfront and the Seabraes technology Digital Media Park; to the north by the Blackness industrial area; to the west by the University of Dundee; the railway station is a five minute walk away; and Dundee airport is less than ten minutes by car. The proximity and connectivity of the Cultural Quarter with the surrounding areas and their diverse and significant uses, particularly adjacent to the functions of the university campus and to the city centre, makes this place strategically important. Important because it is a place where diverse and mutually beneficial uses meet, where people can come to share in social experiences, and connections and a place where certain new businesses should flourish.
- 2.2 There has been significant public sector investment in the Cultural Quarter in recent years. The Dundee Partnership has funded environmental improvements to enhance the character of the Nethergate and to strengthen pedestrian links to the emerging Seabraes Digital Media Park. The aim of this investment is to improve the quality of public spaces, improve pedestrian connectivity and create an environment in which opportunities for significant development can prosper.
- 2.3 Private investment in this area has been constant over the last few years and approvals for further development such as the landmark office building on West Marketgait and a new venue for a Beanscene Coffee and Music House on the Nethergate. Not only will these new uses facilitate informal networking but should play host to cultural activity and their courtyard areas will make a significant contribution to the quality of the public realm on Tay Street Lane.

3 SIGNIFICANT LAND USES AND DIVERSITY

- 3.1 The city is effectively a crucible of ideas, opportunities and influences that are reliant upon the mix of people, functions, uses and connections within and to other places for survival. Therefore the city is a place for not only economic viability but for more

diverse ways of life and it is the contrasts of such diversity in the population, in the uses of buildings and spaces and their wider connections that provides the city with a stimulus - its "urban buzz", a place that retains and attracts people and business, and equally fosters enterprise and well-being.

- 3.2 A Cultural Quarter can be the focus for this "urban buzz", a city quarter where there is a concentration of cultural activity, whether this is theatres, galleries, cinemas or artists' and craft-person's studios.
- 3.3 Successful Cultural Quarters evolve around the importance of securing a good mix of activity, set within an urban environment or built form, which provides a "good fit", and the importance of conveying an image of place. The Dundee Cultural Quarter contains a variety and hierarchy of land uses.
- 3.4 The Dundee Local Plan 2005, *Policy 1: Vibrant and Sustainable Communities* recognises the benefits of vibrant and sustainable communities and encourages mixed development. However, the policy notes that the amenity of existing and proposed residential areas can be adversely affected by inappropriate development and therefore seeks to protect amenity. Although the mix of uses in the Tay Street Lane area creates a particular area character and lifestyle opportunities, new uses and development should not be to the detriment of the established residential amenities.

4 NEW USES AND CULTURAL VENUES

- 4.1 The consideration of adding further housing, leisure and office uses to the existing mix would be a positive step forward within the Cultural Quarter yet these changes alone are unlikely to be the catalyst that will enliven Tay Street Lane and significantly contribute to further diversity of the wider area.
- 4.2 The focus for development must be on accommodating uses that support cultural activity underpinning a range of commercial, creative industries that includes: media, music, publishing, fashion, computer games, architecture, and even hair-dressing etc. This creativity is a source of added value and the opportunity exists for Dundee to exploit its academic successes.
- 4.3 Whilst bars and restaurants may facilitate informal networking, and a supply of flexible office space may accommodate cultural businesses, there is an identified need to stimulate the creation of more cultural venues.
- 4.4 Dundee Local Plan 2005 - Policy 17: Cultural Quarter encourages uses and developments which will further develop the Cultural Quarter's role as a focus for cultural and related leisure and business activities. The policy specifically encourages an increased provision of small scale independent and speciality retailers allowing a variety of uses in this area, however, to ensure there is no conflict between these uses proposals must have regard to a number of other policies in the Local Plan.
- 4.5 There is a range of potential development sites that could contain a mix of uses that enhance present diversity within the Cultural Quarter.

5 AREA CHARACTER AND FUTURE AMBITIONS

- 5.1 In addition to the variety of uses in the area and its designation as a Cultural Quarter, the study area has its own distinctive character, attributable in part to the diversity of buildings both old and new.
- 5.2 The physical character of the Quarter is defined by the buildings that comprise the edges of the street along the Nethergate leading to either the Perth Road or along South Tay Street. These buildings predominantly date from the early to the late 19th Century and are stylistic exemplars of their period which provide a streetscape of high quality visual diversity and give home to a multiplicity of uses. Modern additions to the streetscape, and key uses of the area, include the architecturally and culturally significant Dundee Rep theatre and the Dundee Contemporary Arts Centre. The design of the new buildings and public spaces will rise to the challenge of Policy 55: Urban Design of the Dundee Local Plan 2005, and the principles of the Dundee Urban Design Guide 2001, in order that they will add further merit to the "outstanding conservation area" classification and attract people and businesses who would wish to be part of an attractive place to work and visit.
- 5.3 A comprehensive Design Statement drawing upon the content of this Brief and illustrating the arrival of particular design solutions should be developed as part of the process of pre-application discussions and as a key document in the planning application submission for the sites identified in accordance with Policy 55 of the Dundee Local Plan 2005. A quality environment is dependent on the inter-relationship between building form and use, architectural style, streetscape spaces, places and movement patterns

6 THE EXISTING BUILDINGS ON TAY STREET LANE

- 6.1 Tay Street Lane and the surrounding study area contain a number of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. These are important not only for the character of the area but for the city as a whole. The Dundee Local Plan 2005 through Policy 59: Alternative Uses for Listed Buildings, Policy 61: Development in Conservation Areas and Policy 62: Demolition of Listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas seeks to protect these important buildings and their settings whilst recognising that often change is necessary and that development can take place whilst not only preserving but enhancing the building or wider area.
- 6.2 The existing mews buildings on Tay Street Lane are Category C(s) listed by Historic Scotland being "important for their relation to South Tay Street" and have an architectural charm founded on their contrast of scale and construction materials with the South Tay Street buildings. Based upon the findings of a visual survey limited to the exterior of the mews, buildings appear to be in a poor structural condition. However, Historic Scotland's Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas 1998, states that with regard to listed buildings "no worthwhile building should be lost to our environment unless it is demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that every effort has been exerted by all concerned to find practical ways of keeping it". A Conservation Plan to support the Listed Building Application for the conversion, or other, is required. Historic Scotland's Policy Guidance 1 "Conservation Plans" provides guidance upon the preparation and content of a Conservation Plan.

- 6.3 Should the existing buildings present an insurmountable impediment, in whole or in part, to the redevelopment of the sites then the aforementioned feasibility criteria must be ably demonstrated within a Design Statement.

7 CONNECTIVITY, PERMEABILITY AND ACCESS

- 7.1 The Dundee Local Plan 2005, Policy 81: Pedestrians, outlines that the need for good pedestrian facilities can be undervalued when designing new developments yet is an important element in their economic and social success. All developments should ensure that pedestrian accessibility has been properly addressed and this will include increased pedestrian activity on and around development locations.
- 7.2 A significant barrier to the success of developments on Tay Street Lane and in the wider Cultural Quarter is the ease of pedestrian movement through the area. Presently pedestrians going to the theatre, bars and businesses on South Tay Street from the city centre are funnelled along the Nethergate. Increasing pedestrian permeability both to and through the Quarter is imperative to support new development and to enhance the existing. Tay Street Lane itself is a no through route and this presents a difficult environment in which to establish new businesses and cultural activities. Here the importance of opening up the area, by improving the existing lane and creating new pedestrian links to maximise east/west pedestrian movement should be key to its success.
- 7.3 It is anticipated that car parking requirements for new development will be met through the multi-storey car park at Greenmarket to the south and those within the Overgate Shopping Centre

8 SUSTAINABILITY

- 8.1 The design, construction and layout of the new development should embrace the principles of sustainable development and energy efficiency. Planning applications should, where appropriate, make reference to the Dundee Sustainable Development Guide for Construction (2006).