

**REPORT TO: PLANNING & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE - 10 MARCH 2008**

**REPORT ON: DRAFT FORMER DENS METALS SITE PLANNING BRIEF**

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

**REPORT NO: 67-2008**

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of the Report is to seek approval of a Draft Site Planning Brief in order to proceed to consultation with adjacent owners and interested parties.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- approves the attached Draft Site Planning Brief for the purposes of consultation;
- remits the Director of Planning and Transportation to consult with adjacent owners and interested parties on the content of the Draft Site Planning Brief;
- remits the Director of Planning and Transportation to report back on the results of the consultation.

## **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **4 BACKGROUND**

4.1 Since 2003 the Stobswell Partnership, an alliance between Dundee City Council, Scottish Enterprise Tayside, NHS Tayside, Tayside Police and Stobswell Community Forum have directed significant funds and resources for the regeneration of the Stobswell area in order to recreate an attractive place where "people choose to live and work". The former Dens Metals site is an opportunity to create an attractive high-quality housing development in a prominent location at the junction between Alexander Street and Dens Road to increase residential choice within Stobswell.

4.2 The former Dens Metals site is held on the Dundee City Council Economic Development Department account and was cleared of buildings in 2005 in anticipation of future redevelopment.

4.3 The site is bounded to the north and east by a steep embankment of trees and Abertay Housing Association housing beyond; to the north west by the Dens Road market complex; to the south and west by Dens Road, and the site is on an axis with the eastern end of Alexander Street.

4.4 The former Dens Metals site is not specifically allocated in the Dundee Local Plan Review 2005. However, planning permission was granted in 2005 (incorporating the Dens Road Market complex) for new housing which would provide greater dwelling choice within the Stobswell Housing Investment Focus Area.

- 4.5 The site is a prominent location on Dens Road and is directly opposite the eastern end of Alexander Street. The Draft Site Planning Brief anticipates that a high quality redevelopment of at least four storeys in height, comprising up to 16 apartments, is justified to meet the townscape requirements of the site. The Draft Site Planning Brief requires a high standard of site planning and architectural design to create the positive 'sense of character' that a good new building can give to such a prominent location.
- 4.6 The predominant dwellings within the Stobswell area are Victorian Tenements and in order to retain families and attract new-comers to settle a greater range of dwelling types are needed to provide for the long-term sustainability of the area. A high quality housing development on this strategically important site would provide greater dwelling choice in the area.
- 4.7 The Draft Dens Metals Site Planning Brief forms the Appendix to this report.

## **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.
- 5.2 The Stobswell Neighbourhood Regeneration Framework 2002 was prepared to provide a comprehensive basis to secure, and significantly improve, the residential and commercial sustainability of the Stobswell area. Creating better dwelling choice and supporting enterprise within the Stobswell area by redeveloping brownfield sites for housing, or other appropriate uses, is a primary objective of the Regeneration Framework which aims to create an attractive and sustainable environment.

## **6 CONSULTATIONS**

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

## **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Planning and Transportation Committee of 27 September 2004, Report 597-2004, "The Stobswell Neighbourhood Regeneration Framework, 2002".
- 7.2 Dundee Local Plan Review 2005.

Mike Galloway  
Director of Planning & Transportation

Ian Mudie  
Head of Planning

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8 February 2008

Dundee City Council  
Tayside House  
Dundee

## APPENDIX 1

### THE FORMER DENS METALS SITE- SITE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

#### INTRODUCTION

This Draft Site Planning Brief is supplementary planning guidance to the Dundee Local Plan Review 2005 providing site specific policy guidance for developers and designers in order that an informed design solution is achieved for the satisfactory redevelopment of this site.

The vacant former Dens Metals site is a brownfield site situated in a prominent location at the junction of Dens Road and Alexander Street, on the edge of the Stobswell Regeneration Area. The site, extending to 0.266ha, is owned by Dundee City Council.

Since 2002 the Stobswell Partnership, and alliance between Dundee City Council, Scottish Enterprise Tayside, NHS Tayside and Tayside Police have directed significant funding and resources for the regeneration of the Stobswell area in order to recreate an attractive place where 'people choose to live and work'. The former Dens Metals site provides the opportunity to create an attractive and high-quality residential development in a very prominent location that contributes to the regeneration projects in Stobswell.

#### LOCATION & SITE HISTORY

The site:

- is located on the western edge of the Stobswell Regeneration Area and is situated between the Albert Street District Shopping Area of Stobswell and the Hilltown District Shopping area both of which are a 15-minute walk away.
- has excellent cross city transportation connections as well as being near to a large range of commercial and recreational amenities within the city centre, less than 1km to the south along Victoria Road.
- is bounded to the north and east by a steep embankment of trees and Abertay Housing Association housing beyond; to the north west by the Dens Road market complex; to the south and west by Dens Road, and the site is on axis with the eastern end of Alexander Street.

From the mid to the late 19th century the site was a gravel pit and then latterly cooling ponds for the adjacent spinning mill. In the mid 20th century the ponds were filled in and the Dens Metals smelting building was erected. The site remained as Dens Metals smelting works until the late 1990s.

In 2005 the site was cleared of all buildings to the satisfaction of the City Engineer in anticipation of future development and the land-clearance project files are available for inspection. These documents however do not form part of the sales particulars for the site and an independent site investigations by interested parties is advised.

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

In 2005 planning permission was given for 29 townhouses and 14 apartments to be built on the area covered by the Dens Road Market and the former Dens Metals Site, planning application 05/00212/Ful (see overleaf). The 14 apartments were located on the former Dens Metals Site, and were justified on townscape planning grounds because a four-storey apartment building would form an attractive new focal point to the eastern end of Alexander Street. However, vehicular access for the approved planning application layout access was through the area occupied by Dens Road Market and in order to access the former Dens Metals site a new vehicular access will have to be constructed directly off Dens Road. (See Vehicular Access section).

## **FUTURE LAND USES**

The City Council is determined to achieve a high standard of redevelopment with all new development opportunities in Dundee and many parts of the wider Stobswell area are undergoing land-use change from industrial and commercial premises to housing. This vacant site offers opportunity for designers and developers to positively reshape the built character of this area and contribute to the regeneration successes of Stobswell.

The former Dens Metals site is appropriate for residential redevelopment only. Continual development of new housing in the Stobswell area will provide greater dwelling choice in order to retain families and attract newcomers to settle providing for the general long-term sustainability of Stobswell.

Planning Application No. 05/00212/FUL - Site Plan

## **THE DESIGN STATEMENT & PRE-APPLICATION MEETINGS**

The Dundee Local Plan Review 2005, Policy 55 'Urban Design' states that "The City Council requires the use of a Design Statement for planning applications for listed buildings, for new buildings or extensions to existing buildings on significant sites". The former Dens Metals site is regarded as a 'significant site' because of its townscape value visually terminating the east end of Alexander Street and a Design Statement must be submitted with the planning application. The Design Statement must illustrate an exploration of the site context and should include clear diagrams indicating the selection of a range of option layouts, construction materials etc. Comprehensive guidance on the preparation and content of Design Statements is provided in the Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note 68 'Design Statement'.

The use of pre-application discussions between relevant Dundee City Council Planning and Transportation Department Officers and the developer / agent are encouraged early in the design process and will aid the production of an appropriate Design Statement that clearly demonstrates the merits of redevelopment proposals. (Officer contacts are provided on page 9.)

## **DESIGN GUIDANCE & STANDARDS**

The Dundee Local Plan Review 2005 at Appendix 1 generally requires such an 'Inner City' site to be developed with houses only, however given the townscape importance and the topography of the site, this site planning brief anticipates that only apartments will be built on the site in order that the overall design, scale and massing of the proposals meets the expectation of a high quality focal point building. It is envisaged that up to 16 apartments

could be built on the site to the requirements of Policy 5 of the Dundee Local Plan Review 2005 and in accordance with the relevant Dundee Local Plan Review 2005 Appendix 1 Standards.

Dundee Local Plan Review 2005 Appendix 1 - 'Design of New Housing' quantitative policy standards applicable to the site include:

- 1) Flats /Apartments
  - a) **'Flat Type'**  
All flats to have a minimum of 80sqm living accommodation
  - b) **'Car / Cycle Provision'**  
All flats to have 130% for car space and 30% visitor parking should be provided within the curtilage of the site. Secure indoor storage for cycles and household waste must be provided.
  - c) **'Amenity / Garden Space'**  
A minimum of 100sqm of usable private communal garden ground should be provided, with clothes drying area in addition. The provision of usable balconies is encouraged however their provision will not enable a reduction of the extent of the private communal area. \*(variation to the Dundee Local Plan Review 2005 standards).
  - d) **'Privacy'**  
A minimum distance of 18m is to be maintained between the facing windows of habitable rooms or between balconies and the facing windows of habitable rooms. Living room windows and balconies should not unacceptably overlook private gardens of houses.

## **ASPIRATIONS FOR THE NEW BUILDING**

A high standard of site planning and architectural design are required to create the positive 'sense of character' a good new building can give to this site. The thoughtful integration of townscape modelling and careful orientation of buildings to maximise solar gain should be the starting points to developing a successful site layout. The high quality of design anticipated will also be achieved through the use of contemporary modern architectural styles, construction details and landscape features, as well as through the innovative use of materials that respond harmoniously with the surrounding area to create a valued 21st century contribution to Dens Road and Alexander Street.

The Dundee Local Plan Review 2005, Policy 57 'Visual Impact on Major Routes' applies to the determination of this site and requires that development improves the quality of the environment of Dundee along important routes through the city. Dens Road and Alexander Street are important routes through the City.

## **BUILDING FORM AND SITE LAYOUT**

To balance the need for an appropriate new building line and to provide privacy to ground floor dwellings from noise generated by vehicles and pedestrians along Dens Road it is anticipated that the new building line will be set back from the rear of the footway. This

buffer area should be an area of soft-landscaped garden ground with a boundary formed by well-designed walls or appropriate hedging etc.

The overall height of the building is expected to be four storeys with a roof however, given the surrounding topography the building may be five storeys in height providing that its proposed height is justified by accurate drawings/images showing the proposal in the context of adjacent dwellings and ground levels.

Under-croft ground floor car parking is acceptable in order to maximise the use of communal garden grounds to the rear of the site and to guard against any privacy concerns. Nonetheless under-croft parking requires detailed design as an inactive and bland ground floor elevation will not be supported, nor will the provision of undercroft parking remove the need for a landscaped "buffer" area.

An area of public green space and a children's' play area are located adjacent to the south and east of the site and it may be advantageous to locate the communal garden area and clothes drying area within the south and east area. Controlled pedestrian access to the development should also be provided to give easy access to the network of paths surrounding the site.

### **SECURED BY DESIGN STATUS**

The Tayside Police Architectural Liaison Officer must be consulted by the Applicant / Agent in order to achieve 'Secured by Design' status consistent with the other requirements of this brief. The achievement of the 'Secured by Design' criteria must be included within the content of the Design Statement.

### **ELEVATIONS**

It is anticipated that all elevations will have a high window to wall ratio to take advantage of solar gain and the views from the site, as well as to give a generous and contemporary aesthetic to the buildings. No direction on architectural style is provided other than to state that the Dundee Urban Design Guide 2001 encourages "imaginative and innovative contemporary architecture" and "discourages "off-the-peg" design and debased versions of historical styles". The site is in a very prominent location at an important cross-city junction and the design quality is of paramount importance to all elevations. The west elevation will form a new edge to Dens Road, the south elevation provides a place of architectural opportunity facing south onto Dens Road and the east elevation should be regarded as an informal elevation to the rear courtyard/car parking area.

### **CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS**

It is expected that the construction facing materials will be of a high quality and the careful selection of innovative cladding systems, natural stone or other materials will be encouraged to achieve a strong and attractive architectural aesthetic. The use of sustainable construction systems and techniques is encouraged to promote good environmental practice with the redevelopment of this brownfield site.

### **VEHICULAR ACCESS**

Vehicular access to the site can only be achieved by upgrading the existing three-way light controlled junction of Dens Road/Alexander Street and creating a fourth light controlled arm

to the existing junction. This new access point will be formed directly in line with the mid-point of Alexander Street and will be the sole means for vehicular access/egress from the former Dens Metals Site. The cost of the necessary upgrade to the existing light controlled junction, and the formation of the new arm to the junction, will be paid for by the developer. The new roadway created to service the development will be constructed in accordance with the current Dundee City Council "Streets Ahead" Roads Standards, however from the new junction the internal road and parking area will not be adopted by Dundee City Council. A schedule of appropriate hard landscaping materials is provided within the "Streets Ahead" Roads Standards and the selection of high quality finishing materials with low maintenance requirements and attractive finish and colour is encouraged to contribute to the overall high quality of development expected.

## **LANDSCAPE**

The creation of a small area of communal greenspace, is expected to form a 'set-back' from Dens Road and should contain limited tree planting of an appropriately mature specification to provide privacy and seasonal interest. The steep embankment to the rear of the site contains some semi-mature trees that should be retained and the remainder of this area should be cleared of weeds and ground cover and re-landscaped with appropriate plants. All communal landscaping will be subject to a maintenance agreement, which must be submitted as part of the planning application.

## **DRAINAGE**

The Dundee Local Plan Review 2005, Policy 75 'Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems' (SUDS)- states that "All appropriate development proposals must be accompanied by a Sustainable Drainage Scheme at the time of submitting a planning application. This must be supplemented by a Drainage Impact Assessment that shows the impact of a 1 in 200-year rainstorm event". Pre-application guidance should be sought from the Dundee City Council SUDS Group as to the form the drainage scheme for the site should take. (Contact Linda Robinson, Assistant Engineer, tel. 01382 433433).

## **USEFUL OFFICER CONTACTS**

### **DCC Economic Development Department:**

Colin Craig, Estates Manager, DCC Economic Development Dept, tel. 01382 434349 or email [colin.craig@dundeecity.gov.uk](mailto:colin.craig@dundeecity.gov.uk), and

### **DCC Planning and Transportation Department:**

Nigel McDowell, Planning Officer, Partnership and Regeneration Team, tel. 01382 433464, or email [nigel.mcdowell@dundeecity.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.mcdowell@dundeecity.gov.uk) and

Charlie Walker, Senior Planning Officer, Development Quality Case-officer, tel. 01382 433378 or email [charlie.walker@dundeecity.gov.uk](mailto:charlie.walker@dundeecity.gov.uk)

# Site Plan

