

**REPORT TO: PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE –
1 DECEMBER 2003**

REPORT ON: DRAFT DEVELOPMENT BRIEF – DUNDEE STATION

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION

REPORT NO: 709-2003

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Following the approval of the content of the Dundee Station Draft Development Brief on 31 March 2004, the Brief was circulated to interested parties for consultation purposes. The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the Committee of the outcome of these consultations, and to seek approval for the next course of action.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the consultees comments on the Development Brief.
- 2.2 Approve the suggested minor amendments to the Dundee Station Brief outlined in paragraph 7.2 and refer it to the Development Quality Committee as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 2.3 Remit the Director of Planning and Transportation to develop a passenger survey with the Rail Passenger Committee.
- 2.4 Remit the Director of Planning and Transportation to issue the Brief to interested parties in the development sector.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the approval and issue of this Brief.

4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The redevelopment of the station will help to contribute to the viability and vitality of the city centre. With the successful improvement of this important site the distinctive character of the City Centre will be enhanced and assist in addressing a key theme of Dundee 21 "Places, spaces and objects combine meaning and beauty with utility".
- 4.2 The upgrading of the major access corridors into the City Centre will have considerable benefits for the visual elements of the environment and accessibility.
- 4.3 The development of this site will help discourage commuting.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Provisions for pedestrians are an important objective and access for the disabled is an issue which will be addressed in the development of this site.

6 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 The Draft Station Brief was approved on 31 March 2003 and issued to over 30 organisations, representing rail users groups, the rail industry, rail operators, civic groups, adjacent local authorities, Community Councils, the Scottish Executive and Scottish Enterprise Tayside.

The following comments have been received. Generally, these comments are fully supportive of the Council's approach and therefore no major amendments to the Brief are required. Several minor rewordings and additional pieces of information are suggested as outlined in paragraph 6.26 - conclusion.

- 6.2 Scottish Enterprise Tayside: are totally supportive of the need to substantially improve the station, but are concerned that the Briefs plans indicate a multi storey car park on the site of a proposed office block SET are pursuing with DQD. Following an exchange of letters the matter has now been resolved and a revised plan will be included in the finalised Brief which accommodates an office development on the western position of the adjacent site.
- 6.3 Anderson Strathern Solicitors: representing DQD and have also objected to the Brief in broadly a similar vein to Scottish Enterprise Tayside. This matter is being taken forward through the Finalised Dundee Local Plan Review.
- 6.4 West End Community Council: are generally supportive of the goals of the Brief, but have made some comments. These relate to the requirement for a solution to crossing the Marketgait at grade level; their view that Dundee's history of tall building construction and use of modern materials do not inspire confidence that the resulting structure will be an asset; and that the plans do not replicate the present very convenient car drop off point. These are all matters of detail to be considered when plans are forthcoming. As suggested by West End Community Council, proposals will be available for close public scrutiny.
- 6.5 Broughty Ferry Community Council: support the basic concept to improve the station. They are concerned, however, about design and question some of the wording in the Brief's Design Principles. They believe that there should be an architectural competition involving the public. Also, they believe that natural stone should be used as the finishing material. In response, at this stage, it is too early to state whether an architectural competition will take place, in advance of any developer interest in the station. Also, natural stone is only one of a variety of finishes which may be appropriate.
- 6.6 Scottish Executive Development Department – Planning Division: provided a lengthy and informative response. In conclusion the Executive think that the Brief is very good but suggest that the Rail Authorities, in particular Network Rail, are involved at the earliest opportunity. Network Rail's comments form part of this consultation report. The Executive also make reference to the rail industry's finance, doubting any significant financial contribution. Developer contribution, possibly within a joint venture is, in the Executive's view, essential.
- 6.7 Fife Council – Planning Department: consider that the proposed upgrade should benefit people travelling from Fife. However, a number of comments are made. The Brief should make provision for a bus pick up point, be clearer on how pedestrians will access the station, show how disabled people will access the station and park at the station, provision for cyclists and provision of CCTV. These are all recognised as essential elements which will be considered at the detailed design stage, and which are in part considered in the Brief. However, cycling provision will be added to the Brief.
- 6.8 Angus Council: also believe a transport interchange is required.
- 6.9 Network Rail: comments have been received from both their Commercial Manager, responsible for the strategic development of the Scottish rail network and the commercial liaison with third parties who seek to enhance it, and also from their Strategy and Planning Division.

Overall, Network Rail commends the City Council's aspirations to improve the Central Waterfront that includes the "street level station building". They recognise that the present arrangements that exist for the public, and in particular accessibility from the city centre, are

less than ideal and that this initiative would go a long way towards improving access to the station for people utilising public and private transport. They take issue with the Brief's statement that the station is a "public embarrassment".

Some more specific comments are offered in various degrees of detail, but which are not seen as any impediment to making further progress. For example, mention is made of the need to safeguard present operations such as the signalling centre, complying with "Codes of Practice", formal approval through the rail industry regulatory process, the requirements of the rail tunnel and, more specifically, the need to include the station operator Scotrail in the debate. Network Rail also outline some present ongoing developments at the station which are mostly operational.

In conclusion, they state that the City Council should engage in further dialogue, but that at some stage will need to agree to Network Rails development agreement procedure if any detailed feasibility work is to be undertaken.

6.10 Scotrail: have not yet commented on the Brief. This will be followed up.

6.11 Virgin Trains: endorse the City Council initiative.

6.12 GNER: suggest that Dundee Station is a "smaller station" and that sufficient local demand needs to be created to warrant the aspirations of a significant investment. The Brief's paragraph 7.4, suggests GNER, (relating to other users and development of the evening economy) is therefore seen as important.

A range of comments relating to accessibility, parking, information etc are also supplied. More significantly, they state that the Brief does not consider more fully multi-mode interchange facilities or growth in non-rail interchange.

6.13 Strathtay Bus and Coach: asked if there was no possibility of a new rail station at Shore Terrace, underground, with buses above, as has been developed at Sunderland. Also comments are made again about accessibility following demolition of the overbridge, bus and coach drop off point. More general comments on the traffic arrangements and size of junctions in the Central Waterfront Masterplan were also mentioned.

6.14 Travel Dundee: are pleased to note that the Brief takes account of the provision of facilities for buses.

6.15 The Strategic Rail Authority: noted the Council's aspirations to create a new station in Dundee and sent a copy of the SRA's Planning Criteria, which illustrates the type of information the SRA would expect in appraising any bid for public sector funding. This may ultimately be useful in future once a proposal becomes clearer.

6.16 Dundee Accessible Transport Action Group: summarised their concerns as that it is not enough to ensure that interior design is barrier free for disabled people, but that it is also necessary to design the surrounding street and vehicle access with this also in mind. They refer in particular to the distance to the Whitehall Street area bus interchange, the need for a shuttle service to the bus station, parking for disabled badge holders, proper sized lifts and the sizeable boulevards which the plans show surrounding the proposed site which need to be crossed.

The whole question of accessibility for all and permeability is one of the most important elements of the Central Waterfront Masterplan. It is expected that all of the DATAG concerns will be resolved at the detailed planning stage.

6.17 Rail Passengers Committee: state that the Development Brief strikes the right balance between providing facilities for non-passenger opportunities and facilities for passenger. The

Committee reminds the Council that a stations primary function is for transporting people and should not be distracted from this by becoming a retail development. Whilst they are concerned about funding they believe the partnership approach being adopted by the Council gives the best chance of success.

The Rail Passenger Committee are to undertake a passenger survey in light of the Tay Estuary Rail Study, and have suggested that the questionnaire can now be tailored to include output the Council wishes to see delivered from the Brief. This is welcomed and could add weight to the need to redevelop the station. The outcome of this will be reported to the Planning and Transportation Committee in due course.

- 6.18 Sustrans: wholeheartedly support the initiative to provide a new station, reminding the Council of their view on the hierarchy of road use in order of importance ie pedestrians, cyclists, public transport, motor vehicles.
- 6.19 Tayside Friends of the Earth: have advised that they want a transport interchange included within these proposals. The arguments for a transport interchange were considered at the Local Plan Public Inquiry in 1996, and rejected, however, the current proposals do now contain facilities which will allow for interchange between rail, bus and car.
- 6.20 Angus and Dundee Tourist Board: welcome the project and would be pleased to be involved in any Client group or advisory process. The Board ask that in paragraph 8.1 “a Tourist Information Service” be replaced by “a Visitor Information provision” so as not to imply relocation or duplication of the Tourist Information Centre in Castle Street. This is a minor issue which can be included in the Brief.
- 6.21 Royal Fine Art Commission for Scotland: have commended the Council for taking the initiative to prepare a Brief for the station and wished to continue to be consulted on the proposals progress.
- 6.22 Historic Scotland: welcome the initiative and point to the former Dundee West station which occupied the site as a precedent with real urban presence, advising that any resultant building should look like a railway station rather than part of an office block. Paragraph 7.5 of the Brief sets out a design principle that any development should express its station use.
- 6.23 Dundee Civic Trust: supports entirely the content of the Brief. Their only comment is that the proposed multi storey car park should not lead to an increase in commuter parking space numbers in accordance with the Local Plan. In reality, the multi storey car park will replace the existing surface level car park to maintain the levels and distribution of commuter car parking in the city centre.
- 6.24 The University of Dundee - School of Town and Regional Planning: The School agrees pedestrian and vehicular access to the station and access to bus services from the station is poor, but any redevelopment of the wider station area offers a positive opportunity to resolve this, particularly in the exciting context of the Central Waterfront framework.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 It can be seen from the foregoing that the various consultees are generally very supportive of the Briefs content. However, some of the consultees, Friends of the Earth, Angus Council and GNER have used this opportunity to raise the issue of the lack of a transport interchange for Dundee. Although the present brief does not include the provision of a bus station as such, it does provide for bus services to link with both rail and car passengers thereby achieving the necessary level of interchange which has been requested. Also, the Briefs attached plans, which show the station site surrounded by major traffic routes on three sides, gave rise to several concerns about pedestrian accessibility. At this stage the plans are

indicative and require to be developed further as part of the Central Waterfront infrastructure studies, presently ongoing.

7.2 There are a number of concerns and comments which can be accommodated in the Brief by some minor rewordings and additions as set out below:

- substitute the Brief's Plan 2 with an amended plan showing a relocated multi-storey car park which accommodates an office development to the west;
- add a specific reference to cycling provision within the Brief; and
- substitute "visitor information provision" for Travel Information Service.

8 CONSULTATIONS

8.1 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.

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None.

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