

**REPORT TO:** PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE - 11 DECEMBER 2006

**REPORT ON:** WHITFIELD DESIGN FRAMEWORK - REPORT ON RESULT OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXERCISE

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

**REPORT NO:** 668-2006

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the outcome of consultation on the draft Whitfield Framework and to seek approved of amendments to it and the incorporation of this Framework into a draft Design Guide as a basis for further consultation an the development of a strategy for achieving the continuing regeneration of the Whitfield area.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- i Notes the results of the public consultation exercise on the Draft Framework.
  - ii Approved the revised Design Framework as a basis for taking forward discussion to secure the implementation of proposals to further regenerate the Whitfield area.
  - iii Remits the Director of Planning & Transportation and the Director of Housing to consult with interested parties on the draft Design Guide.
  - iv Remits the Director of Planning & Transportation, the Director of Housing and the Director of Economic Development to further investigate issues in relation to Dunbar Park and the Whitfield Shopping Centre that emerged through the consultation process.
  - v Remits the Director of Planning & Transportation, the Director of Housing and the Director of Economic Development to bring forward a report outlining the preferred means for making available the Council's land interests and securing the full implementation of the revised Design Framework
  - vi Remits the Director of Planning & Transportation to investigate the issues of vandalism of street lighting in Whitfield and identify lighting columns and footpaths that could be removed.

## **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The costs of engaging consultants to investigate issues raised in relation to Dunbar Park can be met from the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund with a possible contribution from Communities Scotland.

## **4 SUSTAINABILITY POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

### **4.1 Sustainability**

The Design Framework is considered to have a positive impact on the Council's Sustainability Policy as the proposal would meet the relevant key principles of the Policy. In this case the key principles are: Compliance with Environmental Legislation, Energy and Water, transport and Travel and Building Environment.

#### 4.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

As the Design Framework and Design Guide are developed they will be screened for applicability to the EU Directive.

#### 4.3 Anti Poverty

In accordance with the Community Plan and Local Housing Strategy, the Design Framework will positively address poverty issues in the Whitfield area.

### 5 **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The consultation exercise ensured that a wide range of interested parties were given the opportunity to participate. Equality issues will be considered in developing and implementing the Design Framework.

### 6 **BACKGROUND**

- 6.1 Reference is made to Article XI of the minute of the meeting 20 June 2005 when it was agreed to:

- i Approve the draft Masterplan for purposes of consultation.
- ii Remit the Director of Planning & Transportation to consult with the local community and interested parties on the terms and content of the draft Masterplan.
- iii Remit the Director of Planning & Transportation to report back on the results of the consultation exercise.

- 6.2 Whitfield is identified in the Local Housing Strategy as a priority regeneration area. There are a considerable number of former housing areas in Whitfield where properties have been demolished and temporary open space created. These sites offer a good opportunity for new private and social rented housing development on brownfield land. The success of recent development in Whitfield demonstrates that there is a strong market and that potential exists for further housing development and the continued regeneration of Whitfield.

- 6.3 The regeneration can also contribute towards addressing the shortage of affordable houses in the city. Provision is made in the Design Guide for developers to provide 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses in a mix of detached, semi-detached and terrace properties. This will create affordability, choice and add interest to the development as a whole.

- 6.4 It was to illustrate the potential for new housing on these sites and to create a basis for discussion with residents and other interested parties that the draft Masterplan or Design Framework was prepared. This draft Framework identified potential for the development of between 700 and 900 new dwellings within a high quality environment supported by infrastructure to serve the new and existing community.

- 6.5 Drawing on the successful Ardler Masterplan, the draft Design Framework embodied a number of principles which addressed the current problems and efficiencies in Whitfield and also the needs of the new larger community. These principles included:

- Creation of new quality neighbourhoods within Whitfield, each with a sense of place, achieved by means of open space, tree belts and avenues of street trees reinforcing the adjacency to the countryside to the north and Dighty Park to the south.
- Safety/natural supervision.

- Open space appropriate in scale and in a dispersed hierarchy.
- Permeability with easy, calmed, hierarchical access for cars, bus and cycles as well as pedestrians.
- Appropriate shopping provision.
- Most new housing to be private housing and mainly houses, to improve the tenure mix and to make a serious contribution to the private sector land supply in the east of the city.
- Flexibility to allow for further demolitions.

6.6 Key features of the draft Design Framework included 700-900 new dwellings of mixed tenure, high quality landscaping, a new network of roads, the retention of the existing shopping centre and local shops, the retention of community facilities and the retention of central open space. Fundamental to the Design Framework, is a proposal to link some existing cul-de-sacs across the neighbourhood to create a 'high street' which contains and links housing, schools, shopping provision, community facilities and recreation areas.

## **7 RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXERCISE**

7.1 Feedback through the public consultation exercise has been generally positive with constructive comments being made on all aspects of the Design Framework. A summary of the main concerns raised is given below.

7.2 Whilst many respondents supported the concept of the 'high street', concerns were raised by some residents who felt that this may lead to rat running through the estate. The new streets within the network will be arranged in a hierarchy in order of location, physical scale, movement capacity, activity and mix of uses. At the top of this hierarchy is the High Street running east to west through the centre of the site linking the community to the local shops, recreation areas and community facilities. A notional position for this is shown on the concept layout. This street will be designed to ensure low speeds. It will form the principal movement and activity spine through the Whitfield area connecting the enlarged road network and providing access to the new development opportunities.

7.3 The draft Design Framework shows the retention of the central sports pitches and areas of open space elsewhere in the estate. Many residents welcomed proposals to improve the quality of open space within the estate but there was some concern raised over the potential loss of the historical open space (ie that not resulting from demolitions) as these areas lie close to existing housing. The draft Design Guide requires developers to, in conjunction with the Leisure and Communities Department and Sportscotland, establish what level and type of open space will be required for the enlarged population of Whitfield. Reference will be made to the City Council's Public Open Space Strategy. This will ensure the provision of an appropriate level of good quality outdoor recreational space and other public open space throughout the Whitfield area. Particular attention will be paid to those areas of historical open space in close proximity to existing housing.

7.4 The draft Design Framework showed the retention of the shopping centre and the smaller shops elsewhere in the estate. Residents were pleased to see the small convenience stores retained but raised concern over the retention of the shopping centre. They did not consider the centre to be an attractive place to shop and it was suggested that provision should be made for a replacement centre more suited to the needs of current and future residents. Further exploration of the issues relating to the shopping centre will take place in conjunction with the Economic Development Department. These investigations will look at the potential for upgrading the existing centre or developing a replacement and the impact this may have on the existing small convenience stores elsewhere in Whitfield.

- 7.5 The existing community facilities within the estate - library and learning centre, health centre, Whitfield Family and Child Centre and Whitfield Community Centre - were shown to be retained. Leisure and Communities officers indicated that some of these facilities may need to be upgraded in the near future. Some residents also noted this and suggested that any replacements should be in a more central location on the new 'high street'. The consultation process also brought to light the early stages of proposals by a community group for a new community centre in Whitfield. The regeneration of Whitfield presents an opportunity to upgrade or replace community facilities potentially jointly with this community group.
- 7.6 Pending the outcome of investigations into the future of the community facilities and the shopping centre, it is proposed to set aside an area of land next to the 'high street' for the provision of a new shopping centre and/or community facility. In this location this would also contribute to the form and function of this central street.
- 7.7 The draft Design Framework indicated that the two remaining areas of Skarne housing at Orimiston Crescent and Dunbar Park would remain. However, through the consultation process, problems of relatively low property values, factoring and anti-social behaviour at Dunbar Park were raised. To take the matter forward and to respond to the concerns raised it is considered necessary to undertake further and more detailed research.
- 7.8 One other issue that has arisen through the consultation exercise is the current problem of vandalism of street lighting in Whitfield. High levels of vandalism have been evident in the former housing areas where properties have been demolished and temporary open space created. The vandalism consists of removing access panels and in some cases knocking over the lighting columns. Not only is there a high cost in repairing damage but there is a real risk of electrocution and injury to members of the public. Many of the lighting columns are located in areas of Whitfield that will be developed and it may be the case that the lighting columns and footpaths will be removed as a part of the redevelopment of the infrastructure in Whitfield. To address the vandalism problem it is intended to identify areas of lighting columns and footpaths that could be switched off or removed. These would be carefully selected to ensure their absence would not harm public safety.

## **8 MOVING FORWARD**

- 8.1 The next stages in planning the regeneration of the Whitfield area are to consult on a draft Design Guide and to further investigate issues in relation to Dunbar Park and the Whitfield Shopping centre that emerged through the consultation process.
- 8.2 The draft Design Guide is appended to this report. The guide incorporates the amended Design Framework and the over-arching principles that will guide physical development within the regeneration area. It includes guidelines in relation to:

- The principles of land use and built form
- House type and tenure mix
- Street hierarchy
- Open space and public realm
- Sustainable development

Development proposals must be consistent with the principles contained within the Design Guide if they are to be supported by the Council. It is intended to consult on the draft Design Guide and to report the outcome of the consultation to Committee before the summer recess.

- 8.3 A report on the outcome of investigations in relation to Dunbar Park and the Whitfield Shopping Centre will also be reported to Committee before the summer recess.
- 8.4 Discussions will continue with the Economic Development Department and Housing Department regarding the options for making available the Council's land interests. A report

and recommendations on the options will then be made to Committee again before the summer recess.

## **9 CONSULTATIONS**

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

## **10 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Dundee Local Plan Review  
Report 247-2005  
Local Housing Strategy

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1 December 2006

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## **DRAFT Whitfield Design Guide**

### **Introduction**

The Design Guide should be read in conjunction with the Dundee Local Plan and the Urban Design Guide for Dundee.

The purpose of the Guide is to describe the over-arching principles that will ensure co-ordination between the different areas in Whitfield and provide a level of certainty to developers of the quality and character of adjacent development. It includes guidelines in relation to:

- principles of land use and built form
- housing potential
- street hierarchy and transport
- open space and public realm
- quality of architecture
- sustainable development

Development proposals must be consistent with these principles if they are to be supported by the Council. The principles have been drawn up following consultation with residents and other interested parties.

### **Strategic Principles**

A number of strategic principles have been established to underpin the regeneration of Whitfield. These principles will be instrumental in shaping the physical form. These are summarised as follows:

- Potential for between 700 and 900 new houses of which 150 will be Housing Association houses.
- Provision of private houses that meet Dundee's need for affordable housing.
- Developers will make improvements to or replace existing community and shopping facilities as part of the creation of a sustainable community. These will form the activity focus of Whitfield and integrate the estate with the private housing to the north and east.
- Developers will provide a fully accessible and permeable street network that positively encourages the use of public transport, walking and cycling over the car.
- This will contain a new 'High Street' to connect and integrate all parts of the estate.
- Developers will provide quality public open space, enhance the existing green spaces and reinforce links to established neighbourhoods and the surrounding countryside.
- A commitment by developers to deliver sustainable development.

### **Principles of Land Use and Built Form**

A concept layout plan has been produced to visually convey the principles of land use and built form required to meet the strategic principles. This is an amended version of the draft Development Framework produced for public consultation.

This concept layout takes the basic form of a village and adapts this to a housing estate. The basic form of most villages is that of a main street containing shops, housing and community facilities. From the main street smaller connected streets and paths lead off to housing in a variety of ways. In creating the concept layout the village format has been applied through the creation of a new spine road containing housing, the main shopping

centre, schools and recreation space. This road will be designed in such a manner that it will discourage use as a thoroughfare and ensure low vehicle speeds. The streetscape will be enhanced by high quality landscaping and buildings which face onto the street to create an urban scale to the new development.

As well as addressing the permeability issue the village layout allows for the development of small clusters of housing which when developed as a whole and connected by the internal road and path network will combine to create a larger cohesive community. These clusters will contain high quality housing designed and laid out in such a way to maximise residential amenity.

Further to the housing layout and form the concept layout contains an organised hierarchy of open space facilities. These extend from the formal landscaping along the high street and larger roads to small pocket parks and incidental open space within the residential areas. There will be improved links with the surrounding countryside at all levels. This begins with the siting of housing to maximise views over adjacent surrounding countryside through to the longer term creation of a mature woodland setting for the estate giving it a particular identity and character.

### **Housing Potential (Type and Tenure Mix)**

The concept layout identifies the potential for the development of between 700 and 900 new dwellings together with the retention of the existing DCC and Housing Association properties. These figures include the development of 150 Housing Association houses. The present tenure within the estate is weighted towards RSL and DCC stock (current figures are 47% private, 29% RSL and 24% DCC). The regeneration will result in a tenure balance in the region of 54% private, 27% RSL and 19% DCC.

Well designed residential development is a key component to achieving the successful regeneration of Whitfield. A mix of house type and size will help to build a sustainable community allowing residents the choice to move within Whitfield and also help avoid the transient nature of single property type estates.

It is evident that there is a shortage of affordable houses in the city. The regeneration can work towards addressing this shortage by providing a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses in a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties. This will create affordability, choice and add interest to the development as a whole.

The new development will consist of houses only with no new flatted development. This is in response to the oversupply of flats in Dundee at present and the number of existing flats in Whitfield.

The scale of the new residential development will need to be supported by an appropriate range and mix of shopping, leisure and local community facilities to ensure that a sense of community is established as soon as possible. Key to the creation of a sense of community is the integration of the new development with the existing areas of housing in Whitfield and also with the private housing to the north and east.

Consideration must also be given to the long term management of residential areas for all tenures. Estate management structures will be put in place by developers to ensure the long term maintenance of hard and soft landscaping, unadopted highways and communal areas.

## **Street Hierarchy and Transport**

The new neighbourhoods will be clearly defined by a well connected and permeable network of streets, squares and public open spaces providing the maximum freedom of movement and choice of direct routes to all destinations within the regeneration area and beyond. The layout of the present estate encourages walking and if this is to continue then the streetscape must be considered as important as the buildings themselves. It must be attractive, highly permeable, good quality, multi-functional, safe and durable.

The new streets within the network will be arranged in a hierarchy in order of location, physical scale, movement capacity, activity and mix of uses. At the top of this hierarchy is the High Street running east to west through the centre of the site linking the community to the local shops, recreation areas and community facilities. A notional position for this is shown on the concept layout. Designed to encourage low speeds and to discourage through traffic the High Street will form the principal movement and activity spine through the Whitfield area connecting the enlarged road network and providing access to the new development opportunities. The character of the High Street will vary along its length due to the differing uses fronting the street.

The High Street will provide access to the streets and paths below it in the hierarchy. The layout and attractiveness of these residential streets and paths should be such as to discourage car use for short and local trips. This creates pedestrian activity and thus security. Importantly through traffic will be excluded from these new residential streets. Notional locations of these streets are shown on the concept layout. Footpaths which are not overlooked by housing or run to the rear of dwellings will not be permitted.

The programme of demolitions has left a number of streets and paths connecting all parts of the estate. There is no requirement to retain and reuse this existing network although the development should as a minimum retain present levels of accessibility for existing areas of housing and seek to improve its safety and usability.

Creating permeability will not be at the expense of establishing a core area to the estate or local 'nodes' which will characterise the community and its individual clusters.

Development should allow for the retention and expansion of the existing bus services to serve the increased population. The High Street will be designed to facilitate the extension of the existing routes through the estate with conveniently located stops. It is also desirable to extend the service into the private housing to the north and east. New bus stops should be located at convenient points along the carriageway and designed in conjunction with the City Council.

Residential car parking shall be provided in accordance with the standards set in Appendix 1 of the Local Plan. Private parking will predominantly be in-curtilage although home zone style car parking courts may be considered acceptable in well designed higher density housing areas.

## **Open Space and Public Realm**

The existing public open space in Whitfield is an important asset that makes a valuable contribution to the quality of life in Whitfield. The City Council recognises the importance of public open space throughout the city and the positive benefits this can have on a community. The City's Public Open Space Strategy discusses these benefits, the types of open space and sets the standards for open space provision in the Dundee. Developers will be expected to refer to this strategy when planning development in Whitfield.



Due to the ongoing programme of demolitions in Whitfield there exists a surplus of open space in relation to the current population. This open space is in many cases of poor quality and would benefit from increased use and improved maintenance. The proposed increase in population will increase use and it is therefore essential that improvements to existing public open space and in particular the historical areas (i.e. that not resulting from demolitions) are planned and developed in conjunction with residential development.

The creation of the High Street and the prospect of redeveloping the shopping centre and community facilities present the opportunity to create a new focal point in Whitfield. At the centre of the community this urban square will act as a focus for day and evening activity and an area for organised community events.

Landscape design can make a significant contribution to environmental quality, particularly when planting begins to mature, but it cannot compensate for poor layout and design. Developers will consider landscape as an integral part of the design and layout from the outset of the development process. If development of sites is to be phased developers should consider advance structural planting to establish a landscape framework within which the development can take place. All public spaces should function as part of an overall network of pedestrian routes and provide for the needs of the users including the elderly and people with disabilities.

To achieve a high standard of accessible public open space the following key principles shall be followed:

- Developers will in conjunction with the City Council's Leisure and Communities department and Sportscotland evaluate the level and type of open space provided, whether in historical or new locations, to ensure that it meets the needs of the enlarged community. Reference will be made to the City Council's Public Open Space Strategy and the Local Plan Policy relating to dual use of open space within school grounds. The historical areas of open space should where possible be retained so that they can continue to be enjoyed by present and future generations.
- Development will take place within a hierarchy of accessible public open spaces. At the top of this is an urban square located on the new High Street. Further down the hierarchy are neighbourhood parks (a range of parks and open spaces across an area, tailored to local needs) and local parks and open spaces (safe, accessible greenspaces and play areas close to people's homes.).
- All areas of public open space must fall within the open space hierarchy. The creation of small incidental open spaces without function will not be acceptable as these are often unmaintained or vandalised and can very quickly detract from the appearance of an area.
- Housing shall front onto parks and open space to provide natural surveillance and to improve the attractiveness of the residential development.
- A clear distinction between public and private space must be established to improve safety and security and give people clear direction as to where they can and cannot go.
- Developers will in conjunction with the City Council create a management and maintenance regime to look after all public open space and public realm.

### **Quality of Architecture**

A quality environment is dependent on the inter-relationship between building form and use, architectural style, streetscape, spaces, places and movement patterns. New quality

development will create successful, meaningful and memorable buildings and spaces and successfully contribute to the positive image of Whitfield and Dundee.

It is not the intention of this Design Guide to specify the detailed design for buildings. The aim is to create flexibility to allow skilled architects to propose imaginative solutions which work within general design guidelines.

Developers, their town planners and architects shall refer to the Dundee Urban Design Guide. This document sets out the broad principles which development in Dundee is expected to follow and discusses the importance and benefits of good urban design.

Some of the key principles to guide the architecture are:

- The creation of a distinctive local character. The design of new housing will draw inspirations from the local vernacular, including urban morphology, architecture and landscape design.
- Development should respect the constraints of a site and the detailing should draw strength from local identity to avoid the “placelessness” formed when standardised design solutions are used.
- The use of local materials and an innovative approach towards their applications will help establish Whitfield as a part of Dundee with a distinctive and positive identity.
- New residential development will as a minimum be expected to satisfy the Local Plan standards.

## **Sustainable Development**

Scottish Planning Policy SPP3: Planning for Housing notes that energy efficiency is an important part of good design and that planning authorities should indicate the potential for using energy more efficiently.

Dundee City Council is committed to encouraging sustainable development at all levels and of particular note is its involvement in the Dundee Sun City initiative which is currently converting an old janitor's house on the Whitfield estate into a demonstration eco-house. The City Council has also produced the Dundee Sustainable Development Guide for Construction. This document asks developers to consider the sustainability of their scheme from conception to construction and throughout the lifetime of the building.

The regeneration of Whitfield by its nature follows the sustainable principles of reusing previously developed land, the construction of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System and an emphasis on providing cycleways, footpaths and improved public transport links. Given the City Council involvement with the regeneration of Whitfield every opportunity to improve the sustainability of the development should be explored.

The topography in some parts of Whitfield consists of south facing slopes. These are particularly suitable for maximising the passive solar gain of dwellings and development should make best use of this particular feature. Opportunities should also be created for the use of sustainable construction techniques and energy saving initiatives in the design and construction of dwellings. Where possible building standards should be exceeded.



# Whitfield Design Guide - Concept Layout

The map illustrates a concept layout for the Whitfield area. It features a central residential development with various housing types, including terraced houses, semi-detached houses, and detached houses. The layout is organized around a central green corridor and a network of streets. Key features include:

- Green Spaces:** Large green areas, including a golf course to the west and a park to the east. A central green corridor runs through the development.
- Infrastructure:** A new "High Street" (A) running through the center. A potential site for community facilities, new shopping centre and urban square (B) is located near the center. Existing community facilities, new shopping centre and potential new urban square (C) are located to the east. A S.U.D.S drainage pond (existing) (D) is located to the south. A Dightly Linear Park (E) and a BMX track (F) are located to the east. A Green Circular cycleway (G) is located to the south.
- Other Features:** A school (School) is located to the east. A golf course (Golf Course) and a golf driving range (Golf Driving Range) are located to the west. A quarry (Quarry) is located to the west. A wood (Wood) is located to the west. A mill dam (Mill Dam) is located to the south.

**KEY**

- (A) New "High Street"
- (B) Potential site for community facilities, new shopping centre and urban square
- (C) Existing community facilities, new shopping centre and potential new urban square
- (D) S.U.D.S drainage pond (existing)
- (E) Dightly Linear Park
- (F) BMX track
- (G) Green Circular cycleway

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