### Purpose of report

1.1 To seek Committee authority to consult on a draft development brief for land and buildings at West Port / King’s Stables Road.

### Summary

2.1 Council owned land and properties at 18-20 King’s Stables Road are surplus to requirements and to be disposed of. However, whilst only the redevelopment of 18-20 King’s Stables Road is in prospect at this time, the attached document promotes the opportunity to consider the future of the surrounding area. It will ensure that proposals for the site are set within the wider context of the West Port area including the potential for the demolition and re-development of Argyle House.

2.2 The purpose of the attached document is therefore to set out development principles for the West Port/King’s Stables Road area as guidance for any future re-development proposals and as a material consideration in deciding any future planning application.

2.3 The development principles set out within the document have been prepared through a series of stakeholder ‘focus group’ workshops with the local councillors, community councils, heritage bodies, resident and traders associations. Following approval in draft, they will be the subject of further community engagement and public consultation exercises designed by the focus group and led by the Council.
3 Main report

Background

3.1 Until recently, 18-20 King's Stables Road housed accommodation and storage space for the lighting and cleaning sections of the Council. The land and properties are now surplus to requirements and are to be marketed for sale.

3.2 The Council encourages a comprehensive approach to redevelopment whenever possible, and the preparation of development frameworks or master plans, to identify the full design potential of creating successful places. The opportunity has been therefore taken to consider the site within the wider context of the King's Stables Road and West Port Area.

3.3 The area (Appendix 1) covered by the brief comprises:

- Properties owned by CEC (18-20 King's Stables Road) – which are now surplus to requirements;
- Argyle House – 22,300 sq m (240,000 sq. ft.) office space, partially let at present. Previously occupied by the DSS, the building is accessed both from West Port and Spittal Street;
- The 'Stereo' nightclub;
- Residential properties – tenement and mews type, located on King's Stables Road, Lady's Wynd and King's Stables Lane, some located above the surplus properties owned by CEC;
- Warehousing units on King's Stables Road and King's Stables Lane; and
- Car parking, to the rear of King's Stables Road and off King's Stables Lane.

Pre-draft consultation

3.4 The development principles contained within the attached document have been prepared through a series of 'focus group' workshops. The focus group consists of:

- Local councillors for the City Centre and Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart wards;
- Old Town, New Town, Tollcross and West End Community Councils;
- Webster's Land Residents Association and the Grassmarket Residents Association (GRASS) as well a number of local residents;
- The West Port Area Business Group and the following businesses: The Point Hotel, Edinburgh College of Art, Ocean Jewellery, Wasp Studios, and The Knights Residence; and,
- Heritage bodies such as The Cockburn Association and Edinburgh World Heritage Trust.

3.5 An initial workshop was held at the Point Hotel on 23 January 2009 and was attended by approximately 30 stakeholders. A number of community engagement techniques were trialled at the workshop including 'speed dating' and 'world cafe' in order to compile a list of stakeholder recommendations for the site. Around 50 recommendations were produced in the workshop and these were grouped under the following headings: Access and Views, Uses and Activities, Character and Relationships, and Heights and Massing. It was
considered by both the focus group and the Council that this meeting was very successful in drawing out the key issues relating to the site.

3.6 A second workshop was held on 16 March 2009 at the Art College and was attended by approximately 15 stakeholders. At this workshop, a technique was used to prioritise the 50 recommendations in order to draw up the development principles.

3.7 At the third workshop, held at the City Chambers on 7 April 2009, the Focus Group was presented with the priority recommendations and the outline of the draft brief for comment. Following this meeting, the final draft was prepared and then provided to the focus group on 18 June 2009 for final comment prior to the brief being presented to Planning Committee. The full results of the consultation exercise can be found in Appendix 3 of this report.

3.8 Following approval of this brief by Planning Committee it is intended that the Focus Group also be consulted as to how the formal community engagement exercise should be designed and carried out.

The Development Principles

3.9 Through the brief there is an opportunity to consider the future of the West Port and King's Stables and other surrounding properties that could contribute to the successful re-development of this area. It is considered important that the site as a whole builds on the identity of the West Port area, with a mixed use character and small local retailing.

3.10 It is likely that the site will be developed in phases. It is, therefore, important that a successful relationship between individual development sites – both in terms of street design and built form – be achieved, as well as having a respect for and designed relationship with the existing built forms of the surrounding area.

Key Objective

3.10 The key objective of the brief is to create a high quality, mixed use, series of developments, designed and coordinated to enhance the approaches to the Grassmarket and West End along King’s Stables Rd and strengthen the local residential and business community at the junction of West Port and Lady Lawson Street.

Land Use

3.11 The preferred use for the site is a mix of:

- Residential, a minimum of 25% of all unit should be affordable, as defined in relevant Council guidance, for local needs;
- Employment uses - class 4 offices - would be encouraged as part of an acceptable mix;
- Commercial uses compatible with a predominantly residential scheme and environment, including local shopping and other uses appropriate to a local
shopping centre, would also be acceptable fronting West Port and Lady Lawson Street;
- Potential for a small hotel; and
- Underground car parking using the contours of the site.

Development Principles

3.12 In summary, the development brief recommends a number of development principles for the site under the following topic headings:

- Co-ordinated Development
- Conservation considerations
- High Quality Buildings, Streets and Spaces
- Sustainability and Energy Efficiency
- Access
- Retention of Views
- Provision of Shared Open Space
- Community Safety.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report for the Planning Service.

5 Environmental Impact

5.1 There are no adverse environmental impacts arising from this report.

6 Conclusions

6.1 The proposed sale of surplus Council properties at 18-20 King's Stables Road allow for the opportunity to consider the site within the wider context of the West Port area including the potential for the demolition and re-development of Argyle House. Whilst only the redevelopment of properties at 18-20 King's Stables Road is in prospect at this time, the proposed development principles seek to ensure that this potential is fully realised.

6.2 The proposals of the document will be made widely available for public comment over an 8 week period and the results reported back to the Committee in due course.

7 Recommendations
7.1 It is recommended that the Planning Committee approves the West Port/King’s Stables Road Development Brief as a basis for public consultation

b) refers this matter to the City Centre Neighbourhood Partnership for its information.

Dave Anderson
Director of City Development

Appendices

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Contact/tel/Email
Kate Evans – 0131 529 6232

Wards affected
City Centre

Single Outcome Agreement

Supports National Outcome 1: We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe.

Supports Local Outcomes: Edinburgh is a thriving, growing city with a high quality of life and environment and a prosperous economy.

Supports Local Outcome: Edinburgh is an internationally competitive business location that attracts talent and investment to its growing knowledge-based economy.

Supports Local Outcome: Edinburgh is the UK’s top performing tourist destination outside of London. The global competitive edge of Edinburgh’s Festivals is maintained.

Supports National Outcome 10: We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.

Supports National Outcome 12: We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.

Supports Local Outcomes: The development of a quality built and natural environment is well supported.

Background Papers
West Port / King’s Stables Development Brief
Draft August 2009
Contents

1.0 Introduction
2.0 The Site and its surroundings
3.0 Policy Context
4.0 Development Principles
5.0 Next Steps

Figure 1 Site Boundary
Figure 2 Concept Plan
1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Draft Development Brief has been prepared for Council owned land and properties at 18-20 King Stable’s Road which are surplus to requirements and to be disposed of. The site comprises a mix of warehousing, storage and offices built around a courtyard form partially set behind a row of residential tenement properties.

1.2 Whilst only the redevelopment of 18-20 King Stables Road is in prospect at this time, consideration has been extended to cover the future of the surrounding area and ensure that proposals for the site are set within the wider context of the West Port area including the potential for the demolition and re-development of Argyle House.

1.3 The purpose of this document is therefore to set out a ‘development framework’ for the West Port/ King Stables Road area as guidance for any future re-development proposals and as a material consideration when decisions are made on these.

1.4 This Draft Development Brief has been prepared by the City of Edinburgh Council through a series of stakeholder ‘Focus Group’ workshops. The workshops were attended by:

- Local Councillors for the City Centre and Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart wards;
- Old Town, New Town, Tollcross and West End Community Councils;
- Webster’s Land Residents Association and the Grassmarket Residents Association (GRASS) as well a number of local residents;
- The West Port Area Business Group and the following businesses: The Point Hotel, Edinburgh College of Art, Ocean Jewellery, Wasp Studios, and The Knights Residence; and,
- Heritage bodies such as The Cockbum Association and Edinburgh World Heritage Trust.

1.5 In recognition of the history of this area, and in consultation with the local community, the document has been entitled ‘The West Port / King’s Stables Development Framework’.

2.0 The Site and its Surroundings

2.1 The West Port / King’s Stable site lies to the south of Johnston Terrace and the Castle and west of the Grassmarket. The area is bound by King Stables Road to the north, Lady’s Wynd to the east, West Port to the South and Spital Street and Lady Lawson Street to the west. The area includes King Stables Lane. (See Figure 1)

2.2 The area has a mixed use character and contains residential, offices, warehousing and commercial leisure uses. The area currently comprises:

- Argyle House – 240,000 sq.ft. office space, partially let at present. Previously occupied by The DSS. The building is accessed both from West Port and Spital Street;
- Properties owned by CEC (18-20 King Stables Road) – which are now surplus to requirements;
- The ‘Stereo’ nightclub;
- Residential properties – tenement and mews type, located on King Stables Road, Lady’s Wynd and King Stables Lane, some located above surplus properties owned by CEC;
- Warehousing units on King Stables Road and King Stables Lane; and

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2.3 There are a number of listed buildings and structures that lie immediately beyond the boundaries of the development site. These are:

- King's Bridge Category A. Thomas Hamilton, 1820-32 a semi-elliptical tunnel arched bridge carrying Johnstone Terrace.
- King's Stables Road, 1 Grassmarket and 2 King's Bridge Category C(S).
- 9 Grassmarket and 3-9 West Port, Category B
- West Port, Former Salvation Army Women's Hostel, Category B
- 1-11 Portsborough Square, West Port, Category C(S)
- 62-76 and 1-32 West Port, Category C(S)
- Edinburgh Castle, Category A
- The Edinburgh College of Art, Category A
- 26-28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 36 Castle Terrace, Category A
- Flodden Wall, Category A

2.4 The site lies within the Old and New Towns of the Edinburgh World Heritage Site, and the Old Town Conservation Area and is adjacent to The West End Conservation Area. Edinburgh Castle and the Flodden Wall are in close proximity.

Site History

2.5 Located just outside the Flodden Wall, between the medieval Old Town to the east and the planned Victorian urban expansion of Lothian Road and Tollcross to the west, the site is located adjacent to the western edge of the Grassmarket.

2.6 The first recorded mention of the area was in 1513 when a gate was cut into the Flodden Wall from the Grassmarket and named “The West Port”. The area became the site of the King's stables (built during the reign of King James IV, 1488-1513), as well as cattle and sheep pens related to the Grassmarket, a slaughter house ('The Shambles'), the Edinburgh Horse Bazaar, industries such as tanning and weaving, and residential properties along Portsburgh Road (now West Port).

Edinburgh Scotiae Metropolis – People and Place - 1582

2.7 In the 1950's, the Corporation of Edinburgh began acquiring ownership of the workshops and yards that made up the King's Stables to provide accommodation and storage space for their lighting and cleaning department. 18-20 King's Stables Road are still in ownership of the Council and now forms the subject of this development brief.

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2.8 In the 1960s, a development site was assembled from the Edinburgh Horse Bazaar on the corner of Lady Lawson Street and Spital Street and adjacent properties by the Corporation of Edinburgh. Argyle House is a late 1960s building designed by the architects Michael Laird and Partners to provide accommodation for the Government.

2.9 The other building that remains on the site is a warehouse at northern exit of King’s Stables Lane (shown on maps from the 1830s) now used as a nightclub. Maps from the period show the building which now houses the nightclub and the building at the end of a close running from West Port to King Stables Road.

Site Analysis

2.10 The site is located between two key routes through the city linking the Grassmarket to the west end and Lothian Road - West Port and King’s Stables Road, bound to the west by Lady Lawson Street and can be approached from Castle Terrace, High Riggs, Bread Street and the Grassmarket.

2.11 West Port is a busy vehicular and pedestrian route from the Grassmarket to Lothian Road. West Port rises from the Grassmarket to the junction with Lady Lawson Street and Argyle House which is its highest point. The route is enclosed by four; five and six storey tenements although there are a number of glimpsed views of the castle through Lady Wynd, Chapel Wynd and Tanners Close as well as pend openings to Portsburgh Square, Websters Land and King’s Stables Lane which provide dramatic glimpsed views of Castle and relief from the enclosure.
2.12 Once the West Port reaches Argyle House, the route opens up; with the open space to the front of Argyle House providing a point of arrival for pedestrians. However, recent developments have enclosed this junction, leaving the open space at the front of Argyle House as the sole piece of public space along West Port.

![View along West Port to open space to front of Argyle House](image1)

2.13 The view of the site along Lady Lawson Street provides a sense of dramatic juxtaposition of heights: The 7-stories of Argyle House steps down suddenly to the 2-storey form fronting Spittal Street. The topography of the site is masked through the changes in roof level and it is important for any new development to reveal this topography, complete the framing of Spittal Street and Castle Street Tenements at the foot of Lady Lawson Street, and provide an active street frontage to Lady Lawson Street.

2.14 The view along High Riggs and Bread Street towards the site is terminated by the 'slab' of Argyle House which dwarfs the gable end of Webster's Land. The open space in front of Argyle House provides a sense of relief and open space compared to the enclosure of High Riggs and Bread Street as well as a destination point. It is important for new development to the respect position of the windows on the gable of Webster's Land and to retain enough space that sunlight will illuminate the façade provide an attractive frontage.

![View of site along Lady Lawson Street](image2)
2.15 The approach to the site from Castle Terrace provides dramatic views of the Castle, the Castle Rock and its setting provided by the low form of the Castle Terrace car-park. The view is framed by the high quality forms and decoration of the Castle Street tenements to the right, with the 1960s Argyle House dominating the end of the view. Any new development should use the opportunity to terminate this vista along Castle Terrace, successfully manage enclosure of the public space of Castle Terrace and respond meaningfully to the profile of the Castle Rock and the castle Terrace tenements.

2.16 Any new development should also provide safer and more welcoming access from Castle Terrace to King’s Stables Road from the steps at King’s Bridge, and signal this access to pedestrians on Castle Terrace.

2.17 From the Grassmarket, the site is visible along the south side of King Stables Road. The street is dark and uninviting, being located below the level of Johnston Terrace. From the Grassmarket there is a change of scale from 4 1/2 -storey tenement to the 2-storey pitched roof form which marks the eastern entrance to King’s Stables Lane. The King’s Bridge is of heritage interest and provides framed views of the site, but it creates an unattractive and unwelcoming environment and means that King’s Stables Road is underused by pedestrians. Any new development should provide an attractive and welcoming to route pedestrians by providing monitoring and overlooking of King’s Stables Road.
2.18 The view to King Stables Lane from the western entrance is dominated by Argyle House and illustrates clearly the change in scale, topography and depth across the site from King's Stables Road to West Port. There is little encouragement to enter these lanes as a pedestrian and they are considered by most as a service/back entrance to Argyle House.

2.19 The site is highly visible within the area, particularly from the Castle Esplanade which illustrates the dominating position and significant scale of Argyle House within the city. The 'slab' form of Argyle House is easily identifiable and 'turns the corner' of the view from the Esplanade. The view of from the Castle illustrates the need to also consider the fifth elevation – from above. Any new development should celebrate the opportunity to view and be viewed from Castle Rock, Castle and Johnson Terrace and respect the ridge heights and built form of surrounding properties.
Policy Context

2.20 Applicants should refer to the Edinburgh City Local Plan. This is at an advanced stage of preparation and when adopted will replace the Central Edinburgh Local Plan as part of the statutory development plan in this area. The Local Plan was the subject of objections which were dealt with at a public inquiry held in 2008. It is likely that the Council will approve and publish modification proposals arising from consideration of these objections towards the end of 2009, leading to adoption early in 2010.

2.21 Guidance in this brief, in particular the guidance on appropriate land uses on redevelopment, reflects and amplifies policies in the Local Plan.

2.22 The finalised Edinburgh City Local Plan Proposals Map includes the West Port Area and the potential redevelopment site within a defined ‘Central Area’. Within the Central Area the Plan seeks to encourage a wide range of development with an emphasis on diversity of provision and mixed uses on individual sites.

2.23 The principal planning considerations are dispersed throughout the Plan but are summarised in Policy Ca1. The policy sets out in general terms the requirements that development proposals should satisfy if they are to be acceptable. In summary, proposals will be permitted which maintain and enhance the character, attractiveness, vitality and accessibility of the city centre and contribute to its role as a regional service centre and Edinburgh’s role as a capital city. An interactive version of the Edinburgh City Local Plan can be viewed www.edinburgh.gov.uk/eclp or at www.edinburgh.gov.uk.

2.24 The requirements in principle for new development are:

- for comprehensively designed proposals which maximise the potential of the site;
- a use or mix of uses appropriate to the location of the site, its accessibility characteristics and the character of the surrounding area;
- for the provision of measures and facilities made necessary by the development including a contribution to the improvement of the public realm in the immediate vicinity of the site; and
- for the creation of new civic spaces and traffic-free pedestrian routes where achievable.

3.0 Development Principles

3.1 Through this brief there is an opportunity to consider the future of the West Port and King’s Stables and other surrounding properties that could contribute to the successful re-development of this area. It is considered important that the area as a whole builds on the identity of the West Port area, with a mixed use character and small local retailing.

3.2 As it is likely that the site will be developed in phases it is important that a successful relationship between individual development sites – both in terms of street design and built form – as well as having a respect for and designed relationship with the existing built forms of the surrounding area. The following development principles must be taken into account when considering any new development within the area:
Site Objective

- A high quality, mixed use, series of developments, designed and coordinated to enhance the approaches to the Grassmarket and West End along King Stables Rd and strengthen the local residential and business community at the junction of West Port and Lady Lawson Street.

Co-ordinated Development

- The Council encourages a comprehensive approach to redevelopment whenever possible, and the preparation of development frameworks or master plans, to identify the full design potential of creating successful places; Policy Des2 of the finalised Edinburgh City Local Plan (ECLP) refers. The Council would expect proposals for the King’s Stable’s development site to consider how it might successfully be integrated into the development proposals for the wider area.

Conservation considerations

- The draft Edinburgh local plan makes it clear that the Edinburgh World Heritage Site’s Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) should be a key consideration in assessing the effects of development. The OUV is defined within statement of significance, which is a core part of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan. The site is also located within the Old Town Conservation area and consideration should also be given towards the Old Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Mixed, Complementary Uses

The preferred use for the site is a mix of:

- Residential (a minimum of 25% of all houses should be affordable, as defined in relevant Council guidance);
- Employment uses - class 4 offices - would be encouraged as part of an acceptable mix;
- Commercial uses compatible with a predominantly residential scheme and environment, including local shopping and other uses appropriate to a local shopping centre, would also be acceptable fronting West Port and Lady Lawson Street;
- The potential for a small hotel; and
- Underground car parking using the contours of the site.

High Quality Buildings, Streets and Spaces

- New development should create new active street frontages along West Port, Lady Lawson Street, King Stable’s Road and Castle Terrace
- Ground floor levels should be integrated with street level along West Port to minimising the severance caused by the level differences across the site;
- A piece of high quality public open space should be retained and improved at the junction of Lady Lawson Street and West Port;
- The scale and mass of new development should respond to the character and grain of surrounding tenements and architecture;

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New development should be based on the traditional plot widths and feu pattern of the Old Town, with narrow closes stepping down from south to north to reflect the topography of the site and create an interesting and varied roof pattern and enhancing views from Castle Esplanade towards West Port and vice versa.

Development should ensure that the vista along Castle Terrace is terminated successfully with a high quality 'landmark' building (it should be noted that "landmark" does not constitute "tall") and respond meaningfully to the Castle Rock and Castle Terrace Tenements;

New development should form active courtyards with an attractive and active street frontage to King's Stables Lane;

A network of pedestrian/cycle routes along new pends, wynds and closes should be provided through the site, creating permeability.

**Sustainability and Energy Efficiency**

Sustainability must be at the heart of the any new development through re-use of buildings, sustainable construction, and energy efficiency and the use of renewables. In the first instance, the re-use of buildings on the site should be considered before demolition and redevelopment and any building materials retained and re-used on site. The Edinburgh Standards for Sustainable Building apply.

**Access**

- Vehicular access for the King's Stables site (including the access for any on site car parking) should continue to be taken from King's Stables Road and conform to standards set out in Council guidance, Movement and Development, (i.e. to adoptable standards) and will need to be the subject of a road construction consent.

- Access for pedestrians and cyclists should be made directly with West Port, King's Stables Road, and the Kings Bridge with the overall design approach to be to overcome barriers to pedestrian/ cyclist access and movement around the site and maximise its permeability for these modes.

**Retention of Views**

- The site is highly visible within the area, particularly from the Castle Esplanade and from Castle Terrace and these views should be considered in detail, specifically protecting and enhancing views from the Castle, Esplanade, Johnston Terrace, from Bread Street and the east end of Castle Terrace paying attention to the design and treatment of roofs.

- The glimpsed views of the Castle along West Port should be protected and not blocked by any new development.

**Provision of Shared Open Space**

- The area of open space at the front of Argyle House is considered specifically to be important, providing a relief from the enclosure of surrounding streets and giving

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West Port identity as a destination. Any new development should create buildings and public spaces which generate successful civil activity in this location.

- Along with the creation of new public open space at the junction of West Port, Lady Lawson Street and Bread Street, open space for private use by residents should be provided in secure location, accessible to all residents, benefiting from some direct sunlight.

Community Safety

- New development should consider how the King’s Bridge can be made pedestrian friendly in a discreet manner, worthy of its listed Status.

4.0 Delivery

Developer contributions

3.3 Developers of the site will be expected to enter into legal agreements to secure an appropriate contribution towards meeting identified requirements. In this regard reference should be made to the following Council guidelines:

- Movement and Development
- Tram Project: Developer Contributions.
- Schools

4.5 The Council will also seek to secure significant improvements to the public realm in line with Section 4.0 Development Framework

Additional Information

4.6 Need to demonstrate that there is no residual contamination issues associated with past use as a tannery. An archaeological survey will also be required.

5.0 Next Steps

5.1 The draft development principles set out in this document will be made available for public comment for an 8 week period. All those with an interest in the future development of the site will be notified of the availability of the document and how and where it may be viewed.

5.2 All comments received will be summarised and made available to the Planning Committee prior to it taking a formal decision to approve the document guidance for any future re-development proposals and as a material consideration when decisions are made on these.

5.3 Once approved the document will be an important consideration for the Council in the assessment and determination of detailed proposals that come forward for the site.

5.4 Should you wish to comment on this document, require a hard copy of this document, further information on its content or the arrangements for community engagement / consultation, please contact:

Kate Evans - Planning Officer
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Edinburgh EH8 8BG
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Figure 2

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Mapping with permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. License number 100023420, City of Edinburgh Council 2005

------------ Active Frontage

Retail Frontage

Improve permeability with new closes and openings

Improve existing access

Improve access from Castle Terrace to King's Stables Road

Arrow indicates requirement for pedestrian route to King's Stable Lane

High quality public open space / public square
Appendix 3

West Port / King’s Stables Development Brief
Pre-draft consultation Report

1.1 The development principles contained within the West Port / King’s Stables Development Brief have been prepared through a series of 'focus group' workshops.

The focus group consists of:

- Local Councillors for the City Centre and Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart wards;
- Old Town, New Town, Tollcross and West End Community Councils;
- Webster’s Land Residents Association and the Grassmarket Residents Association (GRASS) as well a number of local residents;
- The West Port Area Business Group and the following businesses: The Point Hotel, Ocean Jewellery, Wasp Studios, and The Knights Residence;
- Edinburgh College of Art; and,
- Heritage bodies such as The Cockburn Association and Edinburgh World Heritage Trust.

Workshop 1

1.2 Held at the Point Hotel on the 23rd January 2009 and attended by approximately 30 stakeholders. The techniques used:

- 'Speed dating' - Workshop participants were asked to introduce themselves to others and answers 4 questions regarding the site and their relation to it. The results of the discussion were not recorded by the workshop facilitators. Aim was as an 'ice-breaker' and for participants to see the varying views of individuals.

- 'World cafe' - Used to compile a list of stakeholder recommendations for the site. Around 50 recommendations were produced in the workshop and these were grouped under the following headings: Access and Views, Uses and Activities, Character and Relationships, and Heights and Massing.

1.3 It was considered by both the focus group and the Council that this meeting was very successful in drawing out the key issues relating to the site. The key issues were as follows:

- Access and Views - With regards to access and views, it was felt that key views were lost when walking to the Old Town Centre and that inward views from outside the site looking in
are as important as the outward views from within the site. There is also a lot of potential for new access and views to be created. It was also made clear that Kings Stable’s Road is an intimidating environment for pedestrians, especially at night where there is little if any natural surveillance.

- **Uses and Activities** - As would be expected, there was a great deal of interest and input relating to what future uses and activities should be promoted within the future development brief. One theme that arose from the discussions was that it is important that the uses improve the sustainability of the Kings Stable’s area in terms of the local community, economy and environment. It was also noted that it is felt that an over exposure to night specific uses leads to dead frontages during the majority of the day which does nothing to contribute to a vibrant and sustainable area.

- **Character and Relationships** - There was a lot of enthusiasm shown towards identifying what the key aspects of the area’s character are and the relationships that occur between the site and the surrounding areas. The lack of any attempt by Argyle House to relate to its surroundings was strongly identified, as well as the importance of the castle and the areas role as a key tourist route. The groups also identified what they felt are the real strengths and weaknesses of the site and how they can be enhanced/ addressed.

- **Heights and Massing** - It was clear from the discussions arising from the group sessions that the heights and massing that any future buildings are to take, have a great importance to the area as a whole. There was a strong feeling that the current buildings are too high and that large uniform development in terms of size and scale would not work at this site. It was also expressed that the small narrow closes found in the site are characteristic to the area and this aspect should be retained. The following recommendations were made;

1.4 It was considered by both the focus group and the Council that this meeting was very successful in drawing out the key issues relating to the site.

**Workshop 2**

1.5 Held at The Art College on the 16th March 2009, Attended by approximately 12 stakeholders. The technique used was

- ‘Priorities and Conflicts’ – which had 2 aims: To prioritise the 50 recommendations of Workshop 1, to help develop ‘principles’ for the development and to identify areas of ‘considered’ conflict between the ‘Planner’, ‘Developer’ and ‘Local Resident’
1.6 The technique used, which rated the principles from high to low priority was not to be as successful as the techniques used in the first workshop due the number of people used to prioritise the recommendations. However, some results were gathered and the following recommendations were made:

- More/increased activity on King’s Stables Road, possible wider access to Castle Terrace
- Site could become a HUB – Culture, arts and crafts hub, relate to Grassmarket college
- The site can be a place of transition – should reflect the very old character on the Grassmarket side and the very new West Port side
- Primary residential – secondary retail and commercial
- Important to have buildings in scale with adjacent areas
- Possibility for a series of smaller buildings
- Make use of gradients and height differences
- More uniform heights along West Port
- Break up massing – improve permeability and day lighting
- Suitable mix of uses and high quality development which sells.

1.7 The second aim was to identify areas where it was considered that the planning officers, developers and the community would clash. These were considered to be important by the local community, but considered to be less so by planners and developers:

- View from castle for tourists should be taken into account
- Opportunity for a legacy
- Bring heights below the height of Argyle House

Workshop 3

1.8 At the third workshop, held at the City Chambers on the 7th April 2009, the Focus Group was presented with the priority recommendations and the outline of the draft brief for comment. Following this meeting, the final draft was prepared and then provided to the focus group on the 18th June 2009 for final comment prior to the brief being presented to Planning Committee.

Pre-draft comment

1.9 Following the circulation of the draft brief a number of comments from the focus group were received and amendments made and considered. These included (in summary):

- appropriate to give more guidance on residential requirement, e.g. family size houses to be included and inclusion of affordable housing and housing for local needs
- include craft workshops, studios (an artisan area) and “farmers” market
- ensure uses are compatible with local area
- Detail of the EWH universal value and protection of key views
- more specific on scale, style, materials etc - More weight should be given to the Local Plan’s requirement for traditional materials such as slate and stone.
- scale and mass - more prescriptive. What are the developers to compare to in massing and form? Argyle House, West Port House, local tenements, the new build on N. Lady Lawson St., warehouses, etc. etc.
- should be unequivocal about having this space to front of Argyle House
- Development principles 4.1 to 4.6 are generally good but 4.2 would be better if there was a stronger master plan.
- Access to King’s Stables Lane needs to be upgraded / maintained during development and demolition.
- Any redevelopment of the Argyle House site and the 18/20 King’s Stables Road site needs to consider the light and view restrictions for the mews properties in King’s Stables Lane and the gable end of Webster’s Land, (not only at the West port side, but also the King’s Stables Lane and Johnstone Terrace side). Our point here being that light and views should be maximized for existing buildings – as in your report, the North side of Webster’s Land and King’s Stables Lane is permanently shadowed by Argyle House.
- Night club or licensed premises would be a concern in close proximity to quiet lanes and closes which may encourage associated anti-social behavior.
- Support the redevelopment of the King’s Stables building mews properties, not demolition. Protect the heritage of the site in terms of sustainable living / working space and attracting tourist / sightseers to the area.

**Next Steps**

1.10 Following approval of this brief by Planning Committee it is intended that the Focus Group also be consulted as to how the formal community engagement exercise should be designed and carried out as best to suit the West Port area.