

Committee Minutes

Planning Committee

Edinburgh, 19 April 2007

Present:- Councillors Davies (Convener), Child, The Hon David Guest, Harrold, Hunter, Laing, Longstaff, Lowrie, Marshall, Munro, Murray (Vice-Convener), Tritton, Walker and Wigglesworth.

1 Minutes

1.1 Planning Committee

The minute of the Planning Committee of 22 March 2007 was approved as a correct record.

1.2 Development Quality Sub-Committees

The minutes of the Development Quality Sub-Committees of 14, 21 and 28 March 2007 were approved as correct records.

1.3 Development Quality Sub-Committee Visits

The record of the visits made by the Development Quality Sub-Committee on 15 March 2007 was noted.

2 Structure Plan Review and the Strategic Development Plan

An update was provided on strategic planning matters, including the Structure Plan Review and progress on joint working towards a new city region strategic development plan.

The Scottish Ministers had conditionally endorsed abandonment of the Structure Plan Review allowing efforts to be focused on preparing for a new Strategic Development Plan for the Edinburgh city region. An interim Members' City Region Joint Committee had been established to oversee joint working in the run up to the new development plan system in mid 2008.

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Decision

- 1) To welcome the endorsement by Scottish Ministers of the proposed abandonment of the Structure Plan Review, allowing effort to focus securely on preparing the ground for a new Strategic Development Plan.
- 2) To note that a housing overview would be prepared in response to the ministerial letter and reported back to Committee for approval, and that this would provide an opportunity to highlight outstanding infrastructure constraints.
- 3) To agree that the new Strategic Development Plan Joint Committee be established on the basis of the proposed constitution, and note the requirement to nominate two members to it following the May election.
- 4) To note progress made on project planning the Strategic Development Plan preparatory work with Fife and Scottish Borders Councils.
- 5) To advise the Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan Joint Liaison Committee that the costs of the Green Belt Study (subject to their reasonableness and approval) should be shared equally between the joint structure plan authorities on the basis of parity of representation and financial commitment.

(Reference – report no PC/102/06-07/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

3 St James Quarter Development Brief

The Committee had previously approved a draft brief, which set out planning and development principles to guide the future redevelopment of the St James Quarter and the surrounding area, for consultation purposes.

Details were provided of the responses to the public consultation exercise and environmental report. Approval was now sought for the finalised development brief for the St James Quarter, following incorporation of suggested amendments.

Decision

- 1) To approve the St James Quarter Development Brief for use as supplementary planning guidance subject to minor editing changes to the Brief by the Director of City Development.

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- 2) To note the ongoing Strategic Environmental Assessment process and delegate authority to the Director of City Development to publish and advertise the SEA statement.

(References – Planning Committee 18 January 2007, item 3; report no PC/103/06-07/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

4 Salamander Place Development Brief – Finalisation

The Committee had previously approved a draft Salamander Place Development Brief for consultation purposes.

Details were provided of a finalised Development Brief for the Salamander Place area, together with a summary of responses received during the consultation period.

The Committee was asked to approve the finalised Salamander Place Development Brief as modified.

Decision

To approve the Salamander Place Development Brief for use as supplementary planning guidance.

(References – Planning Committee 18 January 2007, item 2; report no PC/104/06-07/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

5 Leith Docks Residential Car Parking Standards

The Executive of the Council had agreed –

- 1) To modify the normal approach to residential parking standards (a) initially to be applied on a pilot basis to one or more developments in or adjacent to the Leith Docks Development Framework (LDDF) area; (b) in principle as the basis for discussions with Forth Ports on residential parking standards for the LDDF area.
- 2) To note that the outcome of discussions with Forth Ports ((b) above refers) will be the subject of a future report to the Executive or the Planning Committee.
- 3) To refer the report to this Committee.

Decision

- 1) To note the Executive's decision.
- 2) To welcome the proposal as a means towards achieving more sustainable neighbourhoods, but not to proceed with the parking provision pilot until the wider planning and implementation issues have been fully considered, and reported on, by the Director of City Development.

(Reference – Executive of the Council 27 March 2007, item 46; report no PC/105/06-07/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

6 Edinburgh Tram Project: Tram Line 3 – Amendments to Limits of Deviation

The Executive of the Council had approved a change to the limits of deviation and safeguarding of Tram Line 3 at Greendykes Road and referred the report to this Committee for information.

Decision

To note the report.

(Reference – report no PC/106/06-07/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Child declared a non-financial interest in this item as a non-executive Director of PARC.

7 The Planning Committee – Transition Report

Details were provided of the various strands of work undertaken by the current Planning Committee in the past four years, and potential areas to be taken forward by the incoming Committee following the elections.

The report stressed the importance of the Planning Committee in delivering the aspirations of the new Council and its vision for the city. It also emphasised the changes heralded by the new Planning Act, which would require culture change to be initiated across the board in order to deliver a modernised planning system.

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Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) To commend the report to the incoming Planning Committee and recommend that the areas identified in the report and other continuing work strands be taken forward into the new Council cycle.
- 3) That the ongoing training for elected members, including the annual tour, should be continued.
- 4) To recognise the significant improvement in processing planning applications and progress in implementing initiatives and to thank the staff involved.
- 5) To thank Councillor Davies for his work in the role of Convener of the Committee.

(Reference – report no PC/107/06-07/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

8 Planning Service – Operational Plan 2007-08

Details were submitted of a review of the implementation of improvements to the Planning service during the past year. A draft Operational Plan for the period April 2007 to March 2008 was also proposed.

The plan detailed tasks to be implemented to achieve the Council and departmental objectives, and addressed key challenges facing the Planning and Strategy Service in the coming year, including reform of the Planning system and achieving performance improvements in handling planning applications.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress made on the tasks set out in the Operational Plan for 2006-07.
- 2) To approve the proposed priority tasks for the Operational Plan 2007-08 as the basis for service improvement in Planning over the next year and refer it to the Development of the City Scrutiny Panel or successor committee for its views.

(Reference – report no PC/108/06-07/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

9 Non Statutory Guidelines: Draft Revised Replacement Windows and Doors

Approval was sought for a draft revised Development Quality Guideline on replacement windows and doors.

The revision took account of advances in the forms of double glazing now available, and tried to resolve the conflict between energy conservation policies included in the amended Building Regulations, and the protection of the architectural character of statutorily listed buildings.

Decision

To approve the draft revised guideline for consultation purposes, subject to editing changes by the Director of City Development in respect of the use of UPVC windows in Conservation Areas.

(Reference – report no PC/109/06-07/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

10 Tollcross Viability and Improvement Study

Details were provided of the results of the recent Tollcross Viability and Improvement Study. The study, undertaken by consultants in 2006, aimed to highlight potential opportunities to enhance the vitality of Tollcross Town Centre and set out a strategy for how improvements could be delivered.

Decision

- 1) To welcome the Study and Action Plan, whilst requesting that further local consultation be carried out.
- 2) To note the further work required to identify sources of funding as a key element in finalising and implementing the Action Plan.
- 3) To request that the Director of City Development consider the need to improve pedestrian access, short-stay parking and signage.
- 4) In view of the location of Tollcross at the junction of three Neighbourhood Partnership areas, to ask the Director of Services for Communities to identify appropriate delivery mechanisms to enhance retail access and quality of place.

(Reference – report no PC/110/06-07/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

11 Proposed Tollcross Conservation Area – Draft Character Appraisal

Following a feasibility study conducted by the Tollcross Community Council, a draft Character Appraisal had been prepared to assess the area's suitability for designation as a Conservation Area

Committee was asked to agree that the area lacked sufficient architectural and historic cohesion to merit Conservation Area status.

Decision

- 1) To thank the Community Council for their Feasibility Study on a Tollcross Conservation Area.
- 2) To agree that Tollcross should not be designated as a separate Conservation Area and that local consultation regarding the proposed Bruntsfield Conservation Area, with its incorporation into the existing Marchmont and Meadows Conservation Area, should consider the inclusion of the Georgian and Victorian building groups of the Gilmore Place and Leven Street areas (as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Tollcross Character Appraisal).

(Reference – report no PC/111/06-07/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

12 Proposed Conservation Area at Bruntsfield – Draft Character Appraisal

Details were provided of a draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal for Bruntsfield. The report proposed that Bruntsfield should be designated as a Conservation Area, but due to its affinity with surrounding areas, this should be through incorporation into the existing Marchmont and Meadows Conservation Area.

The Committee was asked to approve the proposed designation, subject to public consultation.

Decision

- 1) To indicate that the Committee was minded to designate a conservation area at Bruntsfield, subject to any further local views following consultation.
- 2) To agree that the incorporation of the Georgian and Victorian buildings in the Gilmore Place and Leven Street areas into the proposed new

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Marchmont, Meadows and Bruntsfield Conservation Area, be included in the public consultation.

(Reference – report no PC/112/06-07/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

13 Standards for Streets: Implementation Progress

The Committee had previously approved the finalised Standards for Streets document which set out a framework for future thinking and approach to streetscape design, as well as incorporating place-making into the design of streets.

Progress made in delivering the new approach to Streetscape, and in implementing the objectives contained within the Edinburgh Standards for Streets was detailed.

Decision

- 1) To endorse the proposals for the Edinburgh Standards for Streets launch and communication strategy.
- 2) To endorse the appointment of John Dale as the Design Advisor for Streetscape.
- 3) To agree to receive a further report on details of the training and skilling-up programme.
- 4) To ask the Design Advisor to attend an early committee or workshop to:
 - a) clarify the legal situation regarding minimising the visual impact of statutory signage, and
 - b) identify issues to form the basis of further training.

(References – Planning Committee 9 November 2006, item 4; report no PC/113/06-07/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

14 Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan – Progress Report 2006

The second Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan had been launched in November 2004 containing actions for the period 2004-2009.

An update on the progress of the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan for 2006/07 was provided.

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Decision

- 1) To congratulate the City Development Department on progress made in implementing the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan 2004-2009.
- 2) To endorse the continuing work.
- 3) To refer the report to the Council Executive, or successor body, for information.

(Reference – report no PC/114/06-07/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)