



REPORT

To: Planning Board

3 June 2009

From: Planning Officer (Implementation)
Planning Infrastructure Services Department

LERWICK TOWN CENTRE ACTION PLAN

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Planning Service is in the process of creating a new development framework for Shetland. As part of this process, various planning documents will be updated and other new documents will be produced.
- 1.2 The report introduces an update of the 1999-2001 Lerwick Town Centre Action Plan part of the 1997 Town Centre Strategy, and revisits the draft Action Plan of 2007 that was on hold while awaiting the HSE response to the oil tanks.
- 1.3 Due negative feedback from a number of individuals and groups, it was decided to revisit the draft Action Plan of 2007. Following the successful format of the joint 'Lerwick Town Centre Action Plan 1999–2001' by the now disbanded Lerwick Town Centre Management Group.
- 1.4 This review was in the form of the Lerwick Old Town & Waterfront (steering) Group later formed into the Lerwick Old Town Development Association. The groups members and involvement in instigation this joint action plan with SIC Planning and SIC Community Service can be seen in the appendix section 'Lerwick Old Town & Waterfront (steering) Group'
- 1.5 The Lerwick Town Centre Action Plan was produced to ensure the viability and vitality of the town centre. The original 1999-2001 Action Plan is in need of updating to reflect today's circumstances and new planning policy guidance recently introduced.

2 Links to Council Priorities

- 2.1 The strategy will assist the Council meet its targets to create an economy that is prosperous, competitive, and diverse promoting an entrepreneurial environment for new business start-ups and help existing industries looking to relocate or diversify. The Lerwick Town Centre Action Plan will also assist the Council to create a vibrant, healthy, safe and inclusive society.

3 Background

- 3.1 A report was submitted to the Planning Board on the 6th June [minute ref 09/07], which noted the intention to update the 2001 Hay's Dock and

North Ness Masterplan. At this meeting Members noted the need to update this Masterplan but also thought it was necessary to assess other pressure areas of Lerwick. In response to this the Planning Service are in the process of reviewing a number of planning documents and are also in the process of developing a new Local Development Plan, this action plan will key into the on going review.

- 3.2 A report was submitted to the Planning Board on the 8th August 2007 [Min. Ref. 30/07], (Report No: PL-31-07-F) Lerwick Town Centre and Waterfront Strategy, that proposed the first draft action plan for the town centre, this report proposes the second draft.

4 Report

- 4.1 The Lerwick Town Centre Action Plan has been based on three themes. The first is to create a vibrant town centre, the second is to create a sustainable town centre and the third is to create a high quality environment. The vision for the area between the historic centre and the overall aim to improve links and identify opportunities to expand the Town Centre and Waterfront is to create a centre which plays a wider role for the community and which is lively during both day and evening.
- 4.2 The development of the regeneration area adheres to Scottish Planning Policy (SPP8), which encourages authorities and developers to adopt a sequential approach to selecting sites for all retail and commercial uses. The principles also apply to proposals to expand, or change the use of existing developments. The sequential approach requires that locations are considered in the following order:

Sequential Approach

- I) Town centre sites.
- II) Edge of town sites.
- III) Other commercial centres identified within the development plan.
- IV) Out-of-town centre sites in locations that are, or can be made, easily accessible by a choice of modes of transport.

- 4.3 The Lerwick Old Town Development Association, Lerwick Port Authority, Shetland Amenity Trust, Lerwick Town Centre Association and some members of the Lerwick Community Council have been consulted and had input into this Joint Action Plan.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report. However for development to happen within the Town Centre and Waterfront a degree of funding may be required for upgrading infrastructure, site purchases, environmental improvements and assisting with new developments. Funding may also be required for environmental and urban improvements in the future. The Planning Service have a limited amount of funding for small environmental improvements but any requirement for additional funding for larger projects will be requested

by means of other committee reports and will be assessed through the Capital Project assessment process.

6 Policy and Delegated Authority

6.1 The Planning Board has full delegated authority to make decisions on all matters within its remit, and as described in Section 15.0 of the Council's Scheme of Delegations.

7 Conclusion

7.1 This report has introduced a draft Lerwick Town Centre Action Plan. This document has been written to reflect the future development needs of Lerwick Town Centre, to encourage economic development and to encourage joined up strategic approach to development within the centre of Lerwick.

7.2 The attached document is a revised draft document, which will be again subject to public consultation. The final version, with any required amendments will be submitted again for final approval of the Planning Board and Council as a joint action plan in conjunction with the Lerwick Old Town Development Association.

8 Recommendation

8.1 It is recommended that the Planning Board:

- i) Approve, with amendments if necessary, the Lerwick Town Centre Action Plan, for the purpose of going out to public consultation.