

# MINUTES

## A & B – Public

**Special Development Committee**  
**Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick**  
**Tuesday 11 June 2019 at 10.00am**

**Present:**

P Campbell	A Cooper
S Coutts	A Duncan
J Fraser	S Leask
A Manson	A Priest
T Smith	

Also:

I Scott	G Smith
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**Apologies**

None

**In Attendance (Officers):**

N Grant, Director of Development Services  
R Sinclair, Executive Manager – Assets, Commissioning and Procurement  
I McDiarmid, Executive Manager - Planning  
S Shearer, Team Leader – Development Plans and Heritage  
P Wishart, Solicitor  
L Geddes, Committee Officer

**Chair:**

Mr Cooper, Chair of the Committee, presided.

**Circular:**

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

12/19

**Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance – Knab Masterplan**

The Committee considered a report by the Team Leader Development Plans and Heritage (DV-15-19-F) outlining the Supplementary Guidance - Knab Masterplan which, if adopted, would provide policy context and guidance for future development on the Knab Site.

The Director of Development Services summarised the main terms of the report, outlining the processes that had taken place in the development of the draft Knab masterplan. If adopted, development would take place in phases over a ten-year period, and each phase would require detailed planning approval. As per planning policy, processes would be set up for maintaining engagement with neighbours and stakeholders throughout the development. It was important with a development of this size that this engagement continued as the development progressed, and it was intended that the implementation team would go beyond the minimum requirements.

The Team Leader – Development Plans and Heritage advised that 17 responses had been received during the consultation period. A number of these related to the detailed design aspects which would be resolved at the detailed planning

application stage. The Planning Authority had not recommended any significant changes at this time but a few minor amendments had been made, as outlined in paragraph 4.3 of the report. The transport planning framework had also been amended to reflect current timings and strategies, and a typographical error had been corrected.

It was noted that there had been significant representations from sports groups, and it was questioned what discussions had taken place with these groups.

The Executive Manager – Assets, Commissioning and Procurement explained that a number of interested groups had come forward, and there was ongoing dialogue with them. The Council was willing to look at supporting sports groups in terms of providing sites, but the Knab Site was not being considered for that purpose. Over the last couple of months some groups had been working on business cases and were seeking external funding. With regard to hockey, meetings had taken place with the association on a number of occasions. If sufficient interest could be demonstrated in comparison to other sports, the allocation of sports grounds could be rearranged to reflect this. However the associated costs would be a challenge, and the association was being helped to produce a business case.

He went on to say that with regard to the provision of allotments and growing areas, there were a few initiatives locally on a similar theme and various groups with an interest in this topic. Discussions were also ongoing with these groups and the Council was working with them to explore options, but not in relation to the Knab Site.

Concern was expressed that the listing of the Janet Courtney Hostel would inhibit opportunities for the development of the site, and it was questioned if there was any scope for delisting the building.

The Team Leader – Development Plans and Heritage advised that Historic Scotland had looked at all the listed buildings on the site at an early stage, and had concluded that the Janet Courtney Hostel should remain listed. Any proposal to remove this listing would have to demonstrate a strong case for removal, and a proposal illustrating that what would go there in its place would be of superior quality. She confirmed that while the frontage of the building was the most significant in terms of interest, the whole exterior of the building was listed. However as the interior wasn't listed, this meant it would be easier to make changes internally and adapt the building for other uses. With buildings like the Bruce Hostel – where the interior was also listed – this would be more difficult.

The Executive Manager – Assets, Commissioning and Procurement added that any proposal for delisting a building had to be accompanied with plans for a high-quality development in its place. This was not what the Masterplan currently aspired to, with the focus being on reusing the listed buildings. Further discussion by the Council would be required if there was to be any proposal to deviate from the Masterplan.

It was questioned if consideration had been given to reserving an area for bus transport when funerals were being held in St Columba's Church.

The Team Leader – Development Plans and Heritage confirmed this was something that would be looked at during the detailed design and road modelling stages, and it would form part of the consideration. The Roads Service would also

be looking at the capacity in the Knab Road area and taking into account the capacity required for parking. She went on to confirm that discussions had been taking place with Zettrans regarding the provision of a new bus stop at the top of the site, as there was capacity for smaller buses to go into the site if required.

It was pointed out that concerns had also been expressed regarding the traffic flow/levels within Gressy Loan and on-street parking there, both at the demolition stage and the development stage.

The Director of Development Services explained that there were three access points in Gressy Loan/Lovers Loan. If there was a need for modifications, this could come forward for consideration at the detailed planning stages as the development progressed.

The Executive Manager – Assets, Commissioning and Procurement added that these issues would also be considered when the plans were put together and the contract was let. The development would be a staged development over a number of years, and the impact on the existing road network and residents would be assessed. Parking would be provided on site, and this may help to alleviate difficulties. He also confirmed that the issue relating to surface water would be dealt with as part of the development, and the Team Leader – Development Plans and Heritage confirmed that the background reports did illustrate where the drains were.

The Director of Development Services said that it was also important to look to the future and take into account the Scottish Government's policy to remove diesel and petrol vehicles, and move towards electric vehicles and active travel.

In response to a question, he also confirmed that the overall intention was that the Knab Site would be a Council development, and there was no intention to sell off land for private development. It was proposed that there would be a range of housing tenures available, including social housing, market rented, and accommodation for the elderly. The Scottish Government had recognised that there was a gap in the rental market between private rentals and the social rented market, so market rented accommodation was being looked at as a means of providing further housing options. This was regarded as being a more affordable means of private let, and there was a different way of funding the building of these properties. It was something that was being considered, and it was noted that the Scottish Government intended to develop this throughout Scotland. It was a mid-market rental option aimed at professionals looking for high-quality housing, but who may not be living in the area permanently.

During the discussion that followed, concern was expressed that unless action was taken on the access points before development commenced - particularly on Gressy Loan - these entrances may become established entry points and would be difficult to change in future.

It was also commented that across Shetland, there were many sports facilities and community halls available that could be utilised for sports, so sports groups could look to use these in the development of sport rather than focusing on the Knab site and developments in Lerwick. However it was pointed out that not all current

buildings were suitable for all sports, particularly in terms of the height required for some sports.

The Chair advised that it would be appropriate for Members to have this discussion when considering the Council's Asset Strategy.

Mr Fraser moved that the Development Committee recommend to the Council that it resolve to adopt the Supplementary Guidance – Knab Masterplan as supplementary guidance to the Local Development Plan (LDP), but with further exploration as to the possibility of delisting the Janet Courtney Hostel to allow greater options to be considered to enhance the public benefit of the site.

Ms Manson seconded.

Mr Cooper moved that the recommendation in the report be approved.

Mr Leask seconded.

Mr Campbell gave notice of further amendment.

After summing up, voting took place by show of hands and the result was as follows:

Amendment (Mr Cooper)	7
Motion (Mr Fraser)	2

Mr Campbell moved that the Development Committee recommend to the Council that it resolve to adopt the Supplementary Guidance – Knab Masterplan as supplementary guidance to the Local Development Plan (LDP), subject to further consideration being given to traffic flows on and around the site, with particular reference to site access from Gressy Loan, Lovers Loan; the provision of public bus services to and on the site; the impact of increased traffic on Knab Road from Church Road and on Twageos Road from South Commercial Street; and that a report be brought to the Council within three months.

Mr T Smith seconded.

After summing up, voting took place by show of hands, and the result was as follows:

Amendment (Mr Campbell)	3
Motion (Mr Cooper)	6

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**Decision:**

The Development Committee **RECOMMENDED** to the Council that it resolve to adopt the Supplementary Guidance – Knab Masterplan as supplementary guidance to the Local Development Plan.

The meeting concluded at 10.45am.

Chair