

Aberdeen Planning Guidance

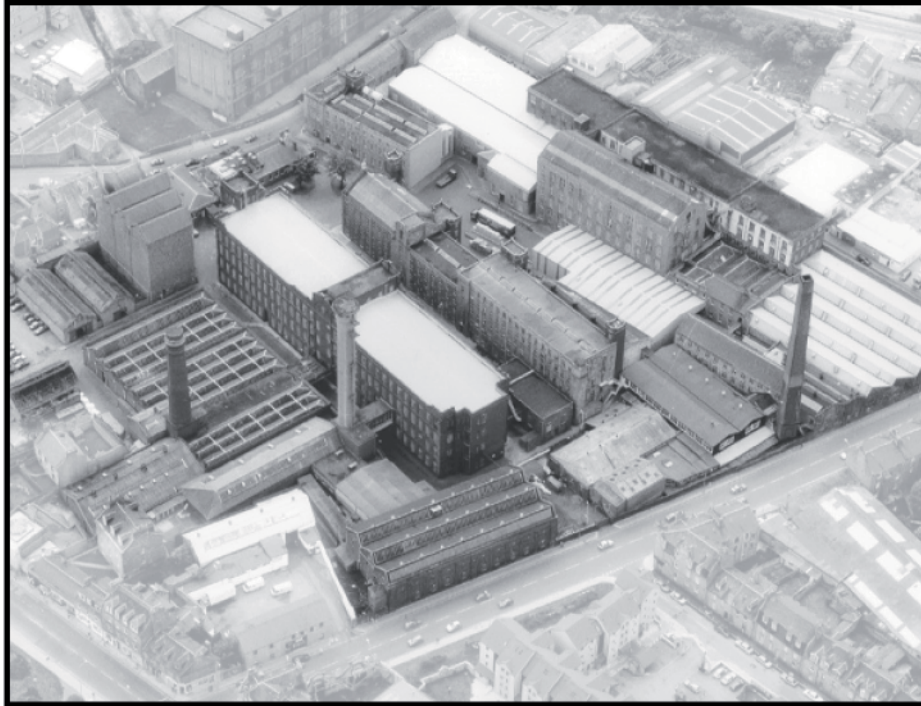
Broadford Works

Maberly Street

Opportunity Site 90

January 2013

The guidance was first produced prior to the adoption of the Local Development Plan. However, the document remains valid and the guidance derived from this still informs the City Council's decisions on such development in Aberdeen. Therefore any queries concerning the text of the guidance should be directed to the Planning Authority for possible clarification.



Bradford Works

DESIGN BRIEF

JUNE 2001

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Broadford Works is a 3.6 hectare mill complex, originally based on flax spinning, located just outside the City Centre. The entire mill complex is listed category A for special architectural and historic interest. The scale and character of the mill buildings ensure that Broadford Works is very distinctive and self-contained area of townscape with obvious scope for development as an 'urban village'.

2.0 DESCRIPTION AND HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

2.1 Though bounded on two sides by major roads, George Street to the east and Hutcheon Street to the north, Broadford Works is so enclosed and inward - looking that from the outside its size is not readily appreciated. It is perhaps the chimney and the chimneylike hosepipe manufacturing towers that are the most conspicuous elements of the Works.

2.2 At the centre of the site is the oldest iron-framed mill in Scotland dating from 1808. This is flanked by later spinning mills built in 1820-1830 and 1860. As the technology changed, new and larger buildings were erected to house the latest machinery and production processes. The complex grew and spread out from this central group of spinning mills until the Works, at one time in the nineteenth century, became the single largest employer in Aberdeen. Most importantly, however, as the Works grew the older buildings were retained with the result that the site comprises a complete history of the development of this particular industry. The importance and complexity of the site are such that a Conservation Plan was commissioned by the City Council as a starting point for the production of this design brief. (A Conservation Plan for Broadford Works - Page and Park Architects June 2000.)

3.0 THE CONSERVATION PLAN

3.1 It was stated at the outset that the purpose of this Conservation Plan is not to investigate how Broadford Works can be preserved as a historical or industrial monument. It accepts the fundamental need to find viable new uses for the buildings and it informs the production of the design brief by ensuring that what is most important and significant is understood and appropriately incorporated into the development proposals. The Conservation Plan analyses each building on the site and assesses its historic, architectural and townscape significance, its general condition and the opportunities it presents. It also examines the spaces between the buildings and similarly assesses their importance. Thus, what must be retained and what can or should be demolished is identified (see Plan 1). Proposals for the demolition or conversion of industrial buildings will be assessed by the planning authority by reference to the Conservation Plan.

4.0 PLANNING POLICIES

4.1 The Broadford Works site is zoned as Mixed Use (H2) in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. The area to the west of the site, between Ann Street and the railway is also zoned Mixed Use (H2) as is the north of the site. To the south and east of the site is zoned as Residential (H1). George Street up until Maberly Street and Spring Garden is classed as a Neighbourhood Centre.

5.0 USES

5.1 Mention has been made above of the suitability of Broadford Works for creating what is now generally known as an Urban Village: an area of mixed uses where the built form or townscape is distinctive enough to be experienced as a village or a recognisable quarter within the wider urban context. Though the major use here is likely to be residential a wide range of uses is to be encouraged both to give life to the area and to make the best use of the spaces available within the converted mill buildings. No particular uses or mix of uses is prescribed in this brief though certain buildings clearly lend themselves to non-residential uses. The ground floors of any of the retained buildings with frontages to the proposed car-free core (see 9 below) are considered appropriate locations for retail or commercial uses.

5.2 When converted to residential use the mill buildings are capable of providing large and characterful apartments as opposed to the small and rather basic flats that have usually been associated with city centre housing in recent years. The nearby Bastille building, originally part of the Broadford Works, with its rooftop penthouses shows the ready market for this type of accommodation. The Aberdeen City Centre Housing Strategy survey supports this: there is a demand for larger, more expensive flats. The Bastille is at present a stand-alone building. The Broadford site as a whole is large enough to enable a high amenity external environment to be created which will further enhance the quality of the individual building conversions. It should be possible therefore, to provide a range of types and sizes of residential accommodation, and to encourage the development of a genuine community: an essential element of any Urban Village.

6.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 A transport impact assessment will be required that looks at both pedestrian and vehicular access to the site and includes any measures that might be required to mitigate the effect of the development including the submission of a “green” travel plan and suggestions for off-site measures such as improving pedestrian access to public transport and control of parking in the surrounding area. The developer will be required to demonstrate a “no net detriment” in traffic terms for the surrounding road network as a result of the proposed new junction providing access to the site (see 10.1 below).

6.2 A preliminary assessment has been undertaken on some aspects of the transportation issues associated with the scheme and this can be made available to the developer. However, the developer will be expected to submit a completed transport assessment to support their planning application.

7.0 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 School Capacity

Broadford Works falls within the catchment of Skene Square Primary School and Aberdeen Grammar School. The 2010 Based School Roll Forecasts indicate that the total roll of Skene Square Primary School, presently under capacity by 22%, will rise to 20% over capacity in 2018. Aberdeen Grammar School, presently under capacity by 5%, is forecast to remain at a similar level in 2019. Broadford Works has been included in the forecasts with a suggested total of 398. However, this site is constrained by marketability. A recent application has been submitted to the Planning Authority in early 2012 which proposes 517 households.

7.2 Contamination

Broadford Works has been used for a number of years for many different manufacturing processes. Many of these processes have the potential to contaminate the land or buildings on or within which they take place. The amount of contamination should be clarified by survey prior to development taking place. Measures will be required to mitigate and remove potentially harmful contamination where identified prior to new development being completed. The extent of mitigation and removal will be dictated by the end-use of the development proposals.

7.3 Affordable Housing

The Aberdeen Local Development Plan requires residential development proposals of five units or more to contribute no less than 25% of the total number of units as affordable housing. Further guidance on the provision of affordable housing from new developments is available in Supplementary Guidance on Affordable Housing. The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (2011) has identified that there is need for affordable housing in Aberdeen City. Broadford Works will be required to accommodate 25% affordable housing either on site, off site or through commuted payments. The extent of affordable housing and the mechanisms for delivery will be dependent on the final development proposals.

8.0 URBAN DESIGN OBJECTIVES

8.1 The primary objectives of the urban design guidance contained in this brief are:

• Ensure that new development is added to the retained mill buildings in such a way as to respect the integrity of individual listed buildings while creating a cohesive and comprehensible network of public streets and spaces and clearly defined private spaces.
• Maintain a distinct character within the development so that the new urban development is a recognisable place and at the same time, improve the pedestrian linkages between the site and the surrounding streets.
• Ensure that any new development within the site will be of a scale and density appropriate to the existing buildings.
• To ensure that the site is not dominated by roads and parking and that amenity is maximised.

8.2 It is particularly important that the whole of the site is developed. It would clearly be unsatisfactory if some of the more historically important yet commercially less attractive buildings were to be neglected while only the more straightforward areas of the site were taken up by developers. It may be necessary to make use of planning agreements and conditions on the phasing of the development to ensure this objective is achieved.

9.0 THE CAR-FREE CORE

9.1 One of the principal means of creating a high standard of residential amenity within the development of this site is to ensure that the major spaces enclosed by the retained historic buildings are kept free of cars. Pedestrian spaces should be provided and should retain the existing setted floorscape, preserving the character of the works. Tree planting and street furniture should be provided to ensure that these spaces can be used and enjoyed by residents and visitors. Where commercial uses open onto these spaces there is scope for outdoor eating and drinking areas or even market stalls.

10.0 VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PARKING

10.1 There should be vehicular access to the central core only for servicing and emergency purposes for which the existing works entrance on Maberly Street will continue as the point of access and egress. A new vehicular access point for residents, occupiers of commercial premises and visitors should be formed as a new traffic light controlled junction off Hutcheon Street.

10.2 It is important that suitable measures are put in place to limit vehicular access to the central pedestrian core. This could be achieved by means of physical controls e.g. gates or barriers or by a Traffic Order if the area is designated as a public road.

10.3 All parking and car circulation should be provided outwith the pedestrian core area. Parking can be provided in a variety of ways. An existing semi basement provides one potential parking area. Elsewhere all of the following can be considered:-

• Uncovered surface parking
• Existing single storey industrial buildings retained to provide covered parking.
• Multi-storey or decked parking.

10.4 A reduction in car parking will be considered on this site provided the developer is willing to introduce suitable measures to mitigate the effect of the development. The Transport Impact Assessment (see section 6.0) should consider any deficit in car parking and identify suitable measures. The following reductions can be considered:

• Flatted development - 1.0 space per flat
o 1 bedroom flat – 1 per unit
o 2 bedroom flat – 1.75 per unit
o 3 bedroom flat – 2 per unit
• Social housing - 0.8 spaces per flat
• Commercial development - reductions of up to 20% may be possible, dependant on suitable “green” transport plan.

11.0 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

11.1 It is desirable to increase pedestrian linkages between the site and the surrounding streets. There is an existing but disused entrance at Maberly Street at the south east corner of the works which could be used as a pedestrian access point. Though at present the west side of Ann Street is wholly occupied by industrial units it is likely that, following the conversion of Broadford Works, this area may be redeveloped for a wider range of uses. It would also be desirable to form a link to George Street. To achieve this it would be necessary to acquire additional property. This brief can, therefore, only express the desirability of creating this link rather than insisting on such a link at a specified point.

12.0 URBAN DESIGN GUIDANCE FOR NEW BUILDINGS

12.1 The buildings identified for retention and conversion in the conservation plan will establish the character of the proposed urban village. Strong, simple building forms generally in granite or red brick. Within this clearly functional aesthetic there is a range of building size and architectural treatment reflecting the different uses of individual buildings and their historic period. In design terms this provides a very exciting context into which new buildings can be added. Robust innovative modern architecture is essential here, pastiche would be glaringly inappropriate. Some guidance is provided in this brief on block heights and building lines but it is essential that a variety of architectural treatments is employed on the different new-build sites.

Further detailed advice should be obtained from the Council’s Masterplanning, Design and Conservation Team.

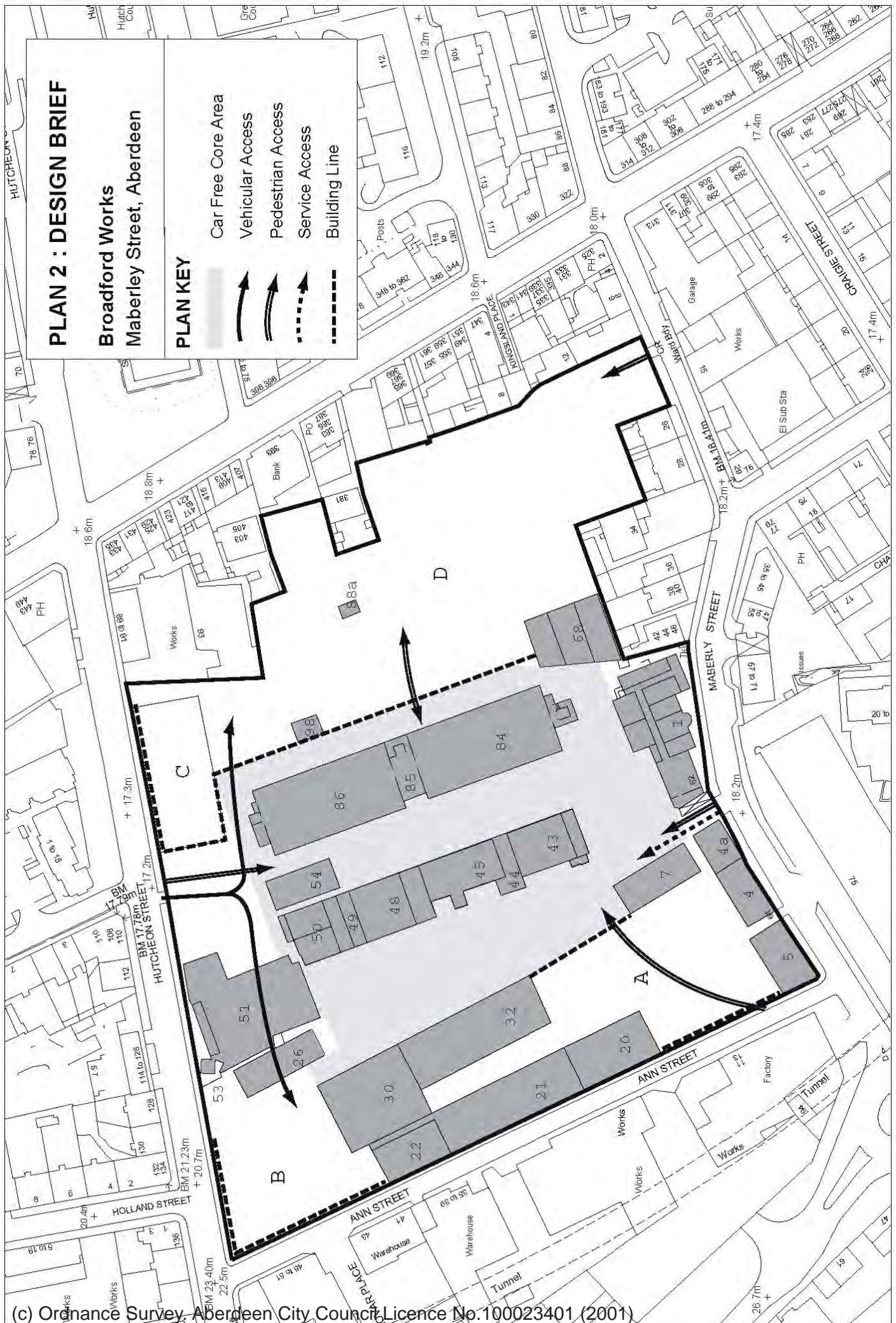
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