

Briefing Note – City Centre Affordable Housing Waiver

1.0 Background

In 2015 Aberdeen City Council adopted its City Centre masterplan, a 30 year vision for the City. One of the many strands of this vision was an ambition to see the population of the City Centre increase by encouraging more people to live there.

In the five years from 2013 to 2018 as few as 56 homes were provided within the City Centre, in stark contrast to the approximately 4,500 homes delivered across the City. To assess what the blockages were to development within the City Centre coming forward, a report was commissioned. The City Living report suggested that due to the complexity of developing in the City Centre, financial viability was a significant challenge. The report went on to suggest that waiving both Affordable Housing and Developer Obligations would greatly increase the attractiveness of developing residential property in the City Centre. As the report clearly showed that Affordable Housing had a far more significant impact on development viability than all the remaining Developer Obligations, it was decided to pursue this option for a pilot scheme.

This pilot would work hand in hand with other incentives such as the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme programme for Union Street which allows developers seek additional funding for the repair of historic buildings. The Council is also investing heavily in projects like the Art Gallery, Music Hall, Broad Street, Marischal Sq. and Union Terrace Gardens with a view to making the City Centre a more attractive place to live.

2.0 Committee Decision

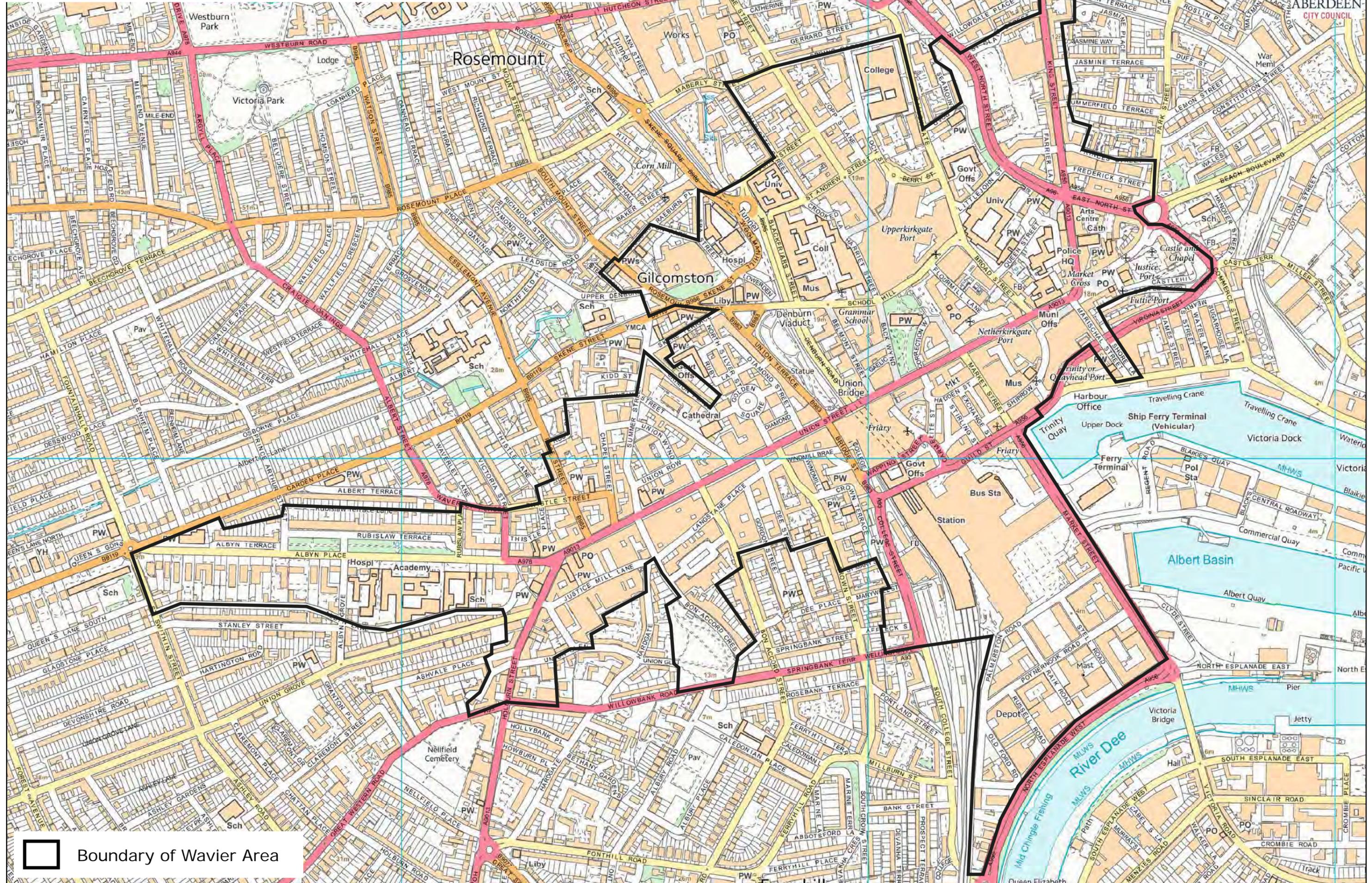
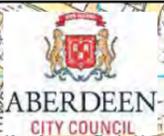
At Planning Development Management committee on the 20th of September 2018, approval was given for the introduction of a waiver on Affordable Housing. The Committee approved this decision based on the requirements set out in Para 3.4 of that report, which states:-

“The recommended approach would therefore be for Affordable Housing contributions not to be sought for applications.....for housing approved starting from the date of the decision of the committee, for a period up to the 31st December 2020. Approval in this context will mean the validation and approval of the application by the Planning Authority, any Section 75 legal agreement and the issuing of a decision notice by the Planning Authority. This would apply within an area of the City Centre as defined on the map attached at Appendix A. Such development would be required to commence within 12 months of the decision notice and would be secured via a direction applied to the grant of planning permission time limiting the relevant consent. There will be an expectation that such development will include a

	<p><i>mix of unit types and sizes, to encourage sustainable mixed communities. A report will be brought to committee at the end of the two-year period detailing the outcomes.”</i></p>
<p>3.0</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p>	<p>Affordable Housing Wavier</p> <p><u>Period of waiver:-</u> 20th of September 2018 – 31st of December 2020</p> <p><u>What has been waived:-</u> The provision of Affordable Housing on all new planning applications within the identified boundary. All other Developer Obligations remain applicable.</p> <p><u>Requirements:-</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The development must be within the identified boundary. b. All applications must be determined before 31st of December 2020. This includes the securing of any legal agreement and the issuing of the decision notice. c. In order to ensure that the Planning Authority is able to process the applications within the above time period planning applications should be submitted by 30th of June 2020. Applicants should be aware that eligible applications submitted after this date or that require additional supporting information which is submitted after that date may not be processed within the period and, in these circumstances as such would not be eligible for the waiver. d. In order to ensure that all the supporting information required with an application is submitted when an application is lodged all applicants should enter into a processing agreement setting out the expectations of both parties in accordance with the Council’s guidance*This should be in place at an early stage and may follow on from pre-application engagement. e. Development must commence within 12 months of the decision notice. Without exception a direction limiting the period for implementation shall be applied to this effect for all applications determined within the time period. If the time period expires before end date of the waiver (31 December 2020) the applicant will be able to apply for permission to renew the consent, but such applications should be submitted before 30th June 2020 to ensure determination within the waiver time period (as per bullet (c.) above). f. There will be an expectation that developments seeking the exemption will provide a mix of unit types and size. This will be determined on an application by application basis.
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Boundary of the area</p> <p>Please see the attached map.</p>

5.0	<p>Transitional Arrangements</p> <p>For applications which are currently being assessed or are awaiting completion of a legal agreement, the waiver can be applied, however the 12 month period for commencement of the development will also apply.</p> <p>The waiver only applies to new approvals that are issued within the waiver period.</p>
6.0	<p>Notes</p> <p>* Processing Agreement Guidance</p> <p>https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-applications/application-processing-agreements</p>

City Centre Affordable Housing Wavier



 Boundary of Wavier Area

