

Supplementary Guidance

Bon Accord Baths

Justice Mill Lane

May 2012

The Bon Accord Baths Planning Brief 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. The new Local Development Plan calls for appraisals of such reports and as part of this process the policy references within the supplementary guidance has been reviewed and updated. Therefore any queries concerning the text of the Supplementary Guidance should be directed to Planning and Sustainable Development for possible clarification.



Bon Accord Baths,
Justice Mill Lane, Aberdeen

Planning Brief

Aberdeen City Council

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Bon Accord Baths are located on Justice Mill Lane, which runs parallel to Union Street in Aberdeen city centre. The Baths closed on 31 March 2008 due to the level of subsidy required to operate the facility being well beyond that of other similar facilities across the UK. The Baths were declared surplus to the requirements of the Central and South Area Committees at their respective meetings on 19 and 21 August 2008. The matter was subsequently referred to the Resources Management Committee on 26 August 2008 where Members resolved to declare the Baths surplus to requirements and that the property be disposed of on the open market at an appropriate time.

1.2 This planning brief has been prepared by Ryden LLP on behalf of Aberdeen City Council as guidance for the possible future use of the various aspects of the building.

1.3 Aberdeen City Council encourages the production of Planning Briefs in consultation with the local community. In preparing this Brief, full consultation, in accordance with Aberdeen City Council's Policy, will be undertaken with surrounding residents and interest groups in order to ensure that their views have been fully considered. The area does not benefit from an active Community Council although there are a number of Conservation Groups and consultation will be undertaken through them with a letter drop to those residents and businesses adjacent to the identified site. Formal consultation will be undertaken with the statutory consultees following approval of the Draft Brief.

2.0 PURPOSE AND STATUS OF THE PLANNING BRIEF

2.1 The purpose of this Planning Brief is to set out the planning framework that will guide the development process and assist with the delivery of a development that makes the best use of the existing building for the benefit of the community. The major component of this brief is to identify the most appropriate use or uses in order to re-occupy the building.

2.2 This Brief, however, is supplementary guidance. It does not have the statutory status of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. Developers and occupiers are entitled to propose alternative schemes. However, this Brief provides a clear indication of the requirements and expectations of Aberdeen City Council which they will consider as a significant material consideration in determining development proposals for this building.

3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 The Bon Accord Baths were designed by Alexander McRobbie of the City Architects Department and constructed in 1937. The building comprises a 14-bay swimming pool which extends behind the cross arm of the northern entrance block, thus forming a T-floor plan. There is no car parking associated with the existing use. The frontage of the building to Justice Mill Lane comprises a symmetrical art deco granite elevation of two storeys. The site and rear elevations are rendered while the pool hall itself has a semi circular vaulted concrete roof. The art-deco building was listed Category B in June 1991. This category covers "buildings of regional or more than local importance, or major examples of some particular period, style or building type which may have been altered". Existing floor plans are attached as Appendix 1.

3.2 In respect of the interior of the building, the entrance hall and approaches to the pool viewing gallery benefit from blond 'ripple' sycamore timber panelling, and distinctive chrome fixtures.

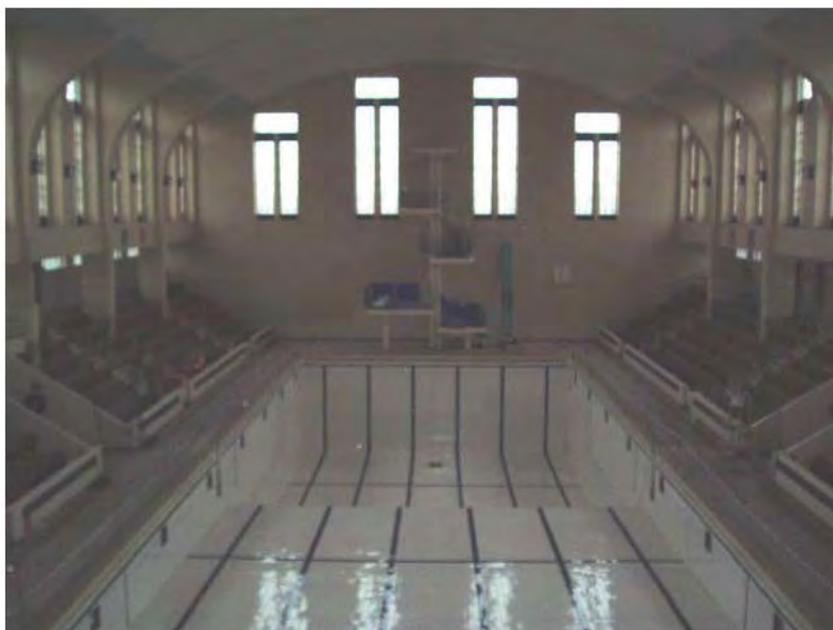


Figure 1
Entrance Lobby and
Sycamore timber panelling

3.3 The front section of the building, which covers two storeys includes the following accommodation:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground floor: Reception booth; Duty Managers Office; gymnasium (fitness studio); former Spartans Weight Training Room; Aerobics Studio; bathing/changing facilities; and 4 no. treatment rooms/offices in the link block leading to the pool viewing gallery.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mezzanine Floor: two small offices and storage space.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Floor: Health Suite comprising Turkish Baths, two saunas, two steam rooms, plunge pool, reception area, relaxation lounge, changing facilities and toilets, treatment rooms, several stores, and a training room (a.k.a the Green Room). Lighting from various windows and recently replaced sky/rooflights.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rear section of the building, containing the pool and changing facilities comprises:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper Level: Viewing Gallery with symmetrical staircases leading to lower levels.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Level: Former Café Area, and respective gents/ladies toilets.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Level: Male changing alongside the western edge of the building. This benefits from individual cubicles, and is lit from metal framed sky/rooflights above (Female changing is repeated to eastern elevation). Further accommodation includes: Club Room, Staff Room, First Aid Room and numerous store rooms.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Level (Rear) includes sizeable areas for the respective plant equipment relating to the filtration of the pool, and to the overall heating of the building. A laundry complete with some original equipment also exists. A workshop area and further storage (including electrical switch room) is located underneath the front aspect of the building. Access to the Boiler room can be obtained from the shared access to the adjacent Health Club's multi-storey car park.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poolside: The pool is 36.57 metres (40 yards) long, and 12.8 metres (14 yards) wide comprising 6 lanes. The poolside incorporates mosaic tiling, while the pool itself includes underwater lighting to the side-walls. The original concrete diving board is located to the southern end of the hall, with 4 diving heights available. The raked timber seating (with supporting ironwork) is located on concrete galleries. A wall mounted clock is located at the screen wall (northern) of the viewing gallery.

Figure 2
From Viewing Gallery



3.4 In respect of the general condition of the Bon Accord Baths, the general structure of the building appears to be in good condition. Considerable expenditure has been made in maintaining the building, the pool, and its plant for continued use. Some aspects of the building are however tired and dated in appearance.

3.5 The setting of the Bon Accord Baths within the city centre can be described as urban, with a mixture of uses surrounding the site. The area to the south, which is at a significantly lower level, is formed by the modern four storey residential development 'Strawberry Bank Parade'. Immediately to the west is the "Nuffield" health club (formerly Cannons gym), which itself comprises a conversion of a Category C(s) Listed former cinema. A multi-storey car park associated with the health club is located to the south west corner of the Baths. On the northern side of Justice Mill Lane there is a mixture of uses including a public house, barbers, hot food takeaway, restaurant, several nightclubs,

and the service access to the Post Office which fronts Union Street. Building heights vary in this section of Justice Mill Lane from one to two storeys.

3.6 Turning to the east of the Bon Accord Baths, an extant planning permission relates to the adjoining four storey building at 21-23 Justice Mill Lane. It would be demolished and subsequently replaced with a 7 storey, 119 bedroom hotel with restaurant. As with other applications on Justice Mill Lane and Langstane Place, the developer was required to provide contributions towards improving pedestrian safety in the immediate area through the provision of localised traffic management measures. Beyond that building is the former 'Satrosphere' site (17-19 Justice Mill Lane) and surface public car park. That site also benefits from planning permission for a six storey mixed use development comprising a 160 bed hotel with conferencing facilities, 11,606 square metres of Grade A Office Accommodation, and a total of 242 car parking spaces, 72 of which would be available for public use. This development is currently under construction.

Figure 3
Location Plan



Licence Number
100004369

Figure 4
Aerial Photograph



Licence Number
100004369

4.0 PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

4.1 Scottish Planning Policy

4.1.1 Scottish Planning Policy (October 2008) refers to the purpose of planning as being to “guide the future development and use of land. Planning is about where development should happen, where it should not, and how it interacts with its surroundings” (Paragraph 4).

4.1.2 Scottish Planning Policy emphasises that open spaces and sports facilities enrich our quality of life and our environments.

4.1.3 Scottish Planning Policy states that “The historic environment is a key part of Scotland's cultural heritage and it enhances national, regional and local distinctiveness, contributing to sustainable economic growth and regeneration. It is of particular importance for supporting the growth of tourism and leisure, and contributes to sustainable development through the energy and material invested in buildings, the scope for adaptation and reuse and the unique quality of historic environments which provide a sense of identity and continuity for communities.

4.1.4 Paragraph 111 states that “In most cases, the historic environment (excluding archaeology) can accommodate change which is informed and sensitively managed, and can be adapted to accommodate new uses whilst retaining its special character.”.

4.1.5 Paragraph 111 also states “Planning authorities should support the best viable use that is compatible with the fabric, setting and character of the historic environment. The aim should be to find a new economic use that is viable over the long term with minimum impact on the special architectural and historic interest of the building or area.”.

4.2 Structure Plan

4.2.1 The Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan was approved by Scottish Ministers in 2009. One of the aims of the Structure Plan is to “protect and improve our values assets and resources, including the natural and built environment and our cultural heritage.

4.2.2 An objective of the Structure Plan is to encourage economic development and create new employment in a range of areas that are both appropriate for and attractive to the needs of different industries. Proposed employment uses on unallocated sites shall be considered acceptable providing they respect relevant structure and local development plan policies and take into reasonable account the following criteria:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposal is well integrated with the existing pattern of land use and will not affect the amenity of neighbouring land uses;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposal takes account of the availability of the need for access and infrastructure and has regard to the proximity of existing and potential transport corridors;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposal is located close to the existing population in order to provide opportunities for people to work near their home and help promote social inclusion;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposal makes use of derelict, despoiled, unused and underused land and buildings where appropriate;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposal can demonstrate a proven economic need and takes advantage of opportunities provided by major inward investment or other economic initiatives; and,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposal minimises the impact of any pollution generated.

4.2.3 Tourism shall be encouraged where they are compatible with policies to safeguard and enhance the built and natural environment to maintain a strong service sector in the City.

4.2.4 Housing developments should respect the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan by:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing the range and quality of housing and the residential environment in the ‘regeneration priority areas’;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building 40% of all new housing in Aberdeen City on brownfield sites;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally having no less than 30 dwellings per hectare;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality and design of new developments to be nationally recognised, including developments recognised under the Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative; and
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new housing meeting the needs of the whole community by providing appropriate levels of affordable housing and an appropriate mix of types and sizes of homes.

There is no limit to the contribution to the housing land supply from brownfield developments within settlements.

4.2.5 The Structure Plan states that developers need to contribute towards necessary infrastructure, services and facilities within their own site. However, in cases where development has wider effects, we will have to secure extra contributions.

4.2.6 The Council, in conjunction with private developers and housing agencies, shall seek to secure appropriate levels of affordable (likely to be in the range of 20% to 30%) and special needs housing through the Structure Plan.

4.2.7 The Structure Plan will use a sequential approach, in line with Scottish Planning Policy, to identify sites for new retail development across the region.

4.2.8 With regards to Built Heritage and Archaeology the Structure Plan states that Local Development Plans. (and supplementary guidance) will make sure the North East’s natural environment and historic sites and buildings continue to be protected and improved. The Plan also states that both councils will take account of biodiversity, wildlife habitats, landscape, greenspace and other sensitive areas in identifying land for development, preparing masterplans and assessing development proposals.

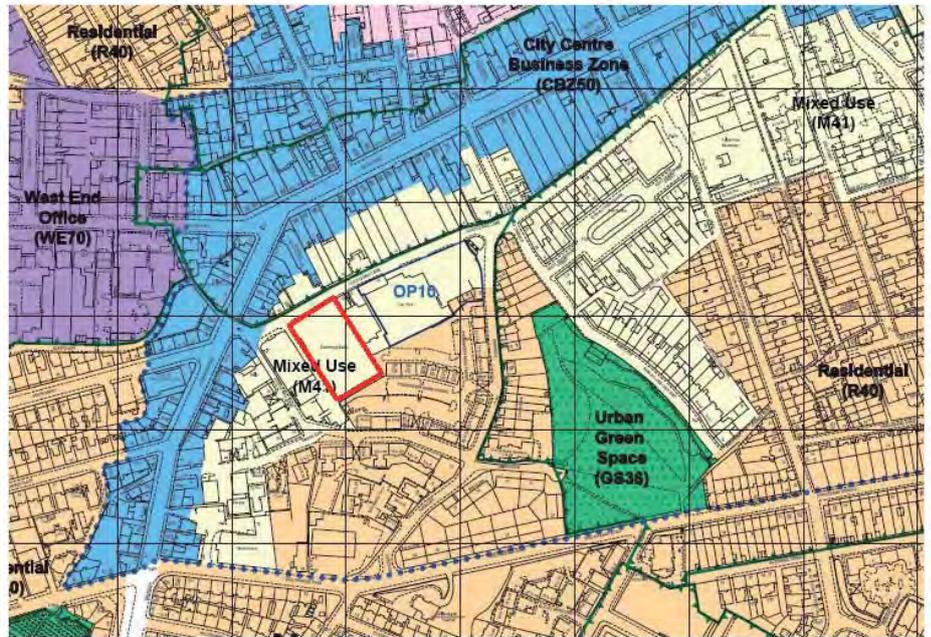
4.2.9 The Structure Plan requires that all new developments contribute towards reducing the need to travel and encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport by making these attractive choices. Developer contributions will be required to mitigate any adverse effects of the travel patterns created by the development on the existing transport infrastructure or services, or the wider community, and should address any shortfalls in the choice of transport available to the development.

4.3 Local Development Plan

4.3.1 The Aberdeen Local Development Plan was formally adopted on 29 February 2012. Within the plan, the site is allocated as Policy H2 - Mixed Use Areas. It states that “Applications for development or change of use within Mixed Use Areas must take into account the existing uses and character of the surrounding area and avoid undue conflict with the adjacent land uses and amenity. Where new housing is proposed, a satisfactory residential environment should be created which should not impinge upon the viability or operation of existing businesses in the vicinity. Conversely, where new industrial, business or commercial uses are permitted, development should not adversely affect the amenity of people living and working in the area”.

4.3.2 Policy D1 - Architecture and Placemaking of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012 seeks to ensure high standards of design with due consideration for its context and make a positive contribution to its setting. To ensure that there is a consistent approach to high quality development throughout the City with an emphasis on creating quality places, the Aberdeen Masterplanning Process Supplementary Guidance will be applied. The Plan encourages the use of previously developed brownfield sites. The Council will consider alternative uses for redundant listed buildings or parts of listed buildings, which will permit better use and maintenance of the properties. Policy D4 - Aberdeen’s Granite Heritage states that conversion and adaptation of redundant granite buildings will be favoured.

Figure 5
Adopted Local Plan extract
(c) Ordnance Survey. Aberdeen
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(2009)



4.3.3 In respect of Affordable Housing, Policy H5 - Affordable Housing states that all developments of five units or more are required 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.

4.3.4 In respect of transportation, Policy T2 - Managing the Transport Impact of Development outlines that new developments will need to demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimize the traffic generated. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will be required for developments which exceed the thresholds set out in the Transport and accessibility Supplementary Guidance. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will be required for developments which exceed the thresholds set out in the Transport and Accessibility Supplementary Guidance. Planning conditions and/ or legal agreements may be imposed to bind the targets set out in the Travel Plan and set the arrangements for monitoring, enforcement and review. Maximum car parking standards are set out in Supplementary Guidance on Transport and Accessibility and detail the standards that different types of development should. Developers will be required to mitigate adverse effects outwith the development that will arise as a result of providing fewer spaces than the maximum permitted. Furthermore, public transport should be available within 400 metres.

4.3.5 Developer Contributions are referred to within Policy I1 - Infrastructure Delivery and Developer Contributions. Development must be accompanied by the infrastructure, services and facilities required to support new or expanded communities and the scale and type of developments proposed. New infrastructure will either be provided by the developer or through financial contributions.

4.3.6 The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan comprises the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009), and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012.

4.4 Historic Scotland - Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP)(2009)

4.4.1 Paragraph 1.6 states “The historic environment has been adapted over time to meet changing needs. The challenge for sustainable management of the historic environment and how it contributes to the vitality of modern life, is to identify its key characteristics and to establish the boundaries within which change can continue so that it enhances rather than diminishes historic character”. Furthermore, “The protection of the historic environment is not about preventing change” (Paragraph 1.8).

4.4.2 Paragraph 1.11 states that “The protection and enhancement of the historic environment contributes to the Scottish Governments central purpose which is to focus government and public

services on creating a more sustainable country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth”. One of the policies of the Scottish Ministers is that there should be a presumption in favour of preservation of individual historic assets and that no historic asset should be lost or radically changed without adequate

4.4.3 Paragraph 1.32 states that “Good stewardship of the historic environment can make a contribution towards addressing wider issues like energy conservation and reuse of building and building materials”. The maintenance of quality is reflected through a number of key considerations including: management, and any proposed alteration or change of use, should be appropriate and follow best conservation practice; and, to retain historical character and future performance of older buildings, it will be important to use appropriate and compatible materials and construction techniques (Paragraph 1.35).

4.4.4 In order to prevent potentially damaging actions, paragraph 1.36 outlines key principles to minimise risk:

“a) ensure that existing and intended management or use is appropriate and based on best available knowledge;
b) ensure that any proposed change of use is necessary; ...
e) where change is to proceed, adopt strategies to mitigate its impact and keep any interventions to a minimum; and,
f) ensure that management or alteration, is sympathetic to the historic character, using compatible materials and construction techniques”.

4.4.5 Paragraph 3.33 states that “In assessing an application for listed building consent, the planning authority is required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses”. The ability to adapt listed buildings to meet the needs of successive generations while retaining their character is highlighted. “Change should therefore be managed to protect a building’s special interest while enabling it to remain in active use” (Paragraph 3.36). This is also reiterated through paragraph 3.43 which states “Listed buildings will however, like other buildings, require alteration and adaptation from time to time if they are to remain in beneficial use, and will be at risk if such alteration and adaptation is unduly constrained. In most cases such change, if approached carefully, can be managed without adversely affecting the special interest of the building”.

4.4.6 Paragraph 3.45 stipulates that “Where proposals involve significant intervention, evidence that less intrusive options have been considered should be provided. Where the application would have a significant adverse effect on the buildings special interest, but is believed to offer significant benefits to economic growth

4.4.7 In respect of the determination of applications, paragraph 3.50 states that “where a proposal involves alteration or adaptation which will sustain or enhance the beneficial use of the building and does not adversely affect the special interest of the building, consent should normally be granted”. Planning authorities involved in discussions about work to Category A and B listed buildings that is novel, contentious or large scale should consult with Historic Scotland at an early stage (Paragraph 3.55).

5.0 ANALYSIS AND APPRECIATION OF THE LISTED BUILDING

5.1.1 As highlighted above, the Bon Accord Baths is a listed building and it is important that the intrinsic character of the building is retained and enhanced as part of any potential use or conversion. The paragraph below highlights some of the distinctive features of the building but any alterations, external or internal, that affect its character or appearance will require listed building consent.

5.1.2 The Bon Accord Baths are a unique example of art-deco architecture, with very few other examples of swimming pools from that era remaining in Scotland. From the external perspective, the principle elevations of the Baths should be retained as existing. The entrance bays and symmetrical (geometrically divided) windows should also remain in-situ. In respect of the interior, aspects

which should be retained include the communal entrance areas which comprise full height glazing, sycamore panelling, and chrome fittings. This also extends into the corridor towards the main pool hall. In respect of the hall itself, the descriptive list also mentions the raked seating, vaulted concrete roof and support pillars, and symmetrical stairways (leading down to the respective changing rooms) as well as the wall mounted clock and decorative pylons at the north screen wall of the pool (viewing gallery). The diving boards located at the southern end of the pool hall also make a significant contribution to the character of the building. The underwater lighting along the length of the pool is believed to have been one of the early examples of such lighting which added to the glamour of the pool itself.

6.0 FUTURE USE AND DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

6.1.1 As the building closed on 31 March 2008, and has subsequently been declared surplus to requirements, consideration must be given to where changes could take place in light of the potential for the building being subject to a change of use. As previously mentioned, alterations to the main elevations are unlikely to be supported where they would detract from the existing visual qualities of the building. However, it must be noted that the baths are effectively split into two distinct sections. The front section is likely to have significant potential for reconfiguration and alteration, while the rear section is less likely to accommodate substantial change. In addition, subject to obtaining a proposal of sufficient quality and merit, there may be scope for the provision of additional accommodation/floorspace between the front and rear sections of the building thus allowing a modest increase to the overall space available, and negating dead space within the buildings existing footprint.

6.1.2 Planning permission and listed building consent will be required for any material change of use of the building and alterations which have a material affect on the external appearance or internal features of intrinsic value or historical interest.

7.0 DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

7.1 Potential Future Uses

7.1.1 In respect of the potential uses of the site, as highlighted above, the Bon Accord Baths are located within an area zoned for 'Mixed Use' within the Adopted Local Plan. Accordingly, it is considered that the surrounding uses and character must be taken into account. The surrounding area comprises a number of uses that would be expected within the centre of a thriving City. This includes hotels, offices, licensed premises, a health club, and residential properties. However, in light of the nature of the building being listed, careful consideration must be given to permitting uses which would not result in the loss of character, and uses which would enhance the building where possible.

7.1.2 Scottish Historic Environment Policy is clear in stating that alteration and adaptation should sustain or enhance the beneficial use of buildings. The Council have identified that the buildings are now surplus to requirements in light of the subsidy required to operate the facility. It should be noted that a private health club which incorporates a swimming pool is located immediately adjacent to the Bon Accord Baths, thus acting in direct competition. Accordingly, this may affect the viability therefore limiting the opportunities for a private occupier to take on the building and utilise it for its original purpose.

7.1.3 Public and Corporation Baths proved to be extremely popular due to the array of services for citizens. This is the only building which survives in Aberdeen, with very few in Scotland as a whole. This is recognised as being due to maintenance issues and changes in social habits following the growth of leisure pools/centres within the past 25 years. Other examples in Scotland have seen redundant Public Baths converted to flats (Parkhead, Glasgow), and a tapestry weaving workshop (Old Infirmary Baths, Edinburgh). Several other conversions have also taken place such as conversion to an art gallery and restaurant in Roubaix (France), and flats in Charleroi (Belgium). However, in some instances traditional baths can operate successfully such as at Drumsheugh in Edinburgh. It underwent substantial refurbishment in 2005, with the use of retained funds, a levy on members, and grant funding from Historic Scotland.

7.1.4 Although not an example of a public baths conversion, large scale buildings can often be converted to accommodate other uses. In Boston, the Faneuil Hall Marketplace (Quincy Market) comprises a combination of shopping and dining within former warehouse buildings. The vast open space of the pool hall could accommodate such uses, although the site location is clearly distinct from the evolving main shopping area which shall have an alignment between 'Union Square' and the 'Bon Accord Centre', on a north south axis.

7.1.5 While the possibility of finding an occupier for the Baths may be feasible, the sheer scale of the building and the associated maintenance costs, may determine the financial viability of any proposal to retain the building for its existing purpose. It is therefore essential that consideration be given to the alternative uses which may be deemed appropriate. As the Baths are effectively split into two parts, each shall be addressed in turn.

Main Pool Hall

7.1.6 One aspect that is of importance is trying to retain the existing character, particularly of the main pool hall. The preference from a conservation perspective is to maintain the hall as one large space. It is considered that the pool could be floored over (retaining the pool itself underneath), which would at least allow further uses to take place in the future. It is expected that the raked seating, and the diving boards would be retained in light of their inclusion within the schedule of the listing by Historic Scotland. These could be designed into any future use. Accordingly, it is envisaged that uses which can utilise large open spaces would be most appropriate. This could include use for:

• gigs/concerts (though achieving adequate sound-proofing could be an issue given the proximity of housing).
• performance arts;
• gallery space; conferencing;
• retailing; and,
• food/catering.

7.1.7 Furthermore, if the original use is no longer viable, there may be an opportunity to provide a suspended or mezzanine floor to create additional floor space with the main pool hall. This may in turn enable further uses compatible with the general area, and sympathetic to the character of the building to be accommodated.

7.1.8 It should be noted that the raked seating on the eastern side of the pool has not been used for some time due to health and safety requirements in respect of the provision of an adequate means of escape in an emergency. Accordingly, should any alterations be proposed to change the use of this aspect of the building, there may be a requirement to provide appropriate emergency exits, which would require an agreement to be reached with the adjoining landowner at 21-23 Justice Mill Lane, where approval has been given for a hotel development as noted above.

7.1.9 The public gallery of the pool hall included a small café, which actually ceased to operate several years prior to the closure of the Baths. Again, there may be potential for such a use to recommence as part of the re-occupation of the building in due course. In addition, many of the small rooms, off the pool hall such as the club and staff rooms, could be converted into individual accommodation for small businesses.

7.1.10 The changing accommodation does not readily lend itself immediately to a particular use in light of its elongated nature. Accordingly, it is considered that it could be utilised for storage associated with the use of the main hall area.

Front Section

7.1.11 While also forming part of the overall listing, it is considered that there may be greater opportunities for significant alterations in this section of the building. Although certain aspects would be important to retain such as the main entrance, and the ripple sycamore timber panelling, chrome fittings, and general structure, several aspects could be utilised for alternative uses. The spaces

which were occupied by the two studios, the former weights club, and the private bathing facilities on the ground floor could provide accommodation which could be utilised by small businesses for city centre offices, or start up enterprises. This would also be the case for the offices in the corridor linking through to the Pool Hall. Such conversions could also apply to the upper floor of the building where the existing partitions in the changing facilities, and the various steam rooms and saunas could be removed to allow alternative uses. However, it is unlikely that further alterations to the elevations could take place to form

7.1.12 The potential to utilise the lower ground floor is limited due to the use of this area for the heating equipment and plant for the building. Some redundant rooms could be utilised for storage purposes. In addition, should the main pool hall be retained for swimming use, then the filtration equipment would require to remain in-situ.

7.2 Layout, Design and Materials

7.2.1 Through careful consideration of the fabric of the existing building, there may be scope to provide an extension to the existing accommodation. The rear elevation of the front section together with the link block to the main pool hall, could in principle be extended in a sympathetic manner to create additional floorspace, which in turn could provide further opportunities. In line with the guidance of Historic Scotland, such an extension would have to be designed in order to play a subordinate role, and prevent any detrimental impact on the character of the building. As the area indicated in Figures 4 and 5 below, would not overlay any principle elevation, it is considered that a well designed modern and lightweight structure could be acceptable. Any extension proposed, should be designed in such a manner to ensure that the scale does not exceed that of the existing elements of the building, and constructed in a manner that would prevent irreversible damage in the future should it ever be removed.

7.2.2 All designs and materials should be of a high quality and be compatible with the local area. Should an extension be proposed as part of any proposal for the re-use of the building, the submission of a Design Statement in accordance with PAN 68 shall be necessary to explain the design principles on which the development is based, and to illustrate the design solution. The Design Statement should also clearly set out how any development proposed has responded to the requirements of this Brief.

7.2.3 In addition, it must be noted that any alterations taking place within the buildings must also be of a sufficient quality so as not to harm the existing character or any historical features. Any subdivision of the property should be carried out in a manner which would allow reversion to the original fabric of the building, without harming any historical features. The materials used should reflect the existing character and materials used in the original construction to ensure that the distinctiveness of the building is retained.

Figure 6
Scope for Extension



Licence Number
100004369

Figure 7
Scope for Extension



Licence Number
100004369

7.3 Access and Traffic

7.3.1 The site is bound by Justice Mill Lane to the north, and is land-locked to the remaining sides. Accordingly only pedestrian access can be achieved, with no vehicular access or car parking on site. The main entrance is located to the frontage of the building on Justice Mill Lane. Emergency egress from the building can also be achieved at several points on the western elevation adjoining the boundary with the adjacent health club. The first is the access into the current plant room for the heating equipment, where a large sliding door provides access. This exits onto the ramp which leads to the multi storey car park at the rear of the adjacent health club. The remaining fire escapes are accessed from the male changing area, and also enter the adjacent car park via a flight of stairs to the west of the building.

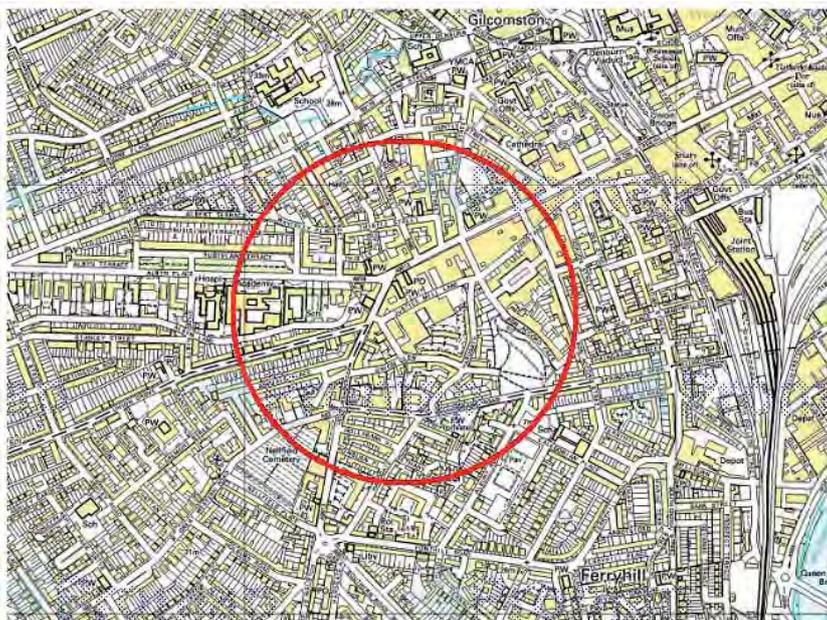
7.3.2 The Development Plan emphasises the importance of reducing the need to travel, particularly by car, and the need to manage transport infrastructure. In this instance, there is no scope to provide car parking on site, without having a fundamental and damaging impact on the listed building. Accordingly, any development or change of use would have to be 'car-free'. This in itself may discourage certain uses from utilising the property, although it must be noted that the site is extremely well served by public transport with numerous bus routes available within a short walk of the site on Holburn Street and Union Street. Furthermore, the Joint Train/Bus Station is only 750 metres from the Baths. Public car parking is also available on-street by means of pay and display, while the multi storey car park at Chapel Street is within 400 metres of the site.

7.3.3 The Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) prepared by NESTRANS (2008) acknowledges that issues facing the region include: supporting sustainable economic growth; improving connectivity; increasing public transport usage; changing travel behaviour; and, Developing a strong City Centre. The Sub Strategies of the RTS seek to improve internal connections through various improvements, while also impacting upon travel behaviour by implementing strategic policies.

7.3.4 Development should aim to mitigate traffic impact and provide for development related travel in a more sustainable manner in line with the requirements of SPP 17. A Transportation Assessment may be necessary to address this issue. The Transportation Assessment should be carried out in line with the most recent guidance published by the Scottish Government and relate to accessibility standards and people trips. The Transportation Assessment must identify the needs of the site to meet sustainability objectives, particularly travel to work. Accordingly, it may be a requirement that any future occupiers demonstrate through the provision of a Green

7.3.5 As car parking on site is not possible, early liaison with the Council's Roads Engineer is recommended to discuss potential methods of mitigating traffic impact. Car parking requirements of the existing use would, of course, be offset against any additional requirements for the proposed use.

Figure 8
400 Metre radius from the
Brief Site



Licence Number
100004369

7.4 Infrastructure Provision

7.4.1 As the site is already developed, the site currently benefits from water, mains drainage, electricity, gas and telephone connections. However depending upon the end use of the buildings, there may be a requirement to upgrade the existing infrastructure on the site.

7.5 Developer Contributions

7.5.1 The policies of the development plan indicate that developer contributions shall be required to address the impact brought about by development. In line with circular 1/2010 Planning Agreements, contributions shall be related to the scale and kind of development. Recently, applications for development along Justice Mill Lane and Langstane Place have been required to contribute towards localised traffic management measures with the aim of improving pedestrian safety. Therefore further contributions may be

7.5.2 Developers cannot be expected to make good existing shortfalls, but shall, in conjunction with the local authority, provide measures designed to address the consequences of their development. This may require the preparation of a S75 legal agreement. The Council however, attach significant weight to safeguarding the future of listed buildings and this will be taken into consideration when assessing proposals for the re-use of the building.

7.6 Designing Out Crime

7.6.1 The role of the planning system in the prevention of crime and promotion of community safety is outlined in Planning Advice Note 77 (Designing Safer Places).

7.6.2 Due to the prominence of the building within the City Centre, and adjacent to numerous different uses, the need for privacy and security is important. Accordingly, developers should seek the advice of Grampian Police's Architectural Liaison Officer prior to submitting any planning application.

7.7 Construction Arrangements

7.7.1 During any construction works, nuisance to neighbouring residential and other property should be minimised. All reasonable precautions must be taken to minimise the intrusion of noise, dust, grit etc, Reasonable restrictions on hours of construction work will be a condition of any Planning Permission

7.8 Archaeology

7.8.1 A programme of archaeological works may be required to be carried out prior to any development taking place. In order to ensure a full and detailed historic record of the building, a photographic survey for RCAHMS may also be a condition of any Planning Permission. This will be determined through the planning application process.

7.9 Indicative Concept

7.9.1 As highlighted within section 7.2, it is considered that there is scope for the provision of additional floorspace between the front and rear sections of the building. This could take the form of an extension which would contrast with the existing construction of the Baths, in order to clearly separate the two elements from one another. Any extension would have to be subservient to both the front and rear sections of the existing building, particularly in respect of overall height. An example of where this has worked successfully is His Majesty's Theatre on Rosemount Viaduct, where a bold and contemporary extension enabled a substantial renovation of the original property. Further detailed advice should be obtained from the Council's Masterplanning, Design and Conservation Team.

Figure 8
Parameters for
potential extension



For further information, please contact:

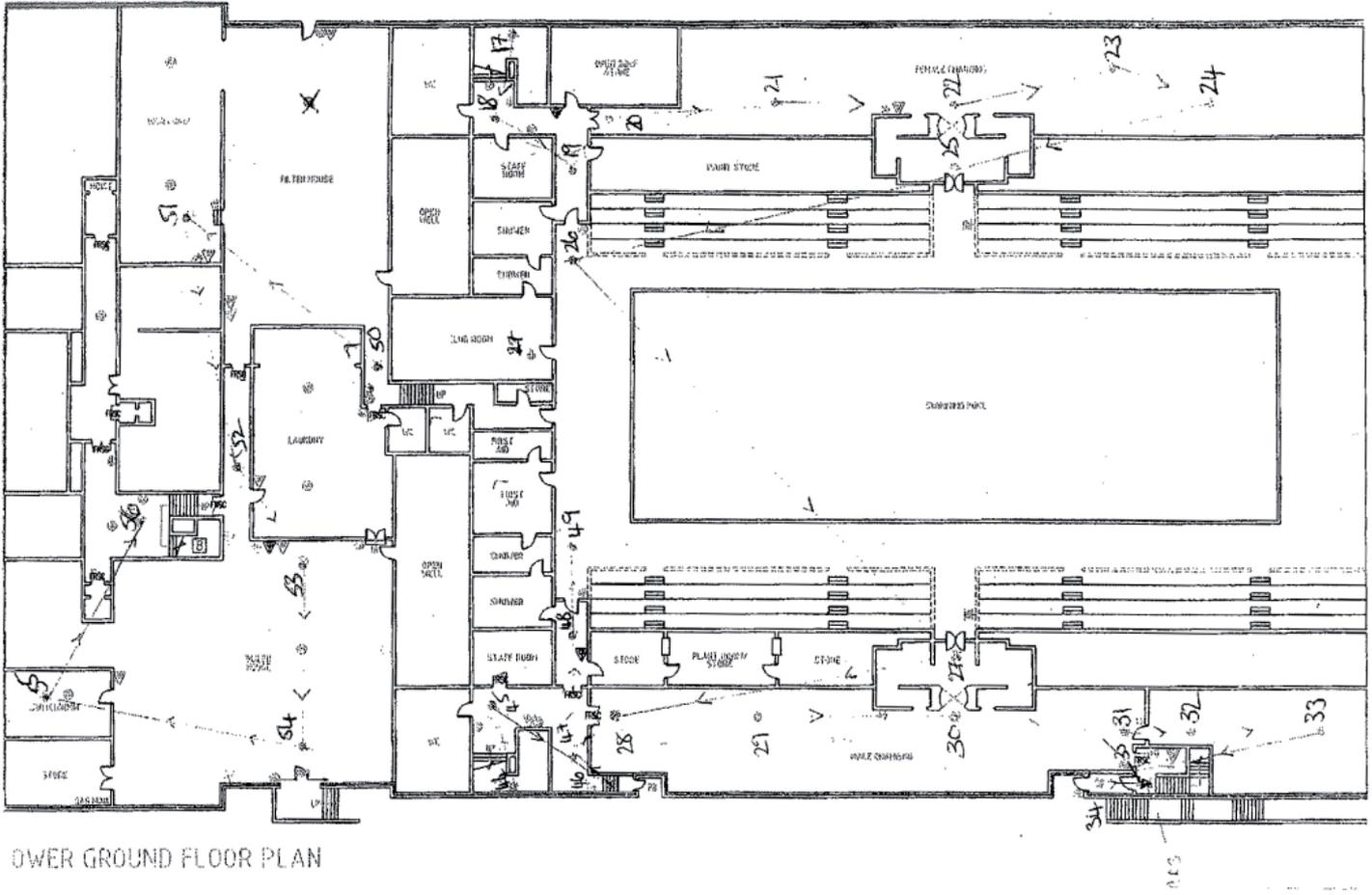
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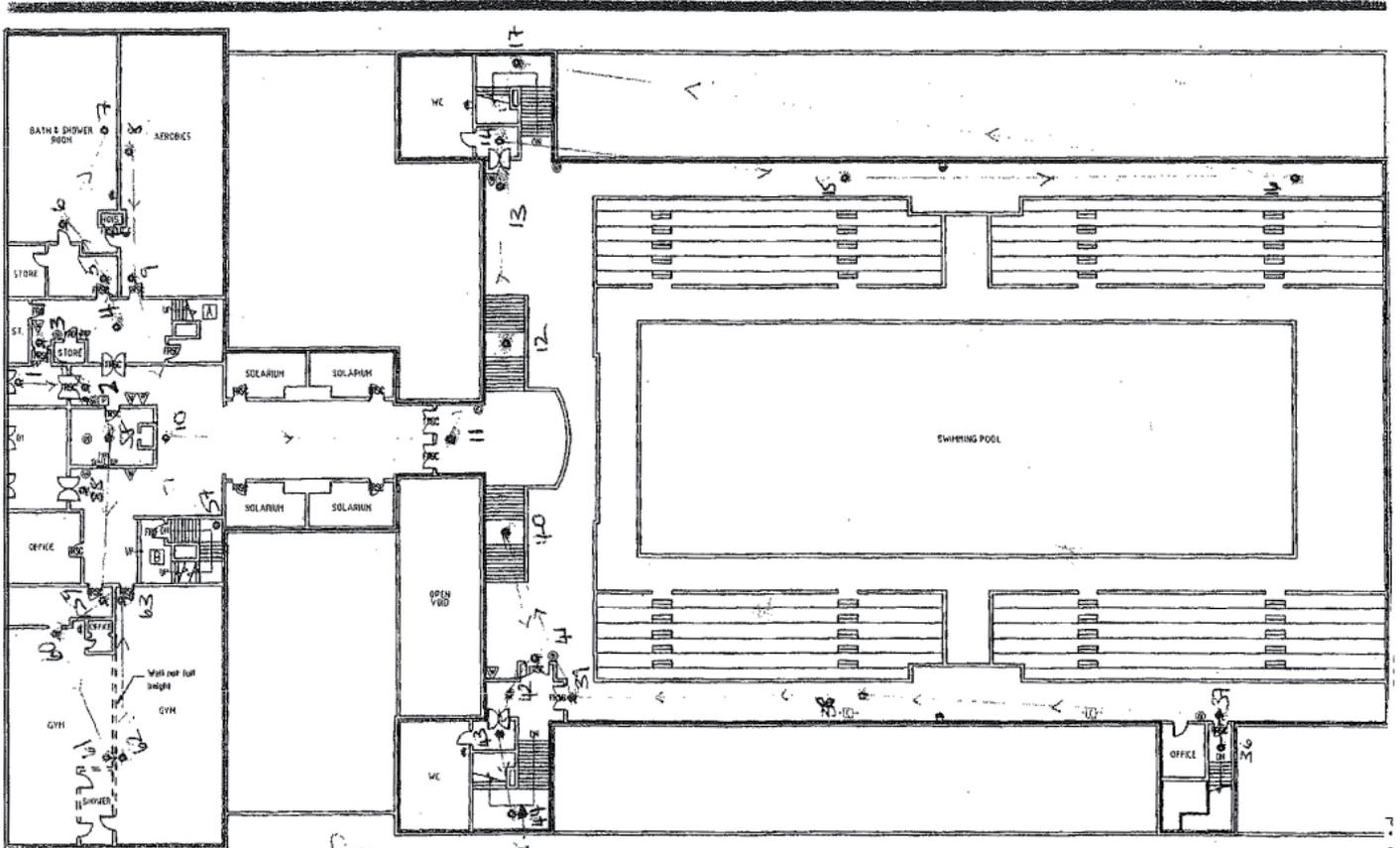
APPENDIX 1



LOWER GROUND FLOOR PLAN

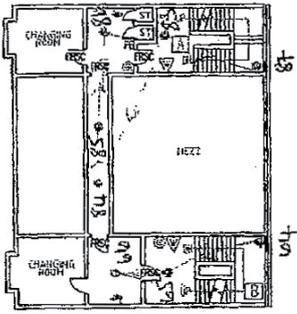
Lower Ground Floor Plan

Ground Floor Plan



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

First Floor Plan



MEZZ FLOOR PLAN

