STIRLING COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

05/04/01

STATION SQUARE REDEVELOPMENT

1 PURPOSE

1.1 This report seeks approval for the comprehensive redevelopment of Station Square in line with a number of development principles.

2 SUMMARY

2.1 The redevelopment of Station Square has been identified as an important development opportunity for a number of years. The Council has now acquired a significant amount of the site. This report sets the planning framework under which the future redevelopment will be considered.

3 RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

3.1 Notes the results of the public consultation exercise outlined in Appendix 1.

3.2 Agrees to support the redevelopment of Station Square in accordance with the principles detailed in section 4.12.

3.3 Instructs officers to identify the most appropriate mechanism(s) for implementing the redevelopment of the site, ensuring that the final scheme is both high quality and deliverable.

4 CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Station Square sits opposite the railway station and is bounded by Station Road, Goosecroft Road, Murray Place and Maxwell Place. It falls within the Stirling Town outstanding Conservation area. A number of buildings on the site were demolished in 2000 and a large part of the area is now vacant. Part of the site is currently provides a temporary home to the Farmers Market.

4.2 The site sits at an important gateway to Stirling and its comprehensive redevelopment provides an opportunity to significantly enhance the town centre, to the benefit of residents, visitors and businesses.
4.3 The Stirling Council Local Plan (adopted 1999) identifies the area as a development opportunity and notes: “The opportunity exists to maximise the benefits of redevelopment in a cohesive way which integrates the area with both the core shopping area and Forthside.”

4.4 The Traditional Town Centre study reviewed the way in which this area and the town works and highlighted the significant opportunities that redevelopment of Station Square could facilitate. The opportunity to “push” people into other parts of historic Stirling and provide for visitor orientation were specifically highlighted. The redevelopment should be completed in such a way as to improve the vitality and viability of this area.

4.5 It is anticipated that the redeveloped site could include - a public space immediately in front of the station forecourt, a relocated central library and archives facility, a new Tourist Information Centre, shops, cafes, offices, flats and create a positive new gateway to the town using high quality design standards and materials. It has also been suggested that the site could accommodate a sustainability centre which could provide a common base for a number of environmental organisations, possibly sharing facilities and technology.

4.6 The commercial elements of the scheme will require to cross subsidise other parts of the development as the Council’s capital programme with not be able to fund the scheme. It is anticipated that other public agencies within the Stirling Initiative partnership will assist financially with the procurement and delivery of this new “gateway” to the town.

4.7 The site lies within a particularly important section of Stirling town and the transportation infrastructure. It is close or adjacent to the Bus Station, railway station, three taxi ranks and major local transportation routes. The development provides an opportunity to consider and address some operational issues within this locality and those will need to be fully considered as part of the development of a detailed masterplan and set of proposals.

**Public Consultation:**

4.8 A public exhibition was held in the Thistle Marches from Thursday 1st to Saturday 3rd March. Some 425 people visited. Unsurprisingly the vast majority of people welcome the redevelopment and recognise the opportunities that this will bring, particularly to improve the environment.

4.9 The consultation was also noted on the weekly Planning Schedule and further consultation letters were sent out to four amenity bodies, four Council Services and six transportation bodies.

4.10 In response to the questionnaire that was issued by the Council there was overwhelming support (96%) for the redevelopment of this area, with the preferred uses being tourist information centre, town square, station forecourt, library and archives, and restaurants/cafes. (See Appendix 1 for detailed analysis of the questionnaire results).

4.11 Further letters were received -

4.11.1 **Technical Services** - point out that the opportunity exists to significantly enhance the operation of the transportation network in this key location. Attention needs to be given to the impact on bus, rail, taxi,
cyclor, pedestrian, freight and car user and detailed plans should accommodate and balance these issues.

4.11.2 The Freight Transport Association – have commented that, in their opinion, issues surrounding servicing and developments are poorly appreciated and not taken into account. The planning stage is the best time to take these issues into account. Specific issues raised include:-

- Good approach and access including consideration of larger vehicles used for deliveries.
- Conflict which can arise when residential and retail uses are mixed.
- Difficulty created by restrictions on deliveries and curfews.

4.11.3 Railtrack – support development and improved pedestrian linkages.

4.11.4 Scotrail – confirm that the railway industry needs to have a major input to this project and that the following are the industry’s objectives for this development.

a. Improved pedestrian and vehicular access to and from the station.

b. Improvement environment.

c. Better car parking and increased capacity.

d. Improved passenger security.

e. Enhanced earnings from retailing to support additional facilities.

Scotrail seek to act as a partner in the developing of proposals for Station Square.

4.11.5 Royal Fine Art Commission - RFAC support the redevelopment and opportunity to create a new public space with improved pedestrian links. Looks forward to receiving details of the proposed redevelopment.

4.11.6 The Scottish Civic Trust – comment that it is essential the best principles of Urban Design are applied. Support the sustainability centre, new station forecourt and town square. Recommend that a massing exercise is undertaken, modelled on 3 dimensions. The two corners are particularly important. Pedestrian routes and access is very important. Recommend that a model would be useful when assessing the proposals.

4.11.7 City Link Coaches Limited - support development and creation of pedestrian linkages.

4.11.8 Stagecoach - support development and improved pedestrian linkages. Particularly support development of the station forecourt and new Tourist Information Centre.

4.11.9 One individual responded in detail raising the following points:

a. The area would benefit from inclusion of a further hotel;
b. Station Road and remainder of Murray Place should be fully pedestrianised (along with Port Street and King Street) a daily Park and Ride introduced;

c. The Tourist Information Centre should be included, but in addition to the one on Dumbarton Road;

d. The footbridge to Forthside is a good idea, but should be enclosed and include a “travelator”.

Redevelopment principles:

4.12 It is proposed that the Council, through Stirling Ventures, develop proposals for the comprehensive redevelopment of Station Square and that the Council agrees that such proposals should accord with the following development principles:

1) **Permeability:-**
   - improved pedestrian access to and through the site, with an emphasis on creating better linkages between different areas of the town centre. This should include improved pedestrian priority to encourage easy movement particularly from Forthside and the railway station to Station Square, and to and from Murray Place towards Barnton Street.
   - Maximising locational advantages with the public transport network, including opportunities for improved transportation interchange making it easy to change from one type of transport to another; incorporating ‘cycle access and parking, wheelchair accessibility.

2) **Building Design:-**
   - adoption of a coherent architectural style which recognises and accords with the special architectural and visual qualities of the Conservation area and yet sets a high standard for contemporary design. Particular care will need to be taken with the frontage onto Murray Place where the context for the development is clearly set by the existing buildings. Throughout the site the highest standards of design should be reflected with the use of quality building materials.

3) **Public Space:-**
   - Inclusion of “hard” and “soft” landscaping.
   - early agreement of a palette of streetscape materials (including lighting) for use throughout the redevelopment.
   - inclusion of public art.
   - consideration of visitor orientation and signage.
   - Agreed maintenance package.

4) **Uses:-**
   - a mixed-use town centre development, which could incorporate relocated central library and archives, tourist information centre, shops, cafes, offices (including serviced offices) and flats.

5. **Timescales for Implementation:**
   - Developing a comprehensive specification and detailed proposals for this development, together with identifying an acceptable
funding package, will take time. It is likely that elements of the scheme can be brought forward ahead of other sections without compromising the overall impact of the finished “product”. For example early implementation of managed office space may be practicable.

- In order to achieve a high quality cohesive scheme, the production of further design frameworks and masterplan, involving possibly an architectural competition, are essential in advance of considering individual proposals.

- The delivery of the finished development will require considerable investigation, including various development vehicle options and partnership working. This will require consideration by other Council Committees, primarily Community and Economic Development and Resources.

5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The redevelopment of the town centre site for the proposed uses conforms with the policy framework incorporated within Central 2000, the Structure Plan for Central Region, Stirling Council Local Plan (December 1999) and the emerging Clackmannanshire and Stirling Structure Plan. Detailed proposals will be subject to the rigour of assessment and consideration through the planning application process.

6 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 As Section 4.8 - 4.11.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Existing Environmental Services staff resources to develop proposals with implementation subject to further reports to the appropriate Committees.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Development Plan

8.2 NPPG 8 and 11.

8.3 Report to Community & Economic Development Committee 3 February 2000.
Author(s)

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Tel No/Extension</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oonagh McCullough</td>
<td>Planning Manager</td>
<td>Ext 2683</td>
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Approved by

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>David Martin</td>
<td>Director of Environmental Services</td>
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Date 26 March 2001

Reference
APPENDIX 1

STATION SQUARE REDEVELOPMENT

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS FROM PUBLIC CONSULTATION 1-21 MARCH 2001

The overwhelming majority of consultees are supportive of the comprehensive redevelopment of Station Square. Of those, who completed a questionnaire, 96% agreed or strongly agreed that the redevelopment should go ahead. The most important components of a redeveloped Station Square are believed to be a Tourist Information Centre (83%), Town Square (81%), Station Forecourt (77%) and Library (62%). Although less support was demonstrated for the proposed commercial components, such as the managed business space (13%) and retail shops (26%), it is important to recognise that these are essential to the funding of the redevelopment of Station Square outwith the Council’s Capital Programme. Together, the mix of elements proposed will generate activity and breathe vitality back into this part of the town.

The results of the questionnaires are shown below:

The run down properties at Station Square provide a poor welcome. A redevelopment opportunity now exists to create a new gateway to Stirling.

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Creating a sense of arrival in Stirling and providing a gateway to the traditional town centre is important.

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<td>77</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagree Strongly</td>
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Good pedestrian linkages to Forthside and through the traditional town centre are important.

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<td>Agree strongly</td>
<td>71</td>
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Which of the following should be included in a redeveloped Station Square?

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<th>Unimportant</th>
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<tr>
<td>Station Forecourt</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library &amp; Archives Centre</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Square</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant &amp; Café Life</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed Business Space</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Sustainability Centre</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A New Tourist Information Centre</td>
<td>83%</td>
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<td>9%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>26%</td>
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