Edinburgh Marina

Granton Harbour Masterplan revision 2: Planning statement

Granton Central Developments Ltd.

Report for: Granton Central Developments Ltd.

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Produced by:

Paton Planning and Development
T 01360 449442  M 07435 964 233  www.pp-d.co.uk
e-mail: info@pp-d.co.uk
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Edinburgh Marina  
Planning statement
1 Introduction

1.1 This report accompanies an application to the City of Edinburgh Council for Approval of Matters specified in Condition (AMC) 2 of the Granton Harbour outline application (01/00802/OUT) approved on 20th June 2003. It covers the siting and height of the development, the design and configuration of public and open spaces, access, road layouts, footpaths and cycle routes.

1.2 There have been two previous approvals of this type, both of which took the form of a Masterplan and supporting information:

- application 06/03636/REM, approved on 4th March 2009 (the 2009 Masterplan),
- application 13/04320/AMC, approved on 31st January 2014 (the 2014 Masterplan revision V).

1.3 The new Masterplan (revision V) submitted with this application aims to re-start development through a deliverable development package that responds to intensive market testing carried out by Granton Central Developments Ltd., and expression of interest by investors and potential port users.

2 The new Masterplan

2.1 The new Masterplan embraces the concept of “Edinburgh Marina”, which is the focal point of the proposals to regenerate and restore Granton into a dynamic and inspiring place to live, work and visit. The new Masterplan aims to integrate all uses within the theme of waterside activity, and to fully realise Granton’s potential as one of the City’s visitor attractions.

2.2 In addition, no funding is available to build retail units in residential blocks, and continuing insistence that they be provided in such a location threatens the viability of the residential area and the Masterplan in general.

2.3 The revision V Masterplan differs from that approved in January in the aspects described below.

Residential

2.4 Market testing of the residential portion strongly indicates that the density is too great, and therefore the present application makes the following changes compared with the January 2014 approval:

- houses: now 207, down from 483,
- family flats: now 909, up from 304,
- other flats: now 880, down from 1193,
- total number of units: now 1996, up from 1980

2.5 In terms of the Masterplan, these changes have the following key effects.

1. The 41 residential units on plot 8B are replaced with a community boatyard.
2. The southern block of flats on plot 7B has been replaced with family houses.
3. Some residential terraces along West Harbour Road and Ross Kestrel Crescent have been replaced by family flats of 3, 4 and 5 stories. This responded to a townscape concern that a taller urban form was required along these boundaries, particularly so that in West Harbour Road the development would better relate to the proposed developments to the south.
2.6 Sites with an existing commitment for development by a Registered Social Landlord are indicated on plots 3 and 19A. Elsewhere, the potential for further flatted affordable housing has been identified within plots 13, 19A, 19B, 20A and 23A. The site will have an overall affordable housing provision of 275 units.

Retail and commercial area

2.7 Residential development on plots 14, 15, 16 and 17 has been replaced with a commercial centre, as described below.

2.8 Retail uses have been removed from the ground-floors of flats, (although the commercial uses are retained in one block in Hesperus Square).

2.9 Discussions with City of Edinburgh Council have identified concentration of retail uses in one location as the most significant issue with the new Masterplan. For this reason, the retail component is considered separately below.

2.10 Commercial uses are increased to 5000 sq m from 3560 sq m, but this is in accordance with condition 17 of the original 2003 outline planning approval (01/00802/OUT) which imposed a total commercial / business limit of 23,190 sq m.

Port and Marina

2.11 Since approval of the 2014 Masterplan, there has been confirmation of Granton’s potential role as the terminal for tenders bringing cruise-ship passengers ashore for Edinburgh. Berthing facilities for these are now included in the new Masterplan as Forth Ports has indicated that it wishes to increase the use of the Middle Pier as a cruise ship tender terminal, and this has necessitated a layout revision. There also remains interest to provide a “fastlink” ferry service between Granton and Fife, and the new layout allows for this potential additional terminus to be accommodated on the site

2.12 A community boatyard was included in the 2014 approval at the request of planning staff during negotiations prior to our 2014 approval, and at the insistence of the community. Since then an overall appraisal has been carried out of all marine activities and their land-based requirements, including discussion with the yacht clubs, and assessment of demand, the need for out-of-water boat storage and manoeuvring space, and car parking. This revealed that more land was required, and that plot 8B offered an immediately available and deliverable site adjoining the inner harbour at a location which was convenient for water access, and would add interest and vitality to the harbour area.

2.13 In terms of the Masterplan, these changes have the following key effects:
1. Removal of the commercial and marine-retail uses from Middle Pier, being replaced with boatyards, boat storage and parking.
2. The gunpowder store remains as a port-related commercial use.
3. Provision of a community boatyard, including a dry stacking area.
4. Greater detail showing the pontoons, berths and launching areas.

Transport

2.14 A further influence on the location of the retail and commercial area is the stop on the proposed Edinburgh Tram extension. This will give Granton Square considerable greater importance, making it an important focal point in the area. The proposed uses will complement the tram stop in creating a
centre for the Granton community based at the square, which it lacks at present. They will also create a “sense of arrival” for cruise ship patrons and ferry passengers.

**Car parking**

2.15 Experience with the completed developments on the site reveals a considerable lack of car parking, and a realisation that the level of parking provided in the developments is well below what is actually required. The result is on-street parking which causes considerable congestion, particularly on streets used by the 38 and 47 bus routes. While Granton Central Developments Ltd. has taken action to limit parking at particular trouble spots, there is a need to provide additional off-street parking. There is also a parking requirement at present from the yacht clubs and boat owners which takes place on vacant sites. The marina will also need safe off-street parking. It is therefore proposed to build a multi-level car park within the retail and commercial area to meet these needs, and users of the shops and commercial premises.

2.16 Attention is drawn to the Transport and Movement Framework document submitted with the application which reviews this subject in detail.

**Employment Prospects**

2.17 The new Masterplan contains a mix of uses which will maximise the potential for job creation. The hotel, the commercial and retail zone, and the marina are anticipated to create over 700 jobs.

3 **Compliance with the 2003 Outline Planning Permission**

3.1 The 2003 permission contained a range of conditions. This application, like its predecessors concerns condition 2. Nevertheless the AMC applications are required to comply with a set of conditions in the 2003 approval which apply development criteria, as follows.

3.2 **A limit of 3396 residential units.** The proposal is 1996 units which is in compliance.

3.3 **Limit of 23,190 sq m on commercial / business use.** The proposal is for 5000 sq m which is in compliance.

3.4 **Limit of 7650 sq m on public amenity / leisure uses.** The proposal is for 4225 sq m which is in compliance.

3.5 **Limit of 250 sq m gross floor area on each retail unit, with the exception of one unit which shall not exceed 1500 sq m.** The retail units will comply with these requirements. Their exact size will form the subject of further AMC applications for the individual development areas.

3.6 The outline planning permission was granted on 20th June 2003 with a duration of fifteen years (condition 1). The submitted application can therefore still be submitted under the terms of the permission.

3.7 This demonstrates that the proposed Masterplan is in compliance with the terms of the outline planning permission.
4 The retail and commercial area approval

4.1 The Masterplan approved in 2014 has the following retail content. In compliance with the outline planning permission, one retail unit would not exceed 1500 sq. m. GFA, and all other retail units would not exceed 250 sq. m.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plot</th>
<th>Floor space (sq m)</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1520</td>
<td>On Middle pier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2A</td>
<td>1635</td>
<td>On harbour east of Lochinvar Drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunpowder store</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>Conversion of listed building on Middle Pier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8A</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>At harbour office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10A</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>Under flats at Hesperus Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2390</td>
<td>Mixed-use area between Lochinvar Way and Oxraig Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>Under flats at Granton Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>1670</td>
<td>Ground floor units at hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9230</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Plot 12 has already been approved in January 2014 as a centre with 2390 sq m retail and 2750 leisure floor space, giving a total of 5140 sq m.

5 The retail and commercial area proposal

5.1 Discussions with existing residents and the surrounding community revealed a strong desire for a location to be identified within the Masterplan that would give Granton a “heart”: containing shops, entertainment and leisure uses, and business space. While the 2014-approved Masterplan has a small parade of shops located centrally within the site, this was not seen to relate to the surrounding areas which are still within walking distance. Scattering of the retail units around the entire Masterplan area in the ground-floors of flatted buildings is unviable (as seen on unoccupied units in other nearby developments), and in the approved form threaten delivery of the project.

5.2 A general view, supported by those attending the consultation events was that a location at Granton Square would provide a focal point for the development (shops, businesses, employment, leisure, entertainment, cafes, restaurants), for the proposed tram terminus, and also for the new residential developments to the south comprising around 300 units in the immediate locality, with greater numbers allocated beyond that in the City of Edinburgh Local Plan’s “Central Development Area”, most of which is within walking distance.

5.3 The retail and commercial area will also provide activity and interest – a “sense of arrival” - for cruise ship passengers.

5.4 Revision V of the Masterplan, on which the new application is based, contains the distribution of retail space, and is shown on the following table. Again, one retail unit would not exceed 1500 sq. m. GFA, and all other retail units would not exceed 250 sq. m.
### Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plot</th>
<th>Floor space (sq m)</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8A</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>At harbour office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>3500</td>
<td>At mixed-use area between Lochinvar Way and Oxraig Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>5120</td>
<td>At mixed-use area between Oxraig Street and Lochinvar Drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8920</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.5 The plots 16 and 17 proposal is for a centre with 8620 sq m retail, 1816 sq m commercial / business, and 255 sq m leisure; giving a total floorspace of 10,691 sq m.

#### Commentary

5.6 Understanding concerns expressed that the new Masterplan could contain additional retail development beyond that previously approved, the floor area of retail space now proposed still accords with the Masterplan approved in 2014. The total retail floor space approved in the January MSC approval was 9230 sq m (see above). The total retail floor space in the new Masterplan (see above) is 8920 sq m.

5.7 The previous retail centre at Hesperus Square will have commercial units targeted particularly at local services such as health.

5.8 In terms of the **approved Masterplan**, the detail of these changes are as follows.

- **Plots 1 and 2A**: retail units removed because entire area on Middle Pier is required for marine activities, access, turning, car and boat parking; and for Yacht Club premises.

- **Gunpowder store**: this has been removed from the retail floor space as a commercial or leisure use associated with the marina is more likely to provide funding for restoration of the building.

- **8A**: Half the proposed building on this site is now proposed to be used as the Harbour office, and the retail floor space has therefore been cut in half.

- **8B**: Introduction of Community boat yard.

- **10A**: This site is now proposed to be developed as two-storey family housing, rather than flatted housing with ground-floor retail. Retail use would not be appropriate as part of the family housing layout.

- **12**: Retained as mixed-use area but design will be proposed as part of a further AMC application for detail.

- **17**: The approved small retail development has been superseded by the new commercial-centre proposal.

- **35**: retail units are now proposed to be removed from hotel as commercial uses (such as bar and restaurants) are seen as contributing better to the function of the marina, which already has retail floorspace at plot 8A.

5.9 The **proposed changes** keep retail use associated with the marina on plot 8A, but otherwise
concentrate the retail floor space, along with leisure and most commercial in a mixed-use commercial centre on plots 12, and 14 to 17.

6  Edinburgh City Local Plan

6.1 The relevant adopted development plan is the Edinburgh City Local Plan (ECLP), adopted in 2010. Policy Wa 1 sets general principles for all “Waterfront Areas of Change”, and Granton Harbour is within the “Granton Area of Change” (WAC 2) designation. This indicates “urban quarters – mainly housing” for most of the harbour area.

6.2 The plan’s map confirms the WAC 2 designation, but also includes one of two “Indicative Shopping Proposals” (S5) in Granton at the site now proposed for the commercial area (see extract below).

6.3 Further clarification of this shopping proposal is provided by paragraph 8.22 of ECLP, where it is defined as one of five new “local centres”. A local centre is defined as:
“For the purposes of this Plan a local centre has been taken to be a shopping centre, usually of 10 units or greater, serving a local retail function”.

6.4 Further clarification appears at paragraph 8.23:
“Local centres vary in size. Some are anchored by a supermarket; others provide only a basic level of convenience shopping for residents in the immediately surrounding area. All are considered viable, and the Council will seek to enhance their vitality, and thereby seek to maintain a basic level of shopping services within walking distance of all homes. This is important particularly for people who do not have use of a car and who may therefore need to make more frequent shopping trips than car users to meet their everyday needs”.

6.5 Specific to Granton, the plan states (table 8.3):
“The approved master plan proposes two new local centres as part of the overall regeneration of the area. The location of these centres is shown on the Proposals Map. Detailed planning permission has
been granted for the centre adjacent to West Granton Road. It includes a superstore (7,271m² gross floor space) and small shop, office and bar/restaurant units”.

7 Assessment of the proposals against the Local Plan

7.1 As advised above, it is the retail aspect of the proposed Masterplan which is claimed by Council officials to require justification against the Local Plan. The new proposal marginally reduces the overall retail floor space approved in 2014. Confirmation has been provided that the unit size restrictions imposed by the 2003 Outline Planning Permission will be complied with.

7.2 The change now proposed is that the non-residential uses be grouped in a commercial centre located at the south-eastern area of the Masterplan, adjoining Granton Square.

7.3 The Local Plan clearly indicated that this was the intended location of the “shopping proposal” (see extract above), and it is noted that the other “S5” centre at West Granton Road, which is also site-specific, has been built at the indicated location. It is of considerable relevance that at this site, a superstore of 7,271 sq. m. gross floor space plus other retail and commercial units were still considered to fall within the definition of a local centre and were approved. This floor space, together with the retail uses adjoining it, reaches a total floor space not significantly less that that approved on the application site in 2014 – but concentrated at one location as is now proposed in the new Masterplan.

7.4 As indicated above, the proposed commercial centre will contain the “large” 1500 sq m unit and 31 small units. This complies with ECLP paragraph 8.22 which places a ten-unit minimum on Local Centres. The Local Plan, however, introduces the opportunity of having a larger “anchor” supermarket: presumably of the size approved at West Granton Road.

7.5 Paragraph 8.2 explains that the Council envisages Local Shopping Centres being located within walking distance of all homes. The proposed commercial centre location, plus the other retail unit at plot 8A will provide local retail facilities within walking distance throughout the Masterplan Area. In addition, we are aware that the area south of West Harbour Road is to be developed for housing, and the commercial centre will serve and be within easy walking distance of these homes, for which no other local centre is identified in the Local Plan.

8 The emerging Local Development Plan

8.1 The local plan discussed above is the adopted development plan and as such, is the primary policy source to which one looks for guidance in making development decisions.

8.2 The City of Edinburgh Second Proposed Local Development Plan (PLPD2) is in progress of preparation. As it has not yet reached its examination stage, and as the developer has submitted unresolved representations on it, it should be treated with less importance than the adopted plan.

Shopping

8.3 Granton Waterfront is still within the list of “Proposed Local Centres” (table 6.4). Their definition is not unduly changed:

“These contribute to the quality of life and sense of identity of neighbourhoods by providing local shops and other services within walking distance” (paragraph 73).
“For the purposes of this Plan a local centre is a shopping centre, usually of 10 units or greater, serving a local retail function” (Glossary).

8.4 Policy Ret 4 establishes a policy context for development adjacent to existing local centres, but does not provide guidance on the form or content of the new centres proposed by the Plan, such as Granton.

Strategic Development Area

8.5 Granton Harbour is within one of four “Strategic Development Areas”: Edinburgh Waterfront. Within these broad areas, individual development sites are each given a set of development principles. Those for Granton are as follows (EW 2c).

“Description: Housing-led mixed use development on land owned by Forth Ports Limited and others. Some housing development has been completed in accordance with an approved master plan.

Development Principles: Proposals will be expected to:
- complete the approved street layout and perimeter block urban form
- revise the housing mix towards a greater number of townhouses than identified in the masterplan, where it would be appropriate in terms of placemaking and would accelerate completions
- meet the convenience shopping needs of new and future residents by implementing the proposed Local Centre (Proposal S2) in the form of commercial units under flatted development, including a small supermarket (1,500sq.m.).
- complete the relevant section of the waterside Edinburgh Promenade
- provide for retained and improved mooring facilities and retain Middle Pier as a ‘working pier’
- include tourism and waterfront-related leisure and entertainment uses”.

8.6 Granton Central Development Ltd. has objected to the requirement that both the approved street layout and perimeter block form be adhered to, and that commercial units be located under flats.

8.7 The draft proposals map relocates the local centre from its position at Granton Square to the central position within the site contained in the Masterplan approved in 2009. This change has also been objected to by Granton Central Developments Ltd.

8.8 These aspects of PLDP2 would embed outdated principles into regeneration of the area – and reduce the opportunity for Masterplan changes which respond to changing circumstances. In effect, they would re-inforce the very reasons why development at Granton has stalled for the past eight years.

9 Local retail function

9.1 The Local Plan and PLDP2 stress that Local Centres will serve a local retail function. With 1881 residential units proposed within the Masterplan area (344 already built), and a further significant residential development to the south containing at least 300 units, there will be a significant demand for a local retail function in this area.

9.2 Further requirement for local retail facilities will be generated by the marina, by local boat owners spending weekends or longer periods based on their boats, and by visiting yachtmen.

9.3 Forth Ports have advised that they intend to use Middle Pier as a berth and terminus for cruise ship tenders, as an alternative to Leith which increasingly serves a freight function. There has also been
interest from ferry operators to introduce a ferry or hovercraft service between Granton and Fife. It is therefore clear that Middle Pier and the Edinburgh Marina development as a whole will play an increasing role as a passenger terminal, and most importantly, as a location through which tourists will pass. While this role will remain lesser than serving the local population, a lively mixed-use commercial area adjoining Granton Square will significantly improve the experience quality and “sense of arrival” for tourists, which residential blocks would not achieve. When the Edinburgh Tram project reaches Granton Square, the commercial centre will not only contribute to the appearance and re-invigoration of the Square as a community heart; but as a transport interchange and tourist transfer point.

10 Deliverability

10.1 The new Masterplan is a result of detailed discussions between the Company, developers and port users, prospective occupiers and funders and is therefore focussed directly towards deliverability. The following material considerations should be significant factors in reaching a positive decision on the new application for the revised Masterplan.

1. Regeneration: a revised Masterplan which will re-start the regeneration of Granton Harbour.
2. Financial viability: the proposed housing component is market tested and viable.
3. Families: significant number of family housing units for both purchase and rental;
4. Maritime economy: essential upgrade works to rejuvenate the local marine economy;
5. Mixed Use Development: a mix of uses based around the marina and port and their land-based facilities - the hotel, visitor retail and leisure units, and public realm. These uses will attract visitors, tourists and boat owners; and will be an attractive place to live – a mix that has proven successful elsewhere;
6. New jobs: the creation of over 700 permanent new job opportunities.

11 Community consultation

11.1 A community consultation event was held in Granton Youth Centre on 3rd December 2014. A summary of the views expressed by those attending is contained in a separate report submitted with the application.

12 Conclusion

12.1 The new Masterplan has been prepared on the basis of considerable market research and discussions with local residents, businesses and boat owners. The aim has been to provide a vibrant community of mixed uses, rather than the undue emphasis on housing as in previous versions. In addition, the new Masterplan will give Granton a “centre”, and vastly improve Granton Square.

12.2 The application proposals are demonstrated in this statement to be fully in compliance with the Local Plan. The Plan promotes a “Centre” approach, and contains no policies which require either that retail units be scattered throughout an area, or that they be located in the ground floor of flatted buildings. Indeed, looking around the completed developments elsewhere in the Edinburgh Waterfront, we see examples of vacant units in flatted developments, boarded up and detracting from residential amenity. The proposed Masterplan also complies with much of the emerging
Proposed Local Development Plan 2, but Granton Central Developments Ltd. has made a formal objection to parts relating to Granton, which are seen to be regressive and perpetuate the very reasons why investment, development and regeneration has stalled in recent years.