



Registered Charity Number SC003089

# ABERDEEN CIVIC SOCIETY

## Newsletter No. 85: March 2014

### Coming Events

**Wednesday 23rd April 2014:** the Civic Society's **Annual General Meeting**, followed by a presentation of topical interest. At the Royal Northern & University Club, No. 9 Albyn Place, commencing at 7.30 pm prompt.

### Planning Matters

**Kirk Brae/Friarsfield Road, Cults:** re land to the north; proposal for a residential development of 98 private dwellings and 12 'affordable' apartments, by CALA.

**No. 14 Rubislaw Terrace:** application for change-of-use from residential to office, by Aberdeen Bridge Club.

**No. 167a Queens Road:** a proposal for sub-division of the existing dwelling to create one flat at lower-ground level and a dwelling on the upper floors.

**No. 314 Great Western Road:** a proposal for change-of-use of the present dwelling-house to three self-contained apartments, with a car parking area in the rear garden, dormer extension to the rear and a new 2-storey bay window.

**Former Hilton Nursery School:** a proposal for demolition and replacement by new residential accommodation of 18 units, a mix of semi-detached houses and cottage apartments.

**No. 133 Union Street:** a proposal by the Nationwide Building Society and Aviva for change-of-use from Class 1 (shops) to Class 3 (financial & professional services); also for a new shop frontage and stone-cleaning on the front, side & rear elevations.

**No. 21 Union Street:** a proposal for change-of-use from Class 1 (retail) to Class 3 (hot food takeaway) and installation of a flue.

**No. 23 Crown Terrace:** a proposal for change-of-use to create 22 flats in this very large building, also for internal alterations to create an additional first floor and dormers.

**Nos. 51-53 Union Street:** proposal by Paddy Power for minor alterations to the existing shop front, access doors and signage, and various internal alterations.

**No. 5 Castle Street:** the Archibald Simpson pub; the proprietors, J D Wetherspoon PLC, propose a general refurbishment and creation of a new beer garden on the unused north side with a glazed screen and canopy to shelter the area.

**No. 2 Powis Place:** Alumno Developments Ltd propose a student accommodation block of 7 storeys plus ground floor.

**Jesmond Drive, Bridge of Don:** ASDA propose various signages in relation to their 'click & collect' service.

**Dubford:** land south of Sheilhill Road - a proposal for erection of 100 houses by HFM.

**Argyll Way, Dyce:** the ABZ Business Park proposal for a 200-bedroom hotel, of six storeys, near Aberdeen International Airport for the Moxey hotel chain.

**Dyce Business Park:** a proposal for a new headquarters, offices and industrial for Miller Developments Ltd.

**No. 15 Thistle Street:** proposal for change-of-use from the present hairdressers to a cafe.

**No. 74 Hutcheon Street:** a proposal for three new-build flats and parking spaces.

**Causewayend School:** the Unite Group PLC propose conversion to student accommodation.

**Kittybrewster:** the former ACC depot at No. 38 Powis Terrace. A proposal for change-of-use from the existing car park to a hydrogen refuelling station, to include the installation of hydrogen production equipment, storage etc.

**Hazledene Road:** west of the old Dobbie's garden centre - a proposal by Carlton Rock for an hotel plus residential development on sites between Hazledene Road and Countesswells Road.

**No. 14 North Esplanade West:** a proposal for change-of-use of the former Andrew Christie fish-processing factory to office accommodation, to include a 2-storey extension on the roof.

**Palmerston Place:** a proposal to demolish the existing warehouse building and erect a new 5-storey office block.

**No. 1 Trinity Quay:** a proposal for change-of-use of the existing attic space to five flats, extension of the stair tower, construction of a link corridor and rooflights.

**No. 16 Bridge Street:** a proposal for change-of-use from the former tailor's premises to a 2-bedroom flat.

**No. 15 Union Street:** the Athenaeum; a proposal to convert the 1st to 4th floors to form 40 serviced apartments, also replacement windows, dormer windows and roof lights.

**No. 425 Union Street:** the Justice Mill pub; J D Wetherspoon PLC propose to remove the existing roof to create a beer garden overlooking Justice Mill Lane.

**Craiginches Prison:** a proposal by Halliday Fraser Munro for redevelopment for residential purposes, to comprise a total of 120 flats, terraced & semi-detached houses and associated infrastructure.

**Balgownie School:** a proposal to erect a residential development of eight houses and 24 flats.

### Round And About

Holburn Junction: there seem to be fewer empty, untenanted premises than in the past, but a continuing high rate of turnover. Tenants move in, struggle for a greater or lesser period of time and then move out. Pubs & bars shut down, coffee houses, betting shops, moneylenders and pawnbrokers open up. Santander has closed its branch at this end, customers are directed to their downtown branch. Waterstone's has closed their branch on Bon Accord Street (once Collie's). The former G\*Raw premises, near Austin Reed, are now a *ristorante*.

Union Terrace Gardens: enter from Woolmanhill, down alongside His Majesty's Theatre and under the Denburn/Schoolhill Viaduct. The Triple Kirks site has been substantially cleared. Crocuses are in bloom, narcissi nearly so. Large numbers of Spring bulbs and shrubs were planted last Autumn, jointly financed by the Friends of Union Terrace Gardens

and Aberdeen City Council. Birds' nesting boxes were built and located in the trees. Some new benches have been installed and faded old electric lights have been replaced. The former policy of benign (malign?) neglect and systematic run-down has been reversed, and at very modest expense.

Union Street: it's not perfect, but on a brilliantly sunny day it doesn't seem nearly as bad as its detractors insist. There are still magnificent vistas. High Streets everywhere are in trouble nowadays, what with edge-of-town retail developments and internet shopping. The priority now should be to convert the upper floors of large city-centre buildings to residential accommodation and to regenerate the resident population of the town proper.

Along the top deck of the St Nicholas Centre, empty, isolated and exposed. They took away the major shopping thoroughfare of St Nicholas Street and gave us this in compensation. How did we let it happen, back in the 1980s? Actually, we fought like hell, but were overwhelmed, much as may now be happening in relation to Perth City Hall. See Diane Morgan's *Lost Aberdeen*.

From the brow of Schoolhill, we once again have views of Marischal College last seen in the mid-1960s. But for how long? St Nick's House and its clutter of outbuildings have gone, or nearly so, but what comes next?

### **Aberdeen Civic Society Goes Digital!**

You may already be aware that we have our own website ([www.aberdeencivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.aberdeencivicsociety.org.uk)) where a digital version of this newsletter can be downloaded, as well as being a home to photos and information about our annual award winners and much more. What you may not know is that we've recently joined Facebook and Twitter too! Search for Aberdeen Civic Society on Facebook or go straight to us ([www.facebook.com/aberdeencivicsociety](https://www.facebook.com/aberdeencivicsociety)). For those on twitter you can follow us at [Abdn\\_Civ\\_Soc](https://twitter.com/Abdn_Civ_Soc). We would love to have you join the conversation and spread the word about the Society online. We can always use new members!

Finally, in the spirit of the digital age and conscious of our carbon footprint, if any members would prefer to receive notifications about talks, visits, the AGM or links to this newsletter via email rather than by post please just send us an email to [info@aberdeencivicsociety.org.uk](mailto:info@aberdeencivicsociety.org.uk) and we'll update your record accordingly.