

**R. 18-3 Motion to advocate for the concerns of St Andrews students, particularly regarding affordability, accessibility and security, to be addressed by any new, private, purpose-built, student accommodation in St Andrews.**

Owner: Paloma Paige

In Effect From: Immediately

Review Date: 27 November 2018

**SRC Notes:**

1. On 21 November 2018 a focus group was convened by the Association President with the view to discuss the proposed project on the St Leonards Field site (also referred to as Abbey Park) and provide a recommendation to the Association President. The details of this group are attached as appendix a.
2. A Pricing Policy was not available for the focus group to review, although it was made clear that it would likely follow the model of Ayton House.
3. The focus group had concerns that a joint hotel and student hall would create security issues and would create an environment conducive to tensions building between neighboring residents and hotel residents/student residents.
4. The focus group recognised that there is a shortage of purpose-built student accommodation in St Andrews, but agreed that:
  - a. the need for more choices of accommodation among students with limited financial means was greater than that of students with that means.
  - b. whilst there may be a demand for high-end student accommodation, there is no shortage; conversely, there is a shortage of low-cost student accommodation
5. The focus group concluded that as the project proposal is currently written, it does not meet the need of students for whom there is a shortage of affordable accommodation.
6. The focus group agreed upon the following action points for the Association President:
  - a. draft a motion, in collaboration with all members of this group, to the SRC or JC
  - b. encourage there to be a consultation of the wider student population by the operators and those in a position to determine how it will function, what facilities there will be, the design in terms of sustainability, how rents will be set.
  - c. liaise closely with local groups on this issue

**SRC Believes:**

1. An increase of purpose-built student beds in St Andrews would benefit the wider student population, but the current plans for St Leonards Field do not indicate any provision of affordable and accessible student beds.
2. 'Affordability' is subjective, and definitions vary across the student body. For those students who consider the rent level of Ayton House to be unaffordable, we cannot expect them to consider the St Leonards Fields Development, as it is currently planned, to be a viable option for them.
3. 'Access' to accommodation should be equal across the student body and the private accommodation available in St Andrews should support this.

**SRC Resolves:**

1. To mandate the Association President to extend current engagement to include all community groups involved in the planning and approval process for the St Leonards Fields Development.
2. To advocate **that any** new, private, purpose-built student accommodation address the demand for *affordable, accessible and secure* student accommodation.
3. To encourage the property developers and appropriate planning committees to undertake further student consultation. **Particularly Taught-Postgraduate students living in private student residences.**

**Proposed by:**

Paloma Paige, Association President

**Seconded by:**

Nick Farrer, Director of Wellbeing

Ciara McCumiskey, SRC Member for Widening Access & Participation

Lucy Allat, Association Accommodation Officer

Morgan Morris, Association Community Relations Officer

**Appendix A.** Agenda for the Abbey Park Focus Group

## Appendix A.

### Abbey Park Focus Group

#### Purpose of the group:

This group has been convened to debate the merits of the proposed Abbey Park project, to put forward a student position on the issue, and to provide recommendations to the Association President. Membership has been established to include both student councilors and lay students. The intention is that this group will meet once.

#### Membership of the group:

Association President (chair); Association Alumni Relations Officer; Association Community Relations Officer; Association Environment Officer; Association Chair; SRC Accommodation Officer; SRC Member for Widening Access and Participation; 7 non-councilor student guests.

#### Agenda items:

1. apologies
2. presentation of background paper as prepared by Joe Noble
3. questions to the presenter
4. discussion
5. summary of points and draft statement
6. establishment of action points for the Association President

Appendix a. paper prepared by Joe Noble

Appendix b. project plans/images