

# Linlithgow Planning Forum

## Minutes of the Meeting held in the Canal Tea Room Thursday 9 January 2014

**Present:** John Kelly, Chair (L&LBCC), John Aitken (LCT), David Tait (LBA, L&LBCC, VWL, Black Bitch Mag), Alan Brown (TL & LCT), Clive Dyson (L&LBCC) and Mike Vickers (LCT, L&LBCC & LBA).

**Apologies:** Ron Smith (BB, LCT, LCDT) and Debbie Dow (L&LBCC)

**Springfield South** Cala and K&E have lodged a PAN for a proposed housing development at Springfield South (the triangular field between Pilgrim's hill and Grange Knowe). They will meet with the Linlithgow Planning Forum, probably in February, as part of the consultation process. It was agreed to wait until we hear exactly what Cala are proposing before forming a view and making any comments. It was noted that this site is currently zoned for single occupancy commercial use, that it is currently in agricultural use and that the application is premature in relation to the emerging Local Plan.

**Clarendon Farm** John Kelly agreed to determine the current status of this Gladman housing development application, which was registered on 22 October 2014. Once we know the date when it is to be decided we can review our reasons for proposing rejection and make arrangements for verbal representations at the meeting.

**Local Development Plan** The delayed MIR is now expected at the end of February, 2014.

### **The following actions are in progress:**

- **Ranking potential development sites in Linlithgow.**

John Kelly had prepared a map showing all the Linlithgow sites that were included in responses to WLC's "Call for Sites". It was agreed that other WLC owned sites in Linlithgow and other potential development sites that are known to the Planning Forum members should also be considered. John will re-circulate the map and members should express their views regarding the suitability of each of these sites for various purposes, giving their reasons. John Kelly will continue to co-ordinate this work.

- **Reviewing Linlithgow's infrastructure needs.**

John Aitken had produced a draft of the narrative sections for the "Vision" incorporating input received from members. It will be re-circulated with the comments removed. An executive summary section will be added. Mike Vickers felt strongly that we had to determine what type of town we wanted Linlithgow to be. It was agreed that this could be difficult to do, as different groups have varying views. Suppressing a further increase in commuters might be desirable but could be difficult to achieve. Accepting that a growing number of commuters from elsewhere (Bo'ness, Winchburgh, Whitecross, Westfield etc.) taking the train from Linlithgow is almost inevitable, suitable provision needs to be made for them.

- **Proposing specific solutions.**  
The task now is to add specific proposals that deal with the issues, starting with those in the Civic Trust's document, and to cross reference them to the narrative. John Aitken will continue to assemble the "Vision" document with input from members.
- **Ascertaining relevant facts.**  
John Kelly pointed out that the "Vision" document should contain more factual information such as the number of affordable houses in Linlithgow over time, the number of new house completions over time, traffic levels, pollution levels etc. Alan Brown mentioned the need for a comprehensive transport study, which was proposed to be done during the period of the current Local Plan but has not been undertaken.
- **Gathering relevant background documents.**  
Some documents relating to Linlithgow's needs have been gathered together and others are still required. Alan Brown will supply a copy of the document produced by Linlithgow Climate Challenge and the emerging view from Transition Linlithgow. All these documents will be referenced as appendixes to the "Vision" document.

**WLC Assets**

WLC has substantial assets in Linlithgow, has already sold some of them and plans to sell others. It was agreed that some of the proceeds from these sales should be invested in addressing Linlithgow's infrastructure and social housing needs rather than simply being added to WLC's capital funds to be spent elsewhere. John Kelly agreed to obtain a list of WLC assets in Linlithgow and the value of recent disposals (probably in the £5-6M range). Alan Brown raised the issue of substantial current and future revenues from wind farms in the south of West Lothian. He suggested that all of West Lothian, including Linlithgow, should benefit.

**Next Meeting**

A meeting with Cala will be arranged at a suitable time and date, probably in February.