

Linlithgow Planning Forum

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Canal Tea Room Thursday 31 October 2013

- Present:** John Kelly, Chair (L&LBCC), John Aitken (LCT), David Tait (LBA, L&LBCC, VWL, Black Bitch Mag) and Mike Vickers (LCT, L&LBCC & LBA).
- Apologies:** Alan Brown (TL), Clive Dyson (L&LBCC) and Ron Smith (BB, LCT, LCDT)
These minutes include some of the input that was made in e-mails received from those who could not attend the meeting.
- Purpose:** The purpose of the meeting was to continue the dialogue between the Planning Forum and West Lothian Council Planning Services. Unfortunately, Craig McCorrison (Head of WLC Planning and Economic Development Services) was unable to attend, so the meeting covered other matters instead.
- Consultation:** As already communicated to Craig McCorrison, the Planning Forum view is that simply putting planning applications on the Weekly List does not amount to “consultation” and that WLC planners should consult with community councils more pro-actively. A recent example was Gladman’s proposal for 119 houses at Clarendon Farm, which was registered by WLC and details put on their planning website on 22 October but, as of 31 October, the Community Council have not been informed by WLC and this significant development application has not yet been included in the Weekly List.
- The Planning Forum requests that, at the time of registering planning applications impacting Linlithgow and adding them to the website, WLC should send an e-mail to the Community Council, who could then inform all members of the Planning Forum.**
- Local Plan:** The Major Issues Report is expected at the end of November, 2013.
- It was confirmed that the Planning Forum should actively pursue proposals for the holistic development of Linlithgow, including infrastructure, so that it is in a good position to compare and contrast its view with that of the MIR.** This would be achieved by:
- **Completing and adopting “Guidelines for the Linlithgow Plan”.** Those who have not yet suggested changes or approved the document as it should do so by next week. Clive Dyson will co-ordinate this work.
 - **Reviewing potential development sites in Linlithgow and ranking them in terms of suitability.** This will include all Linlithgow sites included in WLC’s “Call for Sites”, WLC owned sites in Linlithgow and other sites that are known to the Planning Forum members. All of these sites will be graded in terms of suitability against the criteria in the Planning Guidelines and will be identified on a Linlithgow plan. John Kelly will co-ordinate this work.
 - **Reviewing Linlithgow’s infrastructure needs.** The starting point will be LCT’s “Vision for Linlithgow”. Inputs are welcome. John Aitken will co-ordinate this review.

Social Housing	<p>It was agreed that people working in Linlithgow, even in poorly paid jobs, should be able to afford to live in the town.</p> <p>Linlithgow needs a substantial number of additional affordable houses.</p> <p>John Kelly confirmed that the Community Council is considering the formation of a Linlithgow Housing Association to help construct affordable housing in Linlithgow.</p>
WLC Assets	<p>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. John Kelly agreed to obtain a list of WLC assets in Linlithgow.</p>
Current Issues	<p>It was agreed that Gladman's plans for 119 houses at Clarendon Farm should be refused on the grounds that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These proposals are contrary to the adopted Development Plan • They are premature pending the updated Local Development Plan, particularly with regard to how 'planning gain' can be apportioned. • They would add to traffic congestion at the Manse Road canal bridge. • The proposed layout is lacking in connections to its surroundings, specifically footpath and vehicular connections to the south and east (whether to open space, countryside or future development). There should be pedestrian access via Clarendon grounds. This sort of piecemeal, inward-looking enclave is entirely undesirable and contrary to good town planning practice. • Specific provision should be made for vehicular access from the south so that it could be connected to a future link road between Riccarton Drive and Edinburgh Road (as per Linlithgow Civic Trust's 'Vision'). • The development is on prime 3.1 agricultural land – available brownfield sites should be developed first. <p>It is the responsibility of each member of the Planning Forum to make their own representations by 14 November 2013.</p>
Next Meeting	<p>It was agreed to continue the dialogue with WLC on planning issues and a meeting will be arranged at a time and date that suits Craig McCorriston and the Planning Forum members.</p>