

Linlithgow Planning Forum

DRAFT Minutes of Meeting held 7 February 2019, Linlithgow Partnership Centre

1. **Present:** Ron Smith (RS) Convenor (BB, LBT, LLBCC), Marilynne MacLaren (MM)(Chair, LCT), David Tait (DT) (LBA, WLC), David Timperley (DGT) (LBT), Mike Vickers (MV), (LBT, L&LBCC, LBA), Joyce Hartley (JH) (L&LBCC).
2. **Apologies:** John Kelly (JK) (LLBCC, LCT)
3. **Minutes of the meeting of 10 January 2019:** Approved.
4. **Matters Arising:** There were no matters arising not on the agenda.
- 5.

(a) Vennel Participation Request

Council response to Participation Request considered to be complex. The proposed procedure lists ten 'conditions' including an initial meeting with council officers to agree a way forward. Reference was made to JK's paper summarising the 10 points and putting them into 'stages'. Further discussion followed, during which concerns about the council's proposed procedures were raised. It was acknowledged that this is new territory, and as such, it was agreed that the procedure as outlined be accepted and that JK and RS attend the meeting.

NB - we have until 22 Feb to comment on the councils proposed participation process - I take it we will not be commenting?

(b) Templar's Court

DGT advised that an FOI request has been submitted to the council requesting access to various consents, and that a response is expected by 20/21 February.

A lengthy discussion followed, with its main focus on Condition 1 of the planning consent for the 41 flats and retail units approved under application no 0249/FUL/11 and 0249/FUL/11. MM also sought clarification of the Section 75 planning agreement

RS had circulated previously, a copy of Craig McCorrison's response to various questions raised regarding the discharge of Condition 1 (which required contracts to be in place for the redevelopment of the site before the demolition of the SMT office at the front of the site).

Continuing causes for concern are:

- 1) Perceived error of wording in Condition 1 raised by RS- which does not specify the part of the site to which 'redevelopment' refers. It was assumed that the condition referred to the front rather than the whole of the site. This now does not seem to be the case.

2) Craig McCorriston's response included correspondence from the developer (McCarthy & Stone) and email exchanges between the case officer and the developer's planning agent. Following advice from the developer that McCarthy & Stone would act as main contractor (letter from McC&S dated 23 May 2013), a request was made in that letter to discharge Condition 1. This appears to have been confirmed by the case officer to the developer's agent in an email exchange dated 5 June 2013, although it was noted that

Concerns were raised about the authority given to the case officer to make this decision, which appears to contradict the terms of the planning consent. It was agreed that this concern should be referred back to the council.

3) The seemingly dismissive attitude of the council response to the need for high quality traditional architecture fronting this highly important High Street site, and the opportunity which exists to secure the redevelopment of the frontage. DT commented that the buildings at the front of the site are more important than development to the rear.

4) The absence of any indication on the part that the council might play in remedying this presently unsatisfactory situation.

Following advice from separate legal sources, MM and JH confirmed that, in terms of planning consents, it appears that councils cannot compel developers to complete developments.

DT noted that greater effort required by the council to raise the profile of Linlithgow and its heritage.

MM suggested that a short paper be prepared outlining the case history of the site and present concerns. This could be used to gain further legal comment. MM noted that the Civic Trust will await the outcome of the FOI request before commenting further.

(c) Clarendon Farm
(PPA-400-2093)

DGT advised that both LLBCC and LBT have submitted statements in respect of the Hearing which will take place on 20 February.

DGT noted that traffic/road safety is a key consideration for the Hearing and that although WLC Roads and Transportation had raised no objection in principle to the proposed development, there are ongoing concerns, particularly about canal bridge/ Manse Road. DGT also noted that transport data does not always show the complete situation, and that the views of local residents, a number of whom have submitted statements to the Hearing, make reference to traffic related incidents and 'near misses'. DGT considers that these submissions will provide the Reporter with a more complete picture.

Further discussion included reference to the short cul de sac at the east end of Clarendon Road, which suggests that it was designed to provide access to future development further east.

(d) Beecraigs Car Park

0913/FUL/17

A number of concerns were discussed:

The application description was vague - 'formation of a car park and associated works' - and did not provide enough information about the extent of the proposed use. The application, for WLC, was submitted in the run up to the Christmas holiday period, resulting in it escaping detailed scrutiny by LLBCC and insufficient time to lodge any representations. The list of decisions to be made under delegated powers was not sent to LLBCC in advance and the question was asked about whether the list was sent to Councillors. It was agreed that a complaint be made to the council about these matters.

As previously discussed, there are concerns about lack of tree screening, which it was considered, should have been part of a landscape plan for the development. (JK to request tree planting from council).

There are wider concerns about the proposed event space, what it is for and its use throughout the year, not just over the Festive period. This led to renewed calls for information about longer term business plans for the overall Beecraigs Country Park estate.

DGT remarked that if the event space was to be used for ticketed events, there could be significant impacts on the adjacent road network including Preston Road.

6. Planning List

a. 0043/FUL/19 Beecraigs Fishery - Change of use from fishery to assembly and leisure uses (class 10) for outdoor group activities

Application Description

Change of Use Application. The area is currently a disused Fishery within the Beecraigs Country Park, and is classed as Sui Generis. It is intended that the fish holding tanks and equipment will be cleared at a future date and the area used for outdoor group activities associated with the park. The current Administration Building will be changed to Class 10, and used for the same purpose.

Again, concern was expressed about the lack of information about what is proposed and the need to see a longer term business plan for the Country Park.

It was noted that the usual 21 day period for submitting representations had passed. DT to check if period for local members to request 'call ins' has also passed.

It was agreed that there is no objection in principle to the proposal at this stage. However, DGT to request more information about what is proposed and ask that it be 'called in' to allow for more open discussion.

MV subsequently noted that the proposed description could cover a multitude of activities and expressed surprise at the vagueness of the terminology used. This in itself could have been a reason to object.

b. 1234/LBC/18 Changes to rear of 129 High St

No objections were raised.

c. Proposed playground works at Preston Road

It was noted that the proposal has generated a lot of interest. No objections raised.

DT left the meeting at this point.

7. Plan for the Future 2nd edition

A lengthy discussion took place during which the following points were made:

MM emphasised need for mixing social/affordable tenures with market housing. JH noted need for a mix of house sizes including smaller market properties to increase opportunities for first time buyers.

DGT noted the potential for social housing on WLC owned sites at Doomsdale (following decontamination) and Listloaning Playing Field.

DGT noted the need for longer term infrastructure planning - to include health services and arrangements for a new sewerage system around Linlithgow Loch to prevent pollution.

DGT also noted the benefits of promoting development in the Kingsfield area before Clarendon. The value generated in the Kingsfield area could facilitate construction of a four-way junction at the M9 interchange and a link to Bo'ness Road.

Discussion about the allocation of chapter topics ensued, and it was agreed that JK should circulate information about this. DGT suggested the original authors should write the updates.

MV noted that public consultation should follow the completion of draft 2 version of the Plan.

DGT suggested different front cover for the publication and need to change dates.

JH referred to proposed changes to the planning system presently being considered by the Scottish Parliament. This includes the introduction of Local Place Plans. A discussion about the merits or otherwise of LPPs ensued, during which reference was made to the Linlithgow Plan for the Future and the visit in 2018 by members of the Local Government and Communities Committee. This was reported in the Stage 1 Report on the Bill (previously circulated). Reference was made to paragraph 154 of the Report which notes that council officers considered that 'much of the Linlithgow Planning Forum Plan had been incorporated into its plans and LDP'. It was considered that this directly contradicts the views of the Planning Forum and that the matter be raised with the appropriate authorities.

6/7. AOB/Next meeting

Following discussion about whether meetings should be held in afternoons or evenings, it was agreed that the next meeting of the Planning Forum on Thursday 7 March should be held in the afternoon. Thereafter it was agreed that meetings be held on an alternate afternoon/evening basis. MV offered to host evening meetings.

MM requested five copies of the Vennel Options Appraisal report for LCT.