

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Agenda - July 2000

There will be a meeting of the Community Council at 7pm, Monday 3rd July 2000 in the Burgh Chambers of the Town Hall, Queens Gardens. There will be a break in the meeting as soon as is convenient after 8pm

1. Attendance

Apologies: Maries Cassells

2. Minutes of June 2000

(Read for accuracy in matters of substance - harangue the secretary for minor (spelling etc) errors outwith the meeting))

3. Presentations

(For members of the public wishing to address the meeting on a matter relevant to St Andrews. Please contact the Secretary or Chair before the meeting. Priority will be given who have been invited to speak or have given advance notice)

3.1. Locality Planning

Kate Hughes, St Andrews Locality Manager, to speak.

3.2. Community Policing

4. Fife Councillors

5. Matters arising from previous meetings

5.1. Delegated powers required by committees

(carried over from June Appendix A, GP committee report)

HEW, Planning, Millennium, Recreation, etc

Definition: 'Delegated Powers' = permission to write letters/make public pronouncements/spend money on behalf of Community Council, in accordance with Community Council's established policies.

Planning: as before. Can respond to planning system deadlines, consulting where time permits, otherwise informing full meeting of action taken. Others to be agreed on a case by case basis for specific projects, so that the whole Community Council knows what is going on.

Letters

written on behalf of Community Council: content & presentation to be agreed by Chair/Sec and file copies to be lodged with Sec.

5.2. Canongate - Roads Service Response

Appendix C

5.3. Garden Waste Collections

Trial planned for August/September, after the Open, Lammas etc. Tom Steedman, C&WM Area Manager will contact us to review proposals closer to the time.

5.4. Possible Amenity Site?

Mr Peter Halley, owner of a builder's yard at Tom Stewart Lane, informs us that his property is for sale and wonders if it could be a possible amenity site. Interestingly it is opposite the current Fife Council road sweepers depot, while one of the problems of the current (planned) amenity site is its running costs as it would have to be independently staffed.

Later - Having spoken to Tom Steedman of C&WM, he says he has inspected the site. In his opinion it is far too small for a full amenity and recycling site. There are also concerns with access and traffic - PL.

6. New Business

6.1. Reception for Loches Footballers

Mary Freeborn of the Loches Alliance asks whether we'd be prepared to honour 17 Young Footballers from Loches and associated supporters (34 total) in St Andrews for the International Football Festival (28th July).

Reception?

6.2. Calor Gas - Scottish Community of the Year

Lindsay Murray looked into the possibility of entering St Andrews for this, but reports that it involves more work than one person can undertake in their spare time to build a case for St Andrews. As there are £1,500 prizes for the best communities she recommends we start preparing for next year. As a discussion (or contemplation at least) point the Category Guideline for entries if reproduced in Appendix A.

6.3. Review of Polling Places

Fife Council is reviewing polling places with a view to cutting down the number of schools used. If we have any suggestions in relation to existing places, alternatives or additions they would like to hear by Friday 18th August.

7. Reports from Officers

7.1. Chair

7.1.1. Sustrans - Four Capitals Cycle Ride.

7.2. Treasurer

7.3. Secretary

Correspondence - for information.

7.3.1. St Andrews Day Holiday - (for information) Keith McCartney passed on replies from: John MacDougall (Convener Fife Council) - not for; Preservation Trust - against; Merchant's Association - not for. Iain Smith MSP notes that the number of supporters for Keith Raffan's motion had not increased recently.

7.3.2. Best Kept Town & Village competition - Community services inform us that preliminary judging commences 3rd July, final 24th July - so would everyone please pick up at least one crisp packet before coming in to the meeting this month.

7.3.2. Kerley Report - on 'the renewing of local democracy' - we have a copy.

The rest of the correspondence is in appendix F

8. Reports from Committees

8.1. General Purposes

No meeting.

8.3. Health Education & Welfare

8.4. Millennium

Appendix E

E 1 - Should we have a group photo taken ourselves?

E 2 - Does council endorse a fundraising auction for the Greyfriars garden?

8.5. Planning

8.5.1. Hepburn Hall - appendix D.

8.6. Publicity

Appendix B.

8.7. Recreation

8.8. Youth

9. AOCB

If members intend to raise items under AOCB please let the Secretary/Chair know before the meeting. Remember: unless it is urgent, placing items on the agenda for next month's New

Business would be a better idea...

Appendix A - Calor Gas - Scottish Community of the Year 2000

Category guidelines

1. Environment

- What has been or is being done in your community to enhance and maintain its physical environment? Are there any conservation or restoration programmes in place?

2. Business -

How do local businesses contribute to the life of your community? What employment opportunities do they provide for local people? Do the businesses present any environmental difficulties, and if so, how are these addressed?

3. Young People

- What local facilities are provided for the younger age groups in your community? Is there a crèche? Do pre-school and after-school groups exist? Are there facilities for teenagers such as drop-in centres or youth clubs? Are young people involved in decisions that affect the community? Does your community council include representation from the under 25s?

4. Older People

- What facilities and services are made available for retired people in your community? How does your community support its elders? Are there schemes to assist with transport, gardening and housework? What provisions are made for the house-bound?

5. Community Life

- What activities and events take place, which engender community spirit? How is community news communicated? (e.g. newsletter, notice boards etc.) How does your community welcome visitors? What provision is made for people with disabilities? What communal facilities exist? (e.g. sports halls, community centres etc.) Are there any special projects or activities unique to your community?

The above list is far from exhaustive. It is simply an overview of factors that may define the Community of the Year. In reality it is unlikely that a single community will outshine all others in all categories, in fact the winner may only be outstanding in just two or three sections. The judges are particularly interested in ideas or projects drawn from community initiated action in the last two years, including any special community millennium projects.

Appendix B - Publicity Committee

20th June 2000

MM, PL, FGR, HL, LM, CL

1, Agreed to produce 12 coloured A4 posters advertising bandstand concerts for A. Strachan to distribute to appropriate locations.

2, Agreed to lodge a planning application for the CC notice board free-standing against the wall of what was Boots facing onto Church Square.

3, Agreed to recommend that the CC purchase two sets of A boards to use e.g. at the Bandstand concerts to advertise the series and the Community Council's involvement.

4, Agreed to recommend that the CC produces a newsletter for distribution in mid September subject to arrangements below.

The relevant parameters would be:

i, Copy date would be the CC meeting in September.

ii, Small (200 word articles) required from all committee Chairs and the CC Chair by that date.

iii, Editorial control to be by CC Chair, Secretary and publicity Chair.

Problems to be looked at before going ahead included:

i, Distribution of Newsletter. FGR to contact the Advertiser and the Fife Council Locality Manager to see if they could respectively arrange distribution and assist with costs.

ii, Printing of Newsletter. The CC could produce print ready art work. FGR to contact West Port Printers and PR print and design in Cupar. PL to contact Prontaprint in Dundee. Quotations for 4000 printed copies needed.

FGR

Appendix C - Canongate Traffic Calming

Roads Service Response

I refer to your letter of 30 May 2000 regarding the above project and note that concerns were raised at your May meeting.

I would comment as follows:

1. Number of Roundabouts - as has been stated on many occasions the project was implemented to encourage a change in driver behaviour along this road corridor, one benefit of which would be reduced traffic speeds in the immediate vicinity of the school. It was not solely to address the 'school gate' problem which, to a large extent, is caused by parents "school runs". If driver behaviour can be improved parents will become more relaxed about children walking or cycling to school unattended and reduce the need for "school runs".

2. The visibility at the mini roundabouts meets current national design standards. At all roundabouts including minis, drivers on all approaches are required to give priority to traffic approaching from the right. As a consequence law-abiding drivers approach roundabouts more slowly and with due caution which reduces the sight-line requirements in contrast with the situation that prevails at a typical Give Way Junction. This is one of the significant reasons for using mini roundabouts as speed reducing features on routes such as Canongate.

3. I note your continuing comments about the width of the cycle lanes and would once again advise your Council that the cycle lanes have not been installed as traffic calming measures. In this regard you will recall that to address the concerns of your Council a further consultation exercise was introduced to gauge public opinion on our proposals. This consultation supported the proposals and it seems entirely premature to revisit these issues a matter of months after the scheme has been put in place.

As previously stated the scheme will be reviewed after 12 months when local concerns and the effectiveness of the project can be examined. In the meantime it would be helpful if you could give some indication of how representative the "motorists" and "cyclists" you referred to are in terms of the travelling public and residents in the Canongate.

Appendix D - Draft Response, Hepburn Hall Development

Proposed erection of 21 flats in 2 blocks and conversion of student residence, etc.,

Hepburn Hall, 74 Hepburn Gardens, St Andrews.

I write on behalf of the Community Council to object to the above application. Although there are some aspects of these plans, such as the demolition of the annex, that we are able to welcome, we are particularly concerned about the over-intensity of the proposed development, its impact on the Lade Braes and the consequences for road safety.

Exceeding the housing land requirement

In assessing this application, it should be borne in mind that St Andrews is not in need of windfall housing sites. The Strategic Study on the town concluded that "There is no local requirement for housing land up to 2006, other than that already allocated in the Local Plan." The Strategic Study identified the various ways in which the town is reaching its capacity, and, since 1998, several of the infrastructural problems have grown worse. Nothing has been done to address the problems of overcrowding at Madras College, and the prospects for new health facilities look more distant now than they did then. The housing developments already in the pipeline, coupled with the new development at Kingask, will exacerbate the problem of traffic congestion in the town centre.

The applicants implicitly acknowledge that this site was indeed not designated for additional housing in the Local Plan. They argue in paragraph 11 of their submission that Hepburn Hall is a brownfield site and note that the Structure Plan indicates that such sites *may* be acceptable for development when the housing land requirement is exceeded.

Legitimacy of the brownfield label

Whilst labelling the conversion of Hepburn Hall itself as brownfield development does not seem unreasonable, to use the term brownfield to describe undeveloped garden ground in Hepburn Grounds would seem laughable to the man in the street. It also appears to be technically inaccurate and contrary to the spirit of the Local Plan. Paragraph 5.7 of the Local

Plan defines the sites to which Policy E3, on the development of brownfield land, is to be applied when it starts "Brownfield land (that is, previously developed land or buildings within settlement boundaries)...". The same paragraph also explains that brownfield land is "often derelict or neglected" and that its use "can assist in the implementation of Policy E2 (environmental improvement and derelict land)." In contrast the garden ground of Hepburn Hall does not constitute "previously developed land or buildings", whilst paragraph 10.1.15 of the Local Plan describes the Hepburn Gardens area as "an attractively laid out and landscaped environment".

We note that the applicants claim the site as brownfield under the definition given in the consultative draft of the next Structure Plan. They make this choice of authority advisedly in the sense that the draft indicates that a brownfield site "may encompass infill development." In contrast, paragraph 5.7 of the existing Local Plan says that "the Council encourages the appropriate use of brownfield land in preference to ... open spaces within urban areas". We assume that this application must be determined in the light of the existing development plan and not under the provisions of an unadopted draft.

Excessive density

The applicants indicate that the density of their proposed development is 16.9 dwellings per acre. They claim that the Structure Plan suggests no upper limit on density, but rather recommends minimum density standards. Again this assertion appears to be based on the consultative draft of the next Structure Plan, rather than the Structure Plan currently in force.

We would therefore reiterate our assumption that this application must be determined under the existing development plan. In this case the pertinent part is clause (c) of Policy H5 of the Local Plan, which states that a proposal for residential development "must be compatible with its surroundings in terms of land use, density, and relationship to existing buildings." There is no sense in which the proposed highly intensive development could be considered compatible with the density of its surroundings.

Visual impact

We note with concern that the "development will involve the loss of four trees which are subject of the preservation order, and several less significant trees which are not specifically protected". The supporting documentation also asserts that "The buildings will be partially visible through a screen of trees from certain locations on the Lade Braes but the impact on the walk will be minimal, both because of the substantial change in level between the walk and the development site and because of the protected tree screen." It is vital that Fife Council demands the evidence to prove or disprove this bland assurance. Minimum requirements are North-South cross sections showing the site and both sides of the Lade Braes, and elevations taken from appropriate locations on the path along Lade Braes. These would facilitate a more objective judgement of the extent to which the buildings are visible

We would have to acknowledge that the submitted plans do not provide an adequate means of assessing the visual impact of the proposed development. If, however, a judgement is required on the basis of the submission as it stands, our view is that in order to be acceptable in visual terms the proposed blocks of flats should be reduced in height and moved further back from the Lade Braes. We would wish to see enough mature trees retained at a sufficient distance from the construction work to ensure that their roots are not endangered and that the flats are fully screened from the Lade Braes.

Hazardous nature of the proposed access

Appendix J of the Local Plan specifies that in the relevant part (Zone 5) of the Hepburn Gardens Conservation Area proposals one of the necessary conditions for infill development to be supported is that "access arrangements should serve no more than 3 houses...". This application clearly violates this condition.

In fact the access to the site is probably at the most dangerous possible location in Hepburn Gardens. If there is any point in this road at which a major new access is undesirable, it must surely be here. The protruding pavement on the south side of the Hepburn Gardens/Buchanan Gardens junction produces little reduction in the speed of west-bound traffic entering the western section of Hepburn Gardens. As eastbound cyclists waiting in the middle of the road at this junction will testify, the manoeuvrability of modern cars allows many to negotiate this junction at speeds at, or frequently above, 30 mph. The unexpected emergence of a vehicle from a new road meeting Hepburn Gardens at essentially the same point could easily cause westbound vehicles to swerve into the path of eastbound cars or cycles. If, despite the above arguments, Fife Council should be minded to grant consent to this application, more thought would need to be put into appropriate redesign of this important junction in order to permit safe access to and egress from this site.

Possible use of the proposed flats by students.

In view of recent house-buying trends in St Andrews, it would be foolish to overlook the possibility that flats of the proposed type might be acquired by students. In such circumstances the relevant head-count is given by one per bedroom rather than by a household of 2.2 people per flat. A commensurate increase in the number of vehicles requiring access to the site would also occur. It is not clear to us from the submitted plans that Fife Council's conditions on the provision of adequate car-parking are met, even if the properties were to be acquired by family units. The potential shortfall in parking spaces is, of course, greater if the flats are bought by students, and the increase in traffic needing access to the site would further exacerbate the road safety problems.

Conclusion

Had this application related merely to the conversion of Hepburn Hall, it would probably have raised relatively few concerns. As it is, the environmental and road safety problems it would cause are due in large part to the over-intensive use of the site.

Ian Goudie

Appendix E - Millennium Committee**1. Group photographs.**

It was noted that the original appeal in the *Citizen* had so far produced no result at all, and that more effective publicity would be required. Among the measures suggested is that the Council itself should set an example by having a photograph taken of its members.

2. Greyfriars Garden site.

The Committee discussed the likely result if the Common Good Fund was unable to agree to a realistic price being offered for the ground. In that case it would be necessary to resort to a general appeal to the public, which would require extensive publicity. Among other efforts it is being suggested that the Council ought to organise a fundraising function, possibly an auction if suitable articles can be obtained. The Council is asked to endorse this course of action. Any further suggestions of methods of fund-raising will be welcomed.

Ken Fraser

Appendix F - Correspondence

Date	in	Who	Subject	
6/6/00	I	ASCC	Summer newsletter	FGR
6/6/00	O	Fife Council Local Office	Officer changes	Fax
6/6/00	O	Ann Harding	Meeting with Keith Harding MSP	Email
6/6/00	I	Preservation Trust	CGF grant for museum- thanks	F
6/6/00	O	Planning Cupar	Bruce Embankment	Fax
6/6/00	O	Fife Primary Care Trust	Development meeting 7/6/00	Email
6/6/00	O	Chief Exec	RAF March	Fax
10/6/00	I	Mark D Dennis	Arms Ack	F
12/6/00	O	St Leonards	Fête - thanks & congrat	Letter
13/6/00	I	Planning Service	Hallowhill interpretation board unveiling	F
20/6/00	I	St Andrews Loches Alliance	Reception for footballers	F
20/6/00	I	Celebrating Fife	Events June-September	F
20/6/00	I	Scottish Nat Heritage	SNH magazine	F
21/6/00	I	TMP	Environment Group minutes 1/6/00	F
23/6/00	I	Nan Taylor	Promoting pier proj at bandstand	F
24/6/00	I	Cleansing & Waste Mgmt	Garden Waste Collection	F
24/6/00	I	Local Service cttee	Agenda 28/6/00	F
24/6/00	I	Law & Admin	Review of Polling Places	F

28/6/00	I	Tentsmuir Eden Liaison	Tayport-St Andrews interpretation Plan	IG - plan
28/6/00	I	Roads Service	Canongate Traffic Calming response	F
29/6/00	I	Community Services	Best Kept Town etc	F
29/6/00	I	COSLA	Kerley Report	F
30/6/00	I	Transportation Service	Bus Changes - West Fife	F
30/6/00	I	Transportation Service	Getting About in Fife map	F

St Andrews Pothole Watch!

List: Potholes (40mm/1.5in) in the road, damaged pavements (20mm/.75in), missing or damaged toby covers, blocked drains, floods, defective streetlights etc.

Identify the location (Street and number on closest house or streetlight for instance).

Hand to Cllr Jane Ann Liston or to Fife Roads Service.

Defect & Location
