

Linlithgow & Linlithgow Bridge Community Council

Notes of a Public Meeting held at Burgh Halls 26th February 2013 to Discuss the Future Development of Linlithgow

Advertised Purpose of the Public Meeting

There are currently three major planning applications being considered by West Lothian Council for developments at, Burghmuir, Clarendon, and the Regent Centre. In 2013 West Lothian Council will present the Local Development Plan for Linlithgow. The primary purpose of the meeting was to discuss all issues concerning the development of Linlithgow and thereby inform the Community Council's investigations and representations to the appropriate public authority for comment and action.

Update on current proposed developments

Burghmuir - The proposal includes the following components:

- 600 new homes – The aim is that 25% will be affordable although the WLC requirement is that 15% will be affordable.
- provision of west facing slips M9 junction 3
- Medium-sized food store (originally proposed 5,600m² but subsequently reduced to 4000m²). For comparison Tesco is currently 2322m² and is proposed to extend to 3437m²
- 500 car parking spaces (100 long stay)
- site for a new health centre
- a residential care home (60 bed)
- a hotel and conferencing centre (60 bed)
- green space, community park and land for sports and leisure uses
- associated infrastructure works capable of facilitating the servicing access to the adjacent employment location (local plan proposal EL18 adjacent to Oracle and M9) and long stay public car park.

Wallace Land have confirmed a benefit to Linlithgow of £200,000. The management of this contribution was queried. It was confirmed that the contribution would be in addition to required WLC contributions for education.

A number of reports have been produced and some are awaited.

- Scottish Natural Heritage –on WLC Planning website
- Air Quality & Traffic Report –on WLC Planning website
- Retail Survey – 2 reports by Wallace Land, 1 report by WLC consultants - on WLC Planning website
- Educational needs report – Will be an internal report included in summary report
- WLC Planning summary report – 1 week before Planning Committee Meeting (17/4/13)

Because the change to the retail area proposed is a material change there will be a further opportunity to object. Advert in Gazette on 2nd March. Then 21 days to object.

Nicholas Leonard estimates about 1400 objections of which one third came from residents of Springfield. The Burghmuir development falls foul of the planning principle of prematurity in the context of the current emerging local plan. This basically covers development proposals which are sufficiently substantial and/or whose impact is so significant, that to grant planning permission would prejudice the outcome of the Local Plan by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development.

All those who objected are entitled to make representation at the Planning Committee which decides the planning application by Wallace Land although how this is to be arranged logistically is a challenge.

Most probable date for Planning Committee is 17th April.

We have been invited to suggest:

- A suitable venue for the meeting
- To coordinate representations to the committee

Burghmuir Phase 2 PAC application

Pre-application Consultation for approximately 200 housing units notified by Wallace Land. The date of the Public Exhibition to be confirmed. Note this application includes no benefits i.e. no 4 way junction, no £200,000 contribution.

Clarendon

Pre-application Consultation for 195 units notified by Gladman Developments Ltd. Public Exhibition 19th March Low Port.

Regent Centre

Proposed extension to supermarket

- Existing – 2322m²
- Proposed – 3437m² (extension of 1115m²)

Car Park

- Short stay existing 156 – proposed 169
- Long stay existing 88 – proposed 139

To Planning Committee 27th March.

Local Development Plan

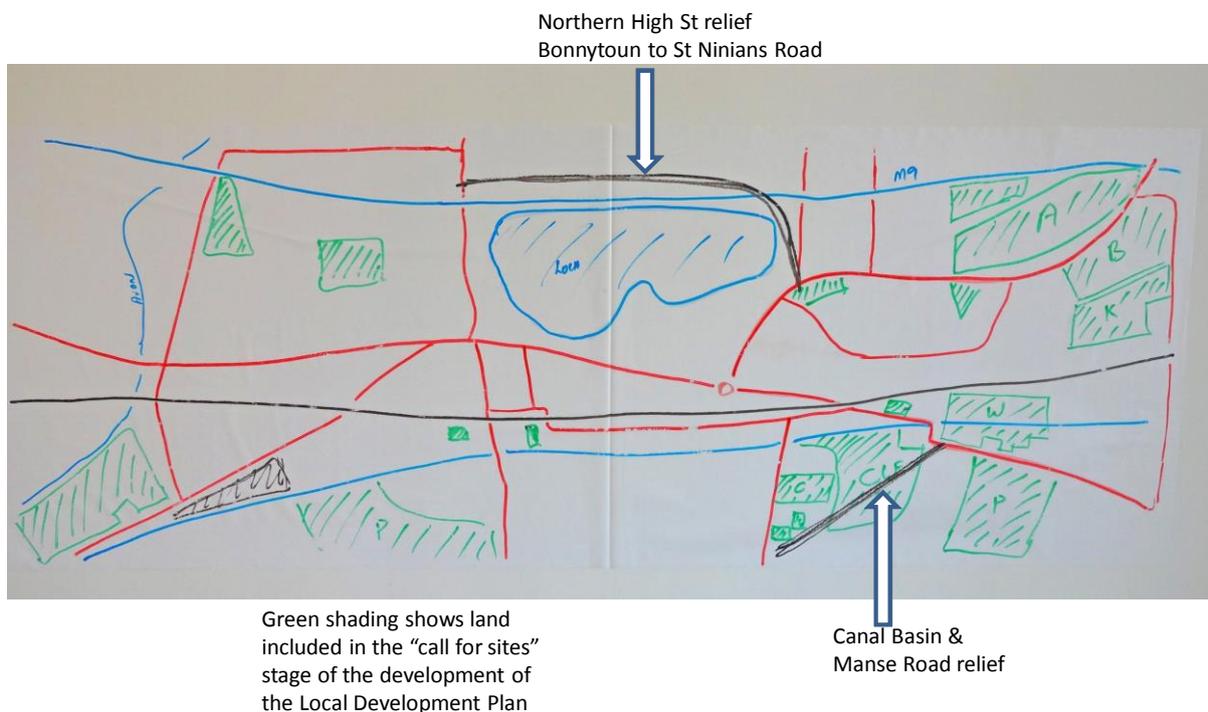
Timetable:

- Call for sites – completed – the sites are shaded green on the sketch map below.
- Publication of development plan scheme no.5 on 31 March – gives timetable
- Main issues report – due for completion summer 2013. Sites will be designated
 - Preferred
 - Alternative
 - Dismissed

- Publish formal responses to Main Issues Report Winter 2013
- Publication of proposed plan including Environmental Report and Action Programme within nine months of Scottish Ministers approving the Strategic Development Plan.
- Examination of outstanding objections within 12 months of publication of the Local Development Plan.

The earliest date for adoption of the LDP is mid-2015.

A comment was made that a potential development site was on the site of the Battle of Linlithgow Bridge.



Iain Paton – Linlithgow Civic Trust

In the context of the planning applications for developments in Linlithgow it is proposed that a Linlithgow Planning Forum be established to coordinate and amalgamate the views of the various organisations in the town in order to present consolidated arguments to planning officers and elected members of the planning committee.

It was subsequently proposed in an e-mail that the views expressed at the public meeting be fed back to those organisations represented. It is necessary to undertake some research on the issues raised impacting the future development of the town which will involve WLC. Once the research has been completed it will be necessary to hold a further widely advertised public meeting perhaps facilitated by Planning Aid Scotland. Census information showing trends over the last decade down to the level of Linlithgow neighbourhoods should be available in due course.

Chaired Discussion

Housing: - the meeting was concerned that the future housing mix was to be driven by developers whose preference was considered to be highly profitable large detached houses whereas the meeting saw a requirement for one and two bed housing with an appropriate mix of private/social rented, starter homes, houses and flats for the elderly and for vulnerable adults. The point was made that the housing mix should focus on serving the community whilst being aware of the dangers of overdevelopment. It was noted that a number of housing types fall into the category of "affordable housing". It was stated that social rented housing must incorporate no "right to buy" provisions.

Infrastructure: - four topics dominated the discussion on infrastructure.

1. High St. The common view is that Linlithgow High St is a pinch point which cannot cope with the existing level of traffic. Pollution levels are considered to be high. The idea of a Northern relief road running between Bonnytoun and St Ninian's Road as indicated on the map received a mixed reception. The Civic Trust has proposed a bypass running from the motorway junction (M9 J3) to St Ninian's Road.
2. Manse Road Canal Bridge and Back Station Road. It was considered that the existing canal bridge could not cope with the increased traffic arising from the proposed Clarendon Farm development. The idea of a link road from the Edinburgh Road to the southern end of Manse Road as indicated on the map was discussed.
3. Coach Parking. The issue of the parking of tourist coaches prompted the question of how many long stay parking places for coaches are required? No one had the answer to this question.
4. Park and Ride. There was a view that park-and-ride facilities are required at both the east and west ends of the town.

Commerce:- a number of issues were discussed:

1. Only about a quarter of those attending the meeting were aware of the BIDS initiative in Linlithgow.
2. There was some concern voiced at the loss of retail units at the Regent Centre but overall it was considered that the retail environment in Linlithgow was relatively healthy albeit that the meeting saw no requirement for an increase in the number of cafes or charity shops.
3. It was suggested that there was a need for pop-up shops -- shops with a different retailing offering on different days of the week to enable budding entrepreneurs to get a foot on the ladder.
4. It was also suggested that Linlithgow would be an attractive location for condominium office accommodation for small professional companies.

Health: - the consensus view was that there is a need to start planning for a new health facility in Linlithgow to be operational in five years. Further work needs to be done to identify the community health requirement of Linlithgow in 2018. The sufficiency of the size of the plot allocated for a potential health facility as a part of the Burghmuir planning application was queried.

Policing: - A number of questions regarding the nature of the police service to be accommodated at and provided from the new partnership centre at County Buildings were raised but remained unanswered.

Sport and Recreation: - the proposed development of Kettilstoun Mains by the Linlithgow Development Trust was briefly described. A number of points were raised:

1. There should be no housing development on current recreation grounds.
2. A monitored and supervised skateboard park should be considered as a part of the Kettilstoun Mains project.
3. Skateboarding is one example of an activity undertaken by non-represented groups i.e. participants have no club to represent their needs. A method for understanding non-represented groups should be considered.

Education: - the issues regarding education centred on:

1. The perception that Linlithgow schools are full and could not accommodate children from the proposed new developments currently the subject of planning applications.
2. Concern over the timescale of the Winchburgh development. This centred on the fact that no new school provision will be provided in Winchburgh until 500 houses have been sold.
3. The point was made that Linlithgow is without a central community centre unlike other towns and villages in West Lothian.

Final Comments: - concerns were voiced over the impact on Linlithgow of the developments at Whichburgh, Whitecross and Bo'ness. It was the majority view of those attending that regarding the proposed developments in Linlithgow, only those developments which retain the nature and character of the town should be considered. It was also proposed that Linlithgow be styled as a garden Burgh.

John Kelly
Minute Secretary
5th March 2013