

STIRLING COUNCIL PROPOSED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – RESPONSE

from KILLEARN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

1. Background

- i) October 2011. Publication of Draft Local Development Plan
- ii) December 2011. Drop-in session hosted by Stirling Council – well attended.
- iii) November & December 2011 KCC meetings. Draft Local Plan KCC discussed in depth.
- iv) 3.1.12. KCC response encompassing views of Killearn community sent to Stirling Council.

The main points from this response were:

- The community recognised the need for special and affordable housing in the area and supported H100 where work is currently in progress.
- H101 (Station Rd.) proposed development of 20 houses attracted only a few comments.
- There was very strong opposition to H102 (Blairessan Field) site and supporting text contained in the Draft Local Plan.
- Considerable support was expressed for the development of B47 Killearn Hospital site and the opportunity to clean up this derelict site was welcomed.

2. Stirling Council's Proposed Local Development Plan

- i) October 2012 Stirling Council's Proposed Local Development Plan published.
- ii) 24.10.12 Proposed Local Development Plan introduced at Killearn CC's monthly meeting and publicised via local press, KCC website, local organisations and posters.
- iii) 1.11.12 KCC special meeting held. Potential developers for three sites on the draft plan made presentations and answered questions. The meeting was very well attended (126 members of the public+7 KCC members+1 elected Councillor). No officers from Stirling Council were present. Minutes available on the KCC website.
- iv) 21.11.12 KCC monthly meeting at which 79 members of the public were in attendance. Community response was debated and opinions gathered for compilation of Killearn CC response.
- v) November/December 2012 Residents' responses to Stirling Council copied to KCC.
- vi) 19.12.12 KCC response presented to KCC meeting. Unanimously accepted with agreement to send this to Stirling Council.

In framing this Community Council response we have tried to take account of all the views expressed during our consultations.

3. Observations on the Proposed Local Plan:

- i) Killearn CC was surprised at a very significant change from the Draft Local Development Plan.
- ii) We were gravely concerned by the increase in the number of houses on site H101 from 20 to 50. *We note that this site lies outside the Countryside Boundary. None of the circumstances in Policy 2.10 p.41 appears to support the building of a new housing estate on this site.*
- iii) We are disappointed that there was no consultation and no opportunity to comment on this change. It would have been helpful if this change had been signalled prior to publication so that the views of the community could have been taken into account before the Proposed Local Plan is sent to the Scottish Government.
- iv) Little account seems to have been taken of our comments regarding the B47 Killearn Hospital site.

- v) Elected Councillors, normally available for advice and support, were equally uninformed of the change affecting our community.
- vi) Officers from Stirling Council Planning Department were unable to come to any of our meetings or to meet with us in another way.

4. **Response to specific sites:**

i) **H101 Station Road site**

- It is felt to be insensitive in the extreme, for almost the entire quota of new builds to be placed in this one site, on the edge of the village on a highly visible site. The site currently provides an open aspect with spectacular views towards the mountains of the north and presents a very pleasing entry to the village for residents and tourists alike. This proposal runs counter to guidance. *Point 6.14 (p.24), Policy 2.10 (p.41), and to Stirling Council's own guidance: Primary Policy 1 Place making (p.30), Policy 1.1 Site Planning a,b,c,e (p.31) 'all new development should consider and respect site topography, and any surrounding important landmarks(built or natural), views and skylines.'*
- It should be noted that all previous major development has been sited where the topography has allowed modern estates to be hidden behind the established older buildings which give the village its character. This proposal defies the careful planning which has underpinned this ideal.
- With a quoted population of 1750, the addition of 50 new houses constitutes an unacceptably large estate situated on the periphery of the village. *Policy 1 a,b,c,d (p.31).*
- Such a proposed development, at one of the farthest points from the centre of the village, would be unsuitable for small sized houses which are needed and which would suit retired people or young couples/families, since to access the amenities of the village – school, nurseries, shops, bus stops, doctor's surgery, pharmacy, church, village and church halls, pubs – will demand an uphill walk of almost a mile. Hence, people will use their cars, thus putting further pressure on already limited parking facilities in the centre of the village and ignoring healthy and environmentally positive guidelines. Public transport services would need to be increased to serve Station Road residents. *Policy 1.1a,b,c, (p.31).*
- There would appear to have been no efforts to quantify the effects of this development on schools or on road traffic. Significant developments are also being proposed for other villages in the vicinity. The sum total of these needs to be examined in relation to total impact.
- There is virtually unanimous local opposition to such a large development being planned for this site. A large number of residents have entered into the debate and the vast majority feel strongly that this greenfield site should be preserved. *Policy 1.3 (p.32), SGO 1,2,3 (p.79).*

ii) **B47 Killearn Hospital Rural Activity Area**

- There is great disappointment that the Proposed Local Development Plan has not taken account of the KCC response to the Draft Local Development Plan for this site. The Proposed Local Development Plan ignores local opinion and has relegated any potential development to the second phase (2019/24) making only cursory reference to the possibility of residential housing here.
- This area of land, which is situated well within sight of a major tourist route, has lain derelict for almost 40 years and is unsightly. It is in the interests of all parties to seize

the opportunities offered by a new Local Development Plan and to regard the Killearn Hospital site as an opportunity rather than a problem.

- Good access to the site already exists via a roundabout on the A81.
- There is much local support for a plan that includes a mix of housing, tourist development and small business units put forward by the site owner, and he appears open to views and ideas expressed by the community.
- We are aware of the problem of asbestos contamination and the associated costs. However, the fact is that this must, at some stage, be dealt with. Dealing with this effectively would rescue the site from its present run-down condition and could transform it into an area providing a positive contribution to the economy of the area.
- It is acknowledged that this site is even farther away from village amenities than the Station Road site. To overcome this, some local transport provision will need to be made to link with the centre of the village.
- *Point 6.19 supports the use of this site and speaks of a flexible approach (p.25)*
- *Other supporting policies are: Policy 2.8 Sites suitable for a mix of uses (p.40);*
- *Policy 2.9a i and ii (p.41); Economic development in the countryside (p.41).*

Pursuing the possibilities offered by the potential of this site would allow many of Stirling Council's published aspirations to be realised.

5. Conclusion

The proposal for a development of 50 houses at a highly visible site in Station Road (H101) has provoked very strong, almost unanimous, opposition from a large number of residents. In view of this opposition and, taking into account the lack of consultation, coupled with the perceived conflict with many of the guidance points in the Proposed Local Development Plan, we believe that the only way forward is:

- To abandon the proposal for an estate of 50 houses on the Station Road site
- To undertake a detailed examination of the Killearn Hospital site with regard to its potential development for housing, along with other uses
- To evaluate the potential for small scale housing developments, i.e. pockets of up to 10 houses, within or close to the village.
- To produce an amended plan which, in the light of findings from the above, accords with the guidelines in the Local Plan and is more acceptable to residents.

Recognising that Stirling Council has an obligation to meet housing targets set by the Scottish Government, Killearn Community Council would be pleased to offer its full cooperation and support to implement the above proposals.

KCC 30/01/2014