

DRAFT KCC RESPONSE TO STIRLING COUNCIL'S DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

KCC understands that there is a need for more housing throughout the Stirling Council area and recognises that new housing is required in rural areas but would emphasise that the type of housing required in Killearn is primarily:

1. Affordable – both social housing and private housing
2. Modest in size
3. Suitable for elderly persons wishing to downsize

Over the past 20 years we have seen the existing housing extended and developed to such an extent that there is no longer any modest sized housing (2 bedroome) left in the village. Council housing stock has been diminished when the right to buy was in operation.

There is a strong sense of community in Killearn and a desire of many of the descendents of long term inhabitants to remain in the village of their birth which few can presently afford to do; there are also numbers of older people wishing to downsize within the village where they have lived for decades.

KCC thus welcomes the opportunity to provide housing of the type listed above and in particular the statement that 50% of houses in developments of 10 or more new houses should be affordable. However, if the developer opts to make a contribution instead, we question how affordable housing will be provided in Killearn.

The following comments are offered on the choice of potential sites:

H100 Crosshead Road

This site has already been the subject of much consultation and the proposal for the building of 6 old peoples' bungalows has been supported by Killearn CC, with the understanding that the remainder of the site – 'the turnip field' - will be retained as open space for leisure and recreation.

H101 Station Road

Given the difficulty of finding sites to develop in this area, we find the extension of housing on the north side of Station Road is acceptable.

Negative opinion

Some loss of impact of a rural approach to the village.

There have been some expressions of opposition to development on this site.

Constructive view

Although an increase in vehicular traffic would result from this development, commuter traffic would already be at one of the exits to the village and the increase in traffic would not entirely impinge on the centre of the village.

H102 Blaressan Field

Viewing this location on the map, this site looks as if it might be a logical place for a development as it 'fills in' a space in the outline of the village envelope but the council had grave reservations about the recommended means of access. Since publication of the Draft Local Plan, KCC has received a considerable amount of correspondence opposing development on this site and must reflect the strength of feeling in the community in this submission.

Negative views

The recommendation of this site contains a piece of text taken from a report by Drivers Jonas, describing a possible development. This has been compiled with no consultation with the community and displaying no knowledge of the current position

of the community and its major players in terms of its residents, its Community Council, its Community Futures Company and the Killearn Trust. It does not address the needs of Killearn. There is strong feeling that this piece of text should not have been included.

Access to the site is problematic. The proposal for entry from Station Road to be made via a roundabout/mini roundabout on a steep incline, close to an abrupt bend is viewed as being unsafe. Station Road is one of three entry/exit routes into and out of the village. The bend already causes problems for drivers who frequently swing wide and meet oncoming traffic in the middle of the road and has been the locus of a number of accidents. Because of the incline there is difficulty in successfully accessing the top of the road in wintry conditions. A roundabout would exacerbate this problem. There is concern that any possible alteration to Station Road would reduce the broad carriageway. This is valued and much used when large village events, including funerals and weddings, result in parking on the Glebe side of the road for a considerable distance. Loss of this facility would be undesirable and would lead to congestion elsewhere.

Both Gartness Road and Drumtian Road, the two roads on the edges of this site, are rural roads, hardly wide enough to accommodate two-way traffic and without pedestrian pathways, and both are unsuited to provide safe access to a large estate. Any alteration to the existing road system will lead inevitably to the destruction of the grass verges and the imposition of a sub-urban road structure on the rural character of this approach to the village.

The site currently offers attractive views from the west of the approach to the village and the setting of the village. Loss of this aspect would be a loss of amenity in the setting of the village below the Campsies. There would inevitably be a loss of trees and an increase in the built appearance at the edge of the village which would be deplored.

There is a real fear that the current proposal for the development of 30 houses will inevitably lead to a subsequent much larger development, again with the loss of the rural character and setting of the village.

There is very strong local opposition to this site as an area of development and KCC has received many letters and communications, all expressing this view.

Constructive view

This area of land, tucked between two rural roads, were it not for the difficulties outlined above, might offer a site for a small development fairly close to village amenities.

B47 Killearn Hospital

This site has lain undeveloped for over 40 years and presents a neglected appearance. We have seen the potential of this area ignored for the lifetime of the past two Local Plans. The site requires management, maintenance and upgrading which development could provide. Given the size of the site we see no reason why development could not be a mix of residential and business space.

Constructive view

It is thought there would be little opposition in the community to any well designed development of this site. It would provide some of the required additional housing in the area. The existence of a roundabout on the A81, opposite the entry to Oakwood Garden Centre, already provides the necessary access. Commuter traffic would immediately be en route via the A81 without adding to the traffic passing through the centre of the village. The possibility of creating some employment opportunities on

this site would be welcomed. There is already some high class residential development close by at Killlearn House and Croy Cunningham steadings. A precedent has been established in this area.

The prevailing opinion is that potential development of this site is an opportunity that should not be ignored.

Negative view

Any development would be at some distance from the village and it is likely that vehicular transport would be required to access amenities in the village. For these reasons this would not be a suitable location for affordable housing.