

Minutes of Meeting of South Cowal Community Council Held in Innellan Village Hall on 11 April 2007

Present: Dr C Valentine (Chair)
Mrs P Forsyth (Secretary)
Mr R McGilvray (Treasurer)
Mrs M Little

Attending: Cllr J R Walsh
Ms E Troup, Turley Associates
Ms J Frost, Turley Associates
Mr A Ramand, WSP Environmental Ltd

1. Dr Valentine opened the meeting at 7.05 pm.

2. Ardyne Point Development Proposal

Dr Valentine handed the meeting over to Ms Troup of Turley Associates, who presented the latest proposal for the development of Ardyne Point to an audience of over 60 members of the public. It was agreed that the presentation would be made available on the South Cowal Community Council's Website (www.southcowal.org). Ms Troup advised that the proposal was at the stage of requiring outline planning permission and, as such, the detailed plan was not yet available. The plan as presented included the construction of a 220 berth marina, small industrial units, a retail outlet, a hotel and up to 220 residential properties of various types.

Mr Andrew Ramand of WSP Environmental Ltd, also engaged by Sir Robert McAlpine, presented on the environmental impact of the development, noting that the site would be subject to a full examination prior to the commencement of any work. He stated that there were no important archaeological sites within the immediate project area, and that steps could be taken to support protected species such as otters and breeding birds in the vicinity. In addition, a survey of traffic had concluded that there would be minimal deterioration of air quality or increase in noise levels.

Mention was made of the potential for a ferry link between Ardyne and Port Bannatyne. It was also hoped that the designation of one of the basins for use as a leisure area might be of interest to Castle Toward. It was proposed that the existing fish farm would be complemented with new business allocations.

Dr Valentine stated that an online survey would be posted on the Community Council Website and encouraged residents to participate. The meeting was opened up to questions from the public, details of which were recorded as follows:

How critical will access be?

The transport assessment will address this.

When will the outline plan be submitted?

Mid-April 2007.

How many houses and businesses are involved?

A 220 berth marina, a 120-bed hotel, a pub, a restaurant, retail space of less than 1,000 m² light industrial and business units, a fish farm, a ferry terminal, a bus drop-off point, overnight

Minutes of Meeting of South Cowal Community Council Held in Innellan Village Hall on 11 April 2007

berthing for 4 boats, 60 low density residences, 160 higher density residences, a car park, and landscaping of 26.47 acres. It was noted that these details were still being worked upon.

Have any discussions been held with Scottish Water?

Initial verbal contact has been made, however, a date for a meeting with them is awaited.

Will Sir Robert McAlpine be the developers?

It isn't known whether they will sell the site once outline consent for development has been given.

What level of community consultation has there been?

Community consultation is not required at this stage and is purely voluntary. Turley Associates presented to the South Cowal Community Council meeting of November 2006.

At this point, one member of the public requested a show of hands as to whether or not those present felt that a ferry service between Ardyne Point and Bute was a good idea, the results of which were inconclusive. Councillor Walsh noted that the Argyll and Bute Local Plan included strategic transportation plans involving a network of ferry services, dependent on interest from operators. He stated that very few objections had been received to the possibility of the suggested ferry service. The presenters confirmed that the local Council had been encouraging of this and that they had spoken to potential operators. Mr Jardine subsequently advised that he had spoken to Western Ferries who were enthusiastic at the prospect, but had reservations about access.

This is an awful lot of development for a road that is in poor shape, and will have a major impact on the area.

The transport assessment addresses this.

Toward has seen relatively minor development in recent years, yet residents have felt like they are living on a building site. The proposed development is ludicrous in its size and impact and out of proportion to the isolated cottages that exist in its vicinity now. It would also see an increase of two-thirds of the existing population of Toward.

The proposal ties in with the Local Plan process. The Council would not allow an inappropriate development and could place a cap on the numbers involved.

Are the local schools under threat due to low rolls?

Councillor Walsh replied that there were no plans for any closures.

In view of the proposed construction of a wind farm at Black Craig, Mr McGilvray suggested that it might be prudent to consider including a small commercial port within the plan. Dr Valentine asked Mr Blacker if Argyll Wind Farms Ltd had had any involvement in the Ardyne Point proposal, to which he responded that they had not.

Consideration must be given to the additional waste water treatment requirements that would be involved, especially in view of the difficulties experienced locally with Scottish Water. The related traffic impact must also be considered. Have discussions been held with SEPA?

Minutes of Meeting of South Cowal Community Council Held in Innellan Village Hall on 11 April 2007

A meeting must be held with Scottish Water before SEPA can be further consulted. No bacterial discharge is anticipated.

Is the development housing dependent?

The Council would not approve single use. Sir Robert McAlpine will pursue the commercial realities which dictate that as many houses as possible are to be encouraged.

Where will waste go subsequent to environmental clean-up?

Contamination testing will be done and treatment will be conducted in situ, or contaminated material will be removed via a licensed contractor. The objective would be to move as little land mass as possible.

Has a study been done on the effect of increased traffic on Dunoon?

The presenters outlined the roads that had been assessed, specific details of which would be made available.

Will the high pressure gas main running along Shore Road be affected?

No.

At this point, Councillor Walsh clarified that any foregoing references to Argyll and Bute Council related specifically to the Council's Planning Officers. He then went on to ask:

If Sir Robert McAlpine is serious about the development, why is outline planning permission being pursued and not detailed planning permission? Is it with a view to marketing the proposal on?

Outline planning permission is required to establish the principle of development and there are too many unknowns to present a detailed plan. The development could take 10 to 20 years to complete and there would be community involvement at every stage.

The sea basins are the best assets of the site, why fill one in? There is an unlimited need for marina berths, why not propose 400 berths?

It is proposed that one basin should be used for leisure pursuits and to restore the shoreline and increase natural habitat.

Is there any connection between the creation of a leisure pond, Castle Toward and Western Ferries?

No.

In response to a suggestion that Castle Toward was under-used, Mr Peter Wilson, MD of Actual Reality, noted that more people than ever were using the venue. He indicated that Mr Gordon Ross of Western Ferries was an Actual Reality board member and, in this role, had been encouraging its usage. Mr Wilson stated that he had not been aware of the suggestion that Castle Toward could use the proposed leisure pond, but he felt it would be a good idea if Actual Reality and Sir Robert McAlpine spoke about this further.

Minutes of Meeting of South Cowal Community Council Held in Innellan Village Hall on 11 April 2007

The discussion on Ardyne Point ended at 8.32 pm, at which point the members of the public in attendance left.

The Community Council meeting resumed at 8.50 pm.

3. Apologies

Apologies were noted from Mrs Pratt and Dr Pearson.

4. Minutes of Meeting Held on 14 March 2007

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

5. Bullwood Quarry

It was believed that Dr Pearson would be attending the pre-inquiry meeting being held on 24 April 2007. Dr Valentine had met with Bullwood residents and would prepare a briefing document.

6. Wind Farms

Councillor Walsh advised that Argyll Wind Farms Ltd had withdrawn their application for a wind farm at Black Craig in view of its anticipated refusal on technicalities. He noted that golden eagles, a protected species, were located within the vicinity of the proposed site. In addition, further information had been requested by the Council, which had not been forthcoming from Argyll Wind Farms Ltd. It was expected that a re-submission would take place in the autumn of 2007.

7. Matheson Garden Project

Mr McGilvray reported that the impetus appeared to have gone out of this project subsequent to Rev Anderson's departure and due to anticipated funding difficulties. Presently, a funding decision was awaited from the church authorities, but it was expected that it would cost £100,000 to implement the project.

8. Review of South Cowal Planning Applications

Dr Valentine asked about the planning application for 5 houses near March Cottage in Toward. Councillor Walsh clarified that these had been included within the Draft Local Plan, although subsequently removed when housing allocation density in Toward had been reduced as a result of objections. The planning application was going before the Area Committee in view of the fact that it was in breach of the current Local Plan.

9. Community Council Website

Mrs Forsyth reported that there had been an increase in traffic to the Website in the month of March. Statistics were:

April (to date) – 122 unique visits
March – 491 unique visits
February – 32 unique visits

Minutes of Meeting of South Cowal Community Council Held in Innellan Village Hall on 11 April 2007

An invoice for renewal of the domain and hosting was submitted to the Treasurer. Dr Valentine indicated that he had renewed the subscription to SurveyMonkey.

10. Housing Development and Conservation

Mr Jones stated that he had been in discussion with Ms Jenny Carlisle of Argyll and Bute Council who was reviewing "special built environment" areas. She had agreed to involve the Community Council in further consultations.

With respect to Persimmon Homes' objection to the removal of housing allocations adjacent to Wyndham Road from the Modified Finalised Draft Local Plan, Mrs Forsyth advised that Mr Convery of Argyll and Bute's Planning Department had voiced confidence that the Council's case would prevail, especially in light of the findings of a recent road engineering survey. Upon questioning as to whether the Council's case could be undermined by the original inclusion of the housing allocations in the First and Finalised Draft Local Plan documents, he had responded that new information precluded this. Mr Convery had also confirmed that there was no opportunity for community representation at this stage. Mrs Forsyth had also learned that Persimmon had recently sent a contractor to the site in question to conduct a flood risk assessment. Councillor Walsh indicated that Mr Convery was obligated to represent the concerns of the community in this regard.

11. Draft Accounts – 2006/2007

Mr McGilvray presented the draft accounts and advised that the Community Council must now think about fundraising. The accounts would be presented to the AGM in June.

12. Secretary's Report

Mrs Forsyth reported receipt of the following items of mail:

Date	From	Subject	Action Required
4 April 2007	Mr J Fraser, UHI Millenium Institute	Council for Vountary Organisations	-
April 2007	Association of Scottish Community Councils	Membership Renewal Invoice 2007 - £15	Renew. It was also agreed to renew membership of the Argyll Association of Community Councils.
4 April 2007	Ms C Symonds, Friends of the Earth	Free Training – what you should know before planners and developers consult you	Request training for SCCC and other Cowal Community Councils
2 April 2007	Mr P Peacock MSP, Scottish Parliament	Future of Post Office Services in the Highlands and Islands	-
28 February 2007	NPF Team, Scottish Executive	National Planning Framework	-

**Minutes of Meeting of South Cowal Community Council
Held in Innellan Village Hall on 11 April 2007**

13. Any Other Business

Mrs Forsyth advised that, due to a change of personal circumstances, she was no longer in a position to continue in her role as Secretary and Member of the Community Council. She therefore respectfully requested the Community Council to accept her resignation. She indicated that she would be willing to continue to support the Community Council via maintenance of its Website. She stated that she believed that the Community Council, and thus the community, would benefit from greater involvement from South Cowal residents and encouraged that an active recruitment campaign should be launched.

On behalf of the Community Council, Dr Valentine thanked Mrs Forsyth for her work over the past 14 months and accepted her resignation.

It was **agreed** that efforts would be made to encourage volunteers via the Community Council's Website. It was also feasible that an individual could be co-opted to perform the Secretary's role.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.30 pm

Signed **Chairman**

Date