

SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL
DRAFT MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 23rd January 2018
Seil Island Hall

PRESENT: Julie Ferris, Seumus Anderson, Anne Marie Robin, John Gordon, Graeme Bruce, Alan MacFadyen, Uta Binnie, Cllr Kieron Green, Cllr Elaine Robertson,

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 17

APPOLOGIES: Charles Struthers, Cllr Andrew Vennard; PC Jeremy Moore,

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Seumus Anderson, as a landowner with a potential interest in the Scottish Water proposals, and as a member of The Scottish Slate Islands Heritage Trust with regard to the discussion on the Ellenabeich Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th November were approved and agreed as an accurate record; proposed by Jean Ainsley, seconded by Seumus Anderson.

Cllr Robertson clarified that the A&B Council budget gap is estimated to be between £3.5 and £8.5 million in 2018/19.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 28th November 2017

Scottish Water (SW)

The CC had asked SW for an update following the drop-in session held on 6th December 2017. The Chair read out the following response received the previous day from Ruaridh Macgregor, Corporate Affairs Manager, Scottish Water

“As you will be aware Scottish Water held an information event on the 6th December 2017 at the Seil Island hall. The event was well attended with approx. 50 people in attendance. At the event we discussed our progress with studies and investigations and presented our preferred site location and associated access track which we will be taking forward to planning. The material from the event is available on our dedicated Seil webpage <http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/investment-and-communities/your-community/isle-of-seil>

As there had been significant change to the proposed access track we felt it was right to meet with the community to present the proposal and allow discussion before we progressed to the next phase.

The main aspects of feedback received from those who attended in December centred on 3 main areas:-

1. People who are supportive of the location and proposals
2. People who were pleased that an alternative access track had been established following previous feedback about concerns.
3. People who are completely against the site location due to its unspoiled nature location

There was always an understanding from the outset that it would be very difficult to find a solution that would meet the unanimous approval of the community and this has proved to be the case. When the planning application goes live all individuals will have the right to make representations to

the planning authority via this statutory process. We will also look to pass the feedback received to Argyll and Bute Council as part of our planning application.

Next steps

You may have noticed survey work being carried out at the proposed hillside site location, this related to ecology surveys with further land survey work taking place this week. These surveys are required to support the applications for planning and other technical submissions.

Planning submission is likely to be early 2018 for the Seaview septic tank and summer 2018 for the proposed new treatment works. We will write to the community council to confirm when these applications will be submitted and the final planning drawings will be able to be viewed on-line and in the village hall.

Please be assured we will continue to keep the community up to date as we progress.”

There was some discussion of the various issues which have been raised over the past several years relating to the waste water proposals.

It was also noted that an online petition set up by those opposed to the location of Option 1a currently had more than 160 names, although the view was expressed that such a petition on the grounds of protecting sensitive countryside could apply to anywhere on Seil, and the presence of nesting hen harriers was also questioned.

The Chair suggested that at this stage the priority is for the community to be fully aware of the proposed option, for everyone to familiarise themselves with the site location and access thereto, and to express their views if they wish to SW and/or the CC, and through the upcoming planning process.

Roads and Bus Shelter

Knotweed: A&B Council confirms that the knotweed has been treated.

Potholes: The jet patcher is working and is currently on Mull and will be available for patching on Seil in due course.

Gritting: Appears to have been good and the Chair suggested that the Roads Department should be thanked for the efforts of the gritter drivers who are out in all weathers to keep our roads safe. Cllr Robertson suggested that the Chair write a letter to this effect, which would be greatly appreciated by the staff. Salt has been left on side roads for local use, but A&B Council will be reminded there is none at present on Kilninver hill.

Tree and Shrub trimming: the Council will review the trimming programme for 2018 after the budgets have been issued. The SECC will be updated after this.

BT hut at Balvicar: The gate has been off for a few weeks now and a request was made by the public that this is reinstated. The CC will write to BT.

Tramway cottages road adoption.

The council has received three letters from residents regarding the adoption of the tramways road. They ask to receive at least another two in order to proceed with the formal adoption process. One of the residents is trying to encourage other home owners to write to the Council in order that this matter be closed quickly and the drain can be repaired.

Health

The Easdale island defibrillator has been replaced and Graham Percival will offer training on Easdale on 28th, 29th and 30th January. The old defibrillator from Easdale will come to Seil; following discussion it was suggested that it might be most useful outside Balvicar Stores.

Police Report

PC Jeremy Moore had no updates for the meeting but was happy to respond to any questions arising from the meeting. In the last two months traffic incidents associated with the bad weather had been the primary issue for his team.

Planning and Listed Building Consent for Building: *New since last meeting*

Ref 17/03310/PPP: Alterations and extension to dwelling house; 13B Easdale Island Oban Argyll and Bute PA34 4TB; Application Received: Fri 05 Jan 2018; Application Validated: Fri 05 Jan 2018; Status: Pending consideration.

Ref 17/03115/PPP: Erection of Dwelling House (amended position relative to planning permission reference 13/02239/PP); Land East of Winteron Balvicar Isle of Seil Argyll and Bute; Application Received: Mon 04 Dec 2017; Application Validated: Mon 04 Dec 2017; Status: Application Permitted

Ref17/03121/LIB: Internal and external alterations and erection of extensions; Tigh An Truish Hotel Clachan Seil, Isle of Seil, Oban Argyll and Bute PA344QZ; Application Received: Mon 04 Dec 2017; Application Validated: Mon 04 Dec 2017; Status: Application permitted

Licensing application for Oysterbar (the key points were read out)

- They would like the potential to hold bingo nights.
- Televised sport for normal channels, 6 nations rugby, Wimbledon etc.
- To open at 9.00am (currently 10.30am) for teas, coffees etc, and include breakfast rolls, no alcohol until 11.00am.
- Change allowing accompanied children for soft drinks from 11am to 8pm to 9am to 8pm & change 9am to 10pm all days if having a meal (last food orders currently 8.30pm, want to extend to 9pm)
- Allow children to stay for the duration of a pre-booked function.
- Increase seating capacity to a total of 90 to include 24 seating in the square (6 tables)
- To close early over winter if insufficient demand.
- To open until 1am over the festive season
- Provision of a take away food service

Cllr Robertson noted that the Council are supporting a café culture and that their policy will probably be in favour of seating in the square. Comments to this application are to be submitted by the 14th February.

Proposed Master Plan of Oban Seil Community included by the applicant in **Planning application 17/02605/PPP/Artisan Workshop** (tabled at the November meeting for consideration, feedback and discussion at this meeting). Feedback to the Community Council was that future development should be generally restricted to the existing population centres, and that further building between the road and the sea should be avoided where possible.

This ties in with the Local Development Plan (LDP), which discourages ribbon development or coalescence of existing separate settlements and which seeks to protect Areas of Panoramic Quality (the shore along the B844 is identified as such), as well as considering the impact of development on existing roads and infrastructure.

The LDP in turn informs the Community Council's priorities, which the Chair identified as:

1. To keep existing settlements separate
2. To protect Areas of Panoramic Quality
3. To consider the impact of any development on our single track roads and existing infrastructure

Some people had expressed the view that there should be no new housing on Seil. While that is a perfectly valid view for an individual to express through the planning process, the Community Council needs to consider the need to keep our community economically viable and vibrant.

It was agreed that it is important for the CC to identify these principles. Community Councillors are not trained planners, but they endeavour to reflect the views of the community in a consistent and objective manner. The Chair invited any comments.

The Community Council had submitted an objection on the above grounds to Application 17/02605/PP/Artisan Workshop. The application had since been withdrawn.

Consultation is now underway for the next Local Development Plan (LDP2) which will be adopted in 2020. Currently there are two areas on Seil which a landowner has proposed for future development. One on the shore side (marked as red, not suitable) and the second site at Oban Seil (marked as amber, for further consideration). Depending on the density and positioning of housing suggested, the SECC are in agreement with the suggested designations. The next consultation period will be between May and July 2018.

The Chair stressed that even if sites are designated as suitable for development in LDP2, any application would have to go through the full planning process.

Concern was expressed about the short consultation windows community Councils are presented with where public feedback is required. 8 weeks appears to be the standard but this is not enough when public meetings are only held every 8 weeks. Although it was appreciated that the use of online questionnaires was cost effective, many people would not be comfortable using them, and it was felt they are sometimes weighted towards the desired response. It was also noted that feedback to the consultations is often slow in return.

A&B Council bus shelter

It was hoped that, as previously proposed, having obtained the bus shelter it could be adapted in future to make it more appropriate to the conservation area. However, concern was expressed that it is not disability compliant i.e. there is no ramp to the road for disabled access. Cllr Robertson would raise this with A&B Council. Concern was also expressed about the safety of children accessing the road from the shelter - SECC to raise with A& B Council. George Doyle's contributions towards raising awareness about the need for a bus shelter were highlighted.

Forward Planning

An open meeting to discuss the setting up of a Seil Community Trust will be held in Seil Island Hall on Thursday, 8th February 2018 at 7.30 pm. All local groups, clubs and societies are being contacted and are encouraged to arrange that they have at least one representative attend this meeting, to listen and disseminate information.

The proposal to set up a Community Trust evolved from the SECC Forward Planning initiative. A variety of projects have already been identified to enhance, regenerate and sustain this community. There could be many more but sourcing funds has to be considered.

Catherine Dougan from The Development Trusts Association Scotland will be attending the meeting to offer our community support, information and advice. The attendance and views of individuals

not involved in any local groups will be equally welcome. Please spread the word and encourage others to come along.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

Ellenabeich and Easdale Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan: Argyll and Bute Council prepared two consultation drafts entitled *Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan*, one for Easdale and the other for Ellenabeich. Property owners of both communities were leafleted in December with invitations to drop in events in January. Online responses only were acceptable and the deadline was 2 February. At the AGM of Eilean Eisdeal there was concern about the lack of consultation and leafleting of holiday homes in mid winter. They wrote to A&BC requesting an extension to the consultation period and expressing concerns about the accuracy of much of the content. This was copied to SECC with the hope that they and the Slate Islands Heritage Trust could collaborate on a more realistic and robust framework for both conservation and development. Following the drop in event on Easdale Island on 11 January another more detailed report was sent to SECC (Tabled). Highlighted were the lack of recognition of the success in increasing the population, the high cost of planning consent for even the smallest of changes and the lack of guidance on how development can be supported.

The Slate Islands Heritage Trust were equally concerned and wrote to the highest levels of the Council complaining about the lack of time for consultation and pointing out some of the major inaccuracies in the appraisal. Following the drop in session in Seil Island Hall the Trust produced a more detailed and critical report which was shared with the SECC (tabled). The conclusions applicable to Easdale Island and Ellenabeich are as follows.

1. We cannot have a meaningful consultation if too many of the draft proposals are, in effect, non-negotiable. The long list of applicable “guidance”, suggests that we may be consulting about very little. The Planning Team must be completely clear and transparent in explaining just how much influence we are being offered.
2. A more user-friendly consultation is important to achieve a meaningful result.
3. A successful conservation plan will deliver an area where the essential character is retained even where modern imperatives have been addressed. To date, Ellenabeich is, by this measurement, pretty successful. However, it is not clear that the responsible planning authority can justly be given credit for that success. The recently installed bus shelter seems to be ignored in the appraisal; but for longer standing residents may be seen as symptomatic of an underlying malaise.
4. Ellenabeich and Easdale Island are outstandingly attractive; visually, architecturally and socially. They have grown this way organically; some bits a bit different from others. Generations have developed as required, but desisted from spoiling their cherished home. That is how it should be. That is what conservation means.
5. The Scottish Slate Islands Heritage Trust is absolutely committed to supporting the conservation areas. We believe that Easdale, on both sides of the channel, has unique heritage value. Any development policies must ensure the survival, not just of technical minutiae, but of the scale, atmosphere and essence of the place; while always accommodating the needs of a balanced, modern community.

As a result of the representations of the two trusts the Council have extended the consultation period to 30 April.

Donald Macpherson (Ellenabeich) has also provided the SECC with a highly critical review of the Ellenabeich appraisal (tabled).

It is hoped that the residents of both communities will actively engage in the consultation and also collaborate with the two Trusts and the SECC. The whole community of Seil and Easdale benefit from these two conservation areas and hopefully the SECC can contribute to this wider dimension

It was noted that the first conservation document for Easdale and Ellenabeich was prepared in 2008 but was never implemented. Much hard work was done by the community at the time to provide a robust and detailed document. Why did this document not form the basis of the current consultation document?

It was suggested that the Pan71 area appraisal document issued by the government would give clear guidance on how to appraise conservation areas to provide council planners guidance and yet it did not appear that this was being followed by A& B Council.

SECC would follow up on a report of fly tipping of rubbish in shrubs at school.

Cllr Robertson confirmed that A& B Council were committed to Conservation Areas but that financial restrictions often limited best practice activities. Local authorities are seeking to work more collaboratively with communities to jointly achieve priorities.

Trailers in Ellenabeich Carpark: It was noted that despite previous attempt to clear, these remain a problem.

SECC Elections: draft timetable for the elections to be held on 26th April 2018 are now available, with Publication of Notice of Election on 5th March that would invite nominations for each of the community councils. Further details to be provided as these become available.

TABLED PAPERS: URL details relate to recent papers of note.

- Slate Islands Heritage Trust tabled paper
- Responses from: Eilean Easdale
- Responses from: Mr D MacPherson
- Ellenabeich and Easdale Conservation Area Draft Appraisal and Management Plan (https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/ellenabeich_draft_conservation_area_appraisal_oct_17.pdf)

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 27 March 2018, 6.30pm, Seil Island Hall