

DAMHEAD AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

19th September 2016, Steading

Present: Irene Sommerville, A Ferguson, J Telfer, M Telfer, Gordon Marshall, David Newbould, L McAuslan, D Graham, L Graham, P Thomson, G Buchanan, N Frankish, S North, R Spray, Grant McPherson, Ian Milne, Stuart Clark, Jean Will, **Constance Newbould, Jo Gillies, Ailsa Carlisle, John Marsh, J Holbrook**, Pauline Winchester, N Holbrook, Jacek Hubner, N Begbie, M Begbie, A MacKenzie, plus 3 others

Apologies: Helen McKay, Catherine Duns MLC

1. Police Report. Police Scotland were not present at the meeting, however the latest police report will be circulated asap.
2. Film Studios The Pentland Studios proposals, and the associated potential impacts on the local environment and Jim's farm, was the main topic for discussion. Nathalie provided an update on the new evidence and film studio documents that have now been submitted to the Reporter, including substantial new information about the gas, chip and pellet fired power station that will generate significant levels of watts and emissions. A range of concerns were raised in relation to the substance of the proposals, the National Importance status of the proposals, and also in relation to the planning process which has not been undertaken effectively or fairly. An update on the petition, proposed protest at the Scottish Parliament, and liaison with MSPs was also provided. Action: John to draft the DDCC response in line with discussions and evidence, which has to be submitted by 30 September. All residents encouraged to submit, to the SG Reporter, comments and any outstanding questions they have on the new documents and information that has been provided.
3. It was noted that the Midlothian LDP is now on hold until Summer 2017. In addition the DDCC were informed that MLC are undertaking "exploratory drilling for further development" on the Bing. The DDCC and residents were shocked to hear that this had led to a badger set being demolished, and a number of trees being damaged, particularly given that the MLC biodiversity survey previously identified the Bing as an area of interest because of its wildlife. Action: Constance to write to MLC plus Scottish Natural Heritage re damage to the Bing.
4. Secondary School Consultation It was noted that a pre-consultation exercise is being undertaken by MLC on proposals to relocate Beeslack High School to a location to be identified on the A701 corridor. A separate option proposes that this would form the basis of a 'super school' which would bring together Penicuik and Beeslack high schools and thus have approx 3000 pupils.
5. DDCC Constitution The draft constitution has now been agreed with MLC. The next step is for both parties to ratify the final version. It was noted that a standard MLC code of conduct accompanies the new scheme for community councils and that the constitution obliges the DDCC to follow this code, most of which is already in place through existing processes and procedures. Action: Jo to arrange ratification of the constitution, identify any new requirements for the DDCC in the code of conduct and provide copies of both for the website.

6. MLC address database The MLC address databases continues to cause difficulties for residents, such as deliveries to the wrong addresses and inaccurate addresses being used by MLC which means on-line services etc don't function properly (e.g. checking bin days, etc). Attempts to work with MLC to rectify these issues have failed due to the complexity and incompatibility of the databases used by MLC. However, John was congratulated for successfully ensuring that Google, Apple, and Tom Tom datasets have been updated with the correct information re Old Pentland Road and Burnside.
7. Concerns were raised that Mr Tickle is constructing a 2-storey building (that provides advertising and is thus very visible from the road) and extending the dog kennels business without proper permissions. This led to a wider discussion about a range of incidents within and outwith the DDCC area where businesses have made changes without the relevant permissions being sought from MLC. There was general consensus that businesses should be discouraged from taking this approach.
8. Lorna Goudie. Following previous agreements to arrange a memorial to Lorna to recognise her commitment and activity as part of the DDCC, it is proposed that an apple tree should be planted on the path leading from the road up to Old Pentland Graveyard, alongside a plaque. Action: Constance to liaise with the Gibson family; L McAuslan to discuss with A Goudie re the potential for taking this forward during the October school holidays; L Graham to cut back the overgrown bushes on the path; and Jo to arrange the plaque.
9. Noticeboard. Ailsa confirmed that a noticeboard has been ordered, and that MLC will be contributing significantly to the costs.
10. Secret Herb Garden. Concerns were raised that the Secret Herb Garden is up for sale without the house (planning consent for the house was given on the basis that it would remain tied with the business), and that the business was being marketed as an events venue (significantly different from current use). The SHG has also applied for an extended licence to sell alcohol. Action: DDCC to raise concerns/object respectively.
11. A703 Seafield Moor Road speed limit. It was noted that the 40mph speed limit is to be extended past the bus stop. Concerns were raised that the reduced speed limit should be extended further to improve safety. Concerns with the triple junction were also raised. Action: Constance to contact MLC re clearing foliage at the top of OPR which is affecting sight lines at the triple junction.
12. Neighbourhood Plan Review. A quick review of progress will be undertaken to celebrate the range of work undertaken already; and to identify key issues and barriers to progress. Action: As well as the original Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (Julian, Kate M, Gordon, Jo, Stuart, and Ailsa), anyone else that is interested in taking part should contact Jo at joanne.gillies@yahoo.co.uk
13. It was suggested that the potential to develop a community charter, similar to the Falkirk Community Charter, should be explored as a further means for challenging potential developers who may look to develop on local greenbelt. Action: anyone interested in being part of this conversation should contact Julian at julian.holbrook@yahoo.co.uk

14. Hedgerow. Action: Julian to liaise with the Woodland Trust re availability of young trees, and Constance to contact Dirty Weekenders to fill existing gaps in hedgerow.

15. AOB

- a. DDCC were asked whether the new swimming club for babies on Seafield Moor Road constituted a change of use. Level of usage of the facility was also discussed.
- b. Constance informed residents that historical documents relating to the Gibson family and land from 1805 had recently been purchased through an on-line auction by the DDCC on behalf of the community. This action was agreed retrospectively. Anyone who would like to view/decipher the documents should contact Constance at constance@pentlandhouse.com
- c. Over 40 people visited Old Pentland Graveyard; a successful event for the local area as part of Midlothian Doors Open Day.
- d. Concerns were raised about the level of litter on OPR and Burnside as a result of take aways from KFC, McDonalds and Burger King. Action: Ailsa to contact drive throughs to discuss potential for them to undertake litter picking in the area.

16. Next meeting. The next DDCC meeting will take place at **7pm on Tuesday 22nd November at the Steading**

Other useful dates: **Litter Pick Sunday 9th October**