

Holme Hill Campaign

Report of Public Meeting : Monday 27th June 2005

Scottish Churches House

Present

Surname	Forename
Aldred S	Sarah VV
Bennett	Jim
Brockman	Sharon
Bland	Richard
Bland	Rosemary
Crawford	Caroline
Davis	Robin
Harley	Sue
Hastings	Gerard
Hulbert	Alastair
Jackson	Sylvia
Jones	Paul
Law	Liz
Mason	Steve
Seddon	John
Tebbitt	Phill
Topliff	David
Scott Watson	Mary
Watt	Iain
Wilson	Deirdre
Wilson	Malcolm
Wooley	David
Wooley	Paula

Chairman: Jim Bennett

The Chairman welcomed Sylvia Jackson, M.S.P., Stirling, expressing the appreciation of the meeting at her presence.

The stated purpose of the Meeting was:

To provide an update on the Appeal against the Executive's rejection of Holme Hill Ltd.'s Application for Registration.

To review any developments

To open discussion on possible ways forward.

Update on Appeal

Holme Hill Ltd's Application for registration under the Land Reform Act was rejected on the grounds:

1. That it was not in the public interest, and .
2. That the reasons offered for Late Application were inadequate.

It was recommended that we should appeal against the rejection on these latter grounds.

The Appeal will be a Test Case under the Land Reform Act, and the result will affect future applications.

There is a danger that loss of the Appeal could mean that Holme Hill Ltd. would be liable for costs. £8500 has been raised to meet this possibility.

The Executive intends to defend the case "vigorously".

The first formal hearing before the Sheriff Court will be 25th July.

The final decision may not be made before September.

Negotiations with the Hilton

A meeting was held with a representative of Hilton International. It is reported that the meeting was cordial and helpful. It was pointed out that the Hilton has chosen to delay any sale of the land until after the result of the Sheriff Court hearing.

We were informed that the Hilton has an offer for the land of £750,000. This offer will be increased if planning permission for development is obtained.

If our strategy is to deal with the Hilton then we have to raise in excess of £1,000,000.

The Chairman observed that if we want to buy the land then we may have to consider a number of options, some of which may be unpalatable.

Possible Ways Forward:

- To wait for the result of the Appeal
- To consider controlled development

- To re-register our interest in the land, perhaps excluding Braeport Meadow from the rest of the land. This would exclude “buildable” land and reduce the costs.

Controlled Development

The Chairman pointed out that the Land Fund will not fund a group to prevent development. If the land can be developed then the Land fund would finance us in order to develop it commercially.

Discussions were held with Stirling Council’s Planning and Housing Departments and with a Housing Association.

Planning Department They would oppose any development except in Braeport Meadow.

Office development will not be permitted.

Sylvia Jackson pointed out that a Planning Bill before the Scottish Executive would return power to the Local Authorities. If passed this could work in our favour.

Housing Department They would favour development of “affordable housing” for which there is an urgent need in Dunblane.

Housing Association There was a positive reaction to the concept of affordable housing. They will report back in 2 to 3 weeks.

The Quaker Association has noted an interest in Holme Hill, among other sites in Scotland. They are considering a Housing Association with shared ownership to provide housing for elderly Quakers.

Comment

There was some strong opposition expressed to the idea of any development on Holme Hill. It was thought that there would be significant local opposition to any further development in Dunblane.

It was suggested that if development were to be necessary then the whole Braeport site should be re-developed to make the area an asset.

Problems of sewerage and access were again emphasised.

Further Action

Alternatives to Development

Paul Jones, Deirdre Wilson and David Topliff were remitted to look into ways of fund raising that might preclude development of the land.

Re-new Application

We are advised that should we lose the Appeal we should be prepared to submit a fresh application to the Executive to satisfy the terms of the Land Reform Act.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, 20th July. 7.30p.. Churches House.