

## Holmehill Ltd

### Minutes of Board Meeting

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2006 in Scottish Churches House Annexe

#### Attendance

*Board members* Rosemary Bland (chair), Caroline Crawford, Phil Tebbutt, John Seddon, Liz Law, Malcolm Wilson, David Topliff, Andrew Gould, Claire Watt, Caroline Smillie.

*Others (by invitation)* Alan Booth

*Apologies* : Deirdre Wilson, Alison Brown, Steve Mason, Gerard Hastings

*Invited from 8pm* : Richard Frew, Colin Gray (Scottish Executive)

**Welcome and Apologies** Rosemary welcomed all present. She asked Claire to begin the meeting while office bearers were elected.

**Office Bearers** Steve Mason is standing down as treasurer. Andrew Gould was proposed and seconded for the post. Caroline intimated her resignation from the post of secretary but she will remain a board member. Steve was proposed and seconded for the post of secretary. Rosemary was proposed and seconded to remain as chair.

**Minutes of Previous Meeting** The minutes of the meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> July were referred to. Any actions from those minutes have been superseded by events.

**Meeting with Richard Frew and Colin Gray** Following the formal Board business, we invited the above to our meeting to discuss our past and possible future applications. We want to find a way to work more effectively with the Scottish Executive and to discover what we need to change from our first application to ensure that our second one is successful. Once Richard Frew (RF) and Colin Gray had joined us RB asked RF if he could discuss the Executive's objections to our first application and how we might address them.

RF The land is still on the market so there is nothing to stop HHL from reapplying. What happened with regards to HHL's discussions with Caledonian Trust?

RB We met with them and gave them feedback with regards their rough plan for the land. They took that feedback on board and we were waiting to see what their revised proposal entailed. Since then Hilton have had a higher bidder.

RF Has Stakis given you a price? Would they deal with you directly?

RB They wouldn't return our calls.

DT They wouldn't discuss a price.

RF Has the local plan changed?

CB No.

RF There are several possibilities open to HHL but it seems that a re-application is going to be the most likely outcome. HHL must therefore make an

application and follow the procedures. HHL has good aspirations. Have the company's intentions changed?

RB No. We recognise however that we will need to mature our Business plan. We have money offered from the Land Fund to commission such a plan when and if we have formal management or ownership of part of all of Holmehill.

RF HHL should go ahead and develop its business plan.

CB The Land Fund grant is conditional and relies on us having a successful application to register an interest. The offer also expires in a few months.

RF I'm slightly surprised at that.

RB Perhaps they thought it would be a waste of money if we were to be unsuccessful.

RF That seems unusual to me. I'll research it.

JS Will this future application be a Late Application? Will this be a bar to success?

RF No. The idea that we are no longer accepting late applications is nonsense.

RB What will we give as a reason for it being a late application?

RF Concentrate on what HHL has been doing between the time the land went on sale and the time this application is submitted. Be honest about your position. It would have been impossible for you to apply sooner as you already had an application in which was the subject of a court case. The land has not been taken off the market in this time so it would also have been impossible to submit a timeous application.

RB Can we quote the minister's encouragement?

RF It would do no harm. It is very important to achieve an actual 10% of the electoral register as a minimum. Significantly higher is really necessary. Applications with 17 - 25% have already been approved.

CW Can we re-use names from the first petition?

RF Difficult. Some may object to being on the list since their original permission. Others may object to being left off it.

CB To be on the safe side we should do it again.

RB It will be difficult to do that because we are not offering anything new.

AB Didn't you tell me on the phone that the judge considered 13% to be significantly more?

RF 13% was the number of signatures on the original petition forms that remained after those who mentioned being opposed to housing were taken off. The sheriff may have accepted that but ultimately, I didn't bother objecting to it

because there were so many other more significant reasons to refuse the application.

CW Can we re-use the original names on our petition and add more to them?

RF That would show the current level of support.

AB Could we re-use the other 4% if we remove their comments.

RF *Mr Frew never really replied to this question.*

AG We really need to re-ask the question and get new signatures.

RF Yes, you should set out HHL's aspirations and explain that it is still a live issue. Other groups have put in a late application when the land has been up for sale for a long time.

CG The Electoral Register Officer should be able to let HHL know of changes in the register since the original petition. Please make sure that those signing the petition give given names - clearly printed, signature, address and postcode.

RF With Late Applications it needs to be strongly indicative that it is in the public interest. With regards to preventing development it is a good idea to stick to the land designation in the local plan.

CB Is it better to suggest a development plan in line with or outside the local plan?

RF It is better to stick with the plan. Has the plan changed?

CB The path across the Hill is now in Stirling's Core Path Network document. Can we quote that?

RF Absolutely. Also, refer to your aspirations; for example, what would the benefit be to the community? We have walked the land just now and I was thinking you could, for example, put fruit trees up there and contribute to the healthy eating in Dunblane schools. That's just an example of an aspiration you might have.

AB For clarity, if we develop the land within the plan we'll be okay but if we mention a resistance to executive housing we'll be thrown out?

RF Yes because that is an idea which should be dealt with through the local planning process. Any ONE type of development should not be singled out. Again, focus on your aspirations.

CB Now we're back to our lack of a business plan.

AG But HHL could presumably quote the ideas we have in our application, reliant on feasibility, cost etc. in order to give an impression of our aspirations?

RF That would be helpful.

AG Also, we are now working in partnership with the DDT and they will be responsible for maintaining whatever shape our development takes.

RF That's healthy.

LL But some things will require maintenance and therefore an income, so some of our development would need to provide one.

RF It depends what you want to do with the land.

*A discussion followed outlining possible sources of funding.*

RF I expect changes to happen to the funding situation in future so we would probably look at the general financial viability of your scheme. That would be at a later stage in the process though, not registration.

AG We'd like to mention the historic value.

RF I'd expect that.

CG If you are discussing it with other bodies; Historic Scotland, SNH, the Forestry Commission etc. it would be helpful to put that in your application.

RF Mention reasons why the application should be accepted the second time. Be prepared for opposition - local and from the Hilton Group themselves.

CG Hilton will probably object and look for reasons to complain such as re-using the original petition.

AB Sustainable development, therefore, means that the development on the land pays for itself but not on any interest we might be paying on the land?

RF We'd want to see how income was generated with regards to the potential for the community to buy it and how the costs would be met

*This concluded, for the most part, discussions regarding the HHL application. Further discussion ensued mostly between AB, RF and CG regarding related issues:*

The board thanked Mr Frew and Mr Gray for coming to the meeting; they then left.

The board discussed how to best go about the business of another petition and were advised by AB that the next issue of the Community View would be coming out in a couple of weeks.

**Next meeting** It was agreed that the next meeting would be on Monday 4 September at 7.30 pm in the Annexe behind Scottish Churches House.

Everyone from the sub-groups should be invited to attend. The purpose of the meeting will be to agree a strategy for action. It is hoped that each attendee will bring an acquaintance who would like to get involved as we have to extend our reach into the community.

DT