

Holmehill Ltd

Minutes of the Open Meeting
In Braeport Centre, Dunblane
Tuesday 4 September 2012 at 7.30 pm

This was an extra open meeting called to discuss Planning Application 12/00544/PPP.

50 people attended.

Chris Spray welcomed everyone. He explained that the Holmehill Community Buyout Group had already submitted to the Planning Department a letter objecting to a 'Planning Permission in Principle' application within the Dunblane Conservation area.

Richard Bland summarised the application. AWD has submitted provisional planning permission application to build 2 storey office block on site of former Holmehill House. He explained the historic context of the Section 75/50 agreement between Stirling Council and Stakis, and binding on any future owner of the site. This does state that the site of the former house 'would be suitable' for Class 2 office buildings, but this does not imply that planning permission would be granted, or that it is inevitable.

Open discussion followed. This raised many issues. The main areas of concern were:-

- **Access to and within site.** Smithy Loan is one-way in recognition of the fact that it is narrow and potentially dangerous. There is a Primary School, NHS dentist and sheltered housing on it. It would be unsuitable for construction vehicles and the volume of traffic that offices would generate, particularly as the peak flow would be at school arrival time. Within the site the proposed access route is along a designated core path, used by many residents. It is narrow and bounded by mature trees, unsuitable for construction and emergency vehicles.
- **Environmental issues.** Any building would damage future use and the environmental integrity of the hill, which is recorded as having rich and varied wildlife. Mature trees would be damaged by the construction process, and to allow access. The trees are protected as they are within the Conservation area. This would impact on wildlife and the visual appearance. Concerns it may affect drainage. The visual appraisal submitted by AWD is misleading as it shows the trees in full leaf.
- **Contrary to local policies.** Holmehill is zoned as open green space in the Stirling Local Plan 1999. Stakis did not object to this zoning at the time. AWD knew of this zoning when they bought the site. The Conservation Area Appraisal and the emerging will of the Community as expressed in the Local Development Plan acknowledge the importance of Holmehill. The Section 75/50 agreement cannot override these policies.
- **No need for more offices** in Dunblane. There is empty office accommodation in the area. Concerns that if outline planning permission for offices were granted that this may later be changed to permission to build houses.

Chris Spray encouraged

- Individuals to write to Planning Department making their own views known
- Each individual, including children, in a household should write
- Individuals to encourage others to be involved through their personal networks
- Keep it Short and Simple [KISS]. Bullet points on one side A4 effective.
- Highlight key legitimate objections, i.e. appearance of development, impact on residents, traffic/access issues, contrary to local policies.
- Ask technical questions, e.g. any permission should be conditional on bat survey, drainage assessment etc.
- Final date for comments/objections is 21st September.
- www.holmehillblog.org will be updated soon with key points and links to Stirling Council Planning Department website.

Libby Hughes, 5 September 2012