

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Leith Central Community Council, held in the McDonald Road Library on Monday 16 June 2014 at 7.00pm

Actions and decisions are ***RED ITALIC UNDERLINED SMALLCAPS***. ***NEM CON*** means that no-one spoke or voted against a decision. URLs added by minutes secretary.

1 Introduction, attendance and apologies

1.1 Attendance

Marion Donaldson	LCCC	Sophie Brown	FOPP, resident
Charlotte Encombe	LCCC (secretary)	David Walliker	resident
Anne Finlay	LCCC (treasurer)	Lloyd Quinlan	Taobh na Pair
Julian Siann	LCCC	Jan Brown	Leith Harbour and Newhaven CC
Irene Sweeney	LCCC	Jim Scanlon	Leith Links CC
Harald Tobermann	LCCC (vice-chair)	Ella Taylor-Smith	Broughton Spurtle
Alex Wilson	LCCC	PC Craig McMillan (11082)	Police Scotland
Bruce Ryan	minutes secretary	PC Owen Hopkins (11888)	Police Scotland
Adrian Graham	resident	Nicholas Roberts	Weare ICA (architects)
Ailsa Macintosh	resident	Colin Smith	Turley
Peter Mellors	resident	David Clancy	S Harrison Developments

1.2 Apologies

John Hein	LCCC (chair)	Cllr Angela Blacklock	Leith Walk ward (Labour)
Cllr Deidre Brock	Leith Walk ward (SNP)	Malcolm Chisholm MSP	Edinburgh North and Leith (Labour)
Cllr Nick Gardner	Leith Walk ward (Labour)		

2 Minutes of the meeting of 28 April 2014

2.1 Approval

Subject to correcting a typo in Cllr Brock's first name, approved *nem con*

2.2 Matters arising

2.2.1 Photos of LCCC members for website (item 10.4 of April minutes)

The secretary asked all LCCC members to send good-quality digital photographs of themselves to the minutes secretary (bruce.ryan at mac.com)

2.2.2 Referendum debate (item 10.5 of April minutes)

The secretary thanked M Donaldson for her work on this. See poster at <http://leithcentralcc.co.uk/2014/06/16/referendum-debate/>

3 Pre-application consultation re 34b Haddington Place 14/02115/PAN

Colin Smith of Turley (<http://www.turley.co.uk/office/scotland-edinburgh>) made the following points. This consultation is about the gap site on Leith Walk next to McDonald Road library. Having recently changed hands, this site is the subject of a serious development proposal, now at the early stage of the planning process. Consultation includes speaking to local bodies (e.g. LCCC, New Town and Broughton CC, Cockburn association). The design has not been finalised – two variants have been sent to Edinburgh Council's planning committee. However, the main idea is mostly student accommodation but retaining the ground floor for class 1 (shop) and 3 (restaurant & hot food) uses such as a pay-as-you-use gym. They intend to make the main application in August – to that end, there will be a staffed exhibition at McDonald Road library on 24 June (2pm-8pm). Work should start in 2015.

David Clancy of S Harrison Developments (<http://www.s-harrison.co.uk/projects/current/haddington-place-edinburgh/>) made the following points. They are a family-owned 62 year-old business with a wide-ranging, good track record of work on sensitive, historic buildings in York and elsewhere. They now aim to expand to Edinburgh and Durham, which have similar planning environments. They understand that planning can be sensitive, hence they aim to do all relevant preparation before submitting the application. Because they now own this site, they intend a quick, efficient project. This will include improving the site's look, e.g. dealing with fly-tipping and installing new hoardings (for which planning permission will be needed.)

Nicholas Roberts of Weare ICA made the following points. They intend a building that will bridge the current gap in sympathy with neighbouring buildings and the character of Leith Walk. The building is likely to be 3 or 4 storeys, while nearby buildings are 5 to 6 storeys.

3.1 Questions and comments

The secretary asked about the materials to be used, and why student accommodation was planned given that several previous student accommodation (SA) schemes had fallen through. **Responses:** main material will be sandstone (darker, stain-resistant material at the bottom) due to site being on the edge of the conservation area. The SA market is changing – accommodation nearer the universities is expensive, there are very few Edinburgh students in purpose-built accommodation and there is a move away from HMOs.

A Finlay asked about accommodation numbers. **Response:** around 200 places are anticipated for this building (around 70% as clusters [equivalent to flats for 5 or 6 people], 30% studios [self-contained apartments] at the rear of the scheme.)

H Tobermann asked who would run the building once it was built. **Response:** almost certainly not S Harrisons.

J Siann noted that a crucial feature of a previous design was the interlock between the new building and the library. Would the main entrance be as previously planned? **Response:** Very much as previously planned – the new building would step away from the library, with a glass separation.

A Finlay asked whether student population %ages had been considered. **Response:** Firstly, this is a good area for student accommodation, given the existing scheme on McDonald Road and the good transport links on Leith Walk. Edinburgh Council's student population density (SPD) guideline is 30%. This site is part of 2 datazones. In one, the SPD is currently 26% – with 200 more students it would rise to 33%. If the other datazone is included, after development the SPD would be 28%.

M Donaldson asked about accommodation contracts. **Response:** Normally, cluster-room lets are 43-44 weeks because such students are away over the summer and studio lets (generally to postgraduate students) are 51 weeks. But in Edinburgh, many studio lets are 43 weeks also. So lets here could also be 43 weeks + 8 weeks.

The secretary expressed concern about the new building potentially being too big. **Responses:** Because this area has been through the planning process twice already, the developers are already aware of and will work to limits such as how the building would be seen from down Leith Walk, daylighting on Annadale Street Lane conservation-area requirements. Also, storey-height for student accommodation is less than that of hotels, which also require roof machinery.

H Tobermann suggested that the frontage should take cues from Haddington Place tenements. **Response:** it will be as library and bayed tenements; in terms of style, in keeping with horizontality of neighbouring tenements, and will not sit forward of library

4 Community Police Officer report

Police Scotland has been targeting youth problems, drugs, weapons. In Leith there were 40 stop-and-searches – these have recovered drugs and weapons. PS is now preparing for the Commonwealth Games, many officers being sent to Glasgow (now to July). Leith citizens should notice no difference in policing however.

H Tobermann asked for statistics relating to Leith Central's beats. (LCCC's area is in green on <https://leithccc.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/leith-beats-all-leith-ccs.pdf>.) A Graham asked for statistics for all three Leith CC areas. HT also asked whether more police helicopters had been flying recently. **Response:** PCs will feed back to their superiors re statistics. Helicopters are now available, thanks to formation of Police Scotland – they are used for missing person searches and motorbike offences *inter alia*.

J Siann reported recent criminal activity in Pirig St area (Rosslyn Crescent) – could PS meet the local community group. **Response:** PCs have reported this up their hierarchy, would be happy to speak to community group.

A resident reported problems with car revving and illegal movement in the Colonies area. **Response:** resident invited to make appointment with police so they can handle this.

Another resident noted that just beyond Smith Place, the speed limit is 30mph. However, trucks and buses regularly exceed this, especially evenings and early mornings. **Response:** Normal police cars don't have speeding-detection equipment, but PS have traffic cars and a new radar camera, and will soon start using it.

5 Office-bearers' reports

5.1 Treasurer

Income and expenditure 2014 report has been prepared – see page 5 of 2014 AGM draft minutes (https://leithccc.files.wordpress.com/2011/10/2014_05_19-draft-v21.pdf) for most recent update. Use of Anne Dargo as auditor was approved *nem con* (proposed H Tobermann, seconded Anne Finlay) – she is due to audit the minutes so they can be approved at the August meeting.

5.2 Secretary

The Easter Road post office is due to move to larger premises (56-60 Easter Road), hence providing an open-plan branch with the same products and services and longer opening hours. There is a 6-week consultation, ending 11 July. Comments can be submitted to <http://postofficeviews.co.uk>, comments@postoffice.co.uk, FREEPOST Your Comments or 08457 22 33 44. See <http://www.sheilagilmore.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Norton-Park-EH7-5DR-Ms-Sheila-Gilmore-MP-Cons-Letter.pdf> for details. A resident expressed concern that disabled citizens might not be able to get to the new premises.

5.3 Gala day

This was very successful – very large turnout. M Donaldson networked with other groups, including promoting the Referendum debate. She found that many people do not know what CCs are, and asked whether the Leith CCs had had joint stalls previously because she was asked about issues in other Leith CC areas. She has volunteered to keep the library stocked with leaflets about LCCC.

6 Leith Walk repairs and improvements

H Tobermann reported:

- Work is now in progress on the stretch between Pilrig St and the bottom of LW. Work on two areas within this stretch is due to finish this week. H Tobermann observed that work quality seems to be reasonable but is slightly concerned that work on this stretch will not be completed on time. In parallel, Edinburgh Council has finished plans (including better pedestrian crossings) for the junction at the bottom of LW and is now seeking contractors.
- The section from Pilrig St to the top of LW is most concerning to HT
 - this is at the end of the overall process (scheduled to finish in 2016), while the temporary patches have not achieved as much as he had hoped – so LCCC should press for more.
 - Edinburgh Council may be rethinking matters because the trams may come to LW sooner rather than later and because the plans of the St James Centre area are likely to involve remodelling of the Piccadilly Place roundabout (e.g. moving tram stop from York Place to Piccadilly Place). Such changes would affect the top of Leith Walk, thus putting this stretch's plans in limbo.

HT asked LCCC's endorsement of his and J Siann's actions to press for minimal delay in renovating LW. **AGREED NEM CON**

There was discussion over how the Cathedral at Piccadilly Place would be affected – originally Broughton Street carried on south towards the cathedral.

A Wilson stated that installation of slabs had been behind schedule but having met the contractors, work is now on schedule. He has been disappointed to find that the old BT phone-boxes have been retained, despite their frequent abuse. He also stated that the section from Annandale Street to Piccadilly Place is due for further discussion by Edinburgh Council, and that if the thoroughfare is extended through the St James 'quarter', this would strongly misaffect businesses on Piccadilly Place. Also, he has not received the promised specification for bus stops – he believes all stops on LW should all be reinforced to avoid potholes caused by buses (and thus reduce future maintenance costs).

H Tobermann noted that tram and bus ticketing are currently not integrated (i.e. you can't travel from Leith to the airport via bus and then tram on a single ticket), and requested LCCC's endorsement of him pursuing ticket integration. **AGREED NEM CON**

7 Friends of Pilrig Park report

There will be a clean-up day 29 July, 2pm-3:30, meeting at Balfour Street. LeithDecides-funded projects are in progress.

H Tobermann asked about the new fencing near the special school. **Response:** this is a result of wall collapsing at Liberton – Edinburgh Council is apparently now assessing all walls near schools.

8 Planning subcommittee report

8.1 Tennant St 13/04405/FUL

There is concern about boundaries between this development and Pilrig park. FoPP has met with Balmoral International (representing developers). FoPP has since written to Edinburgh Council's planning department: FoPP generally supports this development (more footfall, increased security) but has concerns about a substation and bin-store (this could become a hotspot for antisocial behavior). Also FoPP recommends

integration of the park and the wider Leith area, and sympathetic planting on the boundary between the proposed housing and Pilrig Park. See appendix 1 for text of this letter.

JS raised concerns about access to the site.

Residents noted that the current application was for a 3-year extension of existing permission but that when permission was originally granted, the school was not operational, and that there would be increased traffic. It now is, but this has not been taken into consideration. This is despite school proximity being considered in other similar applications. Further, the land is seriously contaminated (it's the site of a former Victorian paintwork). Apparently this has not been taken into account by Edinburgh Council, so parents/residents are seeking clarity of and stronger safeguards. Local Edinburgh councillors are sympathetic to their concerns.

ACTION: HT TO WRITE TO EDINBURGH COUNCIL RAISING THESE ISSUES AND REQUESTING REASSESSMENT

8.2 SESPlan

This is a second version of a structural plan covering all the Lothians, some of Scottish Borders, some of Fife, i.e. Edinburgh's commuting area, describing new major routes, power stations, housing masses etc. The current stage is *main issues report early awareness*, i.e. planners want to hear what LCCC and equivalents believe the main issues to be. H Tobermann suggested bringing two ideas into these considerations – the proposed green bridge across Leith Walk, and using the brownfield sites at Shrub Place and Shrub Hill. He also suggested considering these areas comprehensively, not piecemeal. See appendix 2 for his submission, which was endorsed *nem con* by LCCC.

The next stage is a housing needs assessment – this is of major interest to developers because it's about how much land is made available for housing. Comments are required before 1 August 2014. H Tobermann suggested housing needs are vastly overstated and gave rise to threats to the green belt. JS stated that specific sites were now being considered (the secretary ask him to circulate a list of such sites).

The secretary noted that three informative events would be held

- Wednesday 2 July (10am – midday) in Midlothian room in Lothian Chambers, George IV Bridge
- Wednesday 9 July in (10am – midday) in City Chambers
- Thursday 17 July (10am – midday) in City Chambers

8.3 Weekly planning application lists

PSC generally acts on the most impactful of such applications. HT will share these via LCCC's website, and potentially ask for input on these.

9 Edinburgh Councillors' reports

none

10 AOCB

Adrian Graham was co-opted onto LCCC *nem con*

(Notes – at the start of the meeting, LCCC had 8 elected and 2 co-opted members. 7 elected members were at this meeting. It is permitted 16 elected and co-opted members, provided that co-opted members do not exceed a THIRD of the maximum permitted elected community council membership, i.e. there can be no more than 5 co-opted members. With Adrian's co-option, there are 8 elected and 3 co-opted members.)

Concern was raised about the old Customs House on Commercial Street – this is the preferred site for a Leith museum but, even though it is Crown property, it might be sold off to private developers. There is an open meeting arranged by M Lazarowicz MP on Sunday 20th June (2pm, South Leith Parish church, Henderson Street).

There was discussion of speed limits at the foot of Leith Walk. It was suggested that Edinburgh Council's transport committee is in favour of 20mph and that this is likely to become the speed limit on Leith Walk.

A resident raised concern about a DTZ sign which goes over roof level, and may be on a preservation-area building. He was advised to contact Edinburgh Council and ask for enforcement of relevant regulations.

M Donaldson asked for help with promoting and at the Referendum debate, and for a loan of a PA system.

11 Date of next meeting

18 August

Appendix 1: letter from FoPP to Edinburgh Council

12 June 2014

Karen Robertson,
City of Edinburgh Council

Dear Karen,

Ref: 13/04405/FUL

I am writing on behalf of the Friends of Pilrig Park regarding the proposed development on Tennant Street (ref. 13/04405/FUL) that has a border to the north edge of Pilrig Park. Friends of Pilrig Park (FoPP) is a voluntary organisation with over 120 local members, we work closely with the local community to support the positive development of Pilrig Park through consultation and community projects.

The Committee has considered the proposed development carefully and in general supports the development. We believe that housing on this site will benefit the park by not only increasing foot fall but by improving security due to residencies overlooking the area.

However, there are concerns about the about the substation/bin-store site by the Stanwell Street entrance, access points in and out of the park from the development and the wider access into the park from Leith - in particular from Great Junction Street. Additional trees would also be welcomed.

The triangular piece of land between Stanwell street and Block 7 containing a bin store and an electrical substation is of particular concern. This seems to be creating a similar arrangement to the substation currently on the boundary of Pilrig Park and Pilrig Street, which has been a hot spot for drug abuse and anti-social behaviour for a number of years. We work closely with the local community who regularly report this as a priority concern for safety and security for the park and local communities at public meetings and in other consultations. It seems nonsensical to create an area in the development so open to misuse and which will potentially cause problems for residents of the development; Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pairce and park users further down the line. We would recommend that the developer looks again at this area of the plan.

We also believe there is a missed opportunity with regards **to the integration of the development with Pilrig Park and the wider Leith Ward.** Access from Great Junction Street via Pirrie Street (then Jane Street and Tennant Street), across the development between Block 6 and Block 7 into Pilrig Park would provide open and easy access for pedestrians and cyclists from Leith into the Park and vice versa. This would promote and encourage use of this beautiful park in central Edinburgh, rather than the inward looking plans currently put forward by the developer.

We recommend the developers **consider sympathetic planting on the boundary between the proposed housing and Pilrig Park** with small trees and low lying shrubs that will still ensure clear lines of site to the development are maintained. This would soften the impact of the development and complement the rest of the park boundary. Development of the woodlands in the park to support biodiversity is a priority area for Friends of Pilrig Park and we are developing a plan of work.

We would be happy to work directly with the developers on what species are appropriate to complement the existing planting within the Park.

On a final note, the committee was disappointed that the City of Edinburgh Council did not seek to require the developer, at an earlier stage in the planning process, to provide some benefit to the local community through improvements to Pilrig Park. This opportunity would seem to have been missed but we would urge the Council to consider this should future developments be proposed that are adjacent or in close proximity to Pilrig Park. We would happily provide a community perspective of what might be an appropriate and proportionate contribution to the Park.

Please feel free to contact me whether by email at friendsofpilrigpark@gmail.com or on 07929 210022 should you wish to discuss any of the above further.

Yours sincerely,

Sophie Boyd Brown

Chair, Friends of Pilrig Park

CC: Cllr Deidre Brock
Cllr Nick Gardener
Murray Black, Local Environment Manager CC&L
Fiona Devlin, Parks Officer CC&L

Appendix 2: Submission re SESplan



Comments on “The Vision for Strategic Development Plan 2” MIR Early Awareness

Comment by

Harald Tobermann, Leith Central Community Council

Question 1a - The Vision for Strategic Development Plan 2

The Vision for South East Scotland as set out in Strategic Development Plan (SDP)1 is that *'By 2032, the Edinburgh City Region is a healthier, more prosperous and sustainable place which continues to be internationally recognised as an outstanding area in which to live, work and do business.'*

Thinking about SDP2, is this Vision,
Needs updating but focussing on the same principles

If you consider the Vision for SDP2 should be updated or needs to be rewritten with a new focus, please set out your reasons why?

Needs to focus development on brown filed sites first; needs to address problems arising from land banking.

Question 1b - Healthier Lives

What can SDP2 do to enable people in the SESplan area to live healthier lives and to create a better quality of place?

More cycling, walking and much better public transport (intermodal) interchanges and through-ticketing at a reasonable price and speed (=cheaper than taxi, not more than 10% slower)

Question 2a - Strategic Development Areas

SDP1 identified 13 areas for strategic growth:

- 1 West Edinburgh;
- 2 South East Edinburgh;
- 3 Edinburgh City Centre;
- 4 Edinburgh Waterfront;
- 5 East Lothian;

- 6 Eastern Borders;
- 7 North Dunfermline;
- 8 Ore / Upper Leven Valley;
- 9 A7 / A68 Borders Rail Corridor;
- 10 A701 Corridor;
- 11 Central Borders;
- 12 Western Borders; and
- 13 West Lothian.

Should SDP2 continue to focus on these 13
Yes

Strategic Development Areas?

Question 2b - Strategic Development Area Principles

SDP1 directs Local Development Plans (LDPs) to set out the details for development within Strategic Development Areas including phasing and the mix of uses.

Should SDP2 provide more detail on the key principles for development within identified Strategic Development Areas?
Yes

If you answered yes, please set out briefly what key principles for the development of Strategic Development Areas should be included within SDP2.

Recognise that Leith Walk is the most densely populated area in Scotland. Are there enough schools, health services, libraries, utility infrastructure (superfast broadband!) and public transport connectivity to reflect (and enable) this density?

Question 2c - The Transition to a Low Carbon Economy

The Scottish Government have set ambitious targets for a Low Carbon Scotland with a reduction in emissions of 42% by 2020.

What are the best ways in which SESplan can contribute to the Scottish Governments targets for a low carbon Scotland?

enable more walking, public transport, cycling

Question 2d - Climate Change

What can SDP2 do to help the SESplan area adapt to climate change?

Biomass energy production in a densely populated area is a red herring

Question 3a - Affordable Housing

SDP1 guides LDPs to take an appropriate approach to affordable housing in compliance with Scottish Planning Policy. However, SDP1 does not contain a specific policy on affordable housing.

Should this also be the case for SDP2?

No, there should be a policy on affordable housing.

Question 3b - Town Centres

In brief, what can SDP2 do to support Town Centres?

recognise that not all town centres are the same
for high-density Leith Walk: enable and mandate the LDP to provide commensurate walking/public transport/logistics facilities; stop conversion of retail premises to residential

Question 4a - Growth Sectors

The following 7 Growth Sectors have been identified in South East Scotland:

- 1 Creative industries;
- 2 Energy;
- 3 Financial and business services;
- 4 Food and drink;
- 5 Life sciences;
- 6 Tourism; and
- 7 Universities.

What can SDP2 do to support these Growth Sectors? Please list only two key points per industry.

*Free public area broadband in North Edinburgh and Leith, not just in the centre.
Commensurate walking/public transport/logistics*

Question 4b - Other Sectors

What can SDP2 do to support:

- 1 Small Businesses;
- 2 The economy of rural areas; and

3 Enabling digital communication.

List no more than 2 key points for each.

reduce red tape for setting up shops; mandate roll-out of FTTC/FTTP in all densely populated areas

Question 5a - Transport and Infrastructure

What do you think are the major challenges relating to transport and infrastructure in the SESplan area? Please list no more than 3.

- *priority to pedestrians and cyclist at all traffic light junctions*
- *commensurate walking/public transport/logistics*
- *pedestrianisation of inner city roads.*
- *Increase parking costs, introduce controlled parking zones in all densely populated areas , improve out of town car parks and bus services to it.*

What do you think are the infrastructure types or specific projects that require priority infrastructure investment in the SESplan area?

- *green bridge over Leith Walk*
- *designate Shrubhill/Shrubplace as strategically important and consult on future uses supporting this, the most densely populated areas in Scotland, including: creation of a “food hub” (covered market, artisan food producers, restaurants, food education) and location of major art centre with international status (“Bilbao effect”) to support all strategic SESplan2 priorities*

Question 5b - Transport Improvements

SDP1 sets a number of strategic transport improvements to be delivered. Thinking about the four groupings below and the SESplan vision, which do you feel are the 2 most important to invest over the next 25 years in the SESplan region. Please pick 2 of the following.

for Leth Walk: commensurate walking/public transport/logistics

Question 5c - Digital Infrastructure

Thinking about your own situation, by significantly improving broadband speeds and coverage (particularly in rural areas), through home working and businesses run from home, can the need to travel for work be significantly reduced?

Question 5d - Green Space Improvements

National priorities for environmental and green space improvements in Central Scotland are

focused on improving derelict land, improvements in deprived areas and creating cycling and walking paths and routes.

Which do you feel is the most important?

Shrub Place/Shrubhill (see above)

Question 6a - Anything Else?

Briefly, are there any other strategic issues which SDP2 should address?

for Leith Walk: commensurate walking/public transport/logistics