

Heriot Community Council

Minutes of meeting, 24th May 2023

Present: Gavin Whittaker (Chair), Sue Sharp, Helen Brinkworth, Frank Connelly, Cllr. Hannah Steel. Seven members of Heriot community.

Apologies

1. Apologies for absence: John Williams, Cllr. Fay Sinclair, Cllr. McKinnon
Meeting chaired by Gavin Whittaker, minutes taken by Helen Brinkworth
2. Minutes of meeting March 15th

Corrections needed. Change the date of the meeting to 15th March, not April. In section 5, change initials to SS and HB, not SS and FC, for the bus service meeting.

3. Planning

Change of Use of Borthwick Hall and Garage from Class 9 Dwelling to Class 7 Guest House. 23/00655/FUL

Hall is on the market; planning is part of a proposed sale

- a) Positive comments:
 - HCC are pro tourism and development.
 - Retreat conversion might give jobs to local area.
- b) Comments made by Peter Campbell (selling the property) in SBC planning portal about changes being made further to offer to purchase e.g. change of Garage use to 6 apartments for 12 people
- c) Negative comments from Borthwick Hall residents:
 - There are concerns about lack of background information of the company buying property - that they may not be up front about the future development of the Hall.
 - The result of the planning application may be more changes than is currently indicated.
 - Transport access is via residential homes, (access goes through and along the side of houses) not suitable for any increased or commercial use.
 - Further worries about possibility of outside activities or events.
 - There is no separation between the Hall and the residential properties. (Hall has retained a small garden area and the surrounding larger area of garden and outlying properties has been converted into the residential properties.)
 - Extra traffic from 12 people using garage conversion, plus Hall guests, moving around all times of the day in area of residential properties.
 - Children are normally playing on access area and next to the garden of the Hall.
 - Residents are living very close to the Hall, e.g., 20m to the next house.
 - Use of the Hall may be increased by additional marquee next to residential properties for events.
 - Eight households/private residences and all are objecting.

- No new car park included in the application, plan to use the turning area as commercial access and parking which would result in no room to turn vehicles.
 - Access is already a problem with delivery vans.
 - Private water supply should not be expanded as could be at capacity.
 - Primarily a retreat, but also the application allows for a B&B/ guest house with unknown usage.
- d) Residents:
- Large area including riverbanks to be sold, but no details at present.
 - B709 not suitable for large constant commercial use.
 - Blind junction at bridge is hazardous.
- e) HCC:
- Agree, we should object and reflect local opinion.
 - Agree to object on grounds of planning application information and will request conditions to be added if planning is granted.
 - Agree that HCC will also, in future, object to any conditions being removed if planning is granted.
 - Also, objection to include road safety issues in village.
 - GW to write objection.

Erection of Stable and field shelter, Keppel Gate

- f) No comment

Erection of dwellinghouse and associated access. Land south of Gilston farmhouse

- g) Outline planning permission sought. Heriot CC put in a brief response stating we encourage such applications under part of our local plan aiming to ensure organic growth of the community and housing provision for young families.

Cakemuir forest management

- h) GW to comment.
- Logging application.
 - GW estimate 1000 tonnes per year and 40 lorry movements.
 - Query about access for lorries with no information given regarding route.

4. Police reports

- a) Fuel thefts highlighted in local news.
- b) Monthly report, JW deleted (ongoing issue with access)
- c) Loss of community officer.

5. Buses.

- a) SS: The x95 service is inadequate. Arranged meeting with SBC and Border Buses and Jenny from Fountainhall to discuss x95 service and possible changes such as wind farm funding for a minibus or adding Pingo service.
- b) HB: New timetable to be proposed by Border Buses.
- c) SS: Border Buses quoted £170 for single minibus journey. Taxi journey is cheaper.

- d) Pressure from Cllr Julie Pirone for changes at Border Buses.
- e) Stuck to key points to request meeting from SBC and Border Buses and follow up same issues.

6. Roads issues

- a) Speed camera vans have been seen at Gilston layby.
- b) A7 accidents recently between Heriot and Galashiels have closed the road.
- c) No accidents at the exchange bends since new electronic signage installed.

7. Windfarms.

a) JW update:

- Wull Muir, Greystone Knowe, Scawd Law. All have requests from SBC for considerable time extensions, to September or October. Wull Muir has to provide more information on various subjects. A provisional extension to June has been agreed for bird surveys and other information.
- Ditcher Law. Awaiting the full application, which may be submitted in July. Looking forward to co-operating with Oxton and Lauder Ccs.
- Long Croft. Oxton and Lauder CCs working together — Heriot CC has put in a brief scoping response.
- Torfichen. Nothing new, but RES did say they expected to make a full application in July/August.

b) Comments:

- Torfichen. 19 wind turbines at scoping request stage.
- Gaps in National Grid infrastructure are a known issue.

8. Community funds updates

- a) GW: first-aid, course and three defibrillators funding is approved. Need written permission on all three sites. Sites are Macfie Hall, Nettleingflat and Crookston (Crookston still needs a site confirmed, FC may host instead).
- b) SS to book two 1st aid courses. First course is six hours split into two evenings for adult first aid over a weekend, second is a paediatric course.
- c) FC: £9000 in HCC funds for microgrants.

9. AOB

- a) GW found a change notification by Scottish government for new constituency Parliamentary boundaries with Heriot in a new wide area from Lanark to Lauder. May result in a change of MSP. Open for consultation.
- b) HB: Duck race on June 24th
- c) FC: Wind farm panel working on questionnaire to be managed externally to survey what development/progress is wanted for Heriot.
- d) SS: Legislation passed by Scottish government to bid for National Park status. SBC putting in bid.
- e) Hannah: Possible NP boundary south of Heriot e.g. Kelso. There could be multiple separate areas included for a national park. Scottish government may create two national parks.

Finish 20:01