

Ness Castle stakeholder group meeting 9 minutes

Microsoft Teams

27 October 2021 at 6:30pm

Present	Representing
Cllr Alasdair Christie	Council Member THC
Gail Beverage	Holm Community Council; Ness Castle resident
Murray McCheyne	Holm Community Council
Donna Grant	Lochardil PS Parent Council
Martin Fitzgerald	Inverness Royal Academy Parent Council
Scott McRoberts	Ness Side resident
Janine Webb	Acting Head Teacher, Holm PS, THC
Audrey Kellacher	Head Teacher, Lochardil PS, THC
Robert Campbell	Estates Strategy Manager, THC
Dorothy Gibb	Principal Estates Officer, THC
Fiona Sangster	Project Co-ordinator Estates, THC
Alan Paul	Estates Officer, THC
Ian Graham	Road Safety Officer, THC
Finlay Niven	Senior Site Manager, Kier Construction
Evelyn Miller	Cleaning & Facilities Management Manager
David Summers	Principal Transport Officer, THC
Apologies	
Fiona Shearer	Area Care & Learning Manager, THC
Kenny Murray	Education Adviser, Capital Estates Projects, THC

Item	Discussion and comment	Action
1.	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AC welcomed everyone to the meeting. 	
2.	Developer contributions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AC welcomed David Summers, Principal Transport Officer, to the meeting. DS explained that developer contributions from the Ness Castle housing developments were being used to fund the current bus service. These contributions are now almost spent, but there are contributions from the Ness-Side development and will provide some support for the service for a limited time. At one point, prior to these developer contributions, the service was withdrawn by the bus company as not financially viable. The school catchment area does not exceed the limits for statutory school transport and so there are no developer contributions towards school transport. DG explained to DS the groups' aspirations for transport provision as part of the school travel plan for Ness Castle. DS explained that given the current budget situation it was unlikely that there would be funding available to enhance the current service. School opening and closing are peak times and buses are already committed to statutory school transport 	

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	<p>routes for rural areas therefore that particular time of day would require additional vehicles and drivers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG suggested that the existing routes could be adjusted to work with school times. • DS said that there is no opportunity to adjust the timing, however, he would discuss with the bus company a potential to alter the IRA service to benefit the new primary school. • Developer contributions will continue to support the bus service for approximately a further four years, but if the public do not use the bus, the service will be discontinued. There is a real risk of this because current passenger numbers are extremely low. It is hoped the increase in population with the new housing will increase the demand. 	DS
3.	<p>Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG informed the group that the contractor has asked for extended working hours on three dates in November to allow for the major concrete pour required for the new school building. • FN shared an aerial photograph and explained that this was to allow the slab to be poured in one go to avoid joints and to ensure that the floor area will be flat and smooth enough for the floor coverings. • There are still concerns with material shortages so to secure the concrete as one load is important to avoid any delays. • FN noted this will be the only time there will be a need for extended hours. • DG has followed the usual procedure and requested that the Ward Manager inform Members and seek approval before bringing to the Stakeholder Group and issuing a letter to the neighbouring properties at the site. • AC had asked the Ward Manager to inform the Community Council ahead of time to gauge the community's reaction to the request. • MMC has requested that FN adjust the letter to neighbours and agreed that although it would be disruptive, it was necessary. • The group agreed that the letter should be issued and circulated to the Stakeholder group. • DG informed the group that she has now submitted a Tree Works Application to the THC Forestry Officer to request removal of the two trees discussed at the previous meeting (beech and oak). If this is approved, landscaping plans will be updated. • DG will update the group on any response/developments on the tree removal. • FN confirmed that construction was still on track, going well with no issues. • MMC enquired if part of the school roof area seen on the aerial photograph was flat. FN confirmed that it was not entirely flat but that he would provide more information on the finish of this area at a later date. • Next steps are the concrete pour, then work will start on the roof and the drainage system on 15 November. 	<p>FN/DG</p> <p>DG</p> <p>FN</p>

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4.	<p>Safer Routes to School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IG updated the group on progress with the safer routes to school plans. The survey is ready to be issued to the group for comments. An assessment has been carried out for the area between the school site and Morriston Road which he will also share with the group. Opinions are sought on a suitable crossing point. DG informed the group that a minor change to the footpath design at the main entrance will be necessary to avoid disturbing the roots of a significant oak tree which is also adjacent to the diseased beech tree that has been requested to be removed. Drawings are not available yet but will be shared when they are. 	<p>FS</p> <p>All</p> <p>DG</p>
5.	<p>Staffing and migration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Head Teacher post has now been advertised. Unfortunately, neither Fiona Shearer nor Kenny Murray was able to attend the meeting so an update will be provided at the next meeting. JW asked when the parent body at the two existing primaries will be surveyed regarding transferring their children to the new school or staying at their current school. Fiona Shearer to advise on this. JW also explained that school staff were concerned about what might happen with regards to transferring to the new school. AC agreed that this would be a concern but suggested that JW take this up with Fiona Shearer separately as it was outwith the scope of the Stakeholder Group meetings. SMR asked about how parents would be involved in the Head Teacher interview process. Fiona Shearer to be asked to get in touch with both HTs to discuss this. JW noted that there were rumours circulating that the secondary catchment school for the new primary would be Charleston Academy. This may impact parents decision on whether to transfer their children or not. RC confirmed that any change to a catchment area requires a statutory consultation. The statutory consultation prior to the decision to build the new school at Ness Castle stated that Inverness Royal Academy would be the catchment and there will be no change to that. 	<p>FShearer</p> <p>FShearer</p> <p>JW</p> <p>FShearer</p>
6.	<p>Community benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kier now have a dedicated staff member on board for Community Benefits. THC to make contact. List of suggestions already but happy to hear of any further suggestions. AC and MMC had talked about possible tours for the older generation. DG asked for potential timing and noted that this would be subject to the contractor's agreement from and health and safety point of view. 	<p>DG/FS</p> <p>AC/MMC</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AC and MMC to discuss this further in terms of frequency of tours etc. 	
7.	<p>AOCB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free School Meals expansion is being looked at for P1 – 7. RC to contact HTs of Holm and Locharil regarding this. MMC asked if the new school will be available for school lets when completed. EM confirmed that the new school would follow the standard school letting procedure. It will not be financially feasible to open the school on demand. The Facilities Management Team would try and establish demand and then decide on days to open for lets. EM will attend future Stakeholder meetings going forward and feed back to her team. 	RC
8.	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wednesday 1 December 2021 at 6.30 pm on Microsoft Teams 	