

**MINUTES OF A GENERAL MEETING OF  
DORNOCH AREA COMMUNITY COUNCIL (DACC)  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 7 PM  
VIA ONLINE CONFERENCE CALL**



**PRESENT**

Patrick Murray – Chair – PM  
Graeme Ross – Vice-Chair – GR  
Jerry Bishop – Treasurer - JB  
Jimmy Melville – JM  
Dave MacBeth – DM  
Genevieve Duhigg – GD  
Lucy Dixon – LD  
Lesley Strang – LS  
Vonnie Macrae – VM

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Jim McGillivray – Cllr – JMc  
Lou Rollason – Minutes – LR  
Caroline McMorran – CMc  
Stuart Morrison – SM  
Carol Mackay - CM

N/B: PLEASE USE THE LINKS IN THE HEADINGS (WHERE APPLICABLE) TO ACCESS CORRESPONDING DOCUMENTATION		
1.	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> None were received	
2.	<b>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</b> PM declared an interest in the planning permission 7C as he owns land adjacent to the properties and has planning permission for the last phase of the site development. LD also declared an interest in the same matter due to living close by.	
3.	<b>ADOPTION &amp; ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (18/8/21)</b> The minutes were then proposed by JB as an accurate account of the meeting and seconded by LS.	
4.	<b>MATTERS ARISING (NOT OTHERWISE COVERED IN AGENDA – NUMBERS RELATE TO THE LAST MEETING POINT)</b>	
a.	4a. Meadows Park – JMc reported that Willie Mackay would like to attend in October to give a progress report. Planning permission is underway & they are also looking at a cricket pitch. SEPA was consulted and insisted on 1000-year flood protection for the shed. JMc added that Willie Mackay had expected two members of DACC to attend a site visit.	<b>GR &amp; JMC</b>
b.	4b. Tree Planting – JMc had passed on information to LD, who had spoken to a tree surgeon & reported that she was working on a plan for tree planting in Dornoch. <b>LD TO CONTINUE TO PROGRESS.</b>	<b>LD</b>
c.	Postponed till next meeting: 4f. Dornoch Trust 4g. Seagull problem	<b>JB</b>

	<b>GUEST SPEAKER – STUART MORRISON (SM) OF SPRINGFIELD PROPERTIES</b>	
	<p>Questions were prepared in advance:  <i>Has any Developer Contribution been agreed with Highland Council (HC), and where will this money go?</i></p> <p>No developer contributions were identified for Phase 1.  Stage 2 developer contributions were quoted as £2,571 per house &amp; £1,457 per flat towards primary school education. A further £1000 per home for community facilities. Totalling £144,931.  Springfield are awaiting a response from HC regarding phases 3 &amp; 4, but SM expected amount to be more than phase 1 &amp; 2.  SM stated that HC decided where the money was spent, subject to the six tests laid out by the Scottish government whereby the money would have to be relevant to the development – therefore probably spent in Dornoch, or at least locally.</p> <p><i>Is there any Community benefit Springfield may be willing to contribute?</i>  Springfield would be willing to contribute to community development, but it would need a more in-depth discussion. In a past development project, Springfield had helped with play areas and a skatepark, but installation of the skatepark caused controversy because the community had been split about its desirability.  PM briefed SM that the two main projects overwhelmingly supported in surveys by the whole community were a Sports Barn at the Dornoch Academy and a new Community Centre.  SM elaborated that there would be £1000 per home towards community facilities, and he asked if these funds should go to that Community Centre; PM stated that there was potential for this. SM continued that there is a regulation that states the money must be spent within 15 years.  JB commented that 'Pot 170', is where he believed the money would go. He continued that some of this had been allocated for the Dornoch South development, which it is hoped will eventually lead to a new Community Centre.  JB continued that he was interested in the educational contributions and where they would end up as there is a 'desperate need for better facilities.'</p> <p><i>How many low-cost housing units will there be, and what will the rough discount be?</i>  These houses would be for rental not for sale and would be delivered with a partner as follows:  Phase 1 – 10 – Albyn Housing  Phase 2 - 12– Albyn Housing  Phase 3 - 12– HC  Phase 4 – 14 - HC</p> <p>Phase 2 – Private market housing had begun and would be completed by June 2022, with the remaining 16 completed by August 2022; the 12 affordable homes would be delivered to the partners outlined above in that timeframe also. SM stated that if Springfield received planning permission promptly, the intention would be to move into phase 3 immediately.</p> <p><i>What are the mechanics of construction, including transport/machinery arrangements.</i>  SM stated that they were not at the stage of confirming for Phase 3 &amp; 4, but would be expected to follow the same principles as the first two phases.  Both DM &amp; VM expressed concerns about the current infrastructure's ability to handle the traffic (especially the road's narrowness). SM appreciated the comments and hoped that DACC would continue to inform</p>	

	<p>them of this. SM then elaborated on the connections between areas, and SM stated that pedestrian access would be discussed in due course. GD reiterated the importance of cycle and walking paths. She stated her willingness to work with Springfield, the school and landowners. SM stated that despite two new pedestrian connections being constructed to an adoptable standard to the south, that the “Safe Route to School” was still likely to be the Embo Road due to the fact that it would be part of the adopted road network.</p> <p>JB asked whether Springfield would be developing further after this project was completed. SM stated that Springfield might be interested in developing further because there was clear demand.</p> <p>JB then asked if there was potential for a road to be put in after the project was completed, and LD asked if what had been proposed as footpaths would be upgraded to roads later, leading to more development in the area at a later date? SM stated he did not think so, but a potential link may go in due to the emergency service access required.</p> <p>GR asked if he could define an ‘informal path’? SM replied that the definition was up to HC, but usually the only difference between formal and informal was that a formal one gets adopted by HC and an informal one does not. GR continued by asking about the access to Burghfield via Cnoc-An-Lobht and noted the steepness of the roads, which may be difficult for the older residents. PM suggested taking this discussion about pathways offline with GD.</p> <p>SM continued that there would be roughly 80 secure stores for cycles. He continued that the roads would not be adopted until all the construction transport no longer needs to use them. GD continued that this is an issue as residents need to have their bins collected from their road before 2024. SM did not realise this was the case and would raise it first thing tomorrow.</p> <p>The possibility of a Good Neighbour Agreement was mentioned. SM required more details, and GD suggested this also got taken offline.</p> <p>PM thanked SM for his time. JB wished to extend his thanks as well. SM stated his appreciation for the time to answer queries and offered to keep in touch.</p> <p><b>GUEST SPEAKER – CAROL MACKAY – DORNOCH AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (DADCA)</b></p> <p>CM spoke on behalf of several people who had approached her regarding DACC’s objections to commercial properties being changed into residential properties – including the old vet’s surgery.</p> <p>GR stated that the basics were that they are properties in the centre of Dornoch, and shops are disappearing and becoming too residential. JM brought up the vacant property, which had been in the market for two years, and DM stated it was trying to rent at £8000 a year. CM stated that she was aware of the logistics and just wished to know the views of DACC and how they made their decision.</p> <p>JB stated that in his time in DACC, they had rejected three commercial properties for residential planning applications. One was in the business park for flats, the second was the vet’s surgery, and the third was Annabel’s shop on the High Street. JB continued that Dornoch has a vibrant high street and that losing commercial properties loses the vibrancy of the town. JB continued to ask, ‘where do DACC draw the line’? He continued that DACC was trying to maintain the Dornoch Masterplan and highlighted that HC had the final say; HC agreed that the flats should not be at the business park but disagreed with DACC’s view of the old vet’s surgery, and thus a change of use was granted.</p> <p>CM continued that there appeared to be a great deal made from objections in the press, and wondered if there was consideration to what happened to the buildings if they did not get the planning permission.</p>	<p><b>GD</b></p>
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	<p>GD said that the HC plan stated that current commercial units should not be turned into housing. GD elaborated that the question is more 'what is the plan for these buildings' and added that Dornoch does not currently have a mixed economy; instead, it is mainly hospitality driven. GD then referred to the proposed Local Place Plan, which should bring together the main community groups within Dornoch, including more community consultations where the community will have more say, but for now, the current plan must be adhered to.</p> <p>CM understood and stated that she also had an issue with the subjectiveness of the press coverage.</p> <p>JB said that although the Northern Times (NT) are nearly always present at the meetings, DACC never heavily objects to any of the planning permissions and that CMc is free to report what she pleases without any interference from DACC and DACC would not have it any other way.</p> <p>GD continued that a vigorous debate had taken place, and it had not been an easy decision. She continued that she did not want people to think that the community was not at the heart of the decision and that it was difficult to reach any agreement. GD continued that there is a need for a more up to date town plan since this one is almost ten years old.</p> <p>CM stated that she has no personal affiliation with any of the persons included but urged DACC to be more transparent – asking, "is there a waiting list for commercial properties? Is the community aware of the process that DACC goes through (regarding the Masterplan) or how they make their decisions?"</p> <p>GR stated that individuals come and go, but the community survives and that it is about looking at the bigger picture. GR agreed that he understands CM's point, "but would it be the same in 5 – 10 years?"</p> <p>VM reiterated what GD had said regarding the fact there were challenging conversations to have but that the Hub had recently opened, and LS (Asset Manager of the Hub) had stated at the time that she could have sold the spaces ten times over. VM continued that she agreed with the point of the press and stated that if she was not a part of DACC, she might have thought the same.</p> <p>DM added that initially, the Dornoch Business Park would be 'all singing and dancing' and pointed out that JMc had discussed having retail units down in that area that were affordable (i.e. not £8000 a year). DM continued that it would be good to get the business park back on the agenda.</p> <p>PM said that this would be in GD's Local Place Plan. PM thanked CM for raising this and added that DACC now has a pre-planning meeting that they should perhaps invite members of the public to attend.</p> <p>CM reiterated that she was interested in the process and wanted to see DACC have more transparency about the processes, think outside the box, and look at what happens if the buildings do not get planning permission to change to residential.</p> <p>JB wanted to record that there are c.160 new houses already consented or in the process of being considered and stated it was about keeping the balance.</p> <p>CM thanked DACC for letting her attend and stated she was looking forward to an update.</p>	
	<b>ITEMS FOR DECISION</b>	
<b>5.</b>		
	<p><b>PLANNING &amp; LICENSING APPLICATIONS</b></p> <p>A pre-planning meeting was held on September 12<sup>th</sup>.</p>	
	<p>A. <b>21/03429/FUL   ERECTION OF 2 NO HOLIDAY LETTING UNITS   312 HILTON DORNOCH - <a href="#">LINK HERE</a></b></p> <p>Comments made were: It was not visible from the road, and it would not create traffic.</p> <p>YM wondered whether this was inconsistent with the rejection of an recent application from a property on the same road.</p>	

	<p>JB explained that there was a marked difference due to its location on East Embo Street, the circumstances of use and the visibility of the development.</p> <p><b>NO COMMENT</b></p>	
	<p><b>B. 21/03759/FUL   EXTENSION OF EXISTING GRAVEL EXTRACTION AND TIPPING FACILITY FOR INERT MATERIALS AND PROCESSING OF MATERIALS ON-SITE   EVELIX QUARRY EVELIX DORNOCH – <a href="#">LINK HERE</a></b></p> <p>No comment</p> <p><b>NO COMMENT</b></p>	
	<p><b>21/04031/FUL   ERECTION OF 112 RESIDENTIAL UNITS.   LAND 120M NORTH OF GLENBURN STATION ROAD DORNOCH – <a href="#">LINK HERE</a></b></p> <p>JB proposed that DACC ask for an extension and bring it to the meeting next month.</p> <p><b>AGREED - JB WILL ASK FOR AN EXTENSION.</b></p>	<b>JB</b>
	<p>Two further planning applications of note included the consultation for the sale of the common good land at River Street.  <u>Proposal to dispose, by sale, of approximately 49m<sup>2</sup> of land at 1 River Street, Dornoch, IV25 3LZ</u>  GR stated that DACC should state their fundamental base position would be not to sell Common Good Land. JB added to this by proposing DACC submit a comment stating: “Normally DACC would object, but in this case, we do not” – Agreed.  <b>JB TO SUBMIT THIS.</b>  <u>Proposal to dispose, by sale, of 164 m<sup>2</sup> of land at 1 Well Street, Dornoch, IV25 3LU</u>  The Common Good Land is currently leased and rents for £60 a year. There is an offer to purchase it for £8500. PM stated that it was an excellent price &amp; JB asked if DACC would support a proviso that the money is ringfenced to purchase more community land and a burden put on the sale for it not to be used for residential development. PM and GD suggested that the Common Good should be entitled to a percentage of the sale if the proviso is not adhered to.  <b>PM TO DRAFT COMMENT</b></p>	<p><b>JB</b></p> <p><b>PM</b></p>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>LITTER PICK AND DORNOCH BURN</b></p> <p><b>DM TO DISCUSS WITH DACC OFFLINE.</b></p>	<b>DM</b>
<b>ITEMS FOR NOTING &amp;/OR DISCUSSION</b>		
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>FINANCIAL UPDATE – <a href="#">LINK HERE</a></b></p> <p>Nothing of note was reported.</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>PROJECT PROGRESS REPORTS &amp; UPDATES</b>	
<b>a.</b>	<p><b>DACC MAINTENANCE PROJECTS (JB) – LINK TO <a href="#">WEBPAGE</a> &amp; <a href="#">PDF</a></b></p> <p>The only projects outstanding from Phases 1 &amp; 2 were the Beach Leaflet’s re-print, which is not yet required.</p> <p>The cemetery gates at the Cathedral, although painted, are in poor condition. Sinclair Muir agreed to refurbish both gates at the cemetery at the cost of £600. DACC agreed to apply for retrospective funding from Common Good Fund.</p> <p>JB was looking at the next phase and asked DACC to think of any projects that may be required. JM asked if JB had ever thought of finding a</p>	<b>PM, JM &amp; JMC</b>

	company to sponsor the toilets, and JB had not thought of this but asked JM to send through any interested parties. <b>IN PROGRESS</b>	
<b>b.</b>	<b>AWAITING HC ACTIONS (JMC) - <a href="#">LINK</a></b>  JMc reported that as many white lines as could be done in a day were done. The cemetery extension project is continuing and discussions with SEPA are progressing. Although there was an early interest, the hanger at the airfield had not moved into a firm offer, so HC is now looking for DACC guidance. The Smiley face signs are to be erected. The garage has not been discussed due to the personal circumstances of the family. Regarding people in vehicles under the influence of alcohol (when stationary), JMc stated it was very much illegal and the police have been involved in at least one such case recently. <b>IN PROGRESS</b>	<b>DM &amp; JMc</b>
<b>c.</b>	<b>DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (PM) – <a href="#">LINK TO PDF</a></b>  PM reported that the focus was the Beach area. A question had been raised about overnight parking and PM confirmed that the community had no intention of competing with the Caravan Park re. overnight stays. However, a proposal to provide basic facilities at times when the Caravan Park is either full or closed is currently with Highland Council for consideration.  <b>IN PROGRESS</b>	<b>PM</b>
<b>d.</b>	<b>VISITOR MANAGEMENT PLAN (GD, LD) – <a href="#">LINK TO ORIGINAL PDF &amp; UPDATED PLAN LINK</a></b>  No update – everything in hand. <b>IN PROGRESS</b>	<b>GD</b>
<b>e.</b>	<b>LOCAL PLACE PLAN (LPP) (GD) – <a href="#">LINK HERE</a></b> GD reported that new planning and legislation was coming out in the autumn, which would be community-focused, rather than imposed by council areas. GD created the LPP by looking at every plan that mentioned Dornoch – many of the points were always the same – housing, Sports Barn, parking, the Square being used as a proper Town Square. GD commented that none of these plans worked in tandem with each other, and this would be the perfect time to involve all the stakeholders and go out to proper Community Consultations. GD proposed a subcommittee consisting of all the local groups, and the second proposal would be getting consultants involved in the October meeting. GD continued that Stromness had created a new plan and complimented it – she would make this available to view at the Hub. It was created with HIE, and GD had spoken to Rachel Skene, who appeared interested. GD stated that the critical part is the Community Consultation and community involvement.	<b>GD</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>REPLACEMENT FOR LOU ROLLASON AS MINUTES SECRETARY</b> To be advertised.  <b>JB TO ADVERTISE MINUTES SECRETARY ROLE</b>	<b>JB</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>CORRESPONDENCE</b>	
<b>a.</b>	<b>FILES FROM ONLINE CORRESPONDENCE – <a href="#">LINK HERE</a></b>	

	<p>DACC has been e-mailed regarding a new street naming request for the Springfield Property development. DACC agree with the primary school children's suggestion of Sorley Avenue. JB added that this was a touching tribute.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>PM TO INFORM CAG</b></p>	<b>PM</b>
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>ROADS AND PATHWAYS</b></p> <p>JM brought up Clunie Corner as it is in bad condition – JMc will add it to the list. JM also brought up the awful (and fast) traffic on River Street going down to the beach and the caravan park. JMc took the point on board. DM brought up the potholes on the High Street, and JMc stated it is on the programme for surface redressing and will put forward a reminder.</p>	<b>JMc</b>
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>AOCB</b></p> <p>PM – Kim Tulloch was in correspondence regarding the Queen's Canopy and was informed that LD was progressing.</p> <p>DM asked about the Hogmanay Street Party, and PM said it was unlikely due to how the regulations look.</p> <p>PM informed DACC that the Remembrance Day Parade would not happen due to Covid. LS asked where this decision came from. JM stated that it came from Kim Tulloch and JM added that the event would be difficult to control. LS reiterated she was just curious regarding this as it felt very different to not doing a street party. YM added that it was primarily children that attended the parade who did not have to social distance. DACC agreed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>LS AGREED TO DISCUSS WITH KIM.</b></p> <p>YM asked PM how Elizabeth Crescent discussions went. PM stated that a few more parking spaces had been allocated, and JB offered to send the documentation.</p>	<p><b>LS</b></p> <p><b>JB</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>THE MEETING CLOSED AT: 21:10</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>WITH NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO DISCUSS, THE CHAIR THANKED EVERYONE FOR ATTENDING AND CLOSED THE MEETING AT THE ABOVE TIME.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING IS STATED BELOW.</b></p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 20<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2021, AT 7 PM</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>LOCATION: POTENTIALLY HYBRID – MIX OF ZOOM AND IN PERSON</b></p>		