

Bishopton Community Council

Response to Master Plan modifications.

Bishopton Community Council were heartened by several of the changes indicated by the modifications and acknowledge the work that had to been done to facilitate these changes.

Needless to say we still have some reservations and concerns that some previously voiced issues have not been fully addressed and some of the modifications raise other aspects that need to be considered.

Foul Water Disposal.

We welcome the realignment of the disposal of foul water but have concerns that the Pumping Station at Barangary does not have the capacity to cope with the increased volume.

We would welcome independent assurance that the system has robust capacity to cope with all eventualities.

Northern Access Road

We discussed the alignment of the Northern Access road as one of the matters raised by the modifications to the Master Plan for the R.O. site.

As has consistently been the case the Community Council considers the proposed alignment of the Northern Access Road creates an area of land to the east (between the new road and the Village) of the access, at risk for future development.

When the access was further discussed both within the Community Council and with residents in the proximity of the proposal several further issues have been raised.

- 1 The gradient of the proposal potentially exceeds recognised planning guidelines.
2. Brings the access close to and potentially inhibits further expansion of the local Cemetery and could be seen to jeopardise its tranquil setting.
3. The further from the village envelope the greater speed can be built up by east bound traffic before the 30 m.ph. limit and the Greenock Road / Old Greenock Road junction.
4. The residents who would be most affected chose to live in a rural setting while alignment near to or within the village envelope would have little impact on village residents as they are already conditioned to road noise and streetlight from the A8.
5. The closer to the village the lesser the problems of gradient.

The length of the proposed route is nearly twice the length of the Community Council preferred option, costing the developer twice as much, but likewise in the long term costing the Council/ Ratepayers twice as much to maintain in the future.

7. The length and broad sweep of the proposed access looks on paper as a new playground for the 'local boy racers' to hone their skills with the resultant noise and safety implications. The tighter shorter Community Council proposal could be within the 30 M.P.H. limit and be much less attractive and more easily policed.

8. We were shown original concept plans generated for the original steering group that had the northern access hard on the Village. Has the long term commercial potential of the 12 hectares of land that would be enclosed by the current proposal coloured the thinking of the development team enough to ignore Community and Local Authority Planning dept. advice. (letter 8th. Oct 2003)

Other aspects for consideration re the Northern Access

If the Northern access was established earlier than proposed it could take the place of the proposed 'haul road' as it has much better "Motorway" connections. (2 miles of virtually straight A class road with only 1 bend under a 14'6" clearance bridge compared with approx 2 miles of A class road followed by 0.7 miles of good B class road followed by 1.1 miles of poorer B class road with 5 double white line bends, a 12'6" bridge and a 200yd. stretch along a steep riverbank.)

There is also concern within the community that due to the alignment of the Motorway access and the intention to start the project with the Southern access road rather than the Northern access road. Workers and equipment sourced to the West of the development will have to pass through the village as there is no reasonable alternative. This also applies to the haul road should it be used rather than the Northern access. As there is no bridge building required the Northern Access would be quicker to build and be a shorter safer access as even traffic from the east could be directed to the West Ferry slip road removing virtually all construction traffic from communities, B class roads and the lowest bridge bordering the site.

Site Decontamination.

The Community Council welcomes the reduction in number of buildings that will have to be decontaminated by burning but there is still a strong underlying concern that air pollution is an inevitable consequence of this activity.

We would seek assurance from the Local Authority that this process be strictly monitored and audited.

Community facilities required to create a Sustainable Community.

The Community Council welcomes the change of focus of the early part of the development and the slight shift to a more mixed initial construction phase. This will allow the Council and Developers to gauge at an early stage the overall development potential of the site.

designating Bishopton and Gartloch as 'Areas of Urban Expansion' the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan implies that certain criteria have to be fully considered and implemented. Not least of these is the statement that all community facilities must be accessible without the use of a motor car and that these areas must become 'Sustainable Communities'.

What concerns the Community Council about the 'Revised Master Plan' is the somewhat vague indications of what Community Facilities will be provided and on what timescale. While we are aware that with regard to Secondary Education the Developers are only responding to guidance from the Local Authority the complete lack of any provision for that aspect of Education gives us great concern.

The very original proposals for the Site, commissioned and agreed by a joint committee including the Local Authority, The Developers, Scottish Enterprise and the then Scottish Executive saw the need for Secondary provision at a projected level of 1500 households. The fact that there is on the table a proposed development of in excess of 2500 houses should surely warrant some provision.

While projected census figures are open to wild speculation due to birth rate, migration and immigration issues the fact that the Scottish Government has, since the Master Plan was first submitted, dictated that pupils must remain in mainstream education until they are 18 has put pressure on any previous projections.

Likewise the fact that Renfrewshire Council has decided to review the future of Park Mains High School rather than refurbish it due to cost implications should surely put a Secondary School onto the Master Plan agenda.

There is a concern within the Community that a them and us attitude would develop between the old and new communities if there is not some form of 'heart' created.

An 'Innovative Education Campus' catering for nursery, primary and secondary pupils would serve the vast majority of the households in the expanded community both from an educational and extra mural activity point of view and would create a focus for the 'Sustainable Community' that could and would build around it.

Ironically the same could apply to Erskine if a new 'Erskine Secondary School Campus' was created on 'neutral' territory nearer the centre of the Erskine community.

Both 'Campus's' would require minimal bussing as all pupils and extra mural activity participants could walk, cycle or use the train to access their facilities.

From an economic and development point of view the provision of a full range of Educational and leisure facilities within the expanded Bishopton community would make the site, both from a residential and commercial point of view, much more attractive.

The fact that the Village and the attached Forest Park lies on the railway further enhances its 'Green' credentials as Education, leisure and industry could all be accessed by rail.

Conclusion.

Bishopton Community Council now recognise that, in light of the Structure Plan outcome announced in June 2008, the Strategic framework is now in place which is likely to lead to the proposed development of the R.O. site coming before the Local Authority for consideration in the foreseeable future.

We welcome, with the noted reservations and objections, the modifications to the Master Plan that have already taken place.

We now wish to have dialogue with the Developers, Local Authority and other Organisations to develop the Master Plan to ensure that the needs and aspirations of all areas of the Community are fully addressed.

By working diligently, and with open minds, with these partners, we have the opportunity to create a new, safe, healthy and 'Sustainable Community' that we can all be proud to live and work in.

We acknowledge that there is a huge task ahead and there will be many stumbling blocks to overcome not least cost. We must however ensure that short term gain does not lead to long term pain as has been seen in many large developments in the past.

We owe it to future generations to get it right first time if the development is approved.