

DDCC Community Council meeting Dec 5th 2022, by zoom

Present: Jo Gillies, Helen McKay, Victoria North, Keith Burwell, Pippa Thomson, Graeme Buchanan, John McLean, and Duncan McAuslan. Ben Rainger and Paul Campbell attended for the item on the Hillend snow centre.

In attendance: Cllr Pauline Winchester

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies: Alexis Moir, Julian Holbrook, Ailsa Carlisle, Stuart Clark, Constance Newbould, David Newbould

2. Ratification of minutes, October 2022, and update on actions not on agenda

Minutes were proposed by Duncan McAuslan and seconded by Pippa Thomson. **ACTION:** Actions not covered in the agenda will be reported on separately (JG).

3. Snowsports Centre Development: Paul Campbell, Project Manager MLC, and Ben Rainger, Design Team lead architect for the project.

A briefing has been sent to Midlothian Councillors. A paper requesting funding will be considered and hopefully signed off next week. The only element that has actually already been signed off with full agreement is the civils for the road junction. Planning in principle has been obtained for more or less the whole development. The application is phased – and still to apply for detailed planning permission for each of the phases, including the buildings. The Council has signed off on funding on all the civils, then all funding will be decided for all the buildings as a oner.

A jump/fun slope has already been built. Based on the presentation the plan is to add: a zip wire using the existing chair lift; alpine coaster (bogey on metal wheels using just gravity); new car parking; and the replacement 2-storey building, which will have a green profiled roof with solar panels, and will include climbing walls, soft play area with café, a retail unit for outdoor activities, a food court and first aid area. Existing building will be knocked down and new building built within more or less the same footprint. There will be 40 bicycle spaces and a 385-space car park although this will accommodate only about ½ of the maximum number of visitors intended. The upper car park tiered and screened with new trees.

The aim is to add 21 glamping units for families, including a few for disabled people. These will be self-contained with an individual car space and hot tub, whin dust road, and surrounding planting to make the units as discrete as possible.

The internal road will be widened to allow 2-way traffic (including coaches) from the main road to the new building. The #4 bus will take people right up to the centre and will become more frequent (to 15 mins).

Any future developments at Calderstone will link to the new wider internal snow sports road and not directly on to the A702. The new bike trail centre at Swanston will join the internal snow sports road farther up the hill.

Traffic lights will be added at the junction. The main road north from the junction will be widened by taking width from the roadside parking outside the Steading; this will allow a filter lane at the traffic lights. Transport Scotland is happy with the design.

Civil engineering will start January 2023. Traffic management plans will be taken forward. The A702 won't be closed. Work will be done between 7 at night and 6 in the morning.

There will be a pedestrian/cycle crossing at the north side of the junction, which we welcomed. Transport Scotland has imposed traffic lights at the junction and require that the design has to take account of the possible developments of the bike trail centre at Swanston and Calderstone to the internal road. (These are the ONLY accesses that will be allowed – Calderstone will not be allowed a direct access to the A702). Impact modelling does not extend very far to the north or south of the junction, so not as far as the 3-way junction or the by-pass. The overall impact is estimated by meshing with other individual models. If improvements at the 3-way junction are not funded, there could be a major cumulative impact of all these local developments. We suggested having yellow hatched boxes at both ski-slope and 3-way junction. Cllr Winchester reported that the Council meeting had also discussed this and were supportive, although a view from the community was that yellow boxes can only be put at a controlled junction so it would not be possible at the 3-way junction. **ACTION:** JG has asked for a contact in Transport Scotland to follow up on this.

4. Police Report (see Appendix)

5. Traffic, roads and pavements

- A701 Relief Road. No news to report
- New speed policy for Midlothian. DDCC responded requesting reduced speed limits on many roads within our area.

6 Planning matters

20/00466/MS Calderstones – hotel, replacement of the house, 3-self-catering cottages. Changes to phasing of work agreed in 2020, but no indications of any work having been undertaken to date.

Plans for mixed used development at junction between Pentland Road and A701. Aldi has been granted planning permission but the mixed development was refused because most of the site is countryside and scale and nature don't meet the needs of the Local Development Plan. Developers are appealing the decision and have referred to Aldi setting a precedent for developing in that area, as well as the open spaces set out in their plans, etc. **ACTION:** Agreed that DDCC (CN) should respond by the deadline.

Midlothian Council has been told to build 8,850 houses over the next 10 years. The most recent Development Plan shows the land that has been allocated (though still needs to be built on), and there is increasing pressure on infrastructure and services. In the context of 20 mins communities, often this is being taken as 20 min drive not 20 min walk in rural areas.

The Beeslack High School pupil roll for the new build has increased from 1200 to 1600 + special educational need places. **ACTION:** JG to enquire about impact of this on location for new school.

7. Community

- Damhead and District Community Climate Action Plan. The survey has had very good response from DDCC residents – keep an eye out for the online workshop in the new year!
- Broadband. Scottish Government/OpenReach planning to roll out superfast broadband across the Damhead and District community by the end of the year. This seems to be on track for almost all and the remaining few will be contacted. **ACTION:** JG following up with those outwith roll out.

8. AOB

- Future format of DDCC meetings to be discussed at next meeting
- MFCC update to be covered at next meeting
- Small Grants Funding, submitted for deadline 14 October 2022, to be covered at next meeting.

9. Date of next meeting: 7.30pm, Monday 6 February 2023 (by zoom).

In general, meetings will take place at 7.30 by zoom on the 1st Monday in every second month for 2023:

6 February
 3 April, plus AGM
 5 June
 7 August
 2 October
 4 December.

Appendix



Damhead Police Report
October and November 2022



Apologies the report is late!

On 4th October 2022, police were contacted regarding a van being involved in an accident on Pentland Road, Damhead. Police attended and the driver was safe and well. Damage was noted to the electricity pole which was fixed immediately by the Electricity Board.

On 9th October 2022, officers were on mobile patrol when they found a vehicle parked on the A702 near Hillend. A strong smell of cannabis was coming from within, the officers searched the person/ vehicle and found cannabis within the car. The driver was given a recorded police warning.

On 25th October 2022, there was a vehicle accident at junction Hillend meeting Pentland Road whereby a vehicle has pulled out of the junction, clipping the vehicle rear of another vehicle causing it to flip. The driver of the offending vehicle was given a Conditional Offer (Ticket).

On 5th November, Police and SFRS attended a fire that got out of control near Hillend Ski Slope, The Pentlands. The small camp fire had been blown onto nearby gorse causing it to spread.

If anyone has any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

I hope everyone has a good Christmas and New Year.

Thanks

PC Julie Hand J760