

Notes on Public Meeting held in Panmure Hotel on 6th February, 2007 to discuss Development of Old Mart Site in Edzell.

Chaired by:-

Brian Waller and Alan Spence – Proposed developers
Charlie Simpson – Chairman Inveresk Community Council
Fiona Work – Chairman EVIS

Also present:- Nicola Donaldson, Alca Design Ltd
Mark Myles, MBM Planning & Development Consultants Ltd

Attended by over approximately 120 members of public.

Apologies from:- Rev. Alan Watt, Sarah Fowlie, Jack Broadly

Brian Waller and Alan Spence open meeting by explaining their concept:-

Brian Waller (BW)

Lived in village 30 years. Good track record of building and establishing businesses. View as “mini House of Bruar” being both beneficial and complementary to local community. Positive for village. Previous owners hoping to develop for housing but Local Plan only for small commercial development. This would deal with site once and for all providing a “hub” for businesses and historical info point for tourists.

Alan Spence (AS)

Lived here 6 years. Historically Edzell built for tourism. Mart site commercial site with vehicular access for delivery animals, etc. Thus commercial/tourism development not extraordinary. Noted EVIS concerned with plans for Mart site and in 2004 suggested locals write to owners about unsightly state of site. Comparison to House of Bruar not wholly correct as that is more for passing traffic whereas this more a “hub” along lines of Brodie Countryfare. Main build on mart site will be similar but slightly smaller than Golf Club with similar traffic flow perceived. Widening of road may be necessary but not wholly for this development as presently concerns following Castle Garden development. Access for commercial traffic from Muir car park is contained in deeds to site. Also plan garden centre at later stage. There will be general manager position plus house on site. Thought to provide 25-30 jobs locally, part-time, second income. Also serve as tourist info centre, promote area and businesses. Development, presently called “Stooks and Bales”, would be similar to Brodie selling items with rural flair such as clothing, delicatessen/local produce, showcase for local crafts. Design incorporates glass atrium which could house a farmer’s market. Also restaurant with table service. The whole development is totally self-funded and owner operated by BW/AS who are both in it for the long term. Not competing with but complimenting local businesses, hope to extend length of tourist season in area. AS can think of several similar sites in Perthshire (e.g. Kenmore) and Aberdeenshire which have benefited local communities. Only Brechin Castle Centre in Angus. Hope to attract trade from people already passing through Edzell.

Meeting open to questions from floor:-

Q - Maxine Goodall – what hours/days open?

A - AS – anticipate open 7 days a week all year.

Q - Maxine Goodall – having spoken with Planning Dept she was told that the site was open for both commercial or housing development.

A - Cllr Bob Myles - as per the Local Plan the site is presently outwith the footprint for housing development, being seen as a commercial/brownfield site.

Q – Maxine Goodall – but this could change in 2011 when Local Plan reviewed.

A – Cllr Bob Myles – could change but did not feel the case as far as he could predict.

A – AS – there is pressure in the village for more housing and though their venture is not without risk, felt if not pursued then the site would most likely eventually be developed for housing.

Q – Ian Rae – what car parking available and what if overflow?

A – BW – 90 spaces in front of main building which is sited at back of site... None on Lethnott Road. Overflow onto Muir car parks. Did not think turnover would incur overflow demand.

Q – Leslie Arthur (Castle Gardens) – concern children to/from school, traffic congestion. Suggestion of mini roundabout at entrance to Castle Gardens?

A – BW – Roads Dept (who are happy with proposed plans) suggested mini roundabout at junction which will have natural effect of slowing traffic on Lethnott Road.

Q – Member public (Glasgow man?) – how many people visiting, didn't move to quiet village to be bothered by traffic (*public applause*)?

A – AS – similar to Golf Club, approx 120 on site at any time, approx 900-1,000 per week as rough idea.

A – BW – thought a lot of custom would be from traffic already passing through thus not huge increase foreseen.

Q – Alison ? – Edzell entered over bridges, are Roads Dept happy with extra traffic on these?

A – BW – Roads Dept. happy with traffic flows and think measures already in place.

A – AS – deliveries by suppliers already travelling through, medium-sized vehicles expected. Note not excessive at Golf Club/Bruar.

Q – Alison? – environmental concerns re destroy habitat on site.

A – BW – presently a brownfield site previously used commercially. Within “forested” area some trees are protected.

Q – Alison? – once planning consent agreed what guarantee that site not sold on for housing?

A – BW – not in business of “disappearing from own doorstep”. Once planning consent achieved then will move fast with building works.

Q – Ian Rae – sewage capacity enough?

A – CS – more than enough to cope with this.

Q – Member public – timescale of build/opening.

A – BW – approx 10 month build and then would aim for a Spring opening.

Q – Robbie Reid – query whether 90 parking place sufficient and where overflow go? Also restaurant times and competition with local eateries?

A – BW – no need for overflow as pedestrian access from Muir car parks will deal with, site has access rights. Unable to have main vehicular access to site via Muir instead of Lethnott Road as Muir rented from Dalhousie Estates.

A – BW – restaurant essentially day time approx 10am – 6pm for lunch/high teas with table service. Capacity seat 100. Comparable with restaurant at Antique Centre, Abernyte. BW experienced in retail catering and clear distinction between hotel and retail catering. Discussed with local hoteliers.

Q – Brenda Simpson – observation – as resident of Edzell for 30 years seen many changes including the 40 houses at Castle Gardens and 14 behind North Esk Road which were both initially viewed with uncertainty but have been gradually accepted. If a commercial development planned plus provision of jobs then surely better than becoming a dormitory village increasing in size with new housing (*public applause*).

A – AS – thanked and commented on RAF Edzell effect on village in past and how village absorbed changes.

Q - Kirsty Kramer – supporting previous. BW/AS not faceless developer with only profit in mind.

Q – Diane Timony (Newsagents) – worry may jeopardise existing businesses.

A – BW – thought that very little cross-over in what local businesses had to offer. Hoped to point more tourists in direction of village as day out. Also hoped to discuss with other businesses, e.g. Tweed Warehouse, and not compete by avoiding similarities.

Q – Heather Parsons (Castle Gardens) – height of proposed main development and proposed width of road as tractors struggle at present.

A – AS – view plans on show – set back from road and similar height to Golf Club. Proposed new width road (per Nicola Donaldson) - 6 metres.