**Bangour sub-committee: Minutes of meeting on Wednesday 10th February 2021 at 16.00**

**(Proposed by Jim Watson and seconded by Greg Colhoun)**

Present: Jim Watson, Ian Ferrel, Lynda Mcgivern, Greg Colhoun,

Also in attendance: Wendy McCorriston (West Lothian Council Development Management Team Manager), Chris Nicol West Lothian Roads and Transportation), Gillian Cyphus (West Lothian Council Development Management Team).

Apologies: Liz Swarbrick

Jim Watson (Chairperson) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Each person introduced themselves and their role. Gillian Cyphus explained that she had taken over as the Planning Officer dealing with Bangour Village.

Wendy McCorriston explained that the Development Team will produce a report making recommendations to the Committee regarding Bangour.

**HOUSING**

* **JW** explained that Ian Ferrel had previously submitted an appeal to the planning department but had not received a response. **GC** apologised and said that the appeal was now on the council website.
* It was acknowledged that the developers intend to build approximately 900 units (flats and houses) but it was also pointed out that the original allocation was 500 units so there is a significant increase.
* **IF** commented that there are plans for 60-120 new homes to be developed at the east end of Dechmont and there are general concerns that the infrastructure (Doctors, schooling etc.) will be unable to cope with the volume of new residents in the area.

**WMc** said that NHS Lothian are responsible for Doctor’s Surgeries as such, they will be consulted. The full Council will participate in the Planning meeting which is expected to take place towards the end of February.

**WMc** assured that in their report to the committee, consideration will be made of:

* the increase in units from 500-900+
* the viability of the site
* capacity issues
* comments from a variety of sources including DCC

**TRANSPORTATION**

**Traffic Volume**

* **IF** raised concerns about the expected increase in the volume of traffic through Dechmont Village. The roundabout at Dobbie’s (pre-lockdown) was already struggling to cope with traffic, he remarked that the transport assessment was the original one (historically prepared by the NHS) which had been adjusted.

**20mph**

* There is a consensus that residents want to retain the 20pmh speed limit and would also like additional/improved speed calming methods. Two years previously, DCC requested calming measures to be introduced, but were refused. The current speed cushions are not a deterrent.
* The recent experience of traffic being diverted through Dechmont due to gas repairs on the A89 has highlighted potential problems for the future, with traffic aiming to avoid hold ups on the main road detouring through the village.
* **IF** commented that other towns had speed cushions (e.g. Armadale) which are effective and all new traffic calming are of this type, he enquired if this could be an option for Dechmont.
* **IF** brought up the issue of public transport and the possibility of re-introducing a bus service to Livingston centre and St John’s Hospital

Chris Nicol explained that speed cushions are generally used around schools. There are pros and cons. Speed humps cause issues for buses as they need to slow down thereby affecting journey times. He also stated that he regularly receives complaints from Armadale residents who want the calming humps removed. **JW** asked what could be done and CN advised that a traffic order would have to be carried out and local Counsellors would have to approve any proposed measures.

**CN** also explained that the 20mph restrictions were a temporary measure implemented for an 18-month period and they are currently being discussed as a potential carte blanche removal throughout West Lothian.

He said that it would be a struggle to promote new measures within the current budget allowance. **IF** challenged **CN** saying that as the speed signs are already in place there would be no cost attached to retaining the 20mph limit, pointing out that Edinburgh council already had/have many 20mph zones. **CN** said that a permanent 20mph would have to be promoted through the correct traffic regulations. On the question of traffic flow through the village **CN** explained that a calculation using post codes and data information was used to provide an explanation on traffic volume it showed that very little traffic turned into Dechmont.

**WMc** said that they can only ask something of Ambassador if their development has a direct effect on traffic through the village. Although, there is a process which can be used with the support of counsellors. The Development Team can facilitate it with the developers.

The Development Management Team will ask the Public Transport section about strategy measures that will require the developers to support a bus service to supply Bangour Village

**Action**- **WMc** and **GP** will take this away and facilitate a conversation.

**WMc** reminded us that the final decision will lie with the Committee based on the information provided to them.

**Education**

* **JW** asked why DCC’s request to move the site of the school had been rejected and **IF** asked if this had been supported by the Education Department.

**WMc** explained that the developers wanted to incorporate the use of the listed building (recreation hall) and that it had been supported by the Education Department.

**AOB**

**Woodland Management**

* **IF** voiced concerns about the management and maintenance of the woodland areas in Bangour Village, pointing out that the Woodland Trust would not undertake the responsibility.
* Also, will Bangour residents want/allow the public to access to use the open spaces within the development if they are paying for it?

**GC** explained that the developers have an obligation to maintaining areas within the site and in their proposal they encourage locals to use the area.

In terms of public access to Bangour Village the Development Management Team will appoint enhanced public access as a factor in their report.

**GC** summarised by explained that when the report comes out, DCC will be classed as a ‘consultee’ rather than objector. There have been 3 individual objections to the planning application.

DCC will be invited to speak at the consultation which should take place in the next few weeks. The agenda will be sent out one week prior to the date.

**Action-GS will inform DCC of the Consultation date.**

**WMc** was invited to a zoom meeting with DCC and the developers on 24th February, she agreed but will not be able to participate.