

Falkirk Council Community Services

Minute of Meeting - Denny Development Group Wednesday 27 May 2009

Present: Douglas Duff - Head of Economic Development, Falkirk Council
Colin Frame - Development Surveyor, Falkirk Council
Nick Harris - Henry Boot Developments Plc
Councillor Alex Waddell - Chairman, Denny Development Group
Councillor John McNally - Denny & Banknock
Councillor Martin Oliver - Denny & Banknock
Raymond Murray - Retailers Representative
Mick McIntosh - Denny & Dunipace Community Council
Frank McKenna - St Alexander's Church
Mary Jane Armstrong - Town Centre Management Ltd
Jim Bell - Central Scotland Police
David Dow - Denny & Dunipace Community Council

Apologies: Councillor Joe Lemetti - Falkirk Council
Councillor Craig Martin - Convener Economic Development
Mick McIntosh - Denny & Dunipace Community Council
Christine Bell - Denny & Dunipace Community Council
Kate Kane - Local Planning Officer, Falkirk Council
George Stevenson - Business Representative

1.0 Minutes of Last Meeting

1.1 They were taken as read.

2.0 Regeneration Update

- 2.1 Nick Harris updated the group on the current situation with regard to the town centre redevelopment proposals. He said that the project was complex and required a balance between the Council's requirements, accounting for consultation feedback and commercial aspects required to make the scheme viable. He went on to remind the group of the key factors that needed to be considered in the scheme namely; traffic management, pedestrian priority on Stirling Street, reduction in scale to integrate more with traditional retail on the East side of Stirling Street and access.
- 2.2 Raymond Murray commented that the entrance to the proposed supermarket has always been an issue in relation to St Alexander's Church and Nick Harris said that the proposed design has been reviewed and supported by the community and

through the traffic management proposals will reduce traffic around the Church. Although the proposals are seen by the majority as 'best fit' for Denny it is clear that it is unlikely to be a solution that completely satisfies all involved.

- 2.3 Raymond added that the traffic impact from the new Denny High School would create additional difficulty but Nick suggested that the Traffic Impact Assessment required as part of a detailed planning application will review the traffic management system and identify improvements required to make sure traffic are managed as efficiently as possible.
- 2.4 The Community Council raised their concern about people being directed to other places to escape traffic jams. Nick confirmed that the Traffic Impact Assessment will review the traffic system around the central Denny area and highlight improvements required.
- 2.5 Nick reported to the group that both Henry Boot and the Council have worked hard to conclude the Development Agreement for the scheme. He confirmed that an outline plan will be submitted within the next few weeks and thereafter the local community will have the opportunity to comment. He said that the next stage would be to meet with property owners/occupiers to negotiate and acquire options over property interests. He went on to say further progress would be dependent on improvement in the market.
- 2.6 Frank McKenna asked if Nick was treading water until the economy picks up and Nick confirmed that this was not the case given that an outlined planning application is being submitted and negotiations are starting with all parties. In effect the development is moving forward as it would have done given good market conditions.
- 2.7 Douglas Duff said that Henry Boot are to be congratulated for going forward in these difficult times and that by moving things along as they are it puts the project in a good position when the market does finally pick up.
- 2.8 Following a question by Raymond Murray it was confirmed that no receipts from the residential sites would be passed to Henry Boot until the town centre is complete.

3.0 Town Centre Promotion

Mary-Jane Armstrong highlighted a number of promotional initiatives currently being undertaken by Town Centre Management to improve vitality in the town centre including:-

- Possible banner around Church Walk - she would like further input from the group before progressing any further. She will bring proposals to next meeting.
- Denny Day scheduled to take place on 29 August.
- Central FM radio advertising campaign.

4.0 Any Other Business

4.1 Town Centres Regeneration Fund

Douglas notified the group of the Scottish Governments Town Centres Regeneration Fund of £60m which has been made available. He confirmed that Falkirk Council would be submitting a bid for this money which would be used if successful to accelerate acquisition process. He asked the group to support the bid as community back up would be a key element in the decision making process. Further information will be provided to the group as it becomes available.

4.2 Station Master's House

John McNally confirmed that the Heritage group is no longer interested in this property. Colin Frame confirmed that a report will now be submitted to Policy and Resources Committee recommending that the property is declared surplus and marketed for sale to attract private sector investment.

4.3 Economic Downturn

Jacque McArthur confirmed that the retail consultant John Cowan is currently working with a number of local retailers to provide general business advice and support. Following this there will be a number of free masterclasses taking place to reflect the topics requested by retailers later in the Summer and assured those in attendance that details of these courses would be made available as they emerged.

4.4 Photographs

Jacque McArthur had invited a photographer (John McNab, The Big Picture) to capture the development group at work. These photographs are to be used in a forthcoming promotional feature in the Falkirk Council News. (Copies of these photographs attached).

5.0 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 30 September 2009 and the relevant papers will be distributed nearer this date.