

Report on the Railway Tunnel project

Initial discussions with bridges and tunnels officials from CEC and conservation officers from Natural Heritage have indicated that enthusiastic support exists for the railway tunnel project. Each consultee has been helpful in pointing us towards other relevant stakeholders and potential supporters and has also emailed those next-stage contacts to confirm their support. We are currently approaching the Water of Leith Heritage Trust and have also sought advice from CEC's Planning Department, given that we now know that their permission will also be needed because the project falls within the Conservation Area. Further consultation with other local and regional interested bodies, including a broader public consultation project via the website, remains to be pursued. Possible partners to execute the project may have been found and a preliminary meeting will have taken place by the time that ColintonCC meets in January. Sources of funding may also have been identified – a particularly synergistic one being Scotrail/Abellio's Community Arts project funding where our eligibility is already being investigated. We heard, immediately before Christmas, that CEC's planned works in the tunnel will begin on 8th February. They do not include any coating or other treatment being applied to the tunnel walls.

On 5.1.16, AM and MS met a Director of the organisation that co-ordinated the graffiti arts projects in Edinburgh's Old Town (Work in Progress Edinburgh Ltd (WIPE)). The Old Town projects are the largest such projects in Scotland and have received very positive support, both locally and in the press. Our project would potentially be even larger.

A great deal of helpful practical advice about project planning, permissions, safety, equipment, resources and execution was obtained. It is likely that collaboration with WIPE will be the best route to taking the project forward, because they have extensive networks with UK artists, have demonstrable project management experience and also because they have colleagues who are appropriately Police checked (PVG) in order to run workshops with school children.

MS and AM will have a further meeting with two Directors of WIPE (Mark Higginbottom and Julie Logan) in approximately two weeks' time, and will visit the tunnel with them.

Mike Scott
Communications Convenor

Planning Report

1. BRIDGE ROAD

- 1.1. An appeal to the Scottish Government is now in process and is expected to be decided in the next few weeks.
- 1.2. The vice-chair attended the reporter's site visit and felt that the most important parts of our position were made clear and were fully understood.
- 1.3. Further formal comment has also been made on information submitted by the applicants as part of the appeal process and the CC will monitor any further submissions.

2. TORDUFF ROAD

- 2.1. Two applications have been submitted for adjacent sites in a field immediately south of Torduff Road – one for a burial ground (15/05501/FUL) the other for a new house (15/05533/FUL)
- 2.2. As the applications are separate they need to be considered (and will be decided) individually even though there is an indication in the documents that the house would serve some supervisory purpose for the burial ground.
- 2.3. As comments are required by 11th January, the Planning sub-group met on 29th December and resolved to seek comments from local residents to help inform representations. It was agreed the issues outlined below in Appendix 1, be published.

3. DREGHORN BARRACKS

- 3.1. Two submitted applications – one for living accommodation and an armoury extension, and one for various vehicle related buildings were also considered by the subgroup as it was the last day for comment. It was agreed that there was likely to be minimal impact on the Colinton community at large and that no representation be made.

Tom McDonald
Planning Convenor

APPENDIX 1

TORDUFF ROAD PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The CC invites local community comment on the following issues, or any other matter of concern, to inform its representations to the planning authorities, which must be lodged by 11th January 2016.

1. GENERAL

It is believed that neither of these applications conforms strictly with current greenbelt or countryside policies. That is not by itself sufficient reason for refusal if a sound planning case exists for allowing a non-conforming use on a particular site.

Within Edinburgh (like most British cities today) there is probably little remaining capacity for burials. Since what space is available may be tied to particular religious denominations, there may be such a case in planning terms to breach these policies.

2. BURIAL GROUND (15/05501/FUL)

- 2.1. The proposals are for "green" burials without permanent memorials and there are to be no buildings or parking on site. A new vehicular access is to be taken from Torduff Road.
- 2.2. This use would effectively prevent any other type of development on this site.

- 2.3. Concerns over health or pollution issues are likely to be fully scrutinised by the Council.
 - 2.4. Plans indicate the site will present as a more or less formal landscaped garden, suggesting modest visual impacts on the landscape, likely to reduce over time as trees mature.
 - 2.5. It is unclear what frequency of use might be expected but all funeral corteges and other traffic will have to arrive and return via Bonaly Road, passing the school.
3. NEW HOUSE (15/05533/FUL)
- 3.1. The house occupies an area almost as large as the burial ground. If granted, the entire house site would become officially “residential” in planning terms.
 - 3.2. The documents suggest the house will perform a desirable supervisory purpose for the burial ground though modern video technology offers other less intrusive methods of remote supervision and the plans indicate that the proposed house looks southward away from the burial ground to the north.
 - 3.3. The house design is designed to have low visual impact by being dug into the south facing hillside with a “green” roof.
 - 3.4. Except for a long vehicular access, there is no clear indication how services are to be connected to the proposed house.

Communications Report

Our email list has now grown to 194 addresses and we hope to gain more through both direct contact with residents and the website contact form to which an email permission tick box has been added. In future promotional activities we will use the tag-line “Tell us what you think”, which aims to encourage dialogue with residents. Our web site has been adapted accordingly, with “Tell us what you think” links on every page, leading to a new area within the “Contact Us” pages where residents can make narrative comments and where they are asked to provide their contact details to which a permissions tick box has been added. This should enable us to gather more email addresses. There will be an immediate automated acknowledgment, and then incoming comments and questions are distributed by DB to relevant Councillors for a more comprehensive reply or acknowledgment. Pictures/captions bearing the tag-line will be released from the start of January.

Other pressures have meant that little work has been done on the photographic competition, but this will be picked up and prepared for launch as we move towards Spring. As was stated at the November meeting, we see this as another means of engaging positively with our community as part of the overall communications approach. DB and MS also met with a media expert, Jim Chisholm (see www.jimchisholm.net) who suggested a number of approaches which would potentially help to build awareness of and engagement with our work. Jim is currently spending a considerable amount of his time in Colinton and has kindly offered to work with us. He hopes to attend the January meeting.

The total number of visitors to our web site has dropped over the Christmas period (191 visitor making 316 visits) and is at a markedly lower level than was the case during the campaign regarding electoral boundary changes. As a response to the latest E-Newsletter website visitor numbers have risen sharply in the days immediately after sending. This is encouraging. Just under half (46.8%) of the visitors to the site are new. Twitter and Facebook activity is also progressing well. We now have 54 Facebook *Likes*, and 100 Twitter *Followers*.

Mike Scott
Communications Convenor

TRAPS Report Colinton Community Council. January 2016

Bridge Road Colinton Road Woodhall Road: This has now been completed and seems to be a welcome improvement. The late reminder to South West Roads Dept to attend to the road deterioration was added to the original plan, during a walk about with SW Roads Dept., following a note from the Secretary.

A question by a resident enquired whether adjustment to the sequencing of the traffic lights was carried out and we have raised this with CEC Traffic Dept. It has been established that the timing is as follows:

At Midday 30th Dec the sequence was between 40 to 62 sec in favour of Bridge Road/ Colinton Road and 8 to 20 sec for Woodhall Road. We assume that the variation encountered is traffic detection dependent.

This information has been sent to CEC Traffic Dept. for their comment.

Bridge Road Pavements: Replacement of existing pavement is to commence 12th Jan to 15th Jan between The Post Office and the telephone box as part of the NEPs 2015 funding.

Colinton Road St Cuthbert's Court: Double yellow lines at this junction are to be extended to the Rustic Cottages bus stop as this has become a regular bottleneck for the free flow of buses due mainly to the increased parking on both sides of the street. This provision has been supported by Lothian Buses and in the interests of public safety and vehicle damage.

Redford Road West Pavement: The work to repair the damage by tree roots and general deterioration of this footpath in the vicinity of Woodthorpe Residential Home has been completed under the NEPs program.

Bridge Road: The anomaly of the yellow lines on the south side of Bridge Road between the traffic lights and the Pedestrian crossing has been approved as double yellow and will be actioned by the SW Roads Dept. presumably at the same time as St Cuthbert's Court/ Colinton Road. (Otherwise to be advised)

Gillespie Road: Solid white lines are to be placed along this road at or around Downes Garden Nursery and will be carried out when white lining in the area is taking place (No Date)

Bill Alexander
Roads Convener.