

Seafield Sounding Board – 13th May 2021

Attendees

- Ewan Aitken (Chair)
- Cllr Chas Booth (councillor)
- Ally Campbell, Montagu Evans (planning adviser to Arnold Clark)
- Cllr Mary Campbell (councillor)
- Alison Coltman (Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home)
- David Cooper (Commercial Development and Investment manager, CEC)
- Kyle Drummond (Commercial Development and Investment team, CEC)
- Lindsay Fyffe-Jardine (Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home)
- Andrew Fournet (Craighentiny and Meadowbank CC)
- James Fraser (architect)
- Malcolm Fraser (architect, adviser to CCs)
- Cllr Joan Griffiths (ward councillor)
- Lee Kindness (Portobello CC)
- Justin Lamb (adviser to Manse)
- Andrew MacKenzie (Leith Links CC)
- Iain McFarlane (Planning, CEC)
- Cllr John McLellan (ward councillor)
- Frazer McNaughton (Portobello CC)
- Gordon McOmish (Flood Prevention, CEC)
- Sally Millar
- Richard Slipper (planning consultant, adviser to Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home)
- Murray Stewart (Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home)
- Neil Tulloch (Leith Harbour/Newhaven CC)
- Cllr Mandy Watt (councillor)
- Nick Waugh (Buccleuch Property)
- Cllr Ethan Young (ward councillor)

1) Welcome and Introductions

- Mr Aitken welcomed the attendees.

2) Note of the last meeting

- The note of the last meeting was agreed.

3) Update on actions

- Two ownership plans have been circulated – further work is ongoing.
- Manse is preparing to circulate a geographical breakdown of the responses to consultations on the PAN.
- A high-level summary of the City Plan consultation on flooding has been circulated.
- Discussions are ongoing with the Scottish Government about the potential for funding for a place brief.
- Mr Aitken emphasised the importance of understanding all ownerships.

4) Coastal protection and erosion

- David Cooper gave a presentation summarising research on coastal erosion conducted by the University of Glasgow.
- An emerging new approach to coastal erosion is to allow it to happen and to focus on natural resilience rather than artificial interventions. Edinburgh has a “hard” coastline with many built defences and development up to the coastline.
- It is predicted that there is a 50% chance of a 57cm rise in sea levels by 2100.
- The new approach has been taken in Granton Waterfront where coastal land is now being used for a park rather than being developed.
- The Council is scoping its duties and responsibilities. If a new coastal strategy is to be taken forward, the Council will need to take a decision on this and engage with owners.

- Gordon McOmish noted that any proposed developments would need a flood risk assessment, taking cognisance of climate change.
- Iain McFarlane noted it was necessary for City Plan to understand flood risks. Iain noted a corporate and partnership approach was needed.
- Cllr Griffiths noted the coast is more than just Seafield and that separate discussions may be required to cover other areas of the coast. David Cooper noted there is work underway across the whole coastline, but the immediacy of planning applications means Seafield is currently in focus.
- Andrew Fournet asked about the working life of the sea defences and whose responsibility they were. David Cooper clarified that the Council owned the Seafield stretch, which is nearing the end of its lifespan. Gordon McOmish noted the sea defences probably had a 50-60 year design life which has now passed. Patch repairs are ongoing. There are no plans for a replacement currently; a like-for-like replacement is probably not an option. Gordon noted that the Scottish Government and SEPA are still working on future sea level predictions and guidance.
- Malcom Fraser noted the severe height changes from east to west in Seafield and that the diagram perhaps did not reflect the detail on the ground. David Cooper agreed that more work might be required.
- Cllr Booth asked if Iain McFarlane was confident of having clarity on the impact of sea levels on the City Plan in time for the summer. Iain explained the Council is assessing all information it currently has – parts of the site may need to be given more time from a City Plan perspective. The proposed plan is due to be presented in August-September 2021.
- Richard Slipper welcomed the potential of funding for a Place Brief, which could pre-inform the City Plan – this would need to be carried out swiftly. Richard thought a Place Brief should also cover utilities, transport, etc. Iain noted the Glasgow study has raised an issue and it is something that will need to be considered as part of the City Plan process. Some decisions are required which cannot be taken via the City Plan process.
- Cllr McLellan noted that the Council’s approach to coastal erosion would have a significant impact on development potential and land values, so a lot more information is needed to inform the work of the Sounding Board. Cllr McLellan noted the possibility of land owner contribution to the cost of coastal defences.

5) Developer updates

- Manse noted that a PAN has been submitted. Manse is reviewing the sea level modelling. Manse reiterated Malcolm Fraser’s point about height differentials. Manse is working through issues pertaining to the site; work has been carried out on transport and drainage and work on environment is pending.
- Richard Slipper for the Edinburgh Cat and Dog Home noted that discussions were ongoing with the community and with Royal London. There are three options: stay and refurbish, stay and redevelop, and relocate. Work on costs is ongoing to inform this. Richard was interested in urgently launching contributory studies and thought the info collected by Manse would be helpful for the Place Brief. Lindsay Fyffe-Jardine introduced herself to the group and noted the Cat and Dog Home is establishing how best to participate in the project.
- David Cooper noted that any developer would need considerable information in order to make a planning application to the Council.

- Nick Waugh noted that Buccleuch Property has not carried out significant work yet. Nick noted the risk that individual utility studies could be inadequate when looking at a wider area.

6) Community updates

- Andrew Fournet emphasised the importance of community consultation. Andrew queried the scope of the studies being carried out by Manse. The community are strongly in favour of a masterplan. Justin Lamb noted Manse’s focus is on the sea side of Seafield Road, though sewage and drainage and traffic analysis have looked at the wider area – Manse offered to feed this information into Council studies. Site investigations have been carried out on Manse’s site only. Cllr Griffiths emphasised that the Manse development should connect into the rest of the ward.

7) AOB

- N/A

8) DONM

- Early July 2021