

Seafield Sounding Board (Thursday 20th January 2022)

Attendees:

- Ewan Aitken, Chair
- Cllr Kate Campbell, City of Edinburgh Council (Convener of Housing, Homelessness, and Fair Work Committee)
- David Cooper, City of Edinburgh Council (Commercial Development & Investment)
- Kyle Drummond, City of Edinburgh Council (Commercial Development & Investment)
- Andrew Fournet, Craigentiny and Meadowbank Community Council
- James Fraser, EMA Architects
- Malcolm Fraser, Architect
- Lindsay Fyffe-Jardine, Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home
- Cllr Joan Griffiths, Ward Councillor
- Angus Hardie, Scottish Community Alliance
- Justin Kenrick, Action Party
- Lee Kindness, Portobello Community Council
- Justin Lamb, Justin Lamb Associates
- Andrew Mackenzie, Leith Links Community Council
- Colin MacPherson, Manse
- Iain McFarlane, City of Edinburgh Council (Planning)
- Ewan McIntyre, EMA Architects
- Cllr John McLellan, Ward Councillor
- Frazer McNaughton, Portobello Community Council
- Richard Slipper, Richard Slipper Planning Consultancy
- Cllr Alex Staniforth, City of Edinburgh Council (ward councillor)
- Neil Tulloch, Leith Harbour/Newhaven Community Council
- Nick Waugh, Buccleuch Property

1) Welcome

- Apologies were received from:
 - Iain Cooke, Action Party
 - Callum Laidlaw
 - Paul Lawrence, City of Edinburgh Council
 - Gordon McOmish, City of Edinburgh Council
 - David Mitchell, Manse
 - Cllr Mandy Watt, City of Edinburgh Council
 - Cllr Ethan Young, City of Edinburgh Council

2) Note of last meeting

- The expanded ownership plan and flood prevention map have been circulated.
- David Cooper has not yet been able to speak to Bill Elliot about the scope to capture waste heat from the Scottish Water waste treatment plant.
- The notes of prior meetings have been published on the Council website.
- **ACTION: Manse to circulate the Kaya flood risk assessment report**

3) Update from community

- Andrew Fournet advised that the community is working with university students to produce a report on local aspirations for Seafield. Andrew will aim to circulate outputs in future.
- Andrew Fournet noted that Manse had advised the community of their intention to submit a planning application. Andrew expressed gratitude at being notified but disappointment that the application was preceding the masterplan.

- Andrew Fournet noted that he was keen to have widespread councillor involvement. Lee Kindness suggested that engagement with “the masses” was key rather than just groups.
- Cllr Joan Griffiths was keen for the Sounding Board to be made up of Craigentenny & Duddingston ward councillors (along with the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Convener and Vice Convener). Cllr Griffiths thought that councillors on the Board could feed back to their colleagues in the neighbouring wards. Cllr John McLellan supported this view and noted that the Council had set the political composition. Cllr Alex Staniforth also supported this view and cautioned against making the Sounding Board too big.

4) Update from landowners

- Lindsay Fyffe-Jardine: there are two options for the Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home – relocate or stay and rebuild. A recommendation will be taken to trustees in the next two months. A representation has been made to the City Plan to change the Home’s zoning.
- Nick Waugh: Buccleuch Property has provided some suggestions on the masterplan scope. Buccleuch is largely passive at this point with its own development plans not yet formulated.
- Colin MacPherson: Manse has concerns around timescale for the masterplan process and the potential that this will lead landowners in limbo for some time. Accordingly, Manse is bringing forward development proposals for its landholding. Colin was hopeful that this would be seen as a positive first stage in the regeneration of Seafield.
 - EMA Architects gave a brief presentation on the emerging proposals. EMA’s aim was to catalyse development and avoid compromising the masterplan. The proposals would crystallise in a PPP application that would establish access, capacity, etc, not a fully detailed design.
 - Inspiration has been drawn from Malmo, Copenhagen, and Oslo waterfronts. Principals include opening up the waterfront and creating protected internal greenspaces.
 - The designs show two blocks of 3-6 storeys with up to 220 homes (25% affordable). They would have internal courtyards and rooftop gardens.
 - Cllr Alex Staniforth asked about the potential for flooding and mitigation measures. Manse have commissioned a study which indicates there is no flood risk on the site. A report will be circulated next week.
 - Cllr John McLellan asked about reactions to the proposed heights. EMA Architects noted that some residents had expected a taller development. EMA Architects thought six storeys was a sensible height and not overly contentious. Consultation events have concluded but the community can input to the formal planning process.
 - Andrew Fournet queried who would deal with the promenade and flood risks. Andrew suggested the development could constrain the development of adjoining sites. Andrew did not think online consultation events worked well in this area.
 - Ewan McIntyre suggested that masterplans evolve and are rarely completely delivered in their original form, and that masterplans do not guarantee good results. Ewan McIntyre suggested that European developments saw the public sector put the infrastructure in place beforehand which was not the case in Scotland.
 - Ewan Aitken asked why EMA Architects were confident the development would not prejudice other developments. Ewan McIntyre noted that the site was self-contained and narrow with fixed boundaries and fixed norms for daylight and privacy.
 - Frazer McNaughton highlighted the increasing popularity of Seafield beach and Prom and raised the issues of sunlight and amenity in relation to development on a

northwards facing site. Issues of overshadowing had been raised by the community in previous design workshops for housing led development of the Westbank Street site (Powerleague and Tumbles) in Portobello. Work by the design teams on the Westbank Street project had highlighted the potential benefits of greater massing and height towards the south of the site, allowing a greater proportion of homes to have sea views, and thereby avoiding severe over-shadowing and reduced light levels on the beach and prom.

- Lee Kindness suggested that the development would “lock-in” the current shoreline.
- Cllr Joan Griffiths noted that this was a PPP design so the end product might look somewhat different. Cllr Griffiths agreed that online consultation events could be challenging. Cllr Griffiths asked for assurances that physical consultation would be undertaken as part of the detailed application.
- Ewan McIntyre thought further consultation would in principle be possible.
- Colin Macpherson noted that Seafield is not a “blank sheet of paper” and that the existing landowners will inevitably influence the final products.
- Ian Macfarlane noted that the PPP exercise was mainly about potential and constraints rather than finished design. Iain noted that the Colonies model used in Leith delivered 50 dwellings per hectare. Iain thought the development could potentially prejudice future heights. Iain noted the potential implications for sunlight reaching the beach.
- Cllr John McLellan queried the process in relation to the proposed masterplan. Iain MacFarlane explained that the masterplan would be one of a number of factors that would need to be taken into account. Decision makers would need to consider what weight to give to the masterplan.
- Malcolm Fraser noted the Colonies density at Leith was actually higher than 50 dwellings per hectare. Malcolm noted contention developments were a product of masterplans and government powers. Malcolm noted the need to consider the wider environmental considerations.
- Angus Hardie queried if the Council would commission its own flood risk assessment. David Cooper noted that anything submitted to the Council would be assessed by the appropriate advisers.

5) Masterplan process update

- David Cooper updated on the masterplan process. A draft brief has been circulated and responses received. The brief will be taken to the Council’s Policy & Sustainability Committee on 22nd February 2022 for authority to proceed.
- Procurement has been lined up so will be ready to proceed.
- Staff resource for the Place Brief has been identified with work now underway
- The Place Brief process will not entail detailed consultation as the masterplan will do this – the Place Brief will primarily inform the masterplan.
- David Cooper confirmed the masterplan would cover infrastructure and design
- Richard Slipper queried if the ownership plan represented the extent of coverage – it was confirmed that this was the case.

6) AOB

- N/A

7) DONM

- Ewan Aitken thanked the attendees and presenters and noted that challenging conversations would be inevitable as part of this process.
- Ewan suggested reconvening after the decision in February 2022.