

Seafield Sounding Board (Thursday 15th August 2024)

Attendees:

- Councillor Joan Griffiths, City of Edinburgh Council (Ward Councillor) [in the chair]
- Dave Bisset, Scottish Water
- Lisa Blyth, 7N Architects
- Ewan Anderson, 7N Architects
- Malcolm Fraser, Fraser/Livingston Architects
- Jane Iannarelli, City of Edinburgh Council (Planning)
- Stephen Lovejoy, City of Edinburgh Council (Planning)
- Frazer McNaughton, Portobello Community Council
- Councillor Alex Staniforth, City of Edinburgh Council (Ward Councillor)
- Nick Waugh, Buccleuch Property
- Councillor Iain Whyte, City of Edinburgh Council (Ward Councillor)
- James Fraser, EMA Architects
- Cathy MacLean – Action Party
- Councillor Danny Aston, City of Edinburgh Council (Ward Councillor)

1) Welcome

- Cllr. Griffiths welcomed the attendees

2) Note of last meeting

- The note was agreed.

3) Update on Seafield Masterplan

a. Overview of the process and timeline by 7N Architects

- Overview of Stage 2 engagement - Portobello Town Hall / Online over 6-week period. In person event at Town Hall – approx. 100 people attended. Final responses to survey – 246.
- 76% agreement with 8 priorities, especially support for bus route, along with proposals regarding safety & inclusivity, links to the park and the sea, adaptive edge, sunlight on promenade.
- Common themes: existing business use, employment, desire for affordable housing, impact on local road and civic infrastructure, and optimum density mean.

b. Overview of Masterplan

- 7N set out the placemaking and development framework, including Masterplan Principles, Parameter Plans, Design Guidance and Illustrative Masterplan.
- 7N gave an example of how the masterplan has responded to the community engagement e.g. location of mobility hub in centre to better connect to Craigentiny.
- 7N presented an overview of engagement with Steering Group and Ward Councillors
- 7N outlined the next steps:
 - o Draft place brief and masterplan report going to Planning Committee on 11th September 2024 to approve for consultation.
 - o Completion of wave study
 - o Final review of Seafield Masterplan
 - o Final consultation
 - o Adopted as policy
 - o Delivery of masterplan.

- Cllr Griffiths noted that Ripple Project is working with future Woodland Scotland on an initiative around urban trees, which has identified that areas in the Craigentenny / Duddingston ward have the least trees. Seafield has come out as one of the top sites for tree planting.
- **ACTION: Woodland Scotland/Ripple Project to contact 7N and CEC regarding proposal for funding bid.**
- Frazer McNaughton + Dave Bisset queried when the Draft Place Brief would be circulated. Stephen noted that if approved by Planning Committee, it will be sent out for Statutory Consultation alongside the masterplan.
- Frazer McNaughton highlighted the opportunity for mixed uses throughout the site, especially along the promenade and the north of the site. 7N highlighted that the masterplan will include a mix of uses throughout the site and would be reviewed again following the consultation. 7N noted that the proposals align with Steering Group comments but that there are limitations within the planning system. Jane noted that the masterplan will include design measures to promote appropriate uses, such as active frontages and a mix of uses on to the promenade.
- Malcolm Fraser acknowledged the limitations of use classes and questioned the use of other planning levers and the potential of working with Local Development Trusts. Malcolm requested confirmation that the masterplan will reflect this. Stephen noted that the NPF4 supports Community Wealth Building, and if a Local Development Trust emerges CEC will connect them with Community Wealth Building Officer. Cathy Maclean noted that Action Party was a Community Development Trust and covered the masterplan area. Stephen offered to connect Action Party with the Council's Community Wealth Building team.
- Cathy Maclean expressed concern that the masterplan was not sufficiently aspirational. 7N responded emphasising that there is aspirational response and highlighted the opportunities within the site including the proposed Waterfront Park.
- Cathy Maclean queried the realigning of Seafield Road East. 7N noted that this was explored early in the design process and presented significant challenges. The masterplan must work with the constraints of the site and ensure that it can be delivered. Malcolm Fraser responded that he believes that the road can be turned into a tree-lined boulevard.
- Frazer McNaughton raised concerns around delivering mixed use sites. Frazer highlighted poor experience in the past of developer led mixed-use. 7N responded that opportunities will be embedded in masterplan.
- Cllr Staniforth noted that we must remember that what people want most of all, is a bus route. Also noted that we need housing in the city. Emphasised that masterplan should align with 20-minute neighbourhood concept to deliver appropriate uses. Regarding density noted that sufficient housing was required to get Lothian Buses to run a bus route.
- Malcolm Fraser noted there are big things that we can be talking about for example a new loop of the tram lifts aspiration and becomes a headline project. Stephen responded that the Seafield Masterplan must be joined up with wider picture, but it is focused on the Seafield site. The extension of the tram network is a wider discussion that can't be delivered by the masterplan document. However, Stephen noted that the railway is safeguarded, and this presents the opportunity of this to become a tramline if no longer needed for freight in the future.
- Frazer McNaughton noted that the waterfront would be a busy place and emphasized the importance of considering the provision of public toilets.

4) Updates from landowners/developers

- Lesley McGrath sends apologies for not being able to attend the meeting. However, on behalf of Royal London, Lesley provided a formal statement in advance noting that they do not support proposals for residential development on their site.

5) AOB

- Cllr Griffiths noted positivity about the opportunity for the councillor's constituents of Craigentenny / Duddingston ward. Emphasised hope that Seafield becomes a really nice place.
- Dave Bisset queried the "opportunity site" designation and how this works with infrastructure delivery as utility providers need to understand timescales. Stephen responded that the expectation from the reporter is that the sites may not come forward in the plan period, albeit the Council may not agree with this. The consultation and wave study will give a clearer indication as to when the sites in Seafield will be delivered. Follow-on discussions with utility providers can happen once this has taken place, though the council is also happy to have earlier discussions if this would benefit.

6) DONM

- The next meeting will take place after the September 2024 Planning Committee.