

Joint response from Fairmilehead Community Council, Edinburgh, and Morningside Community Council, Edinburgh to the Development Management Consultation Paper of January 2008

## **Development Management Consultation Paper: January 2008**

### **A joint response to selected questions from Fairmilehead Community Council, Edinburgh, and Morningside Community Council, Edinburgh**

**Sent by Louise Maguire, Vice Chair**

**Fairmilehead Community Council**

**35B Caiystane Gardens**

**Edinburgh**

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**Comments on Q6, Q10, Q15, Q17, Q29, Q31, Q33, Q34, Q35, Q38**

#### **Question 6: Are the requirements to notify community councils and neighbours of the proposal of application notice sufficient or should others be notified at this stage as a statutory minimum?**

Boundary confusion is resulting, in Edinburgh at least, now that there are no longer 58 single local authority councillor wards, but 12 multi-councillor wards instead. The anticipated changes of the Boundary Commission of Scotland will also affect a number of community council areas. The areas and boundaries of individual community councils are increasingly blurred for residents although the CEC should be aware of the up to date community council ward boundaries.

In addition not every former single LA councillor ward in Edinburgh has an active community council. Where there is no active community council we believe all amenity / residents / tenants associations whose members are resident in that ward or who have an interest in any part of that same ward should be notified of the proposal of application.

#### **Question 10: Should the opportunity to be heard at a pre-determination hearing be extended to other parties beyond those who made representation.**

Yes, we believe all interested parties who may be affected by the planning application should be given the opportunity to be heard at a pre-determination hearing.

**Question 15: Do you agree that the sole parties signing the processing agreement should be the planning authority and the applicant, or do you think there is scope for statutory consultees to also sign the agreement?**

As an active Community Council and therefore possible statutory consultees, we believe there is scope for statutory consultees to also sign the agreement.

**Question 17: Do respondents consider the approach to the content of planning applications to be appropriate or are any of the other options in paragraph 5.3 preferable?**

We believe that the following requirements for planning applications should be mandatory.

A location plan detailing the present and the proposed position of the proposal in relation to its neighbours.

Plans showing existing and proposed elevations (at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100 which should:

- a) Show the proposed works in relation to what is already there
- b) Where a proposed elevation adjoins another building or is in close proximity, the drawings should clearly show the relationship between the buildings, and detail the positions of the openings on each property

Floor plans should show new buildings in context with adjacent buildings (including property numbers where applicable).

Plans should include full information to demonstrate how proposed buildings relate to existing site levels and neighbouring development.

**Question 29: Is the proposed approach to keeping people informed of Planning Permission in Principle and approval of matters specified in conditions appropriate.**

Yes, provided that this approach does not have the effect of limiting public awareness and community involvement.

**Question 31: Do you consider the proposals concerning the use of site notices and of local advertisements to be appropriate?**

We believe site notices for planning applications could be used to much greater effect to inform the near community who will be directly affected. Similarly Public Notices could be erected where the wider local community is likely to be involved. Indeed these could usefully be made statutory provisions.

**Question 33: Are you content with the Scottish Government's proposals for the public availability of the list?**

Authorities must not assume that everyone who might be interested in the weekly list will have the IT knowledge to access a website. In addition home computers may not be powerful enough to download large planning application files and those in Public Libraries may not be available. A paper copy should always be available, at the very least at the principal Planning Office, and the Local Offices of the Council.

**Question 34: Is the advertisement of the availability of the list in a local newspaper on a monthly basis appropriate?**

We believe a paper copy of the current list of planning applications should be available through a local newspaper, as well as at the principal Planning Office and, if there are any, at Local Offices of the Council. The list in the "local" newspaper should appear weekly to allow time for representations.

**Question 35: Do respondents have any views on the list of statutory consultees and the criteria for consultation?**

We believe that statutory consultees are an important means of ensuring that planning applications are both suitable and justified.

**Question 38: How should planning authorities best manage the potential burden of ensuring those who made representations are advised of the decision?**

Emailing decisions directly and providing online information in addition are possible solutions to advising the majority of a decision. However IT knowledge and the availability of powerful computers must not be assumed. Some people will always need to be informed by post.

