

EKCC – 5th December 2024

Welcome

Robert Strang welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Present

Robert Strang, Audrey Willan, Jose MacKinnon, Shelagh Cameron and members of the community.

Apologies

Ian Brodie, Trish Collins & Councillor Tommy Macpherson

Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed. Proposed by Shelagh Caeron, seconded by Robert Strang.

Bank Balance / Treasurers Report

£1045.30 bank balance. £180 from playpark not back yet. No movement on bank account yet. Audrey is investigating where community groups can bank for free. Audrey will update at the February meeting.

Correspondence

None

Planning

Demolition of agricultural farm buildings and farmhouse and erection of replacement farmhouse including installation of septic tank and air source heat pump at Brackley Farm, Carradale has been approved. 23/01128/PP.

Ground / Paths at Cemetery

RS has spoken to the undertaker and they are going to see if they can get a hardstanding path in from the road.

School warning lights

These are now working.

MOWI

SC reported back updates received from Stephen MacIntyre at MOWI. The updates are as below:

Harbour Pontoon: we are still awaiting a decision on the planning application, and we remain hopeful that this prolonged determination will shortly conclude with the granting of planning permission. The marine licence application is progressing well, and we anticipate the licence being issued in the new year. Provisionally we are looking for installation to commence Spring-Summer next year; once we have all the licences in place we can start more detailed planning, and we will further communicate and engage with the harbour users' group, including the boat owners whose moorings will be directly impacted and who are coming onto the pontoon. Discussions with Argyll and Bute Council have also commenced on the necessary lease and agreements we need to operate the pontoon from the local authority (as harbour owners).

Temporary shorebase: we are awaiting confirmation of the delivery timescale for the portacabin and will communicate this when available. We are conscious to ensure delivery does not adversely affect or disrupt traffic/community activities and are working on best options which we will communicate in advance.

Permanent shorebase: the design of the proposed shorebase building (for former Omans yard) is being progressed by our planning consultants with a view to submission of the planning application early 2025. We will share design drawings when available and we are also discussing whether we can have a 3D model produced of this area of harbour showing the layout-setting, with the new shorebase building. I recall you mentioning a village / harbour open day around February 2025 and this would be a good opportunity for us to highlight to the community what is proposed.

Pier House: our intention to renovate the house provisionally starting in 2026 and at this stage we see it being brought back into functional local accommodation for our own staff. The painting of the house has been delayed, my apologies, however this is due to commence shortly.

Shop: The Mowi commitment to support a community building in the harbour to enhance amenity value remains and we are keen to discuss how this can be delivered. Renovating the shop or replacement with a new building of a high-quality design that aligns with the heritage of the harbour are options we are open to, and we will be guided by community views on this. Once the permanent shorebase is constructed, the temporary portacabin on the harbour frontage would be removed, opening this area for a new build in the optimum location. I have been discussing this today with Sean Anderson, Mowi Production Director, both Sean and I would be happy to come and meet with the EKCC (and the local development plan group) in January to listen and discuss how we can take this forward.

Hamish Hunter asked what was happening with MOWI getting rid of use of the lice solution they said they would reduce. He noted that they have since applied to increase its use. SC agreed to revert to MOWI on this.

Wellpark

SC reported that the playpark is there but awaiting some snagging. It was not clear if it was open yet or not as Shelagh believed it wasn't but the Courier had reported that it was. SC agreed to check with Deborah Wragg and then post to Carradale chat.

LDG

SC reported that the recent meeting had been cancelled. However, the planning group is going well. Reiterated that the role of the group is to get things arranged for the open day on 1 March, not to make decisions, but rather to put things out there. Currently looking at Wellpark, Pavillion, Routes & Paths. The Village Shop was the main action from the previous LDP – now free of that and looking at lots of areas. Also looking at Harbour but at the moment a lot of concentration is on the open day. If anyone wants anything added to the local development group for the village please speak to one of its members – Shelagh Cameron, Jose MacKinnon & Trish Collins or our CCT partners.

CCT Update

Nothing to report other than open day is 1st March, same as LDG.

EKWFT

Alasdair Bennett gave an update. Met at the beginning of November and reviewed 11 applications of which 10 were approved. £28,972 in funding was agreed.

EKREG

Alasdair Bennett gave an update. Clachaig Glen was consented 8/11 for 12 turbines over 200m tall. 100 MW site. Partial community ownership is available with up to 49% available to local communities. There is a meeting regarding this next Tuesday. Funding in place from Scottish Government for legal and financial advice required for this.

EK Maintenance – Memorial Gardens

The memorial gardens are no longer being maintained. There was a suggestion that Eva may be able to take them on. RS to approach to see if she has an interest. SC will also post to Carradale Chat to see if there is any interest in taking it on. AW suggested that community payback may be able to take on the Broomfield garden as it is on council land – she will see if that can be arranged.

Amenities / Roads.

RS commented that water is a problem. There are no runoffs like there used to be. RS to ask Ian Brodie to phone council about the water by Abbeyfield and also the issue of overhanging trees and bushes in the area. The mess at the unofficial exit of Tormhor was also raised. RS will ask Ian to raise this also.

Land at Toshs Park

The EKCC had registered an interest but there was no serious interest in buying the land and no future use was envisioned for it. There were no apparent risks to future use identified that would warrant the community making a purchase to protect against.

Any other business – works at Torrisdale.

It was noted that a lot of work had been taking place at and around the beach on the Springwell Cottage side at Torrisdale. The understanding at the time was that a local planning officer had been on site and work was stopped pending an investigation. Nature Scotland had also been to the site. The new owners land agent – Paul Conway (PC) – was in attendance. SC outlined what was known so far and spoke out against some of the negative commentary that had been seen around social media, reiterating that the forum for discussion of such things was this meeting. SC gave some background as to why the area being worked on was of significant personal interest and of significant interest to the community, and reiterated that this wasn't simply newcomer aversion. SC then asked PC if he could update on what was happening.

PC confirmed that there was no change to the beach. The house has been deconstructed but the plan was to get the rest of the croft up and running as a croft again in time. The owners of Springwell cottage are looking to extend the cottage – an architect is looking at this presently. At the beach the plan is to re fence it as it was before. The car park remains open and access to the beach remains as it was before.

There was a heated discussion between members of the community and PC, and a number of accusations were made, namely:

- Barrier stones on the beach have been removed – PC refutes this.
- Vegetation (which forms an important part of the sea defence) has been removed – PC agrees vegetation has been removed but denies it impacts the sea defence / erosion.

- Japanese knotweed has been removed from the site, and may have been discarded near a water course which runs through a SSSI – PC denied this. Conceded vegetation has been removed but not Japanese knotweed and not to a river. Niall Macalister Hall (NMH) referenced a discussion with PC on the beach at Torrisdale where PC had eluded to the presence of Japanese Knotweed. PC refuted and suggested NMH was just jealous he did not own the land. NMH made it known he had attempted to buy the land from Nancy. Her heirs/children had been advised to sell Springwell as a whole so NMH did not pursue further and is not bothered that he does not own the piece of land. Multiple other members of the community recalled seeing Japanese knotweed at the site. PC denies there was any there.
- NMH also said there had been a conversation where PC had eluded to a plan to remove/alter the rockface. PC denies this, and denies this is a plan.

PC was asked why the work started where it did. PC said this was where the owner felt like starting things.

It was asked why work had been stopped. PC said it was just to keep the EKCC happy. SC outlined that the EKCC does not have powers in this area.

Accusations were made that the sea defences at Torrisdale have been moved. PC refutes this.

Hamish Hunter asked what the new owners full plans were. PC said he was not aware.

SC asked if PC could possibly act as a go between between the community via the EKCC and the new owners. PC commented that the new owners knew what the EKCC thought as he had videod the meeting. It was pointed out that people would object to this and it may be illegal. PC gave assurances he had deleted the video.

AW gave her personal view (not that of the EKCC) that during the meeting she had gone from being relatively indifferent about what was happening, having previously taken the view that people can do what they like within the confines of the law to their own land, to now being concerned that something underhanded and possibly illegal may be taking place. There was general agreement around this sentiment from members of the community present.

It was again put forward that the community was looking to find out what the plans are. PC says he doesn't know – but the place will be a croft. NMH asked questions as to who the crofter would be give the restrictions under crofting laws. PC says that is not known yet.

Visitor Tax

Eddie MacCallum (Peninver) raised a question as to what the feeling of the community is with respect to the proposed tax. SC spoke for herself (rather than the EKCC) and said she was against it. The question was raised as to whether there was an interest in making a representation as a council at or prior to the meeting on the 9th at the Town Hall in Campbeltown. A show of hands in the room indicated an overwhelming majority against the tax so SC will make a representation via writing to A&BC.

Next Meeting

6 February 2025. There is no meeting in January.

Meeting closed.

Action items:

- AW to research where the community council can bank for free.
- SC to enquire with MOWI re lice solution use.
- SC to enquire with Deboarh Wragg re playpark status and post to Carradale chat.
- RS to ask Eva about memorial gardens.
- SC to post to Carradale chat to see if there is any interest in taking on memorial gardens.
- AW to ask about community payback for the memorial garden at broomfield.
- RS to ask Ian Brodie to raise issues of water by Abbeyfield, overhanging trees and the unofficial exit at Tormhor with the council roads department.
- SC to make a representation against the visitor tax on behalf of the EKCC.