Minute of a Meeting of Holm Community Council
Held on Thursday 5 December 2024 at 7pm at Ness Castle Primary School in person and online.

Note on Abbreviations: HCC = Holm Community Council, HC= Highland Council

Present: Community Councillors: Alan Stewart, Becky Speight (online), Gail Beveridge, Martin Gardiner, Margaret Irvine, & Murray McCheyne (Chair).
Councillors –Andrew Mackintosh and Jackie Hendry
In Attendance 5 members of the public
Apologies for Absence: John Horne (Treasurer) and Councillor Alasdair Christie.

1. **Welcome and Declarations of Conflict of Interest**
Murray welcomed everyone. No new conflicts of interest were declared.

2. Approval of Minutes 10 October & matters arising
The minute of the meeting on 10 October having been earlier circulated were approved. No matters arose which were not otherwise on the agenda.

3. C1040 Road at Torbreck
Correspondence received from the representative of the owner of the areas which form Phases 4 & 5 of Ness Castle was discussed. The correspondence informed HCC of the intention to submit a pre planning application and likely eventually a planning application itself about the design and layout of the second road into the development required to be constructed before 600 housing units are occupied at Ness Castle, in accordance with the terms of Condition 16 of planning consent 19/05065/S42. In short the intention of the owner is to seek that the planning consent be varied, such that the existing single track carriageway of the C1040 would be used, with a connection being made from the adjacent field at Ness Castle, adding some passing places only on the existing single track road and reducing the speed limit of the part of the C1040 from Dores road to the new junction with Ness Castle to 40mph and the speed limit on Dores Road to 50mph.
The suggestion found no support whatsoever. Amongst the comments made were:
-utilising a single-track road for a second access is going to cause the C1040 to become congested very quickly.
- the existing junction of the C1040 Torbreck Road with the B862 Dores Road is already very challenging with its limited sight lines. If the speed limit on the B862 from before the junction all the way to the new traffic lights at the existing access road into Ness Castle were 30mph this would be much better and might avoid the need to create a new junction. The only work would be the enlargement of the existing carriageway.
-the existing passing places on the road frequently have cars parked in them of owners exercising dogs therefore adding more passing places will simply exacerbate the issue
-the entrance junction from Ness Castle onto the C1040 (which seems to be designed as a “T” junction) would be inadequate to prevent or deter vehicles turning east out of Ness Castle towards the road to Essich, which is likely the most desired route of residents in Ness Castle. Why else would this second access road be used, when quickest way north would be to use the existing access road?

Anecdotally there seem to be comparatively few vehicle movements from the existing access road turning south towards Dores and the data in the report we were given sight of did not provide any insight or comment to the contrary.
-there are comparisons and precedents elsewhere in the city (Raigmore Estate and Robertson's development at Craig Dunain/ Scorguie) both of which have significantly benefited with the formation of a second access road, particularly Scorguie.
-there was within the last ten years a fatality on the section of the B862 between the Dores Road roundabout and the junction with the C1040. HCC have previously requested this stretch of road be a 30mph limit.
-the suggested benefit of not having to lose some woodland habitat does not outweigh the potential chaos of more traffic on the single track C1040 road, the end stretch of which is a safer route to school for walking and wheeling.
-HCC have previously suggested the whole length of the C1040 should be a 20mph speed limit on account of the popularity of it being used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

4. Composting Scheme at Holm Grown

Two new composters have been installed at Holm Grown, our community growing. Unfortunately, the part of the cost (£420) due to be met by Velocity cannot be met as Velocity have effectively ceased trading. It was agreed that rather than see the composters returned in the short term HCC will meet the payment, and an application can be made for funding from the Ward Discretionary Fund, which Jackie and Andrew both indicated they would support.

5. Finance report

John had previously circulated a statement showing general funds of £5062.80 of which £766.52 are designated funds for Holm Grown.

6. Community Growing space at Ness Castle

Murray reported having had further favourable conversations with the Ward Manager for our area, such that the next step will be to have a further meeting in January for anyone interested in being involved with the project of forming a community growing space next to the primary school. The meeting would be targeted primarily at residents in Ness Castle who might be interested in the project. HCC will take the main responsibility for the administration of the project and other details such as any lease and insurance.

Murray also reported having received an email from a resident whose home backs onto the site expressing concern about people potentially gathering there and associated noise. It is to be hoped that such those who will take the project forward will be mindful of all such concerns, especially when it comes to designing what the space will be used for. The point was made that a planted garden is not likely to attract people congregating, although any seating area might well! A planning application is hopefully to be made during the first half of next year once ideas have been further shared and a plan drawn up.

7. Bus services at Ness Castle

Jackie Hendry reported on a positive development regarding the concerns shared at our most recent meeting about the bus service for Ness Castle and the school pupils from the Inverness Royal Academy. As from 6 January 2025 the existing stage coach provided 116 service will continue for those at Ness Castle / Holm Park. A Highland Council provided dedicated service to Dores/ Foyers which will not call at Ness Castle will commence then too. This should alleviate the past difficulties although that will be closely monitored.

8. Local Place Plan

Murray not having managed to progress things it was agreed that Becky and Alan would review the data received in response to the survey with a view to analysing responses using AI. Several examples of Local Place Plans submitted by other community councils are now available which might also prove a useful source of a template.

9. Housing developments – Ness-side

Martin reported having had helpful feedback from residents at Ness-side following his sharing of the outcomes of the latest Liaison Group. It was considered this was helpful. Margaret and Martin will contact the site agent regarding further changes made to the path behind the bus stop on Dores Road. Dirt bikes careering through the development continue to be an issue, the advice continuing to be that any incidences should be reported to Police Scotland. Murray will chase up David Mudie about the bus gate to push for its completion.

Robertson Homes / Barratt Homes at Ness Castle

One of the members of the public present was William Porter who had spearheaded the provision of gritting by a local group last winter. Thanks to William for those considerable efforts in getting things done were able to be conveyed in person. William and the team of volunteers he has assimilated hope to be able to grit some of the paths in the area again this year.

Cars being on the footway at Tarradale Place is a concern which will hopefully be addressed by bollards being installed at either end of the footway.

10. Correspondence & Police Report

-There was no police newsletter available for the meeting.

-Correspondence about the 20mph traffic order being on the brink of being presented had been received. There was a wide-ranging discussion with varying views being put. In general, it was agreed that the residential streets in HCC's areas should be 20mph and the arterial routes should be 30mph, which would include Stratherrick Road and Dores Road.

-Inverness Community Council Forum next meets on 10 December and Margaret hopes to attend, along with Murray.

11. Next meetings

23 January and 20 March 2025 both at Holm Primary School.