Minute of a Meeting of Holm Community Council
Held on Thursday 20 March 2025 at 7pm at Holm Primary School

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

Present:
Community Councillors: Alan Stewart, John Horne, Martin Gardiner, Margaret Irvine, & Murray McCheyne (Chair).
Councillors: Councillors Andrew Mackintosh and Jackie Hendry
In Attendance: Eleven members of the public and Calum Innes and Michael Summers, representatives of the Tyser Trust.
Apologies for Absence: Becky Speight, Gail Beveridge and Councillor Alasdair Christie

1. **Welcome and Declarations of Conflict of Interest**
Murray welcomed everyone. He declared an interest in relation to item no 3, being a resident on the road affected.

2. Approval of Minutes 23 January
The minute of the meeting on 23 January having been earlier circulated were approved.

3. Second road into Ness Castle Development.
Murray introduced Calum Innes and Michael Summers to the meeting, setting the scene that a condition of the planning application for the development of Ness Castle issued on 6 March 2020 (which can be found on wam.highland.gov.uk by searching 19/02780/S42) states
"16 Before the occupation of the 600th house, accessed from the primary access road, a secondary access of a 6m wide carriageway shall be provided to the site. No work shall commence on this secondary access road until a detailed scheme design has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with the Roads Authority. The design of the access shall :
-utilise existing sections of the existing C1040 Torbreck Road where possible;
-relocate the junction with the B862 Dores Road approximately 45m to the north to provide improved visibility;
-include a priority junction between the site access and the unaffected section of Torbreck Road so as to discourage traffic from the development using Torbreck Road; and
-be so designed to minimise the impact upon existing trees."

By reference to drawings illustrating a new roads design, Calum Innes and Michael Summers presented to the meeting a revised proposal the land owners (the Trustees of Richard Tyser's Overseas Settlement Trust) are considering lodging with the Highland Council seeking an amendment to the planning condition. In short, this is to the effect that the second road would be the existing single track road with three enhanced passing places as well as a revised and widened junction where the C1040 joins with the B862. It was explained the motivations for this revision are to have a lower impact on tree loss, cost saving and advice from external consultants on road safety. There was an opportunity for questions, which resulted in further information being given which included:

1. A suggestion will be made that the speed limit on Dores Road after the junction be reduced to 50mph and 40mph on the C1040. The view of HCC is that the speed limit should be 30mph on the B862 from the junction with C1040 north and the limit on the C1040 should be 20mph for its whole length.
2. The junction of the C1040 with the B862 would be a two way t junction, with sight lines which meet national standards, dictated by the speed limit.
3. The revised proposal would require circa 100 trees to be removed whereas the consented two way 6m road would require the removal of around circa 440 trees.
4. The junction of the road emerging from Ness Castle on to the C1040 would also be a t junction, with no elongated turning splay to the east. This was pointed out to be wholly inadequate as a measure to "discourage traffic from the development using Torbreck Road" . HCC provided the alternative suggestion that the C1040 should be stopped up immediately to the east of the new junction, as suggested in a householder survey they and Dores and Essich CC conducted in 2022. Doing so would enable the C1040 to remain a "quiet road" to be enjoyed by walkers, cyclists, runners and horseriders.
5. A survey of traffic movements has been done on Brodie Road where it joins the B862 , finding that the data supports that only one access road is adequate. No surveys of traffic movements had been done on the C1040.
6. The internal design of the housing layout in phase 5 will not be in the direct control of this planning application modification.
7. The public sewerage system has capacity for the further houses being planned at Ness Castle.
8. Sustrans have already been involved in the revised design.
9. During the development of Phase 5 (and if possible during phase 4) the development traffic should use the second access road to be formed, rather than using Brodie Road or any other road in the completed development.

Calum and Michael will consider the feedback given, which was broadly supportive of a single track road, although there was continuing disquiet about the impact that a new road from the development will have on the C1040, and in due course present a planning application.
Calum and Michael left the meeting at this point (at 8pm)

4. Public Access – Ness side

Murray reported on correspondence with the Access Officer of HC regarding the complaint made by a member of the public about the exclusion of public access from Ness side as a result of a sizeable deer fence and locked gates. The Access officer will continue to be pressed for resolution of the situation, not leaving this to the determination of the pending planning application over that land.

5. Community Growing space at Ness Castle**

Murray reported on the special public meeting which had taken place on 24 February where there had been a very mixed response to the suggestion that a

community growing space be formed. There were several at that meeting who not only supported the idea of improving the empty space to the west of the MUGA but who would play an active part in the project, were it to go ahead. There were also views stated at the meeting that as it was not known what the impact would be on neighbouring properties the project should not proceed.
The meeting discussed the matter again. Amongst the points made both by those at the meeting and by means of an email Murray had received and which he had circulated to the Community Councillors at the meeting were:
-The idea of flattening the large bund of earth Barratt had dumped and then seeded, adjacent to Tarradale Place would not be welcomed as it removed a natural noise barrier;
-If the whins and gorse which have self seeded are not arrested this season they will take hold and will further self seed;
- that there continues to be misgivings amongst some householders who back on to the land that any growing space will cause noise and disruption;
-that it would be helpful to see something done to improve the space, but not necessarily the sort of planting which might have been in earlier contemplation;
-that a "desire line" path is being recreated already.

The meeting therefore decided that at present HCC will itself do no actual work on the ground to form any community growing space. Instead HCC will ask HC to prepare a plan showing the route of a path, located adjacent to the MUGA side of the area. If that path should require planning consent HC will be invited to apply for that and it will be suggested HC form the path. HCC will also recommend that the remaining area be meantime sown with wildflower seed, but only once the whins and gorse have been removed. The whins and gorse would be best removed by hand, perhaps by those in the community who had expressed a desire to be involved in a growing space. . Once the view of HC is obtained HCC would expect there to be further consultation with those who live in the area before anything further happens. It was also stated that the area being improved to this limited extent would not preclude the formation of a community growing space at a future time, but that wil require to be initiated by those in the local area.

6. Traffic calming / Bollards on Dores Road

There had been further correspondence with HC roads officer regarding the unsatisfactory nature of the fixings of the bollards on the build outs at Dores Road. This is ongoing, with Martin and Alan taking the lead with the HC official.

7. Vandalism under bridge over River Ness

It was brought to the meeting's attention that there have been further anti social activities under the bridge over the Ness on the west link road, with syringes and other detritus being deposited on F & R MacDonald's farm land at Ness side. Jackie will speak to Tec services regarding an improved lock on the door under the bridge. This will again be brought to the attention of the public and the Police. It was also noted there is again prevalence of graffiti on many walls in our area.

8. **Housing developments – updates**

The quarterly meeting of the liaison group had just happened, and Murray will chase up the minutes for that so that residents can be updated on progress on the various issues raised there.

Martin will attend the forthcoming meeting with the factors for the Ness side development, seeking as an outcome a further meeting on site to address various landscaping and other issues.

Barratt's Phase 3 development at Ness castle is close to completion, with a complete demobilisation expected by the end of April once the roads are fully surfaced. A bus shelter is ready to be installed and white lines are to be applied to Phase 3. Murray will chase up the white lining in the rest of the development so that the circular bus route can commence soon.

9. Community Litter pick - 5 April

The revised date for the litter pick will be Saturday 5 April at 10am – 12 noon.

10. Finance report

John reported the funds to be at £4109.09, with costs being incurred since the last meeting for the payment of the annual insurance renewal and annual website maintenance fee.

11. Buses

It was noted that this month the buses appear to be reasonably reliable.
Temporary interruption will come in w/c 23 March due to roadworks at Haugh Road. Margaret had received good interaction about the bus timetables.

12. Matters arising from minutes

Due to a shortage of time emergency planning and the local place plan were not discussed.

13. Correspondence and other consultations

A response had not been received from Statera to our concerns expressed about the Ness Weir.

The next Inverness Community council forum is on 1 April discussing short term lets, the Police report and an update on the opening of Inverness Castle

14. Next meetings

12 June (AGM) at Holm Primary School.
21 August, 30 October and 4 December at Ness Castle Primary School.