
Report To:	Environment and Regeneration Committee	Date:	29 August 2019
Report By:	Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration and Resources	Report No:	LP/102/19
Contact Officer:	Gerard Malone	Contact No:	01475 712102
Subject:	Upper Kirn Drive, Gourock – (a) open space consultation; and (b) proposed residential development and road widening – Part A		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the outcome of an open space consultation recently carried out in order to obtain and consider the views of the community in relation to a proposed residential and road widening development, which it is anticipated will be located on ground adjacent to Kirn Drive, Gourock to which the public currently have access, as per the plan at Appendix 1.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The proposed residential development and road widening project at Kirn Drive, Gourock has been the subject of a number of reports to this Committee. This report (part A) seeks to update the Committee on an open space consultation carried out in relation to that development. All responses to the consultation are attached within the appendices (Appendix 2 is public as it comprises Gourock Community Council's response and the front page of a public petition. Appendix 3 is private as it comprises the individual letters from petitioners and individual representations received). This report is a public report on the open space consultation.
- 2.2 There is a separate report (part B) on the agenda for this meeting in the private and exempt section. That separate report provides options for the Committee, dependent on the outcome of the open space consultation.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:-

- 3.1 notes the outcome of the open space consultation in relation to the proposed residential development at upper Kirn Drive, Gourock and the terms of the representations received as detailed in the body of the report prior to consideration of the recommendations in the part B report.
- 3.2 having regard to those representations, decides **either**:
- (a). instruct the Head of Legal and Property Services to withdraw from negotiations for this proposed disposal; **or**
 - (b). to remit to the Head of Legal and Property Services to proceed to conclude a bargain for the sale of the proposed development site at Kirn Drive, on suitable terms and conditions.

Gerard Malone
Head of Legal and Property Services

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The proposed residential development and road widening project at Kirn Drive, Gourrock has been the subject of a number of reports to this Committee. An outline of the development proposal is attached at Appendix 1 and involves the construction of 23 semi-detached and detached dwelling houses at site 2; site 1 will comprise 75 units, containing a mix of terraced, semi-detached and detached dwelling houses, all 98 units will be for the private residential market. The site of the former St Ninian's primary school is shown on the plan as a community park and amenity space.
- 4.2 Detailed proposals for housing development have been considered at the January and May meetings of this Committee. Any such proposals for development are subject to the Committee's consideration of the outcome of this consultation.
- 4.3 The report to the May Committee also requested that the Committee note that the site of the former St Ninian's primary school lies within a designated residential area in the current and proposed Local Development Plan and, accordingly, to decide either:
- (i) to market the site separately in accordance with its Local Development Plan designation for residential use; or
 - (ii) to include the site within the upper Kirn Drive development proposal for open space and play area provision.
- 4.4 As parts of the overall site constitute open space, public consultation on a proposed disposal is required in terms of Section 27 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1959. Further, the Committee must consider any objections received as a result of that consultation before any disposal can take place. The Committee granted delegated authority to officers to progress such a consultation at its meeting of 17 January 2019.
- 4.5 The consultation ended on 31 July 2019 and the responses are attached in the appendices. There were 20 responses in total, one of which was a petition signed by 80 residents of Kirn Drive. A summary of the responses, including said petition, is detailed in the table below.

4.6 Kirn Drive, Gourrock public open space consultation

4.7	Name	Support/Against	Reason
	name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Wants to retain St Ninian's as open space. Concerns over loss of open space.
	name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Reservations	Concerns about congestion and wants St Ninian's site to be used for parking.
	name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Concerns over road congestion and school capacity.
	name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Concerns relating to congestion on Kirn Drive but also privacy.
	name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Concerns over congestion on Kirn Drive and school capacity.
	name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Inconvenience of construction traffic.
	name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Wants clarification on road widening proposals. Concerns over congestion and school capacity.
	name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Inconvenience of construction; concerns over road widening and school capacity plus loss of open space.
	name and address	Against	Concerns over loss of open space; traffic

supplied – private appendix 3		congestion; school capacity.
name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Concerns over loss of open space and congestion.
name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Concerns over adverse effect on own property; road congestion; loss of open space; school capacity.
name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Concerns over adverse effect on own property; road congestion; loss of open space; school capacity.
name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Concerns over congestion; school capacity and existing local services; loss of open space.
name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Concerns over adverse effect on own property and disruption of new development; loss of open space.
name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Concerns over adverse effect on own property; road congestion; loss of open space; school capacity; potential contamination.
name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Concerns over congestion – wants a one way system.
name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Against	Concerns over adverse effect on own property and disruption of new development; traffic congestion; loss of open space.
Petition – Mr Oliver – Front page Public appendix 2 Individual letters – private appendix 3	No explicit mention of development. Opposes road widening and seeks one way system.	Signed by 80 occupants of Kirn Drive all of whom oppose the proposal for road widening and wish the council to support the creation of a one way system at Kirn Drive.
Gourock Community Council –Public appendix 2	Against	Various issues – as per letter.
name and address supplied – private appendix 3	Support	In agreement with more housing and widening of road.

4.8 The majority of responses related to concerns over congestion, loss of open space and lack of school and other emergency service capacity. Comments in relation to each of these headings are detailed below:-

Congestion

The majority of responses were in relation to concerns over traffic congestion on Kirn Drive. Whilst it is acknowledged that there will be some disruption on Kirn Drive during construction, every attempt will be made to keep this at a minimum. On completion of the development and road widening it is anticipated that Kirn Drive should be capable of achieving two way traffic along that stretch currently most affected by congestion.

The final road scheme has not yet been concluded but officers within the Council's roads service are working towards this and a report on the final scheme will be brought before this Committee for approval at a future date.

Open Space

There were a lot of concerns over the loss of open space, however, the proposals seek to ensure that the site of the former St Ninian's school is retained as open space and indeed improved with the construction of a new play area and amenity landscaping.

The former pitches site, which constitutes the majority of site 1, is no longer in use and 2 new 5G pitches have recently been completed at the nearby Gourock Park. There remains plenty of open space in ground adjacent to the former pitches and also adjacent to the Moorfoot site. As

part of the planning approvals the developer has agreed to incorporate new paths within woodland to the rear of the development which will aid access to open space.

School capacity

The current roll capacity as reported to Audit Scotland for the 2018/19 educational year for schools within the catchment area of the proposed development are detailed in the table below.

School	School Roll	Working Capacity	Roll Capacity (%)	Planning Capacity
St Ninian's	310	385	81%	495
Moorfoot	257	322	80%	363
Gourock Primary	223	254	88%	297
St Columba's	708	686	103%	686
Clydeview	904	990	91%	990

The percentage roll capacity indicates how much available capacity there currently is in each school based on the present school roll and working capacities, however, there is further scope to increase this capacity if the planning capacity is adhered to rather than the working capacity. The working capacity relates to the present teacher/pupil ratio. If the planning capacity was used we would need to increase the number of teachers employed. These figures suggest that the schools should be able to accommodate an increase in pupil numbers.

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Finance

This report is focused on the outcome of the open space consultation. Part A is wholly separate from consideration of the financial implications in connection with any disposal which may be considered. The budget headings are provided here for purposes of full transparency but are entirely separate from any detailed financial appraisal of any decision (part B).

One off Costs (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Capital Fund	Capital Receipt	2020/21	TBC		
Capital Fund	Legal & Property Fees	2020/21	TBC		
Capital Recharge	Legal and Property Fees	2010/21	TBC		

Annually Recurring Costs (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect From	Annual Impact	Net	Virement From	Other Comments

5.2 **Legal & Property Services**

As the proposal involved disposal of land consisting of open space, and so required a consultation in terms of Section 27 the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1959, it is necessary for the Committee to have regard to the terms of representations received in that consultation in reaching a decision on whether or not to proceed.

5.3 Equality

No implications

5.4 Repopulation

This report is concerned with the provision of land for the construction of residential accommodation within the Inverclyde area and as such fully supports the repopulation initiative.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

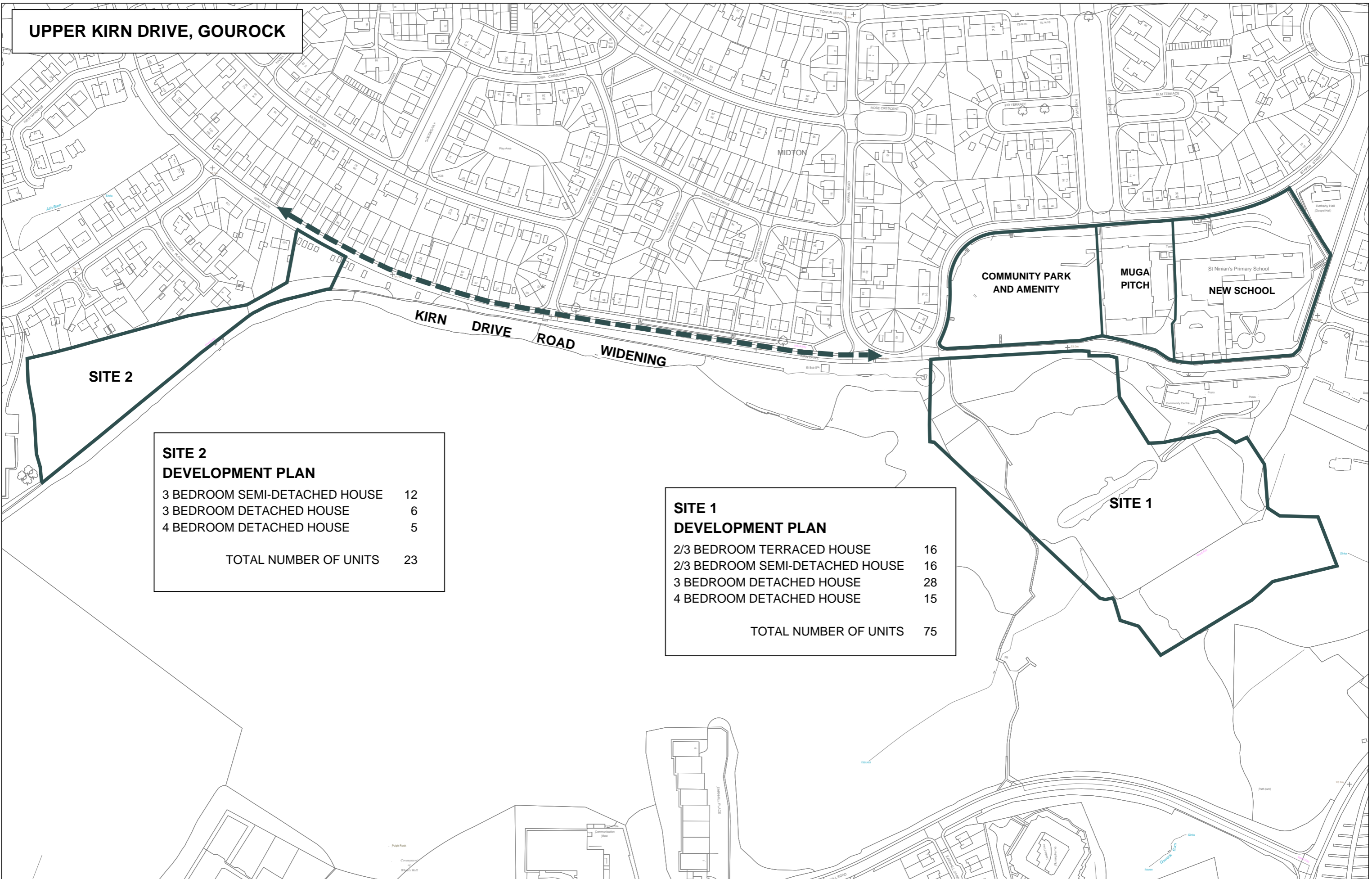
6.1 The Chief Financial Officer has been consulted on the contents of this report.

6.2 The Head of Regeneration & Planning has been consulted on this report

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None

UPPER KIRN DRIVE, GOUROCK



**SITE 2
DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

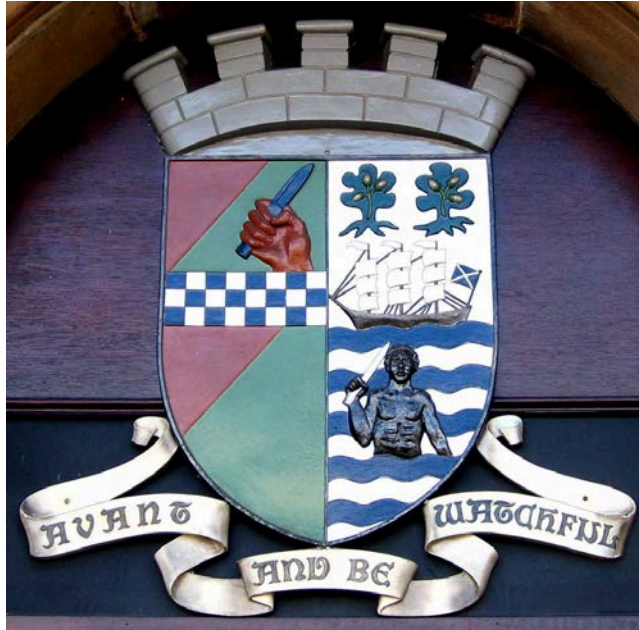
3 BEDROOM SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE	12
3 BEDROOM DETACHED HOUSE	6
4 BEDROOM DETACHED HOUSE	5
TOTAL NUMBER OF UNITS	23

**SITE 1
DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

2/3 BEDROOM TERRACED HOUSE	16
2/3 BEDROOM SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE	16
3 BEDROOM DETACHED HOUSE	28
4 BEDROOM DETACHED HOUSE	15
TOTAL NUMBER OF UNITS	75



APPENDIX 2



GOUROCK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

GAMBLE HALLS

44 Shore Street

GOUROCK

PA19 1RG

INVERCLYDE COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

Clyde Square

GREENOCK

PA15 1LX

31st July, 2019

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND PROPERTY SERVICES

Dear Mr Malone,

PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF LANDS BY KIRN DRIVE, GOUROCK INCLUDING FORMER SCHOOL SITE & THE WIDENING OF ROAD

SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

A Notice under the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act of 1959 states that the Inverclyde Council proposes to dispose of two areas of land, lying South of Kirn Drive, Gourock. The 10,962 square meters and 32,930 square meters) to form part of a housing development. Kirn Drive is also to be widened. In addition, the former Saint Ninian's Primary School site of 9,768 meters may also be disposed of, but noted that this may be developed as public open space as part of the proposal.

Copies of this plan have been seen from the Notice and are available on:

www.inverclyde.gov.uk/kirndirve

or requested by phone by calling:

01475 712 102

or by email:

property@inverclyde.gov.uk

with thanks.

OBJECTION TO THE ABOVE PROPOSAL WITH EXCEPTIONS

Gourock Community Council (GCC) are writing after been asked for an opinion. Having examined the plans and consulted with people who know the sites best: those who live on Kirn Drive. GCC have asked for opinions based on the views of the community over a long period of time, and found that there are many issues about the area that have not changed.

The current members know the needs of the community, which are based on ongoing consultations, meetings, receiving complaints, particularly about the traffic and parking. The people who live on Kirn Drive have been vocal, and have a petition which GCC are writing to support in objecting to development in the area. This has had a lot of recent changes that have exasperated the issues, bringing more people and vehicles to an already congested area, and there has been very little time to settle from the works going on, or get used to the new changes.

Please note that GCC were promised some play areas as part of development for Upper Gourock and community areas at each end of Kirn Drive. People asked for this, and continue to expect this promise to be honoured. GCC would like that the former site of Saint Ninian's Primary School is to be a community area of gardens with a play park. People who have children attending Saint Ninian's Primary and Moorfoot Primary School are seeking a similar arrangement to the contained areas enjoyed by families attending Gourock Primary School. In addition, since the play park at the new housing development at the other end of Kirn Drive did not get a play area, GCC would like some of the grounds allocated from this proposal for this and some community gardens. A play area had been promised, also to have been completed before the very first house was ever sold. This did not happen.

GCC also support in principle the proposal from residents to make Kirn Drive one way and would ask that this is investigated as a possibility, as it is strongly desired by over 80% the people who live there.

GCC believe that under Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1959 and Community Empowerment Act 2011 the case is robust in these most recent objections.

RECENT VISION FOR GOUROCK (with regard to Upper Gourock)

Gourock is a rural town, suggesting just what we have here: green space, moorlands, trees and grass. We also have magnificent views of the Clyde and two Ferry Ports, a Gateway to the Highlands, noted for attracting tourism, which has seen an increase, as there was a 200% spike in 2016 according to HolidayLettings.co.uk. Upper Gourock Kirn Drive area does not have views of the water and natural surrounding to help keep this rural feeling.

More development could have an urbanising effect that may be a material change for residents, workers, those who study, school, and visit Upper Gourock on holiday or simply passing through. At sea level Gourock has the shores to investigate and enjoy, and our Pool, as well as shops. Other parts of the town have viewpoints, and the leafy areas keep the area pretty and cleaner for good health: this is well publicised the world over to help to maintain good mental health.

The Green Pathways Project has shown that even disadvantaged children improve in confidence and behaviour when learning about the environment. The proposed areas are between two Primary Schools, and near the two Senior Schools of Gourock. GCC know that people here would like more opportunities to enjoy the outdoors and learn about natural things. There is the case for having the proposed sites preserved for leisure and as a pollinator corridor. Gourock people are proud to have a variety of wildlife, including, birds, insects, and animals, in addition to having well established trees, shrubs, flowers and grasses indigenous to Scotland. All of these things need to have more similar spaces around a mile apart, and at the moment Gourock seems to be bridging the pollinator corridors, while other areas are trying to establish what we already have. There is also the freshwater burn which several projects in Scotland might show interest in, including the Living Water Project and Dragonfinder.

There are opportunities that would actually improve the image of Gourock, and there are already natural habitats of remarkable quality where our residents are mammals like roe deer, foxes, rabbits, hedgehogs, bats, & squirrels; amphibians like toads and frogs; birds including owls, skylarks, ravens, and jackdaws; a huge variety of insects like damselflies, dragonflies, moths, & butterflies, and bees are in abundance. Many of the flowers are wild and indigenous to Scotland, with the residents of Kirn Drive excited about the presence of European protected Bluebells. Many of the things living in the community are protected wildlife, and the ones named here have been observed: the list is not complete.

GCC would ask that developers have an Assessment Screening for environmental impact before any more development is proposed. GCC think that this is major development to the area and would like further consultation with locals.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The local Tenants & Residents Association, Tower Drive TARA, that takes in Kirn Drive, the streets of Midton, and beyond, have been working on a neighbourhood plan for some time since forming. While are not affiliated to a Housing Associations presently, they are accepted as being effective community activists by individuals, agencies, and organisations. Being residential in the area allows membership, the Officers have been voted, and are continuing in roles bridging with GCC.

At a Single Issue Meeting there were plans that complement the proposal of one way on Kirn Drive by the TARA & GCC, and this is still upheld as desired. More play areas and leisure facilities on the doorstep continue to be a constant request, along with more provision for social housing for families, for elderly and cared for seniors. Written work was submitted to the Council at various times when asked for opinions, especially for the Inverclyde Development Plan.

RECENT PLANNING

Provision of bus bays and moving pick-up points for buses has helped to alleviate some of the congestion, with issues about times of day during school pick-up times, and build ups when activities are going on around the re-cycling, community centre, George Road entrances to the park, pitches, and other places including the Fire Station. A new Transport Assessment in light of the proposed housing would be required. There are two small churches that need access too, situated on Drumshantie Road and Tower Drive. The junction at George Road has historically had a lot of attention: with no clear solution proposed, GCC would prefer to see the infrastructure in place before new development was suggested.

All development, even if for leisure, brings people and vehicles into the area and there is very restricted parking. People with disabilities are finding it difficult even to get home, and their carers, particularly the professionals, find that extra time is needed in Upper Gourrock to get to people. On a busy bus route with hundreds of pedestrians, cyclists and activity, a simple thing like bin collections can really impact on the area.

There are concerns that more houses will add to all of this and swell already full schools, put more strain on the health centre, and that there is a feeling that there is not enough being provided for the people already here. GCC ask if there could be an Equality Assessment for the type of housing proposed, and also if the houses will be affordable or for a large proportion of social housing. Recent housing developments have completely failed Upper Gourock people in provision for social housing allocation: there have been no new builds and few are available. People have identified these needs and have their say through platforms like GCC Forum, meetings, and complaints.

WATER ISSUES, FLOODING, & DRAINAGE

The roads at Kirn Drive and Drumshantie Road are regularly flooded. The steps onto Kirn Drive that come from the playing fields resemble a waterfall river during the frequent heavy rain of Gourock. Could drainage for new housing affect water supplies by contamination? Could it also effect drainage for wider area for waste water?

SEPA Flood Maps show that Kirn Drive area at the old Copper Mine entrance is deep purple - indicative of high surface water. The area around George Road, Drumshantie Road and pitches including the top of Gourock Park are various shades of purple or deep purple.

WATER PRESSURE: It is wondered if more housing impact existing accounts for things like pressure?

SEWAGE & CONTAMINANTS: Could pollution occur to the burn? If land is dug up during building work, and a development was to go ahead, there would be a lot of drift as seen in the recent building work locally. Contamination is a concern, particularly in light of the fact that the moors were used for target practice for artillery for decades and there are known munitions still in the land, both lead and metals and phosphorus. All of which could effect and harm the local diversity of all wild things and also of people.

GCC will be asking Scottish Water for an opinion, along with Scottish Natural Heritage, about things like preservation of trees, as they are well established, tree felling impacting areas that flood and all over Scotland. Other places are planting areas just like what we already have here to help with flooding, environment and human health.

GEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL INTERESTS

This was also the area of the Copper Mine, and geographical seams of minerals. It is wondered by some people if there is geological interests yet untapped.

There has been various historical pieces of importance: a prehistoric bronze spearhead was found nearby that dates back thousands of years. The remains of a Medieval farm & rig have been found near the reservoir. There seems to be a vast area of almost unspoiled land that could hold all sorts of interesting historical gifts.

OTHER SUPPORT

GCC are supporting initiatives by residents on Kirn Drive who have consulted as many neighbours as possible, with some on holiday or unavailable. Of 85 possible homes in proximity, 66 names object, with several still to consult - there seems to be some empty houses while people are in transition, possibly 5 all together of the 85. GCC understand that 10 objections are a serious amount, so would like the weight of numbers supporting a one way road on Kirn Drive to be given your attention. The people are also concerned about more people and vehicles, but were not specifically asked about the housing development at this time, although many have commented in the past about concerns in general.

GCC have not been informed about what stages plans are in place to dispose of the land proposed. GCC request help to see what the timeline is for a location plan that has no details: it is understood that at the moment it is not a full application.

Surveys and advice will be requested to be sought by the developers from Tree Specialists, Biodiversity and Protected Species, as well as others mentioned in parts of this objection.

Opinions would be surveyed as well as canvassed by GCC to all over Midton with a planned methodology that would include schools, groups, and organisations, as well as businesses and Services including but not only the Emergency Services, HSCP, and Social Work.

DISCLAIMER

Every effort in research and conversation has been made to note accurately what people say, and GCC have tried to record this properly. GCC accept no responsibility for mistakes or errors, omissions or unprofessional statements which have a different meaning than that intended. Should anyone wish to question the facts or meaning this writer the GCC Secretary will be pleased to answer any questions or query that is helpful to the objection.

Yours faithfully,

Gourock Community Council

Notes by GCC Secretary Geraldine Harron

Breakdown of petition to have Kirn Drive made a one way system

There are 82 properties on Kirn Drive

66 householders are in favour of one way system

5 properties have disabled residents as they have no family living in house I did not approach them

5 properties under renovation wasn't able to contact owners

2 people objected

1 property seems to be abandoned

1 resident liked the idea but did not want his name on petition

2 properties I could not get response from

This petition was done over period of 3 weeks at different times of the day to maximise people's work and possible holiday commitment

Regards,

Bill Oliver