



KILMACOLM CIVIC TRUST

(SCOTTISH CHARITY No SC 032744)

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2021

INTRODUCTION

Dear Member,

We write to update you on several key matters affecting Kilmacolm and Quarriers' Village. Threats to the Greenbelt around our villages continue to emerge and we continue to fight to protect them.

We have been fully engaged in lobbying the Scottish Government and Inverclyde Council on several issues as discussed below.

THE INVERCLYDE COUNCIL MAIN ISSUES REPORT

The threat of development on the Greenbelt remains. If you wish to comment on the Main Issues Report we describe below by the end of 31st January, then we suggest you go to one of the following:

- e-mail to ldp@inverclyde.gov.uk with the subject heading 'Main Issues Report'. This may be the easier way.
- completing an e-form at https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/forms/ShowForm.asp?fm_fid=447

Inverclyde Council (IC) has issued a new Main Issues Report (MIR) as part of the process to re-write Chapter 7 on Planning, following its quashing by the Court of Session judgment. It is a consultative document and will inform the proposed new version of the Local Development Plan. Although we agree with the majority of the proposals there are some elements with which we disagree.

The MIR includes *inter alia* a proposal to build at West of Quarry Drive and Planetreeyets. There is also a list of "alternative sites" (reserve sites) including Knapps Loch, North Denniston and Carsemeadow. We have responded saying:

- We disagree with the proposal to build at West of Quarry Drive and Planetreeyets and confirmed our position that no build should take place on Greenbelt sites unless there is a proven need. We also dispute the alternative sites.
- We support a proposed carpark for 24 x vehicles at the junction of Gillburn Road and Ross Road. The KCT has been lobbying IC for several years to improve village-centre parking and this is a welcome development.
- We dispute the presumption that Kilmacolm and Quarriers Village should be treated in isolation in planning terms. For whatever reason, the two villages are part of the wider Renfrewshire Housing Sub-Market Area (RHSMA) that comprises: Kilmacolm and Quarriers (Inverclyde Council) Levern Valley (East Renfrewshire Council) and Renfrewshire local authority area (Renfrewshire Council). We believe that across this sub-market there is a housing surplus of over 3000 sites and that the whole RHSMA should be treated strategically

and development take place where there is a surplus of supply and NOT on cherry-picked sites in Greenbelt around Kilmacolm and Quarriers Village.

What happens next? Inverclyde Council will assess the responses to its MIR and then produce its draft Local Development Plan in Spring 2021 for further consultation (to which the KCT will respond), after which it will be submitted to the Scottish Government for approval. It is expected to be confirmed by Spring 2022.

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT (SG) CONSULTATION ON CHANGING SCOTTISH PLANNING POLICY (SPP)

We updated members earlier in Autumn 2020 on the Scottish Government (SG) consultation on changing Scottish Planning Policy as a direct result of a Court of Session decision to allow the Gladman Appeal on Carsemeadow, Quarriers Village. The Court of Session decision potentially has implications for the Greenbelt around both villages. The SG clearly felt that the decision did not reflect the Intent within SPP and sought to change several key paragraphs within the policy.

The national consultation received 244 responses (including one from the KCT) and although not all proposed changes were accepted, several key elements were amended. The key changes are:

- The ruling confirms the primacy of plan-led development.
- The amendment confirms that there is no place in Scottish Planning Policy for the application of a “tilted balance” that played a key part in the Court of Session judgment.
- A key proposal was to **remove the statement**: *“This SPP introduces a presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development.”*
 - The KCT was strongly in favour of this approach but in the event the SPP now says: ***“This SPP introduces a presumption in favour of sustainable development.”***
 - What this means is that the presumption to build should only be applied to those sites that are considered “sustainable sites”. We believe that this gives an element of protection to locations such as Knapps Loch, North Denniston, Carsemeadow and other Greenbelt sites. However, any decision remains with the local authority and if appointed, a SG Reporter who will decide the weight to be given to what constitutes a “sustainable site” as described in paragraph 29 of SPP.
- All disputed sites have been subject to different claims as to how much land was available to meet a Five-Year Housing Supply. This was a key point in the Gladman case on which the Court of Session ruled. A calculation has been introduced in SPP that must be applied by all to calculate the Five-Year Housing Supply. This gives clarity and removes areas of contention and dispute.

In summary, the outcome did not achieve as much change as we wished, but we believe on balance the Greenbelt is better protected. It does **not remove the threat** of development being given approval at locations such as Carsemeadow where we still await a decision by the Reporter, but it gives some additional protection.

CARSEMEADOW – GLADMAN APPEAL AND CONSIDERATION BY THE REPORTER

We still await a decision by the Reporter on the Gladman appeal to build at Carsemeadow. In our previous submissions we had asked for any decision to be delayed until the changes to SPP had become clear. The Reporter has acceded to that request and no decision has yet emerged but he has asked for comment on how we think the change to SPP affects the Carsemeadow case. We have responded to that request and made the following points:

- Carsemeadow is not a sustainable site as described in SPP paragraph 29 and therefore no building should take place.
- We highlight the total of houses available across the RHSMA and the surplus of 3000+ sites which should be built upon first, not on Greenbelt around Kilmacolm and Quarriers Village.

The Reporter is considering these new submissions and we have until 8th February, 2021 to make any comment on any other party's comments. Gladman has also commented and we will respond to that. We cannot be sure when a judgement from the Reporter will be forthcoming, but it will not be before mid-February.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We normally hold our AGM in March each year. Given Covid 19 restrictions we cannot do so in March this year. We will schedule the AGM for later in 2021 once it is safe to do so and we will publish a date once we have greater clarity.

To all our members, thank you for your continued support. We will keep you updated on all the matters we have covered here. In the meantime, stay safe and well.

KCT Executive Committee