LAXEY VILLAGE COMMISSIONERS

Mid Monthly Meeting

Wednesday 19th August 2015 at 10.00am.

Meeting Minutes

Present: Mrs R.Bate (Vice Chairman), Mr J James, Mr P Kinnish, Mr AJ Moore (Chairman), Mrs J. Pinson.

In Attendance: Mr P. Burgess, Clerk. Mr C. Heginbothan, Members of Public - Mr J Rosa.

Apologies: Mr P Hill Deputy Clerk.

47/15a Guest- Mr Chris Heginbotham – FRICS – Treasury Valuation Officer.

AM welcomed CH to the meeting and asked him to introduce himself. CH said he was an Isle of Man Government Valuation Officer working for Treasury, he was a qualified chartered surveyor and a registered RICS valuer. CH gave a summary of his career to date. AM asked CH to debrief the commissioners on the valuation carried out by himself on the Commissioner's Office Building (35 New Road). CH advised he had been requested by the Commissioners to carry out a valuation of the property in 2013. At the same time had been carrying out works for the them DCCL and found that they had some surplus land adjacent to 35 New Road and it seemed logical to CH that looking at the condition of property that both plots of land together would have greater value on the open market and benefit both parties.. CH stated that following the inspection of 35 New Road it was obvious the building was time expired and required some major remedial works to the roof and had movement to the rear of the building. AM asked CH to provide further detail of the buildings condition. CH stated that a principle rafter in the roof had failed and following inspection by BB Consulting it had been found undersize for the weight of the roof it was supporting. The Clerk added that this issue affects all the principle rafters at the front and rear of the building. CH continued sating the internal layout was very poor and there was evidence of long structural movement to the rear of the building. PK advised this was a long standing matter and surveys had been carried out a number of years ago and the building was found to be static at the time. CH repeated that it was long structural movement and that from the single inspection he carried out he could not advise whether or not it was currently an issue. CH continued stating the windows to the side and rear of the building were decaying and the lower ground floor was subject to penetrating and rising damp and the garaging is limited. CH advised the upper floor area was 1268sqft first floor, 1088sqft ground floor excluding the public toilets. The lower ground floors 1591sqft and the garage 369sgft. The rental value on the whole building would equate to approximately £14,000. with office rent at £6 per sqft, store at 75p per sqft and garage at £2 per sqft The valuation placed on the building was £160k. CH advised the combined DCCL and Commissioners site was 545m². As a redevelopment site it could be possible to accommodate up to 9 apartments including car parking, with planning consent which is now in place, this gave a site value of around £270K. PK enquired if CH had taken into consideration the difficulties of the site when redeveloping. CH advised he had and that had been reflected in the base value used to calculate valuations provided and the costs associated with building a retaining wall along the front of the site to the road. **CH** advised that if 7 properties were built as part of the development there would be no requirement for first time buyer properties however, if there were 8 properties there would need to be provision for first time buyers within the development. PK referred to car parking provision and enquired whether the site could accommodate enough spaces for 7 or more properties. CH advised there was enough space to provide car parking under the building with access off Lower Rencell Hill. CH stated that each property would require 1.5 car parking spaces. The Clerk advised that the IOM strategic plan gave some room for reducing this provision in a Conservation area. CH continued stating the size of the site would give sufficient car parking and for example if there were 7 properties you would be required to provide 10 spaces. PK questioned the feasibility of providing sufficient car parking on the site. A detailed discussion took place with respect to car parking provision. CH advised that highways had approved the planning application in principle and had no issues with vehicular access to the site or the car parking provision and the additional traffic generated. CH recommended the Commissioners look at the car parking provision at Illiam Dhone house to see what can be accommodated on a small site. AM confirmed that the car parking provision would be off road and underground. CH stated that alone the Government owned land adjacent to 35 New Road is not worth a lot as it stands because it cannot be development without the Commissioners land and the Commissioners land is restricted because it would be difficult to develop without the Government land. CH stated that if both sites were sold together the Commissioners and the Government would benefit from increased sale value. CH confirmed the government had agreed in principle to sell the land and the combined value would be in the region of £270K, the current value of the Government site being in the region of £2K. CH said that both parties would benefit from the increased value of the two sites combined. A discussion took place with respect to the cost and whether a developer would have the funds readily available. CH suggested that at that price it would likely be a cash sale which simplifies matters greatly. CH suggested the pro rata split in the sale profits would be 80% to the Commissioners and 20% to Government. Which gives the Commissioners significant uplift on the £160k valuation. The Clerk asked CH what would be the value of the Commissioner's office if they were in good order ie well maintained with no structural issues. CH stated the value would not be much more than now referring to the fact the building was time expired and does not meet any modern building standards. CH suggested that it would be difficult to find a buyer who could work round the layout etc for their own use. For example refurbishment works are being carried out to Illiam Dhone House to bring it up to the latest standards in term of IT requirements etc and the building was only 30 years old. JP asked CH if he thought the value of the building would be the same, CH stated it may add around £20K or so to the value. PK asked CH if he was aware of the fire service report on the building CH said he was however he had not seen the report. The Clerk stated the report had highlighted a number of issues that required works including installation of a new fire alarm system and the removal of all fibreboard cladding which formed partitions and cellings in a number of area including the main escape route. AM asked PK if he had any questions. PK enquired with respect to the report. CH responded that his advice would be a joint disposal to get the best money for the site. A discussion took place with respect to other sites and what the Commissioners requirements were. AM asked CH to give his qualified opinion on the condition of the building. CH referred to the fire service report said that replacing the fibre board would not enhance or add value to the building. **PK** expressed concerns as to whether people would invest money into the building. A discussion took place. CH pointed out of all the towns/villages Laxey has very few apartments and that there could be scope to provide more. PK referred to the approximate value of the two sites and the rental valuation of the property being £14k which equates to around 5%. A discussion took place with CH stating the current rental income was round £6K however if the whole building was rented out the value would be £14K. PK suggested that if the Commissioner went elsewhere they could be paying considerably more in rent. CH said the running costs of an old building ware likely to be considerable more than a newer one. AM suggested the requirement would be an office, boardroom with amenities. A discussion took place with regards to other Local Authority offices with particular reference being made to Port Erin. AM said the issue of the cost of renting was clouding the matter and paying rent would not be a justification for retaining the current premises. CH referred to the potential income from the sale of 35 New Road suggesting £230K to the Commissioners with £20K to Government and that the two sites have marriage value. JJ enquired if in CH opinion it would be worth retaining the building. CH advised no. AM asked if we did decide to keep the building who would pay for the refurbishment. AM asked JP it she had any questions. JP stated she was not emotionally attached to the building and would base her decision on facts and enquired regarding the projected costs over a number of years. JP continued stating the Commissioners needed to look 100 years ahead and that if we moved to a modern building in 10 to 20 years' time that would also not be up to specification. CH stated the profits from the sale would be sufficient to purchase a suitable building. A further discussion took place with respect to the Cranleigh Ville site and the original asking price using this as an example as to where offices could be built with the remainder of the site developed and sold off. CH stated that the current property was far too large for the Commissioners requirement. JP concurred however stated that consideration would need to be given to the rental of 35 New Road once renovated. CH referred to the office space currently available in Douglas. JP asked what would be the potential rental value if the office was renovated and what was the likelihood of being able to rent it commercially. CH responding stating it would probably be difficult and he would not advise it. JP asked what would be the square footage rent for commercial office space for this area. CH suggested no more than £6 per sqft in pristine condition. CH said that office space was over supplied on the isle of man and his professional opinion would be to relocate the Commissioners Offices. JP asked if the building were to be sold was there a danger it might be left empty for a period of time and therefore deteriorate in condition, expressing concerns regarding the potential environmental impact. CH stated that any developer would not land grab and the site lends itself to immediate development. **PK** concurred with **JP's** concerns. **CH** stated he thought this was unlikely to happen as a small developer was unlikely to be able to afford let the property stand. JP stated that she knew of one developer that had already done this in Laxey. **PK** stated he could see the property lying empty for some time. AM stated that members were allowing emotion to interfere with decisions, and that the Commissioners could not afford or justify borrowing the money to carry out the refurbishment works. A heated discussion ensued with **JP** again expressing concerns the building may lie empty for a number of years. CH advised that the difficulty was that once the property was sold it was out of the Commissioners hands and that was both simple and straight forward. Further discussed took place with respect to the redevelopment of the site and construction of a retaining wall, with CH advising that it was likely to take 2.5 years to redevelop the site. JP asked for a ball park figure to renovate the property and bring it up to specification. CH stated he had really been put on the spot as he had never looked at the refurbishment costs. **JP** stated she was looking for an overall figure. CH replied stating "if you refurbished the building would it go up in value? The answer is, unlikely." The Clerk summarised the works required. CH suggested £80 to £100K. The Clerk advised the estimate received previously had been double that amount. A further discussion took place. JP stated she had looked round the building and thought the cost would be around £100K. The Clerk pointed that currently the building was not fit for purpose in term of layout and size out and even if the building were to be refurbished there was very little that could be done to improve the layout. **CH** referred to his measurements and suggested a 600-700sqft building would accommodate the Commissioners requirement and at a build cost of £120 per sqft a new build would come in at around £85K. CH referred back to the Cranleigh Ville site suggesting the Commissioners Offices could be located there with car parking and possibly a first time buyer development. AM went round the table. JJ no further questions. PK said that unfortunately nothing was black and white and there were still a lot of unanswered questions and concerns reference the potential for the site to become derelict. Further discussion took place reference potential issues, JP, no further questions. RB, no further questions adding she did not need convincing that the best option was to dispose of the property. AM thanked CH for attending. CH left at 10.55am.

47/15 Planning Matters

Planning Applications

- a) Planning Application 15/00878/B of 03.08.15 in respect of extension to and conversion of detached garage into a dwelling and improvement to vehicular access onto the highway at Ballashalom, Glen Road, Laxey, IM4 7AP. [LVC Ref: 3727].
 - It was Resolved to approve planning application no. 15/00878/B.
- b) Planning Application for a Certificate of Lawful Use or Development No 15/00898/LAW of 07.08.15 in respect of application to make lawful the installation of replacement windows at The Old Post Office, Old Laxey Hill, Laxey, IM4 7DA. [LVC Ref: 3728].
 - It was Resolved to approve application for a Certificate of Lawful Use or Development no. 15/00898/B.

Approval Notices (DEFA Planning Committee)

c) Nil.

Refusal Notices (DEFA Planning Committee)

d) Nil

Appeal Notices (DEFA Planning Committee)

e) Planning Appeal Decision Notice No 14/01332/A of 04.08.15 in respect of appeal against refusal to allow approval in principle for erection of a dwelling addressing siting and means of access on land at rear of Briardale, South Cape, Laxey. [LVC Ref: 3701]. *Approved by LVC*.

Appeal dismissed, refusal upheld.

f) Planning Appeal Decision Notice No 14/00256/B of 14.08.14 in respect of appeal against refusal to allow replacement windows to front elevation of 10, Shore Road, Laxey. [LVC Ref 3668]. Approval granted.

Planning Enforcement (DEFA Planning and Building Control)

g) Nil.

Planning - other Correspondence

h) Nil.

48/15 Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the monthly meeting held on Wednesday 5th August 2015 were examined for accuracy and it was unanimously Resolved that they represented a correct statement of events.

Proposed by: JJ. Seconded by: RB.

49/15 Matters arising out of the minutes 5th August 2015.

a) JP requested that the Authorities maintenance man water the boat planter on the centre promenade green.

50/15 General Correspondence

MEA e-mails at 1323 hours on 06.08.15 - RE: LA096 – GLEN ROAD LAXEY (at the entrance to Cooil Roi). Further to a site visit by one of our streetlight technicians the above column appears to have been damaged by a third party. The fitting is an old post top fitting which is no longer water tight, please see the attached photos. We would recommend the column and fitting are replaced which I have estimated the cost of below. As we will be carrying out excavations close by due to a cable fault in the area we will where possible keep the costs down if we can tie in with the fault repairs so the estimates below are worst case scenario. The estimated cost of a replacement column and standard fitting will be £2,000 + 20% VAT or the estimated cost of a replacement column and LED fitting will be £2,250 + 20% VAT. Please advise how you wish to proceed.

Resolved to approve replacement column and LED fitting LA096.

b) Chris.Hannon@highways.dot.gov.im e-mails at 1630 hours on 06.08.15 regarding Road races Bill 2015 – Consultation - Good afternoon everyone, The Department of Infrastructure is seeking to update key elements of legislation to ensure that motorsport festivals continue to flourish and make an important contribution to the Island's economy and culture. The Road Races Bill 2015 aims to better reflect the needs of event organisers, participants and fans by reducing bureaucracy, enhancing safety and increasing the period over which road racing can take place. Details of how to respond to the consultation can be found in the consultation document. Should you require any further details please contact Wendy Haynes on telephone number 686924 in the first instance.

It was resolved to note consultation on the amendments to the Road Racing Bill 2015. **RB** took the document away to read.

A discussion took place and **PK** referred to the suspension of parking order for New Road along the Rose Gardens during TT and the Festival of Motor Cycling. **AM** advised that the order was in place at the request of Bus Vannin. It was resolved the Clerk write to the secretary of the Northern Traffic Management Liaison Group and request that consideration be given to doing away with the suspension of car parking during TT and the Festival of Motor Cycling and that the matter be placed on the agenda for the next NTMLG meeting.

- c) Elaine Caley e-mails at 1524 hours on 07.08.15 regarding Consultation on the Proposed Establishment of a separate Financial Intelligence Unit for the Isle of Man Good Afternoon, The Cabinet Office is seeking views on the proposed establishment of an independent Financial Intelligence Unit, with enhanced information gathering powers. The current Financial Intelligence Unit sits within the Financial Crimes Unit, the changes proposed in the Financial Intelligence Bill, will put the unit on the same footing as those in other jurisdictions and enable it to meet its international obligations. Details of how to respond to the consultation can be found in the consultation document.
 - It was Resolved to note the Consultation on the Proposed Establishment of a separate Financial Intelligence Unit for the Isle of Man.
- **d**) Ian Longworth Director of Public Transport emails on 11.08.15 at 1011hrs, in response to email outlining the scheme to Tarmac around Christ Church. Mr Longworth states:

The principle of introducing hard standing around the church does not cause us an issue except for 2 minor points:

- 1. We do not want to come under pressure to resurface the road between the Co-op and the Church as we would prefer to discourage traffic
- 2. You will need to recognise the requirement for drainage which you will recall limited the amount of paving that could be put into the station, therefore we need to review your drainage arrangements before you undertake the work.

A discussion took place and **AM** advised that the cost proposal contained details of drainage provision. It was resolved the Clerk write to Rev Jo Dudley and request a copy of the cost proposal for the works

e) Andrew Smith e-mails at 2237 hours on 11.08.15 - As mentioned, Dennis Kneale informed me that he is organising a table top sale on Laxey promenade on Sunday 30/08 and asked me to help him promote it. I asked him if he had anything for children but he hasn't so I said that I would arrange bouncy castle etc if acceptable to the Commissioners. I would propose using the green area on the corner of Shore Road. Please could you let me know if I can go ahead with this. I will be off Island 21/08 to 29/08 so need to arrange before I go.

It was Resolved to give permission to Mr Smith for the Bouncy Castle with the proviso insurance is in place and the Bouncy Castle is secured to the ground.

51/15 Reports

Works and Amenity Report – After a short discussion it was unanimously Resolved to accept the Clerks Report.

52/15 Any Other Business

a) David.Corteen@itd.treasury.gov.im e-mails at 1114 hours on 14.08.15 regarding Consultation on streamlining the income tax system. Treasury Minister Eddie Teare MHK has announced the start of a public consultation on moves to further simplify the Island's income tax system and lift thousands of the lower paid out of the tax net. The proposals, first set out in this year's Manx Budget, would see the abolition of the lower 10% income tax rate, the effect of which would be counterbalanced by a significant increase in personal allowances, from £9,500 per person to around £14,000. In his Budget speech in February, Mr Teare explained that the change would leave the Island with a single personal income tax rate of 20%, after the personal allowance. He went on: 'I will announce the level of the personal allowance for 2016/17 in my Budget speech next year but my aim is to ensure that as a consequence of this change as many people as possible on low incomes benefit and I hope revenues will permit me to also ensure that nobody will be worse off. 'It will mean that over 10,000 low paid people will no longer have a tax liability. It will also significantly simplify the income tax system and reduce the instances where income tax acts as a disincentive to paid employment. This will also enable us to divert resources to ensure that those who should pay do pay.' The Minister yesterday repeated his hope that income tax revenues this year would be sufficient to permit a level of personal allowance high enough to ensure that no-one paid more tax as a result of the removal of the 10% rate. He added

that it was still too early to say with any certainty whether or not this would be achieved. The Treasury consultation 'Proposed Changes to Individual Taxation' starts today (Friday August 14, 2015) and is due to close on Friday October 9. It is available in the consultations section of the Government website – https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/government/government-consultations/

- b) Steve Rodan emails on 18/08/2015 at 14:32. I am pleased to forward for your consideration all the financial information regarding All Saints Church which I had requested some time ago from the Archdeacon. This arrived while I was away on leave, hence the delay in passing on to you.
 - When you have had a chance to consider it, perhaps we can all meet as a group as we did before to consider the best way forward. *Copies available for circulation*.
 - **JP** advised Mr Rodan had arranged a further meeting. It was Resolved this correspondence be place on the agenda for the meeting 02.09.15.
- **RB** asked for an update on the progress of the Campsite shower block. It was Resolved that the Clerk seek expressions of interest via the Isle of Man Employers Federation.

Meeting Closed at 11.45am

Date of next meeting - Wednesday 3rd September 2015, 10.00 am.