

## Chair's Report – 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021 Public Meeting

- Much of MCC's work this month for several MCC members has involved considerable work in scrutinising, discussing, and formulating responses to 2 controversial local planning issues:
  - The proposed new house at 8A Napier Road, on which conflicting views were expressed by members and several residents in MCC's October public meeting.
  - The "controversial" pink canopy at McLarens Pub at Holy Corner, which has been re-erected (apparently again without planning permission)

To discuss in greater depth the 8A Napier Road planning application, an additional internal discussion meeting of all MCC members took place on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

MCC has now submitted its comments on both these planning issues via the CEC Planning Portal.

Text of MCC's submission on 8A Napier Road have been circulated in confidence to MCC members (only). A resident has since requested a copy of the full text that MCC submitted. I have replied as Chair as follows:

*"I can confirm that MCC has submitted its impartial comments to CEC on this planning application, after having considered the issues in depth.*

*Our submission reflects the various views expressed by MCC members & residents living & working in our area.*

*I can confirm that MCC did not support this application.*

*MCC's detailed comments in its submission are however sensitive & confidential until CEC's planning committee makes its decision, in accordance with CEC's advice and to comply with GDPR regulations”.*

- **Reflections on issues from recent discussions:**

- Role of MCC – Some residents seem unaware that MCC’s role is limited to scrutinising, discussing, and submitting comments and recommendations on local planning applications. CEC is the statutory decision-maker on planning applications – not MCC.
- Advice obtained from CEC includes that MCC is not required under planning legislation to put MCC’s comments into the public domain during the assessment period of the application (i.e., before a CEC decision is made on a planning application).
- MCC must be **impartial in** all matters it considers. Decisions made by MCC should be after discussion in a **public meeting** (not a private meeting). Decisions should reflect the majority views of MCC members, plus the views of residents living and working in Merchiston
- Residents should be encouraged to bring their concerns and views to MCC for consideration. Residents can often provide additional perspectives and insight to MCC’s discussion, and this can assist in reaching good decisions that residents support and enhance the reputation of MCC.
- For background, newer members may find it useful to refer to the 7 Nolan Principles of Public Life:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2>.

Plus, for Scotland, 2 additional principles: Duty (i.e., public service) and Respect.

- **Chair’s meetings as MCC ‘s representative:**

- 21<sup>st</sup> October – EACC business meeting. Discussions included update on Edinburgh Partnership meetings, CEC presentation on City Plan 2030 and period for representation, and the proposed National Care Service.
- 17<sup>th</sup> November – SW Locality Community Planning Partnership (LCPP)
- 25<sup>th</sup> November - Community Empowerment Workshop (EVOC/CEC)
- 25<sup>th</sup> November- EACC business meeting, including AGM
- 9<sup>th</sup> December - SW Funding Panel Meeting.

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Ian Doig. MCC Chair. November 2021.