

29 July 2014 Dunluce Stakeholder Steering Group

Attendance:

Mr Phelim Maguire	NIEA/Strategic Investment Board (ISD)	PPM
Ms Rhonda Robinson	NIEA Innovation Strategies (ISD)	RR
Mr Andrew Gault	NIEA Innovations Strategies (ISD)	AG
Ms Catherine Spencer	NIEA Innovations Strategies (ISD)	CS
Mr Maxime Sizaret	Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust	MS
Ms Angela Lavin	Heritage Lottery Fund NI	AL
Mr Colin Breen	Queen's University	CB
Ms Kerrie McGonigle	Moyle District Council	KMcG
Cllr. Sandra Hunter	Moyle District Council	SH
Mr Oliver McKeown	Northern Ireland Tourist Board	OMcK
Mr Michael Wilson	Planning NI	MW

Apologies:

Mr Terry A'Hearn	Chief Executive, NIEA	TA'H
Mr Stephen Aston	Chairman, Director or Innovation Strategies, NIEA	SA
Mr Bob Bleakley	NIEA, Regional Operations	BB
Mr John O'Keeffe	NIEA, Built Heritage	JO'K
Ms Mary O'Driscoll	Ballycastle Chamber of Commerce	MO'D
The Earl of Antrim	Landowner	EA
Mr Paul Mullan	Heritage Lottery Fund	PM
Mr Shane Mathers	Planning Service	SM
Prof. Audrey Horning	Queen's University of Belfast	AH
Ms Kathleen McBride	Northern Ireland Tourist Board	KMcB

Item		Action
1.0	Introduction	
	PPM welcomed those attending.	
2.0	Minutes of the previous meeting	
	Action points from the minutes of the meeting held on 29 th May 2014 were discussed. Item 2.0 The minutes from previous meetings have been successfully added to the Dunluce Development page of the DOE website. RR will send the link to group members.	RR
3.0	Site Selection – Preferred Option	

Item		Action
	<p>PPM advised that the Outline Business Case (OBC) has been submitted by Deloitte to the Project Board and DOE economists. The OBC identifies Site D (adjacent to Magheracross carpark) as the preferred option for the visitor centre.</p> <p>The OBC equally assessed short-listed options at Location C (Mr McKinley's farm) and Location D (Magheracross) and identified that the financial costs of each would be similar. However, the non monetary benefits, such as better flow around the site, a better visitor experience and less visual impact adjacent to the castle, supported Location D as well as providing the most benefit and least risk to the anticipated public investment.</p> <p>Illustrations of the potential for the Location D site were passed around. It was emphasised that these were an artist's impression of the proposed development, based upon conceptual designs, which will likely change with the new Visitor Centre building having a minimal visual impact on the landscape.</p> <p>PPM noted that the Project Team are liaising with Coleraine Borough Council regarding the existing car park and advised that a Tourism Innovation Fund (TIF) application has been submitted to NITB regarding a consultancy to explore and develop opportunities for joint ticketing, parking and transport strategies. Dependent upon the success of this application and subsequent consultancy, it may help to reduce the size of the proposed car park.</p> <p><u>Costs</u></p> <p>Project costs for delivering Option D were discussed. PPM advised that this includes the new visitor centre, car park, landscaping, interpretation, professional fees, costs for the archaeological excavation and conservation of the site and optimism bias (contingency).</p> <p>Elements of the building, such as the archaeological archive space, semi-subterranean structure and green roof have added to costs.</p> <p>The Project team has met with government officials, DETI, NITB, and DRD to discuss potential funding and support in principle has been shown at this stage.</p>	

Item		Action
	<p>AL pointed out that HLF priority is the site archaeology rather than the visitor building.</p> <p>CB also emphasised this point and expressed his concern that that the project was veering towards delivering a 'signature building' rather than a highly innovative and exciting heritage project based around the extraordinary history and archaeology of the site.</p> <p>CB also noted his concern that the level of funding now being sought over and above the original project proposals, and that this level of funding is not available in the present financial climate.</p> <p>MS acknowledged that the idea to access the site from Magheracross car park is very interesting as it would feature the archaeological site as part of the overall experience and would add another dimension to a visit to Dunluce Castle. However, he also expressed concerns about the cost and challenges of building in this very sensitive landscape</p> <p>PPM acknowledged these concerns and noted that while the excavation and conservation of the archaeology is and will remain central to the project, the location and design of a new visitor centre is also important so as to minimise impact on the landscape, improve the visitor experience and help to enhance their understanding of the archaeology. PPM also noted that a Visitor Centre of a particular size and quality will be required in order to facilitate the expected annual visitor numbers to the site and to provide a quality of experience that the international visitor has become accustomed to across the UK and ROI.</p> <p><u>Visitor numbers</u></p> <p>Projected visitor numbers after project completion are estimated to rise to 250,000 per year by the end of 2021. This is thought to be a realistic target and is less than Carrick-a-Rede (275,000) or the Giants Causeway (550,000). PPM noted that 165,000 visitors per year would be needed to break even and that any profits created by additional visitors would be used to maintain and conserve the site.</p> <p><u>Planning Applications</u></p> <p>The group raised concerns that if NIEA decide to proceed with the site identified by Deloitte as the preferred location, this will conflict with the planning application which Mr McKinley has</p>	

Item		Action
	<p>already submitted for a visitor centre on the site of his existing farm buildings.</p> <p>MW introduced himself from Planning NI. He noted that Site D has some benefits as it would utilise an existing car park. However, the addition of new buildings to landscape may be less favourable than the use of existing built form, and this would need to be weighed up in any decision making.</p> <p>CB stated that he remains committed to the project but is very concerned at the failure of what he believes are, in effect, two competing camps to reach some form of compromise. Unless this issue is sorted it will be difficult to make progress.</p> <p>MS also expressed his concern at the issue of potentially 2 competing applications and SH emphasized that she would like to see the project team addressing these issues with Mr McKinley.</p> <p>PPM advised that he had made repeated attempts to contact Mr McKinley prior to this Steering Group meeting, as he had wished to discuss the outcome of the OBC with him before presenting it to the Steering Group. Unfortunately, however, he was unable to reach Mr McKinley.</p> <p>PPM advised the Steering Group that in his opinion, there are opportunities for complementary offerings that could enhance the visitor experience and he is keen to discuss these opportunities with Mr McKinley. Mr McKinley was contacted by Deloitte for input into the OBC.</p> <p>PPM advised that in relation to Mr McKinley's current planning applications, NIEA are a consultee of Planning NI. However as is standard procedure, these are being processed by NIEA: Built and Natural Environment Divisions, and would not be referred to the Dunluce Project team. If the project team submit a planning application at Dunluce, these will also be subject to the same scrutiny by these separate NIEA divisions.</p> <p>MW noted that any application by NIEA and those already submitted by Mr McKinley will each be looked at independently on its own merit. The priority for Planning NI is the protection of the landscape, the castle and its setting.</p> <p>PPM advised that NIEA have contacted the landowner of Site D.</p> <p><u>Other</u></p>	

Item		Action
	A presentation for the new Causeway Coast and Glens District Council will be organised after the designers are appointed.	
4.0	Project Managers Report	
	<p>PPM delivered his Project Managers Report for period May – July 2014. The report covered :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status Summary • This Reporting period • Next Reporting Period • Key Issues and Risks <p>This covered the request to HLF for a formal extension of the Round 2 HLF Submission. AL acknowledged this request and confirmed it had been received.</p> <p>AG advised that nearly 5,000 people had attended the Medieval Fair event on Saturday 19th July 2014 the most successful they have had to date. Approximately 250 people joined the archaeology tours on the day, demonstrating to potential of the site. Parking was provided by Mr McKinley, highlighting that there was a shared interest in what is best for the castle.</p> <p>AG gave a brief outline of his activities to date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explained that the current evaluation across the site gives an idea of how well the archaeology has survived - explained that an advisor will come to site to advise on conservation options for garden walls - they have been targeting other structures on site to test conservation and treatment of cobbled surfaces - they are undertaking a survey of the castle complex which will help with planning, including laser scan and photographic survey. <p>PPM gave a brief description of C2K who have conducted filming onsite, explaining that they are education internet providers and that NIEA are looking into developing teaching aids and pre and post visit packages.</p> <p>AL suggested that CS look into Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) for support on volunteer policies.</p> <p>MS suggested that CS contact Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust to discuss activities on site as they are</p>	<p>CS</p> <p>CS</p>

Item		Action
	<p>developing similar plans to those outlined in LPO activities.</p> <p>PPM highlighted the risks at this stage as S9, S11, P4 and C8, as noted in the risk register.</p>	
5.0	Recent site visits	
	<p>PPM advised that he and RR have recently visited Culloden and Urquhart Castle visitor centres and that these were interesting in the varied approach they had to interpretation.</p>	
6.0	<p>AOB</p> <p>KMcG queries the non-cash contributions listed in the budget. AL advised that this should be made up of goods and services that you would otherwise have to pay for.</p> <p>PPM thanked the group for attending.</p>	
	The date for the next meeting is 30th September 2014	