

Lime Grove Association

East Lothian Council
Community Asset Transfers
John Muir House
Brewery Park
Haddington EH41 3HA

Dear East Lothian Council,

Re: The former Council Depot at Lime Grove, North Berwick, East Lothian (Asset Transfer No 1357 and 1359).

Lime Grove Association is the constituted tenants' and residents' association for Lime Grove (including Rhodes Farmhouse) and Rhodes Cottages, North Berwick. The Association hereby makes representation about the above Community Asset Transfer request.

While generally supportive of the request, and very supportive of the North Berwick Community Development Company team, the Association naturally has some concerns.

- 1. Traffic.** The width of the road and current levels of on-street parking will make access difficult, particularly at peak times (before and after theatre or cinema performances, for example) and for large delivery vehicles, even if the site access is at the south-western end of the site (rather than to the south-east as shown in the plan). The layout of pavements and verges is at present designed for very low traffic volumes, but residents and their children must cross the street to reach the play-park, or to access the normal route to school and the supermarket. A few residents have little option other than reversing from their driveways into the street, and the lack of an enforceable turning area at the far end of the street means that larger vehicles reverse almost the entire length of the street to turn in the fork. The Association hopes that the Council and NBCDC will work to alleviate as many of these problems as possible.
- 2. Parking.** There is a severe lack of parking along most of the street, and the Association has an aspiration that the provision of parking for the planned Hub would not be a zero-sum game, but might in fact increase the availability of convenient parking for residents.
- 3. Wildlife.** While there is a reassuring degree of concern in the request for the welfare of great crested newts, bats etc., the site plan in the proposal does not reflect this clearly. In reality it will be difficult to make firm planning proposals before the wildlife assessment; anecdotally, the newts, for example, are reported to use the whole site, and they may prefer the current unmanaged nature of the grassed area to managed parkland.
- 4. Existing buildings.** The Association is pleased to see that NBCDC's "architect's plans will take into account the character of the area" and that NBCDC "will maintain any buildings of interest where possible." Some of the current buildings are indeed minor landmarks in the neighbourhood and an important part of the area's character. However, the business plan appears to contradict this aspiration.

5. **Active transport and public transport.** The request does not go into much detail about active and public transport options.
- a. **Pedestrian access.** The quickest pedestrian access between the town centre and the site is via Tantallon Terrace (along the shore) and either up “Jacob’s ladder” or up the steps south of the golf course to Rhodes Park, and then via a right of way to the site; however, these routes are not only unlit, but both would require considerable upgrading to the path surface and to the steps themselves, as they are not currently of a usable standard for all pedestrians or in all seasons. The Association hopes NBCDC and East Lothian Council will work with the Area Partnership and other local interest groups to solve these problems.
 - b. **Cycling access.** Current access by cycle from the town centre is along the main road, or a longer, but quieter, route over the golf course and along the shore. The main-road route is not suitable for young cyclists, particularly when travelling west, as there are high (and increasing) traffic levels and two roundabouts to negotiate. The route over the golf course is safer, but longer, and has several problems: at the western end, the obvious continuation of the route west is a one-way street; the golf course has two latched gates to negotiate; and the golf course needs some care with regard to golfers. The Association hopes NBCDC and East Lothian Council will work with the Area Partnership and other local interest groups to find solutions here (which appear to share a great deal with existing proposals for East/West Safer Routes to School).
 - c. **Public transport.** The main 124/X24/X5 service terminates at Tesco. The 120 service requires west-bound passengers to cross Tantallon Road close to the point where the speed limit changes from 30mph to 60mph. The Association hopes that East Lothian Council will investigate ways to reinstate the terminus of the main bus services at Lime Grove, and to slow traffic more effectively as it enters the town at this point, making it safer for pedestrians and cyclists to cross.
6. **Light pollution and noise.** The request does not go into much detail about noise and light pollution, but the Association trusts that all lengths will be gone to, to maintain the amenity of the area for residents, particularly at night.
7. **Boundary between development and Rhodes Farmhouse dwellings.** The current plan shows no barrier between the proposed development and two of the three dwellings in neighbouring Rhodes Farmhouse.
8. **Lock-ups.** The Association would like NBCDC to consider keeping the current residents’ lock-ups at Rhodes Cottages.
9. **Viability.** The Association trusts that the business plan is viable, as a failing enterprise in our neighbourhood would blight the area in more ways than one.

Yours faithfully,

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