Minute of Planning Hearing held in Kames Village Hall on 30th March 2006.

Present
Councillor B. Chennell in the chair
Councillor Currie
Councillor Scoullar
Councillor Marshall
Councillor Strong
Mr C. Hepburn, Applicant
M/s C. Elder, Joint Applicant
Mr S. Jack, Kilfinan Community Council, Objector
Steven Gove, Area Development Control Manager
Paul Farrell, Roads Superintendent, Consultee

Attending
George B. McKenzie, Area Corporate Services Manager
Eilidh Headrick, Area Committee Services Officer

Apologies
Councillors Macintyre, McKinven, McQueen and Walsh.

Planning Application 05/02259/DET, Mr Hepburn, Erection of Dwellinghouse, Land East of Kames Hotel, Tighnabruaich.

Steven Gove gave a detailed and illustrated description of the proposed development. He said the design was of an acceptable scale and would suit the location. He highlighted the volume of objections to the proposals but said the issues raised by the objectors had been addressed in the report by the Head of Planning. His department were recommending approval of the proposal subject to conditions.

Mr Hepburn apologised for the absence of his agent Mr Peace and then spoke in support of his application. He circulated a photo montage indicating the size and scale of the proposed house and stressed that it conformed to the Local Plan provisions on ‘infill’. He spoke of the Section 25 of the 1997 Planning Act and quoted the section of material considerations, adding that the Council’s Development Services department considered it appropriate for the site. He said he accepted all the conditions in the Report by the Head of Planning and sought the committee’s approval of the proposal.
Mr Jack, Community Council, Objector, said that he was speaking on behalf of numerous objectors. He referred to the earlier refusal of an application for an adjacent site and spoke about the public nature of the site on which the development would take place. He said any building on this site would have detrimental effect to the Hotel and the community and the loss of such a historic site would be a tremendous blow to Kames. He spoke of the petition which had been raised at short notice and then highlighted the 'right of way' which existed through this piece of land. He said this was, and had been for generations, a village open site, and such was local acceptance of this fact no one had thought to seek its inclusion as such in the Local Plan. It was imperative that this point was now pursued. The community and Community Council were strongly opposed to any development on this site and recommended refusal of the application.

Paul Farrell, Consultee said that the proposed development would conform to current planning standards and 2 off street parking places would be provided along with surfacing of the first 2 metres of the access driveway.

The Chairman then invited questions from members of the committee.

The members asked questions on the right of way, the wording of the petition, the previous application for the adjacent site, the height of the proposed building in comparison with the window height of the Kames Hotel, the basis of the argument about the historic nature of the site, the infill and rounding off aspects of the Local Plan.

The Chairman then invited the previous speakers to sum up.

Steven Gove said that in terms of the Local Plan Policies the proposal was acceptable infill development, there were no infrastructure constraints and the design and scale were in keeping with the site. The area of ground was not a protected open space in terms of the Local Plan, the time for objecting to the local plan had passed and there were no compelling reasons to refuse the application. He recommended approval subject to the conditions attached to the Head of Planning’s report.

Paul Farrell said he had nothing to add.

Mr Jack said that his Community Council intended to approach the Council to have this site designated as an Open Space in terms of the Local Plan.

Mr Hepburn said he sought approval of the application and fully accepted the attached conditions placed on any such development.

The participants confirmed they had each had a fair hearing.
The Committee then debated the matter with differing points of view. However as there was a lack of clarity on the matter of the ‘right of way’ across this piece of land the Chairman suggested that the matter be continued to the May meeting of the committee so that clear guidance can be provided on this subject.

The members unanimously agreed to continue the matter to the May Area Committee meeting.