

Blacket Newsletter: 13th January 2010

The Rowans site within Blacket: LATEST NEWS

As most residents will know, there have been two sets of plans in recent years, for the redevelopment of the site at the head of Alfred Place (empty since the closure and 2005 demolition of the former two-storey nursing home). First came proposals - for which planning permission was granted in 2000 - for some 20 dwellings (12 two/three bedroom flats, plus 8 four bedroom 'penthouses'). Then in 2008 consultation was opened with local residents and the Blacket Association – but never concluded - about a revised development plan (involving an 80 bedroom nursing home and 23 flats rising to four storeys). The Blacket Association was forthright in its view that these latter proposals were completely inappropriate, involving, among other things, an excessive density and height of building (for further background see the Planning Issues text on the Blacket website www.blacketedin.org also issued as a Newsletter in March 2008).

This Newsletter is to advise Blacket Association members that the site has recently changed hands and that the new owners, S1 Developments, have authorised their architects, McLaren, Murdoch & Hamilton (MMH), to open informal consultations with local residents on revised proposals for the site which, we understand, are likely, in the near future, to be fully registered with Edinburgh City as a planning application. This would seek permission for a development of 8 five-bedroomed and 2 six-bedroomed semi-detached houses and a block of 4 three-bedroomed and 1 four-bedroomed flats, all with sandstone fascias in a traditional style, rising to not more than three storeys, including a mansard roof storey.

When a formal planning application is fully registered, directly-adjacent neighbours are notified and the application advertised in the Edinburgh Evening News by the Council. This usually gives those interested not more than three weeks, to register with City Planning any comments or objections they may have.

The Blacket Association Committee will meet on 21 January and consider its likely submission to the planning authorities on the new proposals. In the meantime Austin Flynn, who has convened the 'Rowans Group' (of particularly interested neighbours round the site), along with Blacket Chairman, Ray Footman and Blacket Secretary, Ian Carter, have accepted an offer from the architects for a meeting at which the developer will be represented by one of their directors and the architects, MMH, who will present and answer questions on the plans. Thanks to an offer from Austin Flynn to provide a central venue, the meeting will be held at his offices - Morton Fraser's at Quatermile Two, 2 Lister Square, Edinburgh EH3 9GL (on the old Royal Infirmary site, off Lauriston Place) – starting at 6.00pm on Monday 18 January. Given limits on space, it would be helpful if those Blacket Association members definitely interested in attending could contact Ray Footman in advance (see below) unless they have already contacted Ian Carter about this.

In the meantime, until the visuals of the new development proposals can be accessed via the Council planning website, anyone wishing to look at the new plans is advised to contact Ray Footman or Austin Flynn.

Once the application is published, individual responses can be made to Planning but if you would like the Blacket Association Committee to take any views you may have into account, it would be helpful

if a copy could be sent to Ian Carter or Ray Footman , as soon as possible, and by Tuesday 19 January at the latest.

Any submission made to City Planning on behalf of the Blacket Association will be mounted on the Blacket website www.blacketedin.org as it is sent in to the local authority. Thereafter, Association officers working in liaison with Austin Flynn and the local Rowans Group, will do their best to keep residents updated on developments.

Ray Footman, Chairman BLACKET ASSOCIATION

Ian Carter, Secretary