

Sachelcourt Avenue
BISHOPTON
Renfrewshire
PA7 5AA

25th August 2005

Dear Councillor,

**Special Meeting of the GCVSP Joint Committee 29.8.05
Report on Consultations Agenda Item 1(e)**

We write to you in your capacity as a member of the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Structure Plan Committee and ask you to read this in conjunction with the letter we sent you dated 17th August 2005.

We are most concerned that you are being asked to approve the above report which is highly misleading and totally inaccurate with regard to Bishopton and the proposed ROF development, for the reasons outlined below.

During the recent consultation period, 2,500 Bishopton residents made representations to the Consultative Draft Structure Plan Alteration 2005 in the form of an objection letter individually signed and hand delivered to the Structure Plan Manager. I enclose for your information a copy of one of these letters. The name and address of the respondent has been omitted for reasons of confidentiality. We are astonished that these 2,500 respondents have been completely ignored, and their names deliberately omitted from Appendix 3 – List of Respondents to Consultative Draft Structure Plan Alteration. Appendix 3 contains only 20 named "Bishopton Residents" in addition to the letters of objection received from the Bishopton Action Group, Bishopton Community Council, Erskine Community Council, Houston Community Council, MSP Annabel Goldie, and Mr. Iain Langlands.

We would like to emphasize that the vast majority of Bishopton residents are vehemently opposed to the designation of Bishopton as an Area of Urban Expansion. On page 29 of the Structure Plan Manager's report, he states that "The redevelopment of the former ROF site at Bishopton is considered supportive of the....Guiding Principles of Sustainable Development of the 2000 Structure Plan." Bishopton Residents strongly object to this statement and the attached letter explains why the designation of rural Bishopton as an area of urban expansion and the redevelopment of the former ROF site **CONTRADICTS** the guiding principles of sustainable development under 4 main headings: (1) Strengthening Communities (2) Principles of Urban Expansion (3) Agenda for Sustained Growth and (4) Assessment of Development Proposals. We would like to comment also that it is strange that the report states that there are objections to the structure plan alteration, but does not actually state what the objections are. How are you able to make an informed decision on the designation of Bishopton as an area of urban expansion when you do not have detailed information on the arguments against this? The planning process is fundamentally flawed in this respect.

Agenda item 1(e) refers to the statutory context of any alteration to the Structure Plan and contains the following:

"Planning authorities must take steps so as to ensure, in their opinion that:

- all persons wishing to make representations are aware of their right so to do
- all such persons are given adequate opportunity to make such representations
- **all such representations, received within the prescribed consultation period are considered by the Planning Authorities"**

The mainstay of the White Paper "Modernising the Planning System" is that openness and transparency should underpin all stages of the planning process, and that individuals should be involved and included in planning developments which affect their lives and their communities. On behalf of all the Bishopton residents who made representations, we ask why their submissions are being overlooked and trivialised in such a blatant disregard for the stated principles of the modernising agenda. We would like to stress that there has been inadequate consultation with the local community about the redevelopment proposals. Bishopton people knew nothing about the proposals until February of this year, when BAE/Redrow unveiled their plans. Immediately following this, the Community Council organised a referendum and a massive 92% of the voters said "NO" to the new development. This was followed by an unprecedented and spectacular response to the proposed alteration to the Structure Plan when 2,500 representations were made to the Structure Plan Manager. The people of Bishopton feel angry, frustrated and deeply suspicious of why the proposals are being surreptitiously railroaded through the planning process despite the massive public opposition that exists. The omission of these 2,500 representations from the Structure Manager's report serves to reinforce these feelings.

Reference is made in the report to the Community Liaison Group which has recently been established so that the preferred developers can claim to have involved the local community in their plans. **However as the majority of the local community oppose the principle of development of the ROF site**, it could be argued that progress will be difficult as a result of the two widely differing and inherently irreconcilable viewpoints. It is unacceptable to pretend that consultation is meaningful when many Bishopton people feel that they have been kept in the dark about BAE's proposals so that it would be too late to influence events in any way. Moreover, when they do attempt to exercise their right to make a submission to the Structure Plan Alteration, their opinions are inexplicably omitted from the consultation exercise! The opportunity to object to the Structure Plan only becomes purposeful when the Structure Plan Manager can explain why he believes the objections made by the 2,500 residents are not valid.

We again question why vital information is being deliberately withheld from members of the Structure Plan Committee. We claim that this action totally discredits the entire planning process, and that you cannot be expected to compromise your individual integrity as an elected representative of the people by supporting this misleading report in its references to Bishopton and the ROF site.

We therefore seek your reassurance that you will NOT accept the recommendations of report 1 (e) in relation to Bishopton and await your written response to the points we have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Stewart Ferguson
Chairman
On behalf of Bishopton Action Group
Group

Anthony Sowersby
Vice Chairman
On behalf of Bishtopton Action