



**Minutes of Staffin Community Trust meeting
Church of Scotland annexe, Staffin
Oct 30 2014**

Present: SCT directors Donald MacDonald, Angus Ross, Sandy Ogilvie, Dougie Ross, Ian MacDonald and Roddy Gillies; SCT member Kerry Lyall, SCT development officer Hugh Ross and John Porteous of Wallace Stone Consulting Engineers.

Apologies: SCT directors Sine Gillespie and Gordon Higgins

Minutes: The minutes from the SCT meeting 30.9.14 were agreed to be accurate by DR and seconded by RG.

Matters arising: Due to the scale and importance of the Slipway development for Staffin it was decided that the meeting should concentrate on the marine engineer and road access feasibility study.

Marine engineer & road access feasibility study, Staffin Slipway:

DMcD welcomed JP, who had been working on the marine feasibility report. JP went on to describe the draft content of the report to SCT directors.

Layout/services – JP shared a CAD (Computer Aided Design) drawing of the proposed development. He said the pier would have two berthing spaces for 50-metre-long well-boats for delivering the fish to the processing facility. He said dredging to a -7-m water depth was very important to SSH (Skye Sea Harvest) because the next generation of well-boats would require that depth. JP said that the pontoons would accommodate 30 vessels on the pier. There would be a separate access way for processing facility staff and marina users/visitors. JP said he had estimated the cost of power and water connections. The estimates had been made comparing similar sized developments elsewhere.

Dredging/ sources of rock - JP said the amount of dredging required – 130,000-m³ – was a cost concern. He said the material dredged up, which was not used in the development's construction, would have to be taken away by sea. It was not allowed to be stockpiled on land. The closest locations to dump that material were 50-km away at ports like Kishorn, Armadale and Lochinver.

JP had also investigated a dredge of -6-m. He said there could be a shortage of armour stone. He looked at Sconser Quarry and Kingsburgh was also assessed but all the loads would have to come through Portree which could be problematic as HVGs, like timber lorries, were barred during daytime.

Lealt Quarry was an option. JP thought the quarry could be a good source of secondary rock but was not sure it would provide the armour rock needed. He added there was a significant cost benefit in getting the rock from Lealt. The quarry owner, Kilmuir Estate, was receptive to Lealt being re-opened and the cost would probably be discounted for a community organisation. JP said that talks would be required with Scottish Natural Heritage, including a site visit, to discuss potential access.

JP also got quotes from Bonawe Quarry, near Oban, and Kishorn. He said a temporary pier would be needed at the Slipway to take delivery of rock by sea. JP said the draft costs were for a development that was “predictably achievable”.

Harbour powers - JP said he had not yet received a response from Highland Council but harbour powers would be needed at Slipway. For example, a trawler could be abandoned at the Slipway and SCT or SSH would have no legal right to remove it. Acquiring harbour power was a lengthy legal process which had to go through Parliament.

Slip road - One of JP’s colleagues had surveyed the whole road with Gordon MacDonald, of the council’s roads department. Some widening work on the approach to the bridge would be needed as would two or three extra passing places along the road. Work at the tight corners past Cairnrobin was also needed as was repairs to some of the road’s edges. He estimated the improvements would cost £400,000.

Environmental consents/restrictions - A major environmental impact assessment was a statutory requirement. A public consultation involving local fishermen/users, yachting groups, the Marine and Coastguard Agency, SEPA, SNH etc before Marine Scotland would make a decision. It would take about six months.

Questions: IMcD asked why JP estimated that power and water connections would be 2-km away from Slip. He said that if connection went over the hill to Garafad it would cut that distance by half. JP said a supply via the A855 had been assumed but would look into it.

DR asked if the freshwater springs near the Slip were being taken into account. JP said they had not and would be surprised if they could give capacity. DR thought they could, if the water was kept in a holding tank.

DMcD said the fish processing facility was important but it was not the only aspect, the marine tourism opportunities through the pontoons, water/power services etc was also very strong.

There was general discussion about potential savings including shortening and moving the pier, cutting the number of well-boat berths from one to two and altering the access to the pier. DMcD asked JP if he would review the costs and see if other estimated costs could be driven down, ahead of a Slipway Working Group meeting next month.

JP said he had other work commitments but he would do that and would be back on Skye on Friday November 14 for that meeting, when it is expected the draft economic feasibility study report prepared by Steve Westbrook will also be available.

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 25 2014