

HOUSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Title: Houston Community Council Ordinary Meeting

Ref: HCC/17/01/2024

Location: Carrick Centre, Houston

Date: 17th January 2024

Time: 7:30pm

Sheet: 1 of 15

Present

Ian Andrew (IA)

Kathy McFall (KM)

Janet Mason (JM)

William Haddow (WH)

Graham Donald (GD)

David Dunlop (DD)

Gillian White (GW)

Barry Walker (BW)

Trevor Hillman (TH)

Alison Calderwood (AC)

Richard McKay (RM)

Mary O'Brien (MO)

Cllr David McGonigle (DM)

Cllr Audrey Doig (AD)

Kevin Christie (KC)

Jake Fulton (JF)

Apologies

June McCrae (JM)

David O'Neill (DO)

May Patrick (MP)

Marie White (MW)

Chaired By

Ian Andrew (IA)

Minutes taken by

Finlay Macdonald (FM)

Representing

Houston Community Council (HCC)

Houston Community Council (HCC)

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Houston Community Council (HCC)

Renfrewshire Council (RC)

Renfrewshire Council (RC)

Gryffe High School (GHS)

Resident (R).

Representing

Houston Community Council (HCC)

Houston Community Council (HCC)

Houston Community Council (HCC)

Houston Community Council (HCC)

Representing

Houston Community Council (HCC)

Representing

Houston Community Council (HCC)

Item	Description	Action By	Due Date
1.0	Welcome IA welcomed all attendees, apologies noted.	Note	
2.0	Approval of Minutes of Meeting from Nov 2023 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record and were approved remotely on 22 nd November. Approved: Trevor Hillman, Seconded: Barry Walker.	Note	
3.0	Matters Arising not otherwise listed in agenda.		
3.1	From October minutes – IA reported on Elderslie Estate works on Kirk Road. Tree survey report has been completed and shows that there is ash dieback on the site meaning they are required to remove more trees than they anticipated.	Note	
4.0	Police Report		
4.1	Written report submitted (Appendix A) and reviewed by IA.		
4.2	No Police attendance as both community police officers have now retired and not yet been replaced. IA has contacted the Community Policing Inspector, and it is hoped they will be replaced soon.	Note	
5.0	Gryffe High School Report		
5.1	GHS/KC - Gryffe High School had a visit from Renfrewshire Council, Director of Education/Heads of Service in November. They visit a couple of times each session to look over School data such as exam results to validate how Gryffe High is doing as a school. The Visit went very well.	Note	
5.2	Gryffe High school are implementing Construction crafts as a subject for 5 th years. This means that students will not need to go to college for the course and more can do the course. At present there are only 2 spots for Gryffe High students on the college course, Gryffe High intends having 12 spots in the school. For the future Gryffe High wants to increase availability of vocational courses and introduce more subjects such as hair and beauty to stop students having to travel to college and allowing them to stay at school to do those subjects.	Note	
5.3	A careers fayre is being run on the 24 th of January in the school between 5-7 pm. It is the first time it has been done and will hopefully create a bond between the school and local businesses meaning that Gryffe High can look to		

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5.4	<p>those companies for work experience and positive destinations for young people.</p> <p>Question TH - "are all stalls taken for the careers fayre?"</p> <p>KC - "There is still space for companies to come in and there is still time for companies to sign up to come in."</p>	Note	
5.5	<p>Question TH - "Who are you linking in with for the expertise to teach construction?"</p> <p>KC – "One of our technical teachers has a real background in construction but, if there is a need to upskill further staff, we will seek support from West College and will embrace support from any professional trade".</p>		
5.6	<p>Question GW – "The Litter at the new playpark on South Mound is appalling, and there is no sign of litter picking being done. Pupils also lift the bench and move it to a secluded spot where they are vaping".</p> <p>KC – "we have not had s5 and s6 out litter picking for the past week due to prelims being on but now that prelims are finished pupils will be doing litter picking as normal. There is no excuse for it, and it will be brought up in assemblies this month".</p>	Note	
5.7	<p>KM referred to earlier discussions there had been about reverse vending machine in the school to encourage pupils to recycle, KC will consider this further.</p>	IA GHS/KC	ASAP
6.0	<p>Councillor's Reports</p> <p><u>Cllr Audrey Doig</u></p>		
6.1	<p>The only complaints over Christmas and new year were about people not getting their brown bins collected. My answer to them was that if you read the leaflet that was given to every house in the small print, it stated that brown bins were not being collected between the 23rd of December and the 6th of January. This is because the crews for the grey, green and blue bins are depleted as it is holiday time and the brown bin crews fill in the gaps, this is why the brown bins are not collected.</p>	Note	
6.2	<p>Taylor Wimpey Bridge - the officer who had been dealing with it has gone to a new job, but John Wallace has taken over charge and Taylor Wimpey will repair it and the council will adopt if completed to the required standard. They want to get the work done before summer.</p>	Note	
6.3	<p>Potholes - I did get a few complaints about potholes, and we asked the roads department to check them out. I</p>		

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6.4	<p>received a call saying some of them had been done before Christmas, but I told them that according to Facebook they are not completely done. They have come out and inspected them again and there will be further repairs.</p> <p><u>Cllr David McGonigle</u></p> <p>It has been quite busy with potholes and streetlights being the main issues as well as brown bins and there has been a lot of traffic surrounding the Stuart Milne collapse.</p>	Note	
6.5	<p>Speeding and Parking around Whirlees Road and wider Houston area – I have arranged a meeting between a Sergeant from the road traffic police, someone from the council roads, and residents. IA has agreed to attend and anyone from HCC or the community is welcome.</p>	IA RC/DM	TBA
6.6.	<p>Question GW – “when will traffic calming work start?”</p> <p>IA replied – “The work was meant to start before Christmas, but it was delayed due to weather at the time. It is with the contractor now and not the council, so we have no clear date”</p>	Note	
7.0	<p>Treasurer’s report</p>		
7.1	<p>KM provided overview of accounts (Appendix B)</p>	Note	
7.2	<p>IA - Sponsors names will be replaced by the word “sponsor” in the published treasurer’s report to ensure compliance with GDPR.</p>		
	<p>No questions</p>		
8.0	<p>Residents Issues</p>		
8.1	<p>R/JF – On behalf of Bee Happy and Litter Crew. Litter is a big issue and they want to seek help from the community council and police. They would like police to talk to juveniles about littering such as giving out warnings, but JF has had little success discussing with police as an individual and sought HCC support.</p>		
8.2	<p>RC/DM asked if they could have police in school to talk to year groups.</p>		
8.3	<p>IA - will contact the Community Police Inspector.</p>	IA	ASAP
8.4	<p>KM - Should CCTV be implemented in parks to identify people littering? IA – there have been issues in the past with resistance to CCTV in purely residential areas.</p>		

Item	Description	Action By	Due Date
9.0	Action Log		
	IA provided an overview of the updated Action Log		
	<u>Service buses</u>		
9.1	IA commented that this matter is critical to what HCC wish to achieve for the community. Without an effective public transport system, it isn't possible to reduce individual vehicle usage by residents.		
9.2	IA reported that he had received assurances at the Local Partnership Meeting that all councillors, across parties, in Renfrewshire are onboard with improving the bus service. The councillors present agreed this is the case.	Note	
9.2	IA and JM met with Gavin Newlands, MP, on 8 th December when he assured them, he would do what he could to address the issue by contacting the Transport Minister and other agencies.	Note	
9.3	IA has received assurances from Tom Arthur, MSP, and Neil Bibby, MSP, that they will raise the issue with the Transport Minister.	Note	
9.4	IA had received correspondence from the office of the Transport Minister to the effect that any issues should be raised with the operator or the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) as the Scottish Government do not have direct involvement.	Note	
9.5	IA had a meeting with SPT on 17 th January with the Head of Bus Strategy and Delivery, and the Network Analysis & Design Manager. They agreed that services have been cut across the SPT area and their concern is availability and affordability. 80% of the mileage across the network is covered by three main operators. There is no control over them cutting routes or reducing service on their purely commercial routes, but they are now required to inform SPT when they do so to allow discussion and intervention where necessary. SPT are not allowed to share any of the information with other bodies without the operator's permission. At present the SPT budget is £14m which allows them to subsidise about 10% of the mileage across the network. All operators tend to work a policy of keeping driver numbers below requirements and making up with overtime, but all are now experiencing a shortage of drivers with a drift towards the better wages provided by hauliers.	Note	
9.6	SPT have produced a case for change document highlighting the shortfalls of the present system and intend publishing their proposed way ahead in March. They assured IA that this report will not be "Glasgow		

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<p>9.7</p> <p>9.8</p> <p>9.9</p> <p>9.10</p> <p>9.11</p> <p>9.12</p>	<p>centric” but will cover their whole area. The bottom line is that they need funding to achieve effective change and that funding is provided by already stretched local authorities.</p> <p>They will look at issues raised by HCC regarding the timing of the 1/1A and 2/2A routes through Houston and with the connections for buses through Houston to connect to buses into Paisley at Linwood.</p> <p>Question – is there a government requirement in supplying a route to hospitals?</p> <p>IA – no, if the route is purely commercial the operator can run it as they please and aren’t obliged to provide a level of service.</p> <p>RC/AD - The council have spoken to other areas and there is a desire for community buses, but it is expensive.</p> <p><u>Website and Social Media</u></p> <p>IA met with 4th year students and Murdo McKinnon from Gryffe High School and explained the needs of HCC to update the web page. The students are engaged in prelims at present but anticipate providing a layout for the next meeting. The students are keen to assist HCC in utilising other social media platforms.</p> <p><u>Barochan Road Development</u></p> <p>It is regrettable that Stuart Milne has gone into administration, and it will impact locally with sites shut down nearby. The land at Barochan Road is, however, still on the Renfrewshire Council Development Plan, so still needs to be monitored.</p> <p><u>Solar Farm</u></p> <p>Gareth Gardener from Elgin Energy has agreed to fly up and go over the plans for the benefit of new community councillors. The emphasis of HCC will be on the environmental impact, the need to maintain rights of way and the proposed community payback options.</p>	<p>Note</p> <p>IA JM</p> <p>Note</p> <p>Note</p> <p>IA GHS/MM</p> <p>Note</p> <p>Note</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p>
<p>10.0</p> <p>10.1</p>	<p>Connecting Houston – DD</p> <p>DD and IA had a positive meeting with Houston Farms about the land required to provide a cycle and walking route from Houston to Bridge of Weir. The proposal would be for a route similar to that between Bishopton and Renfrew. Houston Farms are supportive of the project</p>		

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10.2	and would seek a simple agreement for use of the land rather than purchase. Costings for the project are unclear but the bulk likely to be provided by Sustrans/Transport Scotland with, hopefully, local authority and commercial support. DD will seek information on the cost per metre of the path from Bishopton to Renfrew.	Note DD	
10.3	Awaiting response from Peter Leslie on next steps.	DD	
11.0	Planning 23/068/PP – 63 Crosslee Crescent		
11.1	Information circulated and remote consultation carried out via email and social media as application came in after last meeting with deadline before this one.		
11.2	HCC are not opposed to the development in principal but there are elements that should be considered such as visual, traffic and noise impact. Full submission attached (Appendix C).	Note	
12.0	Local Place Plan – DD		
12.1	There hasn't been much progress over the festive break with a need to progress Connecting Houston and other pressing planning issues, but it will be back to full progress now.	Note	
13.0	Local Partnership Meeting – The Villages – IA		
13.1	IA explained a little about the purpose of the Local Partnership Meetings for the benefit of new members. It allows organisations from villages across Renfrewshire to discuss and address common issues. It is also attended by all the local councillors.		
13.2	Interesting inputs were received on tourism within Renfrewshire and on courses provided within the villages. There was a consensus however that those areas, along with many others, are severely hampered by poor public transport.		
13.3	Cllr Robert Innes assured all those present that public transport, and the buses specifically are a priority for all councillors within Renfrewshire and that there is cross part agreement that the issues must be addressed.	Note	

Item	Description	Action By	Due Date
14.0	Christmas Lights Display and Switch on De-Brief – TH		
14.1	TH expressed massive thanks to members of the sub-committee.		
14.2	The event generated a good community spirit and was very well received but the sub-committee have discussed improvements for the coming year.		
14.3	The date should be agreed sooner to allow earlier engagement with the community.		
14.4	The road closure at North Street should be extended further up Barochan Road.		
14.4	A school's competition should be continued but changed to something more manageable. The present process of purchasing expensive slides and changing manually is both costly and labour intensive.		
14.5	Efforts should be made to get teenagers more engaged with the event.		
14.6	The possibility of having stalls in the adjacent pub car parks should be investigated.		
14.7	A project plan has been completed to be used for future events.	Note	
15.8	The event was a great success and showed a surplus of £300 which will be invested in community projects.	Note	
15.0	Future Projects - IA		
15.1	Efforts to engage with the community for project ideas have been largely unsuccessful with no response on social media. However, there have been a few ideas brought forward from the community and HCC that merit further progression.	Note	
15.2	Frankie Greenwood from Houston Kirk suggested that Houston could become a dementia friendly neighbourhood. IA had carried out some basic research and it involves educating businesses and residents in the issues surrounding dementia and providing support for those who may be struggling. This type of support can allow sufferers to remain engaged for longer, knowing they will be supported when out of their homes. HCC is supportive of the concept and GD will liaise with Frankie Greenwood as he already works with her with regards to dementia support. He will report to the next meeting. – Action Log.	GD	21/02/24

Item	Description	Action By	Due Date
15.3	RM had previously suggested providing film shows for the elderly showing classic films and providing teas or lunch. He suggested involving S.6 students doing media and film to assist with setting up and running, allowing them to engage with senior citizens. HCC agreed with the proposals and TH offered to assist, they will report to the next meeting. – Action Log.	RM TH	21/02/24
15.4	IA raised concern that HCC should try to engage more with young people and members agreed. FM will talk to Gryffe 6 th year pupils about ideas to support teenagers in the community. It was stressed that the need was to identify what they want to do and would attend as previous attempts failed in that area. IA commented that 6 th year pupils had previously addressed HCC directly and were always well received. – Action Log.	FM	ASAP
15.5	GW suggested that HCC should be running some form of event in the summer months to compliment the winter lights switch on. Members agreed and it was suggested there could be a tie in with the Houston Show and Kirk Carnival. GW agreed to investigate the options and report back. – Action Log.	GW	21/02/24
15.6	IA commented that previous projects had been well received and well used, such as the outdoor gym at Gryfe Park. DD suggested there may be scope to get the running track back in use to compliment the facility and members agreed this should also be considered. – Action Log.	DD IA	ASAP
15.7	IA stressed that it is important to get projects up and running to deliver within realistic timescales. In the past projects have not been take forward because they were not committed to soon enough.	Note	
16.0	Emails and Communication		
16.1	Notification received and circulated to members that Bee Happy are seeking an asset transfer to increase the size of the orchard at Manse Crescent to include a nuttery. HCC have no objections.	Note	
16.2	Notification received and circulated to members when work was commencing on the “Helicopter Park” at South Mound. This development had been progressed by enthusiastic volunteers and Renfrewshire Council without involvement by HCC.	Note	
16.3	A scoping request was received and circulated to members regarding a proposed area of commercial woodland overlooking the cycle path at Scart Farm, Bridge of Weir. While the area is within the HCC		

Item	Description	Action By	Due Date
	boundary it has little impact on our residents as it will be fully masked by existing planting. Bridge of Weir Community Council have responded.	Note	
17.0	AOB		
17.1	IA had been contacted by a representative from the Carrick Centre who raised concerns with WH being the HCC representative. After discussion a vote was taken, and it was decided WH should remain the representative as he is best placed to understand the working of the centre. The representative had also asked if HCC could provide two representatives to their board, KM agreed to be the second representative.	WH KM	
17.2	IA had been contacted by the History Society. They have produced a historic walking route around Houston and are presently considering if they should produce a booklet or a QR code download. They are seeking HCC support and IA suggested they come along to a future meeting and lay out their proposal.	Note	
17.3	IA announced that DD had agreed to take on the role of Vice Chair to chair any meetings where IA is absent. Members welcomed this and agreed his appointment, acknowledging that he is already managing a large portfolio for HCC.	Note	
18.0	Date and Time of next meeting Wednesday 21 st February at 7.30pm within the Carrick Centre.		
19.0	Remote Approval 22 nd January, 2024 Approved: Alison Calderwood Seconded: Barry Walker		

Appendix A



HOUSTON & CROSSLEE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING JAN2024

Update from Previous Meeting

Crime Summary

Between 1st December and 31st December 2023 there have been a total of four recorded crimes, two have so far been detected.

CRIME/OFFENCES OF NOTE	NUMBER	DETECTED	CONTEXT
Theft by Housebreaking/Attempt	0	0	
Theft	0	0	
Robbery	1	1	1 at house
Serious Assault	0	0	
Common Assault	0	0	
Drug Offences	0	0	
Anti-Social (breach of the peace/vandalism/street drinking)	1	0	1 x break windows
Road Traffic Offences	2	1	1 x fail to report r.t.c., 1 x drink driving
Other	0	0	

Crime Trends and Policing Priorities

Community Police Report

(Include focus of activity, any initiatives, partnership working)

Appendix B

Houston Community Council Treasurer's Report

1st to 30th November 2023

Opening Balance	£9243.40
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Income

Sponsor	100.00
Sponsor	150.00
Sponsor	150.00
Renfrewshire Council	796.00
Sponsor	150.00
Sponsor	150.00
Sponsor	100.00
Sponsor	150.00
Sponsor	150.00

Total	£1896.00
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Expenditure

HOST (rent)	27.00
Insurance (Keegan & Pennykid)	34.70
HCC secretary	50.00
Hamper Raffle Prize (Fireworks)	15.00

Total	£126.70
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Closing Balance	£11,012.70
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As per electronic statement to 30/11/2023

Houston Community Council

Treasurer's Report

1st to 31st December 2023

Opening Balance	£11,012.70
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Income

Raffle sales	1220.55
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Total	£1220.55
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Expenditure

First Aid Support (Fireworks)	177.60
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B&Q (Fireworks)	29.00
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HOST (rent)	27.00
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Insurance (Keegan & Pennykid)	34.70
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Kids Competition Vouchers (Fireworks)	40.00
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Salvation Army (Fireworks)	150.00
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Total	£458.30
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Closing Balance	£11,774.95
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As per electronic statement to 31/12/2023

Appendix C

Ref 23/0648/PP | Alterations and extension of shopping parade in association with the formation one Class 1a retail store and retention of one hot-food takeaway (sui generis), including installation of shopfront, rear extension and external plant | 63 Crosslee Crescent Houston Johnstone PA67DT

I represent Houston Community Council (HCC) regarding the proposed alterations to the above local retail parade.

In general, HCC welcome the proposal as it fits in well with the Scottish Government's ambitions for 20-minute neighbourhoods, sustainable local communities, and active travel. The community council also considers it beneficial for local jobs and Houston's micro-economy by improving customer choice and minimising the 'leakage' of spend from our community to other centres. Given Houston's ageing population and particularly those without access to a car, the proposal will enhance local choice.

HCC welcomes the proposed uplift in quality and the general environment of the parade, which is long overdue.

HCC does have some concerns raised by residents and positive suggestions which it hopes Renfrewshire Council and the applicant can consider: -

- 1) The local retail centre and Houston generally is very car oriented. With the arrival of Sainsbury's and the increased floorplan of convenience retail, the community council believes this will intensify car use in the area and attract traffic from neighbouring villages. With the loss of Weir Dry Cleaners and Whispers and the replacement of 'low footfall' uses with a 'high footfall' Class 1A convenience retail unit, the applicant should be required to submit an independent traffic impact assessment. At present a right turn from the shopping complex onto the B789 Houston Road is challenging at peak times and the arrival of Sainsbury's will likely worsen this. As a solution, the applicant and Council should consider additional traffic calming measures on the B789 Houston Road and better sight line measures to mitigate this. It will be a particular concern during peak primary school pick up times when large numbers of parents use the car park.
- 2) The car park for the shopping parade is in serious need of repair both in terms of lighting and resurfacing. This should be a requirement of permission alongside consideration of the sufficiency of parking to accommodate the additional traffic generation when it already runs at full capacity on occasion.
- 3) HCC is keen to promote active travel within Houston, the recent introduction of pedestrian crossings at Quarry Brae and south of the site on the B879 Houston Road have been important first steps in achieving this along with the delivery of the SWECO 'gateway' proposals. HCC urges Renfrewshire Council and the applicant to consider further measures to assist this, for example with the introduction of pedestrian crossing points and paths from the Cala Development at Woodend House towards Ardgyffe Sport Hub and from the foot of Neuk Crescent towards Leeburn. It would also welcome additional crossing and footpaths on Bridge of Weir Road from Gryffe High School towards Houston Primary School, the route commonly used by school pupils to access the shopping parade. (detailed proposals have been highlighted within the Connecting Houston Study of 2022 which the applicant should use to help inform their proposals)

- 4) In the wider context, in improving active travel connectivity to the proposed Sainsbury's, HCC encourages action by the Council in resolving the longstanding maintenance issues relating to the 'metal bridge' at Ardgryfe Crescent (link between Craigends and Ardgryffe) and 'the wooden bridge' at Crosslee Park (link between Crosslee and Craigends). Without a resolution of these long-term barriers, it will be difficult to secure further active travel to the shopping parade and village centre.
- 5) In mitigating traffic impact HCC recommends the introduction of cycle infrastructure within the local retail centre.
- 6) In securing greener travel, HCC recommends the introduction of appropriate EV charging points.
- 7) In meeting DDA obligations HCC recommends the provision of dedicated disabled parking spaces be a requirement and, in improving DDA compliance, attention should be given to the maintenance and improvement of the various steps and ramps around the shopping parade to support active travel among those with mobility issues and those who may be pushing a pram.
- 8) HCC recommends improved maintenance of pathways around the centre and better lighting to ensure community safety in the evenings, particularly within the underpass and to the rear of the shops.
- 9) HCC opposes the introduction of illuminated signage in the form of 2m and 3m 'totems' beside the B789 Houston Road which are inappropriate in this 'semi-rural location. This undermines both sightlines and the general "green" feel of the site.
- 10) In improving the appeal of the new centre, HCC recommends consideration be given to the introduction of public art and a refresh of the underpass mural. HCC understands a local artist has offered to provide this service, but restrictions placed by the Council have made it impractical for him to do so, this should be revisited.
- 11) Significant local concern has been expressed regarding the loss of Whispers which has relevant Class 3 and takeaway consent. Its loss will result in a reduction in jobs and choice for the community, this is compounded with the recent closure of the River Inn. HCC notes that a previous application for the site (19/0605/PP) proposed a solution with the creation of a 'takeaway pod' and suggests this proposal be reconsidered.
- 12) Concerns have been expressed by the residents of Crosslee Crescent regarding the noise generated and timings of grocery deliveries. HCC endorses these views and urges Renfrewshire Council to seek an appropriate compromise which immediate neighbours to the site will find satisfactory.

I trust this is of assistance and look forward to hearing how Houston community concerns can be resolved.