

## **Muckhart Conservation Area Appraisal**

### **Comments from the Muckhart Community on the CAA draft of Feb. 2011.**

A group representing the Muckhart community has met to discuss the February 2011 draft CAA. There was agreement that the following points might help to improve further on the draft. It is hoped that they can be incorporated into a final draft which can then go out for full public consultation. Muckhart Community Council is meanwhile prepared to meet with Council officials in order to discuss the points further and help with the editing of the final draft.

- We feel that whilst the February 2011 draft is a distinct improvement on previous drafts, additional content from those previous drafts could be beneficially incorporated in to the final draft. For example, we feel that the content in the 2011 draft on the location of Muckhart could be improved by the addition of content in section 2 of the 2009 draft.
- The sequencing of the content has been referred to in previous comment on the draft and we note that you agree with most of our suggestions. To help the sequencing further, we feel that a useful template for the content might be that found in the Blair Atholl Conservation Area Appraisal. In particular, in that and other CAAs, content relating to 'Setting' 'Trees and Landscaping' and 'Spaces' is dealt with under separate headings rather than a single heading as on page 4 of the 2011 draft and we would endorse that approach.
- We would wish to see a more comprehensive description of the historical development of Muckhart during the 19<sup>th</sup> century during which period the core of the Conservation Area was established.
- We still have concerns about the existing boundary of the CA. The 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey map of the village from 1864 which shows many of the properties in the Conservation Area includes properties which correspond to Hollytree and Mansfield. We have argued on numerous occasions that Hollytree, which is a listed building, should be included in the Conservation Area. We do not agree with the argument, outlined on page 12 of the draft, that Hollytree Lodge and Mansfield are not to be considered integral to the core part of the Conservation Area along the spine of the A91; their existence on the 1864 map would seem sufficient justification for their inclusion.
- We would still want to argue that the whole of the glebe field to the north and west of the church should be included in the Conservation Area. The rationale for its inclusion should be based on its historical importance as a glebe field; it is irrelevant that the stream which runs through the field "is a natural feature in the landscape and forms an appropriate boundary".

- We cannot see why the Conservation Area boundary seems to deliberately include the telephone exchange building when the building has no historical significance. It would be more logical for the boundary to follow the line of the A91 before following the western boundary of the Inn car park.
- We do not agree that “views into the Conservation Area are very limited...” (page4). There are numerous core paths focussed on the Conservation Area and they provide uninterrupted views into the Conservation Area. These views are not marked on the Conservation Area map and neither are views out of the Conservation Area, yet views into and out of the Conservation Area are significant, particularly if additional housing were to be built on the edge of the Conservation Area.
- We feel that more photographs of older buildings etc are required in the CAA. The Muckhart and Glendevon Amenity Society has access to such photographs and would be willing to make them available.
- The main map that is included in the CAA is somewhat cluttered and we feel that it would be better to separate out the key issues on different maps. The Blair Atholl CAA, for example, contains a number of different maps dealing with such features as a townscape analysis showing key views; green areas; the Conservation Area boundary; and areas in need of attention.
- We feel that a more substantial building by building analysis is required in the CAA, particularly of the listed buildings. Again other CAAs provide examples of how this might be done. Such an analysis would emphasise the charm, differences and variations of the individual properties. Furthermore, without such an analysis the monitoring and review exercise, outlined on page 14, becomes less valid.
- A sensitivity analysis is required, particularly in relation to the setting of the Conservation Area. The edges of the Muckhart Conservation Area are particularly sensitive to potential development and it would be important that any future development immediately outside the Conservation Area preserves and enhances the setting of the Conservation Area itself. The design, scale and landscaping of any development must not adversely affect this setting. Tree belts outwith the Conservation Area equally important to the setting of the Conservation Area and we feel that they require to be analysed more deeply than in the existing draft.
- We feel that the issue of renewable energy issues such as the installation of photovoltaic panels and solar heating panels require to be addressed in the CAA.
- We would argue that a more detailed Action Plan is required which perhaps addressed the issue of potential funding. Not all funds required for improvements to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area need to flow from Council budgets and we would welcome the opportunity to work with the Council on

identifying projects on which the Muckhart Community may take a lead. The development of a 'village square' adjacent to the Coronation Hall is an example of such a project

- Finally we believe that a more radical approach to the enhancement of that Main Street and traffic management might be looked at. Villages are for people, and we would welcome changes that ensured that drivers did not dominate the village but which, at the same time, resulted in improvements to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. We have been advised that the policy statement by the Scottish Government, 'Designing Streets' would make a useful starting point for a discussion on this issue.

We trust that the above comments are useful and we look forward to working with the Council on finalising the Muckhart Conservation Area Appraisal.

Stuart Dean. Secretary, Muckhart Community Council