

Dean Village News

Issue 170 Spring 2015
www.deanvillage.org

Planning Applications in Dean Village

The last half of 2014 has been a busy time for planning applications. The committee of the Dean Village Association has been keeping a close eye on them and have submitted comments, as have many other residents of Dean Village. Summarised below are the existing relevant applications. They may be viewed by going on to the City of Edinburgh's website, and then into the planning section. Enter the planning application number, and this will get you to the plan itself. The number of documents associated with the plan is listed. Click on the number and the list of documents will be revealed. Click on the individual document to view it.

Planning application reference number 14/05243/FUL: -

Conversion of existing office buildings and a separate garage/office into residential dwellings at 10 Bell's Brae. This planning application was submitted 18th December 2014 and is pending consideration.

RMJM Ltd has now moved into smaller offices on the other side of the courtyard. The offices which stretch along Miller Row are now empty. The plans show that the main office building will be converted into seven dwellings. As a result six new doors will be created along Miller Row. The garage building will have spaces for ten cars at the bottom level, and eight on the next level. Residential dwellings will

(Continued on page 2)

be built partly on this level and on the two levels above. 23 documents showing the existing and proposed plans are available for viewing.

Planning application reference number 14/02924/FUL: - this application, submitted on 21st July 2014, is for a dwelling house at the end of Belford Mews, past numbers 11 and 11a. An existing tree and mature plants would need to be removed. The plan shows the house following the sloping contour of the hill down to the river, so that at the Mews there is one level, with two and three levels as the building follows down the slope. The new building would impede the views from some of the apartments in 48 Belford Road. The application claims that the plan is not substantially different from a previous application number 08/02592/FUL: - There are 38 documents to view, including 12 objections.

The objections are a) that the modern building style is not consistent with that expected in Victorian Belford Mews, b) that the previous plan was for a two-storey non-habited studio, not a three- or four-bedroom three storey house, c) that there may be safety considerations with driving piles into the river bank, considering the example of the unstable land by a building on the opposite side of the river, d) that there were already access and parking problems in Belford Mews, e) that the river bank is a sensitive site on the Water of Leith and there is a need to protect riverside landscape, f) that the heavily wooded slopes enhance the tranquil atmosphere and g) that the building would intrude on the aspect viewed from the houses on Damside.

The application is pending consideration

Planning application reference number 14/04512/FUL: - Demolition of Belford House and conversion of Douglas House for residential development and other uses. This application was received on 30th October 2014 and is pending consideration.

This development has been in the planning stage for a very long time,

(Continued on page 3)

after the original plans of AMA Ltd were rejected by the Reporter on appeal in April 2011. Consultation events with residents were held and these new plans developed. While not receiving universal acclaim, they were considered far better than the original plans. The main success of the consultations was the retention of the Douglas House facade. Other improvements include a variety of separate buildings of different heights, instead of the original long uniform building. There is access to the internal gardens through arched porticos. However the building line is along Belford Road, although set back a little at the corner with Belford Mews and Sunbury Mews.

There are 69 documents associated with this application.

Planning application reference number 14/01450/FUL: -

The original application (05/00675/FUL) on 1st August 2005 by Caledonian Scottish Investments Ltd was for permission to build twenty flats with underground parking for ten cars on the site of the old Dean Free Church at 3/4 Belford Road. (Later the church became an artist's studio and then a joinery, but burnt down in 1954). Planning permission was granted on 19th January 2006 for a five-year period, providing that archaeological assessments were made on the site.

After nearly five years had elapsed a further application was made (10/02443/FUL) on 23rd August 2010 to extend permission for a further three years. This was necessary because the economic recession had made the development non-viable. Permission was granted, but the archaeological survey, which had not been carried out, was necessary. In January 2014 trenches were dug on the site and a report was made (14/04445/CLP). The footprint of the church was found, and a substantial fragment of the walls remains. However it would be necessary that all surviving remnants be cleared before development could take place. This latest planning application (see reference above) asks for a further three year extension, as the recession has continued, but there are signs of recovery. The application is under consideration.

My Friends in the Cemetery XXII by David Perry

The Grants of Rothiemurcus

Sir John Peter Grant, MP (21st September 1774 to 17th May 1848)

William Patrick Grant (19th December 1798 to 26th May 1874)

Jane Grant, (17th June 1800 to 25th April 1863)

The first Grant to style himself “of Rothiemurcus” was James, who died in 1553. Rothiemurcus stayed in the family from then on, helped by a deed of entail by the 8th laird, Patrick, which meant that it was impossible to sell the estate. This became very important in the life of the generation of Grants listed above.

John Peter Grant was heir to the estate of Rothiemurcus by Aviemore in Invernesshire, consisting of a number of farms and the main house, called The Doune. In early life he was well off. He had an inheritance, and was a practising lawyer at the Bar in Edinburgh. In 1796, aged 21, he married and his first child, daughter Elizabeth, was born in Charlotte Square the following year when there were only three houses there. Elizabeth described her family life “Memoirs of a Highland Lady”.

William Patrick was born in 1798 followed by Jane Grant in 1800 who, according to Elizabeth, was mother’s pet. In 1802, the family moved to London, as John Peter wished to join the English Bar, and took rooms in Lincoln’s Inn. There, in 1803, Mary Grant was born. Summers were spent at The Doune, and winters in London. The last member of this family, also called John Peter, was born in 1807. However the elder John Peter was not called to the English Bar, and so sought election to Parliament. This was an extremely expensive business, and in 1811 he was elected as MP of the rotten borough of Great Grimsby. In 1813, parliament was dissolved, and he had to seek re-election. Four candidates stood, and only two were elected. Unfortunately, he succeeded.

In 1814 the family moved back to Edinburgh as John Peter needed money, and he resumed at the Scottish Bar. Fees came in, but not enough to support the family’s life-style. They took a house in Heriot Row. Elizabeth describes the gardens between Heriot Row and Queen’s Street as not prettily laid out, but a long slope of unsightly grass for the use of washerwomen. She became very

fond of a friend of her brother, but her mother did not approve, describing him as not equal to a Grant of Rothiemurcus. William Patrick had begun life at the Bar, but in 1820 he gave this up and concentrated on managing Rothiemurcus, which was much more to his liking. He married Sarah Elizabeth Siddons, daughter of Henry Siddons (b 1774), himself the son of Sarah Siddons née Kemble, famous actress in the late 18th/early 19th century.

In 1827, John Peter was knighted. By this time he had been twice MP for Tavistock and caused quite a nuisance of himself in Parliament. But this constituency was wanted by his patron, the Duke of Bedford, for his son. JP was now in dire financial straits and greatly in debt.

William was in trouble himself. He had been extravagant at University, believing himself to be the heir of a wealthy man. He had taken on his father's debts while running Rothiemurcus, some £60,000. So when he went to Edinburgh he was jailed for his debts. Some Rothiemurcus land was sold off. Jane's husband lent money. The sister's contributed by writing articles for journals.

But the luck of John Peter turned. He had managed to do a favour for King George IV, (one story is that JP gave him a case of malt whisky) and he was awarded the Puisne judgeship in Bombay.

However, money had to be found for the family's journey to India. The tickets and cabins had been bought by the Government. But the journey to the ship at Portsmouth had to be accomplished. On arriving in Edinburgh their carriage was seized by creditors. In London they were besieged by many more. But John Peter could not be relied on to keep quiet, so he and son John fled to France. The rest of the family joined the ship in Portsmouth, and collected the two Johns en route.

John Peter served as a judge in India until 1848. On a journey back to England he died at sea. Blackwood's Magazine said "he was one of those brilliant men not born to succeed". William had stayed on at Rothiemurcus until his death in 1874. His wife died the following year "She hath done what she could" is inscribed on their stone. Young John Peter became Governor of Bengal, later the Governor of Jamaica and then master of Rothiemurcus.

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Dean Village Events

Village Walks: These will take place on Thursday June 11th, Tuesday 30th June and Tuesday 21st July. Meet by Kirkbrae House at the top of Bell's Brae at 7.15pm. Charge - £3 per adult.

Cemetery Walks: These will be on Sundays June 21st, July 12th and July 26th. Meet at the Cemetery gates at the top of Dean Path at 2.30pm. Charge £4 per adult, of which £1 goes to the Dean Cemetery Trust.

St Bernard's Well: Last summer, collections at the Well raised £175.93, donations passed on to the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust in recognition of their restoration work here, The Well will reopen on the first Sundays of the summer months viz: May 3rd, June 7th, July 5th and August 2nd and the Sundays of the Edinburgh Festival, August 16th, 23rd and 30th, all from noon till 3pm. Entry is free.

Schoolyard Information Board

In the spring of last year the Dean Village Association applied to the Inverleith Neighbourhood Partnership for a grant to place an information board in the newly refurbished Schoolyard. This was to be a free-standing board in an iron frame such as can be found by the Water of Leith at Murrayfield. The board would detail the history of many of the buildings in the village for the benefit of visitors and the ever-changing resident population. A quotation was obtained and the Partnership awarded a grant of £2436 to cover the full cost of manufacturing and installing the board in the Schoolyard.

Following subsequent discussions between the Parks Planning Department of the Council and the Dean Village Association it was decided that a better option was to fix the board to the inside of the railings of the Schoolyard that border Damside. This change would result in a considerable saving in costs. Design of the board, shown in the accompanying insert, a co-operative effort involving the Council and the Association, was completed in October. The board was installed in the first week of March.

Schoolyard Notice Board

At a meeting in January the committee of the Dean Village Association decided to make a request to the Inverleith Neighbourhood Partnership that the surplus grant be spent on other items. These were a) a plaque that commemorated the donation of the estate of the late Craig Richards of their half ownership of the Schoolyard, b) a lockable notice board for the benefit of residents, and c) a “Welcome to the Schoolyard” sign containing on “i” to indicate to visitors that information was available here. A fresh grant application was made to the Partnership which was approved at a meeting in February. The plaque is already in place, and the other items will be ready shortly.

Any local business, or resident, who would like to display a notice for the attention of other residents, should apply to the Secretary of the Dean Village Association. Contact details are on the back page.

Conservation of Dean Valley

On Monday 7th January 2013 a meeting of interested parties was convened by the Garden History Society for Scotland with a view to establishing an overall management policy of the environment of the Dean Valley between Stockbridge and Dean Village. There were already management plans in place, from the Water of Leith Trust and the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust (EWHT) and the City of Edinburgh Council had a number of policies in place for the management of green areas. A steering group was set up consisting of Peter Burman, Kristina Taylor and Andrew Kerr, to take forward the formation of an integrated management plan with the ultimate object of applying for a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The steering group reported to a public meeting held on 16th March 2013. The EWHT would commission Peter McGowan, a landscape architect, on behalf of the group to produce a draft statement covering all aspects of conservation on all properties, public and private within the valley. This was financed by the City of Edinburgh Council and Historic Scotland.

At a meeting on 26th February 2015 this document was presented to interested parties. It was stressed that the three managed gardens, Dean, Belgrave Crescent and Moray Park were included in the assessment, as they were an important part of the landscape. However these gardens have separate managements and are very well tended, so are not included in the conservation issues of the river valley and walkway. However, there may be recommendations made to them about management of trees and vegetation with regard to views across the valley. The main issues within Dean Valley are: a) management of the valley with regard to nature conservation and bio-diversity, b) policies for tree and woodland management, and c) the conditions of walls, fences and buildings within the valley.

The meeting was shown drawings of the valley in the 1790s and onwards until photos became available in the 1850s. These show very little vegetation along the river valley, but substantial woodland on the Moray Park side. This lack of vegetation was probably affected by two sewers that were constructed along the length of the river under the riverbed in 1864 and in 1889. A significant event was the building of Telford's Dean Bridge in 1832. Then in the 1870s, probably influenced by the view from Dean Bridge, the Dean Gardens were established. Photographs of the 1920s show well-manicured gardens, particularly around St. Bernard Well. In past times it was possible to have great views anywhere along the Water of Leith in the valley towards either Dean Bridge or St. Bernard's Well and St. Bernard's Bridge. Nowadays there are plenty of self-seeded trees, many completely covered in ivy and views along the river are severely impeded.

Some particular instances were highlighted. The viewpoint at Lindsay's Mill on

Miller Row, where the three millstones are situated, was specifically built in the 1970s so that walkers had good, unimpeded views of Dean Bridge one way and the lower weir the other. Now, even in winter, trees obscure the view. Similarly in Miller Row by Dean Bridge, there is a path down to the riverside. But again trees impede the view in any direction. Also along Miller Row there are trees growing out of the riverbank whose roots are disrupting the walkway's surface. At St. Bernard's Well this area was once beautifully manicured, but now needs attention.

The steering group wishes to apply for a Heritage Lottery grant to cover the cost of conservation work. But first it was necessary to approve the final version of the report presented at this meeting. The information given at the meeting was only a very small part of the document that was produced for EWHT. The report is extensive and covers many aspects of the history and environment of Dean Valley with many drawings and photos. It is well worth viewing and if anyone wishes to see the report, please contact the Secretary (details on the last page) and he will e-mail you the report in its entirety. A time period of three months was decided to allow all to digest the report and submit amendments and suggestions.

The meeting also decided to set up a feasibility study as soon as possible in order to identify the principle objectives and to estimate costings. These would be essential in any lottery application. Robert Barnham, retired architect, who has had extensive experience of working with community groups on projects of this nature, gave a talk on how best to proceed with this aspect. He underlined the fact that the lottery grant, if awarded, provided the capital for the work envisaged. But it was also important to have an income stream so that the area could be kept up in perpetuity. Reference was made to the possibility of placing a micro hydro-electric generator under the lower weir of Dean Village. He referred to the feasibility study that had already been done for the Dean Village Association in 2010. (The Association had abandoned this idea as the installation cost was £950,000, and the income received would be largely outweighed by the loan costs of borrowing the money.) However, this option should now be re-assessed as part of the feasibility study. The meeting voted to include Robert Burnham in the Steering Group.

There will be a further meeting of stakeholders and interested parties when the final report was agreed and the feasibility study completed.

Water of Leith Clean-up - Volunteers wanted

On Sunday, 26th April the Dean Village Association will be participating in the annual Water of Leith Clean-up. From Belford Bridge to Dean Bridge we remove rubbish and debris from the river banks and the river itself. Meet at the Schoolyard in the centre of Dean Village at 10.00 am. Equipment will be provided.

2015 Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given of the forty-fourth Annual General Meeting of the Dean Village Association to be held at the Dean Parish Church Hall on Wednesday 29th April at 7,30pm.

Agenda

1. Apologies
- 2 Minutes of the forty-third AGM
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Chairman's Report
- 5 Secretary's Report
- 6 Treasurer's Report
- 7 Election of Office Bearers
 - a) Chairman - Barry Mackay
 - b) Vice Chairman - Javier Albert
 - c) Secretary - David Perry
 - d) Treasurer - Vacant

Election of Committee Members:

Caroline Gerard, Conrad Hughes, Mignonne Khazaka, Pat Sinclair

- 8 Membership Fees
- 9 The Schoolyard
- 10 Dean Valley Environmental Project
- 11 Any other business

There will now be a break of 10 minutes

Councillor Lesley Hinds will give a talk on the work of the Inverleith Neighbourhood Partnership, which financed the production and installation of the Information Board and Notice Board.

.....
The Dean Village Association needs new members to come on the committee to ensure that our work can continue far into the future. In particular, there is a vacancy for a Treasurer.

The objects of the Association are:- the maintenance and improvement of the amenity of the Dean Village Conservation Area, the protection and preservation of the landscape and historical and architectural heritage, and the promotion of community interests of residents. We need to keep vigilant so that our environment is kept up to standard.



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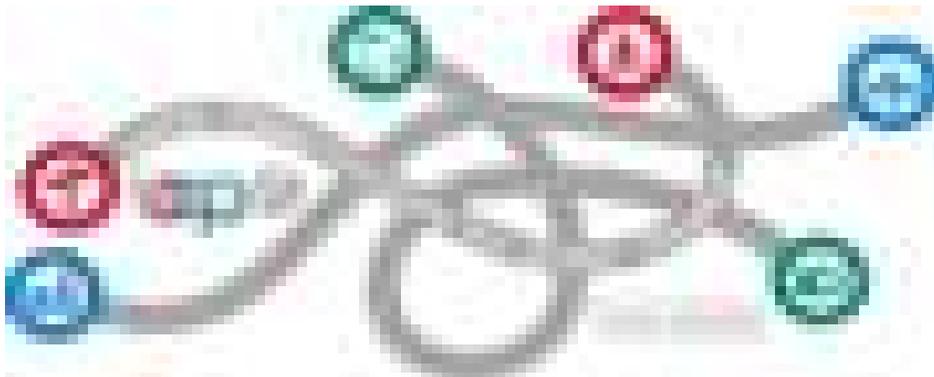
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New phone line launched for the over 65s

In October the Volunteer Centre Edinburgh launched a new dedicated phone line for people aged 65 and over living in the North West and South East Edinburgh giving easy access to information on a huge range of activities open to them.

Using a dedicated direct dial number **0131 603 8311**, lines will be open from 10am to 2pm Monday to Friday with a call back service outside of these times. There are trained friendly volunteers taking calls and chatting through options along with an e-mail service on **loops@volunteeredinburgh.org.uk**.

The new phone line aims to help people to maintain a good quality of life by giving access to information on activities which can help keep us happy and healthy as well as giving us a great excuse to socialise.

The phone line is part of the Local Opportunities for Older People, or LOOPs initiative which is piloting a variety of innovative, new services across Edinburgh aimed at encouraging people 65 plus.

The phone line is hoping to reach out to as many as possible to tackle the effects of loneliness and isolation while improving the quality of life for as many as possible.

Should you require any further information, please contact

**Heather Yang on 0131 603 5144 or
heather.yang@volunteeredinburgh.org.uk**

Many thanks



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Winter Nature Notes by Barbara Mackay

Well, we survived the winter! Not too bad if you got hold of something during the fierce gales. It is still cold at the time of writing but spring flowers have emerged. There is a white blanket of snowdrops besides the steps up to Dean Path. Glossy, yellow, star-shaped, low growing celandines are amongst the first flowers to poke through. These, not daffodils, were Wordsworth's favourite flowers. Buds are appearing on some trees and bushes, a healthy sign of spring.

Now to the birds: it has been quite busy along the river here in Dean. "Our" goosanders appeared again for a stately sail upriver, then shortly afterwards the male came back alone. I think they had fallen out because his aquatic display was of Olympic standard. He swam, dived, strutted, all to the annoyance of the mallards, especially the males, who did not care for this handsome trespasser. The females simply ignored him. "He's not really one of us, he's really a goose with a little bit of duck in him" they seemed to be saying as they brushed past. A moorhen was spotted, investigating the shallow edges for food and possibly nest-building material. Great artistry goes into their nests as they use the debris of our life - bits of paper, bottle tops and pieces of polythene. A long-tailed tit was the next visitor on her own but followed a few days later by two very small fledglings. We haven't seen them since. Another single parent was a male blackcap, its cap still dull and poorly defined. The blackcap is the true herald of spring and the lead singer of the avian opera, though I have not heard it perform as yet.

A problem has arisen with our feeders. According to recent research, the presence of grey squirrels deters birds. Since we have a peanut feeder for them and several bird feeders I am not sure what to do. Last year there were markedly fewer birds which I put down to the damage to the trees opposite by the gales but now I am wondering. The greys who call here are very bright and even seem to talk back to me.

I hope you have a Happy Easter. If you are elderly, stay indoors in the high winds and see what is going on through your window. Listen to the blackbirds, and watch the blue tits, robins and sparrows

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Join the Dean Village Association

Yearly membership is £7 (£10 per couple) or life membership at £50 (£75 per couple). There is a concessionary annual rate of £3 single and £5 couple. Membership Secretary - Caroline Gerard.

Dean Village Association

Committee 2014/2015

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Committee members: Pat Sinclair, Conrad Hughes,
Mignonne Khazaka

Dean Village News

The deadline for articles for the next edition of
the News is

16th June 2015

If you would like to submit an article for the News
please e-mail the Editor at dav12per@btinternet.com

Printed on recycled paper by University of
Stirling Graphics and Print Services

Registered Scottish Charity SC000404, Dean Village Association (DVA)