

# COUNCIL BUSINESS

Special Newsletter – Errol Airfield

## Dr. John Hulbert

SNP Councillor for the Central Carse Ward (still!)

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### 240 HOUSES TO BE BUILT BY MORRIS LESLIE

On Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>, at the last Development Control committee meeting before the election, outline consent was granted to Morris Leslie Ltd. to build 240 houses on the airfield. As your local councillor I considered that the scale of the original proposal for 410 houses was much too large, but that a reduced plan would be good for Errol, good for the Carse of Gowrie, and good for Perthshire. I therefore proposed the reduction to 240 houses, and a number of other conditions (see below), and this amended application was supported by councillors from all the political parties by 10 votes to two.

#### NEW HOUSES INEVITABLE

Perth & Kinross is obliged to meet targets for new houses, set by the Scottish Executive. These depend on demand, and that has been very strong in recent years. As a result the latest version of the Draft Local Plan envisages a requirement for 1,500 more houses than planned in the Perth area between 2005 and 2016. Inevitably some of these houses will be in the Carse.

In my newsletter of August 2006 (copies available), I reported that proposals for building over 5,000 houses around Grange have been received during the Local Plan consultation, but I added that I hoped we could restrict the numbers to less than 500. The first two of these massive proposals have just been lodged with the Council, and others will follow.

We will not be able, and should not want, to stop all house-building. I believe that the best way to control it is to support modest proposals from local developers, who will put something back into the community.

#### HOUSES TO RENT

Included in my amendment that the number of houses be restricted to 240, was to condition the offer that the land for 60 of the houses should be donated free to the Fairfield

Housing Association. These houses, free of the burden of the cost of the land, can be built much more economically, and offered at a reasonable rent to local families. These houses are badly needed. There has not been a single Housing Association or “Council” house built in the Carse since I became a councillor. They will enable 60 local families who are struggling to find a house to live in the Carse.

#### JOBS AND INDUSTRIAL LAND

The Perth area is seriously short of industrial land, and this is inhibiting the Perth economy. The proposal includes 40 industrial units of different types, from work-at-home units to major industrial floor space, totalling around 75,000 sq. ft for lease or sale. This will provide great opportunities to entrepreneurs and businesses, and should create around 175 jobs in addition to the 225 already on the airfield.

#### POTENTIAL APPEAL

If this application were refused, an appeal on the grounds that P & K were not making adequate provision for new housing might succeed. In that case the Council would lose control of the application and all of the conditions.

#### £200k FOR COMMUNITY HALL

As a contribution to the recreational facilities in Errol, £200,000 will be paid to Errol Leisure to enable the Hall and its facilities to go ahead.

#### MORRIS LESLIE GROUP HQ

Perth needs to attract and retain the headquarters of major businesses. The Morris Leslie Group consists of 40 companies dispersed across the UK, with many more in England than Scotland. At present its HQ functions are scattered in various buildings in Scone and Errol. A condition of this consent will be that the Morris Leslie Group builds a new HQ and Training Centre for the company at Errol. As well as providing jobs this will anchor the company in Perthshire.

#### OTHER CONDITIONS

**Errol Brick:** It will be a condition that Errol Bricks are used, so safeguarding 27 jobs at the brickworks.

**Low Carse Road:** A foot path/cycle track must be provided.

**The Cutting:** A contribution to the removal of the Cutting will be paid.

**School:** A contribution to the new School will be required and money for play areas etc.

**Car Boot Sale:** This would cease.

**POSTAL VOTE**

Those electors who may be away at work or on holiday, or whose job or other commitments may make it difficult for them to vote may get a

postal or proxy vote. A postal vote form will be sent out about a week before the election. If you are to be away during the whole of the pre-election period you will need a proxy vote. The form for this asks you to nominate someone to vote

on your behalf.

To request a postal or proxy vote telephone the Electoral registration Department on 01738 630303.

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**LAST NEWSLETTER!** The last Full Council meeting was on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March. Nevertheless, I am still a councillor until the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May, and will be attending the Licensing Board and Development Control meetings in April, and I am available to deal with ward problems. I hope you have found the newsletters interesting and useful. If re-elected, I hope to restart them, but they may be different in view of the larger multi-member ward.