Government Agency Step Back from Flamingo Land Application

News Release

Ross Greer MSP

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 Green MSP Ross Greer has branded Flamingo Land’s Loch Lomond project “toxic” after a letter from the Scottish Government revealed that, in a major shift from the first application, their economic development agency will not co-propose the development.

 Controversial plans for development at Balloch – which drew a record 60,000 objections - were lodged in 2018 in the name of “Flamingo Land Limited & Scottish Enterprise” [1]. Following the outcry, a recommendation of refusal from National Park planning officers and a campaign led by Greer and the Scottish Greens, the plans were withdrawn in September 2019.

In December 2020, it was revealed that Flamingo Land and Scottish Enterprise had agreed an extension to their ‘exclusivity agreement’, which means that the land, currently owned by the government agency, will be sold to Flamingo Land should planning permission be granted. No other interested body or group can apply to purchase the land.

In a letter to Ross Greer, Scottish Government Economy Secretary Fiona Hyslop revealed that “Scottish Enterprise will not be a co-applicant in the planning process.”

Greer commented:
“Flamingo Land and their plans have become so toxic that even their closest supporters in government don’t want their name attached. But we shouldn’t be fooled, Scottish Enterprise are still putting work and public money into supporting this second attempt at getting the plans approved. They had the chance to listen to the public and reconsider options such as a community-buyout of the land, but instead they’ve doubled down on a project which was so spectacularly rejected two years ago. The difference this time is that Scottish Enterprise and by extension the Scottish Government clearly want to keep their involvement low-profile.

“It remains to be seen exactly what they’ll propose, but the fact that Flamingo Land’s strongest ally don’t want it lodged in their name shouldn’t fill us with confidence.”

ENDS

[1] <https://eplanning.lochlomond-trossachs.org/OnlinePlanning/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=details&keyVal=P87LTZSIKOU00>

[2] The text of the letter was as follows:

“Dear Ross,

Thank you for your further correspondence of 23 December 2020 regarding future development of land at West Riverside and Drumkinnon Woods, Balloch.

 The decision by Scottish Enterprise to enter into an agreement with Flamingo Land Ltd for the sale of the land is an operational matter for the agency. I understand that Flamingo Land Ltd intends to bring forward revised plans for the site and think it worth reiterating that the sale will only proceed if planning permission is granted for its proposals. Any new valid planning application would be assessed by the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority. It would be assessed against the Local Development Plan, and other material considerations (including those raised in any representations) would be taken into account in deciding the application.

 It is very important that all interested parties, and members of the local community in particular, are able to consider and comment on Flamingo Land’s proposals. As you are aware, further public consultation will be undertaken as part of the new planning application process. I would encourage all those with an interest to participate in that process. It will, of course, involve consultation with all relevant statutory consultees, including on transport issues.

 Scottish Enterprise will not be a co-applicant in the planning process. However, it will continue to respond to any requests for information and is committed to working to support the delivery of any development which benefits the local community and wider economy.”



