

MEDIA RELEASE FROM THE VICTORIA FORUM

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NO MASTERPLAN FOR VICTORIA SITE AN INSULT TO COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY

Local campaigners are demanding the planning application for the former Victoria site be put on hold until an acceptable masterplan document has been submitted and approved.

Sanctuary Homes' failure, contrary to their media statements, to submit the promised masterplan along with their planning application for the Victoria Infirmary site (reported Evening Times 4.10 and The Extra 5.10, search On line planning Glasgow, reference **17/02059/DC and 17/02061/DC**) makes a mockery of city policy and promises made to the community, say local campaigners. They are encouraging local people to make their views known to councillors and planners as soon as possible to meet 31 October deadline for public comments. Sanctuary have submitted no separate masterplan, arguing that their masterplan is embedded in their planning application documents. The new Neighbourhoods and Public Realm Committee, just established by the new administration, is due to consider the Masterplan which must receive approval before the planning application can be considered by the Council.

Forum Chair, Evelyn Silber commented, 'This is really no more than a planning application and as such should be rejected as premature until a separate masterplan has been submitted and approved. There is no evidence-based justification for some of its proposals, for instance for all flats and no houses. We welcome the retention of the Nightingale wards and Lodge (as they have promised from the outset) but they have swept aside most of the community's clearly expressed concerns about the wider neighbourhood impact. Their approach is breathtakingly arrogant and disrespectful both to the Council, which should take a firm line, and to the community.'

Chris Carus, Chair of Mt Florida Community Council, commented, 'This is a critical moment for the Southside. How this site is developed will affect the area for generations – impacting everything from local businesses to school catchments, traffic and the general attractiveness of the area. We urge people to respond to the planning applications by 31st October. We believe they should be rejected until a masterplan has been approved. With almost 400 documents, the developer has made it difficult for residents to understand the development. We will publish a guide to the planning application on our website. You can consult your community council for more information.'

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The Victoria Forum, representing local community councils, has campaigned over the past two years for full public engagement in the development of a masterplan for the former hospital sites. City planning policies have long identified the Vicky site as requiring a masterplan to provide a framework against which the detailed planning proposals can be evaluated. A master plan would consider local housing needs and other important local factors such as traffic, pedestrian safety, school places and play parks - as part of the impact of the huge re-development.

The Forum has set up a website (www.newoldvicky.org), carried out a survey attracting more than 1,000 local responses and held a packed public discussion forum which attracted over 1700 specific comments. The results were passed on to Sanctuary despite their refusal to participate in the open public discussion. The Forum has produced its own masterplan based on these responses (see website) and instigated a working group with officers, chaired by Cllor Archie Graham, to tease out some of the issues that neither Sanctuary nor the city have hitherto taken into account. They are arguing the planning application should be put on hold until Sanctuary produce a proper masterplan document, with evidence in support of the site choices made.

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