

**From:** Chris Breslin  
**Sent:** 22 Jun 2016 08:46:37 +0000  
**To:** seidel, julie  
**Cc:** Katie Hughes  
**Subject:** RE: P/16/0313/FUL

Dear Julie

**Application Ref: P/16/0313/FUL – Siting of Catering Outlet and erection of fence (retrospective) – Kelpies Hub, The Helix, Falkirk.**

Thank you for recently sending Scottish Canals a consultation notice in connection with the above planning application. I trust the following comments will be taken into account in determining the application.

Scottish Canals objects to the application as it does not sit well within such close proximity to the Kelpies. The Kelpies have become an international symbol for Scotland and established this location as a 'must-see' visitor attraction.

The Kelpies project was several years in the making from conception right through to completion and is a model for partnership working and project delivery. The quality of the hot-food outlet does not match the architectural or visitor quality standard of the adjoining Kelpies. We fear that allowing a use and design such as this in close proximity to this attraction will begin to undermine the quality of the visitor destination.

This application is retrospective so it is already evident that the introduction of the hot food outlet has diminished the quality of the setting of the Kelpies visitor attraction. It is situated on the main 'public approach' to the Kelpies for people coming from the Visitor Centre and main car park area. This outlet is now one of the first things visitors see as they make their final approach to this iconic international landmark art installation. The public realm itself was designed to sweep visitors round in front of the Kelpies and present them with a wonderful approach. This approach is now not the quality international experience which was originally envisaged by the partners behind the project.

In addition to the above initial comments we have listed below our concerns highlighting how this proposal does not meet policies contained within the Falkirk Local Development Plan (July 2015).

### **Vision**

Page 7 of the LDP highlights the '*Sustainable Place*' Strategic Objective part of the Vision for the Falkirk area stating that by 2034 '*high quality design will be the norm, rather than the exception, and will be exemplified within the strategic growth areas, out towns and village centres, our conservation areas, the approaches to our towns and the canal corridor.*' This proposal is not of a design quality which will enhance the canal corridor and build towards this future Vision.

### **Spatial Strategy**

The Spatial Strategy for the Local Development Plan earmarks the canals as place making priorities. The Plan states (Page 68) that *'The Council's objective is to work with Scottish Canals to increase the level of use of the canals, thereby enhancing their vitality and realising their economic potential, whilst safeguarding their unique natural and cultural heritage'*. The cultural heritage of the canals is exemplified at the Kelpies and placing a large hot food take-way in front of the Kelpies does not contribute towards meeting this objective.

### **Policy CG02 Greenbelt**

The site itself sits within a Green Belt Policy area. Part of the Green Belt Policy states that it is the purpose of the Green Belt *'to protect the landscape setting of settlements'*. In this case the settlement could be considered to be the Kelpies and associated Visitor Centre. Unfortunately the proposed catering unit does not contribute towards the protection of the landscape setting of this area.

### **Policy D14 Forth & Clyde Canal**

This policy states *'the Council will support: The protection and enhancement of the ..... visual amenity ..... of the canals and their immediate environs, having regard to the detailed policies on these matters contained in the LDP.'* The proposal does not in any way protect the visual amenity of the canal and its immediate environs which in this location were subject to a masterplan and public realm strategy.

The policy also states that *'the Council will support: Appropriate canal-side development which ..... achieves high design standards, particular attention being paid to the relationship of layout and form to the canal and to the sympathetic use of materials and detailing in buildings and canal-side landscaping.'* The proposed

Policy D14 Canals states that *'the local council, in conjunction with Scottish Canals and other key partners will seek to promote sustainable development in relation to recreation, tourism and heritage which includes developments of high design standards, with particular attention being paid to the relationship with the canal and the use of material sympathetic to the canal-side landscaping'*. The proposed outlet does not meet the high design standards expected by this policy and undermines the attempt to create a high quality landscape setting for the Kelpies. The only form of landscaping around the catering unit is in the form of A-board menus and barrels which are laden with condiments.

### **Policy TC04 Food and Drink**

This policy states that *'Proposals for Class 3 uses, hot food takeaways .... Will be encouraged to locate within centres..... or in locations where they are capable of fulfilling a tourism function'*. Whilst it may be demonstrated that the proposed use could meet part of the demand for food at the site, it is fundamentally the wrong kind of offer for the site particularly taking into account the look of the outlet which is not in keeping with the quality of the adjoining visitor attraction.

This policy also states that *'Proposals must demonstrate there will be no adverse impact on the amenity of ..... the surrounding area'*. We believe that the proposed use does have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the site in particular. The temporary look of the outlet does not meet the high standard expected around this national and international tourist attraction

## **Policy D02 Sustainable Design Principles**

*This policy states that 'New development will be required to achieve a high standard of design quality and compliance with principles of sustainable development. Proposals should accord with 2. Urban Design and Landscape Design. The scale, siting and design of new development should respond positively and sympathetically to the site's surroundings, and create buildings and spaces that are attractive, distinctive, welcoming, adaptable and easy to use'.*

The proposed hot food outlet could appear in any location with footfall and has not been designed specifically for this site or taken into account the important surroundings sympathetically. The location and temporary appearance of the outlet does not fulfil the design and place-making aspirations of the site. It was also noted that there was no design statement provided with the application highlighting that little consideration was taken in preparing this application in terms of contributing something positive to the landscape and public realm setting at the Kelpies.

## **Policy D03 Urban Design**

The siting, density and design of new development should create ..... a sense of identity within the development. So much care and attention to detail has been put into the overall masterplan and landscape strategy around the kelpies. This proposal sits at odds with the spirit of the overall masterplan and landscape and public realm layout of the site.

In conclusion Scottish Canals would not wish to see this application gain Full Planning Permission as it would undermine the quality of the landscape setting of the Kelpies and will diminish the quality of this international visitor attraction.

I trust this objection will be taken into account when considering the application.

Please contact me if you require any further information or clarification on any aspect of the above.

Best regards

Christopher Breslin

**Chris Breslin**  
Strategic Planning & Design Manager

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**From:** seidel, julie [<mailto:julie.seidel@falkirk.gov.uk>]

**Sent:** 01 June 2016 09:17

**To:** Chris Breslin <[Chris.Breslin@scottishcanals.co.uk](mailto:Chris.Breslin@scottishcanals.co.uk)>

**Subject:** P/16/0313/FUL

Christopher,

Allan has now left the Council. I am dealing with the application.

I have sent a consultation response to Scottish Canals this morning as requested. The email address I have in our system is: [gordon.mcgregor@scottishcanals.co.uk](mailto:gordon.mcgregor@scottishcanals.co.uk). Can you confirm that this is up to date?

I trust this is of assistance. Kind regards,

*Julie Seidel*

Planning Officer - Development Management - DD 01324 504880

The link below is for the Development Management Survey which we would be grateful if you would complete and submit.

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/dev\\_management](https://www.surveymonkey.com/dev_management)

For information, the undernoted is the direct link to the Scottish Government eplanning website

<https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk/WAM>

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**From:** Chris Breslin [<mailto:Chris.Breslin@scottishcanals.co.uk>]  
**Sent:** 31 May 2016 17:21  
**To:** Shaw, Alistair  
**Subject:** FW: Planning applications - near Kelpies

Alistair

I keep getting bounce-back emails from Allan. Would you mind forwarding please – assuming he is still there.

Many thanks

Christopher

Chris Breslin  
Strategic Planning & Design Manager

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**From:** Chris Breslin  
**Sent:** 31 May 2016 17:08  
**To:** 'Finlayson, Allan' <[allan.finlayson@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:allan.finlayson@falkirk.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** [alistair.shaw@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:alistair.shaw@falkirk.gov.uk)  
**Subject:** FW: Planning applications - near Kelpies

Hi Allan

I hope you are well. I have heard through the grapevine that there is an application (probably on behalf of Falkirk Community Trust) for a burger van or similar close to the Kelpies. Would you be able to confirm and send us a consultation to enable us to comment please?

Many thanks

Christopher

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