**Music and Worship with Malawi.**

Music is central to worship in Malawi. Our partner church at Luwatala has four choirs and they all prepare worship contributions to the Sunday service with choir practice during the week. The choirs sing out to God with such enthusiasm and rhythm.

Helen is the organist and musician at Heriot Church and has played for the services there for 30 years. Representing the parish partnership (Parish of Stow-Heriot with Parish of Luwatala, Zomba), she is going to be traveling out to Malawi in March and will be looking forward to participating in the singing and finding out more about the musical worship. Perhaps she will be encouraging us all to sing some new hymn styles when she returns, finding new ways to rejoice in God’s Grace.

The choirs in Luwatala sang for Stowed-Out: in the virtual performances of 2020. To hear the singing for yourself and see something of Luwatala, view their performance at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_y8T-prmS8>

Helen will also visit Mpata Primary School at Luwatala and take out with her messages from Heriot Primary School. The schools are exploring the opportunity of forming a learning link together.

As we find ways to participate in the World Church we thank our partners in Luwatala for their Christian fellowship.

If you would like to participate, or link your club, school class or group with Luwatala then see our Partnership Page on the Stow-Heriot Church website or email Eve [ehartswood@gmail.com](mailto:ehartswood@gmail.com).

We look forward to hearing more from Helen when she returns. (Photo: Helen meeting Rev. Thomas Nyang’amah at Heriot Church, when he visited from Malawi, in June 2021)



22/01635/PPP | Erection of four dwelling houses with associated infrastructure and access. | Land South Of Crunzion Cottage Earlston Road Stow Galashiels

Crunzion Cottage access rights:

There are five houses, stated in deeds, who have ownership of the private access. The land to the south of Crunzion cottage, as part of the applicant’s farm, is not included amongst the ownership.

The access has already been objected to by three of the five owners of the lane, as stated in their objection comments submitted against this proposal. We request that the advice given by the applicant’s solicitors, Shepherd and Wedderburn, about access rights should be made publically available. This will enable the residents to make a decision about legally contesting the applicants claim to access. Given the cost and stress to residents of trying to gain legal advice, we request that the SBC solicitor / legal team review the documentation and make an independent assessment of the access rights.

Originally the gate to the field was from Crunzion Cottage, but it has been moved about 10m to give direct access to the field.

Right of access does not exclude the issue of lane suitability. This lane is still narrow, steep and there are a list of additional concerns for pedestrian safety raised in the objections by residents. The pedestrian safety of the lane was also a concern expressed by the Parish Council in their objection.

Without access via this tiny lane, the roads and planning consultant would not otherwise give permission for approval of this planning application. This suggests that the main access and development of this site is otherwise unsuitable for development, from a roads and planning perspective.

Parish Council Objection

The Community Council state in their objection that the site (land south of Crunzion Cottage) should not ever be considered for any kind of residential housing development. The council also state that Earlston Road has several pedestrian and vehicle hazards.

**Claim to be an Affordable Housing Development**:

Scottish Government’s Rural and Islands Housing Fund (RIHF)

Land owner wants to use public money from Rural and Islands Housing Fund for the construction costs relating to his proposed development (RIHF to be paid into his own multi-million pound development company CWP). He then states that the housing would then be a long term investment for himself as landowner. The main beneficiary of the project would therefore the landowner / developer, who would gain the benefit of: public money, rent and ownership of four houses.

Firstly – the RIHF funding has not been applied for, so it is not guaranteed.

Secondly – it is only the RIHF funding that would place any obligation on the landowner to conform to affordable housing.

Thirdly - If planning in principle was agreed first, the developer could then develop the site himself without RIHF conditions, the commitment to long-term affordable housing would then be at the landowners discretion.

The Stow Community Trust are looking at the wider development of the village of Stow. This is through community consultation, alongside Southern Upland Partnership. They are aware of the difficulties of access along Earlston Road and will be coming up with an Action Plan that looks at broader options.

We request that the new plans that the applicant proposes for 22/01635/PPP should be made available for public viewing, before this application moves forward, so that residents could assess the impact on their properties and the surrounding area. Work done on the boundary of the site has so far has been detrimental to the adjacent properties (double deer fences and planting that will block light). We do not feel confident that the developer is interested in the impact of his development scheme for current residents, in a positive way.

Conclusions:

The proposed development has several

Other options for affordable housing will be considered throughout the village.