

press release



Wednesday, July 27, 2006

£175 million Bo'ness foreshore development looks set for success

A new future for Bo'ness beckoned today (July 26) when Falkirk Council gave notice that the £175 million plan for a new 27.5 hectare waterfront leisure and residential development at the historic harbour should go ahead.

The plan will now go to Scottish Ministers who will decide whether Falkirk Council can determine the application by developers ING Real Estate Development UK.

Today's meeting of Falkirk Council's Regulatory Committee said it was minded to give detailed planning permission for phase one of the development around the foreshore including:

- 123 flats
- 75 townhouses
- a 90 bedroom hotel
- a yacht club, restaurant, bars and shops
- reinstatement of the 400 year-old harbour to create a marina for leisure craft using the Forth Estuary and the Millennium Link canals and
- new roads and infrastructure

The Committee also said it would be minded to give approval in principle to the outline application for the whole of the 27.5 hectare site which would bring the total of new homes to around 750.

A wide range of conditions would be applied by the Council. The harbour is on the River Forth and next to a Special Protection Area. Conditions will cover issues like ecology, flooding, contaminated land and transport. A legal agreement will also be concluded with the developers.

The development would help Bo'ness become a major attraction for leisure and housing as part of the My Future's in Falkirk partnership initiative by Falkirk Council, Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley and BP to transform the local economy.

The waterfront development will link to the Scottish Rail Museum which attracts 60,000 visitors each year and to Falkirk Council's £5 million Townscape Heritage Initiative which was launched earlier this year to repair and restore to use the rich heritage of historic buildings in Bo'ness town centre. The town centre and harbour area have Outstanding Conservation Area Status.

The ING proposals are expected to take around eight years to complete and to generate around 700 construction jobs and 100 permanent jobs. The development will restore the disused dock and clean up contaminated land before creating a new urban waterside environment.

Councillor John Constable, Convener of Falkirk Council's Regulatory Committee welcomed the committee's decision. "I am delighted that we have reached such a significant point in this project. ING Real Estate's plans can be of immense importance to the future prosperity of Bo'ness and to the wider economy of the Falkirk Council area. We have worked very closely with ING Real Estate for some years now on every aspect of their proposals to bring about a unique, attractive development for the harbour and foreshore area. We have also consulted closely with statutory agencies and with the local community. Bo'ness people have been very encouraging in their support for the proposals. The next stage is with Scottish Ministers who will decide if Falkirk Council should determine the plans. I am optimistic that this will be the case so that we can begin to change Bo'ness for the better."

Siep Hoeksma, Managing Director ING Real Estate Development UK said: "ING warmly welcomes the backing of its Bo'ness regeneration plans by Falkirk Council. We have received strong support for our proposals from the local community and special interest groups, which we have consulted with over the last two years. It is therefore very rewarding to now reach the milestone of the formal endorsement of the plans by the Council.

He continued: "We also acknowledge the financial support from the European Regional Development Fund, Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley, Falkirk Council and BP for the restoration of the historic dock, which will be a centrepiece of the development. In the course of next year the first signs of development will become visible with the start of infrastructure and harbour works. The first phase including the restored harbour, the marina, restaurants, bars, hotel and homes will be completed within five years from now. In addition to the 200 homes in the first phase another 550 homes will be built on the rest of the site."

Bo'ness and "My Future's in Falkirk": The regeneration of Bo'ness foreshore and town centre has a major role to play in the success of the My Future's in Falkirk initiative, which aims to transform the Falkirk area's economy over the next 10 years into a thriving, diverse modern economy that attracts businesses and visitors into the area and provides jobs for local people. My Future's In Falkirk projects fall into four key themes; developing new technologies, creating capacity for business growth, exploiting physical and digital connections to the world and living, working and visiting Falkirk. The £23m initiative (originally called the Falkirk Action Plan) was launched in December 2002 by a partnership of Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley, BP and Falkirk Council with support from the European Regional Development Fund. For more information visit www.myfuturesinfalkirk.co.uk.

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