

Coul Links Golf Course

Press Release

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Local communities discuss updated plans for 18 hole championship links golf course in Embo, Highland

The communities of Embo and Dornoch met developers Mike Keiser and Todd Warnock, as well as Bill Coore, course designer from Coore & Crenshaw in the latest of a series of public consultation events regarding the multimillion pound investment in an 18 hole championship links golf course in north east of Scotland.

In two events on Tuesday 30 August at Dornoch Social Club, and Wednesday 31 of August at Embo Community Centre, the developers presented the current status of the emerging plans for this exciting and transformational development proposal to be sited on Coul Links to the north of Embo in East Sutherland.

Key areas of focus included ecology, transportation, economic impact, and the ongoing environmental studies and approach to a forthcoming planning application were discussed. Both very well attended events ensured the Highland communities were provided with a factual basis on these issues, the current status of the proposals, and clarity on a number of inaccurate statements circulating in the public domain.

The two gatherings attracted over 250 community members, with the vast majority of attendees expressing support for the proposals, discussing key issues with the developers and with experts from the project team.

The proposals seek to deliver an exceptional world-class golf course that can complement nearby Royal Dornoch Golf Club, and the other East Sutherland golf clubs at Brora, Golspie, Tain and Skibo. The proposals will provide opportunities to collaborate with the East Sutherland tourism network and will seek to attract and retain golf tourists to the area, to stay longer and enjoy the wider offer of East Sutherland, with associated economic benefits.

The proposals are being sensitively developed in the context of the environmental designations in the area. Detailed studies are ongoing, the results of which will be used to inform the final proposals and reported in the Environmental Statement that will accompany the planning application.

Importantly the factual position on the proposals can be summarised as follows:

- The developers do not, and never will be proposing or building a Hotel associated with the proposed golf course;
- There are no proposals / nor intention for associated residential development with the proposed golf course;
- The site can only accommodate one 18 hole course, and there is no aspiration to bring forward additional proposals at Coul Links;
- The approach seeks to deliver a Natural links course that will stand the test of time with minimal intervention into the landscape and environment, and capitalising on the natural features of the site.

The approach to the golf course proposals is predicated on the following:

- The Coul Links land ownership (within which the course is proposed) encompasses 400 acres within the SSSI designation;

- The course proposals currently envisage approximately 75 acres of turf to be required to deliver the layout;
- Of this 75 acres, less than 55 acres are within the boundary of the SSSI.
- The proposals can be constructed from materials on the site and do not require any imported soil or sand; and
- Within the site, and within the SSSI there are significant habitat remediation and restoration proposals including 17 acres of former timber plantation within the SSSI, and site wide additional invasive species remediation and marram grass replanting.

The proposals remain in development and the developers are committed to working closely with The Highland Council, statutory consultees and the local community as the detail emerges. There will be further opportunities for the community to continue the dialogue and view the finalised plans prior to submission of the detailed planning application.

Mike Keiser, developer and owner of Bandon Dunes Golf Resort in Oregon, said

“This is a wonderful opportunity to deliver a spectacular championship links golf course which represents all that is natural about golf, in the home of golf. Our golf course developments aim for minimal intrusion on the landscape and the utmost care and respect for the environment. Our team of environmental advisors is ensuring complete sensitivity to the land, and its location”. Keiser’s developments in Bandon, Oregon and Inverness, Nova Scotia have transformed local communities in terms of restoring the local economy and are widely considered a success.

To find out more details relating to the proposals and to view the information presented at the events, please visit www.coullinks.com

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