

WLC REF: MIRQ0079

OBJECTION and COMMENT REGARDING the DEVELOPMENT OF LAND TO NORTH OF THE CANAL EAST OF MANSE ROAD, LINLITHGOW

Address of the site: Land at Clarendon Farm, St Michaels Hospital, Linlithgow

Objection submitted to: West Lothian Council
County Buildings
High Street
Linlithgow
EH49 7EZ

Objection submitted by:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Tel:

I have viewed the plans and I know the site well. I wish to strongly object to the development of this land.

General:

“West Lothian has one of the fastest growing populations in Scotland and the council is committed to managing this growth in an environmentally sustainable way, by managing resources such as water and land efficiently, to conserve energy and the external environment.” (Quote from WLC’s Planning and Environment website)

I consider that development of this land does not comply with the council’s commitment

The existing local plan states it “encourages growth in a way that protects and enhances the environment; a difficult but achievable task. A good example is that all the major brownfield sites in West Lothian are now allocated for development, with a number being actively developed. This helps lessen the requirements for greenfield land, and its working.”

Clearly the proposed development of this land does not embrace his statement.

Part of the area is inside a conservation area as detailed on the current West Lothian Local Plan

Linlithgow as an area of restraint due to infrastructure, landscape and environmental objectives – this has not changed

The site comprises countryside outwith the settlement envelope of Linlithgow and Linlithgow should remain an area of restraint in any development plan.

In principle I consider that the very nature of the proposal to develop any land in this area is inappropriate and that the use of this undeveloped environment should not change.

Principal Reasons of Objection and Comments:

1. Detrimental Effect of the Proposal on Residential Amenity

- I consider that any development will overlook my property (and the existing neighbouring properties) and this will be an invasion of privacy.
- At present existing properties and gardens at the East side of Oatlands Park are not overlooked and therefore have total privacy. This privacy will be severely compromised by any development.
- Due to the grading of the land, any development is on land higher than the existing properties, there will be overshadowing.
- The orientation of my property (and other properties in Oatlands Park) is such that I have had uninterrupted natural light from first thing in the morning (sun rise) for over 20 years. Should any development be allowed to proceed, my property (and the other properties in Oatlands Park with the same aspect) would be afforded significantly less natural light.
- Noise –Oatlands Park is a very quiet and peaceful area. Often the only sounds being natural sounds. There is little doubt that this would be compromised should the proposed development go ahead.

2. Design and Layout

- I believe that the proposed development will be a “blot on the landscape” especially when viewed from the surrounding area, including Linlithgow Palace.

3. Environmental Impact

- Any development would be on undeveloped open fields. This would be lost should development proceed. There are other “vacant” sites that are not open space / undeveloped open fields within Linlithgow and the surrounding area. Brownfield sites are available for development in West Lothian and are already allocated for development. These sites could be developed without having the same environmental impact.
- There is a significant amount of wildlife that lives and visits the fields. This includes protected species such as badgers and bats. This wildlife habitat would be lost if development is allowed to go ahead.
- There are also mature trees and hedgerows within the area which should be protected, not destroyed.

4. Planning Policy

- The proposed development is outwith the current West Lothian Local Development Plan. It is also not listed on the SESplan area Urban Capacity Study.
- Any access from Clarendon Road would be through conservation area as detailed on the current West Lothian Local Plan.
- Paragraph 2.50 of the ELSP identifies Linlithgow as an area of restraint due to infrastructure, landscape and environmental objectives. The proposal is significantly contrary to this part of the structure plan.
- The site comprises countryside outwith the settlement envelope of Linlithgow and Linlithgow is identified as an area of restraint in the development plan.
- Linlithgow is a historic town with character where development proposals should be considered very carefully. The character of the town could be destroyed should housing development overwhelm it. Linlithgow's visual, historic and archaeological qualities

must also be protected. Inappropriately-designed housing, or design that fails improve the character of an area, should not be accepted. It is considered that the development of the land would not improve Linlithgow.

- This is a greenfield site and building here would diminish the view of the town from the countryside to the South, North and East of Linlithgow. As previously noted it would also be prominent from Linlithgow Palace.
- Previous applications to develop the fields in this area have been successfully resisted. The reasons for rejecting those previous applications have not changed.
- Previous application (0261/P/1992) was rejected. One of the principle reasons was “the impact on the highly unsatisfactory traffic situation at Manse Road”.

There have been no changes to the infrastructure on Manse Road; also there have been additional houses built since 1992 in the Riccarton Road area.

5. Road Safety / Access Issues

- Any development would lead to a significant increase in vehicles and people.
- Linlithgow already has significant problems regarding traffic volumes and traffic flows. There are often delays and traffic jams at the East end of Linlithgow. Significant queues form on the High Street, Blackness Road, the High Port, the B9080, Back Station Road (past the main car park for Linlithgow Railway Station), the “single lane” Canal Bridge and Manse Road. Any development will significantly exacerbate these problems.
- The Canal Bridge is already a bottleneck for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. The following should be noted:
 - The canal bridge parapets and railings are regularly hit by vehicles, as is the stone retaining wall immediately North of the Canal Bridge.
 - There is only a single lane for traffic over the bridge.
 - There is only one footpath over the bridge
 - “Stand-offs” between traffic heading north and south are a regular occurrence happening many times each day requiring vehicles to reverse off the bridge.
 - Rather than reverse off the bridge vehicles often drive on the footpath.
 - Pedestrians on the footpath have to “give way” to vehicles. Cyclists have the same problems
 - The Canal Bridge is the main route for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians coming from the East end of Linlithgow to the Station, bus routes, the High Street, local amenities and shops, primary schools and all routes out of Linlithgow to the North, East and West.

Any development will significantly increase the risk of an accident. This increased risk of an accident applies to pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. Frustration due to congestion will also significantly increase the risk factor.

- Springfield Primary School is the only Primary School for the area at present. Clarendon Farm to Springfield Primary School is a significant distance, requiring children to cross busy main thoroughfare roads. It is also not a recognised walking route.
- This would again increase traffic volumes transporting children to and from schools.
- If access was allowed from Manse Road / Clarendon Road or Oatlands Park this would increase the current traffic volume issues and parking issues; the whole area has parking issues due to the number of cars per household in Linlithgow, limited off street parking, the proximity of the railway station and a shortage of parking at the station. Egress from Clarendon Road and Oatlands Park on to Manse Road is already difficult and sight lines are impaired by parked vehicles. Access will also be restricted by parked vehicles including residents’ vehicles. Any development and the resultant increase in traffic and pedestrian volumes will significantly increase the risk of accidents.

- Any development would significantly increase pedestrian movement in the area of Back Station Road, Canal Bridge and Manse Road.
 - Safety - there is no footpath on the South side of Back Station Road.
 - Sight lines in the area are very poor for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- In summary the any development would have a significant negative impact upon road safety.

6. Capacity of Local Infrastructure

- Surface Water and Drainage:
 - Concern must be raised regarding the capacity of the existing system.
 - It is believed that the substrate of the area is igneous rock. Igneous rock is generally not permeable. Questions must be asked as to the suitability of a SUDS system
- Foul Water / Waste Water:
 - It is known that the existing foul water / waste water system is liable to blockage. Please refer to Scottish water for further details. I have been told by Scottish Water that the existing waste infrastructure is at maximum capacity.
 - As a result a new foul water/waste water Infrastructure should be installed.
- It is considered that a full and detailed investigation of the existing surface water, foul water/waste water infrastructure, including capacities, should be carried out before any additional development is carried out in the area.
- Transport Infrastructure:
 - The train service to Edinburgh and Glasgow from Linlithgow at peak times is at its maximum capacity with most travellers having to “push” to get on the train then stand in cramped conditions for the journey. This infrastructure should be improved before further development is even considered
 - “The highly unsatisfactory traffic situation at Manse Road” has been commented on when previous planning applications have been submitted. There have been no changes to the infrastructure on Manse Road; also there have been additional houses built in the area.
- Schools:
 - Low Port PS is the closest primary school for any development. Low Port PS should be developed prior to permitting further housing development in the “catchment area”.
 - It is also believed that Linlithgow Academy is at or nearing its capacity. The 550 houses planned to be built at Westfield along with the building of houses at Winchburgh will ensure that Linlithgow Academy will be at full capacity.

7. Sustainability

- Please refer to objections above – many of the Considerations listed above raise issues regarding the sustainability of any development.
- It is unlikely that residents of any development would be able to access services easily on foot. It is suggested that each and every time residents left the area they would travel by car.

Signed:



Date: 14th October 2014