

Comments By Lenzie Community Council on Planning Application TP/ED/15/0372 Proposed Development of Site at Meadowburn Avenue, Lenzie

Location

This site is located on the eastern edge of Lenzie in East Dunbartonshire (see map below).

The site is bordered on the east by Initiative Road, on the south by Lyndsaybeg Road and on the west by the Earlsburn-Drumbreck estate.

According to plans published by Miller Homes Limited, the developer, there will be only one access road to the site – via Easter Garngaber Road, Foxes Grove and Meadowburn Avenue which are located to the north-west (see map on the right).

Background

This site was promoted by the current developer during the creation phase of East Dunbartonshire Council's (EDC) Local Plan 2 (LP2) between 2008 and 2010 and appeared as a potential development site in EDC's consultation document Major Issues Report, which preceded the first draft of LP2.

Lenzie Community Council (along with several other individuals and groups) objected to the development of this site on a number of grounds. In response to these objections and after further consideration, EDC removed the Meadowburn Avenue site from its Proposed Local Plan 2 in 2010. The Developer appealed this decision to the Directorate of Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA). In October 2010, the Directorate's Reporters requested East Dunbartonshire to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment and associated public consultation on the Meadowburn Avenue site. Having considered the results of the review and consultations, the DPEA Reporters considered the site was suitable for inclusion in the Finalised Local Plan after suggested modifications to the original plans and requested East Dunbartonshire Council to identify this site when it finally drew up the Adopted Local Plan, in October 2011.

Miller Homes Limited submitted a Proposal of Application Notice in respect of the Meadowburn site to EDC in September 2014. Once again, LCC (and others) lodged objections to the site plan described in the PAN on a number of grounds including access and road safety.



The Current Situation

On the 8th of June 2015 Miller Homes lodged a detailed application with EDC seeking planning permission to erect “37 dwellings (including 9 affordable), the formation of access, SUDS, new open space, landscaping and footpath.”

Lenzie Community Council is pleased with some of the changes made to the plan for the Meadowburn Avenue site since the publication of the PAN version almost a year ago. Nevertheless, LCC is very disappointed that the obvious problems of access and road safety have not been addressed by the Developer in the final plans. So far as LCC is concerned, the final plan’s Achilles heel is that the only access to the proposed estate is via Meadowburn Avenue.

In their conclusions to their report advocating the inclusion of this site as suitable for housing development the Reporters stated that **“A Transport Statement for the developers anticipates no significant adverse traffic or access issues and suggest some offsetting measures for what are described as limited impacts”** (Point 38 in the Reporters’ conclusions). The Reporters appear to have accepted the developers’ assurances as stated in the Transport Statement without seeking alternative views or commissioning an independent investigation themselves.

Meadowburn Avenue was designed to cater for traffic generated by the 11 dwellings in this one-sided cul-de-sac. Over the years, the residents organised the space around their houses in the expectation that the street would remain a cul-de-sac. According to these proposals, the Avenue would be expected to accommodate the traffic generated by an additional 37 dwellings. Each one of the twenty-eight large four-bedroom houses is likely to have at least two cars and allocating one vehicle each to the 9 flats makes a realistic total of 65 additional vehicles which could be using Meadowburn Avenue every day.

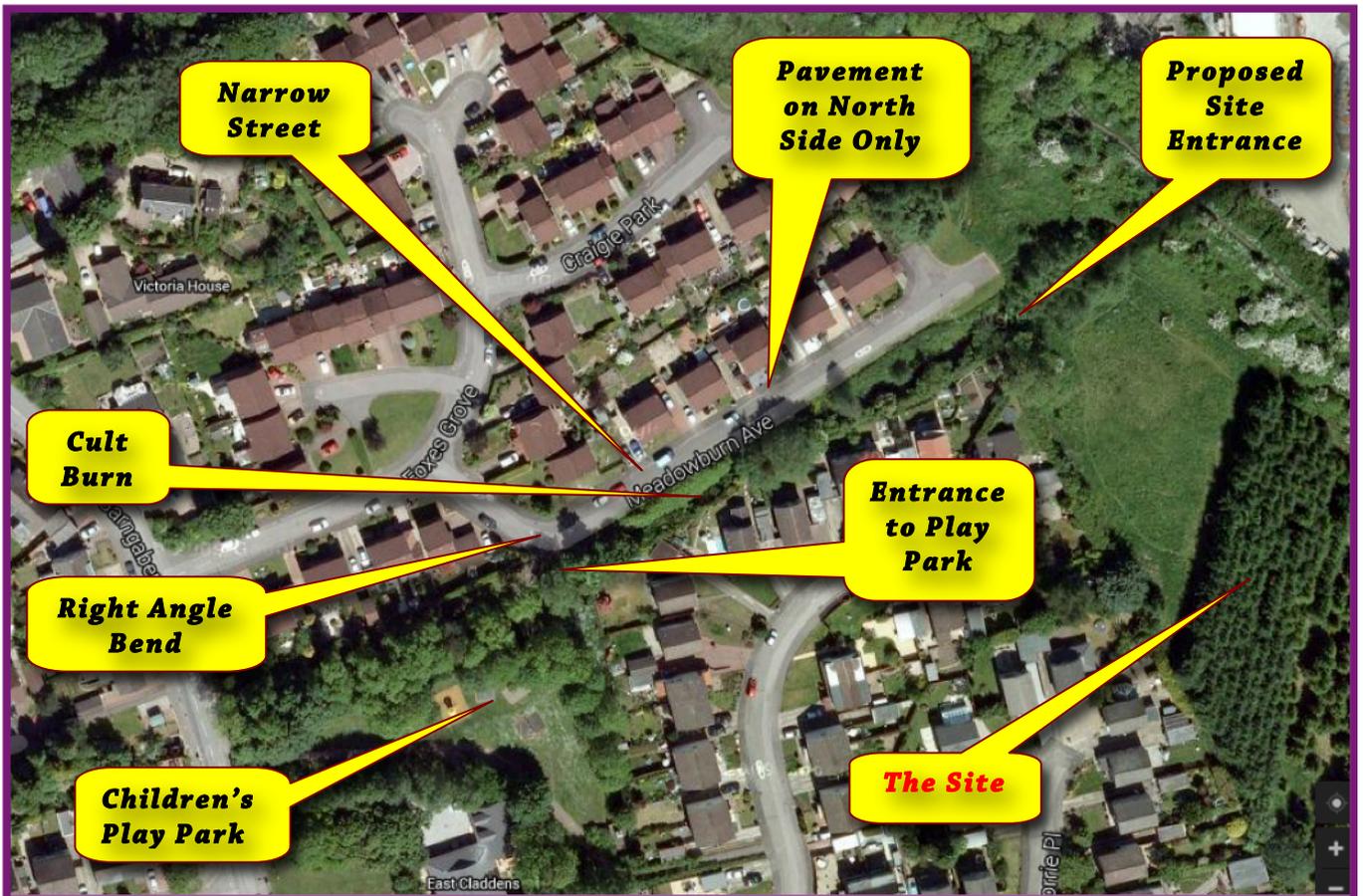
Meadowburn Avenue has a restricted capacity for carrying high volumes of traffic. It is a relatively narrow road – just 5 metres wide. Cars parked on the road regularly reduce this width considerably, effectively making the road a single lane highway. There is a right-angle bend at its western end, just before it enters Foxes Grove which produces a blind corner at this point (see map on the next page).

Lenzie Community Council is convinced that the projected traffic volumes quoted in the Transport Statement are wildly optimistic. The Statement makes many assumptions that local experience in the Lenzie area suggests will not be correct if the proposed estate is built. For example, the Statement assumes that most secondary school pupils will walk or cycle the 1.5km distance to Lenzie Academy; that most commuters will walk the 1km or so to Lenzie Railway station or the Glasgow Express bus stops located on Kirkintilloch Road and that many retail customers will walk or cycle the 1km+ to the local services in Lenzie and Millersneuk.

At present only a minority of pupils from the area surrounding the proposed estate walk or cycle to Lenzie Academy. The majority are transported to school by parents. Relatively few pupils are to be seen walking along Garngaber Avenue en route to Lenzie Academy between 8.15 and 8.50 in the morning, even in early summer. In fact, the weekday “rush hour” in Lenzie coincides with the period before and after the start and finish of the school day!

Experience also shows that most local commuters do not walk to the railway station or the bus stops on Kirkintilloch Road. They drive towards the station or the bus stops and park in local residential streets as close as possible to their destinations.

So far as Lenzie Community Council is concerned, the Transport Statement’s assumption that the number of vehicles emerging from Meadowburn Avenue-Foxes Grove onto Easter Garngaber Road during the morning peak period would increase only from 22 to 36 vehicles and that the number entering Foxes Grove during the evening peak period would increase only by 13 is not credible.



The population of the proposed estate would probably number well over 100. When travelling on foot to local services the new residents would have to use Meadowburn Avenue. The Avenue has a footpath on one side only. The combination of narrow road, parked cars, increased traffic and a single pavement would reduce road safety and make accidents involving pedestrians more likely.

A children's play park located to the west of the proposed development has its access on the bend in Meadowburn Avenue (see map above). Children crossing at this blind spot would be put at considerable risk of accidents from the increased volume of traffic.

LCC is very concerned about conditions in Meadowburn Avenue during the construction phase of the proposed estate. Based on experience gained from the construction of similar local projects, it is likely that this phase would last well over a year. Trees would have to be felled and removed, the site landscaped, drainage schemes completed, water, gas, electricity and sewerage services installed, roads built, houses constructed and trees planted. During this period heavy trucks and other large vehicles would be moving along Meadowburn Avenue every day. Two large trucks would not be able to pass without mounting the pavement. Most trucks would have to weave their way around parked cars endangering pedestrians. Heavy traffic, dust, noise and exhaust fumes would degrade severely the quality of life of Meadowburn Avenue residents during the construction phase.

Before granting planning permission for this development, Lenzie Community Council urges East Dunbartonshire Council to require the developer to investigate an alternative access route to the proposed estate. If an alternative route is not possible, LCC asks EDC to require the developer to culvert the Park Burn, widen Meadowburn Avenue and construct a pavement on the south side of the street.

John MacFadden
 Planning convener.

(On behalf of Lenzie Community Council.)