

LTR-WG-FM-12001-2

Fraser McNair
Planning Officer
Development Applications
Place, Neighbourhood & Corporate Assets
East Dunbartonshire
Broomhill Depot
Kilsyth Road
Kirkintilloch
G66 1TF

Friday, 20 August 2021

Dear Mr McNair:

Reference: TP/ED/20/0339 – RESPONSE TO BIODIVERSITY & GREEN SPACE.

I have responded to your colleagues' responses point by point below.

Biodiversity:

The proposal seeks to remove a small area of semi natural woodland to enable the delivery of 40 affordable units in this area. The number of trees earmarked for removal is estimated to be 25, identified from the Tree Constraints plan [171101-004]. Our client has also offered compensatory planting at the nearby Langshot Farm, where an extensive tree planting scheme is already established, with capacity for more.

The reduced width of the wildlife corridor has been assessed by our ecologist team, who have confirmed that the width will not prevent the movement of wildlife through the site. Our updated ecology statement will provide more detail on this and how the landscape proposal supports and enhances the current situation.

We recognise the importance of not just the bird boxes but the additional wildlife boxes that are proposed as part of our ecology strategy and would welcome any further comments on their location.

The Ecologist states in their report that there is no presence of Pine Martin on site and that the site is suboptimal for den creation, due to the lack of large tree cavities and other suitable den structures. Since there has been no change on site that would materially alter this opinion, it is unlikely there are any Pine Martins on site. Our updated Ecologist's statement will provide more detail on this.

The Ecologist states in their report that no red squirrels were identified on site. The proximity of the red squirrel sightings seems detached from the current proposal. Our updated Ecologist statement will address this.

We would highlight that all the enhancement proposals detailed in the PEA are included within the planning application.

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Greenspace:

We would request a copy of the matrix used to evaluate the site. This would allow us to understand the opinion provided to us by the planning department stating, *"The open space currently has limited value due the dense nature of the woodland and fencing around the site"* and *"The woodland also has limited biodiversity value due to the dominance of non-native conifers"*. These statements were provided to us in August 2017, during the same period you suggest the site was rated as 'Very Good'. These statements suggest that the site had deteriorated substantially by 2017 when our client purchased the site. We therefore seek an understanding of how a good rating was achieved in 2019 when no obvious improvements had been made since 2017.

East Dunbartonshire Council have confirmed to us that there is an overprovision of open space in Lennoxton. We are therefore of the opinion that this site is suitable for the proposal. As indicated by the councils statements the area in question is fenced off and offers limited value. We are aware of unauthorised activities taking place on the site and have made our insurers aware of this and are currently assessing our liability exposure. Can you please advise the methodology used to monitor the site use by residents, as we have not noticed any increase in use during the period you state?

I am surprised to read that the nature of the Woodlands Play area is deemed to differ to the character and utility enjoyed by residents. It was the planning department who stated that an enhancement to the area may consist of, *"...a woodland play area or obstacle course which reflects the semi-natural surroundings"*. We are of the opinion that our proposal enhances the quality of the site, user safety, the accessibility, and formalises routes through the site by the removal of all fencing and the designation of footpaths. This will ensure that the enhanced open space is now accessible to everyone in the community, not just those able to climb the fence you have highlighted. By creating the play space suggested by the council, we are ensuring an open space is accessible to all. The implementation of the enhancements by the ecologist and their conclusion that the development will enhance the biodiversity of the site, is further justification for compliance with LDP Policy 7. We are aware that provision for play space could be provided out with the development area and would be happy to discuss this.

Although immaterial to Biodiversity and Greenspace, our clients have also offered to enhance pedestrian safety in the local area by implementing additional pedestrian crossings, through consultation with the local community council and our traffic engineer.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the above further with Jennifer Wiggins and Jackie Gillespie.

Sincerely,



William Gunn BSc Hons PGDip RIAS RIBA
Director

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