

Comments for Planning Application TP/ED/26/0104

Application Summary

Application Number: TP/ED/26/0104

Address: Whitegates Park Middlemuir Road Lenzie East Dunbartonshire

Proposal: Erection of a secondary school including road access, landscaping, car parking, sports pitches, recreational areas and associated development.

Case Officer: Fraser McNair

Customer Details

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Objection to Planning Application - East Dunbartonshire Council

I wish to formally object to the above proposal. My objection is based on material planning considerations including conflict with East Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2), loss of protected greenspace, inconsistency with national health policy, inappropriate site selection for a replacement school, land contamination concerns, and issues of safety, noise and accessibility.

1. Loss of Designated Greenspace - Conflict with LDP2

The application site is regularly used by the local community for exercise, recreation and informal sport and constitutes an important and well used community asset. Development of this land would result in the permanent loss of valued greenspace in an area where such provision is already limited.

The site is identified within East Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) as a greenspace site which should be protected from development. The proposal would lead to the loss of playing field provision, directly conflicting with Policy ENV 28, which states that greenspace and other open spaces, including sports pitches, are major components of the green network and should be safeguarded and enhanced.

The proposed development is therefore contrary to the adopted development plan and, in accordance with Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, should not be supported unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2. Incompatibility with National Health and Physical Activity Objectives

The proposal also conflicts with national Scottish Government policy on health and physical activity. The development removes a key outdoor space that is actively used for physical recreation by local residents.

Outcome 4 of the Scottish Government's Active Scotland Delivery Plan states the need:

"to ensure that our environments support outdoor play, walking, cycling and other forms of active travel, and provide inspiring and safe opportunities for people to participate in physical activity and sport."

The loss of this greenspace undermines these objectives and should be afforded significant weight as a material consideration.

3. Departure from Established Guidance on Replacement Schools

Scottish Government guidance strongly supports replacement schools being rebuilt on their existing sites wherever possible. This proposal represents a clear departure from that principle.

I submit this objection as a parent of children currently attending, and due to attend, Lenzie Academy. Local children have previously experienced the disruption associated with school rebuilding, and there is no justification for departing from established guidance in this case. The COVID 19 pandemic should not be retrospectively used to justify relocation to a site outside the town of Lenzie, particularly where this results in the loss of protected greenspace.

Lenzie already has very limited accessible greenspace, making the proposed development especially harmful in local planning terms.

4. Land Contamination - Public Safety and Cost Concerns

The proposed site is known to be contaminated, raising serious concerns regarding public safety, long term health risks, and overall project viability. Remediation of contaminated land is inherently complex and carries residual risk even where mitigation measures are proposed. There are documented cases elsewhere in Scotland where sites described as remediated have subsequently been linked to serious health issues among school staff, highlighting the potential long term consequences of developing on such land.

As a parent, I find it deeply concerning that a site previously considered unsuitable for an Assisted Support Needs school due to contamination is now being proposed to accommodate a school of approximately 1,400 pupils, many of whom will be drawn from across East Dunbartonshire, including my own children. The scale and duration of occupation significantly increases the potential exposure risk for both pupils and staff.

There is no clear assurance that remediation works can be delivered without residual risk, nor that the significant costs associated with remediation will remain contained. This raises serious concerns regarding deliverability, long term liability, and value for public money. These issues should be afforded substantial weight as material considerations in determining this application.

5. Road Proximity, Noise and Child Safety

The proposed site is located very close to the main link road between the motorway and Kirkintilloch. In my view, this represents a less safe environment for children compared to the current school site.

Traffic noise, air quality concerns and road safety issues are material planning considerations. Noise from the road is likely to result in poor learning conditions and may prevent windows being opened during warmer weather. The existing site does not suffer from these constraints and offers

a demonstrably safer and quieter environment.

6. Accessibility, Location and Catchment Concerns

The existing Lenzie Academy site adequately serves the majority of pupils, families and key stakeholders and is well embedded within the community it supports. Relocation to a site located on the outermost boundary of Lenzie, and arguably outwith the town altogether, is illogical and undermines the established relationship between the school and its local community.

Furthermore, significant areas of residential development surrounding the proposed site do not fall within the Lenzie Academy catchment area. This raises legitimate concerns regarding accessibility, increased journey distances for pupils and staff, and a heightened reliance on private and public vehicular travel. Such outcomes conflict with sustainable development principles, including objectives to reduce unnecessary travel, limit traffic generation, and promote safe and accessible locations for educational facilities.

The current site demonstrably performs better in locational terms, serving its catchment more effectively and sustainably than the proposed alternative.

7. Conclusion

In summary, the proposal:

- Results in the unjustified loss of LDP2 designated greenspace
- Conflicts with Policy ENV 28 and the wider LDP2 spatial strategy
- Undermines Scottish Government health and physical activity outcomes
- Disregards guidance on replacement school development
- Raises serious concerns regarding contamination, safety, noise and accessibility

For these reasons, I respectfully request that East Dunbartonshire Council refuse this application and instead pursue redevelopment of the existing school site in accordance with the adopted development plan, national guidance and the best interests of children, families and the wider community.