



WEST LOTHIAN PLANNING COMMITTEE

Report by Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration

1 DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

- 1.1 Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works at land at Burnhouse Farm, Dechmont

2 DETAILS

Reference no.	0241/P/22	Owner of site	Mr and Mrs Meikle
Applicant	Springfield Properties Plc	Ward & local members	Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh Cllr Diane Calder Cllr Janet Campbell Cllr Ann Davidson Cllr Angela Doran-Timpson
Case officer	Gillian Cyphus	Contact details	01506 282408 gillian.cyphus@westlothian.gov.uk

Reason for referral to West Lothian Planning Committee:

- 2.1 The proposal is classified as a major development that has been deemed by the council's Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration to be significantly contrary to the development plan.
- 2.2 There is a requirement under the council's scheme of delegation that in determining such proposals the applicant and those persons who have made representations on the application, may appear before, and be heard by, a committee of the council. In accordance with the scheme of delegation, the decision on an application of this type shall be discharged only by the full council and not by a committee of the council.
- 2.3 A subsequent report will be presented to West Lothian Council in order that a decision on the application can be made.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that West Lothian Planning Committee notes the contents of this report and the terms of representations made both at the notification stage on the application and by those, if any, appearing at the hearing, prior to West Lothian Council being invited to make a decision on the application.

4 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL AND PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 This is an application for planning permission in principle for residential development and associated works on a 12.3ha site immediately to the north of Dechmont. The site is attractive open countryside outwith the settlement boundary. It is designated as a Special Landscape Area (SLA) in the adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP) 2018, with a small section of the site being located within the Livingston Countryside Belt. The land rises northwards, from the edge of the Dechmont settlement boundary towards the Bathgate Hills. Immediately adjacent, to the west, is the Bangour Village Hospital site, which was recently granted planning permission in principle for redevelopment. A water course runs to the west of the site, within an established woodland, then along the southern boundary and through the south eastern corner of the site. Access to the development would be from Burnhouse Road to the east.
- 4.2 The application is also accompanied by:
- a) a pre-application consultation report
 - b) a planning statement
 - c) a site effectiveness statement
 - d) a sustainable development statement
 - e) a housing land supply statement
 - f) a settlement and local character appraisal
 - g) a landscape and visual impact assessment
 - h) a transport assessment
 - i) a flood risk assessment
 - j) a drainage statement
 - k) a desk study report
 - l) a preliminary ecological assessment
 - m) a tree survey
 - n) an archaeological desk based assessment
 - o) an indicative development framework
 - p) a landscape and visual impact assessment
 - q) a design statement

These reports and other information can be viewed in the online case file at [0241/P/22](#)

History

- 4.3 1075/EIA/21 - EIA screening opinion for an 8 Ha residential development with associated works. Environmental Assessment not required.
- 4.6 1136/PAC/21 - Proposal of application notice for residential development and associated infrastructure

- 4.7 In addition, a previous pre-application consultation and EIA screening request were submitted in 2017, but the developer did not progress to a planning application at that time.

EIA Development

- 4.8 The scale and nature of this residential development is such that it falls within the description of development set out in Class 10(b) of Schedule 2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (EIA regulations).
- 4.9 In this instance, the applicant submitted a screening opinion request to the planning authority in October 2021 and taking into account all the considerations set out in the submission, in particular the assessment against Schedule 3, the planning authority considered that the proposed development is not likely to have significant effects on the environment due to its characteristics, location and characteristics of potential impact. Therefore, the proposed development is not subject to Environmental Impact Assessment.

Equalities Impact

- 4.10 The application has been assessed and has no impact in terms of equalities or human rights.

5 REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1 A total of 267 representations have been received, all of them objections including objections from Dechmont Community Council, Bathgate Community Council, Uphall Community Council, one local ward member, Cllr Davidson, Fiona Hyslop MSP and Foyso Choudhury MSP. Two letters of support were also received.
- 5.2 The representations are summarised below and a sample are attached to this report. Copies of all the objections can be seen in the online file.

Comments	Response
The proposal does not accord with the local plan as this site is not allocated for housing.	Agreed. The local development plan does not allocate the site for housing and shows the site as within the countryside.
There is already a lot of new development in the area.	Noted. A significant amount of land at Bangour Village Hospital has been allocated for residential development and was recently granted planning permission in principle. In addition, a site on the eastern edge of Dechmont is allocated for residential development and benefits from planning permission in principle. In contrast, this site is not allocated for development.
There is inadequate infrastructure to cope with this development.	Infrastructure is discussed in more detail in Section 8 below.
Impact on the heath facilities.	Noted. However, this is not an infrastructure constraint

	that can be remedied by current planning policy.
Loss of countryside.	Agreed. The local development plan does not allocate the site for housing and shows the site as within the countryside.
Impact on wildlife and the environment.	An ecological appraisal has been carried out and confirms that there will be no significant impact on any protected species. However, it is recognised that the development of this unallocated greenfield site will result in the loss of open countryside and part of the allocated SLA.
The site is a Special Landscape Area (SLA) and should be protected from development.	Noted. See Assessment in Section 8 below.
Development of the site will give rise to issues with drainage.	The developer has submitted a flood risk assessment and a drainage impact assessment which require to be updated should permission be granted. Scottish Water has been consulted and has confirmed that they have no objection to the application.
Impact on road safety/road infrastructure	The council's Roads & Transportation section has no objection to the proposal subject to mitigation measures.
Impact on amenity for adjacent residents.	Agreed. The development of this site and resulting loss of open countryside would have an impact on the amenity of the surrounding area.

6 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 The consultations are summarised below. The full consultations are contained in the application file.

Consultee	Objection	Comments	Planning Response
WLC Roads & Transportation	No	The proposals are acceptable, subject to conditions including the design of the access, provision of pedestrian and cycle links and the widening of Burnhouse Road.	Noted. A planning condition would secure this should committee be minded to grant the application.
WLC Flood Risk Management	No	A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Assessment were submitted and are accepted.	In the event that the council was minded to grant planning permission suitable conditions will be attached.
WLC Contaminated	No	The submitted site investigation is satisfactory, subject to a condition	Noted. In the event that the council was

Consultee	Objection	Comments	Planning Response
Land Officer		requiring a phase 2 as part of any detailed application.	supportive of the development, conditions would be necessary to ensure submission of further details and compliance with the recommendations.
WLC Education Planning	Yes	In addition to developer contributions towards education infrastructure, any planning consent would require a phasing restriction to prevent the occupation of houses until after the new primary school is provided at Bangour. The developer does not agree to this approach and therefore the application cannot be supported.	Noted. Education is discussed in more detail below.
WLC Ecology Service	No	Suggested conditions, including an ecological clerk of works, further details at the reserved matters stage and re-surveying for species in the event that works are delayed.	Noted, suitable conditions can be attached should committee be minded to grant the application.
WLC Environmental Health	No	An Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) is not required for the scale of development.	Noted.
West of Scotland Archaeology Service	No	A programme of archaeological works is required.	Noted. A planning condition would secure this should committee be minded to grant the application.
SEPA	No	Suggested conditions related to the details design of SUDs etc.	Noted. A planning condition would secure this should committee be minded to grant the application.

Consultee	Objection	Comments	Planning Response
Scottish Water	No	There is currently capacity at the WWTP in Newburgh. However, this does not guarantee a connection which is subject to a separate process.	Noted. Securing a connection to the sewerage works is a matter for the developer, outwith the planning process.
Edinburgh Airport Safeguarding	No	Conditions would be required regarding a bird hazard management plan and the design of the SUDS.	Noted.

7 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

- 7.1 Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.1 The development plan comprises of the Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh and South East Scotland (SESplan) and the West Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP).
- 7.2 Relevant development plan policies are listed below.

Policy	Policy Summary	Assessment	Conform
SESplan - Policy 1A The spatial strategy: development locations	This policy states that local development plans (LDP) will direct further strategic development to strategic development areas (SDA). It lists West Lothian as a strategic development area.	The site lies within the West Lothian SDA and is not identified as an area of restraint.	Yes

SESplan Policy 1B The spatial strategy: development principles	This policy states that LDP will ensure that there are no significant adverse impacts on the integrity of international, national and local designations; on the integrity of international and national built or cultural heritage; have regard to the need to improve the quality of life in local communities; contribute to the response to climate change and have regard to the need for high quality design, energy efficiency and the use of sustainable building materials.	The site forms part of the locally designated Special Landscape Area. This is discussed in further detail in Section 8 below.	No
SESplan Policy 5 Housing land	This policy states that for the period from 2009 up to 2024, there is a requirement for sufficient housing land to be allocated so as to enable 107,545 houses to be built across the SESplan area, including on land which is currently committed for housing development.	Since the proposal is not allocated in the LDP and does not benefit from planning permission, the site is not considered as being necessary to meet the West Lothian housing land supply target. The council's position is the LDP allocates sufficient land to meet SESplan targets.	No
SESplan Policy 6 Housing land flexibility	This policy states that each planning authority in the SESplan area shall maintain a five year effective housing land supply at all times. The scale of this supply shall derive from the housing requirements for each LDP area identified through the supplementary guidance provided for by Policy 5. For this purpose, planning authorities may grant planning permission for the earlier development of sites which are allocated or phased for a later period in LDP.	Housing land supply issues are discussed in Section 8 below.	No

SESPlan Policy 7 Maintaining a five year housing land supply	This policy states that sites for greenfield housing development proposals either within or outwith the identified SDA may be allocated in the LDP or granted planning permission to maintain a five years' effective housing land supply, subject to satisfying certain criteria.	Housing land supply issues are discussed in Section 8 below.	No
SESplan Policy 9 Infrastructure	This policy states that LDP will provide policy guidance that will require sufficient infrastructure to be available, or its provision to be committed, before development can proceed.	There is currently insufficient education infrastructure to serve the development.	No
SESPlan Policy 13 Other countryside designations	This policy states that LDP should review and justify additions or deletions to countryside designations,	A review of designations has been undertaken. The site is allocated in the LDP as a Special Landscape Area (SLA) which is discussed in more detail below.	No
LDP - DES 1 Design principles	Development proposals should have no significant adverse impacts on the local community and where appropriate, should include measures to enhance the environment and be high quality in their design.	As a greenfield site, the proposal would result in the loss of countryside land within an SLA and would have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the area.	No
LDP - HOU 1 Allocated Housing Sites	This policy states that residential development on sites allocated for housing is supported in principle.	The site is not allocated for housing.	No

LDP – HOU2 Maintaining an Effective Housing Land Supply	<p>The council is required to maintain a minimum of a 5 year effective housing land supply at all times throughout the lifetime of the plan.</p> <p>Where additional sites are needed to maintain a 5 year effective housing land supply, greenfield sites will be supported subject to the certain criteria.</p>	Housing land supply issues are discussed in Section 8 below.	No
LDP – HOU 4 Affordable Housing	This policy requires developers to make provision for affordable housing and identifies general principles.	The proposal would include affordable housing to meet policy requirements.	Yes, subject to the relevant planning obligations being secured.
LDP – INF 1 Infrastructure Provision and Developer Obligations	The council will seek developer obligations in accordance with Scottish Government guidance to mitigate the development's individual or cumulative impacts upon infrastructure, including cross-boundary impacts. Any such obligations will be concluded prior to the issue of planning permission.	There is insufficient education capacity to serve this development. In the event that development was to proceed developer contributions would be necessary to be secured for each unit in line with LDP policy should permission be granted.	No.
LDP – TRAN 1 Transport Infrastructure	Development will only be permitted where transport impacts are acceptable.	WLC Roads & Transportation has not objected to the principle of residential development and the expected capacity.	Yes, subject to conditions
LDP – ENV1 Character and Special Landscape Areas	Within the Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) shown on the proposals map there is a presumption against development which would undermine the landscape and visual qualities for which the areas were designated.	Development of this site does not respect the reasons for the designation or the management principles for the SLA. This is discussed in more detail below.	No

LDP – ENV 2 Housing Development in the Countryside	Housing development in the countryside will only be permitted subject to certain criteria.	The proposed development does not meet any policy exemptions.	No
LDP – ENV4 Loss of Prime Agricultural Land	There will be a presumption against development resulting in the loss of prime agricultural land.	The proposed development does not meet any policy exemptions.	No
LDP – ENV 20 Species Protection and Enhancement	Development that would affect a species protected by European or UK law will not be permitted subject to certain criteria	The application is supported by a preliminary ecology appraisal that is accepted.	Yes, subject to condition.
LDP – ENV 34 Art and Development	Developers of major residential sites will be required to fund or contribute to the cost of works of art appropriate to the setting and scale of their surrounding area.	Developer contributions would be necessary and need to be secured	Yes, subject to the relevant planning obligations being secured.
LDP – NRG 1a Low and Zero Carbon Generating Technology	At least 10% of the current carbon emission reduction set by Scottish Building Standards will be met through the installation and operation of low and zero-carbon generating technologies.	To be assessed at any subsequent planning stage.	Yes, subject to condition
LDP – EMG 2 Flooding	When considering proposals for development, the council will adopt a precautionary approach to the flood risk from all sources.	A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with the application and is accepted.	Yes
LDP – EMG 3 Sustainable Drainage	Developers may be required to submit a Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA) to ensure that surface water flows are properly taken into account in the design of a development.	A drainage assessment has been submitted with the application.	Yes, subject to revised modelling and conditions
LDP - EMG 6 Vacant, Derelict and Contaminated Land	Where it is suspected by the council that a development site may be contaminated, the developer will be required to undertake a site investigation.	A site investigation has been submitted with the application which recommends further intrusive works. A planning condition would secure the recommended intrusive reports to be submitted and	Yes, subject to conditions

		approved at any subsequent planning stage.	
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7.3 Other planning policy documents of relevance are

- Scottish Planning Policy 2014 (SPP)
- Draft NPF4
- Creating Places
- Designing Streets
- Planning Advice Notes (PAN):
 - PAN 33 *Development of Contaminated Land*
 - PAN 60 *Planning for Natural Heritage*
 - PAN 61 *Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems*
 - PAN 65 *Planning and Open Space*
 - PAN 75 *Planning for Transport*
 - PAN 77 *Designing Safer Places*
 - PAN 78 *Inclusive Design*
 - PAN 79 *Water and Drainage*
 - PAN 83 *Masterplanning*
 - PAN 2/2010 *Affordable Housing and Housing Land Audits*
 - PAN 2/2011 *Planning and Archaeology*

7.4 Statutory Supplementary Guidance

Planning and Noise
 Development in the Countryside
 Residential Development Guide
 Flooding and Drainage
 Affordable Housing
 Developer Contributions Towards Public Art
 Developer Obligations for General Infrastructure Site Delivery
 Planning and Education

8 ASSESSMENT

8.1 The determining issues for consideration in relation to this application are set out below:

Principle of Development – Housing in the Countryside and Special Landscape Areas (SLA)

8.2 The Adopted LDP identifies the site as within the countryside, within the SLA and a small section within the countryside belt. The site is not allocated for housing. The proposal does not satisfy the criteria set out in LDP policy ENV 2 (Housing Development in the Countryside). It is not brownfield or infill development, it does not involve the replacement

or conversion of buildings of merit and it does not fall within the area identified for lowland crofting. The development of this site would also result in the unjustified loss of prime agricultural land. The application is clearly contrary to policies ENV2 and ENV4.

- 8.3 In 2013 the council carried out the West Lothian Local Landscape Designation Review, consistent with the requirements of SESplan Policy 13. This review provided the basis for the SLA allocations within the LDP. It identified risks to this particular area as including development pressure at the edge of settlement boundaries. The management principles for the SLA include the careful management of land use at settlement edges. The landscape contributes strongly to local identity and a sense of place. Development of this open countryside would have a significant detrimental visual impact on the SLA and the setting of Dechmont. The development conflicts with the purpose and aims of the SLA designation and accordingly the application is contrary to policy ENV1 (Landscape Character and Special Landscape Areas).
- 8.4 The site was allocated as a reserve housing site at the Proposed LDP stage. The principle reason for the reserve designation was to provide the critical mass and funding to support a new primary school at Bangour if that could not be fully achieved by the development of the hospital site itself. With the granting of planning consent on the hospital site funding for the school has been fully secured and there would, in the event have been no need for the reserve site. Notwithstanding, during the examination of the LDP the Reporter removed the site, due to the likely landscape and visual impacts of development and the relatively poor prospects for adequately integrating development on the site with the existing village and with development at Bangour Village Hospital. He took account of the SLA allocation, the topography of the site and the loss of prime agricultural land. This decision was taken in the context of the Reporters also concluding that there was a shortfall of effective housing land in the LDP. This indicates that, even in the event that more housing land is required West Lothian wide, this is not a suitable location for development.

The Effective Housing Land Supply - Background

- 8.5 The development plan requires planning authorities to maintain a 5-year supply of effective housing land. Where this is not achieved, greenfield unallocated sites can be granted planning permission in order to address the shortfall. The applicant argues there is a shortfall in housing land supply in West Lothian and that, therefore, this unallocated greenfield site should be brought forward for development.
- 8.6 Neither the development plan nor national policy sets out how the housing land supply should be calculated. This is a matter which the council has raised with the Scottish Government on a number of occasions. As set out below, the Scottish Government has made two recent attempts to resolve the matter but has been unable to conclude the process of doing so. It is now expected that the matter will be clarified through the publication of National Planning Framework 4 which is expected in autumn this year. In the absence of a clearly defined methodology, case law is clear that it is for the decision maker to determine the method of calculation, having regard to the alternative approaches promoted.

- 8.7 Many developers have taken an approach which seeks to address any shortfalls in housing completions in previous years, by adding them to the housing requirement for the remaining years in the plan period. In very simple terms this is done by taking the total housing requirement for the plan period and subtracting the number of completions so far to establish what the remaining housing supply target should be. This is often referred to as the residual method of calculation. This approach takes no account of any other factor which may have influenced demand for housing and house completions and it has no regard to the number of units which could realistically be completed annually within West Lothian. It is the council's view that this approach artificially inflates the 5-year housing land requirement. This position has been recognised by the Scottish Ministers who have identified that economic conditions and the Covid pandemic are material factors.
- 8.8 The council has previously promoted an average method for calculating the 5-year requirement. The basis of this approach is that the housing requirements promoted by the development industry are based on historical completion rates going as far back as the pre-economic recession period following the economic crash in 2008. It is clear that demand for housing reduced in the immediate post-crash period and took a number of years to recover. However, the residual approach promoted by the development industry does not recognise the reduction in demand which occurred and simply continues to calculate demand as being the same as it was pre-recession. The annual 'shortfalls' are then rolled forward to subsequent years meaning that the annual requirement continues to increase year on year. This is despite all the evidence pointing to reducing demand over this period. In summary, the average method divides the total housing requirement for the plan period by the number of years the plan covers, gives an annual housing requirement. This is then multiplied by five to establish the 5 year effective housing land requirement.
- 8.9 In 2020 the Scottish Government published a revised Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and Planning Advice Note (PAN) 1/2020 Assessing The Extent Of The 5 Year Supply Of Effective Housing Land which promoted the average method of calculation. However, in July 2021 these documents were quashed by the Court of Session. Dismissal of PAN 1/2020 regrettably perpetuates the uncertainty about the methodology to adopt when calculating the 5-year effective housing land supply and is,, therefore not helpful. In responding to the Court decision, the Scottish Ministers set out that they would use National Planning Framework 4 to address the issue. Nevertheless, it remains the case that there is no definitive methodology for calculating the 5-year effective housing land supply and, in these circumstances, it is for the decision maker to decide on the appropriate means, having regard to the merits or otherwise of the methodologies before it.

Housing Land Supply – Current Position

- 8.10 SESplan, which is based on the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment carried out in 2010, was approved by the Scottish Ministers on 27 June 2013. The plan and accompanying supplementary guidance are more than five years old, and the policies relating to housing are now out-of-date in accordance with SPP. This was confirmed by Scottish Ministers in a notice of intention issued on 30 April 2020 and the decision notice

issued on 4 April 2022 for a mixed-use development at Edinburgh Garden Village (under reference NOD-EDB-002). The out-of-date status was also recognised by Reporter Warren in planning appeal decision PPA-230-2294 and PPA-230-2295 for the appeal sites located in Edinburgh's South East wedge.

- 8.11 As the housing land requirements are out of date, and there are less than 5 years left in the plan period, it is not possible to calculate a five-year effective housing supply and consequently SESplan Policy 7 and LDP HOU 2 cannot be engaged. This is the approach taken by Scottish Ministers in the Garden Village decision.
- 8.12 Instead of relying on the out of date housing land figures, weight must be given to other evidence relating to housing land supply issues. The council takes the view that the Housing Land Audit 2021, the housing land requirements in Draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), Housing Needs and Demand Assessment 2 (HNDA 2) and Housing Needs and Demand Assessment 3 (HNDA 3) all post date the SESplan SDP and provide more up to date assessments of housing demand are all material considerations which should be given significant weight. Both HNDA 2 and HND3 have been confirmed as 'Robust and Credible assessments of demand for housing in West Lothian by the Scottish's Government's Centre for Housing Market Research.
- 8.13 Housing Land Audit 2021 demonstrates that there is a total effective housing land supply of 21,468, this is more than sufficient unconstrained housing land to meet the housing land requirement and illustrates that the five-year completions programme is above target. The 5-year housing land supply in West Lothian is 9,040 units. Draft NPF4 gives a ten-year housing land requirement of 9,600 houses, or 960 per year. It is worth noting that this is a land requirement rather than a housing requirement as it includes a 25% flexibility allowance. While applicants will argue that NPF4 is only a consultation and should be afforded little weight in planning decisions, it should be remembered that the housing figures in the plan have been the subject of separate consultation and agreement by the Scottish Government.
- 8.14 In spring 2020, the Scottish Government consulted on the approach to setting housing land supply figures to be included in NPF4. Following on from that consultation, and in discussion with the Housing Advisory Group, the government refined the methodology before going on to publish the 10 year Minimum All Tender Housing Land Requirements (MATHLR) in February 2021. If approved the MATHLR approach will replace the requirement for an effective 5 year housing land supply. Local Authorities were invited to consider the housing land requirement for their area, in consultation with stakeholders including Homes for Scotland, and to respond to the government on whether that figure should be revised. The council's response is set out in the report to Council Executive on the 18 May 2021. In summary, the council suggested that the MATHLR figure should be increased slightly from 8,850 to 9,600. The council's suggested increase in the MATHLR was driven by its assessment of housing need, particularly that arising from homelessness, and the conclusion that this had been under estimated in the original calculation by Scottish Government. The Scottish Government has since accepted the figure of 9,600 and it has been incorporated into draft NPF4, despite having been challenged by third parties.

- 8.15 The council submits that as the MATHLR has already been through a consultation process, involving stakeholders such as Homes for Scotland, therefore, notwithstanding the fact that NPF4 is in draft at present, the housing land requirement contained within that draft is a material consideration which should be given more weight when determining planning applications. Furthermore, the MATHLR demonstrates that demand is significantly lower than the assumed housing requirement identified in recent planning appeals and the application of the residual method would unreasonably inflate demand and result in an unrealistic requirement for land to meet that demand. The figures should be afforded significant weight as the most up to date assessment of housing land requirements in West Lothian. This NPF4 ten-year figure should be contrasted with the development industry's assertion that the annual housing requirement in West Lothian is now 3,000 units.
- 8.16 HNDA 3 was certified by Scottish Government as being robust and credible on 28 July 2022. Like HNDA 2, the most recent assessment of demand continues to show a significantly lower demand within West Lothian than HNDA1 which was used in the SESplan housing targets. This is further evidence that the housing land supply target in the development plan is out of date. For West Lothian, the various scenario's in HNDA 3 reveal a range of projected need and demand from 13,088 (slow growth scenario) to 15,312 (strong growth scenario) over a 20 year period. This equates to 654 to 766 houses per annum. This is comparable to the figure set out in the draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) which outlines a Minimum All Tenure Housing Land Requirement of 9,600 homes over a ten year period. This is comprised of an estimated housing need of 768 homes per annum with a 25% flexibility allowance applied.
- 8.17 In summary, the housing land requirements in the development plan are out of date and it is, therefore, not possible to demonstrate a deficit in the 5 year effective housing land supply. Policy SESplan 7 and policy HOU2 in the LDP cannot therefore be invoked. Instead, significant weight should be attached to other evidence which all indicates that there is sufficient effective housing land supply within West Lothian to meet the predicted demand.

Sustainable Development

- 8.18 The aim of the SPP as detailed in paragraph 28 is "to achieve the right development in the right place, it is not to allow development at any cost." Paragraph 29 sets out the principles for assessing proposed development. The current application does not comply with these principles and is not considered to be sustainable development for the following reasons.
- 8.19 The development of greenfield land inherently does not contribute towards climate change mitigation. Supporting climate change mitigation would involve preserving agricultural land and accommodating growth on existing brownfield or allocated sites. The development of greenfield land in a small village with limited amenities, with the attraction of the site being in close proximity to the motorway network, is likely to result in a car

dependant development with the residents unable to access most of their everyday needs by any means of transport other than a private car. It is considered that it would be more efficient and sustainable to utilise existing allocated sites. No evidence has been put forward to demonstrate how the proposal will support town centre and regeneration priorities. With a shift in retailing habits from the High Street to online, the need to direct development to focus on town centre and existing brownfield sites is heightened. Any economic benefits achieved as a result of this proposal would be no different from any other housing project of a similar size. The net benefits would depend on the degree to which the construction of houses on the application site would displace that on existing allocated sites.

- 8.20 Paragraph 33 of SPP states that where relevant policies are out of date then the presumption in favour of sustainable development will be a significant material consideration. However, it goes on to say that decision makers must also take into account any adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against wider policy. Importantly, the 'tilted balance' in favour of supporting unallocated sites, which has been referred to in recent housing applications and appeals, should not be applied where a housing land shortage has not been established. It is impossible to determine the degree of tilt to apply if the scale of shortage cannot be demonstrated.
- 8.21 Paragraph 34 of SPP sets out that where a plan is under review, it may be appropriate in some circumstances to consider whether granting planning permission would prejudice the emerging plan. Such circumstances are only likely to apply where the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new developments that are central to the emerging plan. Although the scale of this proposed development alone is not substantial, the cumulative effect of numerous unallocated sites being promoted by developers arguing that there is a housing land supply shortage, will undermine the proper plan-making process in relation to NPF4 and housing land targets. Developing on unallocated sites, without taking account of up to date housing land targets will not lead to the right development in the right place.
- 8.22 Notwithstanding the fact that the housing land requirements are out of date, the current proposal is not considered to be sustainable development. Any benefits of developing the site do not outweigh the negative impacts which have been identified. Furthermore continuing to grant consent for unallocated sites such as this will undermine the emerging NPF4.

Education

- 8.23 The site is in the catchment for Dechmont infant school, which has limited capacity. That capacity will be taken up by the development at Bangour Village which has recently been granted planning permission in principle for 998 houses and the site to the south which has consent for 120 houses. Although there are plans for additional capacity at primary

level, in the form of a new primary school at Bangour, a phasing restriction would be required to ensure that development on the Burnhouse site could not commence until the additional primary capacity was available. Contributions towards primary and secondary education would also be required. However, the developer does not accept this position and has indicated that they would not accept a phasing restriction. Policy INF1 in the LDP states that development will not be permitted to commence unless phasing to manage demand on infrastructure has been agreed. The development therefore cannot be accommodated within existing capacity and is contrary to policy INF1 in the LDP.

Other Material Considerations/Objections

- 8.24 Residents are also concerned about the lack of health care infrastructure in the village, particularly given the considerable house building taking place within the nearby Bangour Village Hospital. As set out above, this is not an infrastructure constraint that can be remedied by planning policy at this time.
- 8.25 The impact of the development on traffic and road safety has been assessed through the submission of a Transport Impact Assessment. This has been reviewed by the council's Transportation Service and the transport impacts of the proposal are considered to be acceptable. Conditions are recommended relating to the widening of Burnhouse Road and the design of the access.
- 8.26 The representations have also raised questions about the suitability of the site for development because of air quality, noise and impacts on ecology. These matters, along with all other technical issues, have been assessed as part of the application process, with appropriate consultations carried out.

9	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
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- 9.1 The site is situated outwith a settlement boundary, therefore the presumption against development prevails. The proposed development is an unjustified incursion into the countryside and the application is therefore contrary to policies ENV1 (Special Landscape Areas), ENV2 (Development in the Countryside) and ENV4 (Loss of Prime Agricultural Land) in the LDP.
- 9.2 The housing land requirements in the development plan are out of date and it is therefore not possible to demonstrate a housing land supply shortage. Therefore, SESplan policy 7 does not apply.
- 9.3 The proposal is not considered to be sustainable development in accordance with the principles set out in SPP, nor does the proposal contribute towards sustainable development.
- 9.4 In summary, the proposal conflicts with the development plan (Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh & South East Scotland and West Lothian Local Development Plan).

There are no material considerations that outweigh the development plan presumption against residential development at this location.

- 9.5 Members are asked to note the conflict with development plan policies when the application is reported to Full Council for a decision.

10 ATTACHMENTS

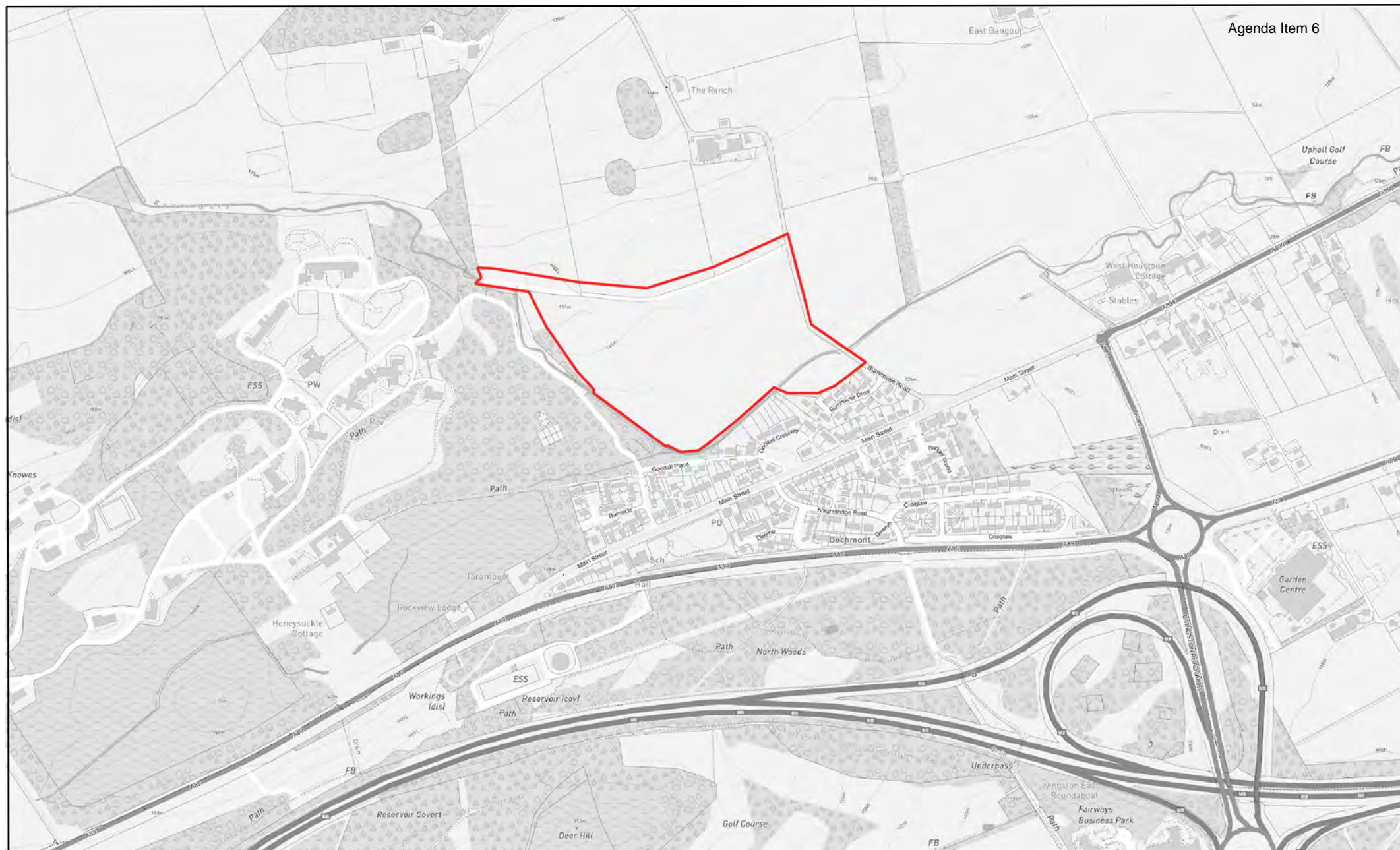
- Location Plan
- Representations

An aerial plan, site layout plan and photomontage are also available in the accompanying slide presentation pack.

Craig McCorriston

Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration

Date: 11th August 2022



Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr Kyle McGivern

Address: 59 Thomson Drive Glasgow G61 3PB

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Good afternoon,

I wish to highlight my objection to the proposed housing development at Burnhouse Farm, Dechmont for a number of reasons as follows.

Direct effect on home / Health and wellbeing: enjoyment of local open spaces

I regularly visit my parents with my family who moved to Dechmont having found a house which looks on to Burnhouse Farm. They spent considerable money on the purchase and subsequent renovation of the property which particular attention to the rear aspect with said view, adding full length windows and doors and glass handrails to enjoy it. Should the housing development go ahead there will be no view to enjoy and instead their home will be overlooked in a way which would offer no privacy at this rear aspect with a direct view into their kitchen, living area and back garden. Whilst the loss of view is a non-material consideration, the significant loss of privacy is an important material issue.

Nature conservation / Health and wellbeing: enjoyment of local open spaces

Additionally, when visiting I and my young children bird watch from the rear of the property as a number of different birds and animals can be seen in the fields using our binoculars. Once houses are built, this will clearly not be possible.

Traffic / Infrastructure

Burnhouse Road is already a very busy road with vehicles travelling in both directions around the tight bend and narrow bridge which must be negotiated at slower speeds. The addition of houses to Burnhouse Farm will significantly increase vehicular traffic and their emissions polluting what is

a clean air area. Furthermore, there will be a necessary increase in other traffic such as refuse lorries, gritters, etc. The area does not lend itself to easy access to local services without significant work to the roads, addition of pavements, public transport and such. The time, noise, disruption and cost to the public purse for such will be significant.

Furthermore, with Bangour Village literally next to the plot, there is absolutely no need for a further housing development in the area. That project is so large in scale that there will be little need for more houses for quite some time to come. The pressure on local amenities such as public transport, schools, medical centre, community centre, public parks, etc. will be increased to an extent which will clearly be unmanageable.

Kind regards,

Kyle McGivern

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

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Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Cheryl Freeland

Address: 16 Pinewood PI Blackburn Bathgate EH47 7NY

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I strongly object to the above planning ref 0241/P/22 as I often walk in this area.

With the volume of houses proposed and the potential for each household having one or two cars or more this would equate to significantly increased traffic in the area not only on Burnhouse road but also on some of the smaller surrounding roads impacting road safety, traffic congestion and air quality.

Dechmont only has one small primary school and nursery which may not be able to cope with an increased number of children.

There is already a large number of developments in the West Lothian area and I understand that housing targets are already being met. Do we really need more houses built in another beautiful green area where there are options to build on brownfield sites available in West Lothian. This development will also impact greatly on our already disappearing wildlife, deer, badgers, frogs and toads that live in the area. For the health and well-being of our communities we need to preserve our green areas not build houses on them.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Scott Russell

Address: 100 inchwood avenue Bathgate Eh48 2ef

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Tear down the past housing mistakes before destroying any more countryside to line your own pockets to the cost of wildlife and the environment.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs judy kenneway

Address: 17 byrehope road Uphall Eh525sp

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: We object to using special landscape areas for housing and value the local countryside area, I think additional traffic in the area would be a problem and local schools and gp surgeries already at capacity would be a huge problem!

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr John Gonnella

Address: 18 Goodall Crescent Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6LB

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: The proposed site is not suitable for development as it is a Special Landscape Area and a Countryside Belt. I value the open green space around me and I believe that it should be protected. It is vital habitat for wildlife. The Local Development Plan does not allocate this land for housing development and that should be upheld.

Another new development in Dechmont will increase the traffic, the village is already struggling to cope with the traffic we have. The single bridge outside the proposed development could not cope with the increase in traffic. Noise pollution will also increase.

Local services such as GPs and dentists cannot accommodate more patients which will come from yet another development.

Dechmont has been subjected to too much development and it is losing its character and small village feel. It is unfair to inflict this on the residents.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Miss Simone Oliver

Address: 8 Parkwood Crescent Broxburn EH52 5RA

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Object to planning permission

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Lindsay Dodds

Address: 54 Thomson grove Uphall EH52 6BS

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment:I object to the planning application as the land is a special landscape area. I value the local countryside and I don't believe it should be developed for housing. I am very concerned about the impact on the wildlife. The area can't cope with the additional cars this will attract and the pollution this will generate. The area is not allocated for development in the local development plan. There are not enough resources in the local area (dentists, doctors, hospital availability) for more residents.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Edith Erzsebet Csapai

Address: 7Burnside DECHMONT EH52 6LQ

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: We decided to move in Dechmont because it's a really quiet village and one of the reasons why I'm not happy about this project, because we want to keep Dechmont like a nice, quiet village.

I really value the green space around this nice and quiet village, to keep our health and wellbeing. The village will lose its character and identity if this project will take place, will increase the traffic, that I really wouldn't like.

Personally, I would like to keep this place as the way it is now, a small, very nice quiet VILLAGE.

Thank you

Edith Csapai

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

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Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Cherrie Weir

Address: 18 St Andrews Drive Uphall Eh52 6bx

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I object to this planning application on multiple grounds.

Firstly this proposed site is not allocated as a West Lothian development area.

This site being constructed would cause considerable strain on local health services such as GPs, the local hospital and local dental services.

Dechmont is a small town and already under huge reconstruction with the site already being developed at Bangour. This proposed site would vastly further reduce green space which is hugely valued to local residents and further.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr Robert Weir

Address: 18 St Andrews Drive Uphall Eh52 6bx

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment:

Firstly this proposed site is not allocate as a West Lothian development area.

This site being constructed would cause considerable strain on local health services such as GPs, the local hospital and local dental services.

Dechmont is a small town and already under huge reconstruction with the site already being developed at Bangour. This proposed site would vastly further reduce green space which is hugely valued to local residents and further.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr Costica Paroiu

Address: 7Burnside Dechmont EH52 6LQ

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: The reason for objecting this project are that I would like to keep the green space around the village, to keep the village quiet, the way how it's now for our health and wellbeing.

To stop the increase of traffic, the pollution.

To keep protected the identity of this village.

Thank you

Costica Paroiu

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr Costica Paroiu

Address: 7Burnside Dechmont EH52 6LQ

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: The reason for objecting this project are that we would like to keep our village quiet as the way how it's now , to not loose the green space around the village, that it's good for our health and wellbeing.

To not increase the traffic around Dechmont that's create pollution ,noise, environmental air.

To keep Dechmont a nice, quiet village , to not lose his character and identity, to make sure that this area will remain protected.

Thank you

Costica Paroiu

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Gemma Stafford

Address: 18 Burnside Dechmont Dechmont, Broxburn EH52 6LQ

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: The proposed site is protected as a special landscape area and part of it is designated protected Countryside Belt. There is a whole host of wildlife within this area that would be displaced if this were to go ahead.

With the development of the Bangour Village site also, there will be a very significant increase in traffic within the area, increasing air and noise pollution.

Lastly I am concerned about local GP surgeries, schools and other local amenities and the added pressure this development would bring to them when they are already under pressure as it is.

This development would have a significantly negative impact on the village of Dechmont.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

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Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Christopher Weston

Address: 2 Goodall Crescent Dechmont EH52 6LB

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: The proposed development at Burnhouse Farm will only bring more traffic to disrupt the quiet village we currently live in. Its hard enough crossing the main street with current traffic levels and the huge lorries trundling through. We are currently facing a huge increase in traffic from the development . Dechmont will be dwarfed by the developments about to arrive on our doorstep . Please stop it before its too late

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

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Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr Craig Stafford

Address: 18 burnside Broxburn EH52 6LQ

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: It's a protected piece of land not to be built on. Only reason I moved from the city was to be in a village.

Already building a house on bangour.

Reasons for objecting

Pressure on Schools, Gps etc

Noise

Air pollution

Increased traffic.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

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Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Susan Heggie

Address: 81 Main Street Dechmont BROXBURN EH52 6LJ

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: There is already pressures on the GP surgery - that's before the Bangour development is established

Traffic in the village is already busy at times and the Linlithgow road is not appropriate for the potential volume of traffic which this development will generate

The local nature is already going to be pushed towards the roads by the Bangour development as it will have nowhere to go

We are a small community at the moment and are going to lose our identity altogether if this proposal is approved

The area for proposed development goes against the Special Protected Status which most of it includes

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

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Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Ms Pippa Plevin

Address: 46 Alexander Street Uphall EH525DB

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Parish Councillor

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I object to this development on the grounds of:

Infrastructure, local amenities will not cope when there are already 900+ houses already being built at Bangour. Which schools are going to be used that aren't already at capacity? Similarly with health care provision that has to cope with other developments close by.

Traffic, this will be even more cars on the A89/M8 of a morning and evening. It is already seriously congested. The train station at Uphall cannot cope with those that want to use it and the car park is inadequate. Cars would also have to go through Dechmont village this is unacceptable extra traffic for a small rural village.

There should not be any further green/countryside belt developments in this area when there has been so much of this lost already.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr Robert Basford

Address: 6 Goodall Crescent Dechmont BROXBURN EH52 6LB

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: As a resident of Dechmont and Goodall place, I would like to formally object to the proposed development at Burnhouse Farm. By building an additional 160 homes at Burnhouse Farm, there will be:

- A significant impact on the amount of traffic in the area, increasing both air pollution and noise pollution within village. In addition, due to the primary school and local park, there will be an increased risk to young children in the area as well from higher vehicle counts.
- There could be an overwhelming and detrimental impact on local infrastructures such as the school and local shops due to the increase in houses. In addition, due to the location, residents will likely need to use cars to reach most amenities, again increasing pollution.
- Due to the location of the builds, it will likely mean multiple homes in Goodall Place, Goodall Crescent and Burnhouse Drive will be overlooked and lose their privacy
- By removing the fields, the habitat of multiple flora and fauna will be destroyed e.g. it will impact rabbits, brown hare and field mice as well as the predators that live off them.
- The loss of Green Space such as the area the houses may be built can have a negative impact on mental health and wellbeing. Losing Green Space has a direct impact on mental health, memory, concentration and creativity.
- The area that is being proposed to be built on, part of it is a protected Special Landscape area and part of it is protected countryside Belt. This means the areas are protected from being developed and by developing here, it will remove the principle of the designation.
- Dechmont is a small village and the locals here live in Dechmont as it is a small village. By building more housing, Dechmont will lose its character and identity.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr Robert Basford

Address: 6 Goodall Crescent Dechmont BROXBURN EH52 6LB

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: As a resident of Dechmont and Goodall place, I would like to formally object to the proposed development at Burnhouse Farm. By building an additional 160 homes at Burnhouse Farm, there will be:

- A significant impact on the amount of traffic in the area, increasing both air pollution and noise pollution within village. In addition, due to the primary school and local park, there will be an increased risk to young children in the area as well from higher vehicle counts.
- There could be an overwhelming and detrimental impact on local infrastructures such as the school and local shops due to the increase in houses. In addition, due to the location, residents will likely need to use cars to reach most amenities, again increasing pollution.
- Due to the location of the builds, it will likely mean multiple homes in Goodall Place, Goodall Crescent and Burnhouse Drive will be overlooked and lose their privacy
- By removing the fields, the habitat of multiple flora and fauna will be destroyed e.g. it will impact rabbits, brown hare and field mice as well as the predators that live off them.
- The loss of Green Space such as the area the houses may be built can have a negative impact on mental health and wellbeing. Losing Green Space has a direct impact on mental health, memory, concentration and creativity.
- The area that is being proposed to be built on, part of it is a protected Special Landscape area and part of it is protected countryside Belt. This means the areas are protected from being developed and by developing here, it will remove the principle of the designation.
- Dechmont is a small village and the locals here live in Dechmont as it is a small village. By building more housing, Dechmont will lose its character and identity.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

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Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Susan Hepburn

Address: 30 Plessey Terrace Bathgate EH482XQ

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: West Lothian overall despite being an urban area is wonderful because of the green space which is good for the environment and mental health. So why is the need to build on any green space. Why not create a community green space project. 160 houses = at least 320 cars which increases pollution. The roads and available services such as schools ,doctors etc.

The local community oppose this for good reason and I support them

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

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Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr Mervyn Robb

Address: 10 Marrfield Terrace Uphal Station Livingston EH54 5PX

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I object to this, due to the added pressure on the local infrastructure and services.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

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Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr Graeme Rogers

Address: 16 Badger Place Broxburn EH52 5TP

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Area already has substantial housing developments in the form of Bangor Village. Inadequate infrastructure in the area and charm of Dechmont will be lost on another soulless housing development

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Kirsty Hughes

Address: 1 St Andrews Drive Uphall Eh52 6bx

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: This is ridiculous when so many houses are already planned and approved for Bangour. This would be a nightmare for the roads infrastructure and it is already a bad road at Burnhouse plus more stretch on public services in the area.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

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Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Heather Millar

Address: 1 Heatherwood Park Pumpherston West Lothian EH53 0PH

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Absolutely disgraceful that WL Council appear to have only one interest at heart.

Destroying every village within the catchment area of Livingston New town and building on every piece of green belt available. No concern whatsoever for the infrastructure required. Not enough hospital beds. dental, health centre, schools and the congestion on the already busy roads. They need to wake up to the monster they are creating.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr John Thomas

Address: 12 Ormiston Farm Steadings Kirknewton EH27 8DQ

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: This development will fundamentally change the character of a small village and is contrary to the policy against development in the countryside.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Laura Battles

Address: 43 station road Broxburn Eh52 5qr

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Given the state of Broxburn Academy under the current PFI contract it's not viable to build even more homes in the local area which will feed into this school. It's incredible that so many homes have already been built in this area without replacing this outdated and neglected school. The primary schools in Broxburn and Uphall also require replacement but no plans are even in place. Why can't the council prioritise the education of local children before planning applications from big business?

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

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Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Aileen Grant

Address: 127 badger park Broxburn Eh525gy

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: We already struggle to get a GP appointment at Strathbrock partnership & an appointment at the local dentists. With adding more housing to the area, this is going to have a huge impact, on an already over stretched health service for the Broxburn /Uphall/Dechmont areas.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

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Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Miss Hannah Rarity

Address: 44 Main St, Dechmont Broxburn EH52 6LE

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Object to further building of new houses. The Bangour development is already going to put a strain on resources and the local environment - don't further disrupt this area and the beauty and peace it has to offer.

Dechmont Community Council

Dechmont Community Council

Meetings held in:
Dechmont Memorial Hall
71 Main Street
Dechmont
EH52 6LJ

Communication by email please
dechmontcommunitycouncil@hotmail.com

07.04.2022

West Lothian Council
Planning & Building Standards
West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingston
EH54 6FF

**OBJECTION TO PLANNING IN PRINCIPLE APPLICATION (REF: 0241/P/22) AT
BURNHOUSE FARM, DECHMONT.**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Dechmont Community Council consults with, and represents, the people of Dechmont. As a Community Council we have consulted widely to ensure that the views of as many residents as possible are represented in our submission. Following significant community engagement and consultation, as well as discussion at Community Council meetings, we hereby submit an objection to the above noted planning application.

Dechmont Community Council objects to the planning application in respect of the proposed development at Burnhouse Farm.

Dechmont Community Council objects in respect of the following material considerations;

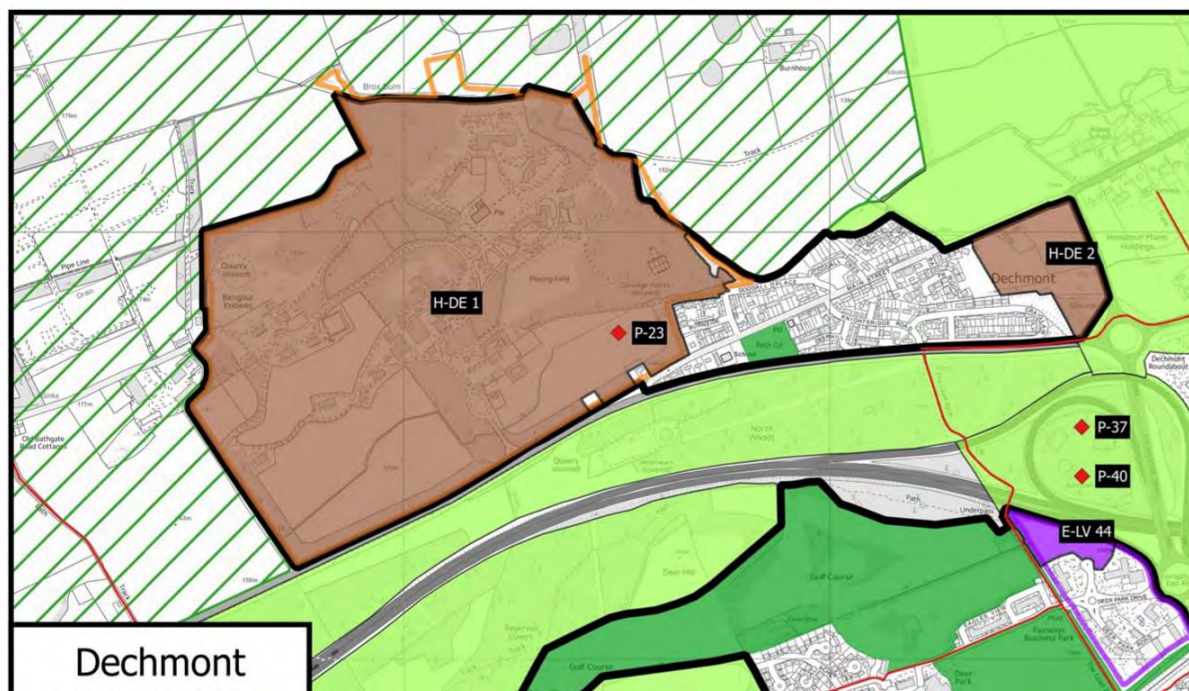
Reason 1: The West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018

Settlement Boundary - Current Position

The West Lothian Local Development Plan (WLLDP) 2018 shows the proposed site out with the Dechmont Settlement Boundary. The proposed site is **not allocated** as a residential development area. The settlement boundary, as an integral part of the existing plan, should be upheld.

Dechmont Community Council supports the due process that sits behind the current housing allocations and settlement boundary areas as this has been subject to consultation in the formulation of the existing plan.

Dechmont Community Council



Source: Supplementary Material to the 2018 WLC Local Development Plan, Map 5 Villages.

This assertion is further supported by West Lothian Council (WLC) where they have again categorically stated,

“It is the council’s position that if the site is not needed to support the allocation at Bangour Village Hospital **then it shouldn’t be developed for housing.**” (Source DPEA Request Number FIR 41, Issue Ref 10A at paragraph 5, page 6)

Special Landscape Area

The majority of the site is allocated as a ‘Special Landscape Area’. The West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018, Policy ENV 1: Character and Special Landscape Areas, at page 38 states,

“Within the Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) shown on the proposals map there is a **presumption against development** which would undermine the landscape and visual qualities for which the areas were designated...

The council will seek to **protect and enhance** landscape character and local landscape designations...”

In accordance with Scottish Natural Heritage, Special Landscape Areas play an important role in developing an awareness of the landscape qualities that make particular areas distinctive. They promote a community's sense of pride in their surroundings. Scottish Natural Heritage have stated the purpose of such areas, namely,

“This is to ensure that the landscape is not damaged by inappropriate development.”

Source: Scottish Natural Heritage www.snh.gov.uk

Dechmont Community Council

It is the position of Dechmont Community Council that we fully support West Lothian Council in their designation of the land as a Special Landscape Area and therefore oppose the building of a housing development which would fundamentally and irreversibly change this area.

Countryside Belt

In accordance with the WLLDP 2018 at page 39, and 'Policy ENV7: Countryside Belts and Settlement Setting' Countryside Belts are spatial designations, and critical planning tools, for the purposes of controlling urban spread into the countryside. A key purpose is to maintain the identity of particular areas by avoiding coalescence. Protecting the setting of settlements is an important purpose of Countryside Belts.

Countryside Belts offer a definable edge to urban development and avoid suburbanisation of the countryside and sporadic development which can harm the setting of settlements and their identifiable characteristics. The West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018, at page 42 states that the strategic purposes of Countryside Belts are to:

- maintain the separate identity and visual separation of settlements;
- protect the landscape setting of settlements;
- promote public access to green space for informal recreation; and
- enhance landscape and wildlife habitat.

A section of the southern part of the site is designated as Countryside Belt. This provides a clearly defined edge to the village and maintains a separate identity and visual separation of the settlement. The existing Countryside Belt provides a clear line to prevent 'development creep' into the countryside. The existing Countryside Belt area of the proposed development regularly hosts a range of wildlife including hares, rabbits, foxes, badgers and deer and is therefore enhancing the landscape and wildlife habitat. This is in line with the strategic purpose of a Countryside Belt.

Recent Example of Refusal: Greenbelt and SLA

Within the nearby City of Edinburgh Council area, the large scale 'Cammo' planning application (Ref: 21/04210/PPP) has recently been refused. Key amongst the grounds for refusal were the fact that the proposed site is greenbelt and part of a wider Special Landscape Area.

During the application process 118 formal written objections were received, thus showing the extent of public feeling regarding development on protected areas.

On Wednesday the 2nd March 2022 the Development Management Sub Committee published their Report categorically stating that the application is not in accordance with the Local Development Plan for a multitude of reasons including the fact that the site is a greenbelt area and part of a wider Special Landscape Area. Additionally, the Report picked up on the open character of the site,

"The introduction of urban residential development across the ridge **would break the open character of the site.** The existing rural character would be eroded, which contravenes the aims of LDP Policy Env 10." (at page 12 of 60)

This case provides precedent for West Lothian Council in this regard – the Burnhouse development is designated greenbelt, an SLA and the site has an open character.

Dechmont Community Council

Countryside

Countryside may be defined as land outside of the settlement boundaries. The WLLDP 2018 'Policy ENV 2: Housing Development in the Countryside' seeks to prohibit housing development in the countryside. At page 40 it is stated that,

"Housing development in the countryside will only be permitted where:

- a. the proposal provides for the restoration of a brownfield site where there is no realistic prospect of it being returned to agriculture or woodland use and the site has no significant natural heritage value in its current condition; or
- b. the proposal is for the replacement of an existing house in the countryside which is of a poor design or in a poor structural condition; or
- c. the proposal is for infill development within the curtilage of an existing building group or infilling of gaps between existing houses of a single plot width; or
- d. the proposal involves the conversion or rehabilitation of existing rural buildings which the council deems worthy of retention because of their architectural or historic merit; or
- e. the proposal is supported by the council's lowland crofting policy.

It is the assertion of Dechmont Community Council that the proposed development **does not meet any** of the exceptions noted above.

Reason 2: Pre-determination of the Emerging Local Development Plan

The successor to the existing WLLDP is currently being prepared. The public consultation for the emerging WLLDP will take place in due course, the delay is due to the new regulatory regime introduced by The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

One of the key aspects of the 2019 Act is to advocate greater community involvement in planning.

The granting of planning permission in principle for a major development, such as that proposed by Springfield Properties, on land that is not allocated for residential development, on land that is not part of the settlement boundary, on land that is both Countryside Belt and Special Landscape Area is grossly inappropriate in any case and specifically when a new Local Development Plan is emerging. Indeed, one may question this unscrupulous timing by the developers.

The question of the principle of development on the land in question should be addressed through the emerging WLLDP rather than now. This would enable the principle of development on the land to be subject to due process and consultation.

Dechmont Community Council makes particular mention of the prematurity argument. If West Lothian Council were to approve this application now, they would effectively be pre-determining an important element of the emerging WLLDP, without due process. It is the strong opinion of Dechmont Community Council that all potential

Dechmont Community Council

development sites in West Lothian should be considered together as part of the emerging WLLDP, whereby they can be compared with one another and the relative merits of each site considered.

There is precedent for this argument. In the local case of 'The Trustees of the late Mrs Pilkington v. The Scottish Ministers', the Reporter found that it would be premature to grant planning permission before the outcome of the Local Development Plan process was known. To do so would predetermine where a large proportion of Perth's strategic housing allocation would be located without the benefit of examining the relative benefits of all other potential sites in the area. The importance of making such strategic allocations through the LDP process overrode the developer's immediate wish to develop the Site. The developer appealed the Reporter's decision on various grounds. The Court dismissed the appeal. In particular, the Court found that the Reporter was entitled to conclude that the proposed LDP was a material consideration.

Additionally, the opinion of Lady Paton in Angus Estates (Carnoustie) LLP & Others v. Angus Council [2016] CSOH 145 is relevant;

"Approval of this application would prejudice the emerging Angus Local Development Plan as the proposed development is substantial and its cumulative effect is considered to be significant. It would predetermine decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to the emerging development plan."

Dechmont Community Council believe that granting planning in principle to the proposed development would pre-determine important elements of the scale and location of a significant development. Developments of this size should be allocated within the emerging WLLDP, as opposed to quickly passed when the emerging plan has been delayed.

Reason 3: Housing Land Requirement in West Lothian

In accordance with the WLLDP 2018 'Policy HOU 1: Allocated Housing Sites', West Lothian Council are expected to meet the bulk of their housing land requirement from sites allocated for residential development. The sites identified for development are set out at Appendix 2 of the WLLDP. **The site in question is not allocated in Appendix 2.**

In accordance with the WLLDP 2018 'Policy HOU 3: Infill / Windfall Housing Development Within Settlements' West Lothian Council are expected to source some of their land for new housing development from 'windfall sites' and 'gap sites'. **The site in question is not a windfall site or a gap site.**

Effective Housing Land Supply

The current WLLDP 2018 provides a policy framework to 2024 and also a 'vision beyond'. The 'vision beyond' means that the emerging WLLDP will continue the broad strategy within the current WLLDP.

Dechmont Community Council

West Lothian Council have land allocations to meet demand for the next 10 years plus. Indeed, the new Local Development Plan will require this, given the new longer term of the plan. WLC, in line with national planning policy, have stated that brownfield sites (such as the major development at Bangour) will be prioritised over any developments on greenbelt sites, and certainly over any developments in Countryside Belts and Special Landscape Areas.

The future development of Bangour Village along with the site approved at the east of the village would in effect triple the number of homes within and bordering the village of Dechmont. It is the strong view of Dechmont Community Council that there is no housing land requirement for the allocation of the Burnhouse site. The ongoing developments in neighbouring Winchburgh and Pumpherston have provided many thousands of new homes and will continue to do so for some time yet.

It is a point worthy of mention that housing targets are for West Lothian as a local council area, not for Dechmont as a small village to meet solely.

West Lothian Council have stated that,

“If it [the Burnhouse reserve site] is not needed to support delivery of the Bangour Village Hospital site the tests in Policy 7 of SES plan should apply. It would fail the test in this policy as:

- (a) There would be no need for the site to maintain the effective five year land supply;
- (b) It would not be in keeping with the character of the village as the village is already doubling in size and a further extension on the northern boundary which is currently identified as an Area of Great Landscape Value (Special Landscape Area); and
- (c) It is likely to exacerbate rather than solve infrastructure constraints in the school estate.”

Source DPEA Request Number FIR 41, Issue Ref 10A at paragraph 5, page 6.

Reason 4: The Character of the Village

Dechmont is a small village. People choose to live in Dechmont because it is a village. The residents are already being subjected to an expansion of the village which will see it treble in size. In doing so, the village will lose its character and identity. Adding additional developments such as the proposed Burnhouse Farm development will exacerbate this problem significantly.

The residents of Dechmont value the green space around them. Green space is well-recognised as being a factor which can contribute to overall wellbeing. It is a source of great distress to many of the residents that there has been a further attempt to develop a Countryside Belt and Special Landscape Area, despite the fact that the area is not allocated for housing in any way.

Dechmont Community Council

Reason 5: Traffic

Concerns over the increase in traffic within and around Dechmont is an issue which the community Council deal with on a regular basis. Significant increases in traffic have been noted over the past ten years with the development of the surrounding areas (Winchburgh, Pumpherston, Livingston, Broxburn etc.)

A traffic survey produced for the Bangour Village Hospital site highlighted an issue with the development causing traffic problems on the main roads around the site.

Within the documentation provided by the developer, the 'Transportation Assessment' (at page 39, para 8.44) states,

"Diagrams 8a and 8b shows that the two-way traffic flow over the bridge, with traffic growth to 2024 and with the committed and proposed developments in place, will be approximately 587 vehicles in the morning peak hour, and 498 in the evening peak hour."

According to the developer's figures, this means that about 10 cars per minute will be trying to use a single road bridge. This will cause an immediate serious problem at the junction of Burnhouse Road and the Main Street.

The figures provided by the developer of an increase of 127 cars crossing the bridge (460 per hour now compared with 587 per hour in the future) during the morning rush hour on completion of the proposed development, and on completion of the 998 houses at Bangour appears grossly inaccurate.

The proposed development at Burnhouse and the resulting additional traffic would result in an intolerable increase in traffic within and in the vicinity of the village.

Reason 6: Access to Health Services

There is considerable concern over the ability of local services, including GPs and dentists, to accommodate the existing requirements. Local residents have reported wait times of several weeks for a GP and many months for a dental appointment. This problem will be exacerbated significantly with another housing development.

Additional Information: Feedback on the Consultation

A great deal of concern as raised at community level regarding the consultation carried out by Geddes Consulting.

Firstly, the online nature of the consultation meant that many of the residents of Dechmont would have been unable to participate. No additional measures were implemented by Geddes Consulting to address this issue. As a result of the inadequacies of the Geddes Consultation, Dechmont Community Council utilised their own resources to print and deliver information leaflets to all local residents and to provide a comments box in the village shop.

Dechmont Community Council

The majority of residents in the village received no notification of the consultation from Geddes Consulting. It must also be noted that the Community Council has received several complaints from members of the public who attended the online consultation and felt that their questions were not answered, or that they were given stock answers.

The timing of the consultation was particularly poor. It is well known and recognised that people like to take time off during the Christmas holidays. It would have been known to the Geddes group that participation during the Christmas season would be low.

Another important factor requires to be addressed. During the consultation, participants were informed that the Bangour development consists of 500 houses. This is incorrect. The Bangour development will consist of around 1000 houses. It is felt that this information was misleading as it significantly scaled down the extent of development at Bangour. In the event of an appeal process, this fact must be clearly stated to the Reporters.

Concluding Remarks

Dechmont Community Council objects to the planning application for the reasons stated above. The overwhelming community response to the planning in principle application shows the extent of public opinion in relation to this proposed development. The people of Dechmont are making a stand against losing precious green space.

As a Community Council we are available should any further discussion be required in relation to our objection.

**Yours sincerely,
The Members of Dechmont Community Council
April 2022**

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Renata Lopatowska

Address: 56 Milton road Kirkcaldy KY1 1TL

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I would like to submit my objections for the Burnside Farm Application (REF: 0241/P/22) I have outlined the reasons for my objections, and they are as follows:

*The proposed development has not been identified as a suitable site in the West Lothian Local Development Plan.

*It is a Special Landscape Area of the Bathgate Hills and on protected Countryside Belt.

Developing on protected land would be wrong when there are numerous other areas without such an important status already identified on the LDP.

This gives a worrying message and sets a precedence that SLA's and Countryside Belts aren't important.

*This proposed development would significantly alter and ruin the characteristic of Dechmont. The development is not in keeping with the character of the village due to its size, density and house style. The location is out-with the natural boundary of the village as defined by the Brox Burn.

*I value the greenery, wildlife and semi-rural nature of the village which is already being jeopardised by significant developments in the area. This development proposes to remove more of the identifying features which are so greatly valued by residents and visitors and will also have a direct impact on our health and wellbeing.

...

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Ms Sarah Madden

Address: 37 Craighlaw Dechmont EH52 6LU

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I object to the proposal or any building on the site for a number of reasons:

Bangour development is already significantly increasing the size of the village. Further development will harm the character and village identity

The site is not allocated in the LDP as a residential area. I understand it was a reserve site for Bangour but it has been confirmed that this is no longer needed so should not be developed for separate development

The site is in a special landscape area, which has a presumption against development

Traffic/Infrastructure: The traffic through the village and up the A89 is already causing concern due to the volume and speed and this is going to get much worse with the large Bangour development. The Transportation Assessment provided by the developer showed an unacceptable level of traffic expected to be travelling over a single track bridge.

A section of the southern part of the site is Countryside Belt. The dev does not meet the any of the POLICY ENV 2 exceptions for permitting development in the countryside.

The site has not been allocated for development in WLC's 'Policy HOU1: Allocated Housing Sites' and should therefore not be developed on. Nor has it been identified as a windfall or gap site in accordance with WLLDP 2018 Policy HOU: Infill/Windfall Housing Development Within Settlements.

Housing land allocation: Developments in Winchburgh, Pumpherston and East Calder are providing a significant number of homes and will continue to do so for some time.

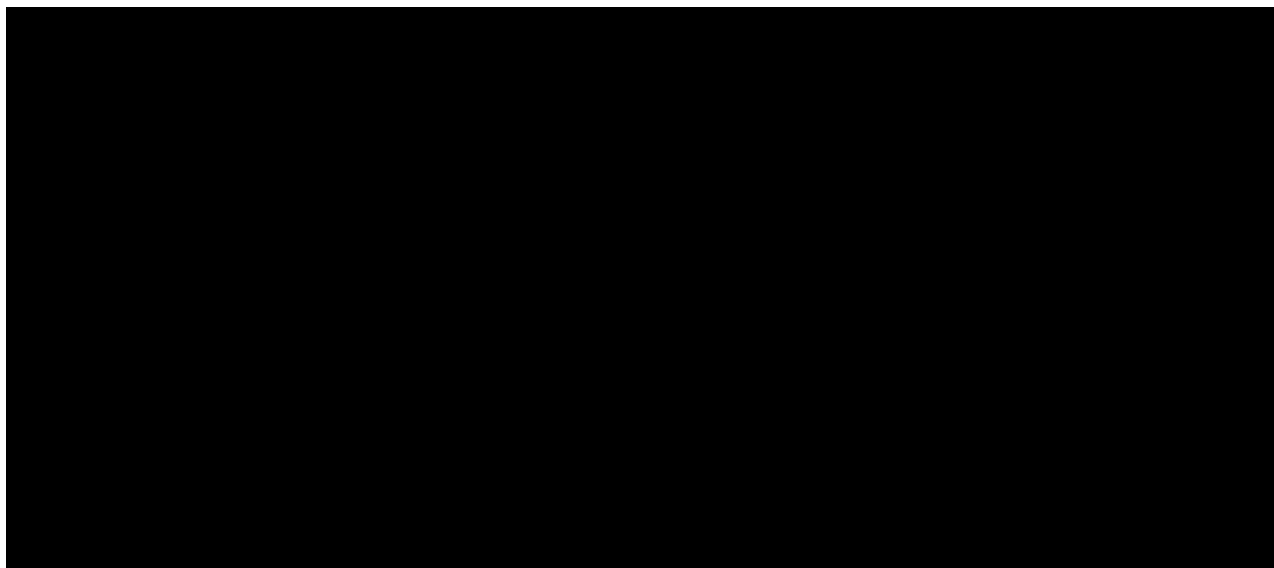
West Lothian Council have stated that: "If it [the Burnhouse reserve site] is not needed to support delivery of the Bangour Village Hospital site the tests in Policy 7 of SES plan should apply. It would fail the test in this policy as:

- (a) There would be no need for the site to maintain the effective five year land supply;
- (b) It would not be in keeping with the character of the village as the village is already doubling in size and a further extension on the northern boundary which is currently identified as an Area of Great Landscape Value (Special Landscape Area); and
- (c) It is likely to exacerbate rather than solve infrastructure constraints in the school estate."

Therefore the proposed site it not needed to maintain the five year land supply and planning should not be granted on these grounds.

Source DPEA Request FIR 41 Issue ref 10A para 5 page 6

If WLC approve this application they would be pre-determining an important aspect of the emerging LDP without due process. The precedence for this argument can be seen in the case of 'The Trustees of the late Mrs Pilkington vs Scottish Ministers' as well as The Opinion f Lady Paton in Angus Estates (Carnoustie) LLP & Others v. Angus Council [2016] CSOH 145. These cases proposed that the emerging LDP was a material consideration so granting this development despite the above legitimate restrictions would disadvantage communities in the emerging LDP.



From: Robert Basford [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 April 2022 20:09
To: Planning <Planning@westlothian.gov.uk>
Subject: 0241/P/22 Objection

Hi there,

As a resident of Dechmont and Goodall place, I would like to formally object to the proposed development at Burnhouse Farm. By building an additional 160 homes at Burnhouse Farm, there will be:

- A significant impact on the amount of traffic in the area, increasing both air pollution and noise pollution within village. In addition, due to the primary school and local park, there will be an increased risk to young children in the area as well from higher vehicle counts.
- There could be an overwhelming and detrimental impact on local infrastructures such as the school and local shops due to the increase in houses. In addition, due to the location, residents will likely need to use cars to reach most amenities, again increasing pollution.
- Due to the location of the builds, it will likely mean multiple homes in Goodall Place, Goodall Crescent and Burnhouse Drive will be overlooked and lose their privacy
- By removing the fields, the habitat of multiple flora and fauna will be destroyed e.g. it will impact rabbits, brown hare and field mice as well as the predators that live off them.
- The loss of Green Space such as the area the houses may be built can have a negative impact on mental health and wellbeing. Losing Green Space has a direct impact on mental health, memory, concentration and creativity.
- The area that is being proposed to be built on, part of it is a protected Special Landscape area and part of it is protected countryside Belt. This means the areas are protected from being developed and by developing here, it will remove the principle of the designation.
- Dechmont is a small village and the locals here live in Dechmont as it is a small village. By building more housing, Dechmont will lose its character and identity.

Thanks,

Robert basford

6 Goodall Crescent

Dechmont

EH52 6LB

West Lothian Council - Data Labels:

OFFICIAL - Sensitive: Contains Personal or Business Sensitive Information for authorised personnel only

OFFICIAL: Contains information for council staff only

PUBLIC: All information has been approved for public disclosure

NON-COUNCIL BUSINESS: Contains no business related or sensitive information

Link to **Information Handling Procedure:** <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/1597/Information-Handling-Procedure/pdf/infohandling1.pdf>

P SAVE PAPER - Please do not print this e-mail unless absolutely necessary.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Miss Amy Lobban

Address: 23 Player Green Livingston EH54 8RZ

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment:N/A

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr Ian Ferrel

Address: 35 Main Street Dechmont EH52 6LA

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Like to object to planning application 0241/P/22 Burnhouse Farm for the following reasons

1. Not in the current local development plan for this area.
2. Removed from previous LDP since an extra 450 houses approved for Bangour. So these extra 160 houses are not required to allow the primary School to go forward.
3. Part of Bathgate Hills Special Landscape Area. Erosion of this boundary should not be allowed.
4. Style of houses indicated not suitable for this area. Houses surrounding area are all bungalow style. A recent application for a single house in the next field to this area which was going to replace an existing building was rejected due to not suitable style for the area.
5. Major impact on traffic in the area. 600 cars using a single narrow bridge next to the site will cause major traffic problems. Main Street already having issues with current traffic without increases from Bangour. This development will just overload the area. Main Street and Knightsridge Road already used as a rat run due to problems of traffic between the mini roundabout and Dobbies roundabout.
6. Already approved is nearly an extra 1120 house within the area. This is over three times the size of Dechmont without an extra 160 houses being approved. Major impact on a small local village.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Patricia Ferrel

Address: 35 Main Street Dechmont EH52 6LA

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Not in current LPD

Not required after 450 extra houses approved for Bangour

Traffic problems if allowed 600 cars at peak am hour using narrow bridge to site.

Currently issues with traffic levels on Main Street without additional traffic from this proposed development.

Should not allow to be built within SLA of Bathgate Hills.

Style of houses not suitable for area.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr George Beveridge

Address: 9 Goodall Place, Dechmont, West Lothian EH52 6PD

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I fully support ALL of the objections raised by Dechmont Community Council (e.mailed to the West Lothian planning department around 7/4/2022) regarding the proposed development @ Burnhouse farm. The proposed site is NOT ALLOCATED as a residential development area as it is out with the settlement boundary. The site is NOT needed to support the allocation @ Bangour Village hospital.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr David Ferrel

Address: 43 Mallace Ave Armadale EH48 2QD

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Too many house for Dechmont area

Not in LPD

Not required for Primary School at Bangour since extra 450 houses approved.

Major traffic problems for area

Style not suitable for site

Should not be allowed to be built in SLA of Bathgate Hills

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Ms Sian Williams

Address: 1 Main Street Dechmont EH52 6LA

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: The majority of the proposed site is designated as a protected special landscape area, with another section classified as countryside belt. The land has not been allocated for residential development area in the West Lothian local development plan.

The proposed development will significantly increase traffic in and around the village, with a corresponding increase in air and noise pollution. Burnhouse Road is already heavily used by commercial and commuter traffic throughout the day, with bottlenecks at the single bridge. Traffic travelling to and from the west would almost certainly use Main Street or Knightsridge Road to join or leave the A89. A traffic survey conducted in September 2021 by Dechmont Community Council highlighted residents' concerns about the volume and speed of traffic already using these roads.

Dechmont is a small, historic village with a unique identity thanks to its association and linkages with Bangour village hospital. It has already been subjected to significant expansion to the west with the development at the Bangour site. Further expansion to the north will erode the identity and character of the village.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Liam Oliver

Address: 51 BARNES GREEN Livingston EH54 8PP

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: With the Bangour village development ongoing next to this proposed development, this would represent a whole scale alteration to the location, push local services beyond breaking point. The effects on local transportation infrastructure, already at breaking point, would be unworkable

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Elaine Beveridge

Address: 9 Goodall place Dechmont EH526PD

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I fully support ALL of the objections raised in an e.mail, to West Lothian planning Dept., by Dechmont Community council (7/4/2022). The proposed site is NOT ALLOCATED as a residential development area as it is out with the settlement boundary. The site is not needed to support the allocation @ Bangour village hospital.

Regards

Elaine Beveridge

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Ms Sian Williams

Address: 1 Main Street Dechmont EH52 6LA

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: The majority of the proposed site is designated as a protected special landscape area, with another section classified as countryside belt. The land has not been allocated for residential development area in the West Lothian local development plan.

The proposed development will significantly increase traffic in and around the village, with a corresponding increase in air and noise pollution. Burnhouse Road is already heavily used by commercial and commuter traffic throughout the day, with bottlenecks at the single bridge. Traffic travelling to and from the west would almost certainly use Main Street or Knightsridge Road to join or leave the A89. A traffic survey conducted in September 2021 by Dechmont Community Council highlighted residents' concerns about the volume and speed of traffic already using these roads.

Dechmont is a small, historic village with a unique identity thanks to its association and linkages with Bangour village hospital. It has already been subjected to significant expansion to the west with the development at the Bangour site. Further expansion to the north will erode the identity and character of the village.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Anita Anderson

Address: 38 Loanfoot Road Uphall West Lothian EH52 6LB

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: As a local homeowner and resident in West Lothian I object to this planning application. I value the local countryside and I do not want to see it used for housing development. The field is part of the Bathgate Hills Special Landscape Area and it should be protected.

The proposed development will result in a lot of additional traffic that a small village like Dechmont cannot cope with. Bangour will increase the size of Dechmont hugely, if this development is allowed to go ahead the village will lose its character and identity.

The wildlife including hares, badgers and deer will lose their habitat.

The proposed development will put added pressure on schools, GPs, dental practices and other local amenities.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr William Anderson

Address: 38 Loanfoot Road Uphall West Lothian EH52 6LB

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I am a homeowner and resident in Uphall. I object to the planning application at Burnhouse Farm. Greenbelt land should not be developed when there are brownfield sites available. The proposed site is not in the local development plan for housing.

The additional traffic caused by the development would result in road safety concerns at the single track bridge.

Doctors and dentists would struggle to cope with additional patients.

The bottom of the field regularly floods. Putting hundreds of houses in the field would severely impact on the drainage and worsen this problem.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr George Dickson

Address: 3 nether dechmont place Carmondean Livingston Eh54 8nd

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Dechmont is a small village and the amount of traffic on its roads if this development is approved will be hazardous to health and safety plus its residents don't need any more lorries rumbling through their beautiful place. This can't be a good thing

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Lelde Skrastina

Address: 18 East Glen Avenue Livingston Eh54 8bs

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: It's too many new houses, with too little upgrades of roads, schools, gp practices. Plus we need all green spaces we can have.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Ailsa Wardrop

Address: 7 Burnhouse Drive Dechmont Broxburn EH52 6NA

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I object to this proposal to build houses on Burnhouse Farm for the following reasons:

1. This proposed site is prime farmland, permanent pasture that is a carbon sink.
2. Building on this site could increase the risk of flooding of the Broxburn. (this has happened in the past)
3. This field is part of the Bathgate Hills Special Landscape Area and should not be built on.
4. It is a wildlife haven. Hares breed here in the Spring and bats hibernate under the bridge.
5. The increased traffic associated with 160 houses would make an already busy road congested and dangerous for pedestrians.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: [REDACTED]

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I am objecting to this proposal on a number of key planning grounds.

This proposal is not on land allocated as housing land. It is proposed on land designated a Special Landscape Area in the current West Lothian Local Development Plan (2018). The southern section is designated as Countryside Belt. This development would destroy a valued landscape and fertile farming area which in addition to being a green field site, goes against many local and national planning policies and the future sustainable development of West Lothian.

The land is important for the health and wellbeing of villagers. The fields continue to offer a green, rural outlook to the north, when the rest of the village is surrounded by roads or planned housing developments. Dechmont residents treasure this view of green space and the value of the biodiversity within it .

The proposal would be to the detriment of the Dechmont community and village life . I know from being a past resident and regular visitor to family who still stay in the village that the village character and close knit community of Dechmont is valued by many. This is already threatened by the very large development at Bangour and the agreed development on the east end of the Main Street that, combined, will treble the size of the village.

This proposed housing development would further erode the identity of Dechmont and breach its boundaries, leaving it open to further developments and 'urban creep'.

This development would put even more pressure on traffic infrastructure. Speeding on the Main Street is already a problem. There are concerns of how the Bangour development will affect the village traffic and this proposed development would greatly worsen the situation. Burnhouse Road

is already heavily used by commuters and commercial traffic. This proposed development would mean a much larger volume of daily traffic on this road and at the junction with the Main Street. Road safety for children particularly around routes to school and the park would also be eroded .

The proposed development would inevitably increase local environmental air and noise pollution.

This development would swamp current local facilities such as the shop, school and park and local public services such as GP and dental practices which are already at capacity.

In summary this application and its scale is a poorly considered, speculative proposal which conflicts with local and national planning policies, would impact negatively on the amenity and quality of life of villagers including the road safety of children in the village. It would be damaging to the designated landscape, conservation and biodiversity value of the land. For all these reasons I object to this proposal which I believe should be firmly rejected.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr James Watson

Address: 25 Main Street Dechmont Broxburn EH52 6 LA

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Parish Councillor

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: As the proposed site is not allocated as a residential development area in the Local Development Plan it should not be allowed to proceed.

The majority of the site is allocated as a protected Special Landscape Area. Allowing this development to go ahead would be against the principles of this protected status.

Part of the southern part of the site is designated as a protected Countryside Belt. The wildlife including hares, rabbits, foxes, badgers and deer should be protected and not be displaced.

I choose to live in Dechmont as it is a small village. Dechmont will already treble in size due to other developments. This is a step too far. It will contribute to Dechmont losing its character and identity.

I value the green space that the area around Dechmont offers. This contributes to my health and well being and do not want to lose it.

The amount of traffic using Dechmont is already too High and becoming more of a problem both in density and speed. The development will make this worse.

Local services such as GP's, dental practices, schools, and local transport are under pressure.

The development will add to this.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr Jaeson Kane

Address: 14 Pinewood Place Blackburn Bathgate EH47 7NY

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I Would like to object against this decision to build additional housing on dechmont land. This development would ruin the landscape as well as introduce an over inflated amount of traffic in what is a small area with no access to accomodate these additions. This would cause major disruption to the residents within this area or those that rely on it as a through route for commuting purposes everyday.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Ms Lisa Beveridge

Address: 40 burnside Dechmont Eh526LQ

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I support all of the objections raised in an e.mail by Dechmont Community council which was posted to the planning Dept. posted around 7th April 2022.

One of the main objections, highlighted by Dechmont council, was that the proposed site is not allocated as a residential development area as it is out with the settlement boundary. The Burnhouse site is not needed to support the allocation @ Bangour village hospital. A previous planning application for the Burnhouse site was rejected which makes me wonder why a second application has been submitted as the objections that proved successful on the last occasion have not changed. Do the developers keep applying every year or so until they are successful. Furthermore the Bangour General hospital site earmarked for development is still unused. This site would have little or no direct effect on the village therefore the W.L.council could encourage the development of that area instead of Burnhouse farm.

Lisa Beveridge

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Gavin Kenneway

Address: 17 byrehope road West lothian Uphall EH52 5SP

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I object to the planning application at Burnhouse Farm, Dechmont. The land is part of the Bathgate Hills Special Landscape Area. If developers are allowed to use that area they will start building on other protected areas too, so I think we should make a stand against it.

The field is not allocated for housing on the local development plan. As a local person the surrounding countryside is important to me and I do not want to see it disappearing to another housing estate.

The bottom of the field is known to flood, if there are houses there this will get worse. There is a lot of wildlife in the area and a new development would negatively impact them, they would have nowhere to go.

I am also concerned that the extra traffic caused by more houses would result in a safety issue. There is no footpath in that area and people couldn't walk to the school and shop. It is unfair that Dechmont is being inundated with so many new houses.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Miss Hollie Anderson

Address: 14 pinewood place Blackburn Bathgate Eh47 7ny

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I object to the planning application because it is located on land that is not designated for housing on the local development plan. It is a special landscape area and countryside belt and this should be protected. As a local person I value the countryside around us and I feel that too much of it is being used for housing.

The bottom of the field regularly floods and I am concerned that putting houses there will make the flooding worse.

I am also concerned about the additional traffic in the village of Dechmont and the single bridge outside the site. This would cause a road safety problem.

Dechmont already has a lot of houses planned at Bangour. If this new development goes ahead then Dechmont won't be a village anymore.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr William Colhoun

Address: 17 Burnhouse Drive Dechmont Broxburn EH52 6NA

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: We moved to Dechmont 5 years ago after living in Uphall for over 27 years watching the traffic build up on the main road.

Living at 57 West Main Street Uphall EH52 5DS we had to endure daily traffic jams from the mini roundabout next to the entrance of Houston House Hotel the full length of West Main Street right up to the traffic lights in the centre of the village.

This had a serious impact on my mental health & wellbeing.

I was suffering from work related stress & felt trapped in our cottage unable to escape the constant noise & find peace in my own home.

After a long day at work we were unable to relax in our front facing garden adjacent to the main road due to traffic noise & pollution.

Only 0.5 miles from my old address Dechmont is a world away from the hustle & bustle of life near a main road in Uphall.

Dechmont is peaceful, tranquil & has a real hard to find country village feel with a good sense of identity being surrounded by the beautiful Bathgate hills to the north & the old Bangour Village to the west.

It's hard to put into words how much moving to our house in Burnhouse Drive has changed our lives in such a short time.

I've lived in West Lothian all my life growing up in Livingston before moving to Uphall in 1988.

At 57 I'm planning for retirement & moving to Dechmont was an easy choice as a large part of the village is pensioners & the village is viewed as a quiet retirement village.

It saddens me when you see so many villages in West Lothian being swallowed up by new

developments.

My in-laws moved to Winchburgh over 20 years ago to be closer to my wife.

Back then Winchburgh was a small village roughly the same size as Uphall.

Due to a massive building development in the last few years its totally changed forever.

I fear West Lothian will lose its identity as a scattering of rural villages turning into suburbs of Livingston.

This is the reality if West Lothian Council approve a development that is not required on protected land on the Bathgate hills.

Since the pandemic open spaces have proved to be invaluable to mental health & wellbeing of communities & Scotland.

I fail to see why we need to built on good productive farmland never mind the impact on wild life.

We feel privileged to have a home with a good sized garden next to open farmland.

We've watched Canadian geese & deer graze on the open fields at Burnhouse Farm.

Large hares can been seen playing regularly in the summer.

Its hard to describe the sense for open space when your looking over a large field of golden barely blowing in the Summer breeze.

Since COP26 in Glasgow we've been asked to shop local & eat locally produced food to cut down on the air miles / carbon footprint of daily life. We need to protect good productive farmland from developers to ensure we can produce good quality local grain & animals to supply the ever expanding population of West Lothian.

I feel strongly that this development will have a negative impact onDechmont & West Lothian

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Dr Sonya Popal

Address: 12 South Bridge Suite 611 Edinburgh EH1 1DD

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment:Hi,

I object to the planning of building these homes in the area.

Thank you!



Graham Hope
Chief Executive
West Lothian Council
Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingston
West Lothian
EH54 6FF

Our Ref: FH7320

13 April 2022

Dear Graham,

Re: Planning in principle application (Ref: 0241/P/22) at Burnhouse Farm, Dechmont – Support for Dechmont Community Council objection

I am writing further to the objection submitted by Dechmont Community Council to the planning in principle application to West Lothian Council (Ref: 0241/P/22) for a development of 160 houses at Burnhouse Farm, Dechmont.

I have been supportive of re-development of the neighbouring approved development of the former Bangour Hospital site and indeed originally brought together NHS Lothian, the Scottish Futures Trust and the Council at a meeting in my office which helped initiate the sale and development. I also worked with Historic Environment Scotland to ensure that the listed building considerations were dealt with sensitively but practically. A great deal of time, consultation with the local community and collaborative planning was undertaken to reach a proposal which was sustainable, future proofed and sensitive to the local environment, both natural and built. This new and separate development exceeds all that had previously been agreed on the neighbouring and approved site.

As the local Constituency MSP, I entirely agree with the objection and the strength of concerns about material considerations raised by the Community Council, which I have reiterated below:

Reason 1: The West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018

- **Settlement Boundary - Current Position**

The West Lothian Local Development Plan (WLLDP) 2018 shows the proposed site out with the Dechmont Settlement Boundary. The proposed site is not allocated as a residential development area. The settlement boundary, as an integral part of the existing plan, should be upheld.

- **Special Landscape area**

The Community Council rightly oppose the building of a housing development which would fundamentally and irreversibly change this area on the grounds that the land is designated as a Special Landscape Area.

Fiona Hyslop MSP

Member of Scottish Parliament for the Linlithgow Constituency

- Countryside belt

A section of the southern part of the site of the proposed development is designated as Countryside Belt, providing a clearly defined edge to the village and maintaining a separate identity and visual separation of the settlement. Countryside Belts offer a definable edge to urban development and avoid suburbanisation of the countryside and sporadic development which can harm the setting of settlements and their identifiable characteristics.

There is precedent for West Lothian Council to refuse this application, based on the recent refusal of the large scale 'Cammo' planning application (Ref: 21/04210/PPP): key amongst the grounds for refusal were the fact that the proposed site is greenbelt and part of a wider Special Landscape Area, and because introduction of urban residential development across the ridge would break the open character of the site. In addition to its designation as a greenbelt and an SLA, Burnhouse development site has an open character.

- Countryside

The proposed development also does not meet any of the exceptions that would permit housing development in the countryside.

Reason 2: Pre-determination of the Emerging Local Development Plan

The successor to the existing WLLDP is currently being prepared, but the public consultation on this is delayed due to the new regulatory regime introduced by The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. If West Lothian Council were to approve this application now, they would effectively be pre-determining an important element of the emerging WLLDP, without due process; all potential development sites in West Lothian should be considered together as part of the emerging WLLDP, whereby they can be compared with one another and the relative merits of each site considered, as opposed to quickly passed when the emerging plan has been delayed.

Reason 3: Housing Land Requirement in West Lothian

There is no housing land requirement for the allocation of the Burnhouse site, as the ongoing developments in neighbouring Winchburgh and Pumpherston have provided many thousands of new homes and will continue to do so for some time yet, and there is already sufficient housing planned, with the future development of Bangour Village along with the site approved at the east of the village effectively due to triple the number of homes within and bordering the village of Dechmont. Additionally, housing targets are for West Lothian as a local council area, not for Dechmont as a small village to meet solely.

Reason 4: The Character of the Village

This development would cause the village of Dechmont, a small village, to lose its character and identity. The village is already being expanded to three times its current size, and further developments such as the proposed Burnhouse Farm development will only exacerbate this.

Reason 5: Traffic

Concerns over the increase in traffic within and around Dechmont is an ongoing issue, and the proposed development at Burnhouse and the resulting additional traffic would lead to an intolerable increase in traffic within and in the vicinity of the village.

Reason 6: Access to Health Services

There is considerable concern over the availability of local services, including GPs and dentists, to accommodate the existing requirements, and this will be exacerbated significantly with another housing development.

Additionally, I understand that the community in Dechmont have expressed a great deal of concern regarding the consultation carried out by Geddes Consulting regarding the development, specifically in relation to the online, and thus exclusive, nature of the consultation; the lack of additional measures implemented to address this; the lack of communication regarding the consultation; the timing of the consultation to coincide with a period where participation would likely be low; and the misleading information provided during the consultation.

Considering the above issues relating to the proposed development at Burnhouse Farm, I object to this development in the strongest possible terms. I urge you to take on board the views of the Community as represented by Dechmont Community Council and to take my letter into consideration before a decision is made on this matter.

Kind regards,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Fiona Hyslop.

Fiona Hyslop MSP

From: [Planning](#)
To: [Cyphus, Gillian](#)
Subject: FW: Planning Application 0241/P/22 Land at Burnhouse Farm - [OFFICIAL]
Date: 12 April 2022 15:43:59

DATA LABEL: OFFICIAL

From: Anne Johnston
Sent: 12 April 2022 11:43
To: Planning
Subject: Fwd: Planning Application 0241/P/22 Land at Burnhouse Farm

URGENT - CLOSURE DATE FOR COMMENT 19/4/22

I am resending my submission dated 4/4/22 as I have yet to receive confirmation of receipt from your department. As I explained in a follow-up email on 6/4/22 I am travelling at the moment and will not be at home to receive confirmation by letter. It is imperative I receive confirmation of receipt of my objection by email. Once again I would make it clear that I could not object on-line as there is a restriction on the number of characters that can be used and my objection exceeds that.

I have also spoken to an operative on 0150628000 who is going to email you today as I understand there is no other means of communicating with the planning team.

Yours sincerely

John Johnston

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Anne Johnston [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, Apr 4, 2022 at 10:57 AM
Subject: Planning Application 0241/P/22 Land at Burnhouse Farm
To: <planning@westlothian.gov.uk>

I object to this application for planning permission for the following reasons:-

PLANNING POLICY

1) The Scottish Government Reporter last commented on this site in his report published 13/12/2017 when he concluded that the site should not be allocated for development. His remarks on the subject continue to hold true today and I quote:-

"The council's West Lothian Local Landscape Designation Review (CD87) identified this site as being part of the new candidate Bathgate Hills Special Landscape Area (SLA)." " the inclusion of the site in the former Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) does tend to reinforce my concerns about the prominence and sensitivity of the site."

"Development should not proceed as it would not be in keeping with the character of the village and would be within the Special Landscape Area".

I believe the status of the site continues to remain of significant environmental importance.

2) In the Land Use section of the Design Statement Part 1 the applicant states that only 68% of the land (8.2ha) is prime agricultural land and the remainder, Class 3.2 (3.5ha) and Unclassified (0.4ha), is not considered prime quality. This may be technically correct but is somewhat misleading given that the James Hutton Institute defines Class 3.2 land as capable of supporting mixed agriculture, which the site has done and continues to do as evidenced by the many photographs of the landscape provided by the applicant. Indeed the Reporter remarked **"I note that the Council confirms that around 80% of the site is prime agricultural land."** In the current geopolitical climate I believe retaining agricultural land should be a priority for the

Council.

ENVIRONMENT

In the Preliminary Ecological Assessment document it quotes zero presence of woodcock but these birds are present albeit they can be elusive. In addition, the entry for brown hare at para 5.3.8 is inaccurate. These animals, which are on the Scottish Biodiversity List and protected by law, can be seen on this site every spring as they form breeding pairs. After the water vole this is the second British mammal to suffer the greatest decline in the last century and their habitat must be protected.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Reporter previously concluded that he was **"not inclined to favour the allocation of this site for housing development due to the likely landscape and visual impacts of development and the relatively poor prospects for adequately integrating development on the site with the existing village and with development at Bangour Village Hospital"**. This was one of my key objections last time planning permission was sought, only now the application has increased from 120 to 160 units and from 9.95ha to 12.3ha. The site is outwith the settlement boundary of Dechmont and there is no natural linkage between Dechmont village and the proposed site. The applicant's solution is **"to connect existing settlement to new development with boardwalk across burn"**. The plan includes 1 (or 2 depending on which drawing is referred to) tenuous links via "boardwalk" across the Brox Burn. It is not clear from the plans where these boardwalks would link in to Dechmont village and this needs clarified, particularly as there are no footpaths in Goodall Crescent or Goodall Place.

There is also great reliance upon an 18th century bridge that crosses the Brox Burn **outside the site** to the north west. Unfortunately, the Desk-Based Archaeological Assessment based on a site visit on 26/6/17 does not show that this bridge no longer exists. Heavy machinery was brought in to the site and the bridge was demolished some time after the Bangour Village received Planning Permission in Principle. There is, therefore, no link across the Brox Burn and the site boundary terminates at the burn.

I contend that this development is not **"a logical extension to Dechmont"** and further has no natural linkage to Bangour Village.

ROAD SAFETY/ACCESS

In terms of public transport routes, current residents of Dechmont village would attest to the fact that the bus service is wholly inadequate and the proximity of transport links would not **"encourage residents of the new development to use alternative modes of transport other than motor car"** as quoted by the applicant. The X18 bus service is the only service to go through Dechmont and bus stops exceed the recommended 400 metre walking distance from the centre of the site (480m). This service vies between Whitburn and Edinburgh but to access more local amenities such as the major retailers in Livingston, the bus stop that significantly exceeds the recommended 400m walking distance (800m) has to be used. As for rail services, whilst the Traffic Assessment states there are bus stops at Uphall Station, unfortunately no bus from Dechmont can take you there. The applicant actually states the station is a convenient short drive away. I would, however, question parking availability with many residents there having commuter cars parked in their streets all day.

With regards to transport to schools, the applicant focuses on current travel distances to existing schools, all of which require buses with the exception of P1-3 children. Most will probably drive to the school bus stop if not to the schools. Once Bangour Village is developed, I would not expect anyone to walk 1900 metres with small children to the new primary school and cars will invariably be used.

CAPABILITY OF LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Dechmont Village has been subjected to massive planning change. Bangour Village initially proposed 500 units and that figure has risen to 998 units. Main Street Dechmont initially proposed 60 units and that figure has risen to 120 units. The overall impact of these developments in real terms has yet to be fully realised/understood and I believe Dechmont Village should be subject to no further change whilst these new developments are rolled out. If additional land is necessary for future development the Council/developers should look again at the brown field site of the former Bangour General Hospital to protect our precious countryside.

Yours sincerely

Mr John Johnston

11, Goodall Place

Dechmont

EH52 6PD

West Lothian Council - Data Labels:

OFFICIAL - Sensitive: Contains Personal or Business Sensitive Information for authorised personnel only

OFFICIAL: Contains information for council staff only

PUBLIC: All information has been approved for public disclosure

NON-COUNCIL BUSINESS: Contains no business related or sensitive information

Link to **Information Handling Procedure:** <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/1597/Information-Handling-Procedure/pdf/infohandling1.pdf>

P SAVE PAPER - Please do not print this e-mail unless absolutely necessary.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Catherine Bishop

Address: 6 Thomson Court Uphall EH526BY

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I have great concerns that any additional building on this scale in this area will have an impact not only in Decmont but also on Uphall. The volume of traffic going through Uphall at present is heavy and this will further increase when both the Bangour , Uphall Station and Winchburgh developments are completed. This will result in an increase in emissions in our areas. There has been no upgrade of the infrastructure in the surrounding area which will be required soon and this will cause further traffic problems.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

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Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Ms Sue de Soldenhoff

Address: 21 Park Road Broxburn EH52 5RF

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I don't think the area can support more homes without the introduction of more infrastructure to support the wellbeing of this new community.

By infrastructure I refer to amongst others things retail and school provision, medical facilities, recreational facilities, safer roads, public transport.

Without considering these and other things like the disturbance to wild life, walking routes for the existing community, a ghetto will be created.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Grace MacDonald

Address: 57 Church Street Ladybank Cupar KY15 7LE

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I am objecting to this proposal on a number of key planning grounds.

This proposal is not on land allocated as housing land. It is proposed on land designated a Special Landscape Area in the current West Lothian Local Development Plan (2018). The southern section is designated as Countryside Belt. This development would destroy a valued landscape and fertile farming area which in addition to being a green field site, goes against many local and national planning policies and the future sustainable development of West Lothian.

The land is important for the health and wellbeing of villagers. The fields continue to offer a green, rural outlook to the north, when the rest of the village is surrounded by roads or planned housing developments. Dechmont residents treasure this view of green space and the value of the biodiversity within it .

The proposal would be to the detriment of the Dechmont community and village life . I know from being a past resident and regular visitor to family who still stay in the village that the village character and close knit community of Dechmont is valued by many. This is already threatened by the very large development at Bangour and the agreed development on the east end of the Main Street that, combined, will treble the size of the village.

This proposed housing development would further erode the identity of Dechmont and breach its boundaries, leaving it open to further developments and 'urban creep'.

This development would put even more pressure on traffic infrastructure. Speeding on the Main Street is already a problem. There are concerns of how the Bangour development will affect the village traffic and this proposed development would greatly worsen the situation. Burnhouse Road

is already heavily used by commuters and commercial traffic. This proposed development would mean a much larger volume of daily traffic on this road and at the junction with the Main Street. Road safety for children particularly around routes to school and the park would also be eroded .

The proposed development would inevitably increase local environmental air and noise pollution.

This development would swamp current local facilities such as the shop, school and park and local public services such as GP and dental practices which are already at capacity.

In summary this application and its scale is a poorly considered, speculative proposal which conflicts with local and national planning policies, would impact negatively on the amenity and quality of life of villagers including the road safety of children in the village. It would be damaging to the designated landscape, conservation and biodiversity value of the land. For all these reasons I object to this proposal which I believe should be firmly rejected.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Danny Anderson

Address: 62 Erskine Road Broxburn West Lothian EH526XL

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I would like to note my objection to this proposal based on the following three points:

I have concerns around the extra strain that would be put on the local infrastructure. Schools and GP practices are already exceptionally busy and this would add to what is already an issue locally.

The loss of this special landscape area and the detrimental effect that this would have on local wildlife habitat is not acceptable in my opinion.

The proposed site is not allocated as a residential development area in the West Lothian Local Development Plan. No building should occur in this area.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

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The proposed site is not allocated as a residential development area in the West Lothian Local Development Plan. No building should occur in this area.

From: [Planning](#)
To: [Cyphus, Gillian](#)
Subject: FW: Planning Application 0241/P/22 Land at Burnhouse Farm - [OFFICIAL]
Date: 04 April 2022 10:58:55

DATA LABEL: OFFICIAL

From: Anne Johnston

Sent: 04 April 2022 10:57

To: Planning

Subject: Planning Application 0241/P/22 Land at Burnhouse Farm

I object to this application for planning permission for the following reasons:-

PLANNING POLICY

1) The Scottish Government Reporter last commented on this site in his report published 13/12/2017 when he concluded that the site should not be allocated for development. His remarks on the subject continue to hold true today and I quote:-

"The council's West Lothian Local Landscape Designation Review (CD87) identified this site as being part of the new candidate Bathgate Hills Special Landscape Area (SLA). " the inclusion of the site in the former Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) does tend to reinforce my concerns about the prominence and sensitivity of the site."

"Development should not proceed as it would not be in keeping with the character of the village and would be within the Special Landscape Area".

I believe the status of the site continues to remain of significant environmental importance.

2) In the Land Use section of the Design Statement Part 1 the applicant states that only 68% of the land (8.2ha) is prime agricultural land and the remainder, Class 3.2 (3.5ha) and Unclassified (0.4ha), is not considered prime quality. This may be technically correct but is somewhat misleading given that the James Hutton Institute defines Class 3.2 land as capable of supporting mixed agriculture, which the site has done and continues to do as evidenced by the many photographs of the landscape provided by the applicant. Indeed the Reporter remarked **"I note that the Council confirms that around 80% of the site is prime agricultural land."** In the current geopolitical climate I believe retaining agricultural land should be a priority for the Council.

ENVIRONMENT

In the Preliminary Ecological Assessment document it quotes zero presence of woodcock but these birds are present albeit they can be elusive. In addition, the entry for brown hare at para 5.3.8 is inaccurate. These animals, which are on the Scottish Biodiversity List and protected by law, can be seen on this site every spring as they form breeding pairs. After the water vole this is the second British mammal to suffer the greatest decline in the last century and their habitat must be protected.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Reporter previously concluded that he was **"not inclined to favour the allocation of this site for housing development due to the likely landscape and visual impacts of development and the relatively poor prospects for adequately integrating development on the site with the existing village and with development at Bangour Village Hospital"**. This was one of my key objections last time planning permission was sought, only now the application has increased from 120 to 160 units and from 9.95ha to 12.3ha. The site is outwith the settlement boundary of Dechmont and there is no natural linkage between Dechmont village and the proposed site. The applicant's solution is **"to connect existing settlement to new development with boardwalk across burn"**. The plan includes 1 (or 2 depending on which drawing is referred to) tenuous links

via "boardwalk" across the Brox Burn. It is not clear from the plans where these boardwalks would link in to Dechmont village and this needs clarified, particularly as there are no footpaths in Goodall Crescent or Goodall Place.

There is also great reliance upon an 18th century bridge that crosses the Brox Burn **outside the site** to the north west. Unfortunately, the Desk-Based Archaeological Assessment based on a site visit on 26/6/17 does not show that this bridge no longer exists. Heavy machinery was brought in to the site and the bridge was demolished some time after the Bangour Village received Planning Permission in Principle. There is, therefore, no link across the Brox Burn and the site boundary terminates at the burn.

I contend that this development is not **"a logical extension to Dechmont"** and further has no natural linkage to Bangour Village.

ROAD SAFETY/ACCESS

In terms of public transport routes, current residents of Dechmont village would attest to the fact that the bus service is wholly inadequate and the proximity of transport links would not "encourage residents of the new development to use alternative modes of transport other than motor car" as quoted by the applicant. The X18 bus service is the only service to go through Dechmont and bus stops exceed the recommended 400 metre walking distance from the centre of the site (480m). This service vies between Whitburn and Edinburgh but to access more local amenities such as the major retailers in Livingston, the bus stop that significantly exceeds the recommended 400m walking distance (800m) has to be used. As for rail services, whilst the Traffic Assessment states there are bus stops at Uphall Station, unfortunately no bus from Dechmont can take you there. The applicant actually states the station is a convenient short drive away. I would, however, question parking availability with many residents there having commuter cars parked in their streets all day.

With regards to transport to schools, the applicant focuses on current travel distances to existing schools, all of which require buses with the exception of P1-3 children. Most will probably drive to the school bus stop if not to the schools. Once Bangour Village is developed, I would not expect anyone to walk 1900 metres with small children to the new primary school and cars will invariably be used.

CAPABILITY OF LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Dechmont Village has been subjected to massive planning change. Bangour Village initially proposed 500 units and that figure has risen to 998 units. Main Street Dechmont initially proposed 60 units and that figure has risen to 120 units. The overall impact of these developments in real terms has yet to be fully realised/understood and I believe Dechmont Village should be subject to no further change whilst these new developments are rolled out. If additional land is necessary for future development the Council/developers should look again at the brown field site of the former Bangour General Hospital to protect our precious countryside.

Yours sincerely

Mr John Johnston

11, Goodall Place

Dechmont

EH52 6PD

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Gillian Anderson
18 Goodall Crescent
Dechmont
West Lothian
EH52 6LB

Tel: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
11.04.2022

Gillian Cyphus
West Lothian Council
Planning & Building Standards
West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingston
EH54 6FF

**OBJECTION TO PLANNING IN PRINCIPLE APPLICATION (REF: 0241/P/22) AT
BURNHOUSE FARM, DECHMONT.**

Dear Ms Cyphus,

I am writing to you to lodge my objection to the proposed development at Burnhouse Farm, Dechmont.

I wish to object based on the following material considerations;

1. The West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018

The West Lothian Local Development Plan (WLLDP) 2018 shows the proposed site out with the Dechmont Settlement Boundary. The proposed site is not allocated as a residential development area. The settlement boundary, as an integral part of the existing plan, should be upheld.

The majority of the site is allocated as a 'Special Landscape Area'. The West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018, Policy ENV 1: Character and Special Landscape Areas, at page 38 states,

“Within the Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) shown on the proposals map there is a **presumption against development** which would undermine the landscape and visual qualities for which the areas were designated...

The council will seek to **protect and enhance** landscape character and local landscape designations...”

In my opinion the Special Landscape Area should be protected to ensure that the landscape is not damaged by inappropriate development.

A section of the southern part of the site is designated as Countryside Belt. This provides a clearly defined edge to the village and maintains a separate identity and visual separation of the settlement. The existing Countryside Belt provides a clear line to prevent 'development creep' into the countryside. The existing Countryside Belt area of the proposed development regularly hosts a range of wildlife including hares, rabbits, foxes, badgers and deer and is therefore enhancing the landscape and wildlife habitat. In my opinion this area should be protected.

2. Countryside - land outside of the settlement boundaries.

The WLLDP 2018 'Policy ENV 2: Housing Development in the Countryside' seeks to prohibit housing development in the countryside. At page 40 it is stated that,

"Housing development in the countryside will only be permitted where:

- a. the proposal provides for the restoration of a brownfield site where there is no realistic prospect of it being returned to agriculture or woodland use and the site has no significant natural heritage value in its current condition; or
- b. the proposal is for the replacement of an existing house in the countryside which is of a poor design or in a poor structural condition; or
- c. the proposal is for infill development within the curtilage of an existing building group or infilling of gaps between existing houses of a single plot width; or
- d. the proposal involves the conversion or rehabilitation of existing rural buildings which the council deems worthy of retention because of their architectural or historic merit; or
- e. the proposal is supported by the council's lowland crofting policy.

It is my opinion that the proposed development does not meet any of the exceptions noted above.

3. Pre-determination of the Emerging Local Development Plan

The granting of planning permission in principle for a major development, such as that proposed by Springfield Properties, on land that is not allocated for residential development, on land that is not part of the settlement boundary, on land that is both Countryside Belt and Special Landscape Area is grossly inappropriate in any case and specifically when a new Local Development Plan is emerging.

It is my opinion that the question of the principle of development on the land in question should be addressed through the emerging WLLDP rather than now. This would enable the principle of development on the land to be subject to consultation. All potential development sites in West Lothian should be considered together as part of the emerging WLLDP, whereby they can be compared with one another and the relative merits of each site considered.

4. Housing Land Requirement

The current WLLDP 2018 provides a policy framework to 2024 and also a 'vision beyond'. The 'vision beyond' means that the emerging WLLDP will continue the broad strategy within the current WLLDP.

West Lothian Council have land allocations to meet demand for the next 10 years plus. Indeed, the new Local Development Plan will require this, given the new longer term of the plan. WLC, in line with national planning policy, have stated that brownfield sites (such as the major development at Bangour) will be prioritised over any developments on greenbelt sites, and certainly over any developments in Countryside Belts and Special Landscape Areas.

The future development of Bangour Village along with the site approved at the east of the village would in effect triple the number of homes within and bordering the village of Dechmont. It is the strong view of Dechmont Community Council that there is no housing land requirement for the allocation of the Burnhouse site. The ongoing developments in neighbouring Winchburgh and Pumpherston have provided many thousands of new homes and will continue to do so for some time yet.

5. The Character of the Village

I choose to live in Dechmont because it is a small village. The residents are already being subjected to an expansion of the village which will see it treble in size. In doing so, the village will lose its character and identity. Adding additional developments such as the proposed Burnhouse Farm development will exacerbate this problem significantly. I value the open space around me and I believe it contributes to overall wellbeing.

6. Traffic

The proposed development at Burnhouse and the resulting additional traffic would result in an intolerable increase in traffic within and in the vicinity of the village. I have concerns over the figures provided in the developer's 'Transportation Assessment' as they do not appear to be based on any reasonable estimates. The single road bridge will be unable to cope with the additional traffic produced by the proposed development. This will cause a road safety problem.

Your sincerely,

Gillian Anderson
Resident and Homeowner in Dechmont

From: [Planning](#)
To: [Cyphus, Gillian](#)
Subject: FW: 0241/P/22 Objection - [OFFICIAL]
Date: 11 April 2022 08:18:55

DATA LABEL: OFFICIAL

From: Robert Basford
Sent: 10 April 2022 20:09
To: Planning
Subject: 0241/P/22 Objection

Hi there,

As a resident of Dechmont and Goodall place, I would like to formally object to the proposed development at Burnhouse Farm. By building an additional 160 homes at Burnhouse Farm, there will be:

- A significant impact on the amount of traffic in the area, increasing both air pollution and noise pollution within village. In addition, due to the primary school and local park, there will be an increased risk to young children in the area as well from higher vehicle counts.
- There could be an overwhelming and detrimental impact on local infrastructures such as the school and local shops due to the increase in houses. In addition, due to the location, residents will likely need to use cars to reach most amenities, again increasing pollution.
- Due to the location of the builds, it will likely mean multiple homes in Goodall Place, Goodall Crescent and Burnhouse Drive will be overlooked and lose their privacy
- By removing the fields, the habitat of multiple flora and fauna will be destroyed e.g. it will impact rabbits, brown hare and field mice as well as the predators that live off them.
- The loss of Green Space such as the area the houses may be built can have a negative impact on mental health and wellbeing. Losing Green Space has a direct impact on mental health, memory, concentration and creativity.
- The area that is being proposed to be built on, part of it is a protected Special Landscape area and part of it is protected countryside Belt. This means the areas are protected from being developed and by developing here, it will remove the principle of the designation.
- Dechmont is a small village and the locals here live in Dechmont as it is a small village. By building more housing, Dechmont will lose its character and identity.

Thanks,

Robert basford

6 Goodall Crescent

Dechmont

EH52 6LB

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From: [Planning](#)
To: [Cyphus, Gillian](#)
Subject: FW: Objection to Application 0241/P/22 Burnhouse - [OFFICIAL]
Date: 11 April 2022 16:34:00

DATA LABEL: OFFICIAL

Comment on one of your applications

From: ola lopatowska
Sent: 11 April 2022 16:25
To: Planning
Subject: Objection to Application 0241/P/22 Burnhouse
FAO: Gillian Cyphus (Case Officer)

I would like to submit my objections for the Burnhouse Farm Planning in Principle Application (REF: 0241/P/22) I have outlined the reasons for my objections and they are as follows:

The proposed development isn't within the West Lothian Local Development Plan, yet there are numerous undeveloped areas already identified within the council's 5 year strategy. This area is within The Special Landscape Area of the Bathgate Hills which goes directly against the SESPlan Policy 7 requirements that any new development would protect the character of existing settlement and should not undermine green belt objectives.

Dechmont is a small rural community village which is naturally separated from the Special Protected Area of the Bathgate Hills by the Brox Burn. This is a natural, historical and ecological separation which would be completely destroyed by the proposed development. It would negatively impact the character of the village and its rural identity by the removal of this natural boundary.

I entirely disagree and object to the developers 'Settlement and Local Character Appraisal' and also the 'Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', which clearly shows that the development will NOT be in keeping and character of the rest of the village.

By the Local Character reports own admission, Dechmont is currently made up of a wide variety of house types, only a limited few have been identified within the report itself. The proposed development would alter the character of the village significantly, vastly increasing the size by a third and would create a 'dominant' house style.

The proposed development is on a highly visible area which is further accentuated by the gradient of the slope uphill northwards away from the village. The actual density and visual impact of 160 homes is contradictory to the report statement of the development being a 'small extension', and a 'discreet location' (Section 3 Assessment of Local Landscape Character). A major development of this size and density would in fact incredibly impact the integrity and character of the landscape. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment contradicts its own findings further in this respect with a bizarre metric. The suggestion in table 4.1 that the change to the landscape would be 'medium' to 'high impact', yet the conclusion in their 8.1 table summary deeming the effect to be 'not significant' is baffling. I also object to the continual use of the word 'urban' and 'urbanisation' in this report used to describe Dechmont and its current boundaries. I moved away from an urban location (Edinburgh), and chose to live in Dechmont for its suburban and rural character and do not find this as a suitable description.

I am concerned by the environmental impact caused to the Brox Burn and the species that use the Riparian area. As a resident, I respect and enjoy the wildlife, particularly that of bats and birds. The proposed 15 year term of growth of the incorporated trees around the development periphery does not mitigate the many years of construction that would ecologically and severely impact the Brox Burn and surrounding environment. The Preliminary Ecological Assessment report also does not take into account or mention the habitat loss from the Bangour Village development and how that might affect the link along Brox Burn and its wildlife at the site of the Burnhouse Farm development. I'm also extremely concerned that The Drainage Report by Springfield Properties clearly states that all Surface Drainage Water from the Burnhouse Farm plot will directly be fed into the Brox Burn (section 6) and they acknowledge that during the construction of the site "the risk of pollution and contamination during this period is particularly high (Section 10)".

The development site does not provide any facilities, shops or services. There will be an increase pressure to the current local amenities and no benefit to Dechmont itself. The construction jobs that will be created are temporary and will be redundant when the site is complete.

The proposed development would have a serious impact on road safety, road users and community safety while using the road network, particularly cyclists. I also feel it does not meet the requirements for new developments outlined by the SPP nor the SESplan Policy 8 relating to Transportation requirements. The Burnhouse Farm development does not provide suitable access to public transport. It does not encourage the use of public transport or cycling or non-car transportation and as a result will increase CO2 emissions, environmental air and noise pollution as a result of car usage. And mostly, there are serious safety concerns

involved in the location and road access to the site and surrounding area.

The development proposes two access points on the Burnhouse Road and north of the single lane bridge and dangerous narrowing of the road. Within the Springfield Property Transportation Assessment in section 3.5 they have indicated the new footpath but there have been no provisions made to the safety of cyclist nor for access to suitable cycle path directly accessible from the site. The 40mph speed limit on the access to the site, increase in road users from the proposed development and the danger to cyclists (particularly at the narrowing on the bridge) is a serious concern.

The photographs used in the Transportation Assessment paragraph 3.30, 3.31 and 3.32 and associated description of the road are wholly inaccurate and mis-leading. These have not been taken from the perspective a road user (car driver, motorcyclist or cyclist) but clearly show photos taken from height or from the side of the road at an angle not consistent with that of a road user.

As the Transportation Assessment clearly states, the access to the closest bus service is 430m from the proposed site entrance while Annex B of PAN75 states that the distance to public transport for any new development should be within 400m and up to 800m to rail services. The development is out-with both of these requirements.

The Springfield report suggests the use of the additional local bus services on the A899 for access to local amenities (section 4.27 and 4.28) but this is at 800m of the development and the closest and most direct route for pedestrians to access this bus stop would be via the roundabout onto A899, there is no pavement access to these bus stops (on either side of the road). This is also the quickest and most direct route to the nearest train station at Uphall Station. The lack of pavement and cycle lane is concerning from a safety perspective but will also encourage car usage.

The Springfield Transport Assessment report by it's own admission indicates that Junctions 3 and 4 is currently subject to delays and queues at peak times, yet it also states that the impact to the traffic and surrounding road network would be 'marginal' as a result of the new development. The reports mis-information and contradictions are once again highlighted further by their traffic report which shows their predictions of the Bangour Development combined with the Burnhouse Farm site pushing the road network 'over the practicable capacity' (section 8.28). There is no coherent evidence to show that the impact would be 'marginal' when it is already apparent that the road network in the area and through the village experiences issues particular at peak times and M8 incidents.

I have serious concerns with the risk of flooding and erosion of the Brox Burn and how the addition of the proposed development might impact my own property/garden/outbuilding in the event of flooding. The Flood Risk Assessment Report carried out by KAYA Consulting states that the current SEPA reservoir map highlights Bangour Reservoir as high risk for potential flooding and that of Dechmont in the event of dam failure. It also highlights the West Lothian Council consultation stated "a history of damaging flows coming down the burn causing extreme erosion close to the site of interest and immediately downstream of it" (section 2.4.6.2). This combined with the change to the upstream watercourse and unpredictable nature of water gives me little comfort.

Lastly, a very personal objection to this development is on the grounds that I moved to Dechmont for a quiet, semi-rural location and chose my home on my street for the peace and quiet and countryside outlook. As someone who suffers from anxiety and works from home full time, my move to Dechmont has helped my mental health and wellbeing enormously. The proposal of a construction site directly next to my home and the noise, pollution and disruption that this would cause for many years would seriously and negatively affect me and my life.

Ola Lopatowska
10 Goodall Crescent
Dechmont
EH52 6LB

Tel: [REDACTED]

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Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr BERT McAuley

Address: 1 Almond Side MID CALDER MID CALDER EH53 0AZ

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Dechmont is a small village. People choose to live in Dechmont because it is a village, like Mid Calder used to be before it was hacked at Calderwood.

The residents in Dechmont, and at Mid Calder are already being subjected to an expansion of the village which will see it treble in size. In doing so, the village will lose its character and identity.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Mr Kenny Pitcairn

Address: 25 Station Roas Uphall Eh52 5dx

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: This development would be detrimental to the village of Dechmont, the Bangour development alone will have a major impact on the wildlife due to the removal of trees and hedges. Hate to think what further deterioration this proposed development would cause. Also means more cars and heavy goods vehicles using the A899 and B8036 through Uphall which currently is a nightmare if you are walking on the already narrow pavements, traffic is currently at a standstill at peak times.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Miss SHEILA LINKIE

Address: 3 BURNHOUSE DRIVE DECHMONT BROXBURN EH52 6NA

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: objection to Infrastructure, traffic, nature conservation, sustainability, and health and wellbeing.

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Alan Simpson

Address: 5 craiglaw dechmont Dechmont Eh526lu

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Would totally destroy village atmosphere and make it yet another Edinburgh suburb, just like has happened to winchburgh ..

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Miss Alison Webster

Address: 50 West Main Street Broxburn EH52 5RJ

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: There is not the infrastructure to handle even more houses, especially once the Bangour site is completed, the hospitals and Dr's etc are already groaning at the seams. Given the crisis with the war in Ukraine does this also not show how important it is to retain Farm land for farming and growing and providing our own food, without being at the mercy of any other countries or events! It's all very well having the houses for people, but where will all the food come from to feed them. Also Dechmont is not a city but a wee village and if it is flooded with houses and has all green spaces taken away it will lower the quality of life for people who live there.

From: lynnemcewen <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 18 April 2022 17:35
To: Planning <Planning@westlothian.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Dechmont planning

Dear Sir/Madam

On behalf of Uphall Community Council I am contacting you in support of Dechmont Community Council with regard to a planning application.

Our reasons are outlined below.

--

Uphall Community Council strongly objects to the Planning in principle application (Ref: 0241/P/22) at Burnhouse Farm, Dechmont on the following grounds:

This will directly affect Uphall which is very close to this proposed development.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure is already impacted by up to 1000 houses about to be built at Bangour, this is adding even more to the already overstretched Schools, Health Services, power, water and sewage services.

Sewage services in particular are outdated and will not be able to cope with the increase required in a rural area like this.

Broxburn Academy does not have the capacity and if Winchburgh Secondary schools are used, this would mean cars and buses going through Uphall and onto Ecclesmachan Road to get to school in the morning.

The resulting increase in traffic is not acceptable.

Traffic

Vehicles will all have to go through Dechmont Village creating a rat run, which will be an intolerable increase in traffic for a small rural village.

The A89 and M8 roads are already congested in the mornings and evenings, and will struggle to cope with even more cars on these roads and junctions.

The Uphall train station is at capacity both for car parking and commuters using the service. This is before the needs of future developments at Bangour and Pumpherston.

Nature Conversation

In the West Lothian Local Development Plan a majority of the site is allocated as a 'Special Landscape Area', building houses would fundamentally and irreversibly change this area.

A section of the site is designated as part of the Countryside Belt. It is important that this be maintained to prevent 'development creep' into the countryside.

Additionally the development does not meet any of the exceptions that would permit houses to be built in the countryside.

Policy

The West Lothian Local Development Plan shows that the proposed site is outwith the Dechmont Settlement Boundary so should not be allowed to be developed for housing.

The housing land requirement has already been allocated for the Bangour development that is closeby, and so there is no legal requirement for any more to be built.

Regards

Lynne McEwen
Secretary Uphall Community Council

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From: Milk Hair Mid Calder [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 April 2022 23:45
To: Cyphus Gillian <Gillian.cyphus@westlothian.gov.uk>; Planning <Planning@westlothian.gov.uk>
Subject: Fwd: Delivery Status Notification (Failure)

West Lothian Council

Planning & Building Standards

West Lothian Civic Centre

Livingston EH54 6FF

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to object to the in-principal application reference 0241/P22 at Burnhouse Farm, Dechmont

The proposed site is not allocated as a residential area and the decision, following due process, extensive consultation and formulation should be upheld – West Lothian Council have already stated their position that the site is not needed to support the allocation at Bangour Village Hospital then it shouldn't be developed for housing (source: DPEA Request Number FIR 41)

The majority of the site is within a Special Landscape Area, where Policy ENV 1 states that there is a presumption against development in these areas, the council should therefore seek to protect and enhance an area deemed important in terms of its visual qualities, its distinctive attributes that placed it on the SLA in the first place, and not promote the undermining and inappropriate development

The proposal will see the development of farmland, which is in short supply in Scotland and protected on the LDP, development of this site for housing would result in the permanent loss of this irreplaceable natural resource

The development will severely impact the landscape and visual impact in the area and have a negative impact on the surrounding settlements, and the local character of the area. The development will further fragmentate the predominately rural character of the area. The build would not be sympathetic to the area and rural character of the surrounding area and contrary to the developer's findings does not provide a sympathetic transition between the development and the site area that is currently designated as a Special Landscape Area (SLA), a local designation for quality and value of the current landscape

The developers' proposals would not conserve the landscape character and would have a significant detrimental visual impact for the local area. The proposed development would not be in keeping with the character of Dechmont, or the surrounding area and therefore contrary to criterion (a) of Policy 7 of the SeSplan

The proposed site would negatively impact the character of the village of Dechmont, and surrounding areas too, with the current development under way at the former Bangour hospital site the village would effectively join Uphall, Livingston and Bathgate. The countryside belt designation is described in the local plan as preventing coalescence with other settlements) Policy ENV 23 – countryside belts) This is further expanded on the local development plan to include the strategic purposes of maintaining the separate identity and visual separation of settlements, protecting the landscape setting of settlements, promoting public access to green space for informal recreation and enhancing landscape and wildlife habitat. Policy ENV 1 to ENV 7 is not met, any of the strategic purposes listed are undermined or the proposal would give rise to visual or physical coalescence.

I believe each of the neighbouring settlements would therefore suffer from loss of their own unique identities as the application severely reduces the physical and visual separation of each settlement.

Roads: Burnhouse Farm is not sustainable in terms of its current connectivity to the existing public sector links, reliance of a car to access – an already overstretched – train service into Glasgow and Edinburgh is highly likely, contrary to the developers claims.

According to the developer's own figures they estimate 10 cars per minute will be trying to use a single road bridge. This will cause an immediate serious problem at the road junction where I live, Burnhouse Drive, Burnhouse Road and the Main Street.

The Proposed development at Burnhouse and the resulting additional traffic would be intolerable for both the village and the surrounding areas.

I have considerable concern that the ability of local services, including GP's, Dentists, Policing can accommodate the existing requirements far less an additional strain. I am acutely aware of wait times for a GP appointment, local pharmacies cannot recruit staff to work in their dispensaries and local dentists have closed their NHS lists, its not buildings that are the issue it is employing the correct people to fulfil the roles required to maintain a community

Furthermore, despite living next to the proposed development site I did not receive notification from Geddes Consulting, if it wasn't for the Community Council, I would have been unaware.

Yours sincerely,

George Hughes

13, Burnhouse Drive, Dechmont, West Lothian EH52

----- Forwarded message -----
From: Mail Delivery Subsystem <mailer-daemon@googlemail.com>
Date: Mon 18 Apr 2022 at 23:40
Subject: Delivery Status Notification (Failure)
To: [REDACTED]



Address not found

Your message wasn't delivered to gillian.cyphus@westlothian.gov because the domain westlothian.gov couldn't be found. Check for typos or unnecessary spaces and try again.

The response was

DNS Error: DNS type 'mx' lookup of westlothian.gov responded with code NXDOMAIN Domain name not found: westlothian.gov

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Milk Hair Mid Calder [REDACTED]
To: gillian.cyphus@westlothian.gov
Cc:
Bcc:
Date: Mon, 18 Apr 2022 21:59:37 +0100
Subject: Burnhouse Farm Application
----- Message truncated -----

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [Cyphus, Gillian](#)
Subject: Burnhouse Farm Application 0241/P/22
Date: 18 April 2022 22:06:47

Morning,

Please find attached my letter of objection for the planning application 0242/P/22

Many thanks

West Lothian Council

Planning & Building Standards

West Lothian Civic Centre

Livingston EH54 6FF

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to object to the in-principal application reference 0241/P22 at Burnhouse Farm, Dechmont for the following reasons:

If this application is approved by West Lothian Council it will be against the wishes of most residents in the village and surrounding villages. The village of Dechmont will be sandwiched between two sprawling high density urban housing schemes – lives of the residents and the wildlife in the area will be negatively impacted

The application is contrary to the SESplan, this plan states that sites for greenfield housing development proposals either within or out-with the identified SDA may be allocated in the LDP or granted planning permission to maintain a five years' effective housing land supply, subject to satisfying each of the following criteria: (a) The development will be in keeping with the character of the settlement and local area; (b) the development would undermine green belt objectives

In this instance, the site is not allocated for housing in the adopted local plan. In terms of criterion (a) the site if developed would not be in keeping with the character of the area and the settlement as this area is clearly rural in nature and character and is on the dividing line of settlement envelope and countryside and is worthy of continued protection; It is within the Countryside Belt in both the adopted plan and the LDP and is considered a Special Landscape Area.

Furthermore, there are enough houses allocated through the development plan and that the number of houses being developed being lower than anticipated is due to the economic slowdown, with West Lothian Council already expected to meet the bulk of sites allocated for residential development. Indeed, WLC have stated, in accordance with National Planning Policy to prioritise brownfield sites over any development utilising a greenbelt area. Our village already has approved planning for circa 1000 new homes in the east of the village in a designated brown belt site. The developers are not only aiming to build new homes on greenbelt land but a designated Special Landscape Area. The site is countryside belt in the adopted WLLP and is not an allocated development site. This stance is carried forward to the LDP

The Scottish Planning Policy, paragraph 28, introduces a presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development, and states that the aim is to achieve the right development in the right place; it is not to allow development at any cost. Given the adverse impacts on the character of the settlement, the local area, loss of agricultural land, impact to biodiversity and the environmental impact the application holds no positive contributions. Overall, the proposal contributes nothing to sustainable development (contrary to criterion (d) of policy HOU2.

The proposal will see the development of farmland, which is in short supply in Scotland and protected on the LDP, development of this site for housing would result in the permanent loss of this irreplaceable natural resource

The development will severely impact the landscape and visual impact in the area and have a negative impact on the surrounding settlements, and the local character of the area. The development will further fragmentate the predominately rural character of the area. The build would not be sympathetic to the area and rural character of the surrounding area and contrary to the developer's findings does not provide a sympathetic transition between the development and the site area that is currently designated as a Special Landscape Area (SLA), a local designation for quality and value of the current landscape

The overriding characteristic of the viewpoint in this area is rural, I do not consider that the proposed response and landscaping suggestion of an Open space Corridor with tree planting along the southern edge of the site incorporating the Brox Burn riparian corridor would enhance the existing biodiversity of the site; how can it when a build of this nature will effectively close wildlife corridors, place pressure on nesting, feeding and roaming sites for wildlife. West Lothian has seen a catastrophic decline of rare and endangered wildlife. Furthermore, the influx of so many new residents will increase local air pollution, place hundreds more cars on the roads, further penning the wildlife on the site.

There are several bird species on the RSPB Red List, the Red List can be defined as species that are globally threatened, have a historic population decline, severe decline (at least 50%) in the UK breeding population – this site includes the Yellowhammer; Song Thrush; Skylark; Grey Partridge; Wood Warbler; Lapwing; Grasshopper Warbler to name only a few. – there are no less than ten species of birds that fall with the red list category. Most of these birds are classed as 'Farm Birds' farmland is therefore considered essential to their survival

In addition, the site hosts no less than three active badger sets and numerous bat colonies, likely the protected Pipistrelles which have taken residence in farm buildings

The site should be explored to see if there is any merit in it be designated a Site of specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) by NatureScot.

The developers' proposals would not conserve the landscape character and would have a significant detrimental visual impact for the local area. The proposed development would not be in keeping with the character of Dechmont, or the surrounding area and therefore contrary to criterion (a) of Policy 7 of the SeSplan

A housing development of this site would extend the Bangour Development across the whole village and have an urbanising influence on what is currently countryside. I do not accept that the design/layout of the development offers any enhancements to biodiversity, or that the new areas provide open space and opportunity to explore the current countryside

The proposed site would negatively impact the character of the village of Dechmont, and surrounding areas too, with the current development under way at the former Bangour hospital site the village would effectively join Uphall, Livingston and Bathgate. The countryside belt designation is described in the local plan as preventing coalescence with other settlements) Policy ENV 23 – countryside belts) This is further expanded on the local development plan to include the strategic purposes of maintaining the separate identity and visual separation of settlements, protecting the landscape setting of settlements, promoting public access to green space for informal recreation and enhancing landscape and wildlife habitat. Policy ENV 1 to ENV 7 is not met, any of the strategic purposes listed are undermined or the proposal would give rise to visual or physical coalescence.

I believe each of the neighbouring settlements would therefore suffer from loss of their own unique identities as the application severely reduces the physical and visual separation of each settlement.

Contrary to reports the proposed build does not protect the greenbelt or improve the local countryside, the village, or enhance recreational use, it could only have an unacceptable adverse impact on the landscape setting of the whole area and would therefore be contrary to policies ENV2 and ENV 4

Roads: Burnhouse Farm is not sustainable in terms of its current connectivity to the existing public sector links, reliance of a car to access – an already overstretched – train service into Glasgow and Edinburgh is highly likely, contrary to the developers claims.

Public transport is not accessible from this proposed site and no commitment to provide a link is suggested, it is likely this would never happen as Public Transport in Dechmont is extremely poor and non-existent at key time periods

According to the developer's own figures they estimate 10 cars per minute will be trying to use a single road bridge. This will cause an immediate serious problem at the road junction where I live, Burnhouse Drive, Burnhouse Road and the Main Street.

The Proposed development at Burnhouse and the resulting additional traffic would be intolerable for both the village and the surrounding areas.

Flooding: There is complex hydrology in and around this site, including several watercourses, and a risk that the development could lead to a flood risk, both on and off the site; particularly as this site is on a hill. Let us not forget the devastation caused to many homes in Broxburn in August 2020 when torrential rain closed four roads, and many homes were damaged

The design is ugly, the visual impact is poor, it effects on the character of the neighbourhood, there will be noise and disturbance for all localities for many years to come, Dechmont and surrounding areas lack the infrastructure to cope with such a proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Jennifer Rogers

13, Burnhouse Drive, Dechmont, West Lothian EH52

4 Burnhouse Drive
Dechmont
West Lothian
EH52 6NA

18/4/22

Planning and Building Standards
West Lothian Council
West Lothian Civic centre
Livingston
EH54 6FF

Planning in Principle Application (Ref: 0241/P/22) Burnhouse Farm, Dechmont

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a Dechmont resident objecting to this proposal on a number of key planning grounds.

This proposed plan is not on land allocated as housing land. It is proposed on land designated a Special Landscape Area in the current West Lothian Local Development Plan (2018). The southern section is designated as Countryside Belt. This development would destroy a valued landscape and fertile farming area which, in addition to being a green field site, goes against many local and national planning policies and the future sustainable development of West Lothian.

The developer states that, 'The layout of the proposal will be designed to form an appropriate boundary to the Bathgate Hills SLA.' There is already a current 'appropriate boundary' to the Bathgate Hills SLA. To breach this allows for urban creep into the protected landscape.

The developer states that, 'An appropriate design response and landscape strategy will be incorporated into the proposal to ensure no adverse effects on the cultural heritage assets.' This seems an implausible assurance. A development of 160 homes would undoubtedly adversely affect the aesthetic, environmental, bio-diversity and historical value of the land, no matter what mitigation was attempted.

Indeed the proposals for tree planting would suggest incongruent opaque tree lines in what is at present open farmland. The developer notes that, 'Existing homes at Burnhouse Drive have an urbanising influence in views from the north'. However, there appears to be no mention of the views from the south, that is, from the village itself.

Dechmont is now bordered along the south side by the increasingly busy A89. In Bangour at the west end of the village, 998 homes are planned (**not** 500 as stated in the developer's

documents) and 120 homes are intended for the field at the east end of the Main Street. The farmland in question rises up to the north edge of the village and is important for the health and wellbeing of villagers. Dechmont residents treasure the visual impact of this green space and the value of the biodiversity within it.

The proposal would be to the detriment of the Dechmont community and village life. I know from being a resident and linked to this village since 1970, that the village character and close knit community of Dechmont is valued by many. This is already threatened by the aforementioned developments, which will treble the size of the village.

This development would put even more pressure on currently challenged traffic infrastructure. Speeding on the Main Street is a problem. Burnhouse Road and its junction with Main Street is already heavily used by commuters and commercial traffic. Road safety would be reduced and, inevitably, local environmental air and noise pollution would increase.

This development would overload current local facilities such as the shop, school and park and local health services such as GP and dental practices, which are already at capacity.

In summary this application and its scale is a poorly considered, speculative proposal which conflicts with local and national planning policies, would impact negatively on the amenity and quality of life of villagers, including road safety in the village. It would be damaging to the designated landscape, conservation and biodiversity value of the land. For all these reasons I object to this proposal, which, I believe, should be decisively rejected.

Yours sincerely

Isabelle Gall

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Isabelle Gall.

From: [Planning](#)
To: [Cyphus, Gillian](#)
Subject: FW: Objection to 0241/P/22 - [OFFICIAL]
Date: 19 April 2022 08:26:07

DATA LABEL: OFFICIAL

From: Steven Milne
Sent: 18 April 2022 10:10
To: Planning
Subject: Objection to 0241/P/22

Steven Milne
 10 Goodall Crescent
 Dechmont
 EH52 6LB
 Phone: [REDACTED]
 Email: [REDACTED]

Date: 18/04/22

Re: Objection to planning ref: 0241/P/22, Burnhouse Fam, Burnhouse Road, Dechmont.

To West Lothian Council Planning

I am writing to object to the proposed development at Burnhouse Farm, planning reference: 0241/P/22. There are a number of reasons for this which are as follows:

1. Increased traffic and strain on infrastructure

Burnhouse Road is a narrow stretch of undulating road and as a keen cyclist I am more than aware of the dangers the road presents. Additional vehicles at a dangerous section beside the bridge is an accident waiting to happen and will create a "zone of invisibility" as the report states for cyclists. The bridge itself creates a narrowing and impaired vision of drivers means cyclists will be further disadvantaged. In the traffic report 2.18 states that "generation of additional car traffic is minimised" but the proposed housing and infrastructure would add considerable traffic to the area with little incentive for new residents to take the limited public transport. Through the reports own findings the existing bus infrastructure is out-with the guidelines (430m away vs 400m) and to walk to the train station you have to cross the same busy stretch of road multiple times before making it there. It is also well in excess of the 800m as per Annex B of PAN75. Hardly a suitable prospect for children or the elderly.

The photos taken of the busy road are misleading, they are not reflective of a drivers viewpoint (except the height taken) and have been taken at selective angles. Also, as a current resident, I severely call into question the statement in the traffic report "traffic speeds on Burnhouse Road **have not been measured**, but it is evident that speeds past the proposed site are in the order of 40 miles per hour". Quite the contradictory statement and one I would contest. Plus, new transport flows haven't been explored and merely taken from the Bangour development. In terms of infrastructure, Dechmont is a small village and we do not yet know the impact of the Bangour development which will be significant. We already require speed bumps to reduce traffic speeds, something which has mixed success. There is no commercial space to deal with the increased number of people who will be using the facilities and an additional 160 homes from this development will increase the population by roughly half.

2. Sustainability and loss of natural habitats

A lot has been made in the traffic reports about increased methods for foot traffic but access to the main hubs for amenities make this impractical. I am worried about the impact on both the

local wildlife and burn. The special conservation area should be preserved as such and a ruling to dissolve this sends a clear precedent to anyone who has moved to an area for its natural beauty. We have a number of birds of prey and bats in the area and any development would disrupt the natural ecosystem especially when the burn would be polluted during construction ("the risk of pollution and contamination during this period is particularly high" (section 10)).

3. Village character

I have chosen to live in Dechmont because it is a village and that lifestyle should be available to all residents here. Creating vast swathes of new housing in a small community will alter the character of the village and create a dominant housing style not in keeping with this historic community. Bangour is already going to more than treble the size of the community, this development would add roughly half to the existing size altering the way of life for everyone here. The open countryside is excellent for my health and I am worried about the stresses a development would place on my wellbeing. This is especially apparent given the changing nature of work/life balance as a huge proportion of the country now work from home on a regular basis, something I do the majority of my working time.

In conclusion, I have severe reservations about this development and it's need in this community. The precedent set in any approval on this local special conservation area would be severely damaging. The dangers of the road make this untenable and the safety of the public and existing road users should be put before profits.

Yours sincerely

Steven Milne

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The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Foyso! Choudhury MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament for Lothian Region

West Lothian Council Planning & Building Standards
West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingston EH54 6FF

19th April 2022
Ref: FC/LH/0044

Dear Sir/Madam,

OBJECTION TO PLANNING IN PRINCIPLE APPLICATION (REF: 0241/P/22) AT BURNHOUSE FARM, DECHMONT.

I fully support Dechmont Community Council's objection to the planning application at Burnhouse Farm, Dechmont.

There are many reasons for the rejection of this planning application but below are the two main ones which I hope Planning will take into account when making a decision, on this application.

The West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018 Settlement Boundary - Current Position- The West Lothian Local Development Plan (WLLDP) 2018 shows the proposed site out with the Dechmont Settlement Boundary. The proposed site is not allocated as a residential development area. The settlement boundary, as an integral part of the existing plan, should be upheld.

I support the due process that sits behind the current housing allocations and settlement boundary areas as this has been subject to consultation in the formulation of the existing "It is the Council's position that if the site is not needed to support the allocation at Bangour Village Hospital then it shouldn't be developed for housing."

Special Landscape Area - The majority of the site is allocated as a 'Special Landscape Area'. The West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018, Policy ENV 1: Character and Special Landscape Areas, at page 38 states, "Within the Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) shown on the proposals map there is a presumption against development which would undermine the landscape and visual qualities for which the areas were designated. I fully support West Lothian Council in their designation of the land as a Special Landscape Area and therefore oppose the building of a housing development which would fundamentally and irreversibly change this area.

I have studied the planning application and the objections submitted by Dechmont Community Council. I believe the overwhelming community response to the planning in principle application shows the extent of public opinion in relation to this proposed development. The people of Dechmont are making a stand against losing precious green space.

Yours sincerely,



FOYSOL CHOUDHURY MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for Lothian Region
Shadow Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development

The Scottish Parliament, EH99 1SP
foysol.choudhury.msp@Parliament.scot



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From: [McCorriston, Wendy](#)
To: [Cyphus, Gillian](#)
Subject: FW: Dechmont planning - [OFFICIAL]
Date: 20 April 2022 08:14:21

From: Planning
Sent: 19 April 2022 08:25
To: McCorriston, Wendy
Subject: FW: Dechmont planning - [OFFICIAL]
DATA LABEL: OFFICIAL

From: lynnemcewen [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 April 2022 17:35
To: Planning <Planning@westlothian.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Dechmont planning

Dear Sir/Madam

On behalf of Uphall Community Council I am contacting you in support of Dechmont Community Council with regard to a planning application.

Our reasons are outlined below.

--

Uphall Community Council strongly objects to the Planning in principle application (Ref: 0241/P/22) at Burnhouse Farm, Dechmont on the following grounds:

This will directly affect Uphall which is very close to this proposed development.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure is already impacted by up to 1000 houses about to be built at Bangour, this is adding even more to the already overstretched Schools, Health Services, power, water and sewage services.

Sewage services in particular are outdated and will not be able to cope with the increase required in a rural area like this.

Broxburn Academy does not have the capacity and if Winchburgh Secondary schools are used, this would mean cars and buses going through Uphall and onto Ecclesmachan Road to get to school in the morning.

The resulting increase in traffic is not acceptable.

Traffic

Vehicles will all have to go through Dechmont Village creating a rat run, which will be an intolerable increase in traffic for a small rural village.

The A89 and M8 roads are already congested in the mornings and evenings, and will struggle to cope with even more cars on these roads and junctions.

The Uphall train station is at capacity both for car parking and

commuters using the service. This is before the needs of future developments at Bangour and Pumpherston.

Nature Conversation

In the West Lothian Local Development Plan a majority of the site is allocated as a 'Special Landscape Area', building houses would fundamentally and irreversibly change this area.

A section of the site is designated as part of the Countryside Belt. It is important that this be maintained to prevent 'development creep' into the countryside.

Additionally the development does not meet any of the exceptions that would permit houses to be built in the countryside.

Policy

The West Lothian Local Development Plan shows that the proposed site is outwith the Dechmont Settlement Boundary so should not be allowed to be developed for housing.

The housing land requirement has already been allocated for the Bangour development that is closeby, and so there is no legal requirement for any more to be built.

Regards

Lynne McEwen

Secretary Uphall Community Council

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URGENT - CLOSURE DATE FOR COMMENT 19/4/22

I am resending my submission dated 4/4/22 as I have yet to receive confirmation of receipt from your department. As I explained in a follow-up email on 6/4/22 I am travelling at the moment and will not be at home to receive confirmation by letter. It is imperative I receive confirmation of receipt of my objection by email. Once again I would make it clear that I could not object on-line as there is a restriction on the number of characters that can be used and my objection exceeds that. I have also spoken to an operative on 0150628000 who is going to email you today as I understand there is no other means of communicating with the planning team.

Yours sincerely

John Johnston

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Anne Johnston <[REDACTED]>
 Date: Mon, Apr 4, 2022 at 10:57 AM
 Subject: Planning Application 0241/P/22 Land at Burnhouse Farm
 To: <planning@westlothian.gov.uk>

I object to this application for planning permission for the following reasons:-

PLANNING POLICY

1) The Scottish Government Reporter last commented on this site in his report published 13/12/2017 when he concluded that the site should not be allocated for development. His remarks on the subject continue to hold true today and I quote:-

"The council's West Lothian Local Landscape Designation Review (CD87) identified this site as being part of the new candidate Bathgate Hills Special Landscape Area (SLA)." " the inclusion of the site in the former Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) does tend to reinforce my concerns about the prominence and sensitivity of the site."

"Development should not proceed as it would not be in keeping with the character of the village and would be within the Special Landscape Area".

I believe the status of the site continues to remain of significant environmental importance.

2) In the Land Use section of the Design Statement Part 1 the applicant states that only 68% of the land (8.2ha) is prime agricultural land and the remainder, Class 3.2 (3.5ha) and Unclassified (0.4ha), is not considered prime quality. This may be technically correct but is somewhat misleading given that the James Hutton Institute defines Class 3.2 land as capable of supporting mixed agriculture, which the site has done and continues to do as evidenced by the many photographs of the landscape provided by the applicant. Indeed the Reporter remarked **"I note that the Council confirms that around 80% of the site is prime agricultural land."** In the current geopolitical climate I believe retaining agricultural land should be a priority for the Council.

ENVIRONMENT

In the Preliminary Ecological Assessment document it quotes zero presence of woodcock but these birds are present albeit they can be elusive. In addition, the entry for brown hare at para 5.3.8 is inaccurate. These animals, which are on the Scottish Biodiversity List and protected by law, can be seen on this site every spring as they form breeding pairs. After the water vole this is the second

British mammal to suffer the greatest decline in the last century and their habitat must be protected.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Reporter previously concluded that he was **"not inclined to favour the allocation of this site for housing development due to the likely landscape and visual impacts of development and the relatively poor prospects for adequately integrating development on the site with the existing village and with development at Bangour Village Hospital"**. This was one of my key objections last time planning permission was sought, only now the application has increased from 120 to 160 units and from 9.95ha to 12.3ha. The site is outwith the settlement boundary of Dechmont and there is no natural linkage between Dechmont village and the proposed site. The applicant's solution is **"to connect existing settlement to new development with boardwalk across burn"**. The plan includes 1 (or 2 depending on which drawing is referred to) tenuous links via "boardwalk" across the Brox Burn. It is not clear from the plans where these boardwalks would link in to Dechmont village and this needs clarified, particularly as there are no footpaths in Goodall Crescent or Goodall Place.

There is also great reliance upon an 18th century bridge that crosses the Brox Burn **outside the site** to the north west. Unfortunately, the Desk-Based Archaeological Assessment based on a site visit on 26/6/17 does not show that this bridge no longer exists. Heavy machinery was brought in to the site and the bridge was demolished some time after the Bangour Village received Planning Permission in Principle. There is, therefore, no link across the Brox Burn and the site boundary terminates at the burn.

I contend that this development is not **"a logical extension to Dechmont"** and further has no natural linkage to Bangour Village.

ROAD SAFETY/ACCESS

In terms of public transport routes, current residents of Dechmont village would attest to the fact that the bus service is wholly inadequate and the proximity of transport links would not **"encourage residents of the new development to use alternative modes of transport other than motor car"** as quoted by the applicant. The X18 bus service is the only service to go through Dechmont and bus stops exceed the recommended 400 metre walking distance from the centre of the site (480m). This service vies between Whitburn and Edinburgh but to access more local amenities such as the major retailers in Livingston, the bus stop that significantly exceeds the recommended 400m walking distance (800m) has to be used. As for rail services, whilst the Traffic Assessment states there are bus stops at Uphall Station, unfortunately no bus from Dechmont can take you there. The applicant actually states the station is a convenient short drive away. I would, however, question parking availability with many residents there having commuter cars parked in their streets all day.

With regards to transport to schools, the applicant focuses on current travel distances to existing schools, all of which require buses with the exception of P1-3 children. Most will probably drive to the school bus stop if not to the schools. Once Bangour Village is developed, I would not expect anyone to walk 1900 metres with small children to the new primary school and cars will invariably be used.

CAPABILITY OF LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Dechmont Village has been subjected to massive planning change. Bangour Village initially proposed 500 units and that figure has risen to 998 units. Main Street Dechmont initially proposed 60 units and that figure has risen to 120 units. The overall impact of these developments in real terms has yet to be fully realised/understood and I believe Dechmont Village should be subject to no further

change whilst these new developments are rolled out. If additional land is necessary for future development the Council/developers should look again at the brown field site of the former Bangour General Hospital to protect our precious countryside.

Yours sincerely
Mr John Johnston
11, Goodall Place
Dechmont
EH52 6PD



**RESPONSE TO: PLANNING IN PRINCIPLE APPLICATION (REF: 0241/P/22) AT
BURNHOUSE FARM, BURNHOUSE ROAD, DECHMONT**

- Drop this form into the **dedicated box in the Village Shop/Post Office**, or
- **Send by post to:** West Lothian Council, Planning and Building Standards, West Lothian Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston, EH54 6FF

Privacy information from the West Lothian Council planning portal:

"Comments made on an application will be available for public inspection. Please note that these will not appear online immediately following submission as the content requires to be checked for sensitive or personal information before being published on the planning portal. Please ensure comments are relevant to the case and any sensitive information should be sent separately to the case officer. You must provide a full postal address to enable full consideration of your views. All published comments are viewable using the view all comments button on the Comments / Public Comments tab."

If you wish to submit a representation but do not want your name and address or any other information to be displayed, please indicate this on the form below.

Title	MRS		
First name	AGNES		
Surname	SYME		
Address	ESSEX COTTAGE 20 MAIN ST DECHMONT		
Town	WEST LOTHIAN		
Postcode	EH52 6JZ		
Tel number	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 1.2em;"></div>		
Email address	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 1.2em;"></div>		
Commenter type (tick)	Member of the public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neighbour /resident <input type="checkbox"/>	Councillor <input type="checkbox"/>
Your stance (tick)	Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Support <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>
	Go to Section Two	Go to Section One	Go to Section One

Section One (continue on a separate page if required)

I support or I am neutral to the proposed housing development for the following reasons:

Section Two

I object to the proposed housing development for the following reasons;

(Delete any reasons you do not wish to state)

The proposed site is **not allocated as a residential development area** in the West Lothian Local Development Plan. The proposed site is out with the Dechmont Settlement Boundary and as such no building should occur in this area.

The majority of the site is allocated as a **protected 'Special Landscape Area'**. Allowing a housing estate in this area would be against the principles of the protected status. There are many areas in West Lothian which have been identified by the Council as suitable for future development, the proposed site is not one of them.

A section of the southern part of the site is designated as **protected Countryside Belt**. This provides a clearly defined edge to the village. A wide range of wildlife including hares, rabbits, foxes, badgers and deer use this area and therefore it should be protected to ensure these animals are not displaced.

Dechmont is a small village. People choose to live in Dechmont because it is a village. The residents are already being subjected to an expansion of the village which will see it treble in size. In doing so, the village will **lose its character and identity**.

The residents of Dechmont value the green space around them. Green space is well-recognised as being a factor which can contribute to overall **health and wellbeing**.

The proposed development would significantly **increase traffic** within and around Dechmont. **Environmental air and noise pollution** would increase from the additional traffic.

This development will put added pressure on **schools, GPs, dental practices and other local amenities**.

Other reasons (continue on a separate page if required)

Signed



Date

13 / 4 / 2022

**RESPONSE TO: PLANNING IN PRINCIPLE APPLICATION (REF: 0241/P/22) AT
BURNHOUSE FARM, BURNHOUSE ROAD, DECHMONT**

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If you wish to submit a representation but do not want your name and address or any other information to be displayed, please indicate this on the form below.

Title	MRS		
First name	CATHERINE		
Surname	GRANT		
Address	12 GOODALL CRESCENT		
Town	DECHMONT		
Postcode	EH52 6LB		
Tel number	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div>		
Email address	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div>		
Commenter type (tick)	Member of the public <input type="checkbox"/>	Neighbour /resident <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Councillor <input type="checkbox"/>
Your stance (tick)	Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Go to Section Two	Support <input type="checkbox"/> Go to Section One	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Go to Section One

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This development will put added pressure on **schools, GPs, dental practices and other local amenities**.

Other reasons (continue on a separate page if required)

Having enjoyed the quiet and peaceful location of my home and garden for over 30 years, this development would have a very negative impact on my everyday health and well-being. I would find the following particularly concerning and upsetting:

- Noise from the Groundworks & Building works
- Noise from the increased traffic
- Loss of my much-valued privacy in my back garden and in the rear facing rooms in my home.

Signed

Date 12.04.2022

**RESPONSE TO: PLANNING IN PRINCIPLE APPLICATION (REF: 0241/P/22) AT
BURNHOUSE FARM, BURNHOUSE ROAD, DECHMONT**

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If you wish to submit a representation but do not want your name and address or any other information to be displayed, please indicate this on the form below.

Title	MR.		
First name	JAMES		
Surname	GRANT		
Address	12 GOODALL CRESCENT		
Town	DECHMONT		
Postcode	EH52 6LB		
Tel number	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 1.2em;"></div>		
Email address			
Commenter type (tick)	Member of the public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neighbour /resident <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Councillor <input type="checkbox"/>
Your stance (tick)	Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Support <input type="checkbox"/>	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/>
	Go to Section Two	Go to Section One	Go to Section One

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This development will put added pressure on **schools, GPs, dental practices and other local amenities**.

Other reasons (continue on a separate page if required)

I DAILY SPEND SIGNIFICANT PERIODS OF TIME TENDING TO MY GARDEN. THE IMPACT ANY NEW BUILD WOULD HAVE UPON MY MENTAL HEALTH WHILE GARDENING WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO ME. IF PLANNING PERMISSION WAS GIVEN THE NOISE LEVELS (GENERATED) EITHER BY THE BUILDING WORK OR FROM THE HOMES, ONCE OCCUPIED, WILL HAVE A MAJOR IMPACT ON MY MENTAL & PHYSICAL HEALTH & WELLBEING.

Signed

Date 12.4.2022



Planning and Building Standards
West Lothian Council
West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

14 April 2022

Dear Planning and Building Standards

PLANNING APPLICATION 0241/P/22
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT BURNHOUSE FARM, DECHMONT
OBJECTION

APRS objects to the above planning application for the following reasons:

Development Plan

Planning legislation requires that the determination of a planning application is to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This site is not allocated for development in the West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018 (LDP 2018). It is therefore not in accordance with the development plan and so Planning Permission should be refused. The LDP 2018 already allocates a total of 630 new houses in Dechmont, so this additional site is unnecessary.

Special Landscape Area

Most of the site is located within the Bathgate Hills Special Landscape Area (SLA), therefore LDP 2018 Policy ENV1 Character and Special Landscape Areas applies: "Within the Special Landscape Areas shown on the proposals map there is a presumption against development which would undermine the landscape and visual qualities for which the areas were designated." The applicants have failed to demonstrate that the proposed development would not undermine the landscape and visual qualities for which the Bathgate Hills SLA was designated. Planning Permission should therefore be refused.

Countryside Belt

The remaining part of the site is located in designated Countryside Belt, therefore LDP 2018 Policy ENV 7 Countryside Belts and Settlement Setting applies. The proposed development does not satisfy the four criteria set out in that Policy. Planning Permission should therefore be refused.

Draft National Planning Framework 4

LDP 2018 paragraph 157 states that "Countryside Belts are spatial designations, and critical planning tools somewhat like statutory greenbelts around **Scotland's** cities, for

Dolphin House, 4 Hunter Square, Edinburgh, EH1 1QW
info@aprs.scot 0131 225 7012 www.aprs.scot

President: Patricia Macdonald BSc PhD FRSE FSA(Scot) FRSA HonFRSGS HonFICS
Chairman: John Thomson MA MSc FRSA Director: John Mayhew MA MSc DipTP MRTPI
Scottish Charity No SC016139; Scottish Charitable Company limited by guarantee Registered No 154563

the purposes of controlling urban spread into the countryside". Also, the strategic purposes of Countryside Belts set out in LDP 2018 Policy ENV 7 are very similar to those of statutory Green Belts, to:

- "maintain the separate identity and visual separation of settlements;
- protect the landscape setting of settlements;
- promote public access to green space for informal recreation; and
- enhance landscape and wildlife habitat."

It is therefore relevant to note that the Scottish Government's Draft National Planning Framework 4, issued in November 2021, significantly expands upon the role of Green Belts and the benefits which they bring to Scotland:

"Green belts can be used as a settlement management tool around Scotland's towns and cities to help to direct growth to the most appropriate, sustainable locations. Green Belts can have a role in protecting and enhancing the character, landscape and natural setting and identity of settlements, providing outdoor access to green networks which link urban and rural areas and supporting nature networks."

"Green Belts can ... benefit quality of life and environment in our cities and towns, increase urban density and minimise the need to travel using unsustainable modes."

These recent statements clearly add substantial national weight to the importance of protecting Green Belts, and by extension West Lothian's Countryside Belts.

Benefits of Scotland's Green Belts and Countryside Belts

Scotland's Green Belts and Countryside Belts, including those in West Lothian, are a precious resource of national importance. They contribute to tackling the climate emergency through directing development to more appropriate and sustainable brownfield sites, including vacant and derelict land and re-use of existing buildings. They provide many important benefits to quality of life and well-being in addition to their original planning purposes. They contain significant areas of prime agricultural land, important for home-grown food production, and semi-natural woodland. They can provide havens for wildlife so can help to tackle the nature crisis, especially as part of wider nature networks.

Green Belts and Countryside Belts have great potential, through appropriate management, to do even more to tackle the climate emergency and nature crisis and to promote home-grown food, outdoor education and recreational opportunities for local communities. In a poll of Scottish residents carried out for APRS by Survation in June 2017, 74.6% of those who expressed an opinion agreed that "All Green Belt land in Scotland should have stronger protection from building development".

Please contact me if you require any further information or clarification.

Yours faithfully



John Mayhew MA MSc DipTP MRTPI
Director

15 Burnhouse Drive
Dechmont
West Lothian
EH52 6NA

18/4/22

Planning and Building Standards
West Lothian Council
West Lothian Civic centre
Livingston
EH54 6FF

Planning in Principle Application (Ref: 0241/P/22) Burnhouse Farm, Dechmont

Dear Sir/Madam

I have been a Dechmont resident since 1970. My children and grandchildren have benefitted from village life and the green space around Burnhouse Farm. I object to this proposal on a number of key planning grounds.

This proposed plan is not on land allocated as housing land. It is proposed on land designated a Special Landscape Area in the current West Lothian Local Development Plan (2018). The southern section is designated as Countryside Belt. This development would destroy a valued landscape and fertile farming area which, in addition to being a green field site, goes against many local and national planning policies and the future sustainable development of West Lothian.

The developer states that, 'The layout of the proposal will be designed to form an appropriate boundary to the Bathgate Hills SLA.' There is already a current 'appropriate boundary' to the Bathgate Hills SLA. To breach this allows for urban creep into the protected landscape.

The developer states that, 'An appropriate design response and landscape strategy will be incorporated into the proposal to ensure no adverse effects on the cultural heritage assets.' This seems an implausible assurance. A development of 160 homes would undoubtedly adversely affect the aesthetic, environmental, bio-diversity and historical value of the land, no matter what mitigation was attempted.

Indeed the proposals for tree planting would suggest incongruent opaque tree lines in what is at present open farmland. The developer notes that, 'Existing homes at Burnhouse Drive have an urbanising influence in views from the north'. However, there appears to be no mention of the views from the south, that is, from the village itself.

Dechmont is now bordered along the south side by the increasingly busy A89. In Bangour at the west end of the village, 998 homes are planned (**not** 500 as stated in the developer's documents) and 120 homes are intended for the field at the east end of the Main Street. The farmland in question rises up to the north edge of the village and is important for the health and wellbeing of villagers. Dechmont residents treasure the visual impact of this green space and the value of the biodiversity within it.

The proposal would be to the detriment of the Dechmont community and village life. I know from being a resident and linked to this village since 1970, that the village character and close knit community of Dechmont is valued by many. This is already threatened by the aforementioned developments, which will treble the size of the village.

This development would put even more pressure on currently challenged traffic infrastructure. Speeding on the Main Street is a problem. Burnhouse Road and its junction with Main Street is already heavily used by commuters and commercial traffic. Road safety would be reduced and, inevitably, local environmental air and noise pollution would increase.

This development would overload current local facilities such as the shop, school and park and local health services such as GP and dental practices, which are already at capacity.

In summary this application and its scale is a poorly considered, speculative proposal which conflicts with local and national planning policies, would impact negatively on the amenity and quality of life of villagers, including road safety in the village. It would be damaging to the designated landscape, conservation and biodiversity value of the land. For all these reasons I object to this proposal, which, I believe, should be decisively rejected.

Yours sincerely

Helen W. Gall

Comments for Planning Application 0241/P/22

Application Summary

Application Number: 0241/P/22

Address: Land At Burnhouse Farm Burnhouse Dechmont West Lothian EH52 6NB

Proposal: Planning permission in principle for a 12.3 ha residential development with associated infrastructure, landscaping and engineering works

Case Officer: Gillian Cyphus

Customer Details

Name: Not Available ANN DAVIDSON

Address: Not Available

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I am a candidate in the local government election to be held on 5 May 2022, and if elected, would represent this village. I object to the proposed development and support all of the reasons for objection put forward by Dechmont Community Council.