

Report

8

Report to:	Planning Committee
Date of Meeting:	22/03/2005
Report by:	Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

Application No	HM/04/0321
Planning Proposal:	Erection of new secondary school and associated works (Outline)

1 Summary Application Information

- Application Type : Outline Planning Application
- Applicant : Turner & Townsend Project Management Ltd
- Location : Land at Broomhill Road
Larkhall

2 Recommendation(s)

2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) Grant Outline Planning Permission (Subject to Conditions – based on conditions attached)

2.2 Other Actions/Notes

The Planning Committee has delegated powers to determine this application.

3 Other Information

- ◆ Applicant's Agent: Keppie Planning Ltd
- ◆ Council Area/Ward: 53 Larkhall West
- ◆ Policy Reference(s): **Hamilton District Local Plan**
POLICY CU4 – Retention of open space provision
POLICY CU1A – Sports/Leisure facilities (Reserve Sites)

- ◆ Representation(s):
▶ 0 Objection Letters

- ◆ Consultation(s):

Larkhall Community Council

Economic Development (Estates & Asset)

Environmental Services

Roads and Transportation Services (Hamilton Area)

Roads & Transportation Services H.Q.(Transportation)

S.E.P.A. (West Region)

Scottish Natural Heritage

Power Systems

TRANSCO (Plant Location)

Scottish Wildlife Trust

Scottish Water

Sports Scotland

Greenspace

West of Scotland Archaeology Service

Planning Application Report

1.0 Application Site:

- 1.1** This report relates to land extending to 6.37 hectares in area at Broomhill Road in Larkhall. The site incorporates the Robert Smellie Memorial Stadium (which comprises an enclosed football pitch and running track) at the eastern side of Broomhill Road; large areas of grassed open space (including a grassed football pitch adjacent to Larkhall Leisure Centre) and part of the car park and bus turning area attached to Larkhall Academy. A single storey house occupied by the school caretaker is also found within the site.
- 1.2** The existing Larkhall Academy complex is located immediately to the south west of the site while the Leisure Centre lies on the north eastern boundary. The eastern and south eastern boundaries are marked by grassed open space beyond which is housing. The closest property is 40 metres from the boundary of the site. A former railway track marks the north western boundary within which is overgrown landscaping and some trees. The land the opposite side of the track is rough grassland interspersed with trees and other vegetation.
- 1.3** The area is currently accessed via Broomhill Road which connects with Church Street to the north east. An existing footpath through the site links the site to the residential area to the east while another path connects the south western corner of the site to the residential area to the north west. The proposed park and ride facility that would serve Larkhall Railway Station would be located approximately 100 metres to the north of the site. The whole of the application site is owned by South Lanarkshire Council.

2.0 Proposal(s)

- 2.1** The application seeks outline planning permission for the erection of a new secondary school to replace the existing Larkhall Academy complex. No details are provided on the position of the proposed school buildings, although it is inevitable that it will involve development of either the Robert Smeillie Memorial Stadium or the other football pitches adjacent to the Leisure Centre due to the constraints of the site. It is proposed that the existing stadium facilities would serve the school, together a new proposed synthetic multi-sport pitch. These pitches would be available for use by the local community outside school hours with changing facilities within the new school complex.
- 2.2** Access to the development would be from the existing Broomhill Road via a new roundabout that would provide specific access to the school site. A Transport Assessment submitted with the application considers the implications of both the school and the redevelopment of adjacent land for housing.
- 2.3** A habitat survey provided by the applicant states that the site is not of a high conservation value being comprised of amenity grassland with a few scattered trees. The caretakers building has the potential for bat roosts as the surrounding area (in particular the former railway) is attractive for bats. The report recommends that a survey for roosts be carried out when they are active after the winter period. There is also potential for birds to nest in the trees in the site and the report suggests that any felling take place outside the bird breeding season. No signs of badger setts or foraging by badgers was seen within the site.

3.0 Background

3.1 Local Plan Policy

3.1.1 The application site together with the existing school site and leisure centre is covered by policy CU4 in the adopted Hamilton District Local Plan. This recognises the contribution these facilities make to the local community in terms of providing leisure opportunities and enhancing the amenity of the built environment. The policy states that the Council will review the provision of open space in the local plan area and upgrade/expand facilities where appropriate. It goes on that the Council will oppose any loss of these facilities to other land uses and supports the joint use of school playing fields and recreational facilities with other organisations.

3.1.2 On a more general level, policy CU1A states that the Council will safeguard existing sports and leisure facilities and will promote the development of new facilities in accordance with recognised needs, demands and shortfalls.

3.2 Relevant Government Guidance/Advice

3.2.1 National Planning Policy Guidance 11 (Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Space) sets out the Government objectives to ensure the protection and enhancement of resources required for the country's sport and recreation. It states that Councils should seek to meet the sporting and recreational needs of residents and visitors; safeguard a system of open spaces for formal and informal recreation needs within urban areas and facilities and resources for sport and recreation; ensure new sport facilities are readily accessible by public transport, cycling and on foot; and take a long term view on provision.

3.2.2 Every Council is expected to take a view on the level of provision for sporting and recreational facilities. These levels should be determined locally on a range of factors, including the quality and value of facilities and open space as well as quantity. All playing fields and sports pitches are seen as potentially significant for their sporting value and for their value to the local community and the environment. The guidance includes a presumption against the redevelopment of playing fields and sports pitches except in the following circumstances;

- The retention or enhancement of the facilities can best be achieved by the redevelopment of part of the site which would not affect its sporting potential and its amenity value; or
- There would be no loss of amenity and alternative provision of equal community benefit and accessibility would be made available; and
- There is a clear long term excess of pitches, playing fields and public open space in the wider area, taking into account long term strategy, recreational and amenity value and any shortfall in adjoining local plan areas.
- The disposal of school playing fields should only be allowed if open space analysis demonstrates the land is surplus to requirements and it is established they will not be required in future by the school or community.

3.3 Planning history

- 3.3.1 There are no relevant planning applications relating to this site. However, there is an outline application currently under consideration for a mixed use development (including residential community, woodland and footpath links) on land incorporating the existing Larkhall Academy site, the ground between the existing school and the Avon and the vacant land to the east of the disused railway track (ref no. HM/04/0322).

3.4 Additional information

- 3.4.1 In August 2003 the Council approved its EDSL21 Project, a public private partnership to invest in secondary schools. The proposals include the provision of a new school complex to serve Larkhall Academy and the demolition of the existing group of buildings.

4.0 Consultation(s):

- 4.1.1 **Roads and Transportation Services** – No objections. The Service is having ongoing discussions in relation to the proposed new school. As it will be relocated to a site immediately adjacent to the existing school and there will be no significant change in the school roll or transport arrangements, the school will therefore have no significant impact on the surrounding road network. There are however a number of issues that require to be addressed at the detailed planning application stage:

- a) The only practical access to the site is to use the existing access on Broomhill Road, however this will require the introduction of a new 'normal' roundabout in the vicinity of Broomhill Road and Margaretvale Drive. The proposals are also likely to require the stopping up of Broomhill Road (i.e. within the site) after the new roundabout.
- b) To encourage walking and cycling to school a suitable footway network should be provided within the school site linking to the existing provision in the area.
- c) There may be a need to provide a pick up and drop off facility for parents / children within the school site. The size and location of this requires further assessment.
- d) For the proposed new school it is clear that there will be a high percentage of pupils arriving by bus. Therefore suitable provision, including storage, should be made for the buses within the site.
- e) The parking layout and provision should be in accordance with South Lanarkshire Council's current parking requirements and will require further discussion with Roads and Transportation Services at the detailed planning stage.
- f) A Green Travel Plan, or School Travel Plan as in this case, will be required. The GTP amongst other things will identify that walking and cycling are important modes of travel to school for both children and staff.
- g) In terms of flooding and drainage issues it should be noted that Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) principles will apply to these sites.

Response: A condition would be attached to the outline consent regarding the roundabout access and reserving all matters of detailed design of roads, footways, parking, drainage etc. to further submission at the detailed planning application stage.

- 4.2 Environmental Health** – No objections subject to the submission of a noise impact assessment and site investigation report. In addition, measures to minimise the impact of artificial lighting on surrounding properties should be provided.
Response: The requirement to provide a Noise Impact Assessment and site investigation report can be dealt with at the detailed application stage. The lighting issue would also be best considered at this stage as the position of the proposed pitches is not known at present.
- 4.3 Scottish Water** – Objected to the application on the grounds that the sewage treatment works to which the school would drain is at capacity and cannot accommodate the proposed development.
Response: Following further discussions, Scottish Water have advised that the new school can drain to the existing system providing the school roll is broadly similar to the current figure. There will be a slight increase in the numbers attending the school. However, the system would need to be upgraded to accommodate the new housing proposed under application HM/04/0322. A negative suspensive condition requiring these works to be carried before the school is occupied is considered sufficient to cover this point.
- 4.4 Scottish Environmental Protection Agency** – No objections providing additional flow from the development to the public sewer will not cause premature operation of consented storm overflows. In addition surface water should be treated in accordance with the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage System.
Response: This issue is dealt with in 4.3 above.
- 4.5 Scottish Natural Heritage** – Advise that there are unlikely to be any significant adverse impacts on natural heritage. They seek conditions be attached to any consent granted to ensure development does not impinge on the disused railway, no trees or buildings are removed until a bat survey is carried out, any existing routes through the site are retained or suitable alternatives provided, and a SUDS system is provided.
Response: Noted. These issues can be covered by conditions if consent is granted.
- 4.6 Larkhall Community Council** – No response to date
- 4.7 Scottish Power** – No objections
Response: Noted.
- 4.8 Transco** – Advise that a medium pressure gas main runs through the site. No excavations should take place within 2 metres of the pipeline.
Response: These details have been forwarded to the applicants for information.
- 4.9 West of Scotland Archaeology Service** – No known archaeological issues are raised by the proposals.
- 4.10 SportScotland** – No objection to the principle of the development, the proposals are consistent with the provisions of NPPG 11. However concerns are raised regarding the levels of provision for the school, particularly for extra-curricular activity, and the wider community. SportScotland have also been consulted on the outline planning application for the redevelopment of the adjoining land where Larkhall Academy currently sits. Within this site they comment that land for informal recreation should be provided at a level greater than normally required through the Residential

Development Guide so as to offset losses of recreation space as a result of the school relocation. Sportscotland comment further that conditions should be attached to any consent for the school that at least 2 no. full size pitches, with dimensions of 106m by 66m for the floodlit synthetic pitch and 100m by 60m for the natural grass pitch, and the provision of a minimum 4 lane running track should be provided. The Council should further advise Sportscotland of their intentions for ensuring adequate community access to the new facilities provided by the school. Sportscotland request to be consulted on detailed proposals for the new school and in particular will comment on internal sports and changing facilities in accordance with Sportscotland guidance on secondary school sports facilities.

Response: The provision of additional recreation space on adjoining land under application ref. HM/04/0322 will be commented on in a further report to Committee. Conditions requiring the provision of on site pitches and running track can be attached to the granting of this outline application. Wider community use of the facilities is a key element of the PPP schools project. Arrangements for this provision can be developed at a detailed planning stage.

5.0 Representation(s)

- 5.1** The statutory neighbour notification procedure has been carried out and the application was advertised in the local press as development potentially contrary to the development plan. No representations have been received.

6.0 Assessment and Conclusions

- 6.1** This proposal involves the erection of a replacement secondary school on land currently in use as recreational open space and sport at Broomhill Road in Larkhall. The main planning considerations in determining the application are whether the proposals accord with local and national planning policy guidance, the impact on highway safety and residential amenity in the surrounding area and the environmental impact of the proposed development.
- 6.2** The relevant policy in the adopted local plan seeks the safeguarding of existing sporting and recreation provision by opposing the loss of these facilities to other uses. In addition guidance in NPPG11 contains a presumption against the redevelopment of playing fields and sports pitches unless the proposals would not affect their sporting potential or amenity value; alternative provision of equal community benefit and accessibility is made available; and there is a clear long term excess of pitches and playing fields in the wider area.
- 6.3** In this case, the application site contains a grass grade B football pitch adjacent to the leisure centre which are used by the school at present and the Robert Smellie Memorial Ground which includes a grass grade A pitch and running track. Under the school modernisation proposals it is intended that the school will be served by the Robert Smellie Memorial Ground and a new synthetic multi sport pitch which equates to four external teaching areas. In addition, a games hall and two gymnasias would be provided within the school complex, equivalent to 5 internal teaching areas. All of these facilities would be available for community use outside school hours. The school would also have access to the swimming pool in the leisure centre.

- 6.4** Under current guidelines grade B pitches have a maximum letting capacity of 80 lets per annum, grade A pitches 160 lets per annum and synthetic pitches 1640 lets per annum. Based on these suggested maximum letting capacities, the loss of the existing grade B pitch would be amply compensated by the availability of the Robert Smellie pitch and the new synthetic pitch. These facilities would be widely available to the general public and represent a significant improvement on the quality and range of uses currently available. On this basis I am satisfied that the circumstances set out in NPPG11, that allow an exception to its presumption against the redevelopment of playing fields and sports pitches, are met. SportScotland in their consultation response agree that the proposals are consistent with NPPG11 and have recommendations regarding minimum provision on site and compensatory provision on adjacent land.
- 6.5** In terms of local plan policy the application site is covered by a policy seeking to safeguard existing facilities; this policy extends to the wider area including the existing Larkhall Academy complex and the leisure centre. The site will continue to be used for community purposes (i.e a new school and recreation/sport facilities that will be available to the local community) and therefore the development would be broadly in keeping with the current local plan allocation. While the proposals would result in the loss of some amenity open space, these areas are not of a high quality. Any development on the site will be expected to be of a high quality of design and incorporate appropriate boundary treatment and open space around the new school, which would considerably improve the visual appearance of the area. Policy CU4 also outlines the Council's support for the joint use of school playing fields with other organisations. This proposal would fully accord with the objectives of that part of the policy. The proposal will result in a new facility, which, together with the existing leisure centre complex, will provide an extensive range of uses for the local community in an accessible location. I therefore consider that the proposed development achieves the objectives of the local plan.
- 6.6** With regard to roads issues, Roads and Transportation Services that as the new school will be relocated to a site immediately adjacent to the existing school and there will be no significant change in the school roll or transport arrangements, the school will therefore have no significant impact on the surrounding road network. Several measures require to be implemented by the sites developers and will be conditioned accordingly. I therefore consider the proposals are acceptable in transportation terms.
- 6.7** Although the position of the new school buildings is not known at present, it is likely that they will be closer to housing than the existing complex. A detailed design brief has been prepared for this site which covers issues such as distances from residential properties. It should be noted that the closest housing is at least 40 metres from the nearest part of the application site which is considered acceptable in planning terms. In addition, the level of activity associated with the school is not likely to be significantly different to the current situation as pupil rolls will remain relatively static.
- 6.8** In terms of the environmental impact, the habitat survey has not raised any significant issues while Scottish Natural Heritage have confirmed there will no adverse impact on natural heritage in the area. The detailed issues raised by them on bats and the retention of footpath links can be covered by conditions if consent is granted. The position of the buildings within the site will not be determined until the preferred developer has been appointed. In the event that the detailed layout

encroaches onto the Robert Smellie Memorial Ground, these existing facilities would have to be relocated elsewhere in the site. I would suggest that a condition is attached to any consent granted to ensure this course of action.

- 6.9** In view of the above, I would recommend that outline planning consent be granted. I also consider that the proposals are not contrary to the development plan policy covering the application site.

Iain Urquhart
Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

14 March 2005

Previous References
None

List of Background Papers

- ▶ Application Form
- ▶ Application Plans
- ▶ Consultations
 - Scottish Natural Heritage 26/05/2004
 - TRANSCO (Plant Location) 19/05/2004
 - Economic Development (Estates & Asset) 24/05/2004
 - West of Scotland Archaeology Service 20/07/2004
 - S.E.P.A. (West Region) 15/07/2004
 - Scottish Water 15/07/2004
 - Sports Scotland 07/03/2005
&
09/06/2004
 - Environmental Services 01/06/2004
 - Roads and Transportation Services (Central Division) 09/06/2004
&
28/02/2005
 - Power Systems 09/06/2004

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Stuart McMillan, Team Leader, Planning & Building Control, Brandon Gate, Hamilton
Ext. 3555 (Tel :01698 453555)

E-mail: Enterprise.hamilton@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

CONDITIONS

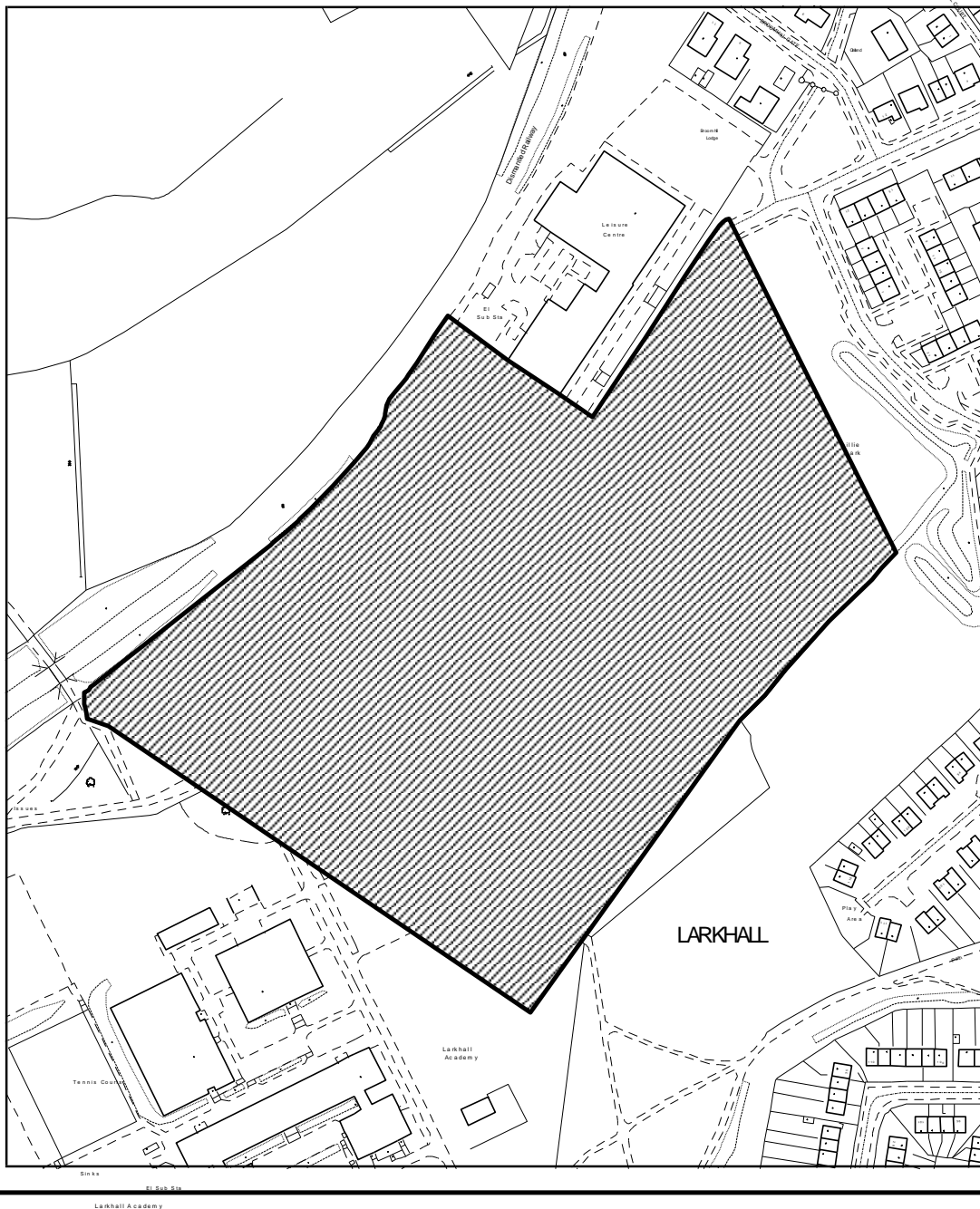
- 1 That before the expiration of three years from the date of this outline permission and before any development starts, a written application and plans in respect of the following Reserved Matters shall be submitted to and approved by the Council as Planning Authority:
 - (a) a site layout plan at a scale of 1:1250 showing the position of all buildings, roads, footpaths, parking areas (distinguishing where appropriate between private and public spaces), walls, fences, landscaping, open space and recreational provision;
 - (b) plans and elevations of the new school showing their dimensions and type and colour of materials;
 - (c) a landscaping plan at a scale of 1:1250 showing the location, species and ground spread of existing and proposed trees, shrubs and hedges;
 - (d) details of the phasing of development (covering all relevant aspects of development detailed in (a) above);
 - (e) detailed cross-sections of existing and finished ground levels and finished floor levels, in relation to a fixed datum, preferably ordnance datum.
- 2 That the only vehicular access to the application site shall be from Broomhill Road to a specification to be agreed with the Council as Planning and Roads Authority.
- 3 That the further application required under Condition 1 above shall include a scheme of tree and shrub planting within the site.
- 4 That the application required under Condition 1 above shall comply with the terms of the Council's approved development brief for the site.
- 5 That the development hereby permitted shall be started either within five years of the date of this permission or within two years of the date on which the last of the reserved matters are approved, whichever is the later;
- 6 That the further application required under condition 1 above shall include a Green Transport Plan, the scope of which shall be agreed in advance with the Council as Planning and Roads Authority, and shall set out proposals for the delivery of sustainable travel options for the school hereby approved and timescales for their implementation.
- 7 That the layout required under condition 1 above shall include car parking, cycle racks and bus/coach parking within the site to meet the Council's guidelines.
- 8 That the further application required under condition 1 above shall include a noise impact assessment to assess the impact of the development hereby approved on the residential amenity of the surrounding area. The report shall include, where appropriate, recommendations to mitigate any potential adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents.

- 9 That the further application required under condition 1 above shall include a further habitat survey of the site, including the potential impact of the proposals on foraging areas. The report shall include, where appropriate, recommendations to mitigate the impact of the development on the habitats and foraging areas within the site.
- 10 That the further application required under condition 1 above shall include evidence to demonstrate that the development can be satisfactorily served by a sewerage scheme.
- 11 That the layout required under condition 1 above shall include proposals to provide pedestrian links to the existing footpath network in the surrounding area.
- 12 That the further application required under condition 1 above shall include a report from a professionally qualified source detailing the nature, concentration and distribution of any contaminants found within the application site and recommendations to remove, or render harmless, any such contaminants.
- 13 That the further application required under the terms of Condition 1 above, shall include a detailed scheme for surface water drainage. Surface water from the site shall be treated in accordance with the principles of the Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Design Manual for Scotland and Northern Ireland and shall be agreed with the Council as Planning Authority in consultation with SEPA.
- 14 That the further application required under condition 1 shall include the provision of 2 no. sports pitches, one being a floodlit synthetic pitch with dimensions 106m by 66m, the other being a Grade A grass pitch with dimensions of 100m by 60m, and the provision of a minimum 4 lane, 400m running track.

REASONS

- 1 Consent is granted in outline only.
- 2 In the interest of road safety
- 3 In the interests of amenity.
- 4 To ensure the appropriate future development of the site
- 5 To accord with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
- 6 In order to retain effective planning control
- 7 To ensure the provision of adequate parking facilities to serve the development.
- 8 To safeguard the residential amenity of the area.
- 9 In the interests of amenity and in order to retain effective planning control.
- 10 To ensure the provision of a satisfactory sewerage system
- 11 In the interests of amenity and in order to retain effective planning control.
- 12 To ensure the site is free from contamination
- 13 To ensure that the disposal of surface water from the site is dealt with in a safe and sustainable manner, to return it to the natural water cycle with minimal adverse impact on people and the environment and to alleviate the potential for off-site flooding.
- 14 To ensure the provision of adequate outdoor sports provision to serve the school.

**HM/04/0321 - TURNER & TOWNSEND
LAND AT BROOMHILL ROAD, LARKHALL**



Map at Scale 1:2500



South Lanarkshire Council, Licence No. LA09047L

This copy has been produced specifically for planning and building control purposes only. No further copies may be made.

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO),

© Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.

Drawn 08/02/2005