

Law, Aileen

From: Iain Hall
Sent: 04 February 2021 04:26
To: Planning
Subject: Objection to Application for Planning Permission P/21/0029
Attachments: Planning Objection final Feb 2021.docx

To Whom it May Concern

Please find attached objection for processing

Regards

Iain Hall
34 Hamilton Park North
Hamilton
ML3OFG

Planning Application Ref P/21/0029 - Land Off Bothwell Road, Hamilton

I am formally submitting my objections to the proposed development detailed above.

The history of this site is significant and includes:

- Originally part of William Alexander Louis Stephen, Duke of Hamilton, Brandon & Chatelherault's estate. No development to date & of historical significance to South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) residents. Long standing amenity area for SLC & wider population
- Tree Preservation Order – long standing. Please note some trees may be missing from those listed in application (between 2137A and 2223C)
- Title deed burdens since 1999 protecting the land as 'amenity woodland', as long as Hamilton Park South (HPS) remains residential, including:
 - Woodland shall be managed 'at all times in accordance with generally prevailing principles of good cultural practice (the applicants have attempted no maintenance to date, despite having open access from HPS, and submitting planning application for vehicular access for 'maintenance'). HPS residents, however, are heavily invested in the land, paying an annual maintenance cost for part of the applicants' land, and carrying out periodic litter clearing, including fly tipping issues, etc.
 - Woodland shall not be used for any other purpose, other than woodland maintenance & management
 - Woodland shall be protected from 'any form of construction, building development,....or any similar works' etc.
- Oct 2012 ownership transferred to the applicants (without my knowledge)
- Previous planning applications by the applicants include:
 - HM11/0257 formation of vehicular access – refused November 2011
 - HM12/0056 formation of vehicular access – refused July 2012
 - HM13/0005 2 detached houses & vehicular access – refused March 2013
 - P/19/0420 formation of vehicular access – refused October 2019

NB Some of the above planning decisions were appealed at the highest level
- Lands Tribunal Scotland application made by the applicants January 2016 – request to remove title burdens - challenged by HPS owners' solicitor – burdens remain intact to date
- HPS & Hamilton Park North owners have been striving for many years to preserve and protect this facility for the benefit of SLC residents. This has involved considerable time, manpower, financial expense and effort. The applicants have offered substantial sums of money to HPS owners and Hamilton College, in exchange for access, and nil objection to development. HPS residents have rejected these offers.

My objections are based on the following:-

- (a) Existing Use – described in the application as 'vacant land with vegetation' however as noted above, site is designated as Amenity Land for the 40 flats at Hamilton Park South.

The Design Statement notes that the applicant is willing to gift the remaining woodland to owners of Hamilton Park South, however, it should be stressed that there is no agreement of any kind in place, and this could therefore be argued as irrelevant to the application.

- (b) Right of Way – The designation of the site as Amenity Land implies that access rights to woodland, in favour of residents, and the wider public exist, and the rights have been in existence for over 20 years without interruption. Statutory access rights already exist in favour of the public at large and the site is an established public link between Bothwell Road (Public Park) and Hamilton Race Course, Palace Grounds, Strathclyde Park, and Chatelherault. There are multiple entry points onto the site leading to informal pathways created by regular users, and providing unhindered access to Greenspace, with families, walkers, joggers and dog walkers crossing the site on a daily basis. The site has therefore connected 2 public places for many years.
- (c) Road Safety – The existing entrance to Hamilton College forms a busy junction from Bothwell Road – a dual carriageway and main access route into Hamilton- and is extremely congested at peak times throughout the day. Apart from private vehicles, a number of large executive coaches drop off and collect pupils on a daily basis, and are required to manoeuvre the narrow access road. To even contemplate allowing a secondary access from this road, to facilitate residential development, is a serious threat to, and total disregard for the safety of pedestrians (nursery to secondary age pupils and public), vehicles, and other road users, including cyclists. Although the application states 2 properties, the scale of each of these, with 6 ensuite bedrooms, and a separate studio flat above the garage, creates the potential for ownership levels of between 7 and 14 cars per property, depending on occupancy and age profile of prospective residents. These would contribute to the traffic flow on the access road. Visitor traffic to/from the proposed properties would be in addition to these figures. This does not show any consideration for Road Safety in this location. In addition, local pedestrians utilise the woodland to access Hamilton College, and some pupils have also used this route to/from school, which would pose further risk to life and limb. I am not aware of any other housing development being accessed from school grounds.
- (d) No Environmental Statement has been submitted, however a Survey commissioned by the National Trust for Scotland, and verified by the National Biodiversity Network (Scotland), records that a great variety of birds and wildlife use this site and the surrounding area as their natural habitat. They include Buzzards; Goldfinch and Greenfinch (protected under Wildlife Countryside Act 1981); as well as a wide range of common birds such as Rooks; Robins; Blue Tits; Gulls; Swallows; Owls and Woodpeckers. In addition bats, deer, toads, foxes, squirrels, large birds of prey, wild flowers including wild orchids, butterflies, bees, and other unusual species such as brightly coloured damsel/dragonflies and Green Shield bugs (rare in Scotland) also inhabit this particular site. This list is not exhaustive. Any development would devastate this rich and diverse eco system.
- (e) Woodland – Scotland's woodlands are at serious risk, and now only cover 18% of our landscape (with only 4% classed as Native woodland), compared to 37% in Europe. There is concern not only about tree removal, but infrastructure damage to the root system, if trees are removed. There is strong evidence that trees make a major contribution to the eco system, and bring benefits to local communities including: Improved physical and mental health; Recreational opportunities; Carbon Storage; Cleaner Air; Longer Life Expectancy; Increased property values; and Reduced

Stress. Woodlands also provide food and shelter to thousands of plants and animals, and homes for more wildlife than any other terrestrial landscape.

This unspoilt woodland is of particular historical and environmental value to the people of South Lanarkshire, being an undeveloped remnant of the original Duke of Hamilton's estate, and forming part of a unique green corridor between Bothwell Castle/Bridge and Chatelherault. This area has been visited and studied by Scottish university academic staff, over recent years.

- (f) Climate Change - The Scottish Government is at the centre of a Climate Change Emergency, and is committed to not only preserving and protecting woodland, but also to increasing tree coverage. The COP26 International Conference event, being held in Glasgow later this year, confirms this acknowledgement of the Climate Emergency, and the fact that we need woodlands now more than ever. The removal of any Greenspace and trees contravenes the Climate Change Agenda, Scottish Government policy, and our individual and corporate responsibilities for the future safety of our planet. A range of actions is needed to best protect our woodlands, and help them adapt to new and dynamic conditions, resulting from the climate crisis. Our climate is already changing. We must all take action to mitigate and help nature adapt to climate change impacts that are now unavoidable.
- (g) No Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been submitted and the site is designated as Medium Risk on the SEPA Flood Maps. Regular significant local flooding is evident, especially on the eastern area of the site where the proposed new buildings will be located. As neighbours we have a concern re how the developer might reroute the flooding, displaced by any new build, to prevent it encroaching on our land.
- (h) Zoning - The site is zoned as 'Green Network' in the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan Settlement Maps, and not Housing. This application is therefore in direct conflict with the Local Plan, at a time when the preservation of green areas is more vital than ever before.
- (i) COVID - During current COVID 19 restrictions the Scottish Government is encouraging people to take exercise outside, and near their homes, to limit transfer of infection. This land is utilised on a daily basis, by the public, to access green space for fresh air and exercise. Any development will prohibit this use. It is also worth noting that, due to COVID restrictions, several owners are stranded abroad or in England, and unable to travel home. This will limit the number of objections being submitted. The COVID pandemic is therefore disadvantaging the process of public consultation/response to this application. The general public who utilise this facility, on a daily basis, etc. will largely, or wholly, be unaware of this application. This is compounded by the fact that locals are prevented from meeting, and some organisations and bodies have not been accessible, due to the ongoing COVID lock down.
- (j) Overlooking/ Loss of Privacy - Although the proposed development is Low Density, the North facing gable wall of the house, adjacent to Hamilton Park South development, would be in close proximity to the dividing fence at Hamilton Park South, and only a further 1½ metres from the Hamilton Park South building. This proposed gable incorporates 1 window and 2 sets of Double Patio Doors at ground level, and 3 windows and a balcony at first floor level. All of these windows will

directly face onto the gable of the 8 flats in Hamilton Park South, which have large floor to ceiling windows.

The new development will therefore result in overlooking, and a loss of privacy, for the 8 flats looking directly onto the proposed development. It will also result in a loss of light and overshadowing, especially for the flats on the lower levels. The loss of sunlight (internal and external) for residents is of particular concern, e.g. as some residents are in the shielding category, and there is a recognised health issue re vitamin D deficiency in the Scottish population. Noise pollution, light pollution and air pollution (cars, etc.) would also adversely impact Hamilton Park residents, and beyond.

In my opinion, this application disadvantages the local current residents, for this applicants purpose; which would be to the detriment of South Lanarkshire local residents, not only during proposed Construction, but also in the long term changes to the environment, and the lifestyle resultant.

Thank you to South Lanarkshire Council for considering this objection.

Iain Hall
34 Hamilton Park North
Hamilton
ML30FG

4.2.2021