

# WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## Report by Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration

Planning Committee: 10 November 2021

---

**DC21/212/PPP Proposed residential development at land to the east of 8 Cochno Holdings, Cochno Road, Hardgate by Miss Cunningham**

### **1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1** This application is subject to representation and is contrary to the local development plan. Under the terms of the approved Scheme of Delegation it therefore requires to be determined by the Planning Committee.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1** **Grant** planning permission in principle subject to conditions set out in Section 9.

### **3. DEVELOPMENT DETAILS**

- 3.1** The application site is located on the eastern side of Cochno Road to the south east of the junction with Duncombe Avenue. The site area is 0.55 hectares and presently accommodates the rear garden of No. 8 Cochno Holdings, this is a detached bungalow with an associated garage/outhouse to the north of the bungalow. It is known that the site has historically been use for dog kennels and a poultry farm. Aside from the domestic garden associated with No.8 Cochno Holdings the land is a grass field with some fruit trees and the land slopes to the north. Vehicle access to the site is off Cochno Road and is sited in between the bungalow and the garage/outhouse. It is also noted that Cochno Road is at a lower level than the application site. Along the length of the site's western site boundary with Cochno Road there is a strong hedgerow. On the opposite side of Cochno Road there are a variety of bungalows that are set back from the road by circa. 21metres. To the site's southern and part eastern boundary the site abuts the two storey houses of Cochno Brae. The houses of Cochno Brae sit at a lower level than the application site and there is a 2m high close boarded fence on the boundaries with these properties. To the remaining eastern boundary and the northern

boundary there are open fields with mature hedgerows forming this boundary. At the northwestern part of the site the application site includes an area of the adjacent open field. This area is 350 sqm. and has a length of circa. 43m and is to the rear of the existing garage/outhouse. The open fields to the north accommodate the electricity pylons and it is also noted that Cochno Burn is located in the field to the east.

- 3.2** Planning permission in principle is sought for the residential redevelopment of the site. At this point the application seeks to establish that the principle of residential redevelopment is acceptable as well as the means of access. No detailed layout or house type designs have been submitted at this point and accordingly no assessment can be made regarding these matters. In support of the application the Supporting Statement indicates that the site could accommodate up to 3-4 dwellings. The site layout includes a proposed means of access to the north of the existing garage/outbuilding. This arrangement results in the need for land in the field to the north of the existing garage/outhouse to achieve the vehicular access. The existing access to No. 8 Cochno Holdings will be retained and car parking spaces associated with that dwelling is proposed. The application also includes works to construct a pavement on the eastern side of Cochno Road for the length of the application site's boundary with Cochno Road.

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1** West Dunbartonshire Council Roads Service have no objection to the principle and advise that the development can be served by a private access provided it serves no more than 5 dwellings. The extension of the existing footway is welcomed and will ensure the development is accessible by active travel modes.
- 4.2** West Dunbartonshire Bio-diversity officer advises that the nearby Cochno Burn is known to be used by otters and appropriate surveys and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal will be necessary but this would be more appropriate at the next stage if planning permission in principle were granted. Compensatory tree planting to strengthen boundaries should also be a consideration.
- 4.3** West Dunbartonshire Council Environmental Health Service has no objection subject to conditions regarding ground contamination, remediation, hours of construction and dust control.
- 4.4** Scottish Water has no objections to the proposed development.

## **5. REPRESENTATIONS**

**5.1** Eleven objections have been received from local residents. The material planning points raised can be summarised as follows:

- Impact on traffic and existing highway safety issues will exacerbate.
- There is no need for new housing given the current building rates elsewhere in Clydebank.
- Loss of amenity to neighbouring houses by reason of overshadowing and loss of privacy.
- Existing drainage and flooding problems will be exacerbated by this development.
- Loss of greenbelt land is contrary to Local Plan policies.

## **6. ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **West Dunbartonshire Adopted Local Plan 2010**

**6.1** Policy GB1 advises that there is a strong presumption against inappropriate development in the green belt and development will not be permitted which would have an adverse effect on the landscape character of the local area. Policy UR1 encourages the redevelopment and re-use of underused, vacant and/or derelict land and buildings for appropriate uses such as housing. Policy H4 sets out standards expected of residential development, requiring high quality design in the range of house types and sizes and in terms of form, layout and materials. Policy GD1 seeks to ensure that all new development is of a high quality of design and respects the character and amenity of the area.

**6.2** Policy T1 and T4 requires sites to be integrated with sustainable travel and Policy E5 relates to trees and requires new development proposals to consider impacts on trees and incorporate suitable tree planting. Policies F1 and F2 aims to ensure that new development is not at risk from, and does not increase the risk of flooding, and has suitable SUDS drainage infrastructure.

## **7. ASSESSMENT AGAINST MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan (LDP1) Proposed Plan**

**7.1** On 27 April 2016, the Planning Committee took a final decision not to accept the Local Development Plan Examination Report recommended modification in respect of including the Duntiglennan Fields site in Clydebank as a housing development opportunity, and therefore, as a result of the Scottish Ministers' Direction, the Local Development Plan has

remained unadopted but continues to be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

- 7.2** Policy DS2 restricts development in the green belt so as to maintain the attractiveness and character of the area. The development requires the consideration of policies DS1, GN2, SD1, DS6 and GN3 and GN5 with regards to new residential development, green network, transport, flooding and drainage and protected species and trees. These policies are similar to that of the Adopted Plan. DS7 requires any potential site contamination issues to be dealt with and DS1 seeks to ensure a high design quality in housing and being suitable for a mix of occupants.
- 7.3** The proposed development is assessed against the Proposed Plan and the Residential Development Guidance in Section 7 below.

West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan (LDP2) Proposed Plan

- 7.4** The modified Plan and associated documents was approved by the Council on 19 August 2020. The Council has advised the Scottish Ministers of its intention to adopt the Plan. On 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020, the Scottish Ministers issued a Direction in relation to the housing land chapter of the Plan. None of the policies considered in the determination of this application is affected by the Direction. Therefore, Local Development Plan 2 is the Council's most up to date policy position and is afforded significant weight in the assessment and determination of planning applications.
- 7.5** Policy GB1 seeks to ensure that new development is directed towards urban areas to maintain the attractiveness and character of the green belt. Similarly to Policy DS1 of LDP 1, Policy CP1 seeks to ensure that housing is of a high quality, adaptable and is designed to be suitable for a mix of occupants. It indicates that all new development will be expected to contribute towards creating successful places by having regard to the six qualities of a successful place (distinctive, adaptable, resource efficient, easy to get to/move around, safe and pleasant, and welcoming).
- 7.6** Policy GI2,G14, BE1, FCC1, ENV1, ENV4, ENV5 and ENV6 are similar to the green network, built heritage, tree, water environment and flooding policies of the Adopted and LDP 1 policies, albeit that Policy GI2 sets a higher open space standard to that of the adopted Local Plan and LDP 1. Policies CP2 requires the integration and consideration of green infrastructure from the outset of the design process through to its maintenance and stewardship of the resource. Policy G12 and Policy G14 require that where residential developments are unable to meet the required green infrastructure standards on site, they must provide a financial contribution towards the cost of providing or improving green infrastructure within the area. As this application is "in principle" and the

number and type of units is not confirmed. It will be for the subsequent detailed application for the site to provide the appropriate development contribution for green infrastructure.

- 7.7** Policy CON4 sets out a need for all developments to install sufficient broadband provisions. Policy ENV8 requires developments to address air quality, lighting and noise as part of the planning process, whilst policy ENV9 requires all potentially contaminated sites to be remediated where necessary to ensure that the site is suitable for the intended use. It is considered that the proposals comply with the above policies as discussed below.

#### Principle of Development

- 7.8** The majority of the application site is not allocated for any specific use in the adopted Local Plan or in Local Development Plan 1 and 2, being part of an 'existing residential area'. In this respect, having regard to the character of the surroundings, the principle of residential development is acceptable. As the application is for planning permission in principle and access is the only issue being asked to consider, this forms the basis of the following assessment. The applicant envisages 3 or 4 detached houses either 1.5 or 2 storey in height but no layout or design has been provided for assessment at this stage and this would be provided at the detailed stage.
- 7.9** As detailed above it is proposed that the vehicle access to the site is achieved by utilising a strip of land to the north of the existing garage/outhouse. This strip of land is circa. 350 sqm and adjoins Cochno Road. The strip of land is within land allocated as green belt and the following policies are applicable to the determination of this application, Local Plan (2010) Policy WC1 Wider Countryside, Local Development Plan (2016) Policy GB1 Greenbelt & Countryside Development and Local Development Plan 2 (2020) Policy GB1 Greenbelt & Countryside. These policies seek to restrict development to those that are compatible within a rural setting and do not have an adverse impact on the established rural character and landscape. In terms of Policy GB1 Greenbelt and Countryside in LDP 2 the residential development is in accordance with Policy H1 however the part of the application site that falls within the greenbelt which facilitates access to the site requires to be assessed against Policy GB1.
- 7.10** A Supporting Statement has been submitted by the applicant which seeks to justify the proposal against these policies. The Supporting Statement contends that there is a justifiable and specific locational need for the proposed access hence meeting the requirements of Policy GB1 in LDP2. The Supporting Statement discounts using the existing access to the wider

site. The reasons for this being the intensification of vehicle movements adjacent to the north elevation of No. 8 Cochno Holdings (the applicants dwelling) and loss of the garage/outhouse would have unacceptable implications for No. 8 Cochno Holdings. The applicant also considers that using the existing access would impact on the bungalows sitting opposite. The Supporting Statement also discounts forming a new access to the south of No. 8 Cochno Holdings as this option is seen to present challenges with the gradient and would impact on the applicant's garden. The Supporting Statement contends that the proposed use of a strip of the adjacent field to facilitate the access to the site is therefore the best option. The Statement asserts that, '...the development of a very small section of the existing agricultural field could be achieved without having any material impact on the existing settlement boundary, the green belt or the landscape character of the surrounding area.'

- 7.11** The area of green belt land needed to facilitate this access is 350 sqm, equating to circa. 15% of the overall application site area. The strip of land has a width of 9m to Cochno Road. With respect to the wider context and the surrounding green fields the area of green belt land needed to facilitate this development is considered to be small and its loss would have a negligible impact on protecting the green belt and its wider role. The fields also contain significant overhead power lines. The existing hedgerow field boundary to the north of the applicant's garage/outhouse provides a very visible, established and well defined boundary between the houses of Cochno Road and Cochno Brae and the land beyond, although it is noted that there are gaps in the hedgerow at its western end. Changes to facilitate the proposed access will be visible and will involve adding a new two width vehicle junction. The existing hedgerows will also need to be removed and this will be visible but can be reduced by new robust planting to screen the new access and provide a defined settlement boundary. It is considered in this instance that taking a small area of the adjacent field to form an access to the site will not affect the character and amenity of the area and will not undermine the Local Plan policies seeking to protect green belt land.

#### Technical Matters

- 7.12** The Council's Environmental Health Service have requested a site investigation report including remediation and mitigation measures. These matters alongside other matters regarding dust mitigation and construction activity can be dealt with by condition together with the Preliminary Ecological Appraisals requested by the Council's Bio-diversity officer .
- 7.13** The Roads Service has not raised any issues in terms of the new access and has welcomed the extension of the footpath along Cochno Road.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1** Whilst the principle of residential development is acceptable, the means of access would result in the small incremental loss of green belt land. The loss of this land will not be highly visible and can be mitigated by strong landscaping and will not have a negative impact on the amenity and character of the area, or on the role and purpose of the green belt. The additional information provided by the applicant is considered to justify this small loss of greenbelt land together with the extension of the footway along Cochno Road.

## **9. CONDITIONS**

- 1. No development shall commence on site until such time as approval of matters specified in conditions for the following matters shall be obtained from the planning authority. Any application for approval of matters specified in conditions shall be submitted before the expiration of three years from the date of this planning permission in principle and shall include:**
  - a) site layout plans showing the position of all buildings, roads, footpaths, car parking areas, walls, fences and landscaping;**
  - b) block and layout plans and elevations of each building showing dimensions, design, height and palettes of external materials;**
  - c) landscape and streetscape plans showing the location of all proposed trees, shrubs, hedges, palettes of landscaping materials**
  - d) details of existing and proposed levels and finished floor levels relating to a clearly identified fixed datum point;**
  - e) the means of drainage and sewage;**
  - f) a detailed report on the extent, scale and nature of any contamination of the site and a remediation scheme;**
  - h) a Ecological Appraisal detailing any ecological interest in the site and how it should be addressed.**
  - i) the provision of open space to West Dunbartonshire Council's Residential Design Guidance.**
- 2. Under condition 1 above details to be submitted shall include no more than 4 houses.**
- 3. Prior to any development on site the existing footpath along the eastern side of Cochno Road shall be extended to the junction with Duncombie Avenue. Details of the footpath and its location shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority and implemented prior to the occupation of any houses on site.**
- 4. Detailed to be submitted under condition 1(c) shall include a landscaping strip along the northern boundary to screen the new vehicular access.**

**Peter Hessett**

**Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration**

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

**Person to Contact:** Pamela Clifford, Planning & Building Standards  
Manager  
Email: [Pamela.Clifford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:Pamela.Clifford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

**Appendix:** Location Plan

**Background Papers:**

1. Application forms and plans;
2. Consultation responses;
3. Representations;
4. West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010;
5. West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan;
6. West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2 Proposed Plan.

**Wards affected:** Ward 4 - Kilpatrick