

Comments for Planning Application TP/ED/26/0104

Application Summary

Application Number: TP/ED/26/0104

Address: Whitegates Park Middlemuir Road Lenzie East Dunbartonshire

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

Case Officer: Fraser McNair

Customer Details

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I am objecting to the proposed development at Whitegates Park due to profound environmental, climate, biodiversity, and social equity concerns. Whitegates Park is designated open space forming part of the established Green Network and protected under Policy 17 of the LDP2, and the Open Space Strategy.

Change of use

If this application seeks to reclassify Whitegates Park from protected open space, it is procedurally unsound. The LDP2 designation remains in force, and any change of use must be made through a formal amendment process, subject to consultation and examination. Attempting to bypass this process via a planning application would conflict with the planned system required under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and NPF4.

The development would permanently remove nearly all existing, mature green space, habitat, and trees from the site. These established natural features provide far greater ecological value and cannot be realistically recreated within the restricted footprint of a school campus.

The proposal would remove a large area of public parkland in a town that already has a deficit of public park provision, directly conflicting with NPF4 Policy 20, which requires development not to exacerbate deficiencies in green infrastructure.

The Council has resolved to make a Tree Preservation Order for Whitegates Park. Determination of this application should not pre-empt or undermine the statutory TPO process now underway.

The removal of the current sports pitch will negatively affect local sporting and recreational use.

My primary objection concerns the proposed biodiversity mitigation. The creation of a new park at the vacated school site is not an acceptable "like for like" compensation for the loss of Whitegates Park. It fails to compensate for the established, mature biodiversity and the well-used, mature green space that will be destroyed.

The latest Technical Note confirms that Myrtle Avenue will come forward as a separate major

planning application, rather than as secured mitigation linked to Whitegates Park. This material change undermines reliance on Myrtle Avenue to justify the current proposal.

Furthermore, this mitigation is fundamentally inequitable. Relocating green space a mile away from the eastern boundary of the town - an area already deemed to have poor provision according to the local Open Space Strategy - to the well-served central Lenzie area, does not constitute a fair replacement. This proposal simply takes a vital asset from one community to give to another, exacerbating existing imbalances in access to green space and reducing accessibility for residents with mobility issues.

National planning policy requires nature-positive outcomes and the protection of valued community assets. On a site of this ecological value, and with this flawed mitigation plan, it is impossible to claim a net gain for biodiversity or the community.

Replacing permeable green-space with hard surfaces increases surface-water runoff and reduces climate resilience. This is particularly irresponsible on a site already known for standing water and drainage issues.

Whitegates Park is currently a freely accessible, mature natural space for the community. A fenced school campus and a distant, new park are not equivalent. This represents a permanent net loss of publicly available, high-quality natural space for the existing community.

The plans do not clearly guarantee that existing public paths through Whitegates Park will remain open, unrestricted and accessible outside school hours.

The Transport Assessment underestimates the likely traffic impacts and congestion around Initiative Road and surrounding residential streets, raising concerns about road safety and suitability of the location for a school of this scale.

I am also concerned about the visual impact of a large modern school building on an area that is currently open, low-rise parkland.

The proposals include floodlit sports pitches with assumed use until 9pm. Floodlighting can significantly extend the hours and intensity of use of sports facilities, including community hire during evenings and winter months. The Noise Impact Assessment models specific match scenarios but does not fully assess the potential effects of regular evening use, spectators and associated activity on nearby residential amenity.

For these reasons, I ask that the application is refused.