

Crosshill Road Site

Site Name: Crosshill Road, Lenzie
Site Reference: LDP 201
Potential Land Use: Housing
Site Size: 7.9 ha.
Site Owner: Developer Reference: 1259

Lenzie Community Council strongly opposes any consideration of housing development on this site which was suggested by Persimmon Homes after the Main Issues Report was published. The Community Council objects to any development on this site for the following reasons:

1. Threat to Lenzie Moss

Lenzie Moss is an important Local Nature Reserve covering some 40 hectares. The main Glasgow to Edinburgh railway line divides the Moss north and south into two unequal portions, the greater part lying to the north of the track. The proposed site 201 is located beside the southern portion and there is no defensible boundary between the site and the southern Moss (see annotated map).

Lenzie Moss comprises three quite separate nature domains: raised peat bog, birch woodland and unimproved grassland. The three habitats support a variety of flora and fauna, including several rare and endangered species, such as bog rosemary (*Andromeda polifolia*). This area also serves as a feeding ground and, in some cases, a breeding ground for a variety of wild life – including roe deer, fox, snipe and long-tailed tits. Additionally, there are several varieties of orchids and many different types of butterfly and moth. Developing this site as a residential area would pose a serious threat to the fauna and flora of the southern portion of this precious Conservation area. Moreover, draining the site prior to the building phase could adversely affect the hydrology of the whole moss, not just the southern portion because although the railway line cuts across the Moss the railway is supported by a shallow raft and the peat bog continues under the line.

Furthermore, any development on this site could release the carbon locked up in the underlying peat, leading to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Lenzie Moss is well used by the local community for children's play, recreation & walking. The Moss helps people to be active and healthy, which is a Scottish Government priority.

Allowing residential development on this site would be contrary to East Dunbartonshire's current planning policy as expressed in Local Plan 2 (LP2). For example:

Local Plan 2 states that

“Development that would adversely affect the designated interest of a Local Nature Conservation Site, including designated Important Wildlife Corridors, or sites identified as regionally or locally important for their geological/geomorphological value, will not be permitted.”

LP2 - Natural Environment - Policy NE1C – Protection of Local Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites, page 77.

2. Threat to the Green Belt

- a. This site is surrounded by the greenbelt on three sides (see annotated map). There can be no justification for selecting an area for development that is surrounded on three sides by the greenbelt.
- b. It is essential to protect the green belt. There are other sites available for development in East Dunbartonshire without using green belt land. Lenzie has accommodated more than its share of new housing in recent years with planning permission having been granted for well over one thousand new homes in the last 10 years.
- c. If development were to be allowed on this site there are no defensible boundaries to the north or the west between itself and the remainder of the greenbelt. At present, a strong defensible boundary is provided by the garden walls that run along the eastern side of the site.
- d. Any development here would set a precedent and encourage other potential developers to use construction on this site to justify applying to develop adjacent greenbelt sites (see annotated map).

Allowing residential development on this site would be contrary to East Dunbartonshire’s current planning policy as expressed in Local Plan 2 (LP2). For example:

*“The Glasgow and Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan 2006 does not identify a need in East Dunbartonshire for additional housing land supply, however it does recognise that there are issues in the distribution of affordable housing, and identifies East Dunbartonshire as an area of particular need. **The Structure Plan prioritises development on urban/brownfield sites**” (LCC emphasis).*

LP2 - Housing and Mixed Uses – strategic Planning Context, page 17.

“The Council will generally encourage housing and mixed use development on infill/brownfield sites within the urban areas in accordance with the policies and proposals in this Plan.”

LP2 - Housing and Mixed Uses – Policy HMU 1 – Development Opportunities for Housing and Mixed Uses, page 18

“There will be a strong presumption against inappropriate development in the green belt.”

LP2 - Green Belt – National Strategic Planning Context, page 48.

“The Metropolitan Development Strategy requires the continued designation and safeguarding of the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Belt within which there is a presumption against the spread of the built up areas and the encroachment of development into the countryside. Local Plans shall define the detailed boundaries and policies to safeguard the Green Belt.”

Quoted in LP2 Page 49 - Green Belt – Strategic Policy 1 – Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan 2006,

“Green belt resources, such as biodiversity (e.g. habitats such as wetlands, woodlands and semi-natural grasslands), landscape character and recreational assets (e.g. core path network), need to be effectively managed, to ensure the environmental and visual qualities of green belt land are protected and, wherever possible, enhanced. National and local support for good farming practices are also an important component of effective management. The Council’s approved priorities for managing green belt resources, including the implementation of the Green Network, are in this Local Plan by identifying the programmes and priorities of Council services and their partners.”

LP2 - Green Belt – Green Belt Management, page 54.

*“Careful consideration has been given as to whether any land in the green belt should be identified for non-conforming development. With regards to housing, and taking account of the requirements of SPP 3: Planning for Homes (2008) and the Metropolitan Development Strategy, **land supply figures indicate there is no requirement for green belt release.** (LCC emphasis) There are also presently no other identified land uses or infrastructure projects where an encroachment into the green belt can be justified.”*

*“With regard to potential development sites identified in the consultation process, mainly for residential use, **again there are no particular local circumstances of sufficient weight to justify release.**”(LCC emphasis.)*

LP2 - Green Belt – Local Plan Policy, page 51.

3. Access to Local Services

This site is located on the south-south western edge of Lenzie. It is remote from all local services. For example:

- (a) Crosshill Road has no bus service.
- (b) By the time any development on this site is completed the nearest primary schools will be Millersneuk Primary and Lenzie Moss Primary School, both over 30 minutes walk away.
- (c) The nearest secondary school is Lenzie Academy which is also 30 minutes walk from the site.
- (d) Lenzie Railway Station is located around a 15-minute walk away as are the nearest retail outlets in Millersneuk and Lenzie.
- (e) Kirkintilloch town centre is over an hour’s distance on foot.
- (f) Housing development on this site would put an additional strain on local services, particularly transport and education.

The relative remoteness of this site means that its residents would be dependent on their cars to access local services. This would add to local traffic congestion, air pollution and lead to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Those residents without their own transport would have considerable difficulty in accessing local services.

Again, this situation would be contrary to the current planning policy as expressed in Local Plan 2. For example,

“The Council will adopt an integrated approach to development and transport with the aims of ensuring that the need to travel is reduced, that active travel and travel by public transport is facilitated and encouraged, and that the effect of traffic on air quality is ameliorated. (LCC emphasis)

Proposals should be located to support more sustainable travel patterns. All new developments must demonstrate accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport networks for all, including those with disabilities. (LCC emphasis)

The planning authority will not normally support development proposals for significant travel generating uses in locations:

1. Where immediate links to walking and cycling networks are not available or cannot be made available; (LCC emphasis)

2. Where access to public transport networks are further than 400m by walking, as measured along recognised and easily accessed routes;

3. Which would encourage reliance on the private car; (LCC emphasis)

4. Which would have a detrimental effect on the capacity of the strategic road network and/or rail network; or

5. Where a Transport Assessment does not include satisfactory mechanisms for meeting sustainable transport requirements.”

LP2 – Transport - Trans 1 Policy, page 93.

4. Access to Local Green Networks

This would not be a good site for walkers. There is no access to footpaths or local green networks. Crosshill Road to the south has no footpaths. The Railway line to the north prevents access to the path network on the northern section of the Moss. There are no cycle paths nearby. People living on this site would be highly dependent on their cars. Life would be very difficult for those without cars.

Local Plan 2 states that

“The designated green belt continues to fulfil other recognised objectives, such as protecting agricultural land, landscape character and biodiversity from inappropriate development and providing easily accessible countryside for recreational and leisure activities. The green belt is also a key component of the Green Network.” (LCC emphasis)

Proposals should be located to support more sustainable travel patterns. All new developments must demonstrate accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport networks for all, including those with disabilities. (LCC

emphasis) *The planning authority will not normally support development proposals for significant travel generating uses in locations:*

LP2 – Green Belt – Local Plan Policy, page 51.

5. Negative Impact on the Visual Landscape

- a. This site is elevated and clearly visible from Crosshill Road. Any residential development would create a negative visual impact on the surrounding area and would spoil the pleasant pastoral scene that is this part of Lenzie.
- b. At present, built-up Lenzie stops in line with the eastern edge of the Gadloch leaving the loch surrounded on all sides by the Green Belt. A housing estate on plot 201 would adversely affect the wonderful rural setting of the Gadloch to the south (see annotated map).

Local Plan 2 states that

“Within the green belt, as defined on the proposals map, there shall be a general presumption against development, and planning permission will not be granted for developments other than those falling within the categories listed in Policy GB 2 below. In all cases, development should:

- i) not have a significant adverse environmental impact,*
- ii) be sited to minimise visual impact,*
- iii) be designed appropriately for a countryside location,*
- iv) preferably be located adjacent to existing buildings,*
- v) be compatible with adjoining land uses, and*
- vi) have appropriate and safe access arrangements.”* (LCC emphases)

LP2 - Green Belt – Local Plan Policies – Policy GB1 – Presumption Against Development, Page 51.

Clearly, the proposed development on Site 201 does not meet these criteria.

6. Access and Egress to and from the Site

The main access and egress to and from a housing estate on Site 201 would be by means of Crosshill Road. Crosshill Road is a narrow “country” road without pavements and with raised verges on both sides. It is already a busy road used by commuters and others as a route to and from Glasgow that avoids bottlenecks on the main roads. In the absence of good local public transport services (see above), building two hundred houses on this site would lead to a probable 250 to 350 vehicles leaving and entering this site at various times during the day. This would not only cause additional congestion and increased greenhouse gas emissions but also endanger the safety of pedestrians and cyclists on the road.

Given the reasons described above, Lenzie Community Council is convinced that there can be no justification for allowing construction on this precious green belt land

Proposed Site 201

Crosshill Road, Lenzie

