

Ref: OP 5. Land South of Gardenston, Street Laurencekirk. [11 Houses]

Reasons for Change:

AREA: The area as stated on the planning bid plan for housing land is 1.13HA but this does not reflect the actual land available for development.

A) it does not reflect the area taken up by the Guagers Burn.

B) it does not reflect the 225mm sewer that runs parallel to the burn nor any land retained by Scottish Water for maintenance.

C) the loss of land required to provide a footpath and reinstate the hedge adjacent to the High Street.

D) the loss of land to facilitate the second entrance to the site from West Burnside.

These factors will reduce the land available to approx. ,8250 m2.

The applicant further states the following: -

E) the existing burn to be enhanced and protected by a landscape buffer.

F) a natural pond feature / suds arrangement to be provided.

G) structured planting to create buffer zone between existing housing and the North East corner of the site.

Would this not reduce the land available by a further 2250 m2?

The planning bid also states that 60% of the houses will be 3 bed, and 40% to be 4 bed, 11units in total.

To provide open space and the necessary infrastructure would mean the houses would have a very small footprint and require to be two storeys to achieve the accommodation as stated.

It should be noted that the surrounding properties are mainly one and a half storey, single storey and small traditional cottages.

This is in my opinion is a gross over development of the site and will not provide a layout/ design that the southern gateway to Laurencekirk requires.

IMPACT.

A) With the construction of the new entrance onto the High Street this will result in the loss of on street parking for several of the neighbouring proprietors.

B) Gardenston Street has many problems i.e. - poor access onto the High Street, narrow or no pavements in some parts, limited on street parking but it does benefit from low traffic speed to an extent that children can still play on the street. My issue is - will traffic increase by linking Gardenston street to the new development as it certainly will have an impact? but unfortunately many of the residents are unaware of the proposals and have insufficient information to make an informed decision.

C) The High Street already has serious traffic/parking problems and is dangerous for both cyclist and pedestrian. At the South end of the High Street the situation is aggravated with speeding vehicles coming into town from the A-90. Surely it would be better to select some of the other planning bid sites away from the High Street until at least the issues on the High Street are resolved.

WILDLIFE

A) Guagers Burn is a natural wildlife corridor in that deer obviously use this as an access route between the Garvock Hill and the Denlethen Woods on a regular basis.

At certain times of the year to find red squirrels and the odd fox is also quite common.

In the trees adjacent to Helmsdale there is a large colony of Bats which can be seen feeding in the field at twilight most nights.

I am to resist presenting a list of birds that can be seen around the burn and in the field but look for the development plan to set aside a suitable area to protect this unique corridor.

B) It should be noted that on OP 6 site has areas set aside namely P5 and P7 to act as a wildlife corridor.

CONCLUSION.

The major problem in Laurencekirk is the High Street which is under stress with the volume of traffic and the lack of parking.

The impact on the High Street from the new grade separated junction when it happens is likely to be considerable.

I submit that the 11-house proposal is an overdevelopment of this site and is premature until a relief road is found to ease the High Street.

Surely it would be preferable to promote the other planning bid sites that could accommodate a relief road.

Jim Stuart

