

Council approves 220 homes on greenfield site

✘ The council's Development Management Sub-Committee has approved planning permission for 220 homes on a greenfield site at Newcraighall Road previously the subject of a Court of Session action. The court decided that the proposed plan for the area should be quashed but the ground did not return to greenbelt status, and was deemed as included in the urban area, thus allowing developers to submit a revised application.

EDI which is a council property body, but an arms length company, is a joint applicant in the planning application along with Barratt.

Gilberstoun Residents Association had hoped that the permission would be limited to 160 units, but said that all their arguments were countered. Part of the boundary of the 9 hectare site is formed by the cycle path part of National Cycle Route 1 and some of the flats will have external cycle storage provided.

Affordable housing will be included in the mix of houses to be built here, and commercial units will front Whitehill Street where a disused rail embankment will have to be removed.

Part of the permission appears to include a s.75 agreement requiring a contribution of £415,000 to extending the local school.

Portobello Community Council made this comment in November last year:-“The proposed units are of a style and density significantly out of keeping with the existing housing currently in the village of Newcraighall. The scheme doesn't rise to the aspirations of the Scottish Government's Creating Places, Designing Places or Designing Streets policies: if the

density was reduced again in accordance with the 160 units agreed in the outline planning, this would free up more green space to enable the shared space streets, pocket parks and small intimate courts proposed, to actually work beneficially for the amenity of the residents of the development. As it is currently designed these appear to just be empty phrases. ”

Responding to the news local MP, Sheila Gilmore said:-
‘Newcraighall residents will be swamped if these 220 homes are built.

‘Two years ago the permission was granted for 160 homes. We thought that was the final decision. This latest permission has hurt morale in the former mining village.

‘Ignored and sidelined residents say they can’t help but feel developers are being allowed to chip away at the village, with local concerns that there is an eye on land at Newhailes House.

‘It is deeply disappointing that the message to developers seems to be that they can come back and back to overturn previous decisions. Nothing objectively has changed since the Planning Committee reached its previous decision after substantial debate.

‘Local communities like these can have no confidence that a planning decision once made is the end of the matter.

‘Today’s hearing was an opportunity to draw a line under “the question of numbers” for the sake of residents. Granting permission for greater numbers has not done this. Newcraighall and its community remain vulnerable and fearful of the next application.’

Full details of the application by Barratt and EDI can be accessed [here](#) on the council planning portal.