

Housing next to proposed greyhound stadium given the go ahead

Nearly 100 new homes which were tied to the building of a greyhound stadium have been given the go ahead, despite the withdrawal of the dog racing plan.

A total of 97 houses which were originally put forward as necessary to fund the new stadium, which East Lothian Council first approved 21 years ago, have been granted planning permission through three separate applications by Ambassador Residential Ltd.

At the same time planners also approved an application to remove a condition from the original planning application, first granted permission in 2017, which linked it to the greyhound stadium.

The stadium at Barbachlaw Farm, Wallyford, was originally granted approval in 2001 by East Lothian Council, however owners argued that housing would need to be built and sold in order to fund the business proposal.

After the local authority agreed to allow housing to be built work on the stadium began, and a steel stand frame was constructed on the land and stood alone, visible from the A1, for years.

Last year the owner of the stadium grounds asked the council

to remove the obligation after admitting the racing proposals were no longer viable and agreeing to allow John Gibson, a family butchers firm, to open a meat processing factory on the land.

East Lothian Council agreed and the steel stand was taken down.

Now three applications for 97 houses on land beside the stadium site, which had been originally earmarked for business units, have been approved.

A report by planning officers on one of the applications said, in total, there would be 73 private homes and 24 affordable houses on the site.

It said at the time of the original application: "The principle of the housing was promoted by the applicant as a necessary provision of enabling development to secure the balance of funding necessary to complete the greyhound stadium."

But after discussions with the stadium owner last year it was agreed that "the stadium site will be used for economic development use and therefore the provision of jobs offsetting the original loss of the business park land for housing.

"On this basis the development of the housing units could commence."

by Marie Sharp, Local Democracy Reporter.

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