

# **Landscape business given more time to build net zero site plea**

**A landscaping and horticulture company aiming to build a net zero business in the countryside has been given more time to provide vital flood risk reports for the site it wants to develop.**

GMCb believe that moving to a single site in Stoneyburn, in sight of the Five Sisters Zoo, will allow the firm to become self-sufficient and become a net zero company by cutting vehicle use by thousands of miles per year.

An agent for the business said the site would allow the firm to compost its own green waste as well as rear trees and shrubs for planting on its client project sites.

At the moment the firm has to use premises near Edinburgh to compost green waste.

Planners stressed that they had no issues with the proposals for planting and composting but did not agree with plans for two large sheds which would be used to store equipment and fertilisers.

GMCb applied for planning permission for a green waste composting area, additional horticulture production areas, erection of office/equipment storage building, storage building, yard and enclosure to the land north west of

Auchenhard Farm, Stoneyburn.

The site has been cleared and the firm has already put in additional trees and shrubs to screen the area from the B-road running through Stoneyburn.

Officers told a meeting of the Development Management Committee that drainage and flooding reports had yet to be provided. Concerns were also raised about vehicle use in such a remote part of the county.

Colin Hardie, an agent for the applicants, pointed out that the drainage and flood risk reports covered only a small part of the site – 1.4% of the total area.

Mr Hardie said: “This next step allows them to be self-sufficient. It allows them to recycle all their own green waste, to turn it into compost. Currently they use a facility on the far side of Edinburgh because of limited facilities in West Lothian. They will rear their own trees and shrubs on this site.”

“Between these two measures alone the company will save over 30,000 commercial vehicle miles a year.”

GMCb is a local family business set up in 2004. It currently employs 30 people, with plans to expand including using the single facility in Stoneyburn.

Mr Hardie added that the planned sheds on the site were specifically to house large trailers. Company vehicles are usually taken home by employees. The trailers are currently stored at an industrial facility nearby.

Mr Hardie said: “This project takes major steps towards the company being net zero. They work throughout central Scotland with many blue-chip clients including Historic Scotland.”

Planners had refused planning permission because of the storage sheds and the lack of technical reports. Councillor

Lawrence Fitzpatrick proposed a delay of two months to allow the submission of these reports.

This was supported by Councillor Pauline Stafford who said: “I would support that position. I’m minded to try to support this business to find a way to justify the buildings possibly bringing down the height.”

Committee agreed to delay a decision until September.

By Stuart Sommerville, Local Democracy Reporter