

Waste recycling firm wins appeal over 'residential' base

A waste recycling firm which operated for three years without planning permission next to a residential street has won its appeal to carry on.

Enviroworx upgraded its facilities at the industrial estate off Engine Road, Loanhead, in Midlothian, with new operating buildings relocating to another part of the site.

But when they applied for retrospective planning permission for the changes they faced opposition from local residents who said the increased business it had generated was too close to a safe route to school.

Midlothian councillors refused to grant planning permission in March this year after it was claimed traffic from the industrial estate was parking on pavements, blocking residents from using the paths and sparking concern about safety.

However Scottish Ministers have overturned the decision after a Scottish Government Reporter ruled the operations on the site were not contributing to parking problems on the road and was suitable for the area.

And granting permission for the company to continue they said: "The Enviroworx recycling business has been operating for several years, albeit at a lower level of throughput, and a

search of accident statistics has shown that there have been no reportable road traffic accidents in and around the site or on Engine Road over the last five years.

“Although active travel has been raised as a concern, a safe route for school children to access Loanhead Primary School and St Margaret’s Roman Catholic Primary School is clearly signposted to avoid the busier part of Engine Road and involves little extra distance.”

They pointed out that Enviroworx had space on the site for lorries to park which would ease pressures on the road.

At their meeting in March councillors were told by planning officers that the site had been used as an industrial area for 150 years and if the waste facility was refused permission, its space could revert to the scrap yard which previously operated on it.

The council received 26 individual objections which raised concerns over the impact of traffic in and out of the site, the centre being in close proximity to schools and a call for it to be moved to a more industrial location away from housing.

Enviroworx who are operating the waste processing site had pointed out it is not a new facility but a relocation of their operations on the site to a more efficient area.

The Reporter approved the firm’s new facilities however introduced a condition refusing permission for shipping containers on the site to be used by small business or other traders, after saying the firm had not provided enough information about the plans to allow them to give it the go ahead.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter