

# Dunbar skate park and pump track gets go ahead

**A new skate park, pump track and cafe in Dunbar have been approved despite claims the town's most famous son would be left 'birling in his grave' by the plans.**

East Lothian Council backed the proposals for open land at Hallhill, in Dunbar, after hearing from supporters, including young people, about the need for new facilities.

The plans, which were brought forward by Dunbar Community Development and Heritage Trust (DCDHT), who own the land, also include a basketball pitch and changing rooms.

They received 55 objections as well as 20 letters of support and went before the council's planning committee today.

Objectors raised concerns about the impact on local wildlife and the surrounding woods as well as the safety of children, describing the site as a "secluded area where young people congregate to drink, take drugs and make fires etc".

One objector told the committee John Muir, the famed naturalist who is known as the founder of America's national parks and has a trail through the county named after him, would be "birling in his grave" at the plans for the open space.

And a representative of West Barns Community Council said a recent local plan consultation with the public found overwhelming support for keep the land as open space saying it

was one of the “last places for deer to safely graze”.

However supporter said the new facilities would provide young people with something to do as well as offering multi-generational activities to families and had the “ability to inspire and improve the lives of the whole community by providing much needed community space”.

Local councillor Donna Collins, who has worked as children’s entertainer Gladys Chucklebutty for decades, said the skate park would help deal with antisocial behaviour claims in the area.

She said: “I have been a kids entertainer for 30 years and there is a lot of support from the kids I have spoken to in Dunbar for this facility.

“It is a well known fact that when you have a physical presence in an area you knock antisocial behaviour on the head.”

The committee unanimously backed the plans for the new skate park and additional facilities at Hallhill.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter