

# **Pentland Park project rejected by Scottish Ministers**

**The company behind plans for a £22.4million housing project near Straiton have said they are 'disappointed' after it was rejected by Scottish Ministers.**

Pentland Park Marine Ltd had appealed after Midlothian Council refused permission for a care home and housing alongside a mixed use development on land it said had been designated as countryside.

The firm had argued that the land was 'disused' and had lain fallow and unused for 50 years and they pointed to the approval of an Aldi store on the site by the council just months earlier.

However the Scottish Government Reporter has now rejected their appeal after ruling there is sufficient housing land available in Midlothian and that while the project would make a "small, but valuable contribution to the supply" with an estimated 10 affordable houses included it was not enough to outweigh concerns about losing public space to the site.

The decision brings to an end a two year fight to have the decision by Midlothian Council overturned.

The Reporter said she had visited the site and considered

points raised by local community councils who objected to the use of the land for the project as well as other development both in place and proposed on the site and adjoining area.

She added: "I have considered the economic benefits of the scheme. However, I am not persuaded that these benefits are sufficient reason to consent commercial development on an unallocated site."

Pentland Park Marine Ltd had said the project would create 172 jobs during the construction phase, 133 new direct jobs and 33 indirect jobs on completion.

A spokesman for the applicants said: "We believed this was a fantastic opportunity to enhance the local amenities with community-focused plans, so we are naturally disappointed in the decision to reject what we feel was an excellent opportunity for the Council."

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter