

Hillend housing plans to get go ahead

Scottish Ministers are set to give the go ahead to new housing at a former petrol station at Hillend after ruling it will make a positive contribution to 'local living'.

Plans by C.M. Roofing and Building, who have been operating from the site on Biggar Road for over a decade, were initially refused by Midlothian Council planners in August 2021.

However that decision was overturned by the council's Local Review Body a few months later despite elected members being told it would have to go to Scottish Ministers for a final decision after Transport Scotland objected.

Concerns had been raised by the agency over road safety with the new houses planned next to the A702.

Now three years after calling it in, Scottish Ministers have written to all parties involved to say they are minded to approve the plans.

The former petrol station site near Hillend had previously been earmarked for a hotel until the pandemic hit and the plans were scrapped.

The land, which lies 70 metres north of the A702 junction with Pentland Road and the A703, has not been used as a petrol station for 20 years but has sold Christmas trees and had a

car wash facility onsite.

In their ruling Scottish Ministers said conditions covering road safety audits and work to be carried out at the site would ensure it could go ahead.

And they said they considered the development would “make a reasonable

contribution to local living” adding “ the site is well placed for bus

services into Edinburgh city ; there are footways on both sides of the road; the majority of Edinburgh city is within a 20–40-minute cycle. A snowsports centre, public house and restaurant and a service station are within a ten-minute walk of the site”.

They also overturned a recommendation from their Reporter that no developer contributions should be paid by the developer saying they would have to agree a sum with the council.

Indicating their intention to approve the plans, Scottish Ministers said: “.On balance, the benefits of the proposed development outweighs its departure from the development plan in this instance and the balance is in favour of granting planning permission subject to conditions and the conclusion of a planning obligation towards education provision.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter