

Fresh bid for housing on former scout camp site

A fresh bid to demolish a former scout hut and replace it with two new family homes has been lodged with Midlothian Council.

The proposals for land at Currie Glen Farm, near Borthwick Castle, would see two three bedroom homes built on the site, which is owned by the applicants, and the current building removed.

A planning application lodged with the council says a previous proposal for the houses was withdrawn "following consideration of the public comments on the application and the misinformation being circulated in the community".

It says the new plans address the issues raised adding: "The house designs are simple and appropriate to the location and an improvement on the building as existing that occupies a large area.

"The houses will be of a modest size internally in order to bring a more affordable family, rural property to the market that doesn't exist in this type of location at present."

Plans to demolish the scout hut attracted 65 objections when they first went before the council last summer.

The community council objected amid concerns they were not compatible.

Moorfoot Community Council said it was aware of considerable

opposition from Borthwick residents to the plans.

Concerns were raised about the proximity of the new homes to a 'long-established scout campsite- on neighbouring land.

Midlothian Councillor Peter Smaill recused himself from his role as an elected member and disclosed he was a partner of Borthwick Scout Campsite LLP, who own the land next to the proposed housing, as he lodged an objection as a private resident.

However two letters of support received by Midlothian planners claimed the campsite itself was not well used and welcomed the houses.

One said: "I am shocked to read the nonsense that has been written about the scouts.

"I counted barely a dozen camps last year and several of those were not overnight stays. Those that were appeared to be from other parts of the country. The local scouts seem to have given up bothering about the place."

In their latest application which is currently available to view on the council's planning portal, the applicants say the revised proposal offers an "acceptable replacement of a current vacant, redundant building on site with an appropriate low-density development of two modest family homes" which it says "makes good use of the land to provide two more affordable homes than one large home".

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter