

# **48 new homes planned for Kirknewton**

**The village of Kirknewton will see another 48 new homes developed, despite concerns over the pressure on local services being caused by the growing population.**

The Bathgate firm of CC Drummond has won permission in principle to develop a five-acre site bounding Roosevelt Road and the railway line running through the village with “bespoke” housing – including bungalows

West Lothian Council’s Development Management Committee heard that the site is part of a larger area that first won permission for development in 2021. However, objectors voiced new concerns about the pressures on existing medical facilities.

It was a point raised by local councillor Conservative group leader Damian Doran-Timson who asked: “We haven’t received NHS data for East Calder medical practice. Is that something the NHS would provide or is that something we would request.

Andrew Cotton said: “We in the development planning and environment team are engaging with NHS Lothian to develop the required data that would be needed to take contributions [towards development]. We are looking to get enough detail on that.”

Councillor Doran-Timson said; “Surely as a council we are fully aware that East Calder Medical Practice the condition of

the building, the size of the building is not fit for purpose and is way oversubscribed with patients.”

Mr Cotton replied: “We don’t yet have sufficient data to specify where there are shortages. At East Calder Medical Practice, we know that there are issues with the existing building we know that there’s issues with the services delivered there but it is a question of quantifying that and working out what the ways of delivering additional capacity and costs would be.”

He added that this could include changing the way services are delivered and, or rental of more property to deliver services.

“Developer contributions could not be used to resolve existing problems. These are for the Scottish Government and NHS Lothian to resolve,” said Mr Cotton.

Robin Matthew, a planning agent for the house builder said: “The approach that will be taken by CC Drummond is that they will design bespoke houses. In accordance with the council’s guidance. The house types will meet the guidance and then any other elements such as acoustic fencing will be taken in a detailed design stage.”

He said the house types will include bungalows and single aspect homes.

“We are confident that with a bespoke housing solution we can address all the constraints on the site, he added.

A report to the DMC outlined constraints facing the builders.

“The site slopes downwards from the rear of the properties at Roosevelt Road towards a flatter area of the site adjacent to the railway line. The steepness of this slope increases to the eastern half of the allocated housing site, out with the current planning application boundary.

“Due to the change in levels, any subsequent detailed planning application will need to take into account level changes to ensure an appropriate layout and design.

“The proximity of the railway line to the immediate north of the application site is a constraint which requires to be addressed. Again, any subsequent detailed application will need to take this into consideration with regards to house type, design and layout.”

The site has long been earmarked for housing development but still attracted 24 objections, some around local access and loss of green space.

A planning paper outlined: “The village benefits from an area of protected open space at Roosevelt Road/Church Way, an equipped play area and large open space at Kirknewton local park.”

By Stuart Sommerville, Local Democracy Reporter