



Gullane Area Community Council
Serving the communities of Gullane, Aberlady,
Dirleton, Drem and surrounding rural areas

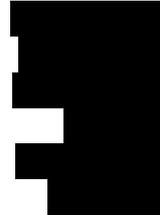


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1 November 2019

From the Chairman

Environment
East Lothian Council
John Muir House
Brewery Park
Haddington
EH41 3HA
Email
environment@eastlothian.gov.uk



Dear Sirs

**Planning Application Number 18/00624/P
Erection of 3 houses, 12 holiday cabins, 2 holiday lodges, store, cinema/function building (class 11)
extension to spa building and associated works - Archerfield Dirleton**

I refer to the above planning application, the community council's letter of objection dated 2 April and your re-advertisement of the application in the East Lothian Courier of 24 October. The community council has the following further comments on it.

Derek Carter of the Dirleton Village Association (the DVA) has provided us with a copy of his email to your Sarah Cheyne and others dated 4 October, relating to the proposed change of access to housing plots 1 and 2 and withdrawing the DVA's objections to the application in so far as relating to the stone wall to the east of that plot. We are strongly in favour of that wall not being breached.

The tree report provided by Alan Motion Tree Consulting Ltd to the applicants dated 12 May has only now come to our attention and, as it was dated after we had submitted our letter of objection, we would like to make the following comments on it and further comments on the extent to which proposals regarding the trees on housing plots 1 and 2 will adversely affect the character of the Dirleton conservation area and the Category B listed East Lodge adjacent to those plots.

You will recall that the Dirleton conservation area character statement provides at paragraph 1.1 that development impinging on either the village greens or the open countryside or woodland at the approaches to the village would adversely affect the conservation area. It also provides, at paragraph 1.8, that trees are an important part of the setting within the village; that the setting to the west is dominated by the plantation woodland within Archerfield (the very woodland in which it is proposed to develop the two houses) and that throughout the village there are mature trees, many of which are protected by a tree preservation order.

We have noted from the tree report that the development of housing plots 1 and 2 would require the felling of nearly 40 mature trees, all of them recorded by the consultant to be in good or fair condition and all located close to the north western corner of the main village green, the Category B listed East Lodge and the western side of the lower green. We suggest that felling them would have

a very damaging effect on these features of the village and would be in direct conflict with the conservation area statement.

Policy CH1 of the Local Development Plan 2018 provides that new development that harms the setting of a listed building will not be permitted. We suggest that it is clear that the proposed tree felling required in connection with the development of these plots would be in direct conflict with that policy, as regards the setting of the East Lodge.

These points are illustrated by the following photograph of the north west corner of the main village green and the East Lodge:-



Photograph 1, taken on 24 October 2019 – north west corner of the village green with the East Lodge in the centre. Most of the trees behind it and the large tree immediately to the left of it will be felled as part of the proposed development. The house proposed for Plot 1 will lie immediately behind the East Lodge, will be about twice its height and will have rendered walls painted white.

As stated above, the conservation area statement provides that development impinging on either the village greens or the open countryside or woodland at the approaches to the village would adversely affect the conservation area. The Archerfield east drive is a key approach to the village from the west. It forms part of the John Muir Way, much frequented as a long distance walking route, which at this point runs through the open countryside between the Archerfield walled garden and the village. This is illustrated by the following photograph:-



Photograph 2, taken on 24 October 2019, looking east towards Dirleton village. The John Muir Way is the estate roadway seen running diagonally across the foreground. The B listed East Lodge nestles in the trees, just left of centre, its roof just visible.

In terms of the tree report most of the trees in the centre of this photograph will be felled if the development proceeds, revealing the proposed stark new two storey building to be erected on plot 1 which, as shown on the elevation drawing No 18/00624/P, will have rendered walls painted white. It will tower above the East Lodge, being about twice its height, and will dominate distant and close-up views of the village from the west. In contrast, Denis Duncan House, part of which can just be seen towards the left of the photograph, is lower and nestles behind its tree screen. There are at present no other buildings breaching the continuous belt of trees screening the western fringe of the village and we suggest that to allow such a breach in this instance would create a dangerous and unfortunate precedent.

In view of these additional comments relating to the application we again ask you to refuse it.

Yours faithfully

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Chairman
Gullane Area Community Council