

Residential development at Land East of Auchendinny

Planning reference: [20/00089/DPP](#)

Spokes objects to this planning application because it does not provide an active travel route between Auchendinny and Roslin, as required by Midlothian Council's Active Travel Strategy, Green Network Supplementary Guidance and Local Development Plan.

This development presents an excellent opportunity to create a high quality active travel route between Auchendinny and Roslin, yet the proposed layout does not achieve this. There are already excellent existing active travel routes between Roslin and Gilmerton, and between Penicuik and Auchendinny. It is therefore especially important to take this opportunity to create an active travel route between Auchendinny and Roslin as it will fill in the missing link between these two existing routes. Cycling between Roslin to Auchendinny currently means going along the B7026 which has several problems which make it unsuitable for many cyclists (very steep at the south end, a nasty junction at the north end, and a high speed limit in between). There are also no pavements on the back road between Roslin and Auchendinny. It is also worth noting that the increased traffic levels which would undoubtedly arise on the B7026 from the proposed development would only exacerbate these issues.

The need for an Auchendinny-Roslin link is addressed in [Midlothian Council's Active Travel Strategy](#) and in its [Green Network Supplementary Guidance](#), both of which show active travel routes connecting Roslin to National Cycle Network route 196 via Auchendinny. The Active Travel Strategy says that this route will be built via "the new development site" - *i.e.*, the site in the present planning application.

[Scottish Planning Policy](#) (paragraph 273) says that new developments should prioritise active travel over car usage. This is not being adhered to in the proposed development.

Finally, we believe the proposed layout would contravene policies DEV 5 and DEV 6 of the [Midlothian Local Development Plan](#), which state that development proposals should facilitate accessibility, integrate existing active travel routes, create new active travel links between key destinations and provide cycle parking. The proposed layout fails to meet these criteria.

The plans should therefore be amended as follows:

- Direct access to NCN 196 must be possible for cyclists and pedestrians at the two points indicated in the Active Travel Strategy. We realise that these points are outwith the site boundary, but developer contributions to pay for the connections should be made a condition of planning permission. These connections should be built before the houses are occupied, to allow sustainable travel patterns to be established early.
- Pedestrian and cyclist access to the back road past the Oatslie landfill site should come out directly opposite the old railway line through the landfill site. This will facilitate a future path to Roslin following the old railway (as shown in the Active Travel Strategy).
- The other shared use paths shown in the Active Travel Strategy and Green Network Supplementary Guidance (to the southern end of The Brae, to the north-east corner of the site and to Firth Crescent) should be added to the plans.
- Developer contributions should also be made towards continuing the active travel route towards Roslin (through the Oatslie site), and towards creating a shared use path from the north of the site to the proposed cycleway along the A701.

- The main north-south cycle path through the site is severed by the grass verge on the south side of the long west-east street through the site. This should be changed to allow pedestrians and cyclists to easily continue along the path in a direct manner. A toucan crossing should also be included at this point.
- Shared use paths should have clear priority where they cross side streets. This includes at the junction where the main vehicular access to the site meets The Brae.
- The road adoption layouts show the cycle paths as being 3m wide. [*Cycling by Design*](#) gives 3m as the “desirable minimum” width for a shared use path. In a new development such as this, where space constraints are not an issue, shared use paths should be at least 4m wide, in order to minimise conflict between users.
- Cycle parking should be provided. We would expect, at minimum, dedicated cycle stores to be built near any flats included in the development.
- There are discrepancies between the documents for the footpath layout in the eastern corner of the site (immediately north west of Lee Lodge). The Overall Site Layout and the Greenways and Links plans show a simple, direct footpath connection, but the Road Adoption Layout shows a different layout, with steps and an S-bend. Since the site is flat at this point, we don’t see a need for stepped access, and so presume the simpler layout is correct, but this needs to be confirmed.

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