

Planning Application: Report of Handling



Renfrewshire
Council

Reference No. 20/0516/PP

KEY INFORMATION

Ward: (8) Johnstone
South and Elderslie

Applicant:
Elderslie Golf Club and
Dickie & Moore Homes

Registered:
07 September 2020

Report by Head of Economy & Development

PROSPECTIVE PROPOSAL: Erection of residential development comprising 17 dwellinghouses and 8 flats with associated infrastructure, parking and landscaping; and erection of relocated greenkeeping facility with associated storage

LOCATION: Land East of Newton Cottage at Elderslie Golf Club, Newton Avenue, Elderslie, Johnstone

APPLICATION FOR: Full Planning Permission



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RECOMMENDATION

Grant subject to
conditions

Alasdair Morrison
Head of Economy &
Development

IDENTIFIED KEY ISSUES

- The residential development site is identified as a Housing Land Supply Site under Policy P2 of the Adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021), while the site of the proposed greenkeeping facility is identified under Policy ENV 1 as green belt.
- Representations have been received from 229 parties, of whom 201 have written in support of the proposals and 28 have submitted objections.
- There are no objections from any consultees.
- The proposals are compliant with the relevant provisions of the Adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021), subject to planning conditions including mitigatory measures to control the loss of trees and the provision of a new path link to ensure the site is accessible for all.

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
 REPORT OF HANDLING FOR APPLICATION 20/0516/PP

SITE ADDRESS	Land East of Newton Cottage at Elderslie Golf Club, Newton Avenue, Elderslie, Johnstone
PROPOSAL	Erection of residential development comprising 17 dwellinghouses and 8 flats with associated infrastructure, parking and landscaping; and erection of relocated greenkeeping facility with associated storage
RECOMMENDATION	Grant subject to conditions

PROPOSALS	<p>This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a residential development comprising 17 dwellinghouses and eight flats, with associated infrastructure, parking and landscaping at Elderslie Golf Course, Newton Avenue, Elderslie. Additionally, the application seeks consent for a new relocated greenkeeping facility with associated storage.</p> <p>The residential element would be sited at the southern end of Newton Avenue, which currently holds the golf club green keeper's yard and Newton Cottage. The access to the yard and cottage would be used to enter the site and Newton Avenue would be extended. Other than the greenkeeping yard and associated buildings, the area of the proposed residential development is largely wooded. The golf course itself lies beyond the woodland to the east, south and west. A track runs south and then west from the greenkeeping facility before branching in two and accessing the golf course at separate locations.</p> <p>The proposed units would be arranged around a new road which would run perpendicular to the existing road, with a smaller additional road branching off this to the south-east. The 17 houses would comprise a mixture of five house types providing three, four and five bedrooms. They would all be two-storey and would comprise 11 detached properties and 6 semi-detached properties. Two blocks of two storey flats would be formed accommodating four flats in each block. The buildings would all feature pitched roofs with grey concrete roof tiles, while the walls would be predominantly finished in different tones of red and brown facing brick, with sections also featuring a smooth white render finish.</p> <p>The development would provide parking for 57 vehicles. This would be provided on the basis of two for each unit, including the flats, with 7 visitor parking bays provided. The house plots would also accommodate single garages. A sustainable drainage scheme is also proposed for collecting surface water which includes a detention basin to the north-east of the units.</p> <p>The residential proposals would require the relocation of the existing greenkeeping facility and it is proposed that the new greenkeeping accommodation would be sited on an area of golf course land approximately 180 metres north of the proposed housing. The new facility would lie to the east of Newton Avenue and south of properties on Main Road, with access taken from Newton Drive.</p>
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	<p>The proposed greenkeeping building would be of a rectangular footprint measuring some 29.67 metres by 12.02 metres and would feature a dual-pitched roof which would reach a maximum height of approximately 7.3 metres. The principal elevation of the building would face the access road to the west. The building would be finished in green plastisol sheeting to its walls, with grey sheeting to its roof. Internally the building would accommodate a workshop and a small office, staffroom and sanitary facilities. Four external storage bays would be sited adjacent to the building, while parking would be provided for three cars, with further hard surfacing situated to the front.</p> <p>To ensure the residential development is accessible for all, the applicants have added an illuminated path link to the housing site on golf course land to the east of Newton Avenue.</p> <p>A supporting statement advises that the purpose of the development is to generate funds for the golf club. The statement outlines that there is a current trend of falling membership in golf in Scotland, resulting in reductions in income and the recent closure of some clubs. The statement further advises that the existing green keeping facility requires essential renewal, while works are also required to the club house and to the course itself. The statement adds that the development would help secure the financial future of the golf club, noting that its potential loss would have a severe effect on the community and fabric of Elderslie.</p>
SITE HISTORY	<p>Application No: 05/0106/PP Description: Siting of temporary accommodation to provide toilets, changing facilities, kitchen and office for ground staff. Decision: Granted subject to conditions.</p>
CONSULTATIONS	<p>Children Services – No objection</p> <p>Communities & Housing Services (Environmental Protection Team) – No objection subject to conditions</p> <p>Environment & Infrastructure Services (Roads) – No objection subject to conditions</p> <p>Glasgow Airport Safeguarding - No objection subject to a condition</p> <p>National Air Traffic Services (NATS) – No objection</p> <p>Scottish Water - No objection</p> <p>Scottish Woodland Trust – No comments received</p> <p>SportScotland – No objection</p> <p>West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS) – No objection subject to a condition</p>

<p>REPRESENTATIONS</p>	<p>Representations have been received from 229 separate parties, 201 of whom have written in support of the proposals and 28 who have submitted objections.</p> <p>The letters of support comment that the proposals would address a shortage of housing in the area and help to secure the finances of the golf club, which is important to the community and local economy of the area. It is further commented that the golf club finances are at risk, reflecting a downward trend in golf club finances throughout the country. It is commented that the development would generate welcome funds to secure necessary upgrades to the clubhouse, the required renewal of the greenkeeping accommodation and other improvements to the course.</p> <p>It is further stated that the proposals would improve infrastructure and access at Newton Avenue, including to Newton Cottage, and that the new houses would provide economic opportunity for local business, potential additional members to the golf club and Council tax revenue. Letters of support also state that the development proposals are proportionate for their location.</p> <p>In terms of the objections received, the substance of these may be summarised as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The loss of green belt land, with objection also raised to the allocation of the site for housing. It is commented that there is no shortfall in the effective housing land supply; that there are ample alternative brownfield sites which should be prioritised; and that the loss of green belt to housing sets a precedent for further future residential development, potentially of the whole golf course. 2. Loss of long-established, mature, native woodland to the detriment of amenity and contrary to the climate emergency agenda. It is also commented that the quality of the woodland is high and not recognised by the applicants. 3. Adverse impacts on access to greenspace and associated detriment to physical and mental wellbeing. 4. Adverse impacts on biodiversity and wildlife, including loss of habitat and harm to protected species, bird species, moth species and deer. 5. The trees subject to felling have previously been planted using public money from Scottish Forestry's woodland grant scheme initiative. 6. The tree surveys are out of date and show the position of the proposals differently to the application drawings.
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7. Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam are identified in the tree and ecology reports as being present. It is required that these are treated and eradicated prior to any development.
8. Whether the proposals have been subject to an Environment Impact Assessment.
9. The site description is inaccurate in referring to "Land to East of Newton Cottage".
10. Traffic impact, including concerns regarding the safety of pedestrians, the build-up of further traffic at the junction of Newton Avenue with Main Road, the need for the installation of traffic signals and road safety concerns in relation to the proposed greenkeeping facility.
11. Impacts on air quality.
12. The access into the residential development being overly steep and hazardous, particularly during icy conditions.
13. The density of the proposed residential units being excessive and the proposed flats being incompatible with the character of the area.
14. The proposed units being visually unappealing, out of character and incongruous to the character of other houses in the area.
15. The impact of the proposed units on the privacy and amenity of existing houses in the area.
16. Concerns regarding flooding and drainage issues, including concerns that ground conditions are insufficient to support drainage from the proposals and that the proposals could increase risk to other nearby properties. Concerns are also raised that no application has been made to Scottish Water to connect to their apparatus.
17. Concerns regarding the proposed detention basin with respect to safety, overflows and vermin.
18. Concerns regarding noise and disturbance resulting from the proposed relocated greenkeeping facility. It is also in this regard contended that the greenkeeping facility constitutes a "change of use" to light industrial use.
19. Concern that the greenkeeping facility and associated equipment and materials will be untidy and not adequately maintained.

	<p>20. Lack of detail regarding the greenkeeping facility including its finishing materials, site levels, screening, lighting and matters relating to its operation, equipment and issues of access around the facility and to and from the golf course</p> <p>21. Concerns regarding odours from the greenkeeping facility.</p> <p>22. The greenkeeping facility being out of proportion to neighbouring bungalows.</p> <p>23. Clarification sought regarding the purpose and position of a tank relating to the greenkeeping facility.</p> <p>24. Concern that no site investigation report has been submitted.</p> <p>25. The economic case put forward by the Golf Club that the proposals are necessary to secure the financial future of the club are questioned in view of current membership waiting lists and it is contended that short term economic gain is being prioritised before long term sustainability. It is also pointed out that support for the proposals are from golf club members who do not generally live in the vicinity.</p> <p>26. Noise, disruption and safety issues during construction.</p> <p>27. The path construction and lighting resulting in loss of greenspace and wildlife habitat.</p> <p>28. The potential for the path to attract anti-social and criminal behaviour, including burglaries, and a reopening of access to motorcycles and other unauthorised vehicles on the course.</p> <p>29. Concerns regarding the impact of the path and lighting on the amenity of nearby houses.</p> <p>30. Concerns regarding the maintenance of the path.</p> <p>31. Concerns regarding how the access from Newton Drive to the path would be designed and managed, including the footways on Newton Drive and the potential impact of any new streetlighting on Newton Drive.</p> <p>32. Concerns regarding users of the path being struck by golf balls and the golf club not accepting liability for injuries.</p> <p>33. The carbon footprint impact of constructing and servicing the path.</p>
<p>DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES</p>	<p><u>Adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021)</u></p> <p>Policy P1 – Renfrewshire’s Places Policy P2 – Additional Housing Sites Policy P3 – Housing Mix and Affordable Housing Policy P6 – Open Space Policy ENV 1 – Green Belt</p>

	<p>Policy ENV 2 – Natural Heritage Policy I1 – Connecting Places Policy I3 – Flooding and Drainage Policy I7 – Zero and Low Carbon Buildings</p> <p><u>Draft Proposed New Development Supplementary Guidance (2019)</u></p> <p>Delivering the Places Strategy: Creating Places; Green Network and Infrastructure; and Open Space. Delivering the Infrastructure Strategy: Connecting Places; Provision for Waste Recycling in New Developments; Flooding and Drainage; and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments. Delivering the Environment Strategy: Acceptable Forms of Development in the Green Belt; Green Belt Development Criteria; Natural Heritage; Trees, Woodland and Forestry; Biodiversity; Noise; and Contaminated Land.</p> <p><u>Material considerations</u> Renfrewshire's Places Residential Design Guide March 2015</p>
<p>PLANNING ASSESSMENT</p>	<p>Residential Development</p> <p>The application is identified in the Local Development Plan (2021) as a housing land supply site which is suitable for delivering up to 25 units where Policy P2 applies.</p> <p>As such, the proposed residential development of 25 units accords in principle with Policy P1 and Policy P2 of the adopted Local Development Plan in contributing towards the range and choice of sites necessary to support Renfrewshire’s housing need and demand. In order to consider the detail of the proposed residential development, Policy P1 requires that the proposals be assessed against the criteria set out in the draft New Development Supplementary Guidance and the associated Renfrewshire’s Places Residential Design Guide. The main issues of consideration in this regard are assessed as follows:</p> <p>Context and Character</p> <p>The residential development would be contained within an area to the south of the existing housing at Newton Avenue, Newton Drive and Roundhill Drive and follows a logical extension to the village envelope, with Newton Cottage retained to the south and the wider area contained by the woodland edge and the golf course to the west, south and east. The south-east portion of the development is currently occupied by the existing greenkeeping facilities and the built form is therefore already established within this portion of the site.</p> <p>The existing streets to the north are characterised by one and two-storey detached and semi-detached houses of traditional character within a leafy setting, with good levels of tree cover, hedging and other planting.</p>

Tree cover would be retained around the edges of the proposed development, particularly towards the south and east, with street tree planting and additional proposed planting around and beyond the perimeters of the development ensuring that this context would be maintained. The development would be contained well away from any fairways and there would appear little prospect for further incremental development in the future given the containment of the site in relation to the surrounding woodland and golf course layout.

The development also provides an appropriate housing mix in accordance with Policy P3 of the Local Development Plan, with eight flats proposed containing two bedrooms each and 17 houses comprising five different house types containing three, four or five bedrooms.

Access and Connectivity

Policy I1 of the adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021) states that development proposals require to ensure appropriate provision and accessibility. Proposals which give priority to sustainable modes of transport and have no significant impact on the safe and efficient operation of the local or trunk road network will be supported.

In this case, the Council's Environment and Infrastructure Service (Roads) initially objected to the residential development due to the steepness of the access from Newton Avenue. While the applicants have committed to alterations to widen and upgrade the access at the top of Newton Avenue to an adoptable standard, with improvements undertaken to facilitate safe vehicular access and to aid pedestrians, the gradient of a section of the footway would still be above that acceptable to support all modes of sustainable transport, particularly during adverse weather, such as wheelchairs and prams. As a result, the development would not comply with the principles of the National Transport Strategy for Scotland or the emerging National Planning Framework (NPF4) which promote a hierarchy of transport modes in which walking and wheeling are to be given greatest priority and private car use lowest priority after cycling, public transport and taxis/shared transport.

Therefore, to make the development accessible for all, the applicants have added the proposal for a path link on golf course land to the east of houses on Newton Avenue. The path would provide a route at a consistently shallow 5% gradient running from the eastern end of Newton Drive to the north east corner of the residential development. The development now meets Environment and Infrastructure Service (Roads) requirements in terms of accessibility. Further consideration of the path is undertaken later in this assessment.

Elsewhere, suitable access would be retained into the woodland to the west and south of the development, connecting with other paths within the golf course grounds. This would include a new path link from the west of the development.

These links, together with the proposed path link from Newton Drive, result in an acceptable level of permeability in providing connections to other areas of greenspace and additional path networks. Newton Avenue itself is well-connected to local services and amenities, with the National Cycle Network also accessible from Main Road. Wallace Primary School is approximately 1.4 kilometres away following the existing footways, with a shorter route also possible via informal paths through the golf course.

A transport statement has been submitted which considers the impact of additional traffic from the development on the existing road network. This provides data on the likely number of road journeys generated by the development at peak times. The statement concludes that while vehicles do often require to wait some to turn out of the junction, even if the proposed development should generate twice as much traffic as estimated, the junction would not be operating at full capacity and signalisation would not be required. However, the assessment does consider that the kerbs at the junction should be built out and the road markings moved some 1.41 metres forward to improve visibility at the junction. The Environment and Infrastructure Service (Roads) have raised no adverse comments regarding these findings, subject to a condition to ensure the improvements to the junction are undertaken as outlined..

Layout and Built Form

The development layout would contain active frontages onto the roads, with the open space also well overlooked. A narrow, wooded buffer ranging between 4.3 and 7.6 metres wide would be retained between the proposed plots and the nearest existing properties on Newton Avenue to the north and the impact on the general outlook of the streetscene on Newton Avenue is not considered to be adverse. Grass verges and a small area of open space within the centre of the site would also contribute to the aesthetic character of the development.

The mass of the buildings, in all being two-storey would be in keeping with a typical edge of settlement residential development and is considered acceptable for the area, which supports both one and two storey housing. Whilst the new units would be elevated in relation to the existing houses to the north, their rear windows would be an acceptable distance of more than 13 metres from the nearest gardens and more than 22 metres from the nearest neighbouring windows facing south.

These aspects are sufficient to ensure no unacceptable loss of privacy, outlook or natural light afforded to the existing houses. The layout is also sufficiently distanced and arranged in relation to the one and a half storey Newton Cottage to preserve the privacy and amenity of its inhabitants and to appear acceptably in proportion.

The eight flats would essentially constitute “four in a block” properties and the mass of these buildings would not appear significantly out of context.

The height of the blocks, at approximately 9.7 metres, would not be significantly higher than the 9.3 metres height of the highest of the five other house types proposed. Given the small number of flats proposed, it is not considered that these would be incongruous with the wider area and would add to the range of accommodation offered by the development, as promoted by Policy P3 of the Local Development Plan.

The plots of the proposed units are themselves relatively modest, but provide sufficiently sized rear gardens for amenity, whilst the layout also ensures appropriate levels of privacy between properties. The front curtilages of the properties would be open, with grass gardens, verges and different surfacing materials contributing to the active street frontage.

Whilst the plot sizes are smaller than many other plots on Newton Avenue and adjacent streets, they are not dissimilar to other more recent developments, including the housing at the west end of Newton Drive. The density of the development is not in this respect excessive, with the number of units proposed according with the number deemed appropriate in the adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021).

Environment and Community

Policy ENV 2 of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan states that development proposals should enhance access to Renfrewshire's natural environment and minimise any adverse impacts on habitats, species, network connectivity or landscape character.

In this case the proposals would entail the removal of a an area of woodland including trees at varying stages of maturity. It should be noted that the trees affected by the proposed development are not subject to a tree protection order (TPO).

Where woodland is removed in association with development, the draft New Development Supplementary Guidance states that developers will be expected to provide compensatory planting, in line with the Scottish Government's control of woodland policy. It is further observed from a tree survey submitted by the applicants that young and semi-mature trees within the western part of the site were planted with grant funding provided by the Forestry Commission (now Scottish Forestry) through their Woodland Grant Scheme. Non-compliance with any terms of this grant would be a matter for Scottish Forestry.

Representees have also noted that the tree survey was undertaken in 2017. However, it is considered that this, in conjunction with various site visits has allowed the development's impact on trees to be properly assessed. In this regard, the woodland is noted to accommodate trees of varying quality, including some good quality specimens, many of which are native broadleaf species. Notwithstanding the value of individual trees, the woodland also contributes a very pleasant green space which is accessible to nearby residents.

As such, the proposals do not fully accord with **Policy ENV 2**; however, it is considered that the removal of the trees to accommodate the development would on balance be acceptable subject to appropriate compensatory planting being undertaken. This takes into account trees being retained around the edges of the site and the area of tree felling constituting a small portion of the overall extent of woodland cover within the wider golf club grounds.

In terms of compensatory planting, the applicants propose to plant trees within the proposed development, including street trees, and to plant additional woodland around the edges of the site and outwith the site boundary within golf course land. This will help mitigate the tree loss, while the retained tree cover, particularly to the south and east, will protect the landscape setting by limiting views of the development. The new planting and existing tree cover round the site edges will continue to offer corridors for wildlife, along with the further tree and woodland cover throughout the golf course.

The applicants have submitted an arboricultural method statement which outlines protective measures for the retained trees during development and offers an indicative schedule for compensatory planting. To maximise the benefit of the retained and new areas of woodland, it is considered appropriate to condition the submission and approval of a woodland management plan to preserve and enhance the retained and new woodland areas and also to condition further compensatory planting within the wider golf course.

An ecological appraisal has been submitted, which outlines the findings of surveys undertaken on site. This observes the presence of a shed adjacent to the main existing greenkeeping buildings which offers “moderate” potential for roosting bats. The report therefore advises that two “activity surveys” should be undertaken prior to works on this building, or any heavy engineering within 30 metres of the building. As two of the houses and one of the flat blocks would be within 30 metres of this building, it is appropriate to condition these further surveys. The woodland is also found to offer potential as a commuter corridor for foraging bats but any roosting is considered to be limited to summer months, with the potential for hibernating bats rated as ‘negligible’. Signs of grey squirrel and deer are also observed but are not protected species, while a range of bird species have also been observed.

It is appropriate in accordance with common practice that any treeworks should only be undertaken outwith the bird nesting season. As noted, the retention of tree cover around the site edges and elsewhere within the golf course, together with compensatory planting are considered appropriate in mitigating these impacts. The ecological appraisal also recommends species appropriate for understorey planting to enhance the biodiversity appeal of these areas. This could be included within a woodland management plan as referenced above.

Glasgow Airport Safeguarding have additionally requested that should consent be granted, a standard condition requiring the submission and approval of a soft landscaping strategy should be applied. The purpose of this would be to ensure no adverse impacts in terms of certain bird species which could in turn potentially affect passing aircraft. A condition on this basis is therefore appropriate.

In terms of flooding and drainage, the applicants have submitted a drainage assessment. This outlines in detail a proposal to employ a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) in order to collect and treat surface water from the development, with the aid of a detention basin, and to direct flows in a controlled matter towards the Lexwell Burn to the east. The document proposes that foul water would be directed to the existing combined sewer on Newton Avenue. Scottish Water have confirmed no objection to the proposals, but it should nevertheless be noted that permission to connect to their apparatus is a separate process which the applicants would still have to pursue following any granting of planning permission. A flood risk assessment has also been submitted which concludes that the housing development would not be at risk of flooding given its elevated position.

In view of the above, the residential proposals are considered to comply with **Policy I3** of the adopted local development plan and the associated supplementary guidance.

Buildings and Design

The proposed dwellings are of an appropriate contemporary design which is considered to be keeping with the character of the built environment of the wider area. The exact specifications of proposed finishings can be the subject of a suitable planning condition in the event that planning permission is granted.

Policy I7 requires that new housing developments should demonstrate a commitment to technology which produces low or no amounts of carbon dioxide emissions, to reduce the predicted emissions by at least 15% below 2007 building standards. In response to this, the applicants have submitted a Low Carbon Development Statement which contains a range of measures they would intend to pursue in order to comply with Policy I7 and with relevant building regulations. These include thermally modelled construction details, Mechanical Ventilation Heat Recovery systems, air-tightness testing, installation of Air Source Heat Pumps and space heating controls within underfloor heating. These measures are considered appropriate in meeting the requirements of Policy I7.

Greenkeeping Facility

The site of the proposed greenkeeping facility is designated both as green belt and as open space in the adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021), where Policy ENV 1 and Policy P6 apply respectively.

Policy ENV 1 seeks to maintain the identity of settlements, protect and enhance the landscape setting of an area and protect and promote access opportunities for open space. Proposals within the green belt will only be considered acceptable where they are compatible with the draft New Development Supplementary Guidance.

The draft New Development Supplementary Guidance lists the types of development which are acceptable forms of development in the green belt. This includes recreational and commercial uses compatible with an agricultural or natural environment setting. As the greenkeeping facility relates to the operation of an established golf course, the principle of this being located within green belt is acceptable, subject to assessment against the Green Belt Development Criteria. The main issues of consideration in this regard are assessed as follows:

Nature Conservation, Trees and Landscape Setting

The area is not subject to any formal environmental designations. The development would be sited on an area of low-lying grassland featuring a range of mostly young and semi-mature trees, with additional mature trees providing a backdrop to the north and west. A tree survey submitted with the application outlines that trees were planted within this area under the same woodland grant scheme as some of the trees to be removed from the residential site. Again, as with the residential site, non-compliance with the terms of any grant would be a matter for Scottish Forestry.

The majority of trees would be retained but a number of young and semi-mature trees would require to be removed in order to accommodate the footprint of the greenkeeping building, the storage area, access and hard surfacing. Good tree cover would be retained between the development and the nearest houses to the north and west, as well as to the east. This, together with the muted dark green and dark grey colours of the proposed building, would enable it to blend in with its landscape setting. Notwithstanding the tree loss, additional compensatory planting can be conditioned as outlined above with respect to the proposed residential development.

The ecological survey for the area notes no signs of any protected species. Whilst the development would cut into this area of natural environment, the wider areas of wild grass and tree cover largely surrounding the proposed development would be retained and it is not considered that the overall impact on nature conservation would be significantly adverse.

Siting and Design

The greenkeeping building would be of a conventional design, similar to the existing building to the south of Newton Avenue. It would have a rectangular footprint and feature a dual-pitched roof and finishing materials appropriate for its purpose, comprising green and grey plastisol sheeting.

The building would be set well back from the access from Newton Drive and would be approximately 25 metres from the gardens of the nearest houses at Main Road to the north and 70 metres from the nearest gardens on Newton Avenue to the west. The storage bays would be arranged perpendicular to the greenkeeping building and would be approximately 25 metres and 40 metres from the nearest gardens to the north and west respectively. Given these distances, the proposals are not considered to significantly affect the amenity of the nearby housing in terms of outlook, privacy or loss of light. Tree cover would also help to screen the building. The height of the building, at approximately 7.3 metres, would not appear out of proportion with the nearest houses, including bungalows at Main Road to the north.

Noise and Disturbance

A Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted and considered acceptable by the Communities and Housing Service (Environmental Protection Team) following clarification on some minor details.

As part of this process, the greenkeepers have provided details of the operations that would take place at the facility and in its vicinity. They state that the hours of operation would typically be 06:00 to 14:00 hours Monday to Friday and 05:30 to 13:30 Saturdays and Sundays in the summer and 07:00 to 15:00 hours seven days a week in the winter.

Vehicles used would include a number of grass-cutting machines, while a tractor and trailer and a 4x4 vehicle would also be used for loading, unloading and transporting equipment. A digger would be used one day a week for a period of up to 20 minutes to load the trailer with sand and gravel. The greenkeepers further advise that at the beginning of the day, vehicles would be started within the building and run at a low level, prior to exiting directly on to the golf course to the south. They also state that the vehicles do not require reverse alarms and that intense periods of activity at the premises are limited, with most work being undertaken out on the course and preparation works undertaken at the end of a typical day to avoid significant prolonged early morning activity at the facility prior to going out on to the course. Two close boarded fences are also proposed to reduce noise levels to the north and west.

Whilst the Communities & Housing Service (Environmental Protection Team) has accepted the findings of the noise impact assessment and therefore has no objections, the acoustic consultant employed by the applicants has raised the possibility of a “noise management plan” which could be an active document which all greenkeeping staff are trained to follow. This would include measures of best practice in terms of matters such as idling vehicles and trailers being loaded within screened areas. To provide greater assurance that noise in relation to the facility would be appropriately managed, it is considered prudent to apply a condition requiring the approval and implementation of a management plan of this nature.

Odours

Significant odours are not anticipated in terms of the activities that would operate from the facility, while it is further noted that the Communities & Housing Service (Environmental Protection Team) have raised no adverse comments in terms of odours.

Traffic and Access Infrastructure

Access to the facility can easily be taken from Newton Drive, with space provided for turning vehicles to the front of the facility. The Council's Environment and Infrastructure Service (Roads) have raised no adverse comments in relation to this arrangement. Non-vehicular access to the surrounding woodland would be retained, while golf course vehicles would be able to directly access the golf course to the south of the facility.

Flooding and Drainage

Anecdotal evidence submitted by representees suggests that the area of the proposed greenkeeping facility is prone to localised flooding. A flood risk assessment submitted on behalf of the applicants also notes the potential for pluvial flooding in the area, leading to ponding at the north end of the site. The assessment recommends that the building should be positioned at least 16.4 metres AOD (above ordnance datum) to not be at risk in this regard. The document also recommends post development overland flows as part of the final development solution, with land drainage installed along the north boundary to prevent additional ponding. It is considered that these details could be subject to a planning condition.

The submitted drainage assessment proposes that the access road serving the greenkeeping facility should be made of permeable materials and that surface water from the building roof be collected and directed to a soakaway to limit additional overland flows.

It is considered in this respect that the final details of the above can be appropriately addressed by condition. Further to this, it is observed that the greenkeeping facility is of a footprint that on its own would not typically require the submission of a Drainage Impact Assessment. This presupposes that the impacts of the facility should not be significantly adverse, but it is in any case appropriate to ensure that the final technical details are suitably effective.

Open space

Policy P6 of the Local Development Plan safeguards designated areas of open space from development. As the designated open space area in this case is a golf course and the proposed greenkeeping facility would only intrude on a small portion of the wider open space, whilst also relating to its continued function as a golf course, the development is considered acceptable in terms of Policy P6.

Footpath

The proposed footpath is considered necessary by the Environment and Infrastructure Service (Roads) in order to provide sustainable access for all people. As with the greenkeeping facility site, this area is designated in the adopted Local Development Plan as both green belt and open space under Policy ENV 1 and Policy P6 respectively.

The draft New Development Supplementary Guidance categorises new active travel routes as acceptable green belt development and the path is therefore compliant in principle with Policy ENV 1. In terms of the Green Belt Development Criteria, the path would not impact significantly on existing natural heritage or wildlife habitats.

In terms of landscape setting, the most notable visual impact would be the proposed lighting. Initial discussions have taken place with the developers and the Council's Environment and Infrastructure Service (Roads) and it is considered that the exact specifications of the lighting can be secured by condition. It is considered that the lighting can be designed to minimise the visual intrusion on the landscape and amenity of the residents in terms of potential glare, whilst also ensuring the path and adjacent areas of land are suitably illuminated in the interests of safety.

It is noted that a desire line cuts through this area and dogwalkers have been seen using this during site visits. The new path would therefore formalise a route through this area. The path itself would be set back from the rear boundaries of the properties on Newton Avenue, a minimum of 5.5 metres and would maintain a consistent low gradient of 5%.

The houses on the east side of Newton Avenue are noted to have gardens with above average length and as such the path would not raise unacceptable passive overlooking of any windows; however, it would still be close enough to the properties to be overlooked from first floor windows. This should enable users of the path to feel safe, whilst also acting as a deterrent to potential anti-social or criminal behaviour.

As an active travel route running through the open space, the proposed path supports Policy P6 by providing enhanced access to an area of green space, as well as providing a sustainable option to ensure the proposed residential development is accessible for all, as required by national guidance and Policy I1 of the adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021).

Representations

In response to the objections not addressed in the above assessment, the following comments are made:

(6) As noted in the assessment, the tree surveys are considered to provide sufficient information on the quality of the trees.

As the surveys constitute supporting documents rather than drawings, the differing locations of the buildings shown in the surveys is not relevant to the formal assessment.

(7) The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Act (as amended) confers responsibility on landowners to address invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsalm spreading in the wild. Whilst this is not subject to planning control, the golf course are aware of their duties in this regard.

(8) The proposals do not come under the categories of development listed under either Schedules 1 or 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. As such, an Environmental Impact Assessment was not required in this case.

(9) The site locations are clearly mapped in the neighbour notification letter issued to neighbours and in the application drawings, when viewed. It is also noted that the applicants held a pre-application event to publicise the proposals. As such, there is no ambiguity regarding the land to which the application relates.

(17) The safety and operation of the proposed detention basin would be the responsibility of the developer in accordance with relevant technical guidance.

(18) The greenkeeping facility constitutes an ancillary use which supports the overall functioning of the golf course, but the planning assessment has in any case considered the facility in the context of its operations and activities.

(19) The greenkeeping facility is well-contained and suitably distanced from the nearest houses that any issues of untidiness or maintenance would not significantly affect the amenity of neighbouring land uses.

(23) The applicants have clarified that the proposed tank would be a water tank which would be positioned immediately to the south of the greenkeeping facility. This is depicted on the application drawings.

(24) The Communities and Housing (Environmental Protection Team) have advised that significant contamination is unlikely but have recommended conditions requiring site investigation of the proposed housing site and, if necessary, mitigation measures to be undertaken and verified. Appropriate conditions can be attached to control these matters.

(25) Whilst it would appear likely that the parties who have written in favour of the proposals will be golf club members, there is no restriction on who may comment on an application. In terms of the economic case put forward by the applicant, it is noted that some of the representees objecting to the development question this, noting that there is a current waiting list for membership.

It is not within the scope of the planning assessment to determine or speculate on the extent to which the development is, or is not, required for financial means. The provisions of the Local Development Plan must take primacy in consideration of the development. Notwithstanding the financial position of the golf club, it is acknowledged that the club is essential to the local community and any potential loss of the club would have significant implications for the surrounding area.

(26) Issues of noise, disruption and safety during construction are not material planning considerations.

(28) The potential for the path attracting anti-social or criminal elements is discussed in the assessment. In terms of the path making it possible for motorcycle and other such vehicles to access the course, this would be a matter for the golf club to address.

(30) The future maintenance of the path can be subject to a condition.

(31) As noted, the final design of the route and lighting can be subject to a condition. Newton Drive itself is adopted and the addition of any lighting can be sensitively designed in consultation with the Environment and Infrastructure Service (Roads).

(32) The path would provide a formal route in place of an existing established desire line. Liability is not a planning matter.

(33) This is considered to be outweighed by the longer-term sustainability of the path providing non-motorised access to the development for all.

Conclusion

It is considered that the residential proposals would deliver a high-quality development within an attractive setting which would support housing demand in the area. The new greenkeeping facility would be sensitively sited, while the proposed path link would support the sustainability of the residential development by ensuring it is suitably accessible for all people.

The proposal's impacts have been fully considered in the above assessment, particularly in terms of the loss of woodland and green space. The site is designated as part of the housing land supply within the adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021) and it has been identified as suitable for the delivery of 25 units, together with appropriate mitigation for the tree loss to include compensatory planting; protection of retained trees during development; and longer-term management measures through a woodland management plan, it is not considered that these impacts should deter from the application receiving a favourable recommendation.

In view of the foregoing, it is therefore recommended that this application should be granted subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION	Grant Subject to Conditions

Reason for Decision

The proposal accords with the provisions of the Development Plan and there were no material considerations which outweighed the presumption in favour of development according with the Development Plan.

Conditions

1. No development shall commence on the residential site until written approval of:

- (a) a Site Investigation report (characterising the nature and extent of any soil, water and gas contamination within the site); and, if remedial works are recommended therein
- (b) a Remediation Strategy and Implementation Plan identifying the proposed methods for implementing all remedial recommendations contained within the site investigation report

all prepared in accordance with current authoritative technical guidance, have been submitted to and approved in writing by Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the site will be made suitable for its proposed use.

2. That prior to the occupation of any residential unit on the site:

- (a) a Verification Report confirming completion of the works specified within the approved Remediation Strategy and Implementation Plan; or
- (b) where remediation works are not required but soils are to be imported to site, a Verification Report confirming imported materials are suitable for use

shall be submitted to and approved in writing by Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority. Verification Reports shall not be submitted on a phased basis unless first agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

Reason: To demonstrate that works required to make the site suitable for use have been completed.

3. That, prior to the erection of any of the residential units or greenkeeping facility hereby approved, a detailed schedule of the proposed external finishes for each building, together with a plan and schedule of the surface treatments to be used on all roads and footpaths shall be submitted for the written approval of Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority.

Thereafter, the buildings, roads and footpaths shall be constructed only in accordance with such details as may be approved to the satisfaction of Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of the amenity of the area.

4. That, prior to the commencement of the development, details of all boundary treatments to be formed shall be submitted for the written approval of Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority. Thereafter, all boundary fences and walls as may be approved relating to or adjacent to each plot shall be erected prior to the occupation of the building within that plot to the satisfaction of Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of the amenity of the area.

5. No development shall take place until full details of soft and water landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Details must comply with Advice Note 3 'Potential Bird Hazards from Amenity Landscaping & Building Design' (available at www.aoa.org.uk/publication/safeguarding.asp). These details shall include:

- Drainage details including SUDS – Such schemes must comply with Advice Note 6 'Potential Bird Hazards from Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) (available at www.aoa.org.uk/publications/safeguarding.asp).

No subsequent alterations to the landscaping scheme are to take place unless submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with Glasgow Airport. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to avoid endangering the safe movement of aircraft and the operation of Glasgow Airport through the attraction of birds and an increase in the bird hazard risk of the application site.

6. That prior to the commencement of development, details of the species, size and locations of all new trees to be planted shall be submitted and approved in writing by Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority. This shall include full details of all trees indicated on drawing 1598 / 01 Rev A and shall also confirm details of further compensatory planting to be undertaken elsewhere within the golf course over and above the details indicated on drawing 1598 / 01 Rev A. Thereafter, all trees shall be planted within 12 months and any trees which die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased within a period of five years shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of environment, amenity and the continuity of tree cover in the area.

7. That prior to the commencement of development, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority, a long-term Tree/Woodland Management & Maintenance Plan.

The Tree/Woodland Management & Maintenance Plan shall contain details on the monitoring of growth and condition of all retained trees within the application site boundaries, as well as all new trees and woodland planted in accordance with Condition 6.

Reason: To ensure that works are undertaken to a satisfactory standard in the interests of natural heritage.

8. That all existing trees to be retained shall be protected through the construction phase and future use of the sites in accordance with the recommendations set out in the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement by Brindley Associates dated April 2021 and in accordance with drawing 1598 / 01 Rev A.

Reason: To ensure that works are undertaken to a satisfactory standard in the interests of natural heritage.

9. Prior to the occupation of any of the dwelling units hereby approved a statement shall be submitted for the written approval of Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority confirming all water management measures implemented in relation to the residential development in accordance with the submitted Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment by Dougal Baillie Associates, or as varied following the written approval of the Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure suitable water management mitigation measures in relation to the development.

10. Prior to the occupation of the greenkeeping facility hereby approved a statement shall be submitted for the written approval of Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority confirming that all water management measures in relation to the greenkeeping facility have been implemented in accordance with the submitted Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment by Dougal Baillie Associates, or as varied following the written approval of the Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure suitable water management mitigation measures in relation to the development.

11. No development shall take place within the residential site until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicants, agreed by West of Scotland Archaeology Service, and approved by the Planning Authority. Thereafter, the developer shall ensure that the programme of archaeological works is fully implemented and that all recording and recovery of archaeological resources within the residential site is undertaken to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority in agreement with West of Scotland Archaeology Service.

Reason: To ensure that any archaeological remains which may be disturbed can be identified, excavated and recorded.

12. That prior to development commencing within the residential site, two activity surveys for bats shall be undertaken with respect to potential bat roosts at the outbuilding immediately east of Newton Cottage identified in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by Brindley Associates dated September 2020. Should any bat roosts be discovered, no development shall take place prior to suitable mitigation measures being approved in writing by Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority. Development shall thereafter only proceed in full accordance with these approved measures.

Reason: To ensure the continued protection of existing bat populations in accordance with European and national legislation.

13. That prior to the occupation of any of the dwelling units hereby approved, the footpath link as shown on drawing 17090-SK-15 Rev H shall have been completed. The path shall be of a minimum width of 2.5 metres and a maximum gradient of 5%.

Reason: To ensure that the development is appropriately accessible to sustainable modes of travel.

14. That prior to the occupation of any of the dwelling units hereby approved the specifications for the proposed lighting for the footpath as indicated on drawing 17090-SK-15 Rev H shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority and installed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the path is suitable for use in the interests of sustainable travel.

15. That prior to the occupation of any of the dwelling units hereby approved, Newton Avenue shall be upgraded in accordance with drawing 17090-SK-19 Rev A, entitled 'Proposed Road Gradients'.

Reason: To ensure the development is appropriately accessible.

16. That prior to the occupation of any dwelling units hereby approved, the following shall be installed on the extended access on Newton Avenue:

- (a) A handrail to the rear of the footway on both sides of Newton Avenue.

- (b) A screed of high friction surfacing on Newton Avenue where excessive gradients occur.

Reason: To ensure the development is appropriately accessible.

17. That prior to the occupation of any dwelling units hereby approved, details of the improvements to be undertaken to the junction of Newton Avenue with Main Road shall have been submitted and approved in writing by Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority and implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of improving the safety and functioning of the road network in the area.

18. That parking provision within the completed residential development shall be provided in accordance with the parking standards outlined in the National Roads Development Guide. For the avoidance of doubt, garages are not to be counted towards this provision.

Reason: To ensure appropriate levels of parking provision within the residential development.

19. That prior to the occupation of the greenkeeping facility, full details of any lighting to be installed at the facility and on the access road from Newton Drive shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority and installed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

20. That prior to the occupation of the greenkeeping facility, a Noise Management Plan outlining measures of good practice to be followed by all employees at the facility shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority and shall thereafter remain in place for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Background Papers
For further information or to inspect any letters of objection and other background papers, please contact Gwen McCracken on 07483 419705.