

Minute of Meeting

Local Review Body
Monday 24 March 2025
Item No 4.1



Local Review Body

Date	Time	Venue
Monday 16 December 2024	13:00	Council Chambers/Hybrid

Present:

Councillor Imrie (Chair)	Councillor McEwan
Councillor Alexander (Virtual)	Councillor McManus
Councillor Bowen	Councillor Milligan
Councillor Cassidy	Councillor Smail

In Attendance:

Councillor Pottinger (Virtual)	
Kevin Anderson	Executive Director Place
Peter Arnsdorf	Planning, Sustainable Growth and Investment Manager
Derek Oliver	Chief Officer Place
Iina Jaara	Democratic Services Team Leader
Louise Middleton	Democratic Services Officer

1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Local Review Body (LRB). Apologies were received from Councillor Drummond and Councillor Virgo.

2 Order of Business

The order of business was as outlined in the agenda.

3 Declarations of interest

Councillor Bowen declared they are a patron of Melville Golf Club which was noted for transparency.

No other declarations of interest were intimated at this stage of the proceedings.

4 Minute of Previous Meeting

The Minute of the Planning Meeting of 13 November 2024 was submitted and approved as the correct record.

5 Reports

Agenda No	Report Title	Presented by:
5.1	24/00412/DPP - Land at South Melville Farm, Melville Dykes Road, Lasswade	Planning, Sustainable Growth and Investment Manager
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>The Planning, Sustainable Growth and Investment Manager presented the report which provides a framework for the LRB to consider a 'Notice of Review' for the erection of 11 lodges and associated works at land at South Melville Farm, Melville Dykes Road, Lasswade.</p> <p>It is recommended that the LRB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) determine the review; andb) the Planning Advisor draft and issue the decision of the LRB through the Chair. <p>The Chair thanked the Planning, Sustainable Growth and Investment Manager for the report and advised the applicant of the process that will follow.</p> <p>Elected Members highlighted their concern that the applicant stated the site was in a green belt and allowing planning permission would result in a loss of more green belt land. Whilst the area was not important to the environment this would result in creating more grey belt land.</p>		

The Planning, Sustainable Growth and Investment Manager confirmed the site is in a green belt and advised that if there was a wish to change boundaries this would have to go through the planning policy. The National Performance Framework (NPF) 4, adopted in February 2023, did not mention grey land so this can be put to one side. Merits of green belt sites can be considered for individual applications or the Council could consider within the overall local planning process. Each case should be considered by its own merit.

Elected Members confirmed that having viewed the site they did not believe the site was one of natural beauty or an area that needed preservation and is currently used as dumping ground and burning site. There was an issue raised about the suitability of drainage for the application.

The Planning, Sustainable Growth and Investment Manager confirmed that the septic tank was on the other side of the road which is for the unoccupied dry house. The plan mentions connecting to this. The Planning, Sustainable Growth and Investment Manager noted there is an issue around drainage and the Council would expect solutions for this going forward, and this site cannot go ahead without drainage in place.

Elected Members were concerned that the application for use of houses as holiday accommodation may not always be adhered to and houses may become someone's permanent residence. Elected Members asked how this can be prevented. Elected Members also asked what the cost to Midlothian Council would be if properties were residential in terms of aspects like adopting the road and bin collections

The Planning, Sustainable Growth and Investment Manager confirmed that when granting planning permission there would be a limit set to activity on properties which is a standard approach for this type of development. There would be a condition that properties would not be primary residences and people could not live in the properties for more than 4 weeks. If once built the applicant wanted to change the use of the properties, they would need to apply for planning permission, and a decision would have to be made if this was appropriate.

Elected Members felt the land could not be used for much else and was better not left as a waste site.

Elected Members noted that there did not appear to be another use for this land other than possibly planting. They were unsure on what scale this will attract golfers at Melville or other tourists. They supported the idea subject to drainage, water supply and road access.

A vote was taken and two Elected Members voted to dismiss the appeal whilst four Elected Members voted to uphold the review and grant planning permission.

The Chair advised that the appeal has been upheld with subject to the conditions in the report.

The report was moved to grant planning permission by Councillor Cassidy and seconded by Councillor Smail.

Decision

The Local Review Body granted the planning application subject to the conditions in the report.

6. Private Reports

No private business was discussed.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 3 February 2025 at 13:00. The meeting terminated at 13:19.