



## The Report Pilot Panel Sitting – 7<sup>th</sup> March 2018 Former Braidfield School Site – New Housing Proposal

**Status of Proposal: Pre-application**

**Developer: Miller Homes**

**Introduced by: Keith Bathgate – Planning case officer**

**Supplementary presentation by: Paul Macari – Miller Homes**

### **Site information:**

The proposed development is located on the site of the former Braidfield High School in Clydebank. The site comprises approximately 3.1 ha of brownfield land and is accessible from Queen Mary Avenue to the east currently via 2 points of access. There are existing houses on Queen Mary Avenue that sit within the curtilage of the development site. These properties sit at an elevated height and form the basis of the building line fronting onto Queen Mary Avenue.

Drumry Road runs to the north of the site, with Hood Street located to the south. The small cul-de-sac at Melfort Gardens is located to the west.

The former High School closed in June 2006 with demolition of the associated buildings and structures taking place in September 2009. The site has remained vacant since this time.

The surrounding area is predominately residential in nature, with housing located to the north, south, east and west of the site. Kilbowie cemetery is located to the south west of the site, beyond a cluster of protected trees.

The site is accessible via a range of transport modes including private vehicle and public transport. Drumry train station is located approximately 0.4 miles south east of the site and Singer train station is located approximately 0.8 miles west of the site. A number of bus services operate along Drumry Road and Great Western Road, whilst high quality pedestrian routes serve the surrounding locale.



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**Proposals:** Keith Bathgate presented the project, discussing the topography of the site, the area that the Tree Preservation Order applies and discussed the proposals in relation to the planning officer notes that had been previously issued to the developer in 2017.

Since their issue, the developer has revised the proposals to take due cognisance wherever possible. The points below were read out to the Panel and those still requiring resolution together with any additional questions posed by the Panellists formed the basis of the discussion. Comments relate to proposal to Planning, submitted late 2017.

1. Proposals do not take account of tree preservation order
2. Proposals do not reflect existing building lines on Queen Mary Avenue, with the result that the proposed houses would be unduly prominent in the street.
3. Numerous other issues with building lines and corner treatment throughout the site, with blank gables positioned close against streets. Whilst that might be less important in a 'Designing Streets' layout, this is essentially a conventional layout and corner treatment is problematic throughout;
4. Similarly, several house plots do not front the streets and give the appearance of cramming units into corners;
5. Proximity of houses to boundary at western end of southern boundary, bearing in mind the significant difference in levels and the potential for overlooking of existing houses;

6. Concerns about the proposed back-land car park behind the terrace at the SE corner. Such arrangements are often problematic, and it would be better to give these houses conventional driveways, which there would be ample room for especially if they were pushed back slightly to better reflect the building line;

7. Misgivings about the distribution of visitor spaces generally, as residents normally wish to park directly in front of their houses if possible, so providing a remote allocated space when there is on-street visitor parking in front of the house will often result in the allocated space not being used;

8. The majority of units would be orientated north/south. Whilst the shape of the site favours such an arrangement, it is often less than ideal from an energy efficiency perspective as the majority of heat-loss occurs through north elevations and it results in half of the gardens facing north and getting little sunlight, so this issue should be considered;

9. Given the present topography of the site, additional information in the way of site sections or topographical drawings showing proposed new levels would assist.



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**Workshop discussion;**

1. Tree Preservation Order;

The proposals have been revised to retain the trees subject to the TPO, however there are still 2 rather large trees for proposed removal in the development. The developer stated that a detailed tree survey will be commissioned with the outcome reflected in any revisions to the layout thereafter.

2/3/4. Building Lines on Queen Mary Avenue/ Consideration of dual aspect homes/Building lines fronting streets and plots appearing 'crammed in' to corners.

The Panel felt the frontage to Queen Mary Avenue had been improved somewhat to address the street and since the first iteration of the site layout the building lines across the site were improved, creating a safer inner urban environment. It is thought that on Queen Mary Avenue the run of terraced houses to the SE corner of the site could benefit from some additional consideration in relation to parking layout and ownership of the land immediately in front of the properties onto Queen Mary Avenue. It was pointed out that people generally preferred to park in front of their houses and this informal arrangement would probably be the default if it was not designed in to the front of these homes. The developer advised that this advice conflicts somewhat with that from WDC Roads Department who advised against accessing drives from Queen Mary Avenue.

The developer provided additional information with details of house types and sketches showing example dual frontage homes. It was further clarified where on the site the dual front homes would be located.

The house on the North West corner plot was looked at as the remaining example of a property that may appear 'crammed into a corner'. However upon the provision of the latest scheme the Panel did not see this as problematic and agreed with the developer that this could be a desirable plot on the site with semi-enclosure and detached garage.

5. Proximity of houses to boundary at western end of southern boundary, bearing in mind the significant difference in levels and the potential for overlooking of existing houses;

In the pre-panel documents the developer provided topographical information and site sections that demonstrated the proposed levels and varying heights the houses will sit at. The panel were satisfied that the depths of rear gardens, where these sit back to back has been considered. The section drawings provided assisted in demonstrating that a logical approach to the site levels is being taken.

The Panel suggested the developer may want to give some consideration to a possible pedestrian route at the south west corner of the site. Creating a pedestrian route via the green space within the site, connecting with Kilbowie Cemetery and the St Eunan's park proposal and linking down to Clydebank. How this could be achieved would have to be subject to careful design as it was thought the plots in this locale may be vulnerable and the treatment of the fencing around the 'play area' would require some detailed consideration.



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**Workshop discussion;**

6/7. Concerns about the proposed back-land car park behind the terrace at the SE corner/ misgivings about the distribution of visitor spaces generally.

The panel agreed that the car park to the SE corner of the site would require more consideration and as the detail of the landscape was developed, (i.e. locations of visitor parking provision, access for bin collection, path and routes around the site, gardens, shared and defensible space relating to each property) this would receive additional appraisal at the Planning Application stage.

8. North/South orientation of plots.

The current proposals take cognisance of this and the developer has substantially reduced the numbers of properties orientated in this way from the first iteration.

Additional questions;

Is there a landscape architect involved?

The developer will be employing a landscape architect to detail the development.

Land Tenure after development;

Private ownership, with communally owned spaces looked after by an owner funded factor. There will be a 'common areas' plan and a 'factor management' plan submitted as part of the full Planning Application. Roads will be to an adoptable standard.

Suds pond management and adoption and the possible addition of a fence;

Miller Homes would manage the Suds pond for the first year and it is to be designed in such a way that it does not require a fence. Scottish Water would then adopt the suds pond and manage it going forward.

Affordable homes on the site?

There would be no provision of affordable homes on the site.



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**Panel Summary/Consensus;**

The project is more developed than the 'ideal' stage that a development would come to the Place and Design Panel and the influence on the design at this stage is limited. Notwithstanding the Panel aims to add value to whatever project comes before it and therefore the workshop process was tailored specifically with that aim.

The Information provided for review was comprehensive. The Panel appreciated that the developer had taken steps to somewhat address earlier comments from the Planning officers in relation to the TPO, the orientation of plots, building lines and corner/dual aspect properties.

During the Panel sitting, the areas of the development that generated most conversation and where the Panel suggested the developer should give detailed consideration as the proposals are developed for the Planning Application were;

The trees protected by the TPO with proposed play area in the vicinity and those trees proposed for removal;  
The potential pedestrian links at the SW corner, linking to other green spaces and existing pedestrian routes;  
parking provision and locations of owner and visitor spaces;  
Management and ownership of public/private space;  
The identification and proposed management of potential vulnerabilities in the scheme;

The areas for consideration listed above will be considered under the terms of the formal full Planning Application.

**The activities of the Place and Design Panel are advisory and do not prejudice full consideration of additional issues being raised through the formal Planning Process**