

# WRONG HOUSES, WRONG SITE, WRONG NUMBER

## INTRODUCTION

As reported in October's *Blane Valley Bulletin*, Gladman Developments is suggesting the creation of a residential development on Campsie Road, adjacent to the new Cala houses. The cemetery extension already planned for the site would be moved beyond a track leading over the Blane Water and the Strathkelvin Railway Path.

This supplement provides only facts and background to the proposal, to help the community discuss and agree its response. It may appear one-sided, but then the proposal flies in the face of everything that has been discussed and settled up to now. Gladman have presented some very misleading information. Should we change our minds on the basis of this?

## WRONG HOUSES

Even after the present consultation, Gladman propose an "In Principle" planning application, which does not give enough information for the proposal to be assessed against the needs of the local community, and relevant planning criteria.

## WRONG SITE

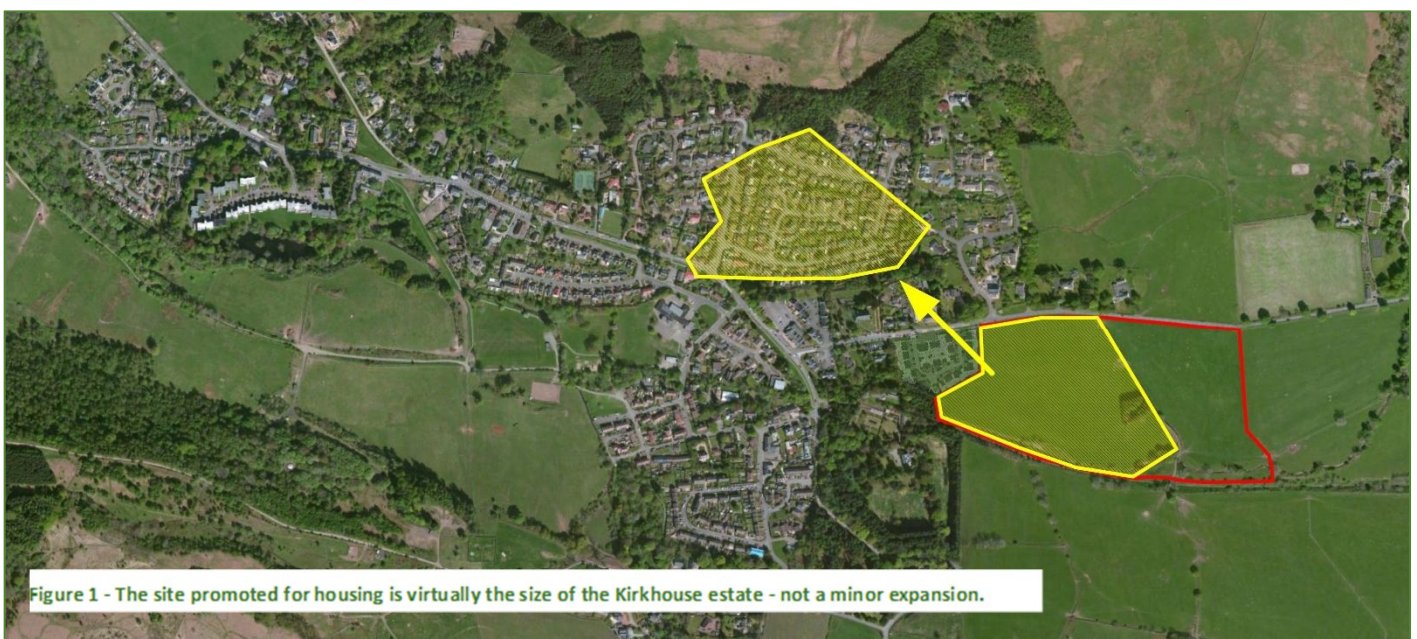
Stirling Council's strategy, supported by the Scottish Government, is to concentrate housing expansion in the "Core Area" around Stirling itself. Within our rural area, new development is strictly for sustainability of the existing communities, for example to improve the balance of housing types and ownership options for local people.

Our community does not reject all development proposals, but judges them on how they contribute to the sustainability of the community, and its setting. A site for new housing has been released beside the A81 below the Devil's Elbow, and the Cala/Rural Stirling Housing Association site on Campsie Road has only just been completed. But it was also agreed that the Cala Development on Campsie Road would be the LAST development in this location, with the boundary with the Green Belt being reinforced by a new cemetery.

The existing cemetery will be full within a very few years, and Stirling Council plan to start a new cemetery extension on this site soon. The site proposed by Gladman for a cemetery is much further from the church, parking and other facilities.

## WRONG NUMBER

The proposed development – up to 70 houses – is vast compared with anything contemplated in recent years. The image Figure 1 shows how the size of this site compares to the whole Kirkhouse development. Clearly it would be a major expansion of the existing housing in the villages.



## WRONG TIMING

There were prolonged consultations and Government examinations leading to the current Local Development Plan 2014-2034 and Proposed Local Development Plan 2017-2037. Proposals for our villages have been adopted in the context of a larger strategy across the Stirling planning area. The Community Council and other residents participated fully in these consultations.

The landowners behind the Gladman proposal, Charles Connell & Co., have presented the site for consideration twice previously and been rejected twice by the community, by Stirling Council and by the Scottish Government.

Changes to the Green Belt and major new allocations of housing should only be made through the next review process, not individual applications. If the Local Development Plan can be bypassed by speculative applications like this, the whole planning framework is undermined. We can be sure that the floodgates would be opened and other sites that have been rejected would be promoted again.

In any case, a “planning application in principle” won’t give any clarity on the type of development, and will not allow the community to assess properly what is proposed.

## WRONG INFORMATION!

On 31<sup>st</sup> October, Gladman exhibited information boards to explain their proposal. The Community Council has ensured that these are placed on view in Strathblane Library. A copy is online at Gladman’s website below, and on the Community Council website.

Some very misleading information is presented.

For example, Gladman say “The Council has identified the site ... as being appropriate for release from the green belt and has accepted the principle of development on the site.” This is plainly untrue. The land is currently allocated for a cemetery extension which would be *within* the Green Belt. The retention of the Green Belt boundary at this site is an explicit part of the Local Development Plan, and was 100% backed by the Scottish Government Reporter in his review in 2014. Charles Connell’s arguments to release the land were presented and fully considered by all the authorities at the time.

Gladman also allege that Stirling’s existing plans do not provide an adequate supply of housing land, as required by the Scottish Government Reporter. The need for increased housing allocation in the Core Area was fully considered in the examination of the LDP of 2014 and in the LDP revision for 2017, but neither Stirling nor the Reporter has ever

proposed that such additional housing allocation should be made in our local area, let alone on this Green Belt site.

## WHAT IS GREEN BELT?

Gladman’s proposal would modify the Strathblane Green Belt boundary.

In planning policy, Green Belts are used as one of a range of mechanisms for “directing development to suitable locations as part of the long-term settlement strategy identified in the Plan”. The Green Belt policy, and the designation and boundaries for Green Belts “provide clarity and certainty on where development should and should not take place”. Green Belts are designated around Stirling, Bridge of Allan, Dunblane and Strathblane, “to protect and enhance the quality, character, landscape setting and identity of these settlements”.

The local Green Belt, including this site, was fully reviewed in 2012, and was confirmed in the Local Development Plan with robust support from the Scottish Government Reporter. The cemetery location was selected to “confirm the greenbelt and exclude future residential housing development”.

The recent Cala development was approved on the basis that the eastern edge would “create a permanent new edge to the settlement”.

## NEXT STEPS – HAVE YOUR SAY

- View Gladman’s proposals in Strathblane Library or online at [www.your-views.co.uk/strathblane](http://www.your-views.co.uk/strathblane)
- Before 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016 **send your views to Gladman** by e-mail to [views@your-views.co.uk](mailto:views@your-views.co.uk) or post to Gladman Developments, 2 Elburn Office Park, Livingston, West Lothian, EH54 6GR. Copy us on [cc@strathblanefield.org.uk](mailto:cc@strathblanefield.org.uk).
  - **We have prepared a draft letter or email** for you to start from. Find it on the “More Houses on Campsie Road?” page at [www.strathblanecc.org.uk](http://www.strathblanecc.org.uk) and in Strathblane Library.
- Come along to our **Community Council meeting on Monday 5th December 2016 (7.30pm, Strathblane Primary School)** where Gladman will be attending.
- Contact the Community Council with your views at [www.strathblanecc.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.strathblanecc.org.uk/contact-us).
- **Sign the petition** at the Library or at our meetings.
- **Complete our own survey** parallel to Gladman’s in Strathblane Library or at [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/VMJXLPK](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/VMJXLPK).
- **Contact Stirling’s Planning Officer** Iain Jeffrey at [jeffreyi@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:jeffreyi@stirling.gov.uk) and [info@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:info@stirling.gov.uk) and copy us on [cc@strathblanefield.org.uk](mailto:cc@strathblanefield.org.uk)