

Andy

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Planning applications: Stirling schools PPP

Ms Lamont had read and considered carefully the terms of your minutes of 9 September and 10 and 13 October.

Ms Lamont recognises the complexities involved in this group of development; in particular she notes that they are all contrary, in some way, to the terms of the development plan. She also fully appreciates that the potential impact of these proposals, along with Stirling council's handling of the applications, has been a source of concern to many local people.

Ms Lamont notes the loss of green spaces as a result of the developments, but also appreciates that efforts have been made to minimise this effectively with the retention of green corridors and the provision of open spaces. She is also content that appropriate steps have been taken to ensure adequate replacement of playing fields and sports facilities, to the satisfaction of Sportscotland.

While appreciating the range of planning issues raised by these proposals, some of which do not support the proposals, Ms Lamont considers that the wider community benefit, gained by delivering these improvements to the school estate, should carry significant weight in consideration of this whole package of proposals. In that respect, she has noted that, in contrast to the high level of opposition, there has also been significant public support for new, modern schools to serve their respective communities. Accordingly, Ms Lamont has decided that Scottish Ministers should not intervene in these 8 planning applications and, therefore, that they should be cleared back to Stirling Council to decide as it thinks fit.

Sorry for the delay in responding.

Thank you.

Lynne McDougall
PS/Deputy Minister for Communities
08 November 2005