

Morningside residents celebrate traffic victory

[Nov 25 2009](#) by Robert Mitchell, [Wishaw Press](#)

THE residents of Morningside are celebrating victory after the Scottish Executive refused planning permission for a development which would have allowed heavy lorries to go to and from a freight line at nearby Chapel over 200 times a day.

Community campaigners had launched a fight to stop vehicles accessing the railhead – where goods would be loaded or unloaded – over fears of noise and pollution.

The firm behind the proposal had promised that commotion and dust would be kept to a minimum and that the lorries would never actually go through the village.

However, after hearing both sides and going on a site visit, a Reporter from the Scottish Executive have delighted villagers by knocking back the plans.

The chair of Morningside Residents' Association, Ron Banks, said: "As a result of this decision, villagers can now safely enjoy the tranquillity, fresh air and healthy, natural, rural environment which have been valued by Morningside residents for years, and have been important for the many new families who have chosen to settle in this growing village.

"This decision is a victory for democracy. The people of Morningside spoke, each with a clear and persuasive voice, and made a collective sound which no listener could ignore.

"North Lanarkshire Council's Planning and Transportation Committee wholeheartedly rejected this application in the spring and the Reporter has upheld that wise decision. Villagers are delighted that he reached this just decision having been presented with an overwhelming number (120) of written submissions from residents who pointed out in detail the dangers associated with this kind of development.

"Many residents, particularly those who had recently settled in the village, were faced with the prospect of 44 tonne lorries driving close to their properties at a rate of around, one every two minutes', for 11 hours a day.

"I hope this victory for the people of Morningside will give encouragement to anybody whose lifestyle is threatened by inappropriate development or feels overwhelmed by systems which seem to make it difficult to be heard. People have a right to have their opinions heard and they should exercise that right with all the skill and passion they can muster."

Mr Banks would like to thank the residents' association committee for all their hard work throughout the campaign, and all the residents who took the time to write so eloquently to the Reporter and let him see the strength of opinion against this planning application.

He also paid tribute to councillors Robert McKendrick, Jimmy Martin and Nicky Shevlin for "their wholehearted, continuous and invaluable support." His thanks also went to Shotts MSP Karen Whitfield who expressed her support to the village in her written submission to

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the Reporter, Newmains and District Community Council and other groups in Newmains who were fully behind the campaign.

At the moment 60 lorry movements of coal are allowed at the railhead each day (30 in and 30 out) and it was proposed that would change to 112 lorry loads of coal a day (224 movements instead of 60).

North Lanarkshire Council had previously refused the application to allow more lorries earlier in the year, and an appeal on this decision was made to the Scottish Executive.

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