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Once-Proud Rolls-Royce Factory in East Kilbride Now a Fly-Tipping Blackspot

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A derelict former Rolls-Royce site in East Kilbride has become a magnet for illegal fly-tipping, sparking anger among residents and raising concerns over public safety, property values, and council inaction.

The historic site, once a key part of the U.K.'s engineering heritage, has fallen into disrepair since Rolls-Royce vacated it in 2015. While parts of the land have been developed into housing, a large section remains abandoned and overrun by waste. Piles of discarded tyres,

burnt rubbish, and debris now dominate the area, leaving locals frustrated and demanding answers.

East Kilbride resident Michael McClorey voiced his dismay at the worsening condition of the land. He told the *Daily Express*: “I’ve been here for about four years, and the land has always been derelict. Looking at it now, there’s rubbish all over. I’m not expecting beautiful scenery in a city, but instead I’m looking out at old tyres and piles of rubbish. It’s really having a very negative effect.”

McClorey also fears the long-term consequences for the community. “We look out at it all the time. That’s all we can see. It’s not nice. I’m not trying to sell my house, but this would definitely have an impact on selling prospects. It looks awful.” He added that discussions had taken place regarding potential new-build housing on the land, but nothing concrete had emerged. “I would like to see the land cleared of rubbish, the priority,” he said.

Fly-Tipping Plague

Another resident, who preferred not to be named, managed to capture footage of a white pickup truck unloading waste on the site. They raised health and safety concerns, noting that rubbish fires have become more frequent. “It’s an eyesore mostly, but I wouldn’t be surprised if it’s brought more pests and flies into our garden. There have been fires breaking out, likely releasing chemicals into the air,” they said. “There is a tall pile of tyres. If that catches fire, it could be a major incident. It’s just metres from our fence.”

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has been called to the location multiple times. Despite this, efforts to address the problem have been limited. South Lanarkshire Council has acknowledged the complaints but insists its powers are constrained, given that the land is privately owned.

Kevin Carr, Head of Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services at South Lanarkshire Council, said: “Fly tipping is the result of unacceptable behaviour and illegal action by a small number of people. It is a blight on our communities, and the council takes this criminal activity very seriously. Although we’re not responsible for private land, our Environmental Crime team will still investigate any reports and try to inform the landowner. But we don’t have statutory powers to require the waste to (sic) be removed.”

Residents say they have also contacted their Member of Parliament, though progress has been slow. The site's ownership remains unclear, further complicating clean-up efforts.

The former Rolls-Royce facility was once a thriving aero-engine maintenance hub, contributing to Britain's aviation strength. Its descent into decay starkly contrasts its legacy, leaving locals to wonder how such a prominent piece of industrial land has been allowed to become a dumping ground.