

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 21 March 2018

Application for Planning Permission 17/05986/FUL At South East Wedge Development Site, Old Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh

The project is the development of an area of existing open space with an active travel route from Little France Drive in the north to the Wisp in the south. It also connects Phase 1 of the project heading west and linking in with the ERI.

Item number	4.5
Report number	
Wards	B17 - Portobello/Craigmillar

Summary

The provision of an active travel route through this site will help deliver a key green space proposal as set out in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP). It will help with the access and delivery of the overall parkland and provide a new active travel route through the site, connecting with other areas.

There are no issues arising with regards to archaeology, flooding, or landscape and ecological impact.

The proposal is in accordance with the LDP and is acceptable.

Links

[Policies and guidance for this application](#)

LDPP, LEN08, LEN09, LEN10, LTRA07, NSG, NSGD02,

Report

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The project is the development of an area of existing open space with an active travel route from Little France Drive in the north to the Wisp in the south. It also connects Phase 1 of the project heading west and linking in with the ERI.

Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that this application be Granted subject to the details below.

Background

2.1 Site description

The site covers approximately 1.35 hectares of green belt land in the Edmonstone area of south-east Edinburgh. The site comprises three strips of land; one running east to west to the north of the existing Edinburgh Royal Infirmary car park covering 0.2 ha; one covering 0.02 ha to the north of Little France drive and another larger area running north to south from Little France Drive to the Wisp covering 1.13ha.

It comprises open grassland and scrubland with occasional mature trees and informal paths and desire lines traversing the site. Areas of dense woodland are located to the north and southwest portions of the site. The site undulates throughout, sloping from east to west towards the valley at Little France Drive.

The Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and the initial phases of the Edinburgh BioQuarter development are situated to the west of the site, beyond which lies the A7 Old Dalkeith Road and the suburb of Moredun. Residential properties forming the area of Danderhall (within the jurisdiction of Midlothian Council) are located adjacent to the south east, immediately beyond The Wisp. The A6106 (The Wisp) is adjacent to the east of the site and forms the boundary with Midlothian Council. The areas of Craigmillar, Greendykes and Niddrie are situated to the north. New residential properties are currently under construction adjacent to the north of the site in the vicinity of Greendykes.

2.2 Site History

This site:

1 February 2018 - Proposal of Application Notice submitted for residential development of approximately 500 dwellings, landscaping works and associated ancillary works (18/00456/PAN).

19 September 2017 - Application withdrawn for proposed residential development, community parkland and a primary school on land at Edmonstone, the Wisp, South East Edinburgh (application number 16/05417/PPP).

4 November 2016 - Application withdrawn for proposed residential development, community parkland and a primary school on Land at Edmonstone, the Wisp, South East, Edinburgh (application number: 15/05074/PPP).

11 January 2017 - Application withdrawn for the development of an area of existing open space into public parkland, to include new active travel links with lighting, paths, landscaping, habitat creation/enhancement and tree planting (application number: 16/02661/FUL).

8 August 2013 - The Craigmillar Urban Design Framework is approved.

Other relevant applications within the area:

12 February 2015 - Reporter from the Department of Planning and Environmental Appeals granted planning permission in principle for residential development, ancillary uses and associated development (application number: 14/01057/PPP).

23 April 2015 - planning permission was granted for ground stabilisation works (application number: 14/01166/FUL).

23 April 2015 - application granted for a cemetery (including provision for woodland burials), memorial garden, chapel of rest and associated development (application number: 13/05235/PPP).

24 April 2015 - application granted on the same site for a cemetery, crematorium, memorial garden, chapel of rest and associated development (application number: 13/05302/PPP).

2 February 2017 - section 42 application granted to extend the outline hospital consent (04/03551/OUT) for a further 3 years (application number: 12/00764/FUL).

Main report

3.1 Description Of The Proposal

Full planning permission is sought for the construction of an active travel route through the site.

The route sits on an east/west axis and is proposed to connect the existing active travel route on the upper slopes of the park with the remainder of the parkland and beyond to Midlothian. Due to the ground levels, the route curves around the contours of the site.

The route is 3.5 metres wide and will be a shared cycleway/footway with 0.5 metre verges incorporating kerbs along the length. SUDS swales/ditches are proposed along the sides of the route.

In order to address the level differences across the site, some land raising is required and this will form two cut embankments. The location of these are towards the western section of the route, close to Little France Drive.

The route is proposed to be lit along its length.

Supporting Statements

The following documents were submitted in support of the proposals:

- Design and Access Statement;
- Ecology Report;
- Tree Report;
- Landscape and Visual Appraisal; and
- Pre-Application Consultation Report.

These are available to view on the Planning and Building Standards Online Service.

3.2 Determining Issues

Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 states - Where, in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Do the proposals comply with the development plan?

If the proposals do comply with the development plan, are there any compelling reasons for not approving them?

If the proposals do not comply with the development plan, are there any compelling reasons for approving them?

3.3 Assessment

To address these determining issues, the Committee needs to consider whether:

- a) The principle of the development complies with the Development Plan;
- b) The proposals would have an impact on landscape quality or natural heritage;
- c) The proposals have any equalities or human rights impacts;
- d) There are any other material issues, and
- e) The representations have been addressed.

a) The Principle of the Development

The site is within the green belt in the Local Development Plan (LDP). Policy Env 10 (Development in the Green Belt and Countryside) states that within these areas, development will only be permitted where it meets one of the relevant criteria and would not detract from the landscape quality and/or rural character of the area. The relevant criteria in this instance relates to whether the development is for the purposes of agriculture, woodland and forestry, horticulture or countryside recreation, and provided any areas of hardstanding are of a scale and quality of design appropriate to the use. Also relevant and linked to this policy is the Green Space Proposal, GS4: South East Wedge Parkland, which relates to this site. This proposal aims to provide a multi-functional parkland, woodland and country paths linking with parallel development in Midlothian.

In this instance, the purpose of the development is to provide an active travel route through the site, which will increase accessibility and permeability, and will aid in the delivery of LDP Proposal GS4.

Therefore, the principle of the development is acceptable.

b) Landscape Quality and Natural Heritage

Visualisations were submitted to show the impact of the proposal on sensitive viewpoints, including Craigmillar Castle. The visuals showed that the active travel route itself would have a minimal impact on the landscape when viewed within its context. The main impact would be from the lighting columns along the route, and a condition is recommended to ensure the columns are painted in a dark colour in order to reduce their visual impact.

In terms of natural heritage, clearance of vegetation/trees from the proposed construction areas has the potential to disturb nesting birds; therefore clearance should not be carried out during the bird breeding/nesting season (March - August (inclusive)). Should it be necessary to clear ground during the bird breeding/nesting season the land should be surveyed by a suitably qualified ecologist and declared clear of nesting birds before vegetation clearance starts. A suitable informative is recommended in this regard. Similarly, a disused badger sett has been identified within 30 meters of the development site. Should the sett become occupied during the works, all works should be suspended and a licence applied from Scottish Natural Heritage. An informative is recommended to address this issue.

In addition, a number of category C trees are proposed to be removed along the southern boundary in order to accommodate the new route. The removal of these trees do not raise any issues as they are young trees (7 to 8 years old) and currently have little landscape impact.

c) Equalities and Human Rights

The active travel route has been designed to accommodate a range of users and will be Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant. There are no issues with equalities or human rights.

d) Other Material Issues

Drainage and Flooding

Due to the minimal impact of the new paths, plus the inclusion of swales and other SUDS features, the development will have no impact on drainage and flooding from the site.

Archaeology

The site is of historic and archaeological significance covering parts of three medieval estates with a range of archaeological remains dating back from the 20th century through to prehistory. Accordingly, any landscaping, path construction or tree planting could have significant archaeological implications but can be addressed through a suitable condition. Therefore, it is recommended that a condition requiring an archaeological watching brief is put in place, in order to record any impacts on the historic boundary wall that runs across the centre of the site on the Edmonstone/Wisp side.

e) Representations

Material Support

- Strong opportunities for walking and cycling; and
- Good opportunities for further connections to new residential developments.

Conclusion

The provision of an active travel route through this site will help deliver a key green space proposal as set out in the LDP. It will help with the access and delivery of the overall parkland and provide a new active travel route through the site, connecting with other areas.

There are no issues arising with regards to archaeology, flooding, or landscape and ecological impact.

The proposal is in accordance with the LDP and is acceptable.

It is recommended that this application be Granted subject to the details below.

3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives

Conditions:-

1. Prior to the installation of the lighting columns, full details of the colour of the columns will be submitted in writing to the Planning Authority. Thereafter, the columns will be installed as per the approved colour.

2. No works shall take place on the site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work (historic building survey, excavation, reporting and analysis), including a Watching Brief with regards to the historic boundary wall, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.

Reasons:-

1. To enable the Planning Authority to consider this in detail, in order to minimise the visual impact of the lighting columns within the landscape.
2. In the interests of cultural heritage.

Informatives

It should be noted that:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced no later than the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.
2. No development shall take place on the site until a 'Notice of Initiation of Development' has been submitted to the Council stating the intended date on which the development is to commence. Failure to do so constitutes a breach of planning control, under Section 123(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
3. As soon as practicable upon the completion of the development of the site, as authorised in the associated grant of permission, a 'Notice of Completion of Development' must be given, in writing to the Council.
4. Natural Heritage: Clearance of vegetation/trees from the proposed construction areas has the potential to disturb nesting birds; therefore clearance should be carried out out-with the bird breeding/nesting season March - August (inclusive). Should it be necessary to clear ground during the bird breeding/nesting season the land should be surveyed by a suitably qualified ecologist and declared clear of nesting birds before vegetation clearance starts.

Badger Protection: A disused badger sett has been identified within 30 meters of the development site. Should the sett become occupied during the works, all works should be suspended and a licence applied from Scottish Natural Heritage.

Financial impact

4.1 The financial impact has been assessed as follows:

The Council is the land owner of the site.

Risk, Policy, compliance and governance impact

5.1 Provided planning applications are determined in accordance with statutory legislation, the level of risk is low.

Equalities impact

6.1 The equalities impact has been assessed as follows:

The application has been assessed and has no impact in terms of equalities or human rights.

Sustainability impact

7.1 The sustainability impact has been assessed as follows:

This application is not subject to the sustainability requirements of the Edinburgh Design Guidance.

Consultation and engagement

8.1 Pre-Application Process

Pre-application discussions took place on this application.

8.2 Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments

The application was advertised on 19 January 2018 and two letters of support were received.

A full assessment of the representations can be found in the main report in the Assessment section.

Background reading/external references

- To view details of the application go to
- [Planning and Building Standards online services](#)
- [Planning guidelines](#)
- [Conservation Area Character Appraisals](#)
- [Edinburgh Local Development Plan](#)
- [Scottish Planning Policy](#)

Statutory Development

Plan Provision

The land is within the Green Belt and is part of Greenspace Proposal: GS4 South East Wedge Parkland. The site also has a tram safeguard route on a north/south axis.

Craigmillar Urban Design Framework: This sets out a vision and principles for development of the Craigmillar area. Edmonstone is identified as providing landscape and natural and historical heritage context to the area alongside land for future open space proposals.

Date registered

20 December 2017

Drawing numbers/Scheme

01, 02,

David R. Leslie

Chief Planning Officer

PLACE

The City of Edinburgh Council

Contact: Lesley Carus, Senior Planning Officer

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Links - Policies

Relevant Policies:

Relevant policies of the Local Development Plan.

LDP Policy Env 8 (Protection of Important Remains) establishes a presumption against development that would adversely affect the site or setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument or archaeological remains of national importance.

LDP Policy Env 9 (Development of Sites of Archaeological Significance) sets out the circumstances in which development affecting sites of known or suspected archaeological significance will be permitted.

LDP Policy Env 10 (Development in the Green Belt and Countryside) identifies the types of development that will be permitted in the Green Belt and Countryside.

LDP Policy Tra 7 (Public Transport Proposals and Safeguards) prevents development which would prejudice the implementation of the public transport proposals and safeguards listed.

Relevant Non-Statutory Guidelines

Non-Statutory guidelines Edinburgh Design Guidance supports development of the highest design quality and that integrates well with the existing city. It sets out the Council's expectations for the design of new development, including buildings, parking, streets and landscape, in Edinburgh.

Appendix 1

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Consultations

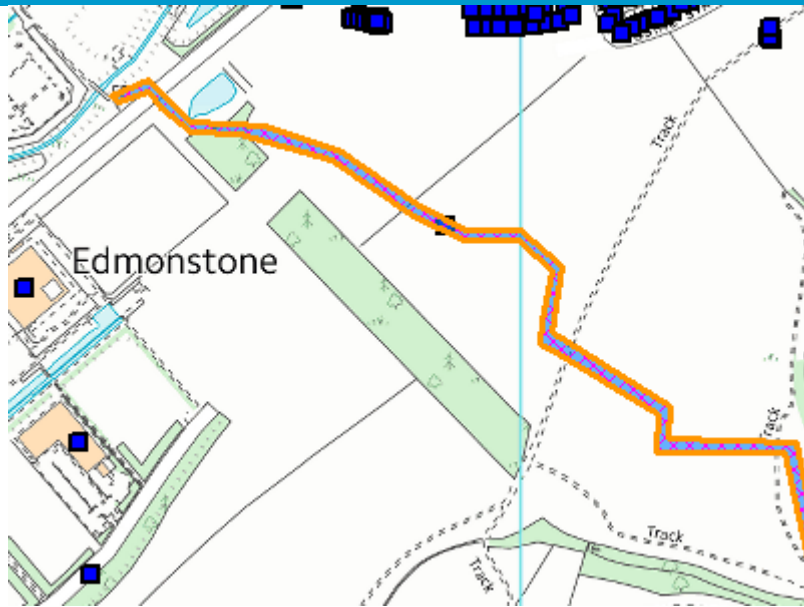
Midlothian Council - 18 January 2018

MLC fully supports the proposed active travel route from Little France to The Wisp and have no comments to make on the planning application (17/05986/FUL).

Historic Environment Scotland - 18 January 2018

We have considered the information received and do not have any comments to make on the proposals. Our decision not to provide comments should not be taken as our support for the proposals. This application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy on development affecting the historic environment, together with related policy guidance.

Location Plan



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