

# Development Management Sub Committee

**Wednesday 1 May 2024**

**Report for forthcoming application by**

**University Of Edinburgh - Estates Dept. for Proposal of Application Notice.**

**24/01183/PAN**

**at University of Edinburgh, Darwin Building, Max Born Crescent.**

**Erection of research and teaching building, with associated landscaping, access, and cycle parking.**

**Item number**

**Report number**

**Wards**

B15 - Southside/Newington

## Summary

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This report is to inform the Development Management Sub-committee of a potential forthcoming planning application for the erection of a replacement research and teaching building on the site of the Darwin Building along with associated landscaping, access works and cycle parking.

In accordance with the provisions of The Town and Country Planning Act (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended), a Proposal of Application Notice was submitted on the 8 March 2024.

## Links

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**Coalition pledges**

**Council outcomes**

**Single Outcome Agreement**

## Recommendations

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- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the key issues at this stage and advises of any other issues.

## Background

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### 2.1 Site description

The site is located within the University of Edinburgh King's Buildings Campus. It extends to 1.2 hectares and includes the Darwin Building, which has permission for demolition, the Michael Swann Building (being retained) and a temporary construction access leading to Mayfield Road. The site bounds educational uses except Craigmillar Park Golf Course to the south and residential properties on the eastern side of Mayfield Road.

The site is within the Urban Area in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan 2016. There are no specific designations which apply to the site, except Cycleway Footpath Safeguard T7 (To King's Buildings and Mayfield Road) which is located at the southeast corner. Craigmillar Park Golf Course is designated Open Space and falls within the Green Belt, a Special Landscape Area (Braids, Liberton, Mortonhall) and a Local Nature Conservation Site.

Craigmillar Park Conservation Area terminates at Mayfield Road and the Category B listed Hudson Beare Building (LB51407) sits outwith the site to the north on the opposite side of Max Born Crescent. The Darwin Building is located within the cone of one Key View S10b (Castle from A701, Liberton Brae/Kirkgate). The non-statutory King's Buildings Planning Framework applies to the site.

### 2.2 Site History

24/01184/SCR  
University of Edinburgh  
Darwin Building  
EH9 3BF  
Request for an EIA Screening Opinion  
EIA Not Required  
19 March 2024

24/01187/CLP  
University of Edinburgh  
Darwin Building  
EH9 3BF  
Proposed demolition of Darwin Building and temporary growth facility  
Granted  
20 March 2024

23/06561/FUL  
University of Edinburgh  
Darwin Building  
EH9 3BF  
Application for temporary construction road (continuance of planning permission  
19/04307/FUL) (as amended)  
Granted  
15 December 2023

20/05825/FUL  
Land Adjacent to Daniel Rutherford Building  
Max Born Crescent  
Edinburgh  
Proposed portacabins for research and development  
Granted  
22 March 2021

17/04651/FUL  
University of Edinburgh  
Darwin Building  
EH9 3BF  
Erection of Research and Development Facility for School of Biological Sciences  
including associated access, servicing, and landscape works.  
Granted  
1 February 2018

16/02873/FUL  
University of Edinburgh  
Darwin Building  
EH9 3BF  
Proposed extension to and redevelopment of existing Darwin Building and demolition  
with redevelopment of existing library building with associated landscaping, car  
parking access and infrastructure.  
Granted  
7 November 2016

## **Main report**

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### **3.1 Description of the Proposal**

Any planning application will relate to the erection of a replacement research and teaching building on the site of the Darwin Building along with associated landscaping, access works and cycle parking. The gross floor space of any building as a result of the development is likely to exceed 5,000sqm.

### **3.2 Key Issues**

The key considerations against which the eventual application will be assessed include whether:

#### **a) The principle is acceptable in this location**

The principle is acceptable as the planning application is not anticipated to include any material change in the use of the land.

On 30 November 2022 the Planning Committee approved the Schedule 4 summaries and responses to representations made, to be submitted with the Proposed City Plan 2030 (CP2030) and its supporting documents for Examination in terms of Section 19 of The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. It should be noted that it is possible the status of CP2030 may change, including the weight attributed to it as it undergoes examination.

There is also the potential for CP2030 to be adopted during the eighteen-month period that this Proposal of Application Notice is valid or during the determination period after a planning application is submitted. In this event, CP2030 and National Planning Framework 4 will form the Development Plan against which any planning application will be assessed along with any material considerations.

#### **b) The design is acceptable in this location**

The demolition of the Darwin Building and adjacent 'Temporary Growth Facility' has been confirmed as permitted development under Class 70 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 (as amended) (application reference: 24/01187/CLP). It would not be competent for the Planning Authority to entertain the retention of a building(s) which can lawfully be demolished under Class 70. Accordingly, the forthcoming planning application shall solely focus on the acceptability against relevant policy of the new development and retention / refurbishment of the existing building(s) will not be considered.

The proposals will be assessed against all relevant design related policies of the Development Plan in force as well as the provisions of non-statutory Planning Guidance. At this stage, and whilst subject to change, the replacement building is likely to be smaller in height but greater in footprint than the Darwin Tower. Any planning application will be expected to demonstrate how the development constitutes an improvement for the street and city scape whilst safeguarding and enhancing (where relevant) the interest and integrity of nearby natural and historic assets (e.g. setting of listed buildings and impact on key views).

#### **c) There will be material adverse impacts for residential amenity**

The proposals will be assessed against all relevant amenity related policies of the Development Plan as well as the provisions of non-statutory Planning Guidance. At this stage, and whilst subject to change, material adverse impacts for residential amenity are not expected owing to the distance properties will sit from a replacement building of a similar principal use and floorspace to what already exists.

d) The access arrangements and transport impacts are acceptable

The proposals will be assessed against all relevant transport related policies of the Development Plan as well as the provisions of non-statutory Planning Guidance. At this stage, and whilst subject to change, very limited car parking is proposed and the temporary construction access leading to Mayfield Road is likely to be removed. The applicant will be required to provide transport information to demonstrate how the proposals prioritise active travel and are aligned with parking standards, including service arrangements and cycle parking provision.

e) There are any other environmental factors that require consideration

Whilst an Environmental Statement will not be required (application reference: 24/01184/SCR), sufficient information to demonstrate that the site can be developed without unacceptable impacts on the environment including how it will address the global climate and nature crisis will be expected. The following supporting documentation is anticipated:

- Archaeological / heritage information;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Landscape and visual impact information;
- Pre-Application Consultation Report;
- Planning Statement;
- Site remediation information;
- Surface water drainage information;
- Sustainability information and
- Transport information.

The above is not an exhaustive list and other supporting documentation may be identified prior to the planning application being submitted or during its assessment.

### **3.3 Assessment**

This report highlights the main issues that are likely to arise in relation to the various key considerations. This list is not exhaustive and further matters may arise when the new application is received, and consultees and the public have the opportunity to comment.

## **Financial impact**

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**4.1** The forthcoming application may be subject to a legal agreement.

## **Risk, Policy, compliance and governance impact.**

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

## **Equalities impact**

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**6.1** This is a pre-application report. When a planning application is submitted it will be assessed in terms of equalities and human rights.

## **Sustainability impact**

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**7.1** A sustainability statement will need to be submitted with the application.

## **Consultation and engagement**

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### **8.1 Pre-Application Process**

Pre-application discussions are currently ongoing regarding a possible planning application.

### **8.2 Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments**

The following parties were served with a copy of the Proposal of Application Notice on the 8 March 2024:

- 
- Grange and Prestonfield Community Council;
  - Liberton and District Community Council;
  - Gilmerton and Inch Community Council;
  - Councillor Steve Burgess;
  - Councillor Pauline Flannery;
  - Councillor Simita Kumar;
  - Councillor Tim Pogson;
  - Councillor Lezley Marion Cameron;
  - Councillor Martha Mattos-Coelho;
  - Councillor Phil Doggart;
  - Councillor Lesley Macinnes;
  - Daniel Johnson MSP and
  - Ian Murray MP.
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The following consultation was/will be carried out:

- Public event on the 27 March 2024 between 4pm and 7pm at the Elm
- Lecture Theatre, University of Edinburgh King's Building's Campus,
- EH9 3FG;
- Public event on the 8 May 2024 between 4pm and 7pm at the Elm Lecture
- Theatre, University of Edinburgh King's Buildings Campus, EH9 3FG;
- Publication of an advert in the Edinburgh Evening News the week
- commencing the 18 March 2024;
- Publication of an advert in the Edinburgh Evening News the week
- commencing the 29 April 2024; and
- Publication of a website (now live) at [www.ed.ac.uk/local/campus-development-and-consultations](http://www.ed.ac.uk/local/campus-development-and-consultations).

The results of the above consultation will be summarised within a Pre-application Consultation Report for submission with any planning application.

## Background reading/external references

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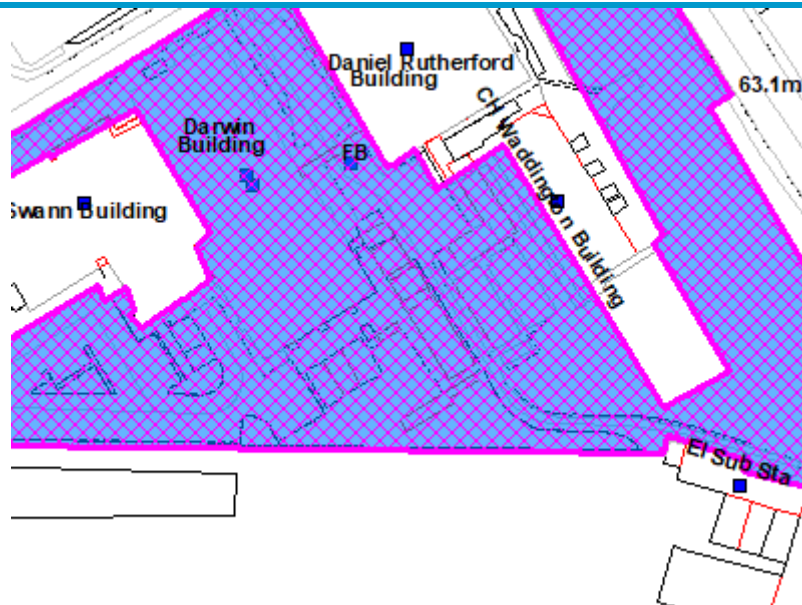
- To view details of the proposal of Application Notice go to
- [Planning and Building Standards online services](#)
- [Planning guidelines](#)
- [Conservation Area Character Appraisals](#)
- [Edinburgh Local Development Plan](#)

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## Location Plan

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