



PRE - APPLICATION REPORT REGARDING:

PROPOSED ERECTION OF A COMMUNITY FACILITY INCORPORATING A PRIMARY SCHOOL; NURSERY PROVISION; EARLY YEARS/WRAP AROUND CARE; LIBRARY; HEALTH CENTRE; AND ALTERATIONS TO THE EXISTING LEISURE CENTRE SITE AND ASSOCIATED EXTERNAL WORKS, LAND AT GEORGE AVENUE, LOANHEAD (15/00226/PAC)

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON THE SITE OF THE TO BE DEMOLISHED EXISTING PARADYKES PRIMARY SCHOOL, NURSERY, COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRE, LIBRARY AND HEALTH CENTRE, LAND AT MAYBURN WALK, LOANHEAD (15/00228/PAC)

Report by Head of Communities and Economy

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of two related pre application consultations submitted regarding the proposed erection of a community facility (including a primary school, nursery provision, early years/wrap around care facility, library and health centre) and the separate and associated pre application consultation for the development of the site of the to be demolished Paradykes Primary School, nursery, community learning centre, library and health centre and the sites redevelopment for housing. The new community facility is on George Avenue and the proposed residential development fronts onto Mayburn Walk.
- 1.2 The pre application consultation is reported to Committee to enable Councillors to express a provisional view on the proposed major developments. The report outlines the proposal, identifies the key development plan policies and material considerations and states a provisional without prejudice planning view regarding the principle of development.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Guidance on the role of Councillors in the pre-application process, published by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland, was reported to the Committee at its meeting of 27 May 2014 and subsequent procedures were reported to the Committee at its meeting of 7 October 2014. The guidance clarifies the position with regard to Councillors stating a provisional view on proposals at pre-application stage.

- 2.2 Pre application consultations for the proposed community facility and residential development were submitted on 17 March 2015.
- 2.3 As part of the pre application consultation process the applicants have held a public event/drop in session at Loanhead Library on 12, 17 and 19 March 2015 between 2pm and 7.30pm. On the conclusion of the public consultation process the applicant could submit a planning application for the proposal. It is anticipated that two separate detailed planning applications, one for the new community facilities and the one for the residential development, would be submitted. It is reasonable for an Elected Member to have attended such a public event without a Council planning officer present, but the Member should (in accordance with the Commissioner's guidance) not offer views, as the forum for doing so will be at this meeting of the Planning Committee.
- 2.4 Copies of the pre application notices have been sent by the applicant to Loanhead and District Community Council.

3 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The proposed developments are situated on land centrally located in Loanhead with the proposed community facility on George Avenue and the residential development fronting Mayburn Walk. The concept would be to build the proposed new community facilities prior to demolishing the existing facilities and redeveloping the site for housing.
- 3.2 In assessing any subsequent planning application the main planning issues to be considered will be the principle of development on the site, the relationship of the proposal with neighbouring land uses and properties, access and transportation issues and the design and layout of the proposal.
- 3.3 The adopted 2008 Midlothian Local Plan (MLP) identifies the sites as being within the built up area and therefore assessed in relation to policy RP20: Development within the built-up area. A provisional assessment against this policy supports both schemes in principle on the basis that the George Avenue site is already used for community uses and the Mayburn Walk site is within a residential estate which will be compatible with an appropriate new housing scheme.
- 3.4 However, there are other MLP policies which will require to be considered as part of the assessment, including DP2: Development Guidelines, which relates to the need for new development to adhere to good design in both the overall layout of sites and a high quality of architecture. The proposals will also have to be assessed in relation to Policies IMP1, 2 and 3 which relate to the need for developer contributions and the provision of essential infrastructure, facility deficiencies and affordable housing.

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1 The Scottish Government's Guidance on the Role of Councillors in Pre-Application Procedures provides for Councillors to express a 'without prejudice' view and to identify material considerations with regard to a major application.
- 4.2 The Committee is invited to express a 'without prejudice' view and to raise any material considerations which it wishes the applicant and/or officers to consider. Views and comments expressed by the Committee will be entered into the minutes of the meeting and relayed to the applicant for consideration.
- 4.3 The Scottish Government's Guidance on the Role of Councillors in Pre-Application Procedures advises that Councillors are expected to approach their decision-making with an open mind in that they must have regard to all material considerations and be prepared to change their views which they are minded towards if persuaded that they should.

5 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes:
 - a) the provisional planning position set out in this report; and
 - b) that any comments made by Members will form part of the minute of the Committee meeting; and
 - c) that the expression of a provisional view does not fetter the Committee in its consideration of any subsequent formal planning application.

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