



PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION FOR A MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT AT LAND BOUNDED BY A7, STOBHILL ROAD AND PENTLAND AVENUE, GOREBRIDGE (17/00663/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 a pre application consultation submitted regarding a proposed mixed use development comprising residential and commercial uses at land bounded by the A7, Stobhill Road and Pentland Avenue, Gorebridge (17/00663/PAC).
- 1.2 The pre application consultation is reported to Committee to enable Councillors to express a provisional view on the proposed major development. 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 6 June 2017. The guidance clarifies the position with regard to Councillors stating a provisional view on proposals at pre-application stage.
- 2.2 A pre application consultation for a mixed use development, including residential and commercial land uses; access; landscaping; SUDS; parking and demolition of existing Stobhill depot facility at land bounded by A7, Stobhill Road and Pentland Avenue, Gorebridge was submitted on 16 August 2017.
- 2.3 As part of the pre-application consultation process, the applicants held a public event at the National Mining Museum on Thursday 14 September 2017 from 2-8pm. On the conclusion of the public event and the 12 week pre application consultation engagement period the applicant could submit a planning application for the proposal. It is anticipated that a planning application for either planning permission in principle or detailed planning permission will be submitted. It is reasonable for an Elected Member to attend 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 prospective applicant to the local elected members, Gorebridge Community Council, Newtongrange Community Council, and Mayfield and Easthouses Community Council.

3 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 In assessing any subsequent planning application the main planning issue to be considered in determining the application is whether the currently proposed development complies with development plan policies unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise
- 3.2 The 9.71ha site is located immediately to the south of Newtongrange, bounded to the west by the A7, by Stobhill Road to the north, by Pentland Avenue to the east; and by a restaurant, recycling centre and agricultural land to the south. Beyond to the north, south and east are residential properties and agricultural land. Across the A7 to the west are a construction materials depot and industrial units.
- 3.3 Approximately a quarter of the site, being in its north-west corner, is occupied by this Council's Stobhill Depot which is served by an 'in and out' vehicle access onto Stobhill Road. Aside from a further access from Stobhill Road through the site to the abovementioned recycling centre, the site is otherwise open grassland. No further details of the proposal have been submitted with the pre application consultation.
- 3.4 The development plan is comprised of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland Strategic Development Plan (June 2013) and the Midlothian Local Plan (MLP), adopted in December 2008. The adopted 2008 Midlothian Local Plan (MLP) identifies the area of the Council depot as being subject to Policy RP20 Development within the built-up area, where appropriate development will be support if it does not detract materially from the existing character or amenity of the area. The rest of the site is subject to policies which seek use of the site for general industry/business, including to meet strategic requirements (Policies ECON1 and COMD1). It is anticipated that, in large part, the proposals would not accord with the development plan.
- 3.5 At its meeting of 16 December 2014 the Council approved the Proposed MLDP as its settled spatial strategy. The MLDP continues the commitment to the land uses set out above in paragraph 3.4. The plan was subject to Local Plan Examination and subject to consideration by a Reporter appointed by the Scottish Ministers. The Reporters findings were published on 10 July 2017 and the examination findings were reported to Council in September 2017. With regard to this site the Reporter recommendations do not change the commitment to the industrial/business uses. This is a material

consideration of significant weight in the assessment of any application, if submitted prior to the adoption of the MLDP.

- 3.6 The principal material consideration to consider is the economic benefits in terms of inward investment and job creation. The weight to be given to any such benefits, and the extent to which housing is justifiable in enabling such benefits would be assessed as part of any planning application assessment.

4 PROCEDURES

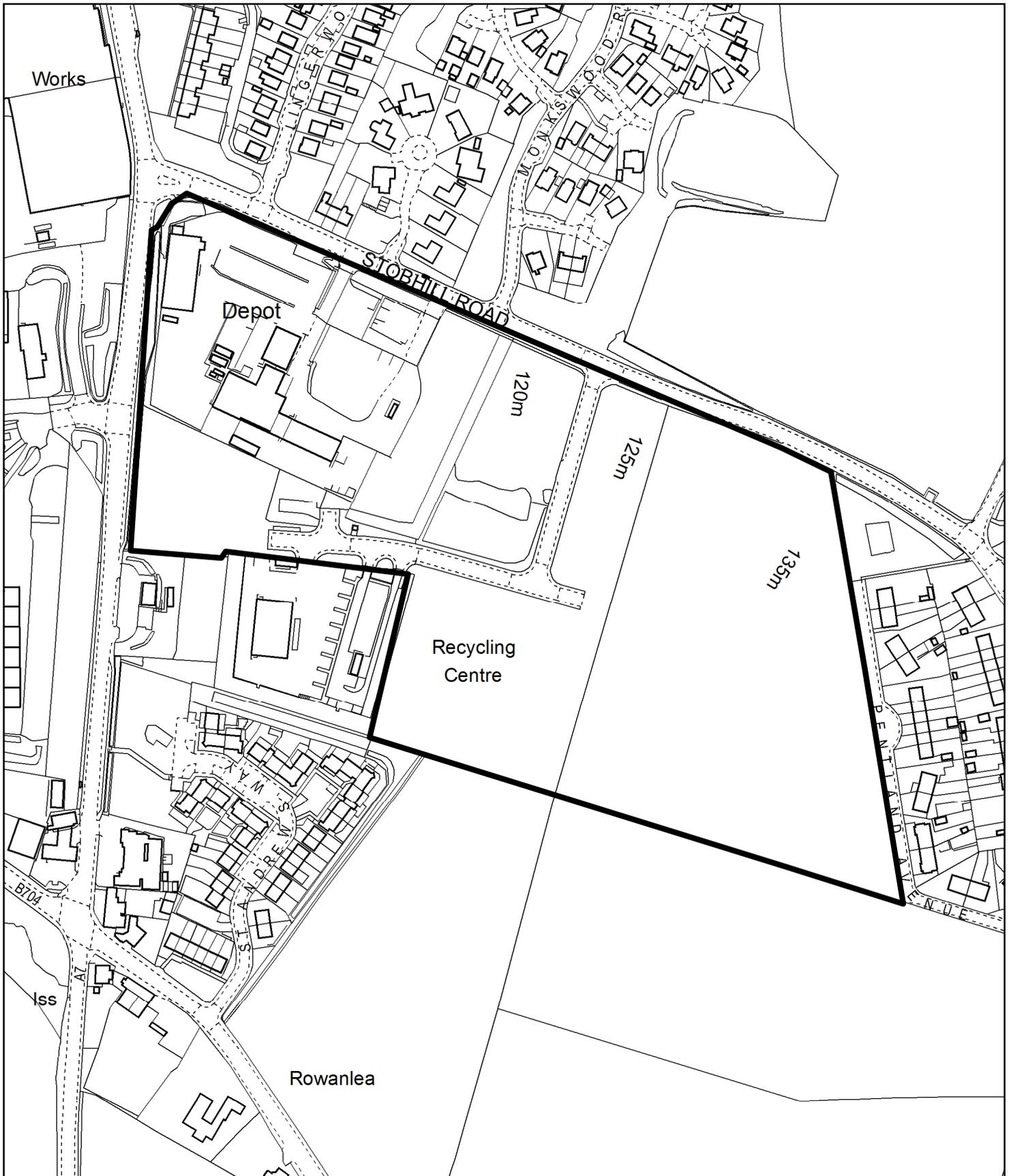
- 4.1 The Scottish Government's Guidance on the Role of Councillors in Pre-Application Procedures provides for Councillors to express a 'without prejudice' view and to identify material considerations with regard to a major application.
- 4.2 The Committee is invited to express a 'without prejudice' view and to raise any material considerations which they wish 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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Date: 22 September 2017
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Land Bounded By A7, Stobhill Road and Pentland Avenue,
Gorebridge

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