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## **PRE - APPLICATION REPORT REGARDING INSTALLATION OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE SYSTEM (SUDS) AND FOUL WATER DRAINAGE SYSTEM AT EASTER BUSH CAMPUS, BUSH FARM ROAD, ROSLIN (17/00339/PAC)**

Report by Head of Communities and Economy

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### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of a pre application consultation submitted regarding the installation of a sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS) and foul water drainage system at Easter Bush Campus, Bush Farm Road, Roslin (17/00339/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 the installation of a sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS) and foul water drainage system at Easter Bush Campus, Bush Farm Road, Roslin was submitted 1 May 2017.
- 2.3 As part of the pre application consultation process the applicants held a public event/drop in session at the Roslin Institute, Easter Bush Campus between 1pm and 5pm on Wednesday 7 June 2017. 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 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 reported to the Committee at its meeting in June 2017) 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 the Penicuik and District Community Council, the Roslin and Bilston Community Council and the Damhead and District 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 proposed development is situated on land at Easter Bush Campus which is a long-established university campus being home to several facilities relating to veterinary medicine and bioscience. Easter Bush was originally a farm steading and there are some 19<sup>th</sup> Century farm buildings remaining, although they have been converted to uses related to the campus. The main periods of development at the campus were in the 1960's and during the last 20 years. The proposed application site has an area of approximately 24 hectares.
- 3.3 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 site as being in the countryside; the green belt; and the "non-conforming" land use at the Bush Estate. Any subsequent planning application will be subject to assessment against policies RP1: Protection of the Countryside; RP2: Protection of the Green Belt; and RP3: Major Non-Conforming Land Uses in the Green Belt. The development is associated with the established activity at the Bush Estate and the principle of development is therefore acceptable. However this policy position with regard the proposed development site is being superseded by the Proposed MLDP.
- 3.4 At its meeting of 16 December 2014 the Council approved the Proposed MLDP as its settled spatial strategy. The site is identified as forming part of a larger site allocated for biotechnology/knowledge-based industries. Any subsequent planning application will be subject to assessment against policy ECON2: The Bush Bioscience Cluster. The development is associated with the established activity at the Bush Estate and the principle of development is therefore acceptable. The plan was subject to Local Plan Examination and subject to consideration by a Reporter appointed by the Scottish Ministers. The Reporter's findings were published on 10 July 2017. It is anticipated that the examination findings will be reported to Council in September 2017. This is a material consideration of significant weight in the assessment of any application, if submitted prior to the adoption of the MLDP.

- 3.5 If an application is submitted either prior to, or after the adoption of the MLDP there will be a presumption in favour of the installation of a sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS) and foul water drainage system.

#### **4. PROCEDURES**

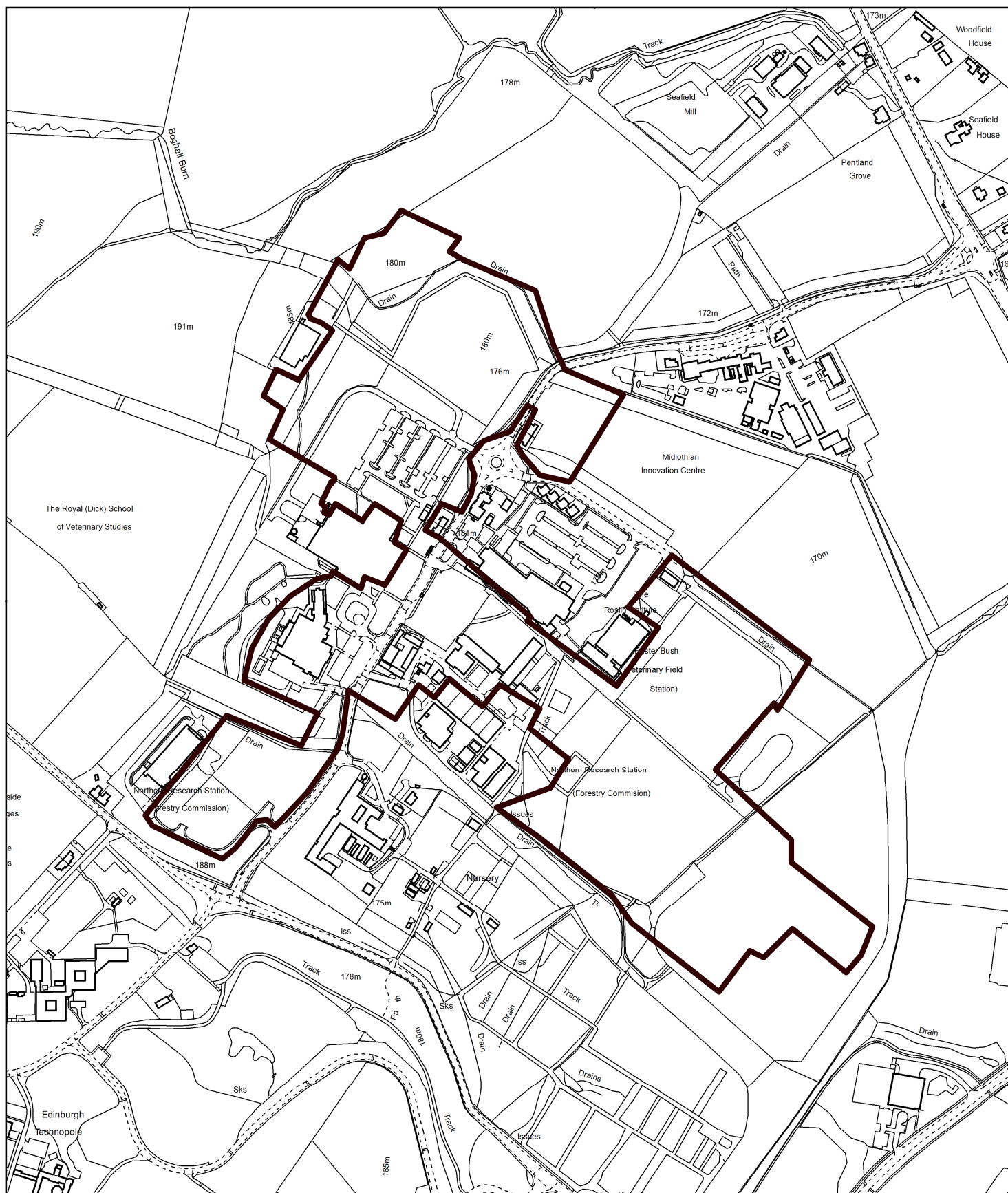
- 4.1 The Scottish Government's Guidance on the Role of Councillors in Pre-Application Procedures provides for Councillors to express a 'without prejudice' view and to identify material considerations with regard to a major application.
- 4.2 The Committee is invited to express a 'without prejudice' 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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