

6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Local Plan Objectives

- To promote new business and industrial development at Granton Waterfront as part of the overall regeneration proposals.
- To promote Edinburgh Park and Granton Waterfront as strategic locations for office development within West Edinburgh.
- To maintain an adequate supply of land for economic development uses and improve the environment and accessibility of existing industrial and business areas.
- To encourage small scale business opportunities, particularly within the regeneration areas of North Edinburgh and Wester Hailes.
- To encourage the further development of existing businesses in the Local Plan area.
- To identify appropriate alternative uses for former business and industrial sites which are no longer considered suitable for economic development uses.
- To encourage the enhancement and development of tourist facilities which will benefit existing communities and are consistent with environmental protection and sustainable development objectives.

Background

- 6.1 The Local Plan area benefits from having good road and rail transport links and being located close to both the airport and the City Centre. It has a number of major centres of industrial and commercial activity – South Gyle, Edinburgh Park, Granton, Sighthill Industrial Estate, Gorgie and Chesser. These vary in character and accommodate a wide range of industrial and business uses. General industrial uses which would not normally be compatible with residential amenity have tended to locate in the traditional industrial areas of Granton, Gorgie and Chesser. The more modern industrial estates at Sighthill and South Gyle cater for mainly light industrial/business uses with Edinburgh Park the high profile focus for office development. In addition, there are also a number of single occupier sites located in areas of predominantly residential use, including BAE Systems site at Ferry Road and the Parsons Peebles/VA Tech site at Pilton Avenue. The latter was seriously damaged by a fire in early 1999 and the previous occupiers have now relocated to Rosyth and Leith.
- 6.2 The economic base of the Local Plan area has been subject to considerable change in recent years. There has been an overall decline in manufacturing industry which has been most noticeable in the Granton area. Throughout the Local Plan area, many locations and premises which were previously suitable for economic development are not compatible with the needs of present day businesses. In addition, industrial land is coming under pressure for redevelopment for uses which achieve greater financial returns, such as housing or retailing. The North West Edinburgh Local Plan includes two major business allocations which have experienced mixed results in attracting development. The uptake of land for business use at Granton has been disappointing. However, Granton Waterfront is now the subject of a major regeneration initiative involving a wide range of public and private bodies which should result in significant business development and job creation. Edinburgh Park located adjacent to the City Bypass, is proving to be very attractive for both inward investment and the relocation of existing Edinburgh-based businesses, mainly in the office sector. The South West Edinburgh Local Plan includes only one significant business proposal at Cultins Road. This site is now almost complete having been developed for office, retail warehouse and car showroom uses.

- 6.3 Unemployment rates in West Edinburgh vary considerably. Muirhouse and Wester Hailes have the highest unemployment rates in the city, around 12-14%. In Muirhouse male unemployment is 19%. However in some areas, for example Baberton and Cramond, only 1% of residents are unemployed. The West Edinburgh Local Plan area does not have Assisted Area status and therefore does not qualify for European grant assistance. However, measures to assist employment creation in the partnership areas of North Edinburgh and Wester Hailes, are available within the context of the “Closing the Gap” urban regeneration strategy.
- 6.4 Although there are few major tourist facilities in the area, its natural countryside assets including Cramond to the north and the Pentland Hills to the South attract visitors. Edinburgh Zoo, on Corstorphine Road attracts high numbers of visitors and is the fourth largest tourist attraction of its type in Britain. In terms of tourist accommodation, there are a number of hotels and guest houses, with the latter being located primarily along the main arterial routes. Two projects, both assisted by lottery funding, are being undertaken which will increase the visitor potential of the two main waterways running through the Local Plan area. The re-opening and refurbishment of the Union Canal as part of the Millennium Link will significantly increase the number of people using the canal and towpaths. In this Local Plan area, Wester Hailes in particular should benefit in terms of environmental improvements and employment opportunities. Proposals for the Water of Leith include the provision of a new visitor centre at Slateford and the completion and upgrading of the walkway from source to sea. The regeneration proposals for Granton Waterfront will create a new quality environment with a balanced mix of uses including leisure and tourism facilities. As a result, this area of the City is likely to become an important visitor destination.

Policy Context

- 6.5 Business and industrial uses fall within Classes 4 to 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997. Class 4 “business” covers light industry, office, and research/development uses, which can be conducted in a residential area without detriment to amenity in terms of noise, vibration or pollution. All other industrial uses fall within Class 5 “general industry”. Class 6 covers uses for storage and distribution.
- 6.6 Government policy for business and industry is set out in NPPG 2 “Business and Industry” (October 1993). It requires the planning system to reconcile the need for industrial and business development with the maintenance of environmental quality. Both NPPG2 and NPPG17 “Transport and Planning” (April 1999) promote the identification of business uses in locations which are accessible by modes of transport other than the private car.
- 6.7 The Lothian Structure Plan 1994 places a high priority on encouraging economic development and spreading its benefits to areas that do not currently share in economic prosperity. While there is not a shortage of industrial land in the Lothians, there is scope to improve the quality and distribution of development opportunities. Accordingly, the Structure Plan's economic development strategy requires the provision of new high quality sites and the encouragement of new technology development through the provision of specialised research and development parks. It identifies three strategic locations for new business development, none of which are within this Local Plan area. However it does support Edinburgh Park as a strategic business centre for major office development. The development of existing sites (Category 1 and 2 sites as set out in the established industrial land supply 1993) is also supported: in West Edinburgh, this includes land at Granton and Cultins Road.

- 6.8 Supported by the Local Transport Strategy and NPPG17, the Structure Plan requires that the location of new business development sites promotes public transport use and reduces the lengths of journeys to work. The Structure Plan seeks to concentrate business development in strategic centres and generally applies a policy of restraint outside these areas. Although Granton Waterfront is not identified as a key strategic business location, its redevelopment for a mix of uses including business and industry is consistent with the Structure Plan strategy. The project will create jobs in an area with high levels of unemployment, provide employment in close proximity to homes and is being brought forward in conjunction with a Public Transport Study.
- 6.9 The Structure Plan seeks to resist pressure for change from business use to other activities. However, where former industrial and business sites are no longer suitable for economic development uses, other compatible uses (particularly housing) are supported. The Structure Plan also supports tourism in recognition of its important contribution to the City's economy.

Policies and Proposals

General Industrial and Business Development

- 6.10 The two key locations for major new business and industrial development in West Edinburgh are Granton Waterfront and Edinburgh Park. Outwith these areas, opportunities for further significant allocations of business and industrial land are limited. Much of the area is residential or has environmental or heritage significance, restricting the potential to identify new employment sites. However, the developable land available at Edinburgh Park and Granton is considerable and the opportunity exists to accommodate new business development of varying types and sizes. Edinburgh Park is the high profile business gateway to the City, providing land for mainly office development in an attractive environment and accessible location. The accessibility of this area will be greatly enhanced when the proposed CERT system and Edinburgh Park Station are operational. Just over half of the land allocated for business development at Edinburgh Park has now been completed.
- 6.11 Employment generation is a key aim of the Waterfront Granton Master Plan. Accordingly, business and industry development should be an integral component of the mixed use regeneration proposals for the area (Proposals WG1 – WG4). Within Granton Waterfront, the approved Master Plan provides the planning and design framework against which development proposals will be assessed. Class 4 business uses are likely to be most suitable as these can be located in close proximity to residential development. However Class 5 general industrial uses also have the potential to make a valuable contribution to the local economy. Proposals for general industrial uses will be carefully assessed to ensure that they do not undermine the regeneration aims to create an attractive mixed-use environment for residents, workers and visitors. Further guidance on development within the Waterfront area can be found in Chapter 10.
- 6.12 The business land at Cultins Road identified in the South West Edinburgh Local Plan is almost complete. However, one opportunity site adjacent to Hermiston Gait Retail Park remains available for development. Given its highly visible location adjacent to the City Bypass, a high quality Class 4 use is preferred. However providing a satisfactory design solution can be achieved, a Class 6 (storage and distribution) development may also be acceptable.

Policy ED1 - Business and Industrial Sites

The development or redevelopment of Proposal sites BUS1 – BUS4 primarily for the business and industrial uses outlined below will be supported :

BUS 1	Edinburgh Park	Class 4
BUS 2	Hermiston Gait	Classes 4 and 6
BUS 3	West Gorgie Parks	Classes 4 and 5
BUS 4	New Mart Road	Class 4

Proposals for business and industrial development at Granton Waterfront which accord with the approved Master Plan will be supported.

- 6.13 The business and industrial land supply in West Edinburgh is comprised of the four identified business proposals, land at Granton Waterfront and existing business and industrial areas. The existing business and industrial areas identified in the South West and North West Edinburgh Local Plans have been reviewed in terms of their continuing suitability for economic development uses, and the Local Transport Strategy's objective of siting new developments in locations which support the use of alternatives to the private car. Many of these areas remain suitable for business development, have a reasonable walk-in catchment area and are located on or close to public transport routes.
- 6.14 The existing industrial areas highlighted on the Proposals Map may be suitable for Class 4, 5 or 6 uses, subject to consideration of factors such as accessibility, traffic generation and amenity impact. Within these areas, opportunities may arise for changes of use of existing premises, redevelopment of vacant sites and the expansion of existing businesses. Where existing industrial areas are quite closely related to housing areas, the protection of residential amenity will be key in assessing the acceptability of development proposals.. All the existing and proposed business and industrial sites could accommodate office development as a result of the flexibility within the Use Classes and General Development Orders. However, office developments can draw significant numbers of employees and are therefore best located in strategic centres for sustainable transport reasons. In West Edinburgh, office development will be encouraged at Edinburgh Park and Granton Waterfront, where major public transport improvements are proposed and such uses can benefit from proximity to complimentary services. Proposals for office development will only be acceptable elsewhere in the urban area if they are appropriate in scale and character to their location and surroundings and are well connected to existing or proposed public transport, walking and cycling networks. Proposals for new business or industrial development, or expansion of existing businesses, provide an opportunity to improve the environmental quality of business and industrial areas in terms of landscaping, building design, air quality, energy efficiency and waste management.
- 6.15 Major industrial, business and storage/distribution development will be resisted outside identified existing industrial/business areas and identified business proposal sites. Such developments are liable to generate noise, activity and/or significant traffic volumes and are not acceptable within residential areas. Small scale business developments, and the expansion of existing businesses, can have local employment benefits without undermining the broad locational strategy, and may be acceptable provided that there will be no detrimental impact on residential amenity and that they are compatible with their surroundings. Developments involving hazardous substances will be rigorously assessed, in consultation with the Health and Safety Executive, in order to ensure that they do not give rise to health, safety or amenity concerns. In view of the predominantly residential nature of much of the Local Plan area, there is unlikely to be a significant potential for such developments in West Edinburgh.

- 6.16 The need to provide opportunities for business development and training facilities is particularly important in West Edinburgh's two local Partnership areas (North Edinburgh and Wester Hailes). In both areas, the economic development priorities have been identified as access to employment and provision of appropriate training. The use of Local Labour and Training Agreements can assist in targeting jobs and training opportunities afforded by new development proposals towards people from disadvantaged groups and communities.

Policy ED2 – New Industrial and Business Development

Within existing business and industrial areas (as defined on the Proposals Map), new industrial and business development (use classes 4, 5 and 6) will be acceptable, provided:

- a) there is no unacceptable impact on residential amenity;**
- b) there is no unacceptable traffic impact; and**
- c) proposals are of an appropriate scale and character.**

In areas not identified for economic development purposes, general industrial and warehousing proposals (use classes 5 and 6) will be resisted. Small-scale business development (use class 4) and training facilities will generally be supported throughout the urban area, subject to compliance with other Local Plan policies. Proposals for new developments involving hazardous substances will not be allowed if likely to lead to an unacceptable risk to health, safety or amenity.

Policy ED3 – New Office Development

Edinburgh Park and Granton Waterfront are the preferred locations for office development in West Edinburgh. Elsewhere in the urban area, new office development will be only be acceptable where proposals are of an appropriate scale and character and easily accessible to existing public transport, walking and cycling networks (or proposed networks, where these can be implemented in time to serve the development).

Policy ED4 - Expansion of Existing Businesses

The expansion of existing businesses will be supported, provided:

- (a) there is no detrimental impact on neighbouring uses and local residential amenity; and**
- (b) the scale of development is appropriate to the size and location of the site; and**
- (c) in the case of expansions outwith the urban area, there are significant economic benefits, relocation is impractical and there are no harmful effects on the landscape quality of the Green Belt.**

- 6.17 With the exception of Edinburgh Park and Granton Waterfront, opportunities for business and industrial development are limited in West Edinburgh, and there may be pressure to develop those sites that do become available for alternative higher value uses. The need to ensure an ongoing supply of land for business and industry distributed throughout the Local Plan area accords with the principles of sustainable development, in terms of enabling people to work close to their homes and thereby reducing travel distances. In order to maintain an adequate supply of land for economic development purposes and retain opportunities to generate additional employment, suitable sites are protected from incompatible development.

- 6.18 There are a number of sites identified for economic development purposes in the South West and North West Edinburgh Local Plans where protection for business and industrial purposes is no longer required. This may be because the site is not appropriate for modern industrial/business practices, the predominant character of the surrounding area is residential, the site is poorly located in relation to public transport services or it is no longer required by its current occupier and an alternative business use is neither likely nor desirable. The Waterfront Granton Master Plan has been prepared within the context that there is no requirement for the whole of the site to be

retained in industrial use. Other examples include the Parsons Peebles/VA Tech site at Pilton Avenue and BAE Systems at Silverknowes, which have both been identified as housing opportunity sites in this Local Plan. Proposals for the redevelopment of urban business and industrial land not affected by Policy ED2 are supported in principle, subject to compliance with the policies in this Local Plan. In most cases, housing is likely to be the most appropriate alternative use.

Policy ED5 – Protection of Business and Industrial Land

Other uses will only be allowed on business/industry proposal sites and in areas defined "existing business/industrial" on the Proposals Map where:

- (a) proposals are compatible with business and industrial uses; and**
- (b) there is no significant loss in terms of the quality or quantity of the business and industrial land supply in the Local Plan area.**

Higher Education

- 6.19 There are a number of higher education establishments within West Edinburgh - Queen Margaret University College at Clermiston, Napier University campuses at Craiglockhart, Craighouse and Sighthill, Telford College at Crewe Road North and Stevenson College at Sighthill. These universities and colleges make a significant contribution to the local economy, particularly in terms of job creation and research and development. In order to best meet their operational requirements, many of these establishments are presently reviewing their portfolio of sites and facilities. Opportunities may exist for the relocation of facilities to more appropriate locations and/or further development on existing campuses. In recognition of their value to the local economy, proposals to enhance the facilities provided by higher education establishments within the West Edinburgh area will generally be supported, unless contrary to other local plan policies.
- 6.20 The Waterfront Granton Master Plan identifies an opportunity for the relocation of an existing college or university. Such a proposal could provide a modern purpose-built campus that would benefit the Waterfront area in terms of creating jobs and attracting staff, students and ancillary services to the area.

Policy ED6 – Higher Education Facilities

Within the urban area, development proposals which will enhance the quality of higher education facilities will be supported, subject to compliance with other local plan policies.

Proposals for a college/university at Granton Waterfront should comply with the provisions of the approved Master Plan.

Tourism

- 6.21 Tourism has the potential to make an important contribution to the local economy, in terms of job creation and revenue generation. The development and improvement of tourist facilities in the Local Plan area is therefore encouraged. Any proposals will need to accord with sustainability principles and the need to reduce energy consumption, being well located in terms of public transport connections and cycle routes. Tourist developments should not have a detrimental impact on features of urban and nature conservation value, local residents, the rural landscape or the surrounding road network. Within West Edinburgh, Granton Waterfront offers the best opportunity to develop and expand facilities for visitors, where proposals will be brought forward within the context of the approved Master Plan. Further guidance on development within the Waterfront area can be found in Chapter 10.

Policy ED7 - Tourist and Visitor Facilities

Proposals to develop or enhance tourist or visitor facilities will be supported provided that they are located on suitable sites and are of an appropriate scale in relation to their surroundings.

6.22 The Council is also concerned to encourage the provision of visitor accommodation in suitable locations within the Local Plan area. Chapter 5 (Housing and Public Services) deals with the issue of the change of use from residential accommodation to hotel or guest house use. A hotel is proposed as part of Phase 2 of Edinburgh Park to serve mainly business clientele. Elsewhere in West Edinburgh, the development of purpose built hotels is encouraged as part of the regeneration of Granton Waterfront and on Principal Tourist Routes within the urban area.

Policy ED8 - Hotel Development

New hotel development, including the conversion of non-residential buildings to hotel use, will be favourably considered on suitable sites adjacent to the Principal Tourist Routes defined on the Proposals Map, provided it is appropriate in scale and character to its surroundings as regards scale, character and overall impact and at Granton Waterfront provided it accords with the approved Master Plan.

SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY PROPOSALS

BUS1

Edinburgh Park

Site Area:

56.1 hectares

Owner:

New Edinburgh Limited

Proposed Uses:

Class 4

Edinburgh Park covers 56.1 hectares in total, 35.5 of which has already been developed. The remainder of the site will be developed for Class 4 (predominantly office) uses. Ancillary uses to serve Edinburgh Park employees and visitors such as a hotel, retail and café/restaurants will be permitted.

The layout, design and landscaping of the remainder of the site will be expected to reflect the quality of the existing development.

The accessibility of the Park by public transport will be greatly enhanced by the development of a station on the eastern boundary of the site in association with the proposed rapid transit system CERT.

BUS2

Hermiston Gait

Site Area:

3.4 hectares

Owner:

Private

Proposed Uses:

Classes 4 and 6

This gateway site is considered most suitable for Class 4 business development. Given the site's proximity to City Bypass, it may also be suited to Class 6 Storage and Distribution uses. A high quality layout and design appropriate to its prominent location will be expected.

BUS3

West Gorgie Parks

Site Area:

0.3 hectares

Owner:

Private

Proposed Uses:

Class 4 and 5

As part of the overall regeneration of the Chesser area, there is an opportunity to extend the existing business and industrial estate onto land to the north, which is currently part of the fruitmarket site.

This will assist in the promotion of small business development and job creation in the Chesser area.

Proposals should make provision for a walkway/cycleway through the site to facilitate a link between the Water of Leith and the former railway line to the east of Hutchison Crossway.

<p>BUS4</p> <p>New Mart Road</p> <hr/> <p>Site Area:</p> <p>3.1 hectares</p> <hr/> <p>Owner:</p> <p>Private</p> <hr/> <p>Proposed Uses:</p> <p>Class 4 Business and/or Commercial Leisure</p>	<p>The former Lawrie & Symington and Swan auction premises along New Mart Road are no longer required for the purposes of animal sales.</p> <p>As part of the overall regeneration of the Chesser area, the redevelopment of the site can contribute to the range of services and facilities available at this local centre. The identification of the site for class 4 business and/or leisure uses will compliment the existing leisure facilities and proposed retail development on neighbouring sites</p> <p>Consideration must be given to the impact of proposals on the amenity of residential properties to the north west of the site.</p> <p>The Category B Listed Building on the site requires to be retained.</p>
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