

# Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 25 March 2015

**Consultation from Midlothian Council 15/00648/MLC for application at  
Land At Calderstone, Biggar Road, Edinburgh  
Application for Planning Permission in Principle for the demolition of existing dwellinghouse, erection of hotel and residential development, formation of access roads, car parking and associated works.**

<b>Item number</b>	4.1
<b>Report number</b>	
<b>Wards</b>	MLC - Midlothian Council

## Summary

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This application consultation from Midlothian Council has potential cross- boundary impacts that need to be carefully considered and addressed. The justification for a hotel and housing development in this location is a matter for Midlothian Council to consider. None of the cross-boundary issues are significant enough to justify an objection to the application. However, it is requested that Midlothian Council takes into account of the cross-boundary landscape issue raised in this report when considering the application and attach appropriate conditions or seek a suitable legal agreement to address them, should Midlothian Council be minded to grant planning permission.

## Links

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[Policies and guidance for this application](#)

# Report

## **Consultation from Midlothian Council 15/00648/MLC for application at Land At Calderstone, Biggar Road, Edinburgh Application for Planning Permission in Principle for the demolition of existing dwellinghouse, erection of hotel and residential development, formation of access roads, car parking and associated works.**

### **Recommendations**

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- 1.1 It is recommended that the response to this application consultation request is to raise no objection.

### **Background**

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#### **2.1 Site description**

The site is located on the Midlothian Council boundary to the west of Biggar Road (A702) on the east side of land at Calderstone. The site currently includes a two storey residential building and forms part of the Edinburgh Green Belt. The Midlothian Snowsports Centre and Hillend Country Park are located west of the site. The site is identified within the adopted Midlothian Local Plan 2008 as being part of the Edinburgh Green Belt.

#### **2.2 Site History**

The site is within the Midlothian Council area and therefore there is no history on file for the site.

### **Main report**

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#### **3.1 Description Of The Proposal**

The proposal is for planning permission in principle for a mixed use development and associated works. It seeks to demolish the existing residential plot and to erect a hotel to provide for 150 rooms with the construction of a replacement dwelling and the development of three new residential plots. A new junction is proposed to be taken from the A702, including access and internal road layout to the Snowsports Centre. An indicative master plan has been submitted with the application (Midlothian Ref: 15/00113/PPP).

#### **3.3 Assessment**

The key issues are whether this proposal raises any strategic planning policy issues or cross boundary impacts that justify an objection to this application.

The proposal is to construct a hotel development and four residential plots on land at Calderstone adjacent to the City of Edinburgh Council Boundary. The site is identified within the adopted Midlothian Plan 2008 as being part of the Edinburgh Green Belt. Midlothian Council has been preparing a new Local Development Plan, to reflect the requirements of the approved Strategic Development Plan (SDP) which will supersede the adopted plan in due course.

The proposed plan was approved by Midlothian Council's Planning Committee on 16 December 2014. The Proposed Plan now represents Midlothian Council's 'settled view' as to where development should be located. However, it should be noted that Midlothian Council has yet to prepare the Proposals Map and therefore it is not clear what policies will cover this site. Furthermore, the period for representations and subsequent examination has yet to commence and this significantly reduces the weight attached to the Proposed Plan.

It is not clear what range of alternative urban based sites for the hotel was assessed and discounted to justify the location of a hotel development on this sensitive area of green belt land. The Supporting Statement has not demonstrated how a hotel in this location would support a link to policy COMF 7 'Midlothian Ski and Snowboard Centre' with the estimated demand of visitors to the Centre and the surrounding area unknown. Therefore, if Midlothian Council is minded to approve the application it will have to be on the basis of there being compelling reasons to do so, for example, that there is capacity for a hotel development in this location and that there are no suitable alternative urban sites elsewhere.

The proposal for four new housing plots on this site appears to be contrary to the development plan. The rationale for housing in this Green Belt location should be based on a need for additional housing and the absence of suitable alternative non Green Belt sites elsewhere. However, the Supporting Statement does not address this and instead justifies the need for housing to support the viability of the proposal which is not an acceptable justification.

The justification for the location of a hotel and housing development in this location are matters for Midlothian Council to consider. However, given the site's location adjacent to the Edinburgh boundary it is important that any potential cross-boundary effects are assessed, should this site be taken forward. The key issues for this Council are related to transport and landscaping.

### Transport

The applicant has carried out a transport assessment (TA) in support of the proposed development. The development junction is predicted to operate within capacity and visibility to the three way junction to the south of the site appears to be acceptable, however, this element is for Midlothian Council to assess. The traffic impact generated from the development will have minimal impact on adjacent junctions within Edinburgh. No objections on transport grounds are raised.

### Landscape

The site is located within the Green Belt, Hillend Country Park, the Pentland Hills Regional Park and its corresponding Area of Great Landscape Value.

The heavily treed grounds at Calderstone contribute to the landscape setting of the City and wooded character of the foot slopes of the Pentland Hills at Hillend. The scale of development proposed and tree removal required to facilitate the proposed hotel, associated car parking, private dwellings, vehicular access and visibility splay will impact adversely on the character of the landscape.

The site is prominent in roadside views leading to and from Edinburgh, including the City Bypass; from the residential suburbs of Swanston, Fairmilehead and Kaimes, and from locations within the Green Belt at Buckstone, Mortonhall and Morton Mains Conservation Area. Through the introduction of new, large scale buildings and tree removal on the flanks of the Pentlands, development will impact adversely on views towards Hillend from key approaches to and from the City, its residential suburbs and path routes within the Green Belt.

Given the exposed nature of the site, sloping landform and scale of development proposed, replacement tree cover is likely to be a long-term prospect, with short to medium term impacts on the landscape and visual interests of the Country Park, Regional Park and Green Belt. Should the application be approved, it is recommended that a comprehensive woodland management plan forms part of any legal agreement, specifying the location, extent and maintenance of any replanting. The impact of lighting from within the development should be fully considered to avoid change to the rural character of the hills.

## **Conclusion**

This application does not raise any strategic planning issues justifying an objection, however, it does raise cross boundary implications that need to be carefully considered and addressed. The justification for a hotel and housing development in this location is a matter for Midlothian Council to consider. None of the cross-boundary issues are significant enough to justify an objection to the application. However, it is requested that Midlothian Council takes into account the cross-boundary landscape issue raised in this report when considering the application and attach appropriate conditions or seek suitable legal agreements to address them, should it be minded to grant planning permission.

It is recommended that this application be raise no objection.

## **3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives**

Not applicable

## **Financial impact**

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### **4.1 The financial impact has been assessed as follows:**

There are no financial implications to the Council.

## **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 The equalities impact has been assessed as follows:**

This is a consultation response to a Midlothian planning application and therefore there is no impact in terms of equalities or human rights.

## **Sustainability impact**

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### **7.1 The sustainability impact has been assessed as follows:**

This application is not subject to the sustainability requirements of the Edinburgh Design Guidance.

## **Consultation and engagement**

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

There is no pre-application process history.

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

No representations were received for this consultation from a neighbouring planning authority.

## **Background reading/external references**

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- To view details of the application go to relevant council website:
- <https://planning-applications.midlothian.gov.uk/OnlinePlanning/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

**Statutory Development****Plan Provision****Date registered** 17 February 2015**Drawing numbers/Scheme****David R. Leslie**

Acting Head of Planning and Building Standards

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**Links - Policies**

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Not applicable

# Appendix 1

## Consultation from Midlothian Council 15/00648/MLC for application at Land At Calderstone, Biggar Road, Edinburgh Application for Planning Permission in Principle for the demolition of existing dwellinghouse, erection of hotel and residential development, formation of access roads, car parking and associated works.

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### Consultations

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#### Location Plan

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