

**Second Variation  
at  
34 Cramond Road North  
Edinburgh  
EH4 6JB**

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**Development Quality Sub-Committee  
of the Planning Committee**

**Proposal:** Amendments to land levels and landscape proposals.  
**Applicant:** Bryant Homes/ Taylor Woodrow Development Ltd.  
**Reference No:** 01/01881/VAR2

**1 Purpose of report**

To recommend that **PERMISSION VARIED** subject to the following;

**Conditions**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced no later than five years from the date of the original consent ref : 01/01881/FUL, dated 30 January 2003.
2. This variation of consent is granted subject to the conditions, numbered 2-27, imposed on the original consent ref : 01/01881/FUL, dated 30 January 2003.
3. A detailed landscape scheme for the proposed planting in the crib walling and on the soil berm hereby approved, which shall include four semi-mature trees (minimum girth 12-14cm), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning and Strategy within 6 months of the date of this variation. The approved landscaping shall then be implemented in accordance with condition 21 on the original consent ref : 01/01881/FUL.
4. Within six months of the date of this consent, a detail of the path proposed along the eastern boundary shall be submitted to and

approved in writing by the Head of Planning and Strategy. The route of the path may require further archaeological investigations which should be carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been agreed in advance by the City Archaeologist. The approved path shall be implemented within six months of the completion of the development to the satisfaction of the Head of Planning and Strategy.

### **Reasons**

1. In order to accord with the statutory requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts.
2. For the avoidance of doubt.
3. In order to ensure that the approved landscaping works are properly established on site.
4. In order to enable the Head of Planning & Strategy to consider this/these matter/s in detail.

## **2 Main report**

### **Site description**

The application site comprises the former Edinburgh University Campus at Cramond, which is accessed from Cramond Road North. The variation relates to the northern half of the site which is currently being developed for housing, and in particular the north west and northern most corners of the housing development site. There is an existing wooded area to the north of the proposed housing with footpaths running through it, and open fields to the east.

The Cramond Conservation Area boundary adjoins the housing development in the north west corner and the site of the Roman Fort which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument is located adjacent to the northern corner of the site.

The Edinburgh Green Belt boundary and a designated Area of Great Landscape Value runs to the east of the housing site and along part of the northern boundary so that gardens of the approved houses extend into the Green Belt.

### **Site history**

30 January 2003 - Consent granted for the demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment for residential, sports and recreational purposes (as amended to reduce dwellings to 155 and delete country club and tennis courts and reposition pavilion).

8 March 2004 - Variation approved for minor amendments to house types and house plots (V1).

There is a current application ref : 04/00997/FUL for an amendment to Condition 25 on the original consent in order to extend the gardens of 3 plots from 9.0m to 15.0m

## **Development**

This variation is for amendments to the land levels in the northern part of the site and for the erection of crib walling to accommodate these land rises.

It was originally anticipated that there would be some levelling out of land and increases in the region of 1.0m to 1.5m. This variation shows new levels with rises ranging from 0.2m through to 3.8m. On the basis that 1.5m had been anticipated in several areas this variation is to cover the locations where increases of up to a further 2.3m are now proposed. The two locations where these increases will occur are on the north west boundary, approximately 40m from the western boundary of the site (and properties on Cramond Glebe Gardens) and around the northern corner of the site and along the eastern boundary for a distance of approximately 90m.

In the first of these locations the additional rise is a maximum of 0.9m (giving a total height of 2.4m) for a length of approximately 25m where it then drops down below the agreed 1.5m. In this location the crib wall has already been erected against the background of the woodland behind. In the second location the additional rise is generally between 1.4m to 2.3m (giving total heights of between 2.9m and 3.8m).

The crib walling which is to be erected along the north and east edges of the land rises is a timber lattice structure which can be filled with planting and will eventually produce a green landscaped feature. To reduce the initial visual impact of the highest sections of the wall from the outset, soil banking is to be placed against the crib wall and planted with shrubs and screen planting. As a result of the wall locations, two mature trees will require to be removed and new semi-mature trees planted in their place. These are located on the eastern boundary.

Two damaged trees have already been removed from the northern boundary which were not shown on the original schedule for removal. The applicants have asked that these trees also be considered as part of the variation submission.

## **Consultations**

### **Culture and Leisure (Archaeology)**

A programme of archaeological works has already been agreed for the recording of archaeological remains lying outwith the scheduled area. As the proposed land rise will have a significant visual impact upon the

setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument the views of Historic Scotland regarding this impact must be sought prior to determination.

If as a result of this consultation the drainage routes are changed, a route which minimises the impact on the underlying archaeology must be chosen.

## **SEPA**

SEPA has no objection in principle. The importation of material, including soil requires either a waste management licence or confirmation of exemption.

SEPA would seek to ensure that the alteration of soil conditions would not impact on site drainage resulting in an increase of runoff. This development will not cause or exacerbate flooding in the catchment.

## **Scottish Water**

No objections

## **Historic Scotland**

Historic Scotland has no locus in commenting on any proposed works which would or might affect archaeological remains outwith (south of) the area of the scheduled monument of Cramond Roman fort. Although we can advise on the appropriate treatment of unscheduled areas, decisions affecting these areas are entirely a matter for the City of Edinburgh Council, advised by its own Archaeological Services.

Turning to the scheduled area within the Cramond campus site, copy letters from AMA Construction Ltd (e.g. 19 February 2004) imply that Historic Scotland required the import of substantial structural infill material over the scheduled area and beyond. This is not strictly accurate. Historic Scotland position has always been that the scheduled area should remain as open and as undisturbed as possible. We agreed in initial discussions with the developer that maintenance of the scheduled area would be improved by its use as a cricket ground and accessible open area; this might have involved a slight element of levelling up, but no other disturbance. Later, the developer advised that it was proposed to landscape the scheduled area instead, including planting additional trees and shrubs and inserting new paths; this was a less desirable outcome for the scheduled area and, as a result, it took some eight months to agree a landscaping plan with the developer. The agreed plan showed the retention of significant historic trees (one of which was subsequently felled), and the planting of some new shallow-rooting trees and shrubs etc within no less than 800mm depth of imported soil to be placed over the scheduled area. The Scottish Ministers granted scheduled monument consent to Bryant Homes on 5 February 2002. Condition 2 of the SMC stipulated that:

*Prior to any landscaping works, the whole of the scheduled area within the development site shall be protected by an additional layer of soil to a minimum depth of 800mm.*

The reason given was 'to protect the underlying archaeological remains from damage and disturbance' [i.e. by the roots of new trees and shrubs or construction of paths].

At no time was Historic Scotland aware that it was intended to place a depth of 3m or more of imported material over any part of the scheduled site. Indeed, had the applicant applied for SMC to place this depth of material over any part of the scheduled area, it is probable that the application would have been refused. The need for a retaining wall, therefore, it not in response to any requirement made by Historic Scotland or the Scottish Ministers.

Historic Scotland's view has not changed throughout the case. We seek to preserve the scheduled area as open ground and as undisturbed as possible. The insertion of a necessarily high and dominant retaining wall, would seem to contradict this aim.

## **Representations**

No publicity or neighbour notification has been undertaken, in line with the procedures for non-material variations.

## **Policy**

### **Lothian Structure Plan**

Policy Env 6 presumes against development which will adversely affect Scheduled Ancient Monuments and areas of archaeological or historic interest.

### **North West Edinburgh Local Plan**

Policy E9 states that planning permission will not be given for new development or redevelopment in the Green Belt for purposes other than agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation or other uses appropriate only to a rural area, except where it can be shown to be necessary and no suitable location exists.

Policy E10 states that within the designated Area of Great Landscape Value, the retention of landscape quality will be the overriding consideration in dealing with development proposals.

Policy H4 requires new development to be sympathetic in scale and density with its surroundings. In conservation areas and defined "areas of interest" in particular, special care is required to protect local character and amenity.

### **Draft West Edinburgh Local Plan**

Policy GE2 states that permission will not be given for development in the Green Belt except:

- a) where necessary for the purposes of agriculture, horticulture, forestry and uses appropriate to its open character;
- b) changes of use of existing buildings provided these are of a substantial construction;
- c) changes of use of listed buildings and other buildings of an attractive visual character in their context;
- d) minor extensions of existing buildings where this would not lead to the unacceptable intensification of an existing non-conforming use.

Policy GE6 requires development located adjacent to the Green Belt to pay special regard to its setting in terms of form, scale and design and provide a high standard of landscaping.

Policy GE7 states that development will not be permitted in Areas of Great Landscape value where it will detrimentally affect the landscape quality.

Policy DQ17 states that development or redevelopment proposals within a conservation area will only be permitted where the proposal is of a high design standard and would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.

Policy DQ20 protects Scheduled Ancient Monuments against development which would adversely affect their setting

Policy DQ22 sets out the requirements in terms of sites of archaeological importance.

Policy DQ7 states that the new development should include proposals for new tree planting and robust landscaping to achieve a suitable visual setting for new building and enhance open spaces and boundaries, and should be designed to minimise its impact on any trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order and other healthy trees worthy of retention

Policy H7 Housing Development Quality seeks to make best use of land without affecting the character of the area whilst make provision for amenities.

Policy H8 sets out open space requirements in new housing development.

Policy GE15 seeks to improve public access to the countryside.

### **3 Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### **DETERMINING ISSUES**

The determining issues are:

- do the proposals preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area? (there being a strong presumption against the granting of planning permission if this is not the case);
- do the proposals preserve the Scheduled Ancient Monument or its setting or any features of special or historic interest?; (there being a strong presumption against granting permission if they do not);
- do the proposals comply with the development plan?
- if the proposals do comply with the development plan, are there any compelling reasons for not approving them?
- if the proposals do not comply with the development plan, are there any compelling reasons for approving them?

## **ASSESSMENT**

To address these determining issues, the Committee needs to consider whether :

- a)The proposed land raises can be justified,
- b)The proposals will be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area and the setting of the Greenbelt/AGLV.
- c)The proposals will be detrimental to the setting of Cramond Conservation Area; the Scheduled Ancient Monument and other archaeological features in the area.

a) The developers advise that the additional land raising has come about following archaeological investigations on the site and the requirement imposed on them by the City Archaeologist and Historic Scotland to preserve the archaeological remains insitu, whilst needing to achieve a level platform for the formation of each of the courtyard developments.

Correspondence between Historic Scotland and the developers confirms that the scheduled area requires to be protected by an additional layer of soil to a minimum depth of 800mm. There appears to have been some mis-interpretation as to the extent of the area to be protected, with the result that the developers have protected a wider area than was actually necessary.

As the development is ongoing drainage routes and road gradients have already been established, based on the developers interpretation of the archaeological restrictions on the site. On this basis, and taking into account that special raft foundations are under construction that will protect the remains and specialist crib retaining walls have been partially erected, it would be unreasonable to require the developers to re-do all the work already undertaken.

The principle of allowing additional land raising is therefore acceptable.

b) In the first of the land raise locations, the maximum new increase is only 0.9m and the crib walling is positioned against the back drop of woodland. Once new soil is banked against the crib wall and the wall itself has been planted the changes will have only a minimum impact on the visual amenity of the locality. This is also the case further north east where, although the total new height of the land/wall is between 2.9 and 3.2m high, the soil banking will cover most of the crib wall and again the wall will run adjacent to the woodland.

The main concern in relation to the impact on visual amenity and the Green Belt is the work on the eastern boundary where crib walling up to a maximum height of 3.8m is proposed. To mitigate this impact the developers have been in negotiation with the Council's Property Management Department and have agreed to undertake banking and landscape works on Council land. Additionally they have agreed to form a path along the boundary of their site, which will form part of a route, under discussion in the Council, for gaining access to the Roman Remains at Cramond. These agreements have been confirmed by Property Management.

The location of the crib wall will require the removal of two mature trees. The developers have therefore agreed to replacements as part of the landscape scheme along the soil banking. The details of this landscaping and the footpath are still to be agreed.

With the incorporation of the proposed banking and landscaping the visual impact of the crib walling will be significantly reduced. No more than 2.0m will be exposed and once this has also been planted the green edge to the Green Belt should be restored. Beech hedging is proposed as the boundary treatment for the three houses adjacent to this edge. This will also contribute to maintaining a natural edge to the Green Belt. The proposals, as amended to incorporate the soil banking, will not be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area or the setting of the Green Belt.

#### c) Cramond Conservation Area Character Statement

*Cramond Conservation Area is of ancient foundation, containing many Roman remains, notably Cramond Fort. The modern village centres around the old kirk, and is typified by white harled houses with red roofs and rubble garden walls.*

*The area contains old centres of industry of archaeological interest along the River Almond, which forms a second focus for the area, particularly at the Riverside. The landscape associated with the river banks, and the hinterland thereof, form another area of focus for the conservation area.*

Only a small area of the site, which is in the north-west corner and all contained within the woodland area, is in the conservation area. One part of the crib wall which is already in place will run adjacent to the conservation area boundary. As the additional land raise is no more than 0.9m in this area and the walling runs adjacent to the woodland, there is no impact on the character of the conservation area from the proposed variations.

The site of the scheduled ancient monument runs adjacent to the approved development in the north corner. The developers have agreed to place a minimum of 0.8m of soil over this area as required by Historic Scotland. Drainage pipes are also to be taken through this area, so 2.0m of soil to cover the monument and accommodate drainage works is being proposed by the developers. Historic Scotland have confirmed that this will protect the monument and allow for landscaping (with species agreed by H.S.). Historic Scotland did have concerns regarding the height of the crib wall placed adjacent to the monument. The developers have therefore amended the proposals to create a split level garden for the corner property so that the height of the crib wall above the soil will be reduced to between 1.0m to 1.2m. With these amendments the proposals will not adversely affect the monument or its setting.

The creation of a new footpath along the edge of the site will increase public access to the archaeological heritage of the area. The path itself will have to be subject to an archaeological investigation to ensure that excavations carried out along the route do not disturb any underlying archaeology. As this will not be implemented until the final phases of the development this can be added as a specific condition on the variation.

It is recommended that the Committee approves this variation, subject to the original conditions and the additional conditions stated.

*Alan Henderson*

**Alan Henderson**  
Head of Planning and Strategy

**Contact/tel** Wendy McCorriston on 0131 529 3594 (FAX 529 3706)

**Ward affected** 00 -No Ward Number

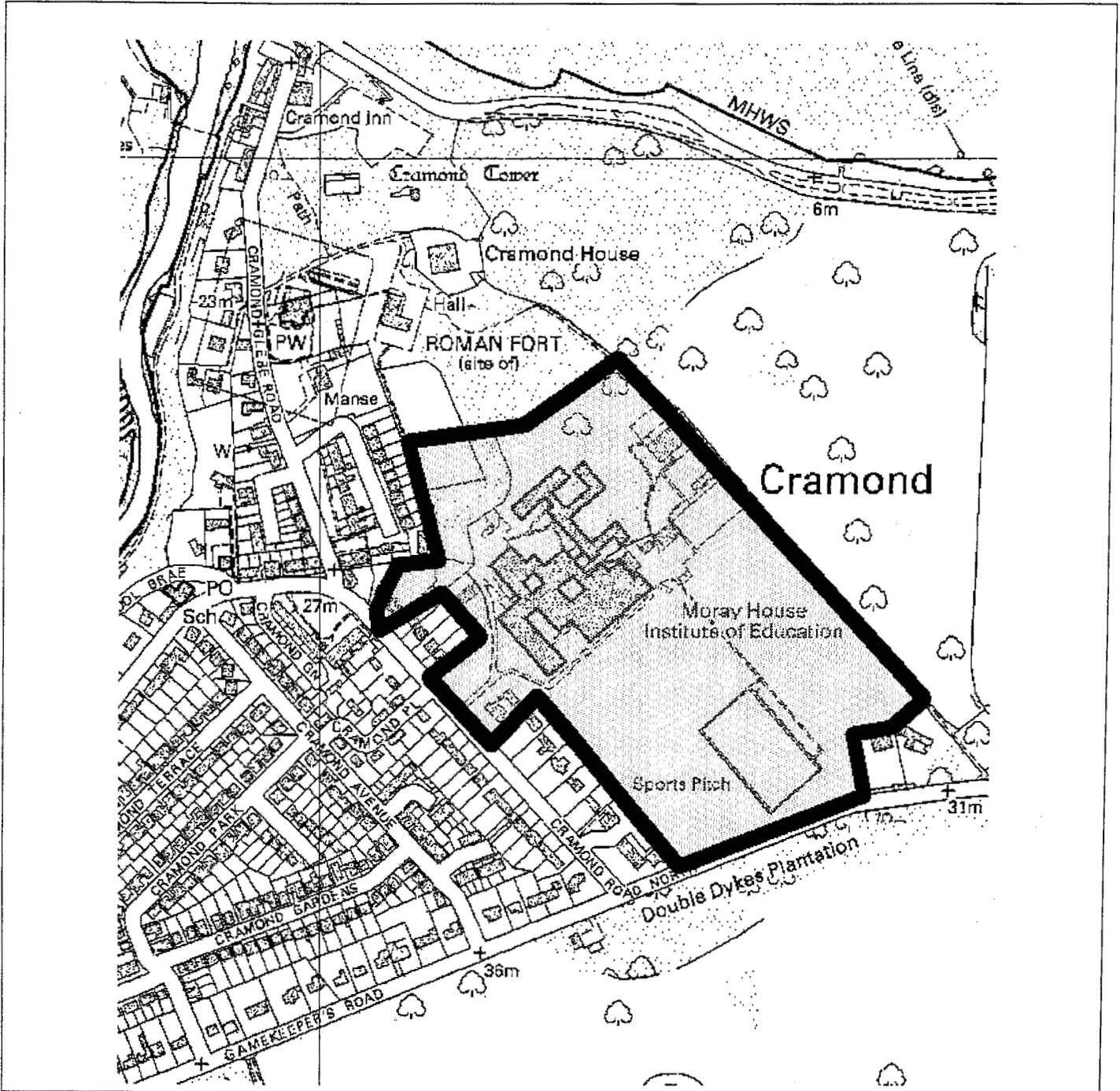
**Local Plan** North West

**Statutory Development  
Plan Provision**

**File** af

**Date registered** 15 March 2004

**Drawing numbers/  
Scheme** 01-03  
Variation 2



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# **PLANNING APPLICATION**

<b>Address</b>	<b>34 Cramond Road North, Edinburgh, EH4 6JB</b>		
<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Amendments to land levels and landscape proposals.</b>		
<b>Application number:</b>	<b>01/01881/VAR2</b>	<b>WARD</b>	<b>00- No Ward Number</b>

**THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL  
THE CITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT- PLANNING & STRATEGY**