



Morningside Local Place Plan 2040

Our plan endeavours to reflect the community views that Morningside Community Council has gathered through surveys and many conversations



Morningside Local Place Plan 2040

Our Vision for Morningside

Maintain and enhance Morningside’s character while responding to growth and climate challenges

- Maintain unique village identity
- Support sustainable housing growth
- Improve town centre environment
- Protect the green belt
- Enable climate-resilient development

Our Community Now

Location

Morningside is one of Edinburgh’s older suburban communities, located two miles south of the city centre. It is now part of the Bruntsfield Morningside Town Centre, with Bruntsfield to the north and the open landscapes of the Pentland Hills to the south-west, giving it a distinctive balance of urban living and access to green space.

It has a strong sense of identity with residents and visitors alike. This place centres on Morningside Road, with its wide variety of shops and services and its ‘village vibe’.

Heritage & Architectural Character

During the 1700s Morningside was a village serving local farms, but by the 1880s the place was changing to become a suburb with the proliferation of villas and, with the opening of the South Suburban railway, a rapidly increased population.

There are two conservation areas in our boundary, Morningside and Plewlands, which cover much of Morningside. There are a number of fine buildings of architectural and historic interest in the area, including St Peter’s Church, Morningside Parish Church and Hermitage House that are all A listed. Morningside also has several handsome terraces such as Nile Grove, Hermitage Terrace, Morningside Park and Cluny Place that are category B listed.

Sources:

- Morningside Conservation Area Character Appraisal – approved 2001
- Plewlands Conservation Area Character Appraisal – approved 2010, (covering the area from Balcarres Street to Greenbank Drive)



Tenements on Comiston Road

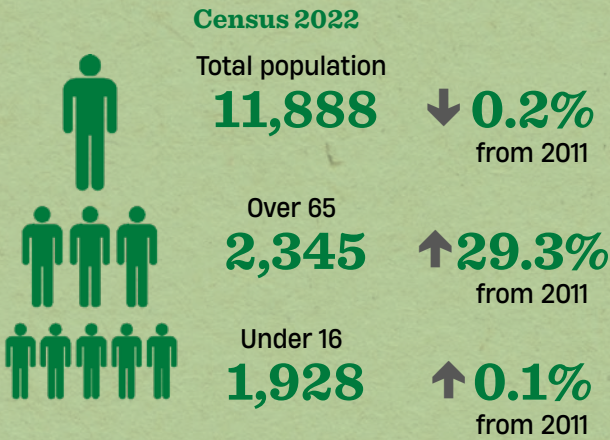


St Peter’s Church

Our Community Now

Population

In the past 10 years, the total population has not increased but the population of older people has increased significantly.

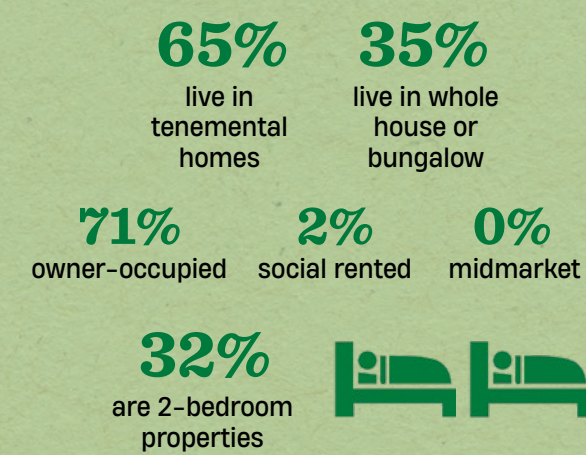


Housing

Morningside consists of **5,446** households. This is a mix of tenement properties, Victorian and Edwardian houses and early 20th century bungalows. Recent developments have mainly been 2-bedroom flats.



Census Data



Green Spaces

40% of the geographic area of Morningside Community Council is made up of **green space** of one type or another.

88% of people agree that **we have easy access to green spaces** and **100%** agree that we should **retain the green belt**.



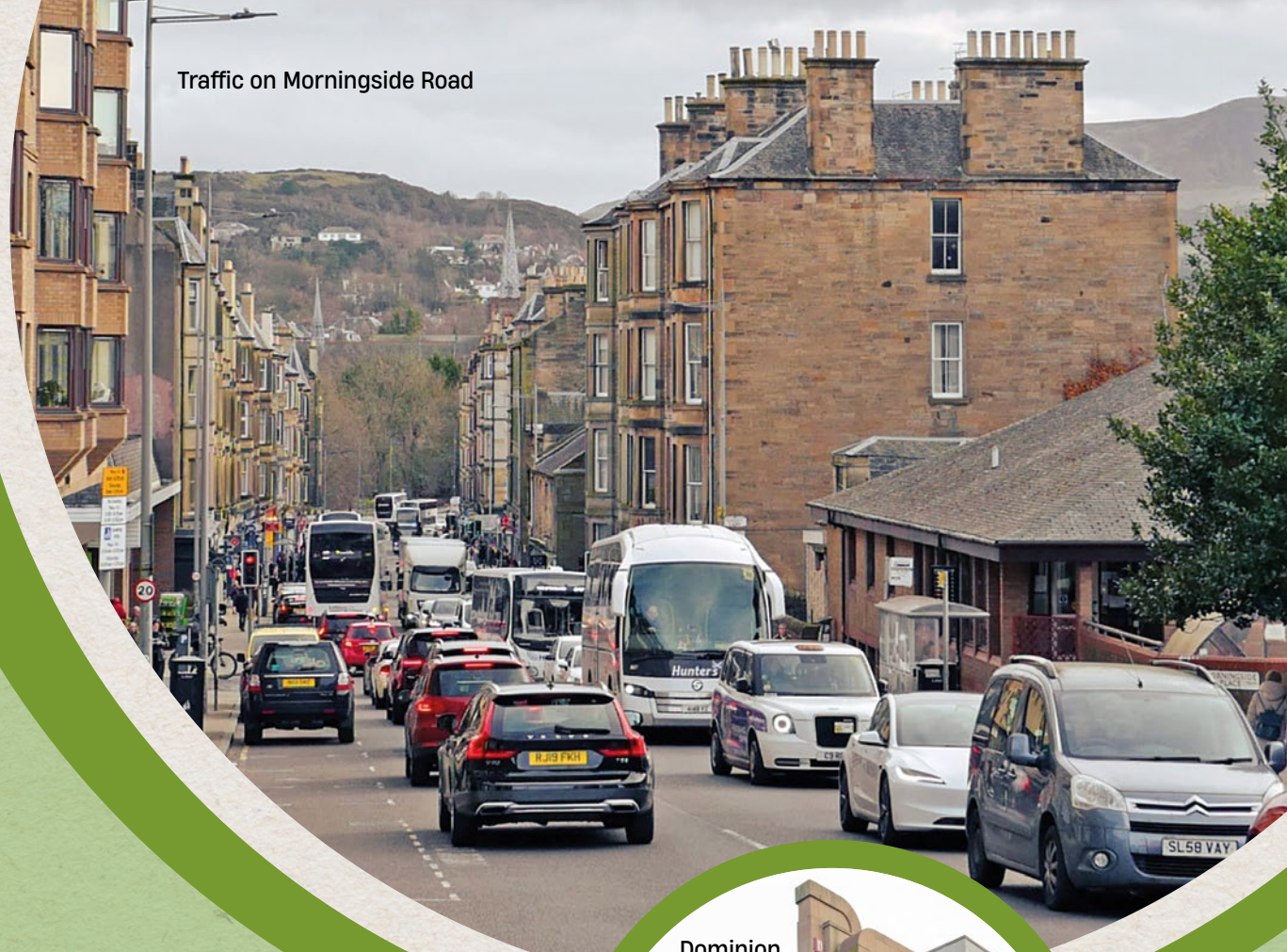
Leisure and Sport Facilities

There are several outdoor sporting and leisure places including a golf club, four tennis facilities, two bowling clubs and an allotment site. There are two play areas; Morningside Park and near St Peter's Primary School. There is also a cinema.



View from Blackford Hill

Traffic on Morningside Road



Dominion Cinema



Economy & Employment

The 2022 Census shows 6K people over 16 are actively employed.

The top industries in Morningside are as follows:

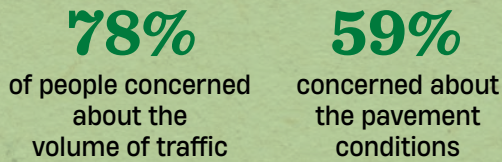
Census data



This data reflects the significant employment in our local schools and hospitals as well as our variety of shops and services on Morningside Road and the wider services in the nearby streets, such as the Dominion cinema and established garages.

Travel & Transport

The A702 runs through Morningside North/South, carrying over 14,000 vehicles each day. This road bisects Morningside Town Centre.



Other transport infrastructure includes the South Suburban Railway line and an experimental active travel route encouraging residents to cycle, wheel and walk.

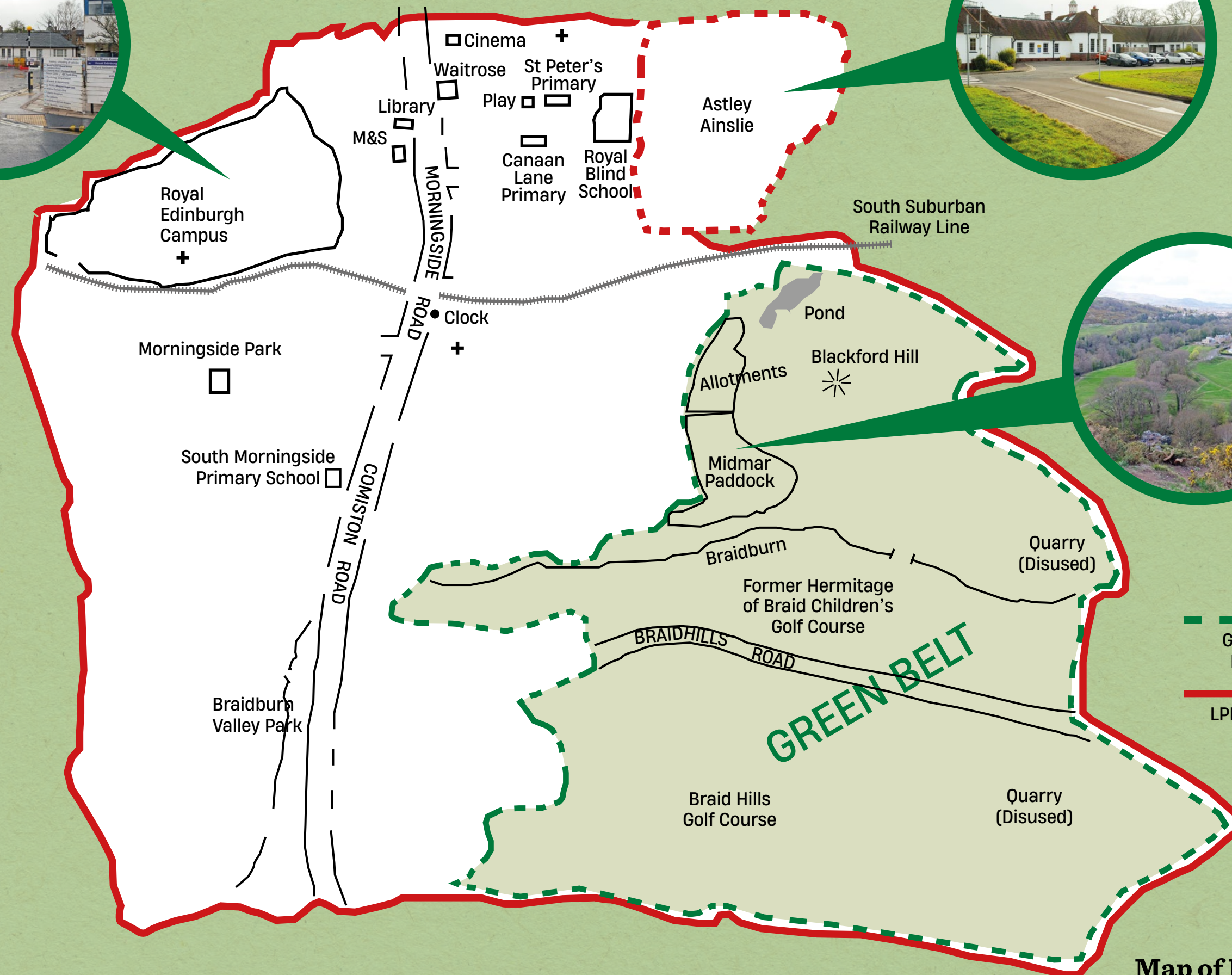
Sources:

- Morningside Conservation Area Character Appraisal – approved 2001
- Plewlands Conservation Area Character Appraisal – approved 2010, (covering the area from Balcarres Street to Greenbank Drive)
- MCC travel survey

Royal Edinburgh Hospital



Astley Ainslie



Midmar Paddock



Map of LPP Area

Community Voices

This Place Plan was developed through ongoing engagement with the local community, ensuring that both the strengths and challenges of the area are well understood and reflected.

The plan is informed by extensive evidence gathered over several years, including more than 1,600 survey responses across four key studies:

- a Travel Survey (755 responses),
- a Local Place Plan Survey (201 responses),
- a Street Life Survey (412 responses),
- and an Under 18s Survey (231 responses).

50 pupils from St Peter’s, Canaan Lane and South Morningside Primary School

600 pupils from Boroughmuir High School

This combined evidence base provided a strong foundation for identifying key themes and emerging priorities to ratify with the local community.

The draft priorities and proposals were developed into consultation materials and presented at a face-to-face community consultation held over a weekend at the end of April 2026. This event enabled direct engagement with residents, providing an opportunity to test the emerging ideas and gather feedback from over 200 members of the community, who attended.

The input received during this consultation was used to refine and confirm the final set of priorities, ensuring they are representative of local views and supported by the community.

The following pages reflect these final, ratified ideas.



A community consultation event was held in April 2026



Boroughmuir High School



South Morningside Primary School

Community Views

Likes/Positives



89%

Has easy access to green and natural spaces



94%

Provides access to a variety of local shops



93%

Provides access to services (e.g. Schools, Health Services, Library)



81%

Has an active local economy

74%

Has unique character

Dislikes/Negatives



78%

Volume of traffic on Morningside Road



59%

Condition of the pavements



62%

Dissatisfied with the crossing at Morningside Park (at the side of M&S)



31%

Disagree that we have access to formal leisure facilities

“It’s a lovely high street, despite the traffic.”

Sources:
• MCC Travel Survey, 2022 (n =755)
• MCC LPP Survey (n = 201)



Merlin pub and housing around Morningside Road



Housing on Cluny Place

Housing

Community Support

✓	120 support	–	31 unsure	✗	13 oppose
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Community Priority: Support new developments to provide a broader mix of homes particularly to enable older people and young families to live healthy lives. Increase the availability of affordable housing and mixed tenures.

Evidence

- The number of residents aged 65+ has increased by **25% since 2011**, highlighting a growing need for housing that supports healthy and independent living.
- The existing housing stock consists of **tenements and older properties**, which present accessibility challenges for older and disabled residents.
- Without suitable alternative barrier-free homes, residents may be forced to **leave the area or remain in housing that does not meet their needs**.
- Morningside is highly desirable for families due to its **strong school provision**, including South Morningside Primary, Canaan Lane, St Peter's, and Boroughmuir/St Thomas's.
- **Rising house prices** (£366,050 for a 2-bedroom flat an

increase of 8% from 2024) and a predominance of **two-bedroom flats** limit access to suitable family homes.

- Housing tenure is **unbalanced**:
 - 71% owner-occupied
 - 26% privately rented
 - 2% socially rented
- There is currently **no mid-market affordable or low cost ownership housing** within the ward.

“Morningside needs young people as well as old. More social housing for families”

Sources:

- Edinburgh Council – Area Profile Dashboard of 2022 and 2011 Census, <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/strategy-performance-research/area-profile-dashboard>
- ESPC – 2025: £366,050 for a 2-bedroom flat an increase of 8% from 2024 <https://espc.com/media/12129/mth-202511.pdf>



Astley Ainslie

“Definitely good place for social housing, while keeping open spaces and preserving trees.”

Community Support

✓	140 support	–	1 unsure	✗	11 oppose
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Royal Edinburgh Hospital Campus

Community Priority: This site already has planning approval for further development. To reduce traffic impacts on Morningside Park and Millar Crescent, we would welcome an increase of public transport and active travel. We request section 75 developers' contributions from this site being used locally to do this and help improve our town centre.

“Reduce the impact of traffic on our neighbourhood”

Development Sites

Community Support

✓	150 support	–	5 unsure	✗	0 oppose
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“Make sure there are good active travel routes throughout the site.”

Astley Ainslie

Community Priority: We welcome the aspirational Astley Ainslie LPP and the importance of the landscape. We hope that the future design of the area will ensure sympathetic mixed use development which protects and enhances the value of the landscape. It is also important to retain public access across the site, provide outdoor play areas, provide new housing and limit the potential for increased traffic on Canaan Lane.

“Development should be car free plus use renewables plus super insulated”



Royal Edinburgh Hospital Campus

Keeping our town centre vibrant and sustainable

Community Priority: Use Section 75 developer contributions locally to offset the impact of new developments (including Royal Edinburgh Hospital and Astley Ainslie) and improve the town centre environment.

Community Support

✓	150 support	–	4 unsure	✗	8 oppose
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Evidence

- Residents value **independent shops, food stores and local amenities** – **94% of adults and 80% of young people are satisfied** with Morningside’s retail mix and service provision
- Residents identify the following challenges
 - 78% dissatisfied** with traffic volumes
 - 59% dissatisfied** with pavement conditions
- Street environment issues (Street Life Assessment, 2016)
 - Poor-quality paving and narrow, uneven pavements
 - Traffic speed, volume and dominance creating safety concerns
 - Crowded bus stop waiting areas
 - Limited space for pedestrians to stop and socialise



Community Priority: Retain ground floor commercial premises in new developments.

Community Support

✓	153 support	–	7 unsure	✗	14 oppose
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Evidence

- The loss of local business sites (eg Aitken & Niven shop, former public toilets, and a nursery) to residential redevelopment has **reduced the range of services** in the neighbourhood.
- Protecting ground floor commercial space helps sustain **local amenities and town centre vitality**.

“Great selection of shops; lovely leafy area; good places for coffee; great community assets such as library, Dominion cinema, places of worship, GP practice, dentist etc. Feels like a community. Has a nice ‘villagey’ feel. I love the Spring crocuses on the green near the clock – they are so beautiful every year”

Sources:

- MCC Travel Survey, 2022 (n=755)
- Qualitative focus groups with the sustainability groups March 2025
- MCC Street Life Survey July 2023 (n=412)
- MCC LPP Survey (n=201)
- MCC LPP School Survey (n=231)

Appropriate Development

Community Support

✓	158 support	–	4 unsure	✗	5 oppose
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Community Priority: Limit the height of any new developments in the existing town centre to that of the neighbouring buildings, which are mainly defined in Morningside by its tenements.

Evidence

- In recent years MCC has been contacted by residents concerned about new proposed developments.
- The initial height of several proposals does not respect the height and spatial importance of the existing buildings nearby.

“Please keep to the existing height – not like on Newbattle Terrace”



Climate Adaptation

Community Support

✓	139 support	–	11 unsure	✗	11 oppose
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Community Priority: Change planning policies to permit climate adaptations of existing buildings in the Morningside and Plewlands Conservation areas, while retaining the architectural character.

Evidence

- 60% of residents want climate considerations included in building design.
- Only 23% of adults and 11% of children agree that buildings are resilient to climate change.
- Adaptations such as solar panels, improved guttering, heat pumps and photovoltaic systems are often restricted by rigid planning policies.
- Historic Environment Scotland already provides guidance on sustainable adaptations within conservation contexts.

“Need better solutions to be developed for retrofitting Victorian buildings. Current options limited.”





Midmar Paddock, former Hermitage Children's Golf Course and Braid Hills

Green Spaces and Leisure

Community Support

Table with 5 columns: checkmark, 175 support, minus, 0 unsure, X, 2 oppose

Community Priority: Retain the existing valuable green spaces, and protect the green belt, with their distant views and opportunities for leisure and informal play.

- Evidence
89% of adults agree that Morningside has easy access to green and natural spaces.
Children felt that Morningside has excellent access to nearby parks and hills (Blackford Hill, Hermitage of Braid, Braidburn Valley Park, Bruntsfield Links, Midmar Paddock and Morningside Park).
There are limited formal local sports, leisure and play facilities in our neighbourhood with only 39% of adults agreeing that our area has access to leisure facilities.

"Braid Hills. Beautiful views, great walks for the dog. Invigorating fresh air!"

"The green spaces. I value the wildlife, the flora and fauna... birds, animals, plants and trees; the associated sense of well-being and access to wide open spaces for exercise... woods, burns and hills."

Sources:
MCC LPP Survey (n=201)
Midmar Paddock PLACE PLAN https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/37536/midmar-paddock
MCC Street Life Survey July 2023 (n=412)
MCC LPP Survey (n=201)
MCC LPP School Survey (n=231)

Specific Green Belt Spaces

Former Hermitage Children's Golf Course

Community Support

Table with 5 columns: checkmark, 131 support, minus, 0 unsure, X, 14 oppose

Community Priority: Protect this place as green belt. The public, both young and old, enjoy this as an open recreational space and wish to retain the uninterrupted views to the Pentland Hills and beyond from Blackford Hill.

Midmar Paddock

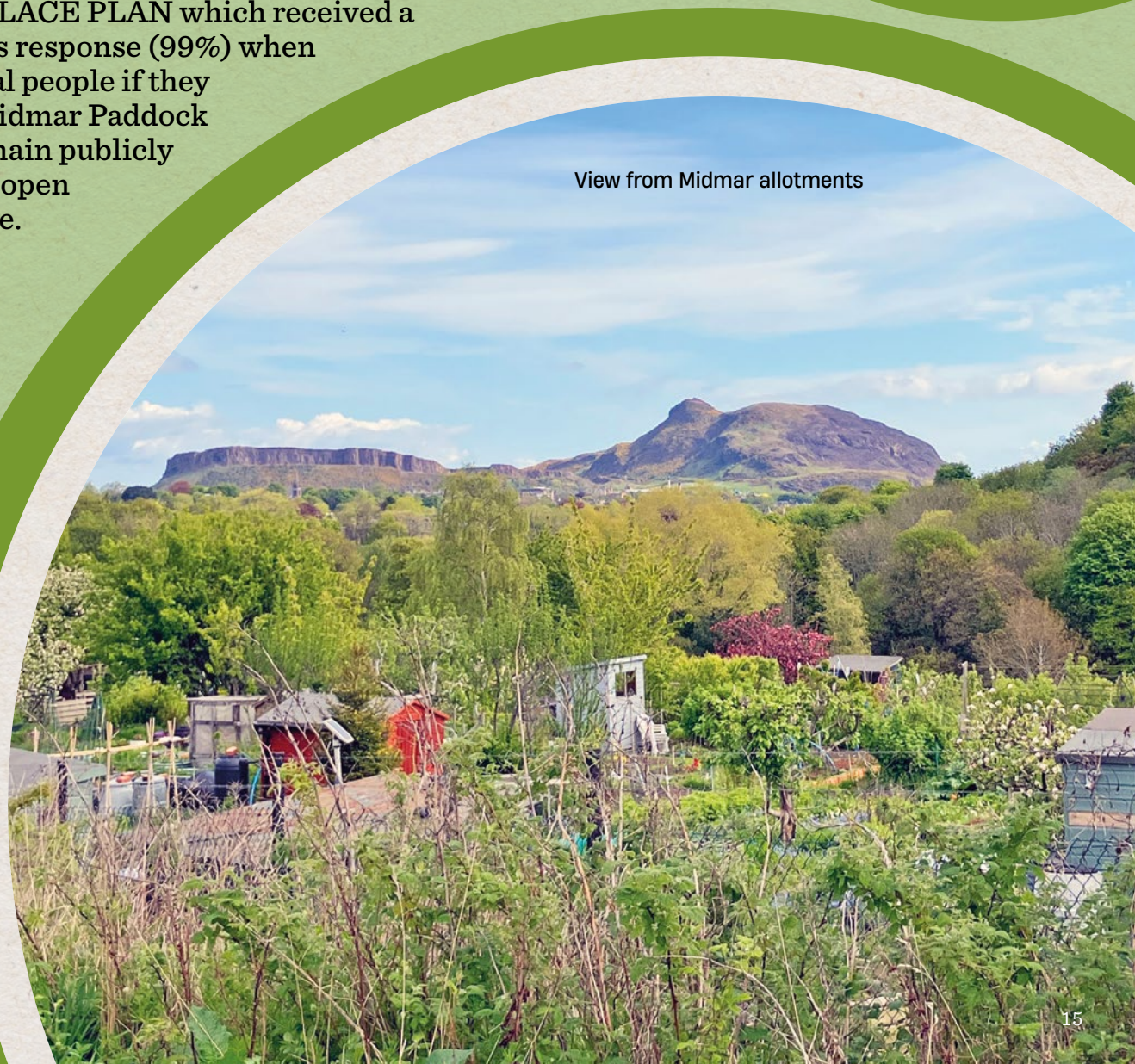
Community Support

Table with 5 columns: checkmark, 148 support, minus, 11 unsure, X, 11 oppose

Community Priority: Protect Midmar Paddock as part of the green belt. Support the Midmar Paddock PLACE PLAN which received a unanimous response (99%) when asking local people if they thought Midmar Paddock should remain publicly accessible open green space.



Former Hermitage Children's Golf Course



View from Midmar allotments

Policy Links that are relevant to our community priorities

- **National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)** (2023), Policy 16: Homes that meet needs across life stages.
- **NPF4 Policy 2** (Climate Emergency): Supports adaptive reuse and climate resilience in the built environment.
- **NPF4 Policy 2** (Climate and Nature Crises): Emphasises the protection and restoration of natural assets
- **NPF4 Policy 14** (Design, Quality & Place): Encourages high-quality, people-centred public spaces.
- **NPF4 Policy 16**: Homes that meet needs across life stages.
- **Scottish Planning Policy** (2020): Supports planning for an ageing population and diverse housing choice.
- **City Plan 2030**: Protects town and local centres, maintaining a balanced mix of uses. Edinburgh's Local Development Plan / City Plan 2030 sets out that the plan will "protect places of value" and maintain a network of town and local centres — i.e., planning policy at city level explicitly supports keeping commercial uses in established centres rather than converting them to other uses (residential, leisure, etc.).
- **City Plan 2030** Policy E2: Promotes liveable, green, and walkable neighbourhoods.
- **City Plan 2030** Policy E6: Balances conservation with sustainable adaptation and energy efficiency.
- **City of Edinburgh Local Development Plan 2030**: Requires 35% affordable housing and prioritises accessible, sustainable homes.
- **Edinburgh Design Guidance 2024** Draft – Bruntsfield-Morningside Supplementary Guidance 2025: Prioritises retaining primary shopping frontages and local economic vitality.
- **Edinburgh Economy Strategy**: Supports small business growth, active local centres, and accessible employment.
- **Edinburgh Health & Social Care Partnership**: Promotes age-friendly communities and independent living.
- **Edinburgh Net Zero 2030 Strategy**: Encourages low-carbon retrofits and renewable energy use in existing buildings.
- **20-Minute Neighbourhood Framework**: Supports accessible, safe, and inclusive town centres.
- **Section 75 Community Benefits Reform Proposal**: Expand eligible uses to include placemaking, greenery, and local quality-of-life projects reflecting the impact of future developments.
- **Historic Environment Scotland Guidance** (Managing Change in the Historic Environment): Endorses sensitive retrofits compatible with heritage values.
- **City Plan 2030** Policy E5 (Green Belt and Green Network): Protects greenbelt and promotes biodiversity and recreation.
- **Edinburgh Open Space Strategy** (2020): Recommends enhancing play, leisure, and informal recreation facilities near homes.