

SCOTTISH WATER'S FAIRMILEHEAD OFFICE REDEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT

Welcome

Scottish Water is submitting an application for Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) for the redevelopment of its land at 55 Buckstone Terrace, Edinburgh, EH10 6XH.

The first stage of the planning process began on 26 February 2026, when a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) was submitted to The City of Edinburgh Council (reference 26/00798/PAN).

The proposal is for a major category development which seeks planning permission in principle to demolish all existing buildings on the site and build a residential-led mixed-use development. The plans also include other supporting works and infrastructure such as car parking, servicing, access arrangements, and landscaping.

These public consultation events give the local community and stakeholders a chance to view the developing proposals and share their feedback before a planning application is then prepared and submitted to The City of Edinburgh Council.

Members of the project team are here to explain the plans, answer questions, and hear your feedback.

About Scottish Water

Scottish Water and its predecessor organisations have operated at Fairmilehead for many decades. Nearby historic elements of the former Fairmilehead Water Treatment Works date from around 1910 and include the Category B listed Filter House and Hillend Pump House.

The current office buildings were originally constructed in 1971, with a further extension added in 1994, serving as headquarters for East of Scotland Water before the creation of Scottish Water. The complex was later refurbished to create modern open plan workspace and staff facilities.

This long operational history reflects the site's evolution from water treatment infrastructure to administrative offices - functions that are now under-utilised as Scottish Water prepares for relocation and future redevelopment.



Location Plan



Aerial image of site looking east.



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The Site

The site is located within the area of Fairmilehead which lies around three miles to the south of Edinburgh City Centre. The boundaries to the site are defined by Buckstone Terrace to the south-west, Waterfield Road to the north, existing residential development to the east at Fairfield Gardens and by an existing parking court and dwelling-house to the south.

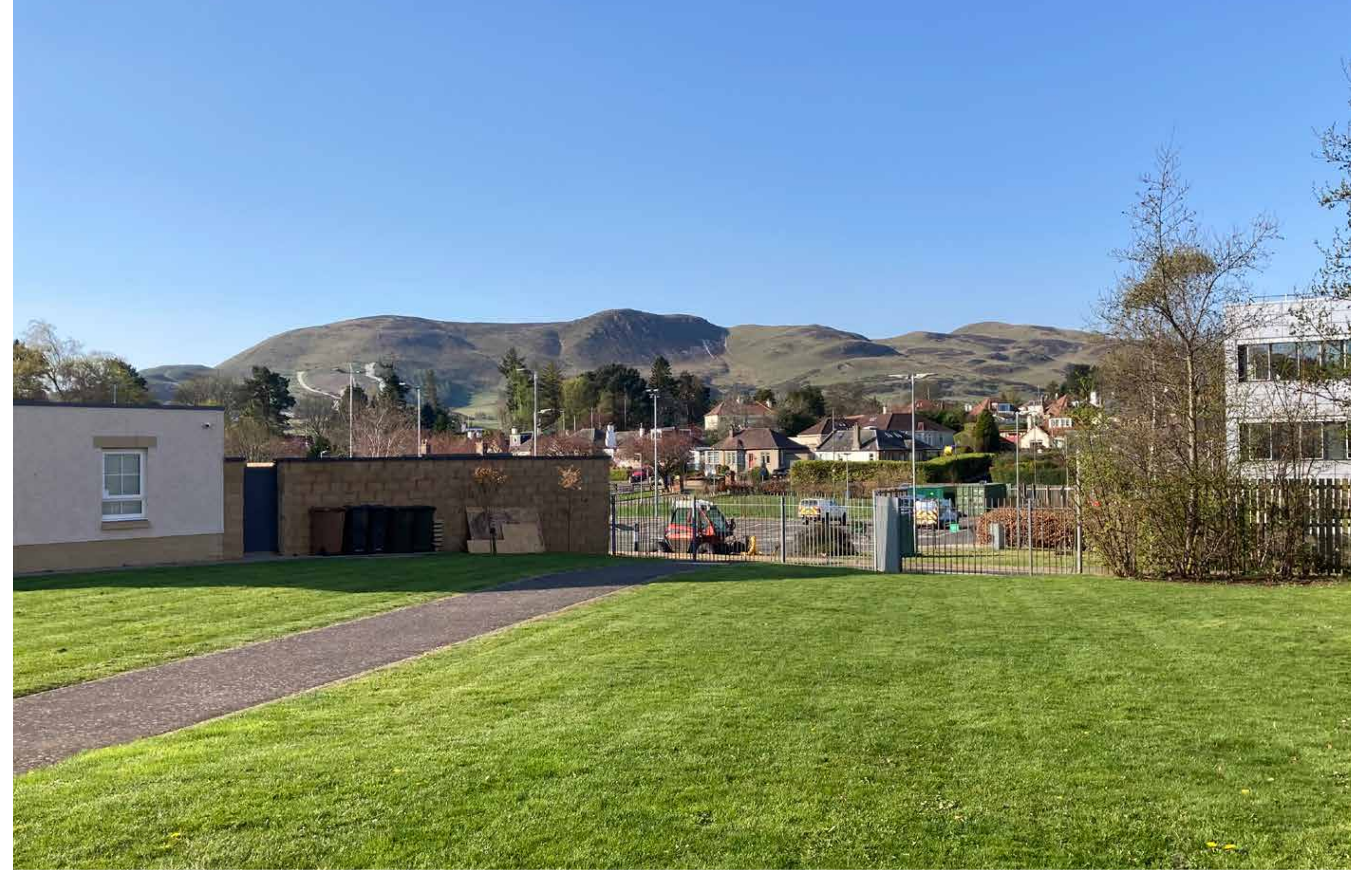
The site extends to 2.45 hectares and is currently occupied by offices and associated car parking. There are a series of existing vehicular access points into the site and the site benefits from a well established bus corridor route along Buckstone Terrace.



View towards site from north along Buckstone Terrace.



View of northern boundary from Fairfield Gardens.



View from path within existing green corridor looking west.



Existing path to north of the site from Skerryvore Loan, looking south



Existing path from south of the site from Buckstone Terrace, looking north

Why the redevelopment is being proposed

Scottish Water has reviewed its property portfolio and identified the Fairmilehead site as significantly under-utilised and no longer suited to long term operational needs. Relocating staff and operations allows us to make more efficient use of our estate while bringing forward a residential-led development that better matches the character of the surrounding area.



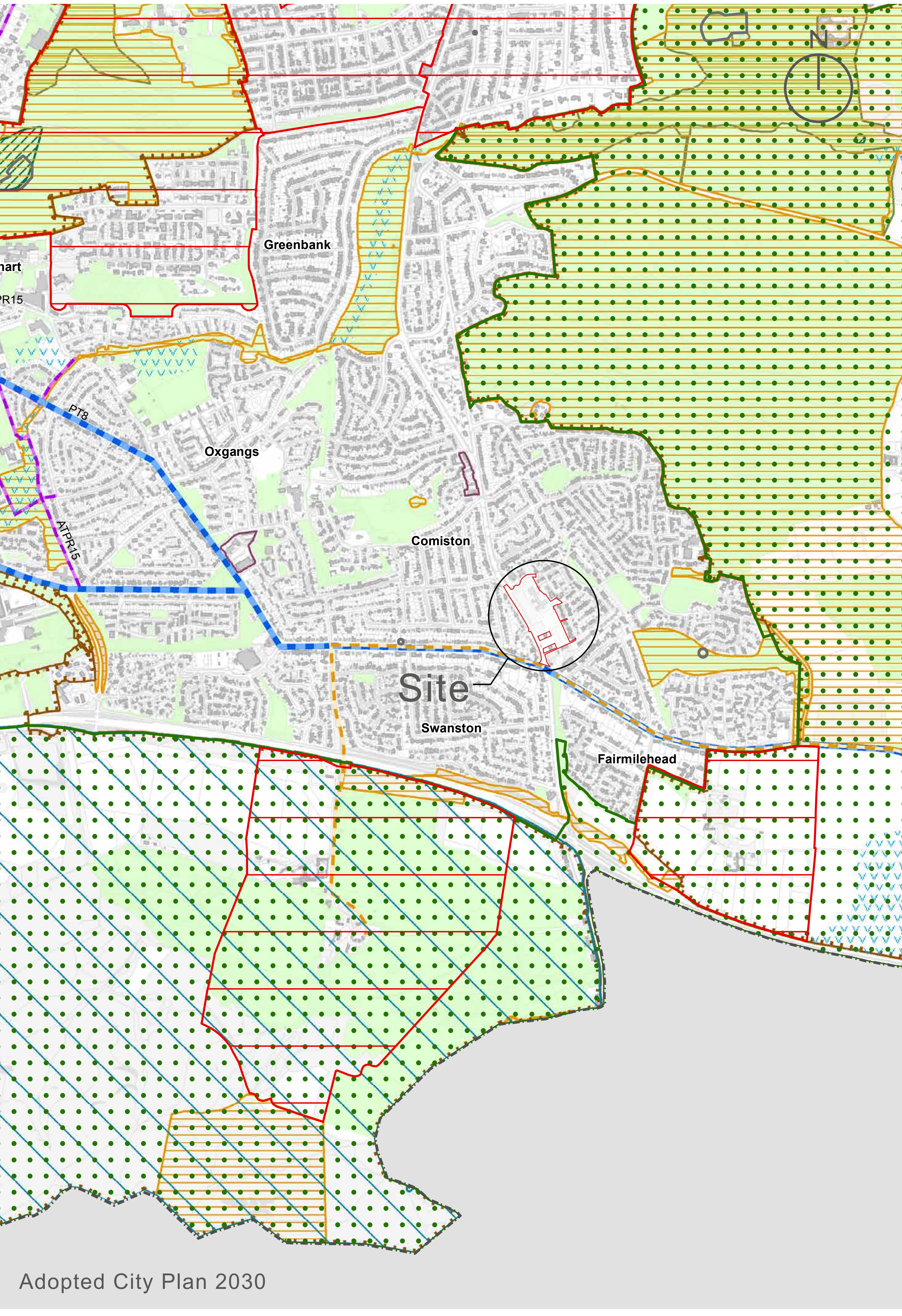
View into site from Waterfield Road.



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Planning Context



Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) is a type of planning application used in Scotland to establish whether the principle of development is acceptable in terms of land use, location and scale before detailed plans are submitted. It allows applicants to seek approval for the principle of development, without providing detailed designs.

Should PPiP be approved, conditions will be added to the planning permission which requires the applicant to submit an Application for Matters Specified in Conditions (AMSCs). The AMSC process is where details such as materials, design, layout, landscaping and/or unit numbers are provided for assessment to the planning authority. Work cannot start on site until an AMSC is submitted and approved.

This process is commonly used for major-scale development or early-stage proposals – such as the Fairmilehead redevelopment when the aim is to secure agreement that the site can be developed, without yet determining the exact layout, appearance or design.

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory Development Plan for this site comprises City Plan 2030 (“LDP”), adopted November 2024 and the National Planning Framework 4 (“NPF4”), adopted February 2023.

The LDP does not allocate the site for any particular use and it therefore constitutes ‘white land’. The site is located within the existing urban area and surrounded by residential development.

Context



Context Plan

The site is located within an area characterised predominantly by residential development, in the Fairmilehead area, with Buckstone to the north, Comiston to the west, and Swanston to the south-west.

It is close to existing amenities, including Fairmilehead Public Park, Buckstone Primary School, Fairmilehead Parish Church and Buckstone Park. Existing supermarkets are located around 1km to the west of the site and can be reached by foot in around 15 minutes. Mortonhall Golf Club and Braidhills Golf Club are also located around 1km to the north-east, beyond the settlement edge of Buckstone.

The site is well connected to existing paths and public transport, with bus stops located along Buckstone Terrace. Services include the number 11 and 15 operated by Lothian Buses, which provides transport into the City Centre.



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Site Considerations



Site Constraints Plan

Development of the site provides the opportunity to extend existing residential development along Buckstone Terrace, within the established settlement of Fairmilehead. Existing trees are located to the western edge, forming a landscape buffer to the edge of the development and a pleasant outlook for residents. There are existing sewers that cross the site to the western edge. Subject to survey work, these services will be retained and appropriate wayleaves respected by the proposed development. The site and its location presents no physical constraint to development. With appropriate mitigation implemented, the site offers a logical extension to the existing residential development and a attractive setting for new homes.

Concept Plan



Concept Plan

The proposed concept for the site aspires to retain the existing western tree belt and provide a new landscape corridor, linking the site to the existing green space to the west. This will allow direct connections from the community to the east to the existing bus corridor along Buckstone Terrace.

Areas for potential development are indicated on the above diagram shown to the east of the existing tree belt. The form and massing to the proposed development areas will be developed further and shown at the second public consultation event.



View from existing path to south of site looking west



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Framework Proposal



The proposed development will use the existing vehicular access to the north from Waterfield Road, establishing a welcoming gateway into the site. The access road will loop around the western edge of the site and connect to the existing junction to the west on Buckstone Terrace. A series of footpath connections will permeate the development, linking into the wider path network and improving access to nearby bus stops and public transport routes. These connections support inclusive, sustainable travel choices and provide direct, well-overlooked routes that make walking and wheeling more attractive. A generous landscape buffer runs along the western perimeter of the site, softening the development's interface with Buckstone Terrace, offering visual amenity and biodiversity enhancement. The parcels of development have been informed by the movement through the site which has been a core consideration. These qualities directly support the placemaking principles promoted in NPF4, which emphasise creating vibrant, safe and well-connected neighbourhoods that respond sensitively to the local context.

Feedback

We welcome your feedback on the proposals and would appreciate it if you could complete one of the feedback forms provided today.

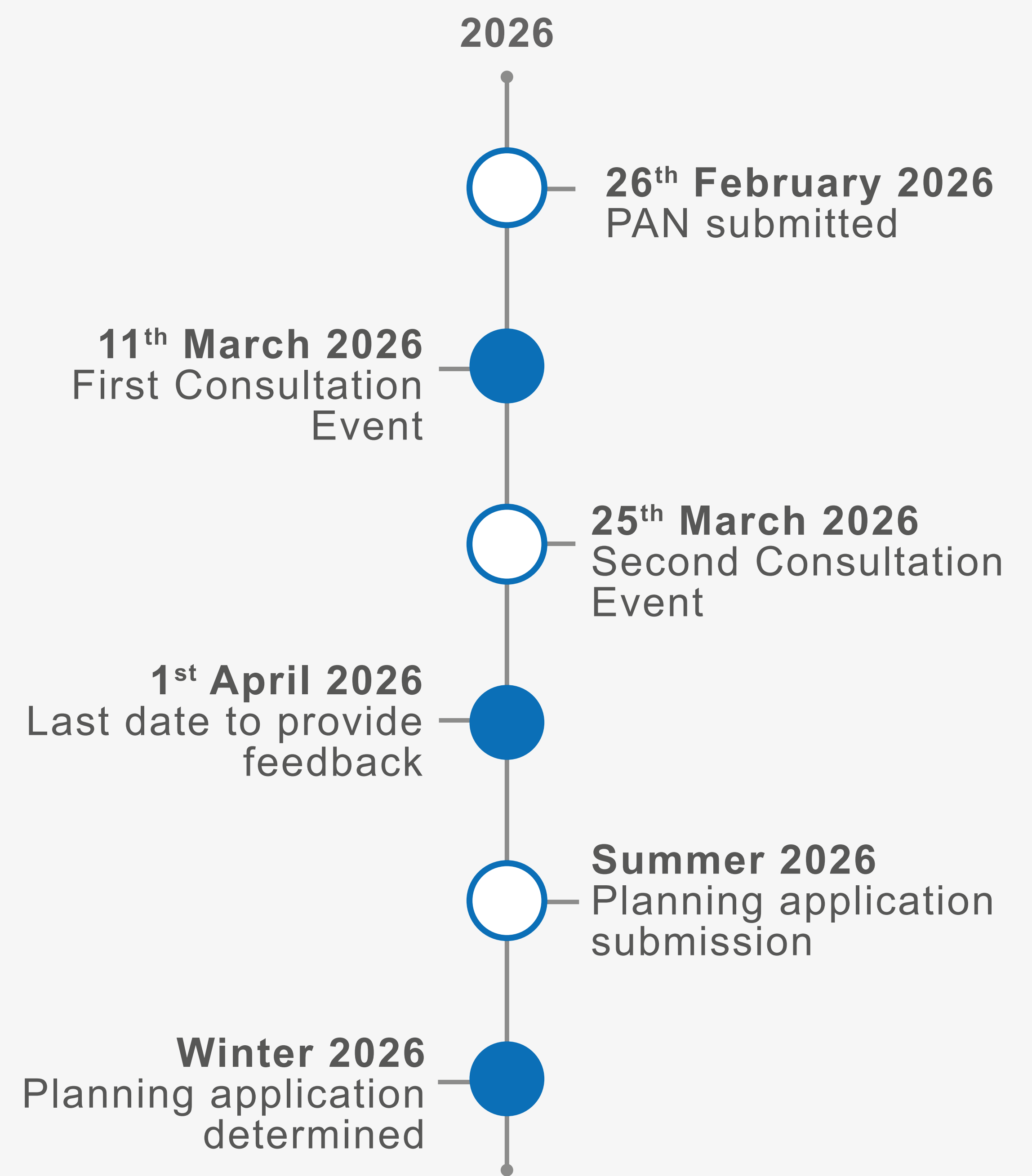
If you prefer, you can complete the form online and view the exhibition boards at www.scottishwater.co.uk/Fairmilehead, or post your comments to: Scottish Water Fairmilehead, c/o Avison Young, 6th Floor, 40 Torphichen Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8JB.

Comments can be received up to 7 days following the conclusion of the second consultation event.

All responses will be reviewed and taken into account as the planning application is prepared. A Pre-Application Consultation Report will accompany the application, summarising the feedback received and explaining how it has influenced the proposals.

Please note that all comments received during this process are not representations to The City of Edinburgh Council. Comments should not be made to The City of Edinburgh Council at this stage. An opportunity to make representations to the Council will exist when a formal application is made and statutory neighbour notification and publicity will be undertaken at that time.

Next Steps



Feedback Form: Fairmilehead Redevelopment Consultation Events (11th & 25th March 2026)



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Questions and Answers

Fairmilehead Office Redevelopment – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. What is Scottish Water proposing at the Fairmilehead site?

A. Scottish Water is preparing an application for Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) for the future redevelopment of its Fairmilehead office site. Early proposals are being developed by the Scottish Water and their appointed project team.

Q. What is an application for Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP)?

A. A PPiP is a type of planning application used in Scotland to establish whether the principle of development is acceptable.

Q. What happens if the PPiP is approved?

A. Should PPiP be approved, conditions will be added to the planning permission which requires the applicant to submit an Application for Matters Specified in Conditions (AMSCs). The AMSC process is where details such as materials, design, layout, landscaping and/or unit numbers are provided for assessment to the planning authority. Work cannot start on site until an AMSC is submitted and approved.

Q. Why is the redevelopment happening?

A. The Fairmilehead office is part of a wider Scottish Water property review, which identified that several larger offices are under-utilised and no longer meet long-term operational needs. Disposing of the site with PPiP ensures the land can be brought forward for future use in a planned, responsible way.

Q. Will the redevelopment lead to job losses at Scottish Water?

A. No. There are no redundancies as part of the wider property review or the relocation from Fairmilehead. This is a change in workspace, not staffing levels.

Q. Has the impact on local services such as schools and GP practices been assessed?

A. As required by relevant planning policy in the Edinburgh City Plan 2030, future proposals will make proportionate financial contributions, where relevant and necessary, to mitigate any negative impact on local services and infrastructure. The precise nature of any contributions will be determined when detailed proposals come forward and in accordance with prevailing guidance by the City Council on these matters at that time.

Q. What happens to existing features on the site, such as the tree belt?

A. Scottish Water has no intention of removing the existing tree belt. Final decisions will rest with City of Edinburgh Council through the formal planning process.

Q. Who are the project team?

A. Scottish Water has appointed Avison Young to oversee the planning process and the future disposal of the site. EMA Architects are also appointed to prepare the relevant drawings and plans for the PoAN and PPiP submission.

Q. Will the community have an opportunity to discuss the proposals with the project team?

A. Yes. Two public consultation events will be held before the PPiP application is submitted. These are informal drop-in sessions, designed to share information and answer any questions you may have. You can come along at any time during the advertised hours, and there is no need to stay for the full duration.

Q. Will the community have an opportunity to provide feedback?

A. Yes. Two public consultation events will be held before the PPiP application is submitted. Feedback can be provided at the event to members of the project team, by completing a physical feedback form at the event or at the following website: www.scottishwater.co.uk/Fairmilehead

Please note that all comments received during this process are not representations to City of Edinburgh Council. Comments should not be made to the City of Edinburgh Council at this stage. An opportunity to make representations to the Council will exist when a formal application is made and statutory neighbour notification and publicity will be undertaken at that time.

Q. How will Scottish Water keep stakeholders informed?

A. Scottish Water will provide regular updates to local councillors, MSPs, MPs, community councils, residents, and other key stakeholders. This includes direct communications, public events, and online updates ahead of the PPiP submission.

Q. When will more detailed plans be available?

A. The AMSC process is where details such as materials, design, layout, landscaping and/or unit numbers are provided for assessment to the planning authority. Work cannot start on site until an AMSC is submitted and approved.

Q. Will the Fairmilehead building close immediately?

A. No. The PPiP process and subsequent disposal will take time. Staff relocation is already planned, and operational arrangements will continue during the transition.

Q. Is Scottish Water selling the Fairmilehead site for financial gain?

A. Yes. But any profits from the sale will be invested back into Scottish Water which is a publicly owned company that is commercially run and independently regulated including by our financial regulator the Water Industry Commission for Scotland. Returns from the future sale of the Fairmilehead building or land will be reinvested directly back into the business to help maintain and improve essential water and waste water services for our customers. Scottish Water's annual report clearly and transparently details income and expenditure so this information will be made available to the public as and when it becomes available.

The team are available at the consultation event to answer any further questions or provide further clarity on the above if required. Thank you for taking the time to attend this public consultation event.

