



a pre-application consultation for

west craigs edinburgh

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for
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Introduction

A new residential development is proposed for West Craigs Edinburgh to provide 650 homes, of which 33% will be affordable homes.

Before the planning application is submitted, the applicants West Craigs Limited wish to consult fully with all interested parties, as recommended in the Planning (Scotland) Bill 2006. It is the intention to formalise the results of this consultation in a Good Neighbour Agreement – an understanding between the community and developers as to how the development is carried out.

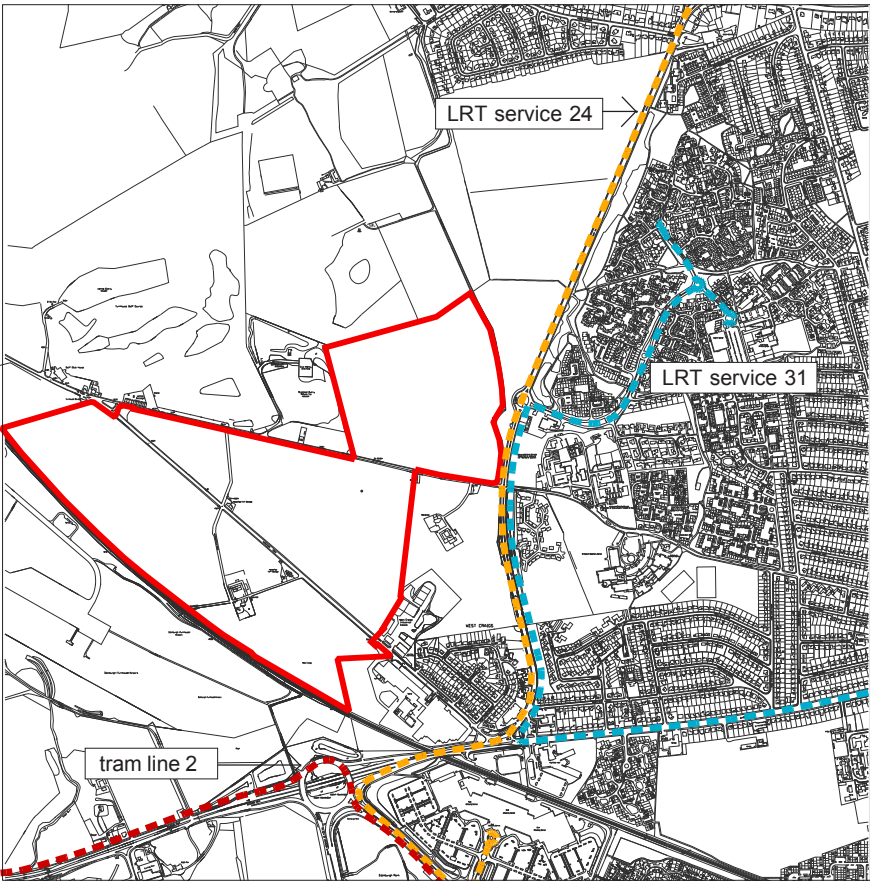


aerial view of site from south west

Site Location

West Craigs is located in West Edinburgh, close to the existing homes at West Craigs Road & Crescent, and adjacent to West Craigs Industrial Estate. West Craigs lies between Edinburgh airport and Maybury Road. The site is not visible from Maybury Road or Gogar roundabout, and is currently accessed via Turnhouse Road and Craigs Road.

West Craigs is near to Gyle Shopping Centre, Edinburgh Park business park, and RBS's new HQ.



site location plan and transport links

Proposal Summary

West Craigs extends to 190 acres. It is proposed that 60 acres are developed to form a community of 650 homes. Of these, 215 would be developed by The Rowan Group as affordable housing, mainly for family occupation across a range of tenures. No flats are proposed for West Craigs, the house types will be terraced, semi-detached, and detached.

The remaining 130 acres would be landscaped, with 50 acres nearest to Cammo being proposed as an informal park with full public access.

A new access road would be formed from the existing roundabout on Maybury Road, which currently serves Bughtlins. This would function as the main vehicle access. West Craigs is well served by public transport, with frequent buses along Glasgow Road and Maybury Road. This will be further enhanced by Tram Line 2, which will operate in close proximity to West Craigs, increasing the accessibility with the wider catchment. It is expected that the provision of 650 households will also encourage the re-routing of bus services into West Craigs.

New community facilities are also proposed, including a local shop, doctor's / dentist's surgery, and community hall. Existing primary & secondary schools are within catchment distance of West Craigs.

The Rowan Group

The Rowan Group is a partnership of Housing Associations in Edinburgh and includes Dunedin Canmore HA, Prospect HA, Margaret Blackwood HA, Barony HA, Manor Estate and Viewpoint. The group has a range of expertise variously specialising in homes for families, single households and the disabled. Dunedin Canmore is the lead Association and largest in Edinburgh, with over 4,000 homes under management. Based at Chesser in West Edinburgh, Dunedin Canmore is delighted with the opportunity to provide much needed affordable family homes. Dunedin Canmore will be responsible for co-ordinating the delivery of the affordable homes at West Craigs, and will use its over 30 years experience and knowledge of Edinburgh's housing market to ensure that an integrated and balanced community is created at this development. The emphasis at West Craigs will be on new family homes, for which there is an acute shortage.

Dunedin Canmore is consulting on its proposals for West Craigs, but is currently considering a breakdown of homes as follows:-

Social rent	70 units
Mid-rent	36 units
Shared equity	35 units

10% of homes would be specifically designed for wheelchair users.

Logic for New Homes at West Craigs

- West Craigs is a natural extension to the city.
- West Craigs will provide 650 homes, mainly for families, in a range of house sizes.
- Provision of badly needed new affordable housing for families by The Rowan Group.
- Although in Edinburgh's green belt, this land is the lowest category of green belt for landscape quality.
- West Craigs has excellent nearby public transport links. This will be further improved by Tram Line 2 – nearest stop at The Gyle Shopping Centre.
- The majority of vehicle access will be taken by a new access road from the existing roundabout at Maybury Road. Turnhouse Road is projected to have little increase in traffic as a result of this proposal.
- A new 50 acre public open space will be formed off Craigs Road, providing informal recreation, a useful addition to nearby Cammo Country Park.
- Both primary and secondary schools are available within the immediate catchment.
- Community facilities, including a shop, local surgery, and community hall are proposed.
- Subject to consents, the development can commence during 2009.

Planning Overview

West Craigs, although located between the airport and Maybury Road, is currently zoned as Green Belt in the Rural West Local Plan, as is the land occupied by Edinburgh airport. West Craigs straddles two local plan areas – the Rural West area and Edinburgh City. No residential planning application has ever been submitted at West Craigs in the past.

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (presently under review by the Scottish Parliament) provides the overall legal framework for applications. New development in Scotland is plan led i.e. in determining a planning application the planning authority should have regard for the development plan in so far as it is material to the application.

The development plan is comprised of the Structure Plan which sets down general allocations for new developments, and the Local Plan which allocates or zones specific sites for these areas.

The Edinburgh & Lothians Structure Plan is now on its next cycle of review. This is anticipated to take account of the findings of the Lothian Housing Needs & Market Study, published in October 2005, which in particular identified deficiencies in future provision of both affordable and family housing in Edinburgh.

The City & Rural West Local Plans have both completed recent reviews, but as they were constrained by the present Structure Plan, neither reviews identified substantial new areas of land for housing, with the exception of Leith and Granton Waterfronts for mainly flatted homes.

In October 2005, consultants Tribal completed their Lothian Housing Needs Study. This had been commissioned by all councils in Lothians, including The City of Edinburgh Council. The results of this study are that a substantial shortage of family homes & affordable homes have been identified over the next 5 years.

In March 2006, The City of Edinburgh Council approved its concept design study, Edinburgh Vision 2020. This spatial vision focussed on the period 2020-2040, and recommended that growth corridors be considered, based on “strong public transport arteries” West Edinburgh was proposed as one of these corridors. In this report, it was accepted that Edinburgh’s green belt requires “modernising” to meet the economic, social, and environmental challenges of the future.

In April 2006, the Scottish Executive published its guidance on development in green belts (SPP 21). This states that “where a proposed use would not normally be consistent with green belt designation, exceptionally it may still be considered appropriate, either as a national priority or to meet an established need, and only if no other suitable site is available. These exceptions to the policy should be highlighted to allow for wide publicity and engagement”.

On 2 May 2006 the Council launched its public consultation on its draft “A Vision for Capital Growth: 2020 - 2040”. This is a consultation by the four Lothians authorities on a joint proposal to alter aspects of the Structure Plan and roll its development strategy forward to 2020. The vision promotes the modernisation of Edinburgh’s green belt and recognises the importance of linking the policies for strategic transport links, jobs and housing.

Green Belt Status

All of the land at West Craigs is allocated as green belt, but there are different categories of green belt. These qualities are sourced from an assessment of the landscape qualities of rural west Edinburgh, undertaken by The City of Edinburgh Council in 1993. This ranked all green belt sites in order of sensitivity, and placed the area proposed at West Craigs for new housing in the Lowest Category, along with Edinburgh airport, Heriot Watt campus at Riccarton, and Ferrymuir. It is relevant that all of these other identified areas of the green belt have been developed.

The access road is proposed through a small section of AGLV (Area of Great Landscape Value). Sensitive landscape screening should minimise this intrusion.

West Craigs - Planning History

There have been three previous proposals for development on West Craigs. The City of Edinburgh Council proposed a new roadway through the site, from Gogar roundabout to Maybury Road. This was later abandoned. A subsequent proposal, for the Barnton bypass, was to pass through West Craigs; this was also abandoned. A change of use application for playing fields on part of the site was also refused planning permission.

West Craigs - 1998-2005 Rural West Local Plan Review

Although no substantial additional housing allocations came out of the 1998-2005 Rural West Local Plan review, the Reporters did consider the prospects of future housing at West Craigs. They stated that “*this site could provide an attractive residential environment in a location not far from existing and proposed public transport facilities along the A8 corridor. Major sources of employment and other services are also at no great distance.*”

Services

All mains services can be supplied to West Craigs. Already within the site is located the western boundary trunk sewer and large diameter water main.

Ground Conditions

The existing ground conditions are acceptable for residential development.

Archaeology

There are no known archaeological sites affected by these proposals.

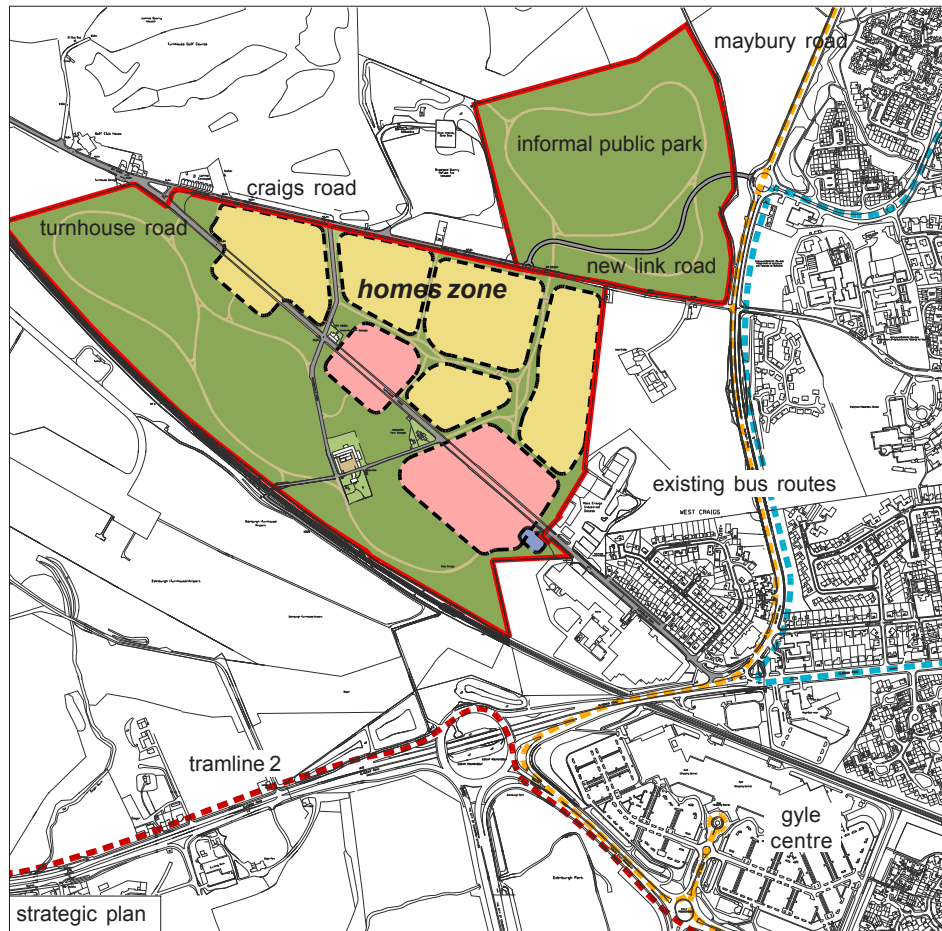
planning overview

Existing Housing

The existing residential settlement at West Craigs comprises a diverse range of house types, including converted bungalows and 2 storey semi detached / terraced houses (a-c), to 3 storey flats (d) and former farm cottages and farm houses (e).

Recent new homes were constructed at nearby Craigmount by Bryant (f-h), and Cala will shortly commence construction on the former SASA site at East Craigs.





Masterplan Principles

Integration and Coherence

The layout seeks to offer a sustainable settlement, providing an attractive place to live, with local amenity and integration into its environment.

Movement

The layout seeks to offer a natural extension into the existing transportation and movement systems, utilising where possible the established access routes and tying into the existing road network and future pedestrian walkways, cycle routes and public transport schemes, including Tram Line 2.

Landscape, Parks and Open space

In order to function as a residential settlement, there must be a sense of place. The most distinctive landscape feature of this proposal will be the provision of a new informal public park. This would be complemented by the inclusion of a series of green open spaces linking parts of the new residential settlement to the countryside beyond. Walkways and cycle paths could be developed to create links to both new and existing amenities, such as the Gyle shopping centre, thereby decreasing dependency upon the car. A substantial landscape zone will form boulevards surrounding the proposed housing zone and define the extent and shape of the proposed urban park, whilst offering a visual and acoustic barrier to the existing railway line.

Amenities

Whilst well served by large-scale amenities, the existing west craigs community forms a dormitory settlement, lacking the small local public amenity that assists in creating a vibrant neighbourhood. A minimum requirement for a development of this scale should include a local corner shop and community hall.

Homes Zone

The proposed new housing zone would be laid out as a series of clusters with a mix of detached, linked, terraced and mews style units, including a substantial affordable element, equating to 33% of the proposed development. There would be a mix of dwelling size and type to allow a community with a good cross section to develop, whilst providing sustainability and a natural migration path for the existing west craigs community. Consideration is also given to rear parking courts in some areas.

Attractive and Welcoming

The proposed design of the built form and associated landscape aims to create an attractive and varied range of public and private space, incorporating well designed communal open spaces onto which the housing will front, providing identity and character to the site, thereby creating a sense of place, safety and security, taking into account recommendations within PAN 77.

A Design Statement to accord with PAN 68 will be produced for this proposal, after full consultation with all interested parties.

Sustainability

To optimise the solar potential of the site's southerly aspect, consideration is to be given, wherever possible, to orientate buildings in a southerly direction thereby maximising passive solar gain. Additionally, spacing between houses and the angle of roof pitches should be designed to ensure good quality daylight can penetrate garden spaces, street and buildings. Consideration should be given to the provision of longer back gardens to the north side of south facing houses to allow sufficient light into gardens.

Development Restrictions

The maximum height of the homes will be 2 storeys, so complying with CAA restrictions regarding Edinburgh airport. Further design constraints will be adhered to re lighting, potential bird hazards and landscape species.

further information

West Craigs is a joint proposal by The Rowan Group & West Craigs Ltd. West Craigs Ltd is advised by Cardross Asset Management Ltd.

This brochure is intended to assist formal pre-application discussions with both statutory consultees and interested parties, in accordance with current Scottish Executive planning guidance.

Comprehensive transport impact and environmental impact studies are ongoing re this proposal, and will be available to all interested parties once complete.

The developers welcome consultation on this proposal. Please send all consultations to Cardross Asset Management. We would also be delighted to provide additional information on any aspect of this proposal, upon request. All consultation information, including a copy of this document in pdf format, is available on the Cardross web-site www.cardrossam.co.uk – then click on West Craigs.

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