

Meadowbank moving on with masterplan

Earlier in the week councillors listened to the detail behind the plans for the council-owned land at Meadowbank where a new stadium is already taking shape.

The land around the new sports facilities has been the subject of consultation and input from local residents. There were overarching principles of increasing quality greenspace and better connected active travel routes suggested – and these have now been included in the application for a masterplan to provide the guiding principles for forthcoming detailed applications.

This might be the first development of this size in Edinburgh which promotes the net zero carbon by 2030 goals by promoting a low car low carbon community. The eventual development here will include housing, retail and encompasses protecting existing trees and planting of saplings with new rain gardens. This has led to the Masterplan being awarded Building with Nature accreditation from Nature Scot and The Scottish Government. The designs have also been endorsed by Sustrans' *Places for Everyone* scheme, which brings specialised active travel knowledge to the project.

Councillor Neil Gardiner, Planning Convener, said: “As a planning authority, we need make sure we protect our city’s beautiful and historic built environment, while supporting our communities to become sustainable for twenty-first century living. We also need to adapt our city to meet the needs of a

growing population, address the increasing impact of climate change and ensure growth is responsible. These designs for Meadowbank meet these needs with plans for a truly low-carbon, low-car, energy efficient neighbourhood, featuring new affordable homes. This is a really important site for the city and I'd like to thank everyone who took time to participate in the consultation process.

"The masterplan includes homes to meet different needs, including for families. One third of the houses will be affordable, making a welcome contribution to the needs of the heroes who keep our city running every day. This masterplan, which has broad community support, offers a gold standard for new developments across the city for both the public and private sectors."

Councillor Maureen Child, Vice Planning Convener, said: "Our aspirations for place making through our new City Plan, which we are currently drafting, are about making sure our communities continue to be great places where people want to live and visit, so feedback from the local community has been key to shaping Committee's decision making on Meadowbank. I'm pleased that an open conversation has been had and that we've been able to agree these ambitious plans, which offer a mix of community benefits and improved facilities. It will see the community evolve into a more connected and climate conscious community, in line with our net zero carbon targets."



Keir Bloomer, the project's independent Sounding Board Chair, said: "The current proposals have emerged through an intensive exercise in community engagement. In addition to a number of public information sessions and consultation meetings, a Meadowbank Sounding Board was established almost two years ago. This group contains representatives of a wide range of local community groups and organisations, including those who were opposed to the original proposals for the site. Local councillors and others with relevant committee

responsibilities are also members but they are in a minority. Considerable efforts have been made to ensure that the sounding board is able to express its views, regardless of whether these are favourable to the Council's perspective or not. I was asked to chair the group as somebody who is completely independent.

"The sounding board met quite frequently until restrictions during the pandemic made this impossible. Designs for the site have been altered on a number of occasions in response to its views. As a result, the current plans are greener and more open. Housing density has been reduced and designs improved. It is intended that the sounding board will continue in existence through the development phase, acting as a strong voice for local people."

Cathy Houston, Project Architect at Collective Architecture, said: "We are grateful for the time taken by members of the community to engage in the Meadowbank design processes. This is such an important site in Edinburgh's City Centre and so it is wonderful to be at this stage with a multifaceted proposal which seeks to enrich the neighbourhood on many levels: ecologically, environmentally, socially and with a huge amount of care. The process undertaken with the community has ensured that the development sensitively integrates new housing, local amenities, greenspace and restored public routes east to west."

Brenda Devlin, a local Community Councillor, said: "Using the expertise of Collective Architecture and the City of Edinburgh Council, local consultations, focus groups, workshops and public meetings were organised. It became obvious that the participants that attended these events were being listened to and their suggestions and ideas taken on board. The plans now being presented are a result of these consultation sessions and mostly reflect the vision of local residents, groups, organisations and businesses.

“The creation of a Sounding Board provided another opportunity for further targeted local input and a place for checks and balances to be carried out on the final plans. This eco-friendly development with a mixture of housing types, quality green spaces and community facilities makes this a very exciting development and will be an asset to our area.”

Around 600 modern energy-efficient homes – a minimum of 35% of which will be affordable – are detailed in the planning application, which is available to view [as a report to Committee](#)

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/meadowbank