

Public Consultation

Welcome



We are holding a first consultation event for a new mixed-use Life Sciences and Residential based masterplan for the undeveloped land at Edinburgh bioQuarter.

This is a new proposal and introduces a new range and mix of uses to complement the existing health innovation and healthcare facilities already developed on site. The aim is create a place to live, rest and relax as well as work. This will provide a significant opportunity for new housing which will better integrate bioQuarter with the surrounding communities and landscape setting.

The project team includes a comprehensive mix of design, technical and environmental specialists who have been appointed by the applicant, Scottish Enterprise. Many of the consultants have experience working on earlier proposals on site and have a deep understanding of the environmental issues.

The current proposal represents a new scale and form of development and includes the large area of land to the south of Little France Road right down to the former Edmonstone Estate which is currently undeveloped.

The following banners provide an initial introduction to the key issues, relevant planning policy and history, and cover some of the initial factors being considered at this stage.

This is early in the process and still at an early design stage, so only initial concepts for development are presented at this time.

Scottish Enterprise owns the land subject to these proposals.

The new masterplan will be for a wider range and mix of uses including housing, leisure, life sciences and business uses as well as other day-to-day attractions and local facilities.

This will be a major new planning application and as such will be subject to two formal public consultation events. A second event will provide more details and summarise feedback from today's event and will be held at Goodtrees Community Centre, Moredun on 9th June 2026.

Please feel free to ask any questions you might have for the design team – some of whom are here today. The full team covers a range of disciplines and includes:

oberlanders 

LUC

Ryden

KJ Tait

Curtins

MÒR

CBRE

RETTIE

gleeds

All of the consultation panels are available via the QR code or on line at www.EBQconsultation.com

We are also engaging with local user groups and community bodies and have started Pre Application discussion with officers at City of Edinburgh Council.





The site and context

The site extends to around to 37.15 hectares (91.76 acres).

The site comprises part of the existing Edinburgh bioQuarter site and open former farmland in two distinct sections to the north of Little France Road and the undeveloped area to the south extending to the Edmonstone ridge and the housing developments on the former Edmonstone Estate beyond.

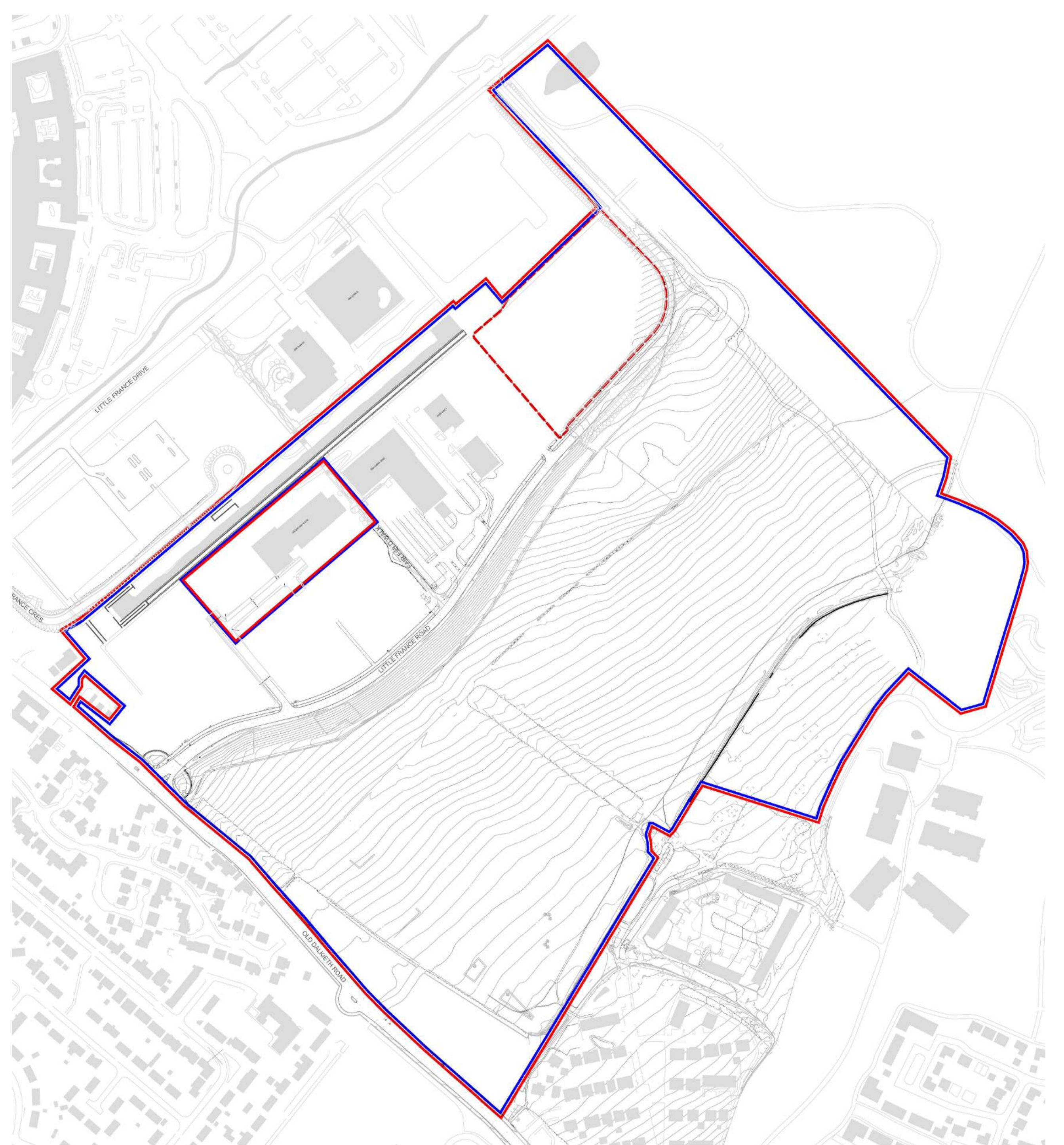
The main part of the site rises in level from Little France Road southwards towards the Edmonstone Ridge.

The western boundary is formed by Old Dalkeith Road (A7). The western boundary is defined by a stone boundary wall of around 1.8 to 2m in height that extends for much of the length of the site apart from one or two historic openings.

The south-western edge of the site is also characterised by a wedge of well-established woodland that widens to the south-western corner of the site. This is designated Long-Established Woodland of Plantation Origin (LEPO).

The surrounding area and uses are a mix of open space, leisure and community, sports facilities and established residential properties. These include traditional and well established housing at Moredun and the more recent housing at Edmonstone to the south.

There are informal footpath networks across the site but much of the existing BioQuarter site is framed by formal buildings, landscape frontages and the entrance signage features.



The proposal

The proposed development is for a new mixed-use urban quarter which will include Life Science businesses and a range of residential tenures and types as well as potential for hotels, key worker housing and co-living.

A formal description of the proposal, is required for planning purposes and is provided in fill below:

“Class 4 (Business) office, research and development floorspace including laboratory and life sciences uses; ancillary Class 6 storage and distribution; healthcare, clinical, hospital and medical research facilities (Class 8) including training and innovation centres; education uses (Class 10); residential development (Class 9 and Sui Generis) comprising up to 1,500 units including houses, flats, affordable housing, build-to-rent and specialist accommodation; purpose-built student accommodation and co-living (Sui Generis); hotel accommodation (Class 7) with conferencing and leisure facilities; retail and professional services (Class 1A); food and drink uses (Class 3); assembly and leisure uses (Class 11); mobility hub; energy centre and low carbon energy infrastructure; public realm, open space, landscaping and play facilities; green infrastructure and sustainable urban drainage systems; active travel and bus infrastructure; car and cycle parking; access and servicing arrangements; demolition where required; and associated engineering, infrastructure, remediation, enabling and ancillary works.”

The description of development is extensive and covers a range of potential uses that are appropriate and consistent with the wider objectives established through the existing Planning Permission in Principle consent, Supplementary Guidance, National Policy (NPF4) and the City Plan 2030.



Place 31 Edinburgh BioQuarter

Planning permission will be granted for development within the boundary of Edinburgh BioQuarter as defined on the Proposals Map, provided it accords with the BioQuarter Development Principles and the approved, or subsequently approved, master plan.

3-91 Proposals will be assessed against the BioQuarter Development Principles and other relevant local plan policies, for example on matters such as design, accessibility, landscaping, biodiversity and relationship with the neighbouring green belt and the Southeast Wedge Parkland Green Space Proposal BGN46.

3-92 A BioQuarter master plan will be prepared to support the future development of the Edinburgh BioQuarter for a development focused on Life Sciences research and directly related commercial developments. This co-location of uses helps the development and city on its journey toward net-zero.

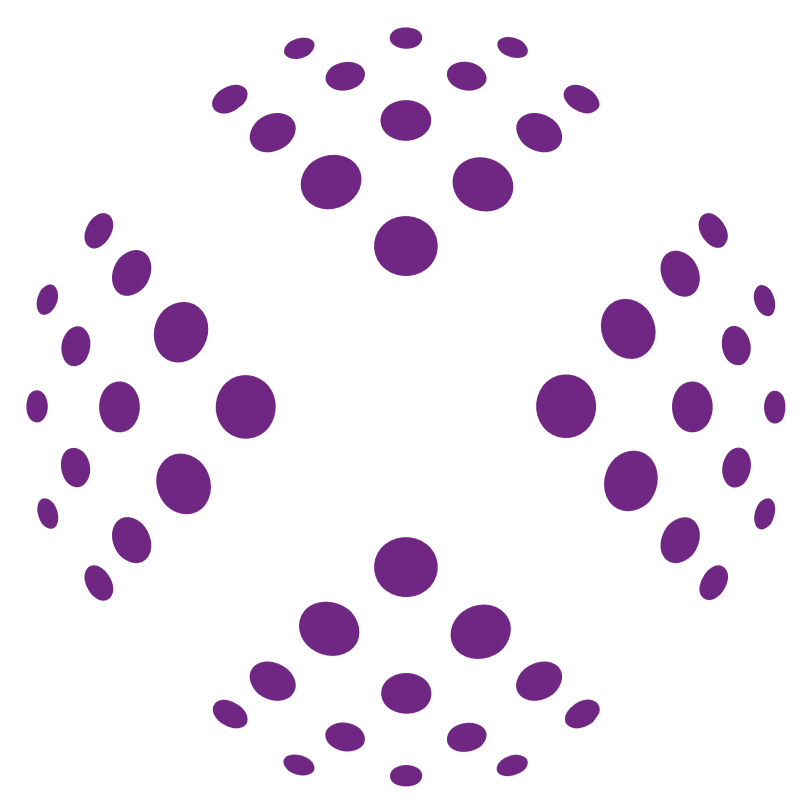
Edinburgh BioQuarter Development Principles

The requirements in principle will be:

- A high density, urban extension, compact in form with a sense of community attractive to workers, visitors and residents.
- A mix of uses focused around the BioQuarter's role as a life sciences quarter, including potentially around 2500 residential units in the longer term, community facilities, commercial and leisure to encourage evening and weekend activity.
- Development which respects the site's location within the wider landscape setting of the city – the extent of development and building heights managed to protect the landscape character and the visual connectivity of the Craigmillar and Edmonstone ridges.
- Address and connect with neighbours and the wider city – physically, visually and socially, including with urban frontages to the site edges, including to Old Dalkeith Road
- A sustainable place with increased biodiversity and a net zero carbon target and adapted to climate change.
- Provide or contribute towards the following transport infrastructure:
 - New active travel route: Connection to the Wisp from East of BioQuarter.
 - New active travel route: A7 north-south - BioQuarter to City Centre and Midlothian.
 - Mobility hub
 - Enhanced bus provision including the Orbital bus route
- Provide or contribute towards education infrastructure as indicated in Table 11, healthcare infrastructure as indicated in Table 12, and other community facilities,
- Ensure all homes are adequately served by play facilities and have access to open space in line with the Council's Open Space Strategy (see BGN 51), and
- A flood risk assessment is required and should inform the development and design/layout of the site.

Extracts from the City Plan 2030





Planning history & key issues

This is a new proposal that includes part of the previously consented masterplan site for a Health Innovation District, which dates back to 2004. That original application was in outline with only a site plan formally submitted for 26.68 ha of open land immediately south of the new Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.

The proposal included academic buildings (medical and veterinary) of 51,075 sq m on the hospital side of the site and 82,450 sq m of related commercial Research & Development floorspace (pharmaceutical and biomedical) to the southern and eastern parts of the site, to be completed over a 15-20 year period.

That application was subject to Environmental Impact Assessment covering the following matters:

- Noise Assessment - traffic and construction;
- Air Quality - traffic and construction;
- Flood Risk & Drainage;
- Landscape - analysis of key features, views, visual impact;
- Natural Heritage - potential to enhance biodiversity;
- Cultural Heritage (Archaeology);
- Construction Management.

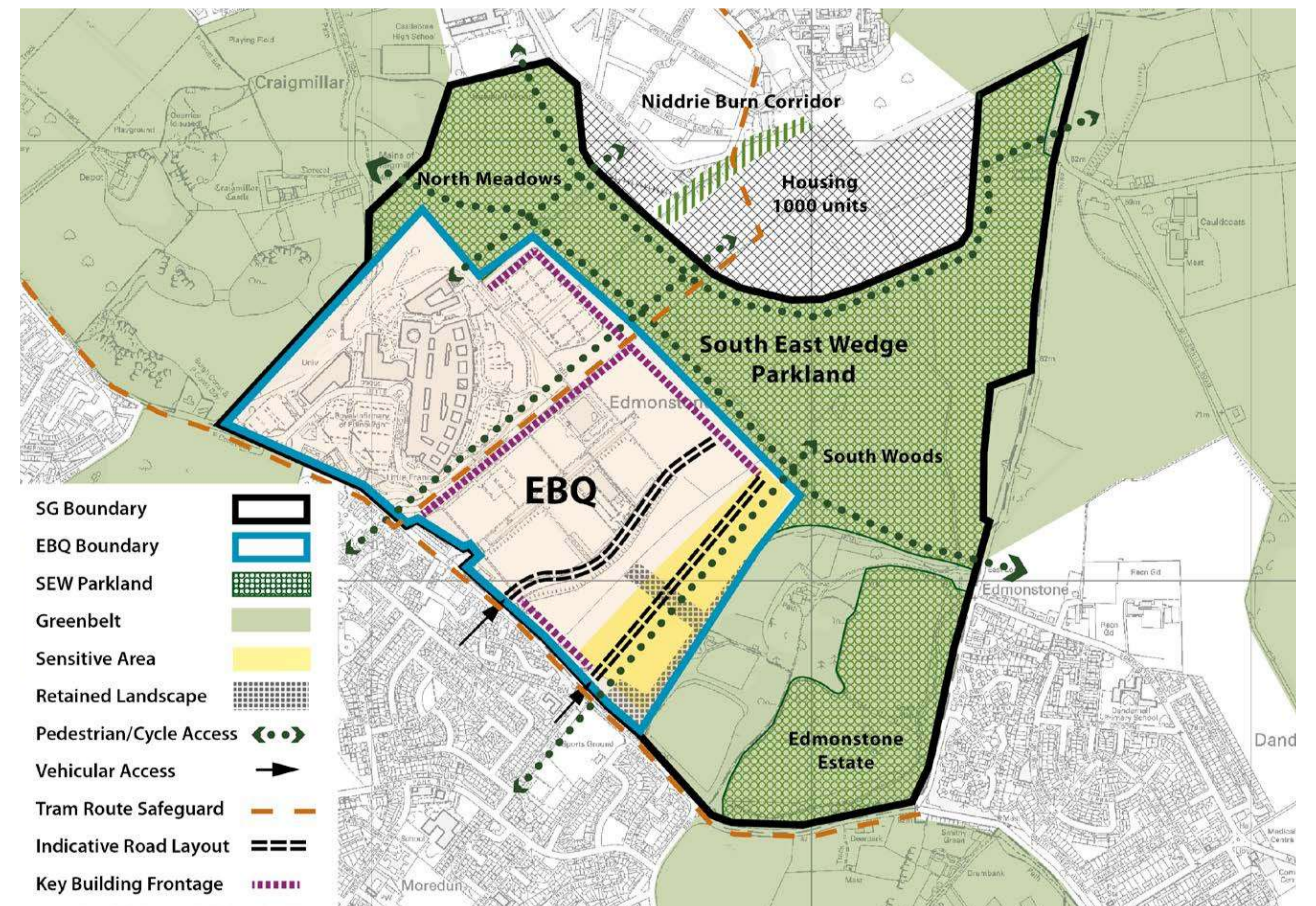
Other matters, including Transport and Economic Impact were separate standalone assessments.

The conclusions of the EIA (and Environmental Statement) were that the Noise, Air Quality, Cultural Heritage, Flood Risk and Construction impacts were not likely to be significant.

There have also been an array of previous masterplans for the wider site – many of which responded to historic market conditions and tested a very dense new urban form of development.

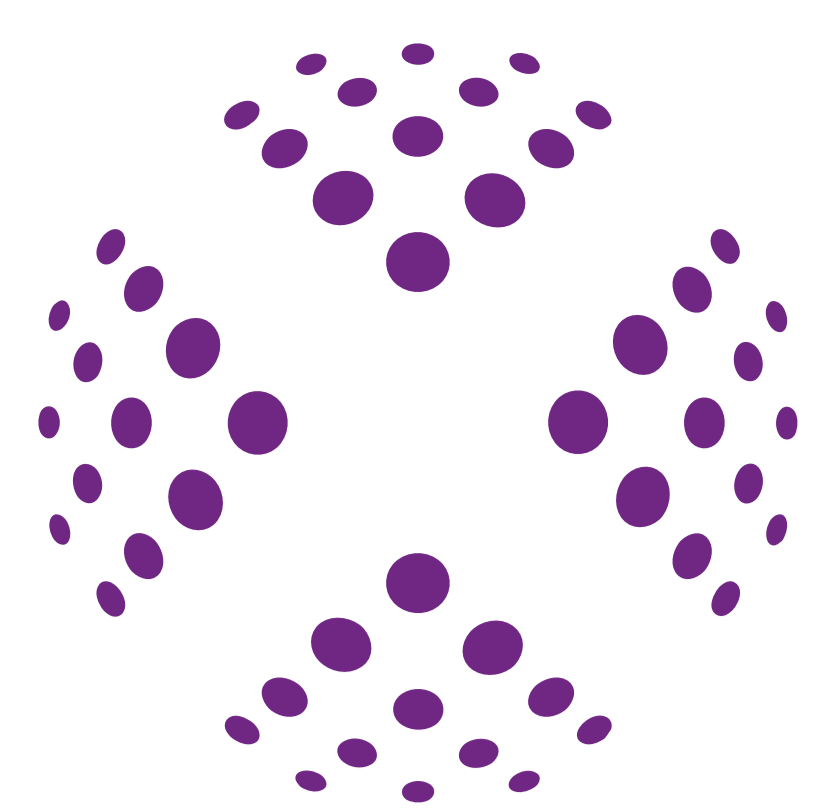
The current proposal is going through EIA Screening for the larger site now proposed which also includes residential uses.

The key issues that we have addressed through pre-application discussion with officers at City of Edinburgh Council to date are covered in the following information.



Key Diagram from the Edinburgh bioQuarter and South East Wedge Parkland: Supplementary Guidance and Masterplan 2013





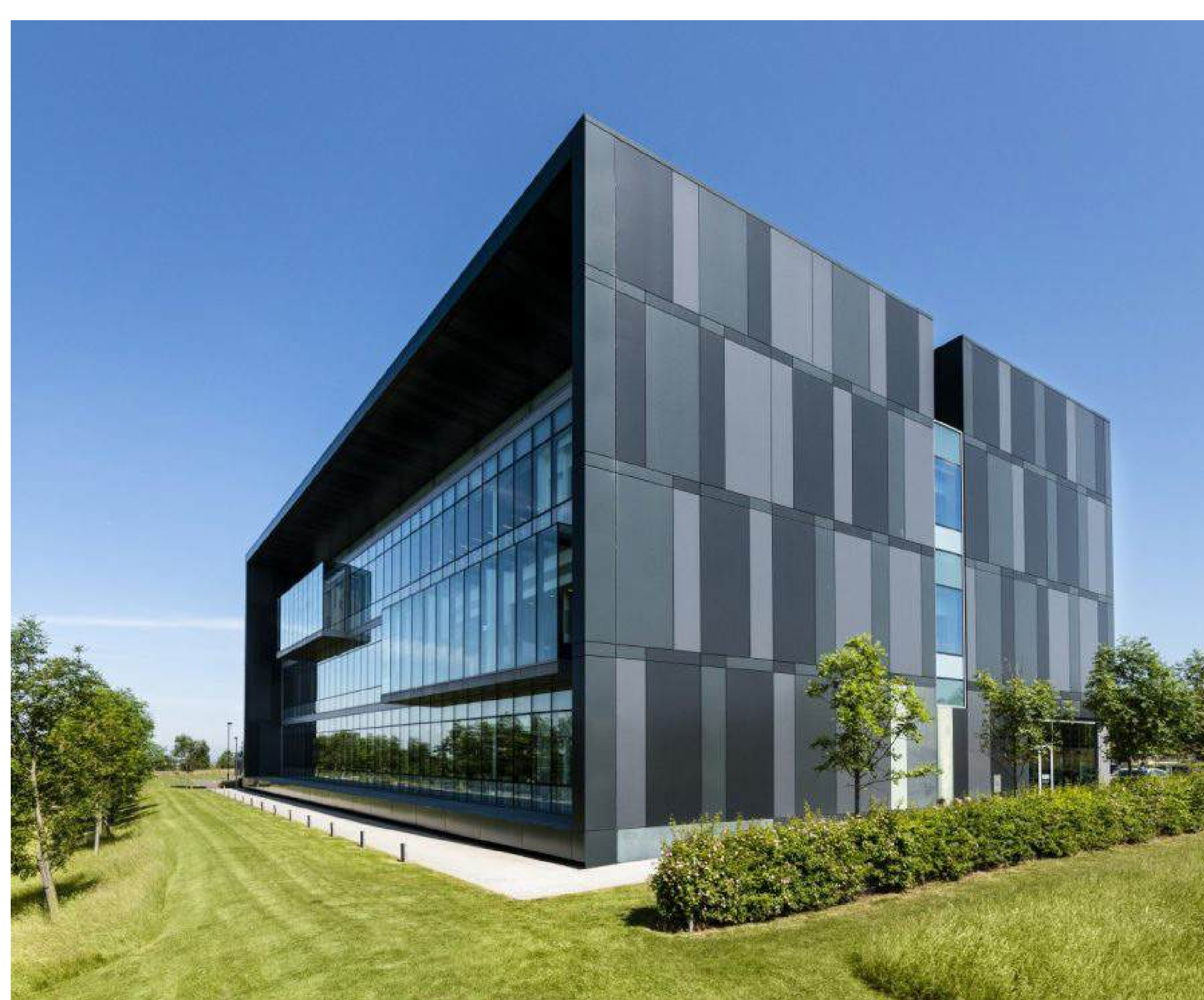
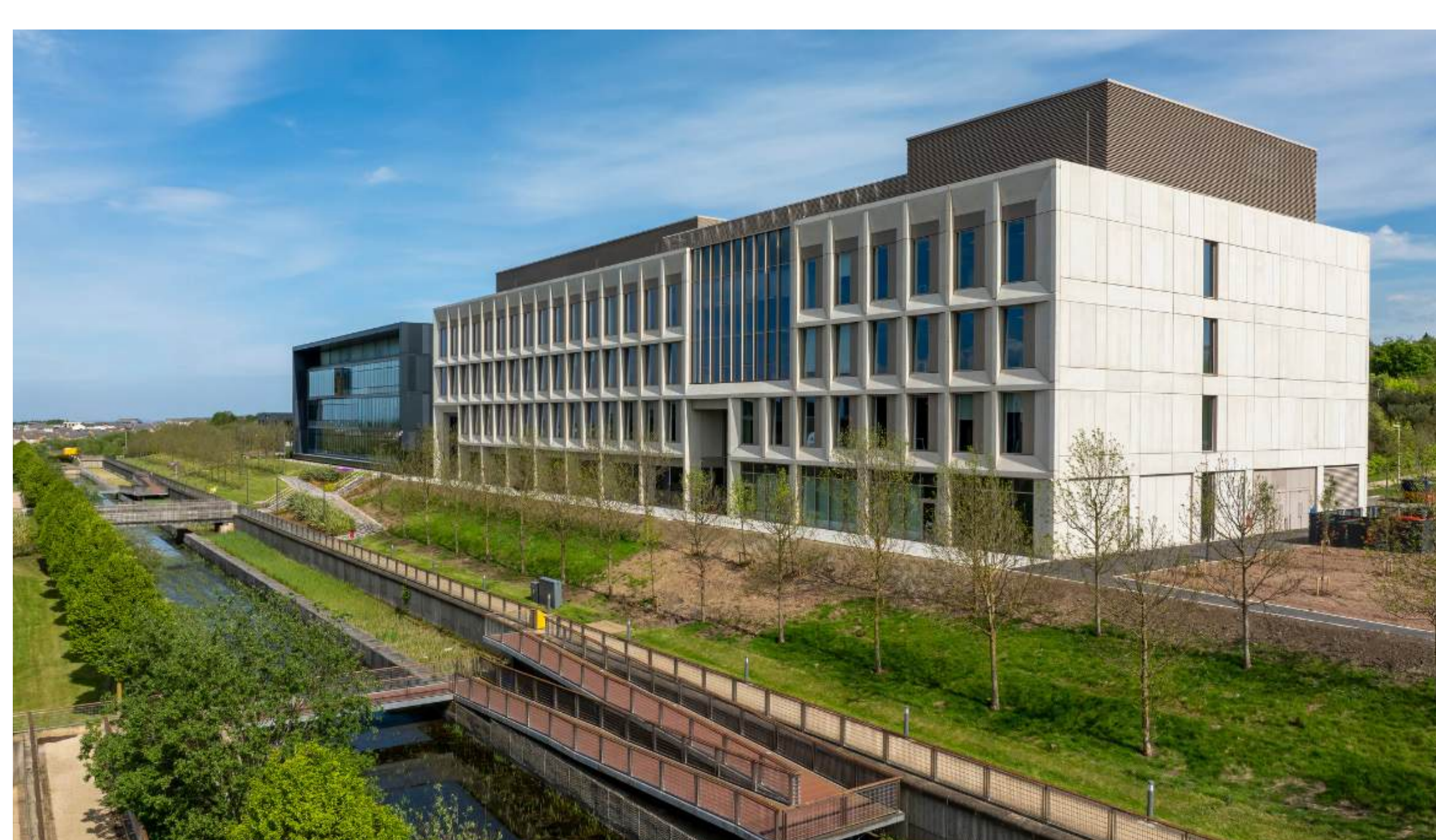
Scope, mix and scale

bioQuarter continues to develop a world-leading community of health innovators and health companies. Existing anchors include the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, University of Edinburgh, Scottish Centre for Regenerative Medicine, Institute for Regeneration & Repair, Usher Institute and commercial life sciences buildings BioQuarter NINE and the BioCubes. Further NHS and life sciences commercial buildings are currently being planned.

Life sciences is a growing, high value economic sector and a national priority for investment. This is driven by an ageing population, lifestyle diseases, healthcare expenditure, personalised medicine and patents. The Scottish Government's Life Sciences Strategy sets an ambitious target to grow the sector from its current £10.5 billion contribution to the economy into a £25 billion industry by 2035.

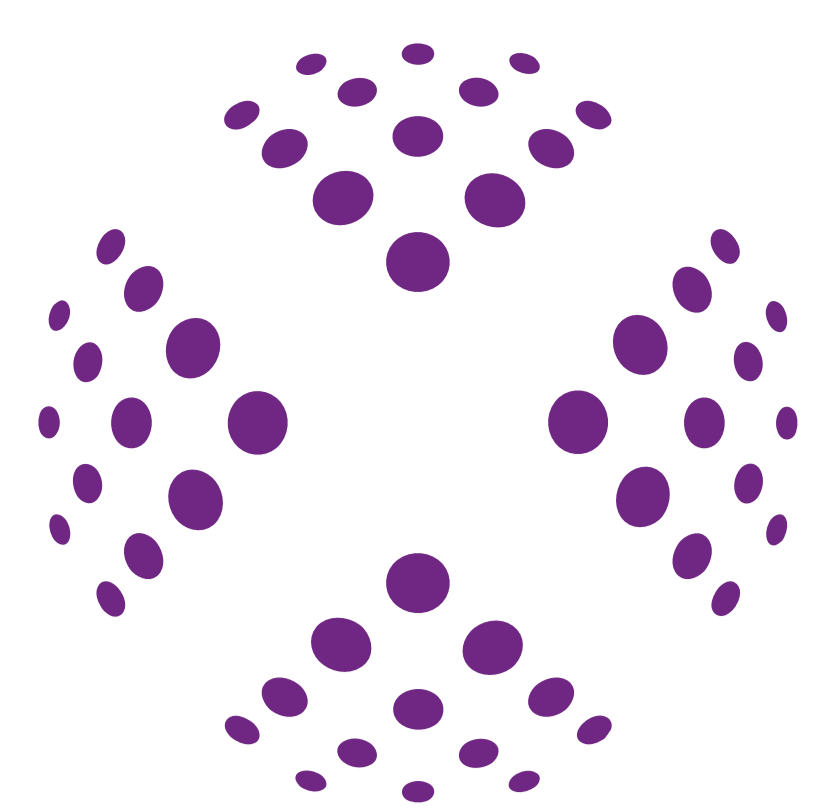
bioQuarter is critical to that ambition and Edinburgh's life sciences growth is outperforming Scotland's. Scottish Enterprise's existing buildings attract regular demand for laboratories and related space from life sciences companies, many of which are currently small to medium with strong growth potential.

Community, commercial and leisure uses are also planned, which will help activate and deliver successful phases of life sciences and residential development. The existing NHS, University and commercial activity, the wider communities and planned residential development provide a local customer base in a part of the city with limited current local provision. The masterplan considers the potential for a hotel with associated amenities, convenience / grocery shopping, food & beverage, recreation, health & fitness, play areas, community healthcare, cultural venues and meanwhile uses such as pop-ups events.



Existing facilities at bioQuarter





Residential etc scope, mix and scale

This new proposal includes the area earmarked for up to 2,500 residential units in the longer term by CEC in City Plan 2030. It envisages a new mixed use urban quarter and we have reviewed the scale, nature and range of residential uses across the site to consider how different land uses can integrate and link with surrounding areas.

There is a diverse target market for new housing, including local residents, those working in the area (including at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and at the bioQuarter); students (with a University of Edinburgh campus close by); and visitors to the area.

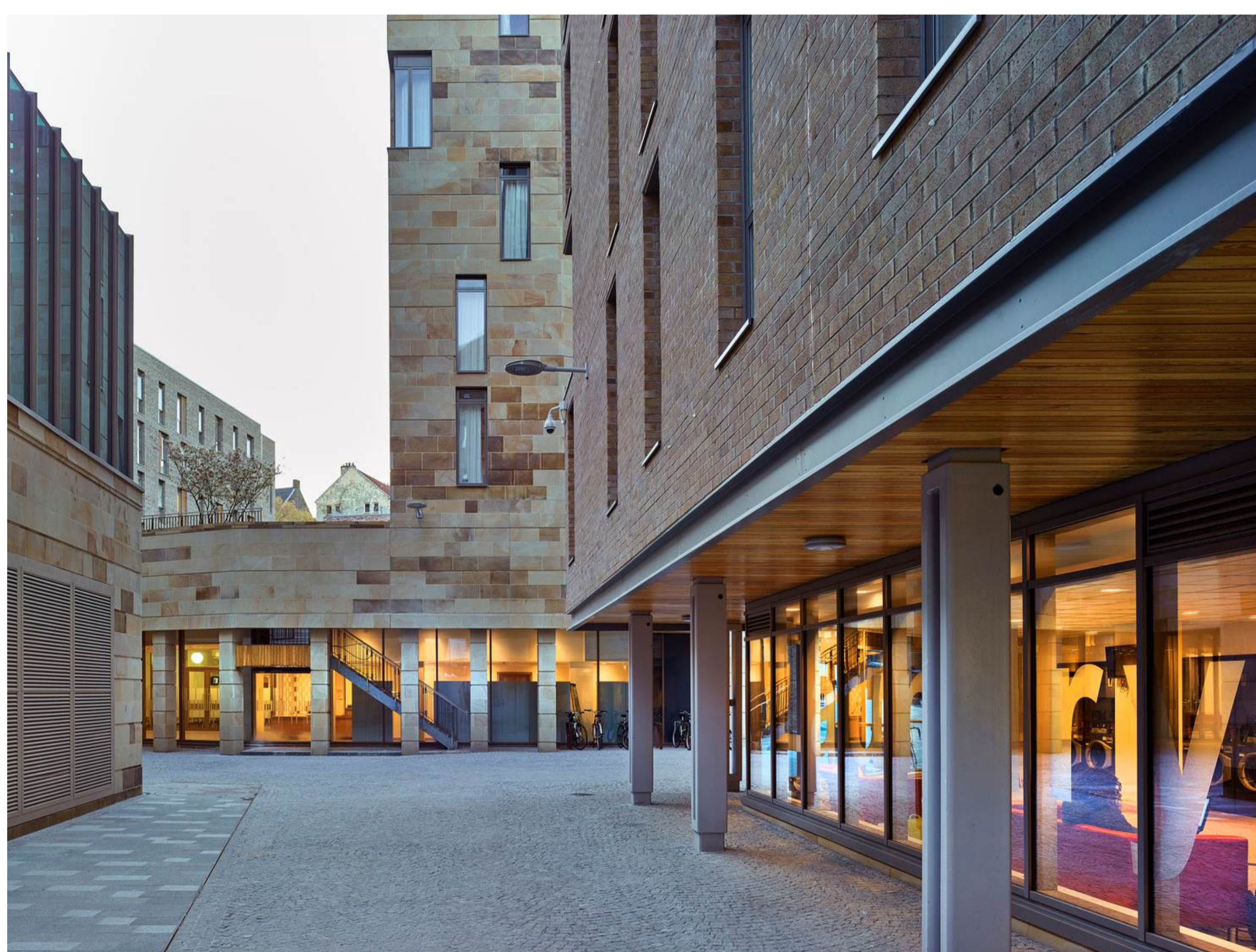
A range of residential uses could be accommodated here including affordable housing (35% of the total, with the intention that a significant proportion of this is key worker housing). Other affordable tenures could be accommodated including Mid Market Rent housing and Low Cost Home Ownership.

There should also be demand for a range of private housing tenures, including Private for Sale, Purpose Built Student Accommodation, Build to Rent (Multi Family and Single Family) and Co-living given the diverse nature of the target markets.

As such, a range of house types could be accommodated from relatively small studio/1-bed co-living apartments to relatively large detached houses. Density can be supported through a range of typologies including a range of flatted types (predominantly 1- and 2-bed), colony flats/maisonettes, terraces and townhouses.

An average target density would be around 60-80 residential units per hectare, although this would vary at different parts of the site depending on tenure and typology.

There would also likely be demand for a hotel (approximately 200 bedrooms) to accommodate visitors to the area (to the hospital and the business quarters) as well as general tourist traffic in the city.



Examples of residential living- range of tenures



Environmental constraints

Topography

- The site is steeply sloping with an embankment running along Little France Road and a retaining wall along the Old Dalkeith Road boundary.
- From Little France Road the ground rises by approximately 20m until it reaches the Edmonstone development at Tweedsmuir Drive
- Access is a challenge and will need some regrading and earthworks to utilise an existing hammerhead on Little France Road and future access on Old Dalkeith Road

Landscape and Visual Impact

- The site has landscape and visual sensitivity to and from Craigmillar Castle
- Views towards the Edmonstone ridge are also important
- Previously 15 key views have been tested for other versions of the masterplan. We are updating this study to reflect our current masterplan thinking
- City of Edinburgh Council's Place Brief sets maximum building height parameters that we will need to take cognisance of

Ecology

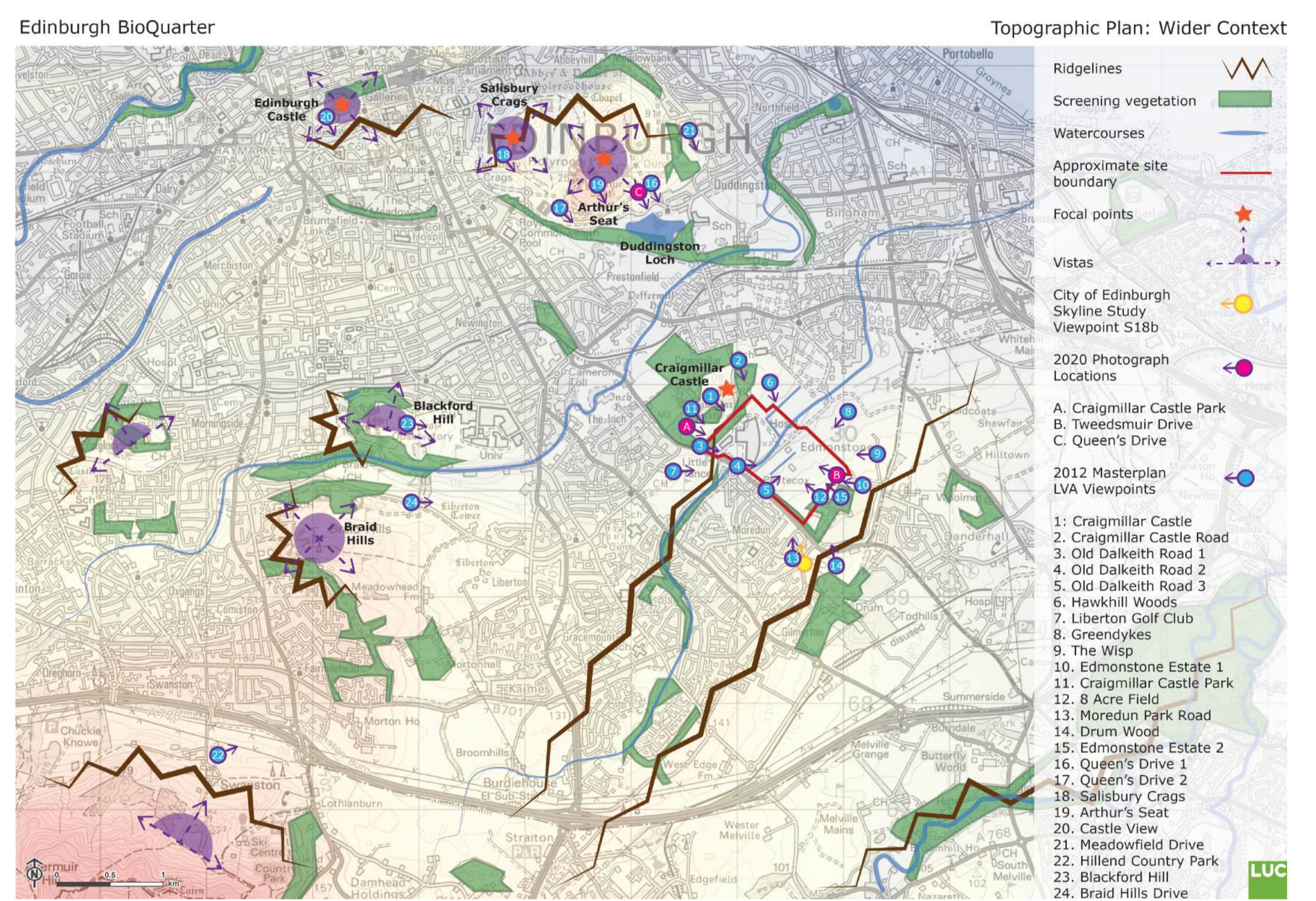
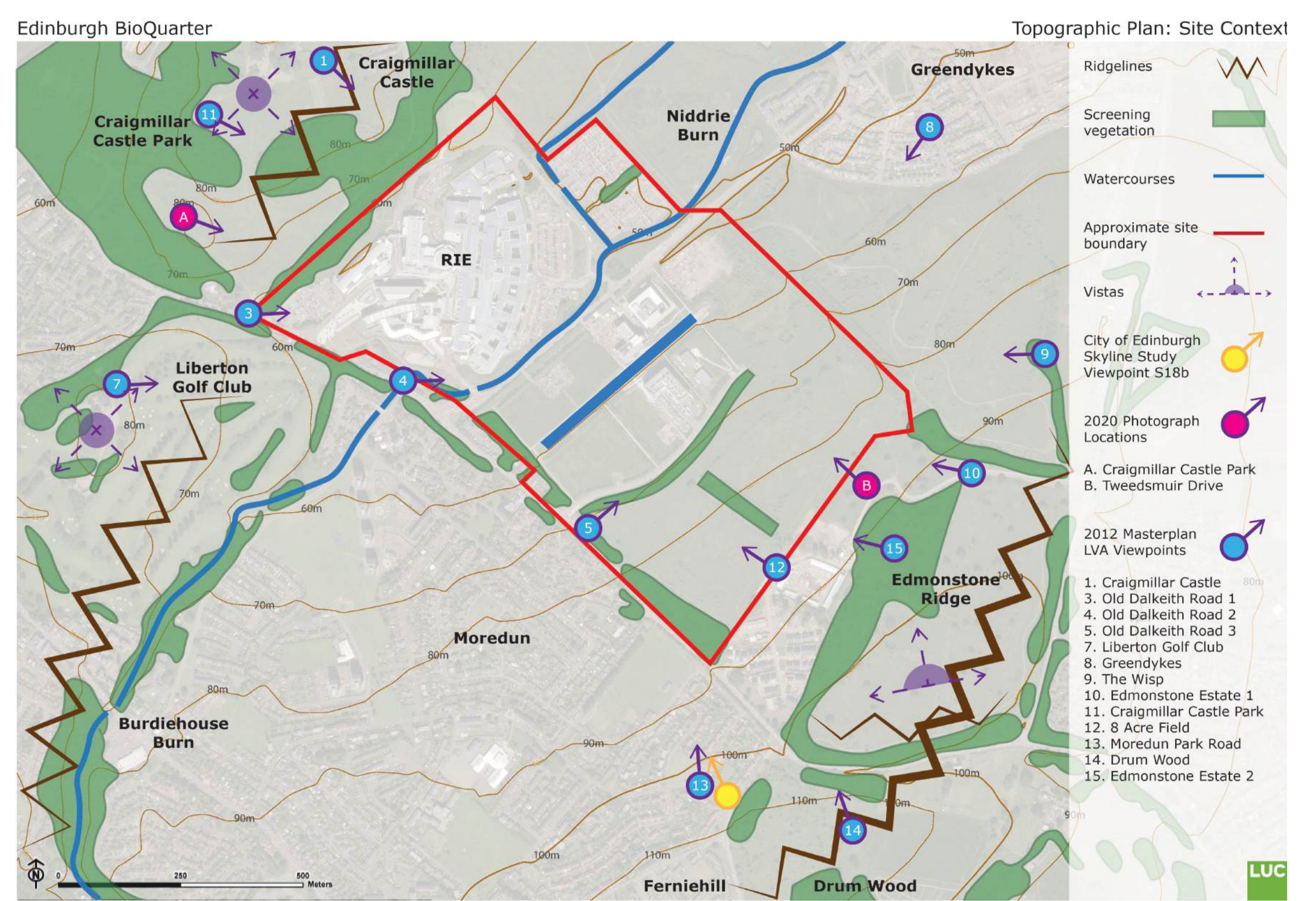
- A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has recently been commissioned
- This comprises two elements, a desk study, and a protected species walkover survey
- This will map existing habitats and set key ecological constraints as well as opportunities for future biodiversity enhancement

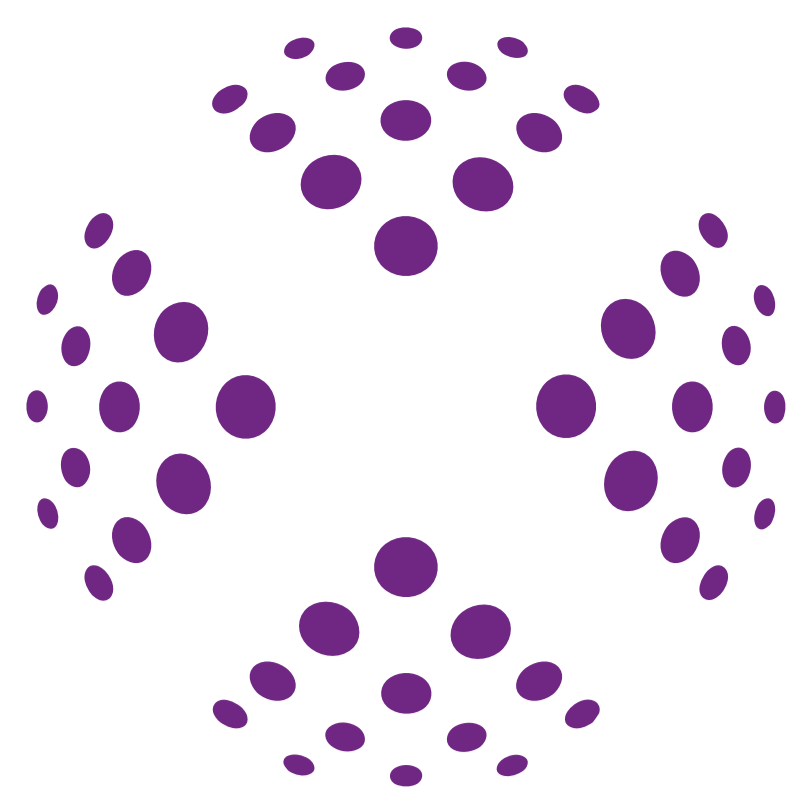
Trees and Woodland

- All the trees are protected under a blanket Tree Protection Order (TPO)
- Some parts of the woodland fall within Long Established woodlands of Plantation Origin (LEPO), an Ancient Woodland designation
- An updated tree survey has recently been commissioned which will consider the root protection areas and any key sensitivities
- Any tree removals will need careful consideration and a mitigation strategy
- We will also be looking at opportunities for significant new planting within the masterplan site and management of existing woodlands

Heritage

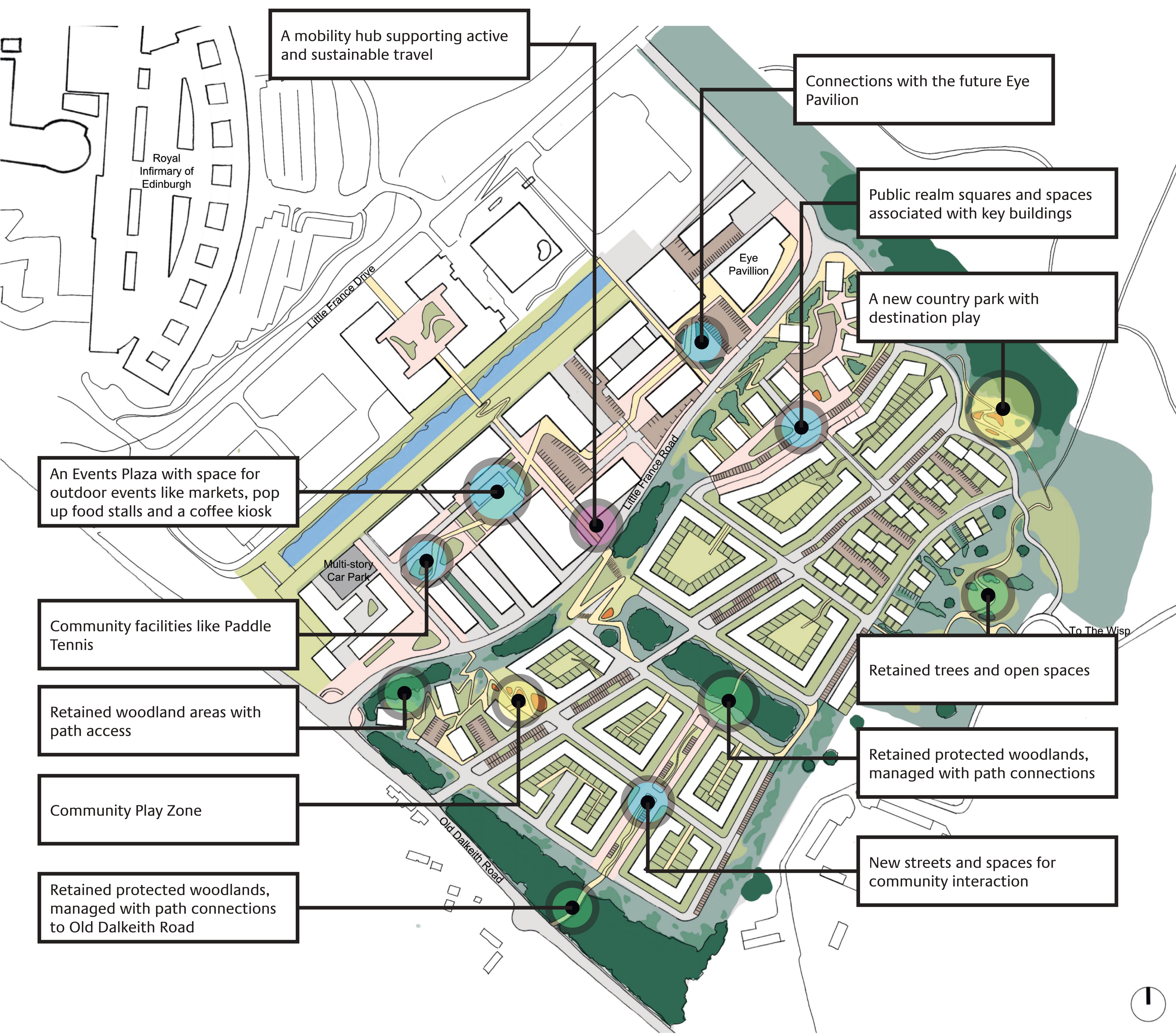
- The site falls within the historic Edmonstone estate, a designed landscape
- There are remnants on site like the ha-ha wall running along the south of the site and boundary walls
- Craigmillar Castle is a scheduled monument and elements of the setting and strategic views from the castle ramparts will require detailed consideration
- Archaeological potential will also need to be considered as part of our supporting studies





Public realm & place activation

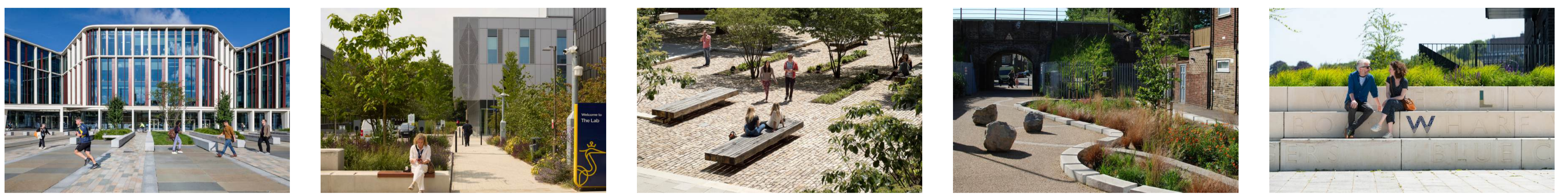
We want to create a lively and attractive place - a healthy new neighbourhood for people to live, work, play and thrive. We are considering opportunities for place activation within the public realm alongside the building uses. We recognise that the masterplan will be developed out over a timeframe of 20 or so years. There are therefore lots of opportunities to consider temporary and meanwhile uses alongside longer term amenities. We would welcome your thoughts and ideas about the kind of facilities you would like to see at Edinburgh BioQuarter.



Woodland connections and Open Space

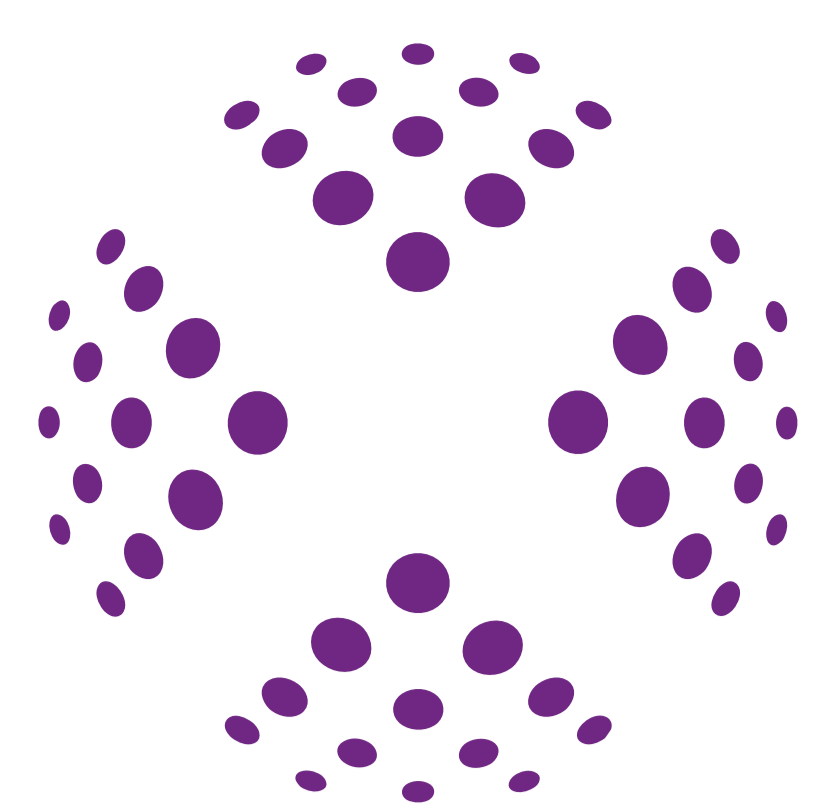


Key Spaces and Public Realm



Play Areas





Concept masterplan

The emerging bioQuarter masterplan seeks to expand upon the existing life-science and health-innovation related activities with cohesive residential, amenity and public realm, creating an ambitious and innovative mixed-use and life science development, with a genuine Sense of Place.

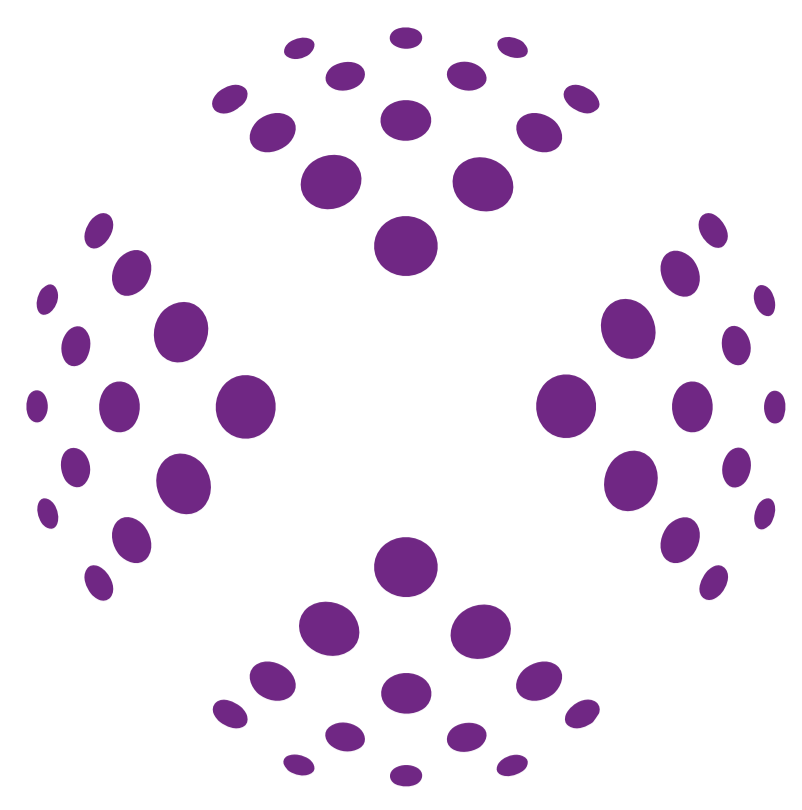
A successful masterplan will deliver a long-term strategy, with a level of flexibility in mind to enable responsiveness to the market while remaining focussed on delivering the overarching vision for bioQuarter.

Our vision is for a new urban place to create a local, regional and international destination.

bioQuarter can uniquely deliver a new urban quarter that celebrates mature natural areas at its heart. Retention and reinvigoration of existing assets including the mature and ancient tree belts and the links to Little France Park are central to the aspirational vision. Our approach balances the desire to shape an urban environment while creating a biodiverse, sustainable and green Place.

The vision intends to draw people in from the existing adjacent communities, offering new amenities and a range of new homes for the population to thrive and grow.





Concept masterplan

Key moves illustrated include:

bioSquare – a new urban heart to the bioquarter, combining Life Science, Labs and Offices, Hotel and potential Key Worker accommodation, Retail and Hospitality, Play and Padel Tennis. A destination for community use, farmers markets and events throughout the year.

A new civic scaled entrance from Old Dalkeith Road, repurposing the existing sub-urban business park entrance and signage.

2 new and additional entrances from Old Dalkeith Road, carefully and sensitively configured through the ancient and mature treescape; a bioQuarter that is open, integrated and welcoming to all.

A portfolio of new homes of mixed sizes and tenures, designed to be specific to their immediate context, whether nestling amidst the mature treescape or rising towards Park and Gateway views.

Integrating with the proposed new NHS Eye Pavillion.

Respecting and retaining Ancient Woodlands and historic features like the Ha-ha wall.

Development with building heights that are sensitive and considered relative to distant views and key view-corridors to Castle and Riidge.



A Mix of Uses



A new Sequence of Public Realm and active open space



Connectivity and permeability





Next steps

Thank you for your interest, and attending today.

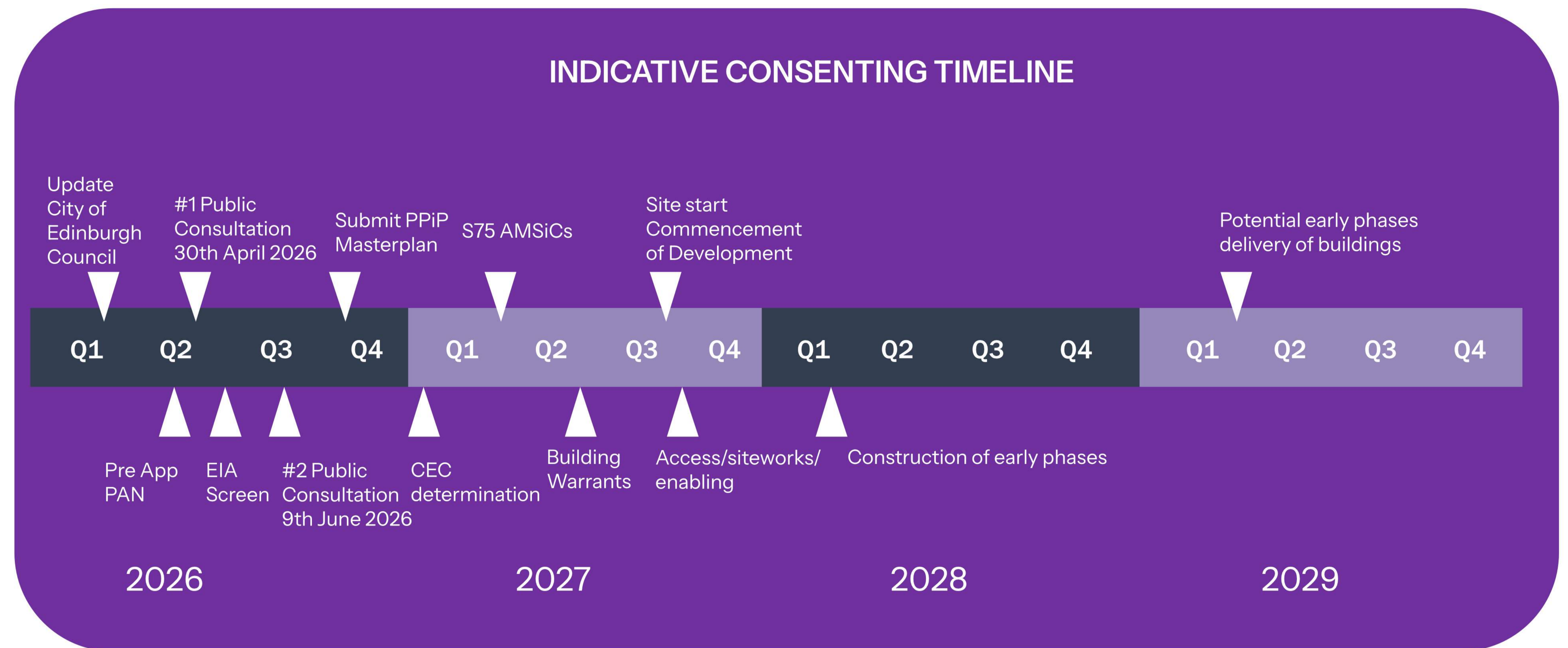
A number of environmental and technical baseline surveys are required, some of which are already underway.

This will inform the initial concept designs but the application will be for Planning Permission in Principle so there will not be any detailed layouts or designs of buildings until much later in the planning process. Whilst much of the layout and illustrations are indicative, we will be looking to secure key cornerstones such as points of access and connectivity, site levels and drainage and the heights and scale of different uses across the site to establish the parameters of development.

Overall we are aiming to submit the planning application in late summer and anticipate a decision from City of Edinburgh Council in late 2026 or early 2027. A legal agreement (S75) will be required to regulate the phasing of development and detail any financial contributions required for example, infrastructure and affordable housing which would follow in the period thereafter.

Detailed design proposals would then come forward on a plot-by-plot basis either as Applications for Matters Specified in Conditions (AMSiC) or as full applications.

Other specific proposals might come forward in the meantime but they would be shaped and informed by the wider framework and masterplan.



We will hold another similar event on:

9th June 2026
2pm – 7pm
Goodtrees Neighbourhood Centre
5 Moredunvale Pl, Edinburgh,
EH17 7LB



We will be able to provide more feedback and detail at that event – both from this first consultation and the other surveys and discussions ongoing with council officers.

All of the consultation panels are available via the QR code or online at www.EBQconsultation.com

Please fill in one of the forms and leave any particular comments you have.

Alternatively, you can submit comments by email to bioquarter@ryden.co.uk