

PANEL 1

WELCOME
ABOUT APATURA
ABOUT AAH

Welcome

Help shape new proposals at Wester Hermiston

Thank you for taking the time to attend. This consultation is your opportunity to learn more about our early-stage proposals to bring new energy and digital infrastructure to the Wester Hermiston AI Data Centre Campus.

We’re here to listen, share ideas, and answer your questions. Your feedback will help shape how the proposals develop so they reflect not just technical goals, but the needs, hopes, and priorities of local people.

Shaping the next chapter

This project is about transforming land into a centre for innovation, skills, and investment, delivering clean, reliable infrastructure that supports Scotland’s growing digital economy.

It has the potential to generate high-quality jobs, attract investment, and bring additional economic activity to the area. This growth can help support local businesses, strengthen the supply chain, and open up opportunities for training and careers in future-facing sectors.

We recognise there are expectations as well as concerns, and that change must deliver genuine, lasting benefit. That’s why we’re engaging early, to explain our thinking, listen to local priorities, and ensure any future plans reflect what matters most to the community.

To learn more about who we are and what we do, visit:
www.apatura.energy



Wester Hermiston red line boundary (you can see this in more detail on our other digital screens).

About Apatura

Who we are and why we’re here

Apatura develops and operates large-scale energy and digital infrastructure. We focus on clean power, battery storage and data centre-ready sites, the behind-the-scenes systems that help keep the lights on, store renewable energy, and support everything from AI to education, research and healthcare.

With one of the UK’s largest energy storage pipelines and a growing portfolio of digital infrastructure projects, we specialise in delivering developments that support both national priorities and local benefits.

Our planning partners at AAH Consultants support all of our planning applications, so you may see their name on submissions. Their role is to help shape and present our proposals with care, clarity, and consideration.

They understand that planning isn’t just about policy – it’s about place, people, and long-term purpose. With AAH Consultants support, we’re committed to an open and transparent process that listens, learns, and evolves.

More about AAH consultants 



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With one of the world’s largest portfolios of clean energy assets, we’re helping to build a more sustainable local built environment.

Our planning and regulatory expertise means we can help you navigate the complexities of the planning process. Their role is to ensure clarity, consistency and transparency in the planning process. They understand the local context, the place, the people and the support that local businesses need to thrive.

More

About AAH Consultants



AAH is a planning consultancy known for clear advice, strong engagement, and success on complex sites. The practice has grown from regeneration roots into large-scale energy and infrastructure, guiding projects from strategy to consent and delivery. Today AAH supports clients in areas such as energy storage and data centres, combining policy expertise with a people-and-place focus.

You can find out more about them on their website here:
www.aahconsultants.co.uk

AAH
consultants

PANEL 2

**WHY NOW?
WHAT IS A DATA CENTRE?**

Wester Hermiston

Creating essential infrastructure with care for place and environment

The proposed Wester Hermiston AI Data Campus represents a rare opportunity to bring nationally significant digital infrastructure to a location with excellent connectivity. Its position close to a skilled workforce, and grid connections means it can efficiently serve Scotland’s growing demand for secure, sustainable data capacity.

We understand the importance of the local environment and landscape. The project will be designed to integrate sensitively with its surroundings, minimise environmental impact, and enhance biodiversity wherever possible.

The scale of investment, new jobs, and training opportunities can help strengthen the local economy, create career pathways, and provide lasting benefits for the area.

We believe this part of the site could support:

- > A clean, modern data campus
- > A heat recovery system to benefit local homes and facilities
- > Hundreds of skilled, future-facing jobs

And importantly, it can do so in a way that complements and strengthens the wider regeneration effort.

Why now?

AI is driving unprecedented demand for secure compute capacity and energy storage. Countries worldwide are racing to attract the investment and infrastructure needed to lead in this new digital economy.

Acting now could secure long-term economic value for the UK and deliver lasting benefits for The City of Edinburgh – from high-quality jobs and skills to enhanced infrastructure that supports the community for decades to come.

So what role does a data centre play in all of this?

What is a data centre?



What is a data centre?

A data centre is a highly secure building that houses the powerful computer servers needed to store, process and move vast amounts of digital information.

These facilities make everyday life possible – from using your smartphone, shopping online and streaming TV, to supporting vital services in healthcare, education and emergency response.

They also provide the computing power behind emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), which are driving major advances in everything from scientific research to transport, manufacturing and energy management.

At Wester Hermiston, the proposed data centre campus would deliver this capability in a way that’s energy-efficient, resilient and aligned with the wider economic, environmental and social development aspirations of the city.



Indicative look and feel of a data centre at Wester Hermiston

Designed to fit in, and contribute to Wester Hermiston’s future

We’re designing this campus to be a long-term asset that strengthens the future development vision for the Wester Hermiston site and delivers lasting value for the local community.

That means:

1. Sympathetically designed:

Careful consideration of appearance and landscaping so it integrates well with surrounding homes, schools, university campus, and green space.
2. Connected to the community:

Working with the local colleges, universities, employers, and training providers to support skills development and create clear pathways into high-quality careers.
3. Supportive of regeneration:

Delivered in partnership with local stakeholders to complement the area’s wider renewal, attracting new investment, jobs, and activity.
4. Low carbon:

Drawing power from the national grid with a focus on renewables.

PANEL 3

OUR PROPOSAL

Our proposal at Wester Hermiston

Creating an AI data campus focused on renewable energy

We are proposing a 200MW AI data campus at Wester Hermiston, designed to meet Scotland’s growing digital needs while being sensitive to the site’s setting and local environment.

The campus will draw its electricity from the national grid, with a strong focus on renewable supply. A key part of this approach is making use of curtailed energy, renewable power that is generated but sometimes goes to waste because the grid cannot absorb it all at once. In 2024 alone, more than £1 billion of clean power was curtailed across the UK. By capturing this surplus and putting it to productive use, the Wester Hermiston campus will help reduce waste, lower costs for consumers, and ensure Scotland’s renewable resources work harder for local communities and the economy.

Purpose-built to the highest technical, environmental, and safety standards, the campus will provide secure, sustainable digital infrastructure that delivers high-performance computing to support innovation, research, and economic growth.

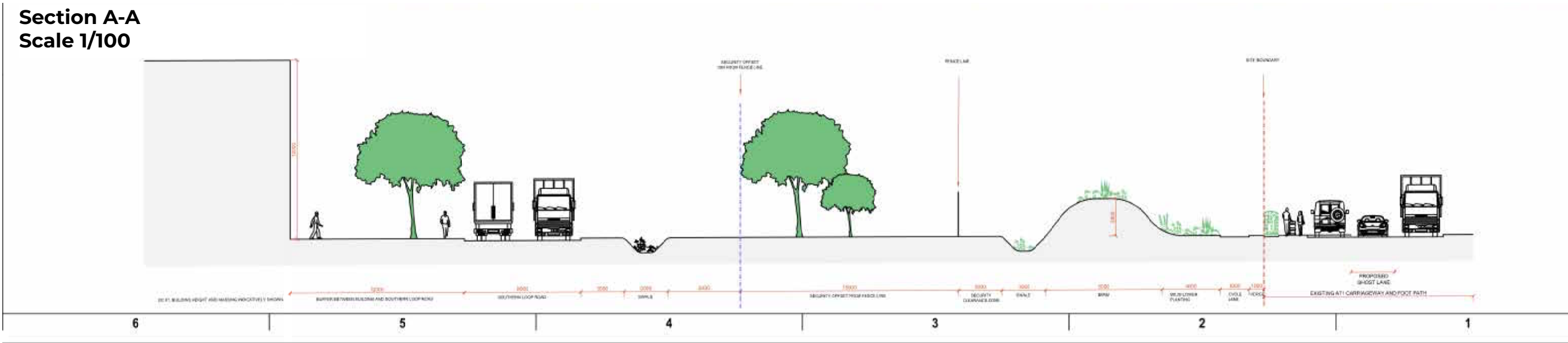
Campus layout and scale

The campus will be arranged in clearly defined zones, each with a specific role in supporting operations. Data halls will be located in low-profile buildings set back from site boundaries, with ancillary plant, equipment yards, and secure parking positioned to maintain efficiency and minimise visual impact.

Design approach

Our design combines technical excellence with environmental responsibility, creating facilities that deliver world-class performance while respecting and enhancing their surroundings. Inspired by nature, the architecture follows a functional, modular approach that allows for phased construction, uses low-carbon materials, and integrates energy-smart systems. Wherever possible, we weave in green spaces, boost biodiversity, and use natural ventilation to minimise environmental impact.

Buildings are designed with clean lines, durable finishes, and opportunities for green façades to soften their profile. Strategic planting of native trees, shrubs, and hedgerows will create natural screening, supplemented with timber cladding or earth berms where needed. This approach ensures the campus sits comfortably within its landscape.



PANEL 4

**THE SITE
WHY THE SITE HAS BEEN CHOSEN
TIMELINE**

The site

Access

It is proposed that the site will be accessed from the A71 through upgrading two of the existing field accesses and upgrading the road network to facilitate access. It is anticipated that the majority of construction traffic and eventual site users would approach the site westbound on the A71 which strategically links from The City of Edinburgh Bypass, which by following clockwise leads to Junction 1 of the M8 and by following anti-clockwise to the A1.

A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will be prepared and agreed with the local authority ahead of construction. It will outline measures to manage construction traffic, minimise disruption to road users, and ensure safe access, taking into account current use of the local road network.

Planting, biodiversity, and design

The proposals include strategic planting of native trees, shrubs, and hedgerows around the site perimeter to soften the appearance of the development and provide natural screening. These green buffers will help break up sightlines, create a more harmonious transition with neighbouring areas, and support local biodiversity. In areas where planting alone may not be sufficient, architectural screening such as timber cladding, green walls, or earth berms will be used to further reduce the visual impact. The use of green façades will also be explored, integrating living plant systems into building designs to blend the facility into the landscape and enhance ecological value. Over time, these measures will help the site settle into its surroundings while preserving the area’s character.

Environmental and technical surveys

Specialist surveys on ecology, noise, traffic, flood risk, and heritage will guide the design to ensure the project meets the highest environmental and planning standards. A transport statement will assess any traffic impacts during construction and operation. Short-term construction impacts such as dust or noise will be managed through a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which will set out best-practice measures and be secured by planning condition.

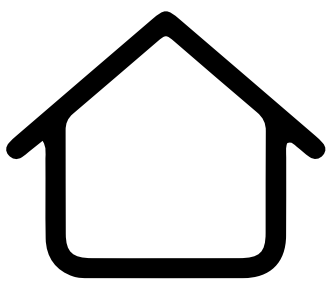
Community and heritage

The Union Canal Scheduled Monument and the Hermiston Conservation Area are adjacent to the site. The design process will include a Cultural Heritage Assessment to guide the layout and ensure significant adverse effects are avoided. Archaeological potential will be assessed through a Desk-Based Archaeological Assessment and, if needed, a Geophysical Survey, with significant sites avoided where possible.

More about the site



The site continued



Air quality

Air quality around the site is influenced mainly by road traffic. The A71, which borders the southern boundary, carries around 15,000 vehicles per day, while the M8 motorway to the north carries close to 70,000 vehicles daily. These existing routes are the dominant sources of air pollution in the area.

The nearest sensitive receptors are residential properties located around 10 metres from the eastern boundary. Other nearby buildings, such as offices and Heriot-Watt University facilities, are not considered significant pollution sources. There are no designated ecological receptors within 5 km; the closest is Wester Craiglockhart Hill Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), around 5.2 km east. Initial baseline modelling shows existing concentrations are well below national air quality objectives.

Noise and acoustics

The main existing sound sources around the site are the nearby motorway and the A71, with residential receptors most affected. Development in zones immediately adjacent to housing poses a high risk of adverse impacts, so these areas will be avoided wherever practicable.

To understand the baseline environment and guide the design, specialist noise surveys are planned. These will focus on the vicinity of residential receptors and include short-term monitoring at positions along the southern boundary.

Arboriculture

A tree survey has been carried out across the site. To the north, there is a mix of willow, poplar, birch, hawthorn, and maple, with most trees in good condition and providing useful screening to the Union Canal. Hedges also run along the eastern and southern boundaries, though the southern hedge becomes more broken towards the east.

These findings will guide the design process. A Tree Constraints Plan will be prepared to identify rooting areas and inform site layout, followed by Tree Impact and Protection Plans and a full Arboricultural Impact Assessment. This approach will ensure trees and hedgerows are taken into account and protected during construction wherever possible.

You can see the full masterplan on our landscape other screen.

Why this site has been chosen and timeline



Why this site has been chosen?

Strategic location

The Wester Hermiston site has been selected for its strategic position and strong grid connectivity, making it ideally placed to meet Scotland’s growing demand for secure, high-capacity digital infrastructure. Its proximity to key research, education, and innovation hubs, and the skilled population base of Edinburgh City further strengthens its role in supporting Scotland’s digital economy.

Policy alignment

The proposals support both national and local priorities, including Scotland’s Net Zero targets, ambitions for advanced digital infrastructure, and inclusive economic growth.

Additionally data centres have been designated as Critical National Infrastructure, reinforcing their strategic importance to the country’s future.

Grid resilience

The site has direct access to a high-capacity grid connection from the nearby Currie substation. This provides the level of power essential for data centre operations.

Timeline

The following timeline outlines the key milestones for the proposed development, from initial grid connection agreements to operation. While these dates are estimates and subject to change, they provide an overview of the project’s journey and the steps required to bring it to life. We are committed to keeping the community informed as the project progresses.



PANEL 5

**SUSTAINABILITY
WHAT IS DISTRICT HEATING?**

Sustainability

Our proposed data centre campus will draw its electricity from the national grid. A major focus will be on using curtailed electricity, surplus renewable energy that cannot currently be sent to the grid because of network constraints.

In 2024 alone, National Energy System Operator (NESO) spent over £1 billion managing this excess power, with costs forecast to rise to £3 billion in the coming years. By putting curtailed energy to productive use, our campus will help reduce waste, cut costs for billpayers, and make Scotland’s renewable resources work harder for communities and the economy.

We are targeting Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) accreditation as a core design goal, a leading standard for sustainable building performance. This means considering environmental impact at every stage, from site layout and energy efficiency to water conservation, biodiversity, and community benefit. A preliminary BREEAM assessment will be undertaken during the design phase and submitted as part of our planning application, ensuring our approach is independently verified from the outset.

Water use and heat recovery

The campus will use a highly efficient closed-loop water cooling system to keep servers at optimal temperatures. This design drastically reduces water consumption by recycling the same water through the system rather than relying on constant fresh supplies.

As the system cools the equipment, it captures significant amounts of low-carbon heat, heat that would normally be released into the atmosphere. Instead, we are designing the site with a dedicated plant and heat exchange system with the ability to transfer this energy to local district heating networks in the future.

This means that, as soon as a network connection is available, the same system that keeps our data halls cool could also deliver low-cost, low-carbon heat to surrounding homes, schools, hospitals, and businesses. Across Europe, similar projects are already transforming communities, from Dublin’s Tallaght District Heating Scheme to Microsoft’s Espoo project in Finland, which will supply heating to around 100,000 homes.

By combining renewable energy, resource efficiency, and surplus heat reuse, our data campus will be designed not just to minimise environmental impact, but to actively deliver long-term benefits for people, the economy, and the planet.

What is district heating?



Sustainability

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In 2024 alone, National Energy System Operator (NESO) spent over £1 billion managing this excess power, with costs forecast to rise to £3 billion in the coming years. By putting curtailed energy to productive use, our campus will help reduce waste and support the UK's net-zero goals. It will also contribute to a greener economy and create jobs.

We are taking a holistic approach to design, from energy performance to social impact and environmental efficiency. Our campus will be underpinned by a part of our independent

What is district heating?

District heating is a way of warming homes, schools, hospitals, and workplaces from a central source of heat. Instead of each building having its own boiler, heat is generated in one place and sent through a network of insulated pipes as hot water.

For data centres, this heat comes from the cooling process that keeps servers at the right temperature. Using a heat exchanger, the captured warmth can be transferred to a local district heating network, providing low-cost, low-carbon heat to surrounding communities.

It's not a new idea, the Romans were early pioneers, and cities like New York and Boston have been using it for over 100 years. Today, countries such as Finland, Sweden, and Ireland are showing how modern data centres can power entire neighbourhoods with their surplus heat.

The campus will keep servers cool by reusing heat, reducing energy consumption and relying less on fossil fuels. As the world shifts to low-carbon energy, we are transferring surplus heat from data centres to homes, schools, hospitals, and businesses. This means that, as soon as a network connection is available, the same system that keeps our data halls cool could also deliver low-cost, low-carbon heat to surrounding homes, schools, hospitals, and businesses. Across Europe, similar projects are already transforming communities, from Dublin's Tallaght District Heating Scheme to Microsoft's Espoo project in Finland, which will supply heating to around 100,000 homes.

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What is district heating?



PANEL 6

FIRE SAFETY

Fire safety

Creating an AI data campus

Safety is at the heart of how we plan, design, and operate the proposed Wester Hermiston AI Data Campus. That includes a robust, proactive approach to fire prevention and emergency response for the data centre.

Although the risk of fire in modern facilities is very low, we have developed a comprehensive Fire Response Plan in partnership with the local Fire and Rescue Service. This ensures rapid detection, isolation, and suppression, with clear protocols to protect people, infrastructure, and the wider site.

Data centre fire safety

- > Advanced smoke and heat detection systems in every critical space.
- > Non-toxic clean agent suppression systems (FM-200 or Novec 1230) to extinguish fires without harming people or damaging equipment.
- > Automatic shutdown of affected systems, with unaffected areas kept running for continuity of service.
- > Zoned containment to prevent spread between rooms.
- > 24/7 real-time monitoring via our Building Management System with instant alerts to on-site teams and the Fire and Rescue Service.
- > Site access routes designed for emergency response vehicles.
- > Regular joint exercises with the Fire and Rescue Service, including quarterly drills and annual simulations.

Our systems are designed to meet and exceed UK regulations and international safety standards, including BS EN ISO 14520, NFPA 855, and UL9540A. We will continually review and update our fire safety approach as technology and best practice evolve, so the campus can operate safely, securely, and with confidence from day one.

PANEL 7

**PROJECT BENEFITS
COMMUNITY BENEFIT**

Project benefits

Supporting Wester Hermiston and The City of Edinburgh’s future

The proposed data centre at Wester Hermiston is a major opportunity to bring new investment, skilled jobs, and economic activity to the area.

By delivering modern energy and digital infrastructure, this project can help unlock the area’s long-term potential, accelerating renewal, supporting local businesses, and creating lasting value for the City of Edinburgh and its communities.

A SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT IN THE CITY OF EDINBURGH

£1.4bn
Total capital investment

£125m
In construction spend retained in The City of Edinburgh

£433m
GVA added to the economy during construction

£205m
Added to the local economy every year once operational



CREATING JOBS AT EVERY STAGE

1,455
Annual jobs created during construction, across a wide range of skills and sectors

1,183
Ongoing annual jobs supported each year once operational

These include direct and indirect jobs through local suppliers, service providers, and wider economic activity.



A BOOST FOR SKILLS, EDUCATION AND INNOVATION



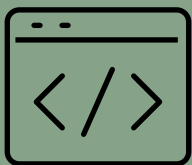
New training and career opportunities in energy, engineering, and digital technology



Potential partnerships with colleges and universities to strengthen Scotland’s STEM pipeline



Additional funding into the UK Apprenticeship Levy each year the site is operating



Strong alignment with national ambitions for innovation, AI, and green industry

What about community benefits?



Independant economic analysis performed by:



Community benefits

Supporting Wester Hermiston and The City of Edinburgh’s future

At Wester Hermiston, we want our project to do more than deliver world-class digital infrastructure, we want it to create meaningful benefits for the local community.

Our approach will focus on:

1. Investing in local projects and spaces that make a difference to everyday life.
2. Supporting skills, training, and opportunities for local people, helping the next generation thrive in a growing digital economy.
3. Working in partnership with the community, listening to what matters most and ensuring benefits are shaped locally.

We support the council’s role in coordinating and managing community benefit funding through Section 75 agreements, and we want to work in partnership to ensure this investment delivers maximum local value.

To help shape these outcomes, we propose working with the council and an experienced delivery partner such as Foundation Scotland, an independent charity with a proven track record of managing community funds in ways that are fair, transparent, and responsive to local needs.

Typical projects supported in other areas include:

1. Upgrades to playgrounds, parks, or community halls.
2. Local environmental or green space initiatives.
3. Programmes that create opportunities for young people and support local wellbeing.

What is Section 75?



Community benefits are often put into programmes that create opportunities for young people and support local wellbeing.

PANEL 8

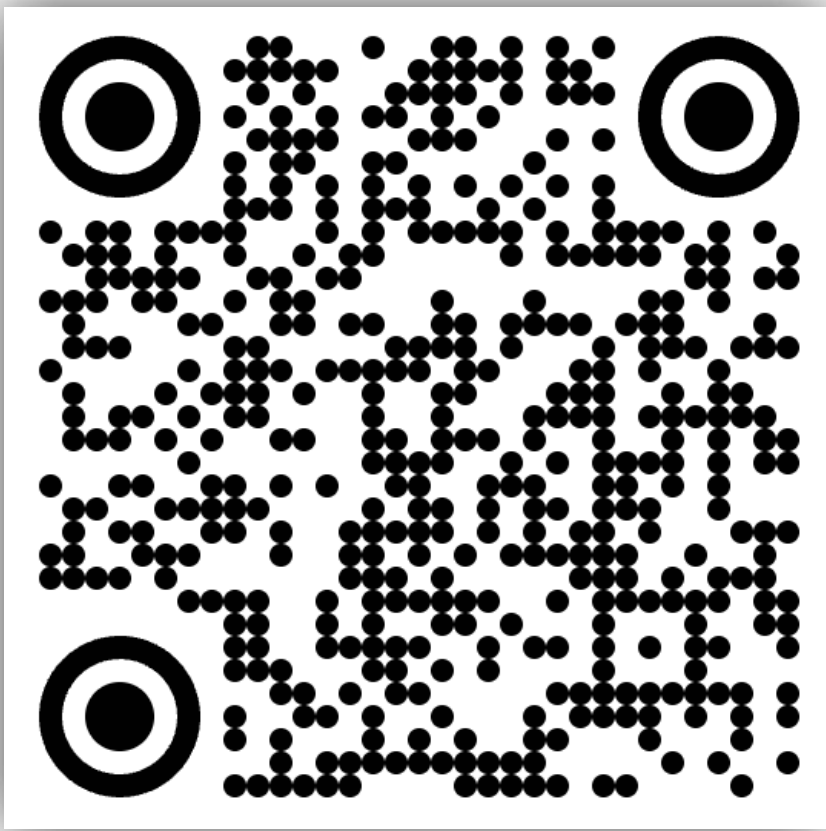
NEXT STEPS

Next steps

Share your views and help shape the future at Wester Hermiston

We’re still early in the process, and your feedback will help shape what comes next at Wester Hermiston.

How you can share your views



- 1. Completing a paper feedback form or
- 2. Scanning the QR code or visiting consult.apatura.energy/westerhermiston/feedback

We welcome your feedback by **25 September 2025** so we can consider any suggestions as we continue to develop our proposal

What happens after this?

A second public consultation will take place on **Thursday 2 October**, shaped by feedback from this event, followed by a planning application in Q4 2025.

For more information, email westerhermiston@apatura.energy

If you’d like to look over the proposals again at home, they’re also available online at consult.apatura.energy/westerhermiston

Comments should not be made to City of Edinburgh Council at this stage. Any comments made to the prospective application are not comments to the planning authority. When a planning application is submitted to City of Edinburgh Council, there will be normal neighbour notification and publicity will be undertaken by the Council at that time. You will have the opportunity to make formal representations regarding the proposal.