

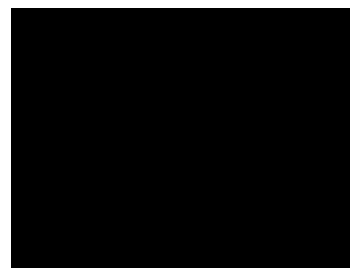
Gardiner Estate

**West Lothian Council Local
Development Plan**

**Proposed Plan
Representation: Springfield West
(EOI-0016)**

November 2015

Ryden LLP



Introduction

1. The Gardiner Estate owns a considerable area of land to the east of Linlithgow, West Lothian. This submission, made on their behalf by Ryden, addresses site reference EOI-0016, land at Springfield West, Linlithgow, south of Blackness Road (A803) only.
2. This site is adjacent to Springfield Road, Linlithgow and extends to 3.1 hectares. It is currently farmland. The site has a significant plateau area to the south, which then slopes down towards Blackness Road, with a sharp incline down an embankment to the north and west of the site. A tree belt and the site's topography screens the elevated area of the site effectively from the road and longer distance views into the site.
3. There is housing development to the site's south and east. A dog-leg from Bonnytoun Terrace clearly shows a previous developer's past intention to develop on to this site. It is a natural extension to the existing housing area at Springfield.
4. A retirement development has been built to the site's west. Linlithgow Loch and farmland extend to the site's north.
5. The site is well connected to the town of Linlithgow, with bus services along the Blackness Road and the site is within walking distance of Linlithgow train station.



Figure 1: Site Location EOI-0016



Figure 2 Embankment along Springfield Road



Figure 3: View from Blackness Road / Springfield Road Junction



Figure 4: View to south west from site plateau



Figure 5: View west showing change in topography

Site Status in Proposed Plan

6. The proposed designation as set out in the Proposed Plan is illustrated below.



Figure 2: Proposed Plan Extract, Linlithgow Settlement Plan: Site EOI-0016

7. The site is currently not within Linlithgow's settlement boundary. It is within the Linlithgow Palace and High Street Conservation Area. The site was previously within an Area of Great Landscape Value, however is now excluded from the Special Landscape Area that has superseded this designation. The site is designated as Land Safeguarded for Open Space.
8. The Gardiner Estate **objects** to the Proposed Plan on the basis of its failure to recognise the suitability of the subject site for housing land.

Proposed Plan Amendments

9. The Gardiner Estate would seek to have the settlement boundary adjusted to include the site within the settlement of Linlithgow.
10. The Proposed Plan should be amended to partially remove the site from the Land Safeguarded for Open Space designation.

11. It would also seek to have part of the site, as illustrated below, designated for housing. This site could provide up to 20 homes within a landscaped setting that would not intrude on views from Linlithgow Loch.
12. There is a sizeable plateau which is well contained from the wider Linlithgow Loch landscape. Any application for the site would include be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to ensure a sensitive approach to the building line was taken in relation to its elevated position.
13. The site's gradient and the extent of this plateau area is illustrated in the aerial photo below and Figures 4 and 5, which clearly shows the division between the area of sloping land and that which is level and is under cultivation. The red boundary illustrates the proposed designation for housing land.



14. The Proposed Plan sets out a sequential assessment for housing land. This states that housing land will be released in Linlithgow in the following order of priority:
 - Brownfield sites within the current settlement boundary;
 - Appropriate and suitable greenfield sites within the current settlement boundary; and
 - Greenfield release outside the current settlement boundary, with preference given to sites closest to the town centre, within walking distance of catchment schools and are acceptable in landscape and townscape terms.

15. Furthermore, developers of greenfield sites are required to demonstrate that development of their site is appropriate taking account of the wider policy framework in the LDP and would not prohibit development of a brownfield site within Linlithgow/Linlithgow Bridge.
16. There is no statutory policy basis for this sequential approach. The priority as set out within SESPlan and the Housing Land Supplementary Guidance is to ensure an effective 5 year housing land supply. West Lothian Council must prioritise this above the protection of brownfield sites which could have complex barriers to delivery, that nonetheless prevent homes on effective greenfield sites being delivered.
17. This sequential assessment is not supported by the Strategic Development Plan and reference to this approach, which would prevent effective sites coming forward to ensure housing need and demand is met, should be removed.
18. Springfield West is a greenfield site that is well located in relation to the town centre. Its exclusion from the settlement boundary is anomalous when the building line and settlement pattern of Linlithgow, south of Blackness Road, is considered. View to Linlithgow Loch and view into the site can be currently protected by an embankment and tree belt, and the site's natural topography. This can be further enhanced with additional screening if required. However there is landscape capacity within the site to develop without any unacceptable impact on this sensitive landscape.
19. Subject to supporting information demonstrating how this site can be developed with minimum impact on the landscape setting of Linlithgow, there is no robust reason for its exclusion from this Proposed Plan.
20. The Gardiner Estate seeks the Local Development Plan to be amended to allow its inclusion as the plan progresses towards adoption.

Ryden LLP
19.11.15

21. If the above amendments are made, my client will remove their objection to the Proposed Plan.

RYDEN
19.11.15