

SECTION B - A PLAN FOR ACTION

The present field-by-field planning strategy, the continued determination of uncoordinated planning applications and the perpetuation of the present problems are unsustainable, as proved by experience over the past thirty years. Inevitable large-scale growth needs to be properly planned and managed, with a clear link between extra housing development and community benefit to the people of Linlithgow. **It is a prerequisite that no further infill housing development, and no expansion whatsoever beyond the present town boundaries, will be acceptable unless it forms part of a comprehensive plan which forces the developers to carry out (or, in the case of infill developments, contribute to) the priority community requirements as outlined above.** (See West Lothian Local Development Plan, Main Issues Report, paragraph 3.95.)

The overall aim will be to keep and enhance the town of Linlithgow as a reasonably balanced community, combining the following roles:

- a place to live and learn - continuing to attract new residents (preferably with more local employment) and catering for the needs of existing residents
- a place to visit - making the most of its potential to attract more visitors and capitalising on the existing range of small, privately-owned shops
- a place to work - with more emphasis on promoting more local employment opportunities.

At the outset, it will be necessary for West Lothian Council to address three fundamental concerns:

- development and delivery of a comprehensive transportation strategy for the town and its setting, primarily addressing the problems of

through traffic in the High Street, and car parking

- a heat and energy strategy in the context of the need to address climate change
- provision of proportionate educational and health care facilities, sufficient to indefinitely support an expanded population to a level to be determined.

The proposals of this Plan for Linlithgow are set out under the following headings:

1. Environmental Sustainability
2. Built/Archaeological Heritage and Tourism
3. Business and Employment
4. Housing
5. Transport and Accessibility
6. Retailing and Town Centre
7. Community, Cultural & Sports Facilities and Open Space
8. Education
9. Health Facilities
10. Funding
11. Implementation

Under each heading, all proposals are accompanied by an analysis of the present situation, needs and opportunities, giving reasoned justification. The proposals are all numbered, giving easy reference to the proposals map (Map 2) at the end of the document. In some cases, alternatives are indicated.

At the end, before Map 2, is a section on the implementation/financing of the plan and how the implementation of the proposals are to be scrutinised and monitored. This includes a table indicating proposals which might be financed directly by housing development. Other projects would generally be self-financing.

1. Environmental Sustainability

Underlying this Plan for Linlithgow is a desire to minimise the consumption of fossil-fuel derived energy, consistent with the reasonable expectations of the populace, and striking a balance between opposing needs in such a way that the visual appearance of the town and its surroundings is not unnecessarily compromised.

Current thinking favours solid measures to make the best use of land, save energy, produce/consume locally, encourage community involvement and foster civic pride.

The main 'sustainable' features of this Plan for Linlithgow, many of which are outlined in the following sections, are:

- encouraging local employment to cut down the dependence on commuting elsewhere, and to make the town more self-sufficient economically
- discouragement of car use by promoting public transport, provision of an attractive cycle and footpath network with easy routes to the town centre and the railway station, and the introduction of long-stay parking charges
- encouragement of retail and business development in locations most accessible by foot, cycle or public transport, particularly the town centre
- upgrading the town centre environment, including the planting of trees for cooling and shading, and encouraging tourism via the railway



Street trees in South Street, St Andrews.

- encouragement of the use of natural building materials wherever possible, coupled with avoidance of materials with high embodied energy and short life expectancy such as plastic wall cladding and uPVC window frames, as circumstances permit
- incorporation of sustainable drainage systems involving the installation of underground filter

drains/water storage, and, in new developments, the provision of storage ponds which can function as high-quality landscape features and havens for wildlife

- high levels of thermal insulation in buildings, improving comfort and minimising heating costs and energy usage
- re-use of materials wherever possible
- remediation of ground contamination where appropriate
- designating 'green wedges' and other development-free areas
- conservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats and corridors
- provision of green space to grow community food, including allotment gardens and community orchards
- creation of market gardens, food-growing nurseries, smallholdings and orchards on the town outskirts, and encouragement of 'community supported agriculture' to produce local food and create local employment
- high levels of community engagement in all aspects of development.

Specific proposals arising from the above and the introductory content on Climate Change, Air Quality and Loch Quality in Section A are as follows:

Proposal ES1 – Installation of District Heating Systems in New Housing Developments

Housing proposals H7 and H8, involving the construction of new housing to the south-east of Linlithgow could be provided with district heating, powered by one or more appropriately sited combined heat and power plants. These systems should be supplemented by appropriately powered heat pumps and deep geothermal sources as appropriate. For all other new developments, such provision should be considered.

Proposal ES2 – Installation of District Heating Systems in Existing Built-up Areas

District heating should be promoted for suitable groups of buildings, anywhere in the town, care being taken to site the heat and power plant in an appropriate location.

Proposal ES3 – Development of Solar Farm

The Planning Forum would support the installation of a solar farm (intensive arrangement of solar panels) in the upper part of the former CEMEX sand/gravel quarry to the west of Mill Road/Avontoun Park.

Proposal ES4 – Development of Hydro-Electric Power Plants on River Avon

One or more hydro plants with accompanying weirs should be promoted on the River Avon to provide power to local homes and industry, for example Mill Road Industrial Estate, as currently being considered by the Business Improvement District (BID).

Proposal ES5 – Sustainable Design of New Developments

All new developments should aim to be 'carbon neutral' including provision for solar gain and maximum insulation. As part of housing proposals H7 and H8, developers should positively consider making provision for co-housing with shared facilities and should provide a range of smaller accommodation. All developments should provide parking spaces for community-owned car club vehicles, electric charge points and bike hire hubs.

Proposal ES6 – Small Farms and Tree Planting

Existing large agricultural units around the town fringes could be subdivided into small farms to grow food for the local market. Tree loss should be reversed through the planting of shelter belts and hedgerows.

Proposal ES7 – Mitigation of Loch and Watercourse Pollution

Pollution of Linlithgow Loch by fertiliser and pesticide run-off from fields and other pollutants should be minimised through such measures as the installation of reed beds, silt traps and retention ponds and the designation of protection strips at the edges of fields. The remaining combined sewer

overflow by the side of the loch should be diverted via a new pipe to the Loch Burn.

See also Proposal H8 with regard to measures to reduce septic tank effluent.

Proposal ES8 – Measures to Cut Down High Street Air Pollution

In order to mitigate high levels of traffic exhaust pollution in the High Street, the following short-term measures should be taken:

- elimination of features which cause traffic to pause and leave engines idling such as double parking - improved streetscape, space for buses and delivery vehicles to park in dedicated zones, organising waste collection at off-peak traffic times
- active promotion and support for alternative lower carbon forms of travel such as local bus service improvements, electric car charge points, community car club parking bays and bike storage
- switching to charged short term parking on the High Street and allowing free off-street parking for up to four hours
- kerbside planting of street trees to soak up pollutants
- community home delivery service
- changing parking fines at the Regent Centre car park to allow people to park free for up to four hours
- proper enforcement of parking restrictions.

In addition, a full traffic study should be undertaken to assess where vehicles are travelling, and for what purpose, to ascertain what other changes are possible and beneficial.



Linlithgow's landscape setting, something to be cherished.

2. Built/Archaeological Heritage and Tourism

As previously stated, Linlithgow's attractiveness as a tourist destination is inextricably linked to its history and built heritage. The heritage aspects are considered first, followed by 'Tourism' under a separate heading.

Heritage

Linlithgow is often quoted as being the 'jewel in the crown' of West Lothian, and includes the only conservation area in West Lothian designated as 'outstanding' by the Scottish Government. The superb juxtaposition of Linlithgow Palace, St Michael's Parish Church, the Peel, the Loch and the ancient Royal Burgh make it one of Scotland's most attractive towns. Strict development and advertisement control continues to preserve the historic fabric (although not, unfortunately, in relation to the Vennel and West Port flats), and some good-quality streetscape work has been carried out at the Cross, leading up Kirkgate to the Palace, and in the High Street.

A new Heritage Trail and 'Perambulation of the Marches' route have been established, street furniture and sign-posting have been improved, and the joint efforts of the Civic Trust's Burgh Beautiful campaign and West Lothian Council have added colour to the town centre through floral displays. In late 2009, West Lothian Council was successful in securing a Scottish Government grant for town centre improvements, including £857,000 for Linlithgow. This sum was spent on a range of projects including paving improvements, street furniture, upgrading the Rose Garden, Heritage Trail and public art. Unfortunately, these works were insufficient to comprehensively address the overall issues of street design, pavement surfaces, street lighting columns, condition of buildings and so on. The approach to the railway station from the High Street could be given greater prominence, and the area improved, to give visitors a better first impression of the town (see Proposal T9).

Further upgrading of the High Street in particular (but also of some of the wynds and footpaths leading southwards) is vital to make the best of the historic environment, to help sustain the shops from competition elsewhere, and to set the scene for floral enhancement. Because of the great importance given to quality street/pavement surfaces and street furniture in Beautiful Scotland and similar competitions, Linlithgow, with its remaining tarmac pavements in the High Street, is greatly handicapped by the lack of a street



New stone paving and planters have greatly improved the environment of the eastern parts of the High Street, but western stretches still await enhancement to the same standards – and 'official' parking on pavements is still a bugbear for many.

environment which has almost become the norm in today's historic towns, many of which have benefitted from generous grant aid from organisations such as Historic Scotland and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

A Conservation Area Appraisal for the Linlithgow Palace and High Street Conservation Area (which would have identified improvement opportunities and is mentioned as Policy HER 18 in the West Lothian Local Plan) was commenced but not completed. There is currently no budget allocation for the continuation of the study into townscape heritage improvement.

The following essential proposal is included in the package of (part) developer-funded town improvements:-

Proposal B1 - Townscape Heritage Initiative/ Conservation Area Enhancement

Upgrading of street/pavement surfaces in the High Street, wynds and links up to the Station/Union Canal to the standards of other historic towns, planting of more street trees, installation/ completion of a more suitable, consistent style of street furniture including street lighting columns, improvement of the condition/appearance of buildings which have been allowed to fall into poor repair or are out of keeping, provision for a greater

element of floral decoration, tree planting, revision to parking arrangements, shopfront improvements, etc.

See related proposals:-

T1 Traffic Management to 'Reclaim' the High Street.

R3 Redevelopment of site of Victoria Hall to form a Community Theatre/Cinema.

Linlithgow Palace

The heritage and tourist potential of Linlithgow Palace has not been fully realised. The expenditure on the reconstruction of the ancient courtyard fountain is welcomed; however spending by Historic Scotland at the Palace is a fraction of that spent at properties such as Stirling and Edinburgh Castles. There is no interpretative centre and no toilets, and, although a new statue of Mary, Queen of Scots has recently been unveiled, there is no indication of her likely birthplace. However, a new Heritage Group, bringing together the Scottish Government, Historic Scotland, local voluntary groups and West Lothian Council, has been established to consider and promote present and future use of the Palace and Peel as heritage assets of world-wide significance. An important early step in that regard should be the holding of a 'charrette' (planning seminar) to enable the local community to engage more directly with ideas for the future of the Palace and Peel in relation to Linlithgow's wider historical environment.

Proposal B2 - Restoration and Re-use of Linlithgow Palace

Provision of a visitor interpretation centre, with adequate toilet provision and access for the disabled is proposed. Options appraisals are required to investigate the potential to reroof and restore appropriate parts of the Palace.

Riggs

Over the years, while many of the rigg gardens behind the built frontages of the High Street have been built upon, some are kept in good condition. However, many, particularly those behind commercial premises, are severely neglected. A strategy is required to save the ancient rigg walls and ensure better cultivation of the rigg gardens for food production and ornamental purposes rather than new development.

Linlithgow Heritage Trust and West Lothian Council are working towards relocating Linlithgow's town museum in more spacious premises in the County Buildings as part of the 'Partnership Centre' project (Proposal R2). This would involve the sale of Annet House, the current museum building, but the Planning Forum is



Linlithgow Palace and the recently-unveiled statue of Mary, Queen of Scots (Calum Smith).



The rigg garden at Annet House (Kirsty Leonard)

concerned about the potential loss of the associated rigg garden as a heritage and tourism resource, and proposes that arrangements are made for its preservation and public access.

Proposal B3 - Preservation of Riggs and Public Access to Annet House Rigg Garden

Production and approval by West Lothian Council of a strategy that promotes the preservation and better use of the historic riggs behind the High Street frontages. In particular, the Planning Forum recommends that, in connection with any proposed sale of Annet House to part-finance the new 'Partnership Centre' in the County Buildings, West Lothian Council makes provision for the preservation of, and continued public access to, the Annet House Rigg Garden.

Tourism

Visitors to Scotland, and even those from within the country, tend to bypass West Lothian on their way to Scotland's better-known destinations, but, for a community of its size, Linlithgow has a disproportionate wealth of resources of interest to the tourism market. However, the full potential of

these resources is not realised - there is an invaluable opportunity to plan and market Linlithgow as the prime focus of tourism within West Lothian, and to target Linlithgow as a travel base, complemented by its rail links to Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling, local bus services and the houseboat holidays on the Union Canal. Linlithgow needs to be marketed more to the myriad of tourists who visit Edinburgh, many of whom could be easily tempted to visit such an attractive town for a day trip.

As well as the Palace, the Royal Burgh has the impressive St. Michael's Church, a wealth of other historic buildings, Linlithgow Loch and the Union Canal offering trips to the Avon Aqueduct and the Falkirk Wheel from the Canal Centre (operated by the Linlithgow Union Canal Society - LUCS). Linlithgow also offers a good range of specialist retail outlets, restaurants, tearooms, pubs and carry-out establishments. Other attractions include the local history museum currently in Annet House (Linlithgow Heritage Trust), the West Lothian Local History Library with its facilities for genealogical research, and a wealth of outdoor activities such as walking, golf, canoeing and fishing. For walkers, the John Muir Way, inaugurated in 2014, passes through the west end of Linlithgow. The Union Canal towpath is another popular long-distance walking and cycling route.



Perambulation of the Marches, 2015 (David Shirres).

The ancient traditions of Linlithgow should also be a greater draw for visitors - the annual Marches celebrations and associated events, including the new Perambulation of the Marches event, held for the first time in 2014. Other, increasing, notable activities include 'Scotch Hop' events, the Canal Fun Day, historical events and 'Party at the Palace' at Linlithgow Palace and the Peel, concerts in St Michael's Parish Church, Celebrate Linlithgow, the Linlithgow Book Festival, the Linlithgow Folk Festival and the Advent Fair. Engendering great civic pride at many of these events are the Linlithgow Reed Band and the Linlithgow Pipe

Band. Specialist tours of the area are offered by Mary's Meanders. Despite the large variety of visitor attractions, tourist accommodation in the immediate area is limited to four small hotels and nine bed and breakfast establishments. Surprisingly, attempts to promote a high-quality hotel on two sites overlooking the east end of Linlithgow Loch have not come to fruition, and the international Laetare Centre has closed. On the other hand, local tourist accommodation will shortly be augmented by the opening of the 'Court Apartments' in the former Sheriff Courthouse.

A good tourist information centre (TIC) is a 'must' for a tourist destination like Linlithgow. However, the former excellent facility located within the ground floor of the Burgh Halls, directly facing the Cross and featuring an audio-visual display on the area's tourist attractions, was closed in 2007 and replaced with short-lived provision in the County Buildings. The former TIC had approximately 17,800 visitors in 2004 (April to October) and arranged in excess of 600 accommodation bookings. In 2010, a replacement facility was created within the Burgh Halls, but it is a poor substitute for a fully-staffed and stocked Tourist Information Centre (see Proposal B4).

Proposal B4 – Provision of Tourist Information Centre on Ground Floor of the Burgh Halls

The Planning Forum supports the re-establishment of Linlithgow's Tourist Information Centre on the ground floor of the Burgh Halls, with direct pedestrian access from the Cross.

In order to maximise the tourism potential of the town, the following must be given serious consideration.

- Resolution of the High Street traffic congestion/parking problems and their impact on conditions for walking and cycling. ***See Transport and Accessibility Section.***
- Encouragement of specialist retail outlets. ***See Retailing and Town Centre Section.***
- The upgrading of the High Street 'public realm' to appropriate standards. ***See Proposal B1.***
- Restoration of the Tourist Information Centre to its former location in the ground floor of the Burgh Halls (as above).
- Promoting rail-based day trips from Edinburgh and Glasgow through a 'Linlithgow' ticket combining train travel, palace entry, shop/café discounts and the use of local bus services.
- Continuing to raise the community's awareness of the significance of Linlithgow's heritage assets to enhance civic pride and support promotion of the town.

For Linlithgow to be the focus of tourism within West Lothian, it also requires to have a larger hotel with adequate parking and conference facilities. Rather than a chain hotel, an independently-owned 'theme' hotel might be more appropriate for the promotion of year-round tourism in Linlithgow – for example provision for 'weekend pamper breaks', outdoor pursuits such as cycle hire, horse riding and walking etc.

Proposal B5 - Promotion of Larger Hotel in Linlithgow

The Planning Forum would be in favour of the establishment of a suitably situated larger hotel, perhaps in relation to development related to the Union Canal or the M9 motorway junction.

A northward extension of Learmonth Gardens would be desirable in association with refurbishment of the routes under the railway, both behind the County Buildings and past the railway station (*see Proposal B1*).

Proposal B6 - Extension of Learmonth Gardens Landscape upgrading of the area to the north of the Ross Doocot.



Fun Day at the Canal Basin (Chris Long).

Although the current West Lothian Local Plan includes a general policy (ENV17) to encourage canal-side development at Linlithgow, no actual opportunities are identified and there is no site delineated on the Proposals Map, simply because no suitable opportunities exist within the built-up area, without spoiling what is there already. Furthermore, any possible sites on the south bank of the canal to the east of Manse Road would be outwith the existing settlement boundary and within the conservation area, perhaps, on the face of it, ruling out any development at all.

In accordance with the West Lothian Local Plan statement (paragraph 3.49a), it is agreed that the Clarendon/St Michael's Hospital area is likely to offer the best opportunities for canal related development in Linlithgow, but their scale, location, access and design parameters would be better established through the Local Plan process, rather than in response to one-off planning applications. The canal bank between Manse Road and St Michael's Hospital should ideally be kept free of development (see proposal R3 and policy proposals for 'green wedges'), but ground below the hospital itself would lend itself to carefully-designed canal-related development, sympathetic to the conservation area. Even greater potential exists eastwards towards Park Farm where a marina development has been suggested in the "Union Canal Moorings Study" for British Waterways (now Scottish Canals). In the meantime, Scottish Canals has provided mooring facilities for around four houseboats at Back Station Road

Proposal B7 - Canalside Facilities near St Michael's Hospital

Proposal B8 - Canal Marina near Park Farm

On the site below St Michael's Hospital, possible facilities could include a small hotel, a pub/café/restaurant, marine supplies, boat repair yard, etc. The main vehicular access would have to be taken from the Edinburgh Road, south-east of the canal bridge, via an improved access road, and a footbridge over the canal would be needed to facilitate non-motorised access from the towpath on the north bank. The proposed marina to the east, catering for up to 100 boats, would have direct vehicular access from the Eastern Local Distributor Road (Proposal T4).

To co-ordinate and execute these tourism proposals, it is suggested that a management group be set up and co-ordinated by Pride & Passion Linlithgow, involving all major interests in the town such as retailers, the Community Council, Linlithgow Civic Trust, Scottish Canals, Linlithgow Heritage Trust and LUCS, plus Visit West Lothian and the West Lothian Tourism Forum (a voluntary trade association that works to promote tourism). Comprehensive marketing leaflets for the town and its places to eat have been produced by Pride & Passion, together with the installation of two webcams (at The Cross and the Canal Basin) and the establishment of the Linlithgow.com website.

See related proposals:-

- T1 Traffic Management to 'Reclaim' the High Street
- R2 Linlithgow Partnership Centre

3. Business and Employment

This section contains proposals to:

- consolidate current business activity and build on it
- replace lost local employment opportunities
- reduce travel time to work
- provide facilities for home based businesses
- promote Linlithgow as an ideal, central, well connected location to do business.

Over the past fifty years or so, Linlithgow has progressively lost its traditional industrial base with the closure of paper mills, distillery, electronics factories, etc. Their sites have been redeveloped for housing occupied by commuters to Edinburgh, Glasgow, Grangemouth and elsewhere, reflecting the burgh's transformation into a dormitory town.

The main employers remaining are Oracle (in a much depleted form with much vacant floorspace) and West Lothian Council (local services). Employment numbers have greatly declined and the trend continues for industrial and commercial businesses throughout the town to close and relocate, capitalising on the high residential value of their sites. Recent examples have included the former builder's yard, petrol station, etc on Edinburgh Road and the former abattoir at Preston Road, thus increasing the number of houses and decreasing employment opportunities locally.

On the other hand, there is a thriving small business sector in the town, mainly concentrated in the High Street (see also section on 'Retailing & Town Centre'). This is reflected in the existence of the Linlithgow Business Association and two recently-established Business Improvement Districts which strive to promote the town as a successful business location.

The town has particular potential for the establishment of high-tech small business, serving as an attractive base for people who might otherwise commute. The encouragement of such businesses would:

1. establish a better balance of businesses in the town, including a wider range of shops
2. make the town less vulnerable to downturns in the economy
3. minimise commuting and promote local productivity.

Mill Road Industrial Estate is the main focus for new industrial/business development in Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge, and the Planning Forum endorses the West Lothian Local Plan proposal to

complete the development of the industrial estate. Road access to the industrial estate is not ideal, either through a residential area, via a narrow, winding country road with a very poor access on to the A706 and/or along the High Street (see Transport and Accessibility Section for a possible solution to this problem - Proposal T2B). Better business facilities are desirable, with particular regard to car parking. Since 2014, the industrial estate has been designated as a Business Improvement District (BID) with a Board composed of public-spirited business people who wish to pursue common interests and make improvements to the area.

Proposal E1 - Completion and Review of Mill Road Industrial Estate

The development of the few remaining sites on Mill Road Industrial Estate should be completed, but, in the meantime, a strategic review, in association with the relevant BID Board, should be undertaken to improve its efficiency and accessibility as a business location.

As stated above, the Mill Road Industrial Estate, with its windowless sheds, is not the ideal environment for many of the high-tech and professional small businesses that the town should attract and foster. Accordingly, other opportunities should be pursued within the town and to the north-east.

Over 50,000 square feet of floorspace at the Oracle (formerly Sun Microsystems) factory at Blackness Road is currently on the market, but the demand for such large industrial premises is low. Subdivision into smaller units would provide more flexible work space. Such floorspace availability could fulfil Linlithgow's needs in that regard for the foreseeable future.

Looking to the longer term, the West Lothian Local Plan allocates greenfield land for further industrial development to the north-east of the present Oracle factory, but this is an ill-defined and currently inaccessible site the development of which would establish an unsatisfactory precedent. However, if developed comprehensively, this whole area, extending to the proposed four-way motorway interchange at Burghmuir (see Proposal T2A), is seen as the best location for future economic development in the longer term, perhaps 20 or 30 years hence. In the meantime, its development potential should be protected from alternative uses such as housing, since a better,

more conveniently-located site for large-scale business development is unlikely to present itself. A planning application for a major supermarket, housing and a petrol filling station on this site was recently withdrawn in the face of public protest (as well as being contrary to the Development Plan).

Proposal E2 - Establishment of Burghmuir Business Park

The whole area between Bonyde Road and the M9 junction, including the Oracle (formerly Sun Microsystems) factory, should be reserved for 'high-amenity' business or light industrial development, including offices, hotel, petrol filling station, etc. In the first instance, surplus floorspace at the Oracle premises could be subdivided to provide suitable employment space, and extension eastwards on to current agricultural land should only be contemplated when these premises are substantially occupied. Vehicular access to later phases would be by means of roundabouts on Blackness Road at the east end of Springfield Road, and at the road leading to Kingsfield (Proposal T3). The landscape structure of the site should be established from the outset and high-quality building design should be mandatory (as per Policy EM 8 of the West Lothian Local Plan). The development should be carefully phased to ensure that land is kept in productive agricultural use for as long as possible.

In the meantime, there are two specific proposals for business development in Linlithgow, recognising the desirability of providing communal services and the significant increase in home-based business start-ups in recent years:

Proposal E3 - Establishment of Business Centre at or near The Cross

Opportunities exist in the Town Centre for the creation of/conversion into office suites for professional businesses. Such development, provided either through conversion of the former 'British Linen Bank' building or part of the County Buildings, conversion of the former Procurator Fiscal's Office or as part of the redevelopment of the Guyancourt Vennel area, should include hireable desks and meeting rooms to cater for home-based businesses and a modern mobile workforce.



The British Linen Bank building at the Cross – potential for conversion into office suites.

Proposal E4 – Home/Business Accommodation
All substantial new housing developments should be required to include an element of suitably-located home/business accommodation – houses with rooms or outbuildings from which can be operated small businesses compatible with a residential area.

4. Housing

Linlithgow's attractive environment, strategic location for road and rail commuting and its high achieving schools result in a strong demand for all types of housing (see West Lothian Local Development Plan, Main Issues Report, paragraph 3.85). Since the early 1960s, when the erstwhile Linlithgow Town Council was keen to promote new private housing development, there has been large-scale expansion to the south, south-west and east. Between 1951 and 2001, the population increased from 3,929 to 13,370 and the number of dwellings increased from 1,187 to 5,243 (see West Lothian Local Development Plan, Main Issues Report, paragraph 3.81). The 2011 census records a population of 13,462 in 5,573 dwellings. Over the ten year period 2001-2011, the population has stayed relatively stable but the number of houses and flats has increased by 305. This reflects the increasing number of smaller, usually older, households.

Despite the growth in private housing, there have been no 'mainstream' social-rented houses of any description built in Linlithgow since the abolition of the Town Council in 1975. In contrast, there have been 1,681 new build completions by housing associations between 1996 and 2014 in the West Lothian Council area. The council's own housing programme has provided 800 council houses since 2007 with another 1,000 committed, but only 15 of the latter are programmed for Linlithgow.

The number of West Lothian Council houses in Linlithgow fell by 305 between 2003 and 2011, reducing the total to 551. Over the period of "right to buy" Linlithgow lost 533 houses for rent, nearly half of the council's housing stock in the town. The reduction in the number of council houses includes the fairly recent demolition of two blocks of flats in St Ninian's Way. Those applying for a Council



Council flats at St Ninian's Way, demolished in 2002 to make way for private housing.

house in Linlithgow currently have an average wait of eight to ten years. Weslo is the only mainstream housing association with property in the town, renting out 44 three and four apartment houses.

Owing to rising house prices, there are now very few properties within the financial reach of people with modest incomes, including but not exclusively the younger generation who having been brought up and educated in Linlithgow. Many have to look elsewhere to purchase a house. The present planning policy of restraint will in time result in an unsustainable community.

Controlled town expansion would give a major opportunity to cater for the unsatisfied housing needs of the less well-off, and thus it is proposed as follows:-

Proposal H1 - Social-Rented and 'Affordable' Housing

(See WLC Main Issues Report, paragraph 3.89.) Four interlinked strategies are recommended to increase the number of social rented and "affordable" homes in Linlithgow:

- 1. The construction of approximately 130 new council houses in Linlithgow in accordance with Proposals H2 and H3 below.*
- 2. Making a high profile "mortgage to rent" scheme available in order that those with mortgage difficulties can opt to sell their house to West Lothian Council in exchange for the right to remain and pay a council house rent.*
- 3. The council to establish a Linlithgow based organisation to encourage development by housing associations and ensure a range of tenure options is available.*
- 4. The council to continue requiring that 15% of the number of houses being built on private housing sites are provided in the form of council housing.*

Proposal H2 - Local Authority Housing - Mill Road

The immediate construction of new West Lothian Council housing to the maximum potential of the council owned land in Mill Road. The Planning Forum considers that this site could accommodate around 30 council houses, rather than the 15 currently proposed (planning application 0244/FUL/15).

Proposal H3 - Local Authority Housing - Additional 100 houses

The construction of 100 additional West Lothian Council houses in Linlithgow, as part of the County-

wide programme over the next 15 year, the most likely site to be in the area between Clarendon and Edinburgh Road (Proposal H7).

With regard to private housing development, reference should be made to the 'threats' section of Section A of this Plan. Recognising the problems which have resulted from large-scale development in the past, it is considered essential that any further development is incremental and supplemented by infrastructure improvements. **Indeed it is recommended that key road infrastructure improvements precede further housing development and that no development should proceed without the funding for additional services and facilities being guaranteed under a legal agreement in accordance with Section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.** The West Lothian Council would be expected to ensure that the amount of 'greenfield' development permitted would be the absolute minimum required to finance the planning gains required,

The Planning Forum concurs in part with the recommendations for preferred housing sites in Linlithgow contained in Appendix 3 of the West Lothian Local Development Plan Main Issues Report, August 2014. In particular, it is agreed that any substantial expansion should take place to the south-east of the built area to avoid elongating the town still further and to allow housing development that is more likely to be within easy walking or cycling distance of the town centre, railway station and other facilities. Another beneficial consequence of building in this area is that it will allow public sewer connections for the existing housing in the outer part of Edinburgh Road, thus reducing pollution of Linlithgow Loch with septic tank effluent. Of great importance is the need to ensure that the major housing developments in this area include a substantial provision of smaller houses to cater for first-time buyers and those on more modest incomes.

The Planning Forum's preferred housing sites are as follows, and are illustrated in Map 1.

Proposal H4 – Private Housing, Boghall East

This was the subject of a planning application entitled "proposed residential development on land at Blackness Road" (0302/FUL/14) by CALA Management Ltd and Kensington & Edinburgh Estates for 49 houses of which seven would be 'affordable'/social rented in accordance with West Lothian Council's policy. The Planning Forum's only objections to this application relate to the position and type of access from Blackness Road, and the

transfer of usage from small campus-style business development.

Proposal H5 – Private Housing, Stockbridge North

Construction of 11 houses to complete the 25-house development at this site.

Proposal H6 – Private Housing, Westerlea, Friarsbrae

Planning permission given for 12 retirement flats (0453/FUL/12).

Proposal H7 – Mixed Housing, Clarendon to Edinburgh Road

The Planning Forum supports the development of housing in the general area between Manse Road and Edinburgh Road, incorporating parts of the sites identified in that area in the West Lothian Local Development Plan Main Issues Report and subject to:

- a) the construction of link/access roads between Manse Road and Edinburgh Road, and from Edinburgh Road to Burghmuir (the Eastern Local Distributor Road - Proposal T4) to relieve traffic congestion/improve road safety at the Manse Road canal bridge, at the railway bridge and aqueduct on Edinburgh Road and the vicinity of the Low Port roundabout*
- b) no development to be permitted to the south of the Eastern Local Distributor Road, to ensure that the skyline is protected from development as far as possible*
- c) allowance for a generous 'green wedge'/wildlife corridor, free of development, running generally from the countryside down to the canal*
- d) generous landscaping on all boundaries with the Eastern Local Distributor Road along the southern edge in the form of a formal boulevard (Proposal T5)*
- e) provision of cycle/footpath links to the railway station and town centre via the Clarendon 'green wedge'*
- f) provision of a highly-accessible local centre with one primary school, a community hall and at least two shops*
- g) provision of allotment gardens and local orchards commensurate with the number of houses to be built in the area*
- h) the layout being subject to a detailed design brief/master plan requiring a high standard of urban design, character, building materials and landscaping*
- i) sequential development being from the town centre outwards*
- j) a commensurate contribution to the improved infrastructure of Linlithgow.*

A particular requirement would be that all edge and 'structure' tree planting should be completed before the sale of the first house on the site - this is to ensure that the site acquires a wooded character in line with the part of Linlithgow already existing on the north-facing slope to the south of the Union Canal. Up to 483 houses would be acceptable on this site, of which 57 would be 'affordable'/social rented in accordance with West Lothian Council's policy and 100 would be provided as part of its council house-building programme. A substantial proportion of the private housing mix should constitute smaller houses for first-time buyers and others with a modest income. The overall land area involved, adjusted to take account of landscape, topographical and road access considerations and the provision for a new primary school, is little more than that indicated on Map 1 of the Council's Main Issues Report.

Proposal H8 – Mixed housing, Wilcoxholm Farm

The Planning Forum supports the development of this greenfield site on either side of the canal, to the north of Edinburgh Road but conditional upon:

- the construction of the Eastern Local Distributor Road (Proposal T4), a formal boulevard linking Edinburgh Road and Blackness Road, to which at least any development north of the canal should be linked
- sensitive landscaping of the canal to retain an undeveloped 'green wedge'/wildlife corridor; this to include a new pedestrian/cycle path along the south bank of the canal
- provision of allotment gardens and local orchards commensurate with the number of houses to be built in the area
- provision, at the western end of the site, of a formal pedestrian/cycle path linking the canal towpath to Maidlands (see Proposal T1)
- the layout being subject to a detailed design brief/master plan requiring a high standard of urban design, character, building materials and landscaping
- sequential development being from the town centre outwards
- a commensurate contribution to the improved infrastructure of Linlithgow.

Any development proposals should take account of flood risk in any appropriate parts of the site. This site has the potential to accommodate 180 houses, of which 27 would be 'affordable'/social rented in accordance with West Lothian Council's policy. A substantial proportion of the private housing mix should constitute smaller houses for first-time buyers and others with a modest income. It should be noted that, given the requirements above, the

extent of the housing development land identified in this Plan at this location is considerably less than that shown on Map 1 in the council's Main Issues Report.

Proposal H9 – Private Housing, Sawmill Site, Falkirk Road.

The Planning Forum supports the development of this brownfield infill site. This site has the potential to accommodate 10 houses.

The Main Issues Report also lists the potential for 60 dwellings to be constructed on the brownfield site at Edinburgh Road, previously the site of a petrol station and now proposed for a food retail development. The Planning Forum would prefer that this site became a car park to meet the increasing demand of commuters using the railway station (See Proposal T7). However, the Planning Forum would also like to see the whisky bond to the east demolished and replaced by housing, to alleviate concerns about public safety and blackening of nearby buildings:

Proposal H10 – Private Housing - Whisky Bond Site, Edinburgh Road

Flats, scaling down to two-storey housing towards the east. Possible capacity – 25 dwellings, of which three would be 'affordable'/social rented in accordance with West Lothian Council's policy. Mature trees on the site should be retained.

Table 3 – Summary of Above Housing Proposals for 15-year Period of Plan

Site	Number of houses		
	Local Authority	Private	Total
H2 Mill Road	30	0	30
H4 Boghall East	7	42	49
H5 Stockbridge North	0	11	11
H6 Westerlea, Friarsbrae	0	12	12
H7/H3 Clarendon/Edinburgh Road	157	326	483
H8 Wilcoxholm Farm	27	153	180
H9 Sawmill Site, Falkirk Road	0	10	10
H10 Whisky Bond Site	3	22	25
TOTALS	224	576	800

In the Linlithgow Planning Forum document, "Guidelines for the Linlithgow Plan" dated 12 March 2014, a statement was made that Linlithgow could accommodate around 600 houses constructed over the next 6 to 10 years without compromising the character of the town and

indeed improving the current infrastructure and other social facilities. This *Plan for the Future* covers 15 years and allowance has been made for a maximum of 800 houses in that period (see table above). These include developments which have already received planning permission. Of the 800 total, 224 would be 'affordable'/social-rented.

Looking beyond the 15 year period of this Plan, there would be further housing potential in the Edinburgh Road area and on a limited area of land east of Springfield, all contained within the line of the Eastern Local Distributor Road (Proposal T4). However, any such land would have to be strictly rationed as the development of these sites would bring the town close to its natural limits in terms of its landscape setting and the need for recreational land at the east end of the town (to counterbalance the Kettilstoun facilities at the west end, Proposal R5) will have to be assessed.

Much concern has been expressed about the generally poor design quality of the widespread private housing developments elsewhere in West Lothian and Central Scotland, with the general use of standard speculative house-types which, in many cases, pay scant regard to local tradition in detailing and materials. It will be essential for new housing developments in and around Linlithgow to follow best practice in design, layout and materials, and guidelines for these should be incorporated in

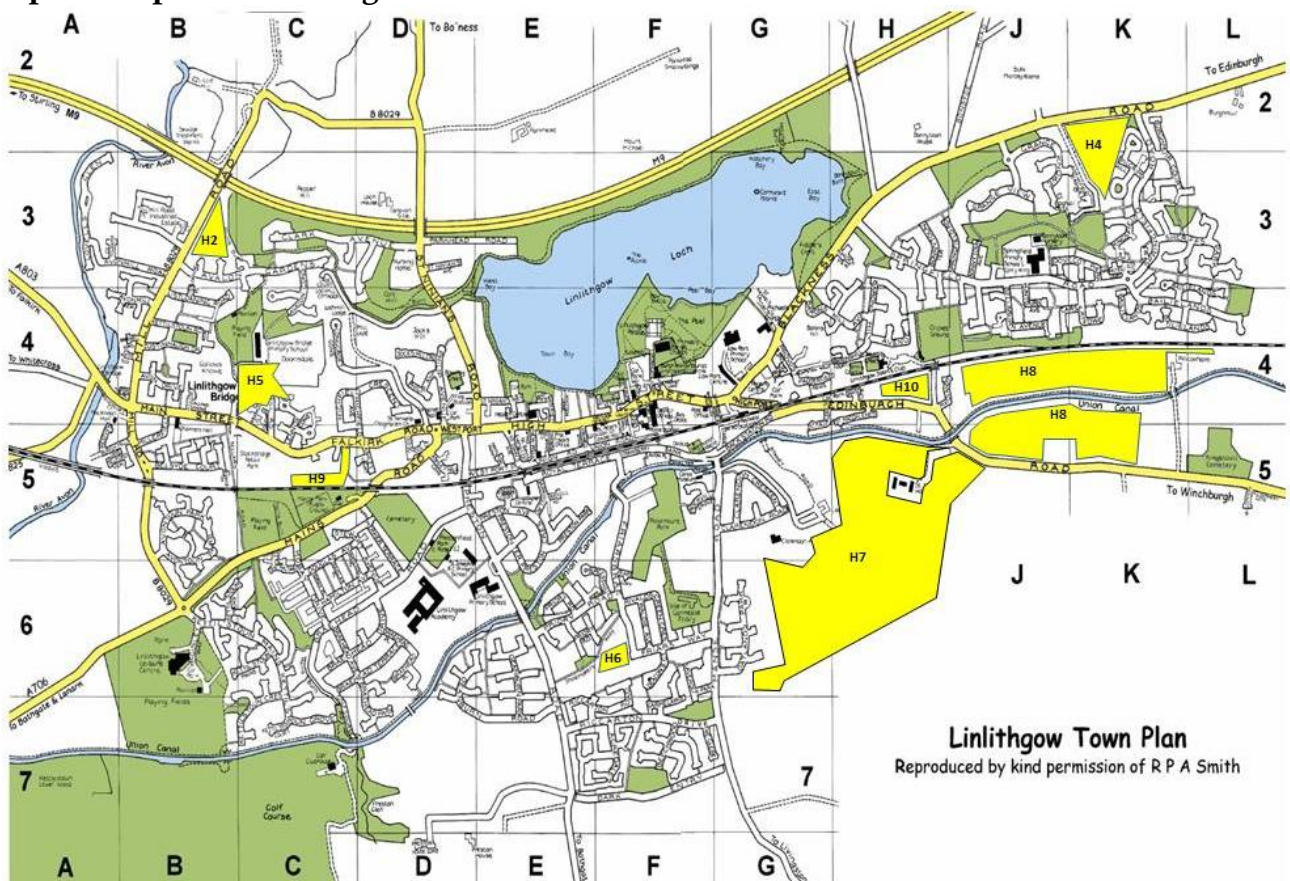
development/planning briefs for all but the smallest developments. New housing should also pay due regard to meeting standards of environmental sustainability (see Section 1) without looking shoddy or 'wacky', the aims being to minimise energy consumption during both construction and occupation. The aim should also be for 10% of all new housing to be potentially wheelchair accessible. All new housing, including flats, should incorporate adequate bicycle storage capacity.

Proposal H11 – Quality and Design of New Housing

All housing sites capable of accommodating more than 10 houses should be the subject of detailed planning/development briefs which should emphasise the need for high quality of design and the creation of places of individual character. Design and layout should reflect current Scottish Government policy and local tradition. At focal points, the buildings should incorporate materials and detailing to a standard normally associated with conservation areas. 10% of all new housing should be potentially wheelchair accessible and all should be provided with adequate bicycle storage capacity.

A table showing Possible Planning Gains from Housing Development can be found in the Funding Section

Map 1 – Proposed Housing Sites



Linlithgow Town Plan
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5. Transport and Accessibility

Linlithgow's attractiveness and consequent success in attracting new residents and activity has, ironically, created the endemic problem of traffic congestion, mainly in the High Street. Pedestrians often find it difficult to cross the street at convenient points because of the seemingly incessant traffic flow which effectively creates a barrier between the north and south sides of the street. This problem is exacerbated by the lack of both a westbound access to the M9 at Burghmuir and an immediately obvious location for a local traffic relief road. There is also a lack of adequate parking facilities in the town centre, and problems associated with commuter car parking are experienced in the streets around the railway station (see West Lothian Local Development Plan, Main Issues Report, paragraphs 3.87 and 3.89).



Traffic in the High Street can be incessant.

There are, of course, strongly opposing views on transport matters – on one hand, there is a view that considerably more car parking needs to be provided; on the other that walking, cycling and public transport should be encouraged, alongside disincentives to car use. This *Plan for the Future* document attempts to provide an appropriate balance between both views.

The traffic and parking problems significantly detract from:-

- Linlithgow as a shopping centre (with particular additional problems related to on-pavement car parking and lack of rear access for servicing - see Section 6 on Retailing)
- Linlithgow's heritage and townscape (see Section 2 on Heritage issues)
- realisation of the town's tourist potential (particular problems being experienced from lack of provision for the parking of tourist buses)
- the potential to maintain a vibrant town centre through the establishment of facilities such as

the new Arts Centre and hotel accommodation, which might be deterred through worries about inadequate visitor parking.

There is clearly a need for residents and visitors to 'reclaim' the High Street as an attractive place to walk, cycle, shop, and visit the many visitor attractions, pubs, restaurants, etc. The most attractive historic towns to visit are easy and pleasant to walk around, but Linlithgow has fairly narrow pavements, a busy High Street, and no simple solution to traffic diversion. Additionally, the High Street is a dangerous place for cyclists. Alleviation of through-traffic is the key – a relief road would allow a ban on all through traffic, with local exceptions allowed by electronic permit. The upgrading of the paving and general environment to the standard one would expect in an outstanding conservation area through a Townscape Heritage Initiative or similar (see Proposal B1 of this plan) is vital. Some sections of pavement have split levels or are very narrow, sometimes forcing pedestrians on to the road, while pavements immediately across the road can be very wide, suggesting the need for carriageway realignment where practical.

A traffic management scheme should be introduced in the High Street from the West Port to the Low Port which would:

1. improve facilities for pedestrians by widening footways and introducing additional signal controlled pedestrian crossings
2. rationalise on street parking so that it is compatible with carriageway and footway widths, pedestrian crossing points and commercial access requirements, including removal of on-pavement parking
3. improve conditions for cyclists
4. Convert the priority junction of Preston Road/ St Ninian's Road/ West Port to a signal controlled junction incorporating pedestrian crossing facilities

Proposal T1 - Traffic Management to 'Reclaim' the High Street'

Introduction of restrictions on through traffic in High Street as outlined above and the conversion of the St Ninian's Road / Preston Road / West Port junction to signal control incorporating pedestrian crossing facilities.

Crucial to relieving the High Street from through traffic is the provision of alternative, more appealing routes for vehicles. Three measures to meet this challenge are considered important and feasible (subject to full traffic analysis) – the provision of additional slip roads at the

M9/Blackness Road (A803) interchange at Burghmuir and/or a High Street Relief Road hidden away to the north of Linlithgow Loch, and the provision of link roads between Blackness Road and Edinburgh Road and between Edinburgh Road and Manse Road in association with the residential development of the Wilcoxholm, Edinburgh Road and Clarendon areas.

These proposals would allow traffic generated in the east part of the town to reach destinations in the west (and vice versa) without passing along the High Street. The new link roads to the south-east would be built to local distributor standards and financed by the developments which they served, while the upgrading of the Burghmuir motorway junction could be financed by a service station and hotel at that location.

Ideally, in addition (or instead of the four-way motorway interchange at Burghmuir), new development might finance a new High Street relief road which could be built on an unobtrusive line north of Linlithgow Loch. This would cater for local traffic in either direction between the eastern and western parts of the town, including cars and lorries associated with the new retail park at Linlithgow Bridge and the Mill Road Industrial Estate, as well as through traffic from the Burghmuir interchange to Bathgate, Armadale, Lanark, etc, thus allowing more radical traffic management arrangements for the High Street to be considered. Uniquely, the relief road option might enable complete closure of the High Street to through traffic (with local exceptions by electronic permit), thus providing a truly walk, cycle and tourist-friendly High Street. The Planning Forum recommends a traffic study to determine the most effective solution from both operational and financial points of view.

Proposal T2A - Four-way Motorway Interchange at Burghmuir

Provision of east-bound off-ramp and west-bound on-ramp to the M9, including roundabouts tying in with existing slip roads. As well as helping to relieve through traffic within the town, the roundabouts would have significant road safety benefits, as compared to the existing T-junctions. (See West Lothian Main Issues Report, paragraph 3.88.)

Proposal T2B - High Street Relief Road

This would be a single-carriageway, unlit road starting from the Bonnytoun Farm Road over the M9, then running westwards beyond the north side of Linlithgow Loch, behind Parkhead Holdings and thus largely hidden from view from Linlithgow by the landform, except near the eastern end where

particular attention would have to be devoted to earthworks and tree planting to screen the road. A roundabout junction with St Ninian's Road (the road to Bo'ness), and a continuation to meet Mill Road where it crosses the M9 would be required. This continuation would replace the existing poor-quality, narrow, winding country road and allow a weight limit to be imposed to prevent heavy industrial traffic going through the residential area in Linlithgow Bridge.

In order to encourage right-turn movements to link in with the four-way interchange, and to enhance road safety, the following two roundabouts are proposed. They would also have the useful functions of slowing down traffic entering the town and giving an opportunity for vivid floral enhancement. In order to minimise the problems of the roundabouts for pedestrians and cyclists (for whom traffic lights are preferable), they would require dedicated cycle lanes outwith the junction area, and safe pedestrian/cycle road-crossing points.

Proposal T3 - Roundabouts on Blackness Road at the eastern entrance to Springfield Road and at the Kingsfield Road Junction

These would be fairly large feature roundabouts at the town entrance.

With the development of housing sites H2 and H3 to the east and south-east of the town, there will be a need for a new road linking the Burghmuir four-way motorway junction to Edinburgh Road in the vicinity of Kildimmery. As stated under Proposals H5 and H6, the parts of the road through the housing areas should be designed as a formal tree-lined boulevard with separate cycle lanes and footpaths. The route will have the advantages of allowing an alternative route for high vehicles approaching Linlithgow on the old Edinburgh Road, avoiding the canal and railway overbridges, and, in the longer term, it would allow traffic from proposed housing along Edinburgh Road and perhaps existing housing around Manse Road to by-pass the Low Port area and link directly to the M9. It would allow closure or restriction of the Manse Road canal bridge to traffic (Proposal T5 below).

Proposal T4 - Eastern Local Distributor Road

Single-carriageway road from Burghmuir (proposed Kingsfield roundabout - Proposal T3) to Edinburgh Road at Kildimmery, crossing both railway and canal, extending along the southern edge of proposed housing area (Proposal H5) to Manse Road at its junction with Riccarton Drive.

The Planning Forum and its constituent groups have for some time been concerned about the risk of serious damage to the narrow Manse Road canal bridge. The implementation of Proposal T4 (Eastern Local Distributor Road) would give the opportunity to close the bridge to all but pedestrians and cyclists, restrict flow to one-way traffic or perhaps close Manse Road elsewhere.



Lorry trying to turn in Back Station Road, stuck between the low bridges in Edinburgh Road and the awkward turn at the Manse Road canal bridge (David Tait).

Proposal T5 Relief of traffic over Canal Bridge at Manse Road

Traffic relief for the Manse Road canal bridge should be considered in the context of Proposal T4 above.

Car Parking

The lack of available car parking spaces in the town centre for potential shoppers, tourists and other visitors to the town centre, and the clogging up of streets around the railway station with parked cars reflect the fact that dedicated parking for shoppers, tourists and rail users is insufficient to meet demand. Rail users wishing to travel off-peak are frequently unable to find a parking place anywhere near the station, which is a disincentive to using rail as an alternative mode. Residents and visitors to the town have problems in locating convenient parking spaces during the day. This reduces footfall in Linlithgow, impacts negatively on shops and tourist attractions, and spoils the visitor experience. Although many argue that providing more car parking spaces only stimulates further car use, it is considered that, in the case of Linlithgow, there is a need to address the problem positively.

The current West Lothian Local Plan includes a policy (Policy TRAN 34) that a parking management scheme will be developed for Linlithgow Town Centre and that this will look at detailed issues including rationalisation of parking

spaces in the High Street, enforcement of parking regulations, and (presumably) charging to ensure a turnover of spaces. This policy presumably led to the consultation paper 'Parking Proposals for Linlithgow', published in June 2006, which contained numerous ideas to solve the various problems, but has been taken no further except that a limited number of additional spaces have been created at Linlithgow Sports Club and at St Ninian's Way. However, even with the increased provision, demand often still outstrips supply.

The only solutions so far identified which would provide a large number of parking spaces in relatively unobtrusive locations, on a permanent basis, are decking over the car park behind the Regent Centre and the use of the former petrol station site in Edinburgh Road (albeit it is recognised that the latter site now has planning permission for a supermarket). The Regent Centre parking proposal would cater primarily for shoppers, visitors to the town, and off-peak railway travellers, partly on a 'pay-as-you-go' basis, while the Edinburgh Road car park would be provided for commuters, in many cases displaced from elsewhere. The number of decks at the Regent Centre car park would be decided bearing in mind the car park's impact on the conservation area. At present, the car park is far from ideal as a supermarket car park on account of its slope. There is potential to link the upper deck directly to the railway station eastbound platform by means of a footbridge.

It is recommended that:

- a charge be levied for commuter all-day parking, to encourage those who live fairly close to walk or cycle to the station. Note that such a charge already exists at many stations, for example Falkirk
- only once adequate commuter parking is provided, should new parking restrictions be introduced on roads currently clogged by commuter parking, particularly where this is causing any form of nuisance
- cycle parking arrangements at the station be significantly upgraded, with potential for future growth if justified by usage
- the station car park adjacent to the south platform be dedicated for the use of off-peak railway travellers and collection/drop-off. A hefty charge for all-day parking here could enable this
- park and ride facilities be considered on the edge of town, if justified by likely demand
- the new Winchburgh Station (expected to open in December 2018) should have adequate all-

day parking, to reduce pressure on Linlithgow roadside parking.

The key to all of these proposals, with the exception of cycle parking, is enforcement – which could be funded through the commuter parking charges.

Proposal T6 - Decked Car Park at Regent Centre
Levelling of the existing car park and the erection of two decks on top. This would need traffic lights at the Blackness Road entrance and should be accompanied by suitable parking restrictions on nearby roads and the upgrading of cycle parking provision at the railway station.

Proposal T7 – Commuter Car Park at Edinburgh Road
This would involve redevelopment of the former petrol station site. The car park would require good landscaping to safeguard the appearance of an important entry point to the town, and to protect the amenity of nearby residents.

In addition, there would be strong benefits in providing some more car parking for tourists specifically visiting Linlithgow Palace and The Peel. An opportunity to meet such a demand exists in the underused grounds of St Michael's RC Church, from which direct access to The Peel could be provided.

Proposal T8 – Tourist Car Parking at Blackness Road
Construction of a tourist car park behind St Michael's RC Church, Blackness Road, with pedestrian access to The Peel.

Station Access and Railway Services

Having a town centre station is a major bonus for Linlithgow in terms of sustainable transport and access, for visitors, commuters, recreation, shoppers, etc. The station platforms are being extended to accommodate new, longer electric trains. However pedestrian access is not good and this, together with signing, should be improved. There should be a high quality shared surface on Station Road and the presence of the station should be made more obvious by signing on the building and direction signing from other points in the town.

Representations should be made to ScotRail to provide the following:

- more services from Glasgow direct to Fife via Linlithgow
- a circular service, via Linlithgow, from Edinburgh and Glasgow via Stirling, Alloa and Dunfermline

c) direct services from Linlithgow via a Dalmeny 'chord' to the new airport interchange station at Gogar.

Proposal T9 – Improvements to Access to the Railway Station and to Rail Services.

Pedestrian access and signing should be improved to encourage use of rail travel. The service provider should be approached to extend services from Linlithgow.

Bus Services and Parking for Tourist Buses

Bus services within the town of Linlithgow are, at present, poorly developed and little used, partly because the town's layout mitigates against a good and viable circular service. The road links proposed in this document should overcome some of the problems in this respect. The proposed Eastern Local Distributor Road (Proposal T4) would allow Edinburgh-Falkirk through bus services the option of routing certain journeys via Springfield. Lack of information about times, frequency and cost of bus services is one of the main disincentives to bus patronage, hence the following proposal:

Proposal T10 – Improvements to Bus Services
New bus routes and the re routing of existing services should be considered to take advantage of new local distributor roads associated with housing development in the east of the Town. All bus stops in Linlithgow should be provided with full relevant timetable and fares information.

The lack of specific provision for the parking of tourist buses has been identified as a significant issue. More use should be made of the extended lay-by on Blackness Road through improved communications between the tour bus operators through the Tourist Information Office. The roundabout at the Blackness Road/Springfield Road junction allows this lay by to be used on a drop off/ call up basis

Proposal T11 – Parking for Tourist Buses
Tour buses should be encouraged to use the extended Blackness Road lay-by through better communications with the tour operators via the Tourist Information Office.

Cycle and Pedestrian Links

A draft cycle network for Linlithgow was drawn up by the former Lothian Regional Council but was shelved when transport responsibilities were passed to the less well-resourced unitary councils. Implementation of such a network should take into account the following principles:

- incorporating better facilities for cyclists on the High Street as part of any traffic management scheme, (see Proposal T1)
- high quality cycle routes, segregated where possible, to the town centre and railway station from all existing and new residential areas
- ensuring similar high-quality connections to all important facilities outwith the centre - such as the Leisure Centre, Oracle plant, schools, etc
- 'home-zone' design should be considered for all new residential areas, and where possible in existing areas, with slow-speed mixed-use areas not normally requiring cycle lanes
- links between Linlithgow and the Round-Forth route, and Linlithgow being on its map
- a round-Linlithgow easy leisure route for families and day visitors, possibly associated with the bike hire scheme which Abellio has promised by Spring 2016 at Linlithgow Station
- Wider publicity/ availability for the Linlithgow active travel map produced by Transition Linlithgow.

A recent project to improve cycle provision (as well as conditions for pedestrians) has been the hard-surfacing the most heavily-used section of canal towpath between Kettilstoun and the vicinity of the Edinburgh Road aqueduct. At the Kettilstoun end, a cycle/footpath ramp has been provided to link with the Linlithgow Leisure Centre. A similar link is needed at the eastern end of the hard-surfaced section, linking the canal towpath to Maidlands and hence the Springfield area (see also Proposal H6). Another specific proposal supported by the Planning Forum is the upgrading of Sellars Road and extension north across the Mains Burn behind Sainsbury's supermarket. Also recognised is the lack of direct cycle and pedestrian links to Livingston and Bathgate.

Proposal T12 - Creation of Cycle Network

A cycle network should be drawn up for Linlithgow in accordance with the principles set out above, including preferred cycle-rack locations. Safe and welcoming routes between residential areas and the town centre are a particular priority.

Proposal T13 - Provision of Cycle Route/Footpath Link between Union Canal Towpath and Maidlands

The existing informal path between the canal towpath and Maidlands should be upgraded to provide a formal cycle route/footpath link.

Proposal T14 - Upgrading of Sellars Road and Formation of Pedestrian/Cycle Link north-east of Sainsbury's Supermarket

The existing Sellars Road footpaths should be upgraded to provide a formal cycle/footpath route, together with the provision of a link across the Mains Burn to the north-east of Sainsbury's Store.

Proposal T15 - Cycle/Footpath Links to Livingston and Bathgate via Beecraigs Country Park

The existing footpath and bridleway alongside Preston Road to the south of the built-up area should be extended from its existing termination to both the Park Centre and the park focal point at Balvormie, the former route continuing to Livingston via Bangour and the latter having potential to extend to Bathgate via Cairnpapple and The Knock.

The Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note PAN75 refers to setting modal share targets (that is, the projected relative amount of walking, cycling, public transport use and car use) for whole areas, and mentions the appointment of a Travel Co-ordinator. Already Sustrans (the 'green' transport charity) has set up experimental government-funded 'active travel' schemes to encourage sustainable transport (walking, cycling, bus, rail) at household level, and there might well be interest in testing out similar ideas from the planning stages onwards in a new area-wide development.

Proposal T16 - Modal Share/Active Travel Policy for New Housing Areas

Consideration could be given to an experimental policy to attempt to maximise the use of walking and cycling in the two completely new development areas (proposals H7 and H8), by innovative measures in addition to the provision of high quality walking and cycling routes.

The proposed 'Green Wedge' running north-south east of Clarendon would accommodate cycle and pedestrian links to the station and town centre. In addition, it would reduce dependence on car use.

Proposal T17 - Cycle and Pedestrian Links across 'Green Wedge' at Clarendon

Provision of an interesting network of footpaths and cycle paths to link new housing area to the railway station and town centre. This will require a canal crossing (for both pedestrian and cycle use) unless the existing underpass at Staney Road can be used.

See also Transition Linlithgow's Sustainable Travel Action Plan at:

<http://transitionlinlithgow.org.uk/docsimages/TL-STAP-Final.pdf>

6. Retailing and Town Centre

This section looks to the future of retailing in Linlithgow:

- to promote Linlithgow's much admired High Street and town centre
- to encourage a diverse High Street economy which minimises the presence of chain stores, charity and betting shops
- to work with the recently formed Town Centre BID (Business Improvement District) to create a business-friendly town centre
- to actively seek niche businesses to come in to the High Street
- to actively seek knowledge, expertise and best practice in town centre development
- to encourage creativity and interest on the High Street
- to maximise the benefits of being an outstanding conservation area
- And thereby to plan a successful High Street.

For the future, it is vital that community and commercial facilities which attract large numbers of people are located, whenever possible, in the town centre, to encourage multi-purpose trips and a lively centre. The role of inward commuting to town centre workplaces, as part of the mix, is extremely important, bringing revenue to existing businesses. This whole philosophy is supported by Scottish Government guidance on town centres (SPP8) and endorsed by the proposals and preferences stated in this *Plan for the Future*.

Recent planning decisions with regard to retailing in Linlithgow have been quite the reverse. Firstly, in terms of convenience (everyday requirements) shopping, Linlithgow has had to adjust to the recent impact of the three major supermarket outlets at either end of the town. At the time of their opening, there was considerable impact upon the fortunes of the affected individual High Street traders, although this has now largely stabilised with total relevant turnover likely to be at a lower level. As the influence of such dominant multi-national outlets can still be felt, the pressures on independent retailers are unrelenting.

This process was more recently replicated in relation to comparison (occasional, major purchases) shopping, with the opening of the Stockbridge Retail Park at Linlithgow Bridge, occupied primarily by a series of national chain stores, a development which West Lothian Council's own committee report suggested could impact upon remaining High Street trade by between 7% and 16%. Of course, the impact on

individual outlets would have been greater, but it is significant to note that the previously existing DIY and pet stores in the High Street have outlived their Stockbridge counterparts. Internet shopping may be having an impact, but it also provides an opportunity for local businesses to grow.



The High Street provides a good shopping and business environment, but one which much potential for improvement.

Despite the competing pressures, Linlithgow's High Street appears to be remarkably resilient, compared to the experience in other similar towns. Although many shop unit occupancies tended until recently to be short-lived, and the average turnover in retail outlets must have declined, there is a clear evolution towards the provision of services that are not available online or in soul-less retail parks, such as a meal at a quality restaurant, a drink with friends, a cup of coffee and a fresh cake, beauty treatments and hair cuts, fresh sandwiches, browsing in bookshops, professional services and personal expertise. Although, in many cases, High Street shop units become vacant as successful businesses move to larger premises, a few longer-term vacancies have recently become evident.

The continuing success of the High Street in attracting new businesses is to be welcomed, but complacency must be avoided and the role of the recently established Business Improvement District (BID) Board for the Town Centre will play an important part in promoting business vitality and making the High Street a more attractive destination for customers.

Proposal S1 – Investigation of Successful Retail Business Initiatives Elsewhere

The Linlithgow High Street Business Improvement (BID) Board is recommended to consult retail businesses in similar towns to ascertain their experience and participation in the promotion of varied and vibrant High Streets.

Rent reductions for Council-owned shop units must still be considered to help re-invigorate the retail sector in Linlithgow. The Council, through its Local Plan, advocates support for change of use of vacated retail outlets to consolidate (reduce the size of) the retail area. As a result, the potential threat to the viability of the High Street as a traditional retail area, to the jobs of those employed in independent outlets, and to the overall townscape quality, becomes very real.

Some progress has already been made – for example, the regular farmers' market should provide an opportunity for residents and visitors to experience the choice and quality of products produced locally, as a counterbalance to the fare offered by supermarkets, and the BID has promoted initiatives such as improved Christmas lights.

Of great importance also is the quality of the shopping environment – the attractiveness of the buildings, the existence of trees and flowers, and the quality of the paving and street furniture (see 'Heritage' section). The Council has made a good start on the necessary improvements, aided by the activities of Burgh Beautiful Linlithgow, but a more comprehensive approach is still required (Proposal B1). The shopping environment also suffers badly from the level of traffic (both moving and parked on footways) which detracts greatly from the ambience of the High Street and in particular makes crossing the High Street to shops on the other side frustrating and stressful.

The opportunity exists to redevelop the Guyancourt Vennel area for specialist retail outlets - such an initiative might prove a catalyst to attract other independent specialist retailers, perhaps

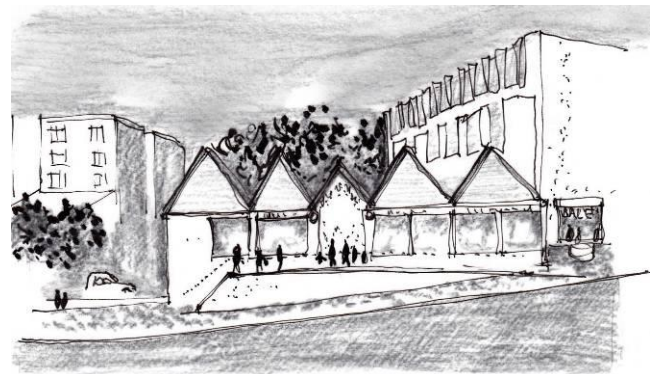
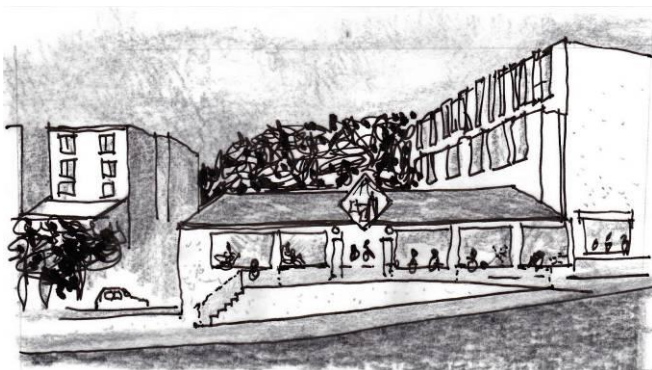


The forthcoming relocation of public library from Guyancourt Vennel to the County Buildings augments the area's potential for specialist retailing.

focused on the tourism market. The development of themed specialist retailing has been successful elsewhere - one need only visit the likes of Aberfeldy (a 'Fairtrade Town' before Linlithgow), Wigtown (Scotland's Booktown) or Castle Douglas (Foodtown) to see how such initiatives can transform the fortunes of previously declining communities. Linlithgow already has specialised 'craft' and hobby shops in the fields of embroidery, patchwork, knitting, artwork and 'DIY' and, with its history of manufacturing skills particularly in connection with the leather industry, there may be opportunities to market Linlithgow as a craft and hobby shop centre.

Proposal S2 - Redevelopment of Guyancourt Vennel

Demolition of the buildings along at least the western side of Guyancourt Vennel and redevelopment with a range of small units to attract tourist-related commercial activity such as craft shops, leather workshops.



Two sketches showing alternative ideas of how the Guyancourt Vennel area could be transformed with a new High Street retail frontage and arcade (Chris Long).

Within the existing shopping area, opportunities exist to promote the evolution of 'quarters' of specialist retailing. One example might be the western end of the High Street which has the potential to become an 'arts retail quarter'.

Proposal S3 - Establishment of Arts Retail Quarter

The Planning Forum would support efforts to create an 'Arts Retail Quarter' towards the west end of the High Street, with a distinctive 'public realm'.

The new housing areas resulting from Proposal H5 (along with H6) will require local shops, and the provision of shop units should be a requirement of the relevant housing developers. Ideally, the school, community hall, shop and other such facilities should be located centrally, next to each other, possibly with other community facilities, and easily accessible by foot/cycle from the whole

housing area. Having these facilities/services together will "encourage multi-purpose trips and reduce distances travelled by car by bringing together related land uses" (Planning Advice Note PAN75, paragraph 24). Having them together will also help foster economic and social success, for example with parents and schoolchildren using a shop next to the school, whilst waiting or at lunchtimes. These should be 'key locations ... with a sense of place" (paragraph 26 of PAN75).

Proposal S4 - Neighbourhood Shops within New Housing Areas

At least two new shop units should be provided within the new housing areas proposed for the south-east fringes of the town (see Proposal H5).

See related proposal:-

T1 Town Centre Traffic Management to 'reclaim' the High Street

7. Community, Cultural & Sports Facilities and Open Space

The refurbishment of the Burgh Halls as a community and arts centre is a considerable achievement by the Council, and should be applauded. However, the implementation of the proposals has meant a loss of community meeting rooms. This has exacerbated the perceived shortage of community meeting space in Linlithgow, as did the removal of the old huts at Low Port Primary School.

Proposal R1 – Provision of Community Rooms

Proposals for more community meeting space should be brought forward as a matter of urgency. Possible locations might include part of the proposed County Buildings refurbishment (Proposal R2), or an extension of the Low Port Centre.

County Buildings

West Lothian Council proposes the conversion of the County Buildings into a Partnership Centre which will accommodate the town's public library, a police station, the day care centre relocated from St Michael's Hospital, the local museum of the Linlithgow Heritage Trust (relocated from Annet House) and potentially some business space/office accommodation and meeting rooms.

Proposal R2 – Linlithgow Partnership Centre

The Planning Forum supports West Lothian Council's plans to convert the interior of the County Buildings to accommodate the public library, a police station, a day care centre, the local museum and office/meeting room accommodation.

Victoria Hall

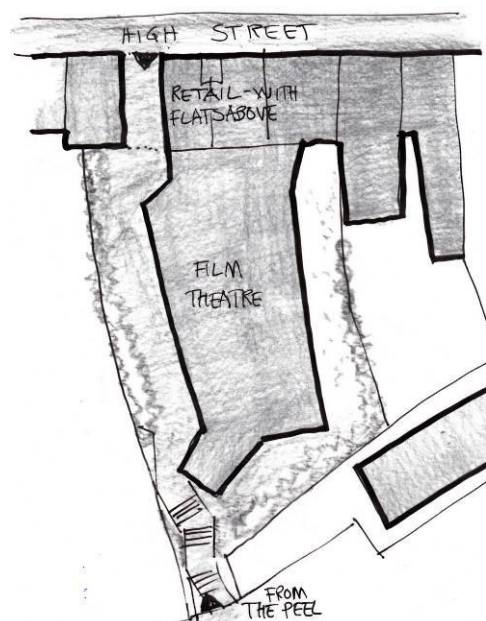
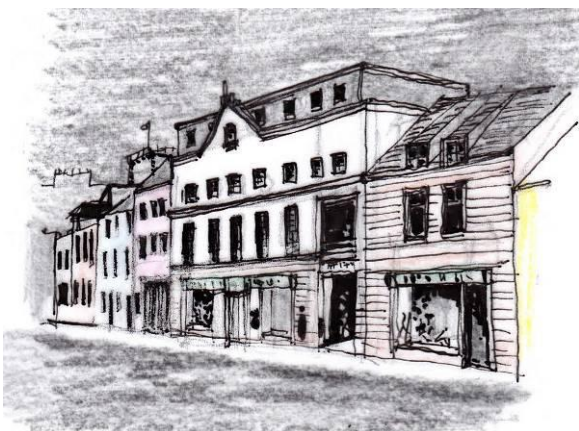
There is an unfulfilled demand for the performing



Victoria Hall.

arts in Linlithgow. The assembly hall at Linlithgow Academy has been upgraded with moveable seating and improved sound equipment. However, the public use of this facility leads to competing demands by the school and the community. Also, its ambience is far from ideal! The Eastgate Centre in Peebles demonstrates the effective re-use of a former church building into a community theatre and the success of the Barony Theatre at Bo'ness illustrates what can be achieved.

The Victoria Hall has been part-demolished and the current owners received planning permission for redevelopment for commercial leisure/restaurant/retail uses, permission which has since lapsed. However, the site is centrally located and



Possible front elevation (above) and plan (right) for a Community Theatre/Cinema, retail units and apartments, as proposed by the Linlithgow Victoria Hall Trust (Proposal R3). Sketches by Chris Long based on initial proposals by EK:JN Architects.

the locally-based Linlithgow Victoria Hall Trust is pursuing plans for the construction of a purpose-built new community theatre/cinema, the running costs of which would be partly met by rentals derived from shops and flats on the High Street frontage. Finance for the development is likely to be derived from grants, donations and loans, but a contribution from development value derived from proposed residential developments on the town outskirts should not be discounted.

Proposal R3 – Redevelopment of site of Victoria Hall to form a Community Theatre/Cinema

The Planning Forum supports redevelopment of the site of the Victoria Hall into a community theatre/cinema as being pursued by the Linlithgow Victoria Hall Trust.

New Park at Clarendon

The opportunity exists for the creation of a new public park in the Clarendon area, east of Clarendon House and grounds, as a result of the prospective developer’s intention to develop only a small portion of the housing site. This could form a wide buffer ('green wedge' on the Proposals Map) dividing the groups of housing proposed in this area. This would help to retain the open aspect to the part of the conservation area on the south bank of the Union Canal between Manse Road and St Michael's Hospital. The new park could include ornamental planting as well as woodland planting/community orchards and would be crossed by footpaths and cycle routes. It would also have the important function of being a 'wildlife corridor' from the countryside to the canal.

Proposal R4 - Formation of Clarendon Public Park with Woodland Planting and Community Orchards

Preservation from development of a strip of land to the east of Clarendon/Oatlands Park to retain a 'green wedge' from the countryside to the town centre, and extending along the south bank of the Union Canal towards St Michael's Hospital; formation of public park with woodland planting, community orchards and through footpaths and cycle routes (see Proposal T17).

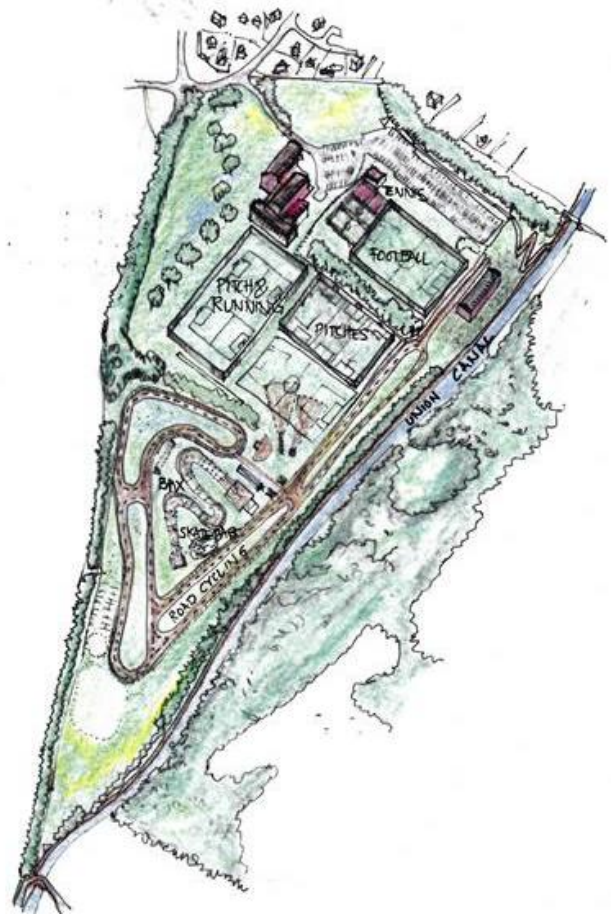
Leisure Facilities at Kettilstoun

The existing Linlithgow Leisure Centre at Kettilstoun is currently (2015) being extended by West Lothian Leisure to increase the amount of gym/exercise class space within the building. Additional car parking is also being provided as well as a new, recently completed, cycle/footpath up to the Union Canal towpath. Further improvements to sports facilities, including additional changing rooms and a 'third generation'

football pitch, also need to be provided and the recently established Linlithgow Community Development Trust proposes major additional facilities to the south and west. The Trust proposes to construct a community owned and operated closed road cycling/running circuit, BMX track/MTB skills area, skateboard/wheeled sports park, outdoor adventure play area, compact field sports practice area, sprint track and car parking on land adjacent to the existing Leisure Centre facilities at Kettilstoun. These would be complemented by a shared use clubhouse/community building incorporating toilets and changing facilities, storage facilities (including kayak storage for Linlithgow Kayak Racing Club) communal clubhouse/social space, café and meeting rooms. This is supported in principle by the national sporting bodies concerned and West Lothian Council. This communal space would be available for use by any community group in Linlithgow.

Proposal R5 – New/Upgraded Playing Fields, Community Facilities and Additional Parking, Kettilstoun

The Planning Forum supports the extension and upgrading of sports facilities at Kettilstoun, together with associated community and parking provision.



Above: Current proposals by the Linlithgow Community Development Trust for recreational and community facilities at Kettilstoun (Proposal R5), in conjunction with the extension of the Linlithgow Leisure Centre.

A valuable addition to the plan for Kettilstoun would be a cycle/pedestrian route along the side of the triangle adjacent to the A706, from the canal bridge to the mini-roundabout, and linking to the existing paths at both ends.

The implementation of Proposal R5 will further concentrate recreational provision at the extreme west end of the town, far distant from the eastern extremity and thus encouraging car use. The provision of recreational facilities on the edges of the Springfield and Edinburgh Road areas should be taken into account in any long-term planning of these areas.

Green Wedges and Other Development Free Areas

There is a strategic need to preserve and enhance the landscape setting of Linlithgow entirely free of urban development. The following areas are identified:

- **Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV)** - the Bathgate Hills and River Avon Valley AGLV, extending right up to the town's southern and south-western boundaries and the Airngath Hill AGLV which provides the backdrop to Linlithgow Loch and includes the policies of Bonnytoun House and the open area on the opposite side of Blackness Road
- **Conservation Areas** - the Linlithgow Palace and High Street Conservation Area and the Upper Linlithgow and Union Canal Conservation Area which, between them, include undeveloped land around the loch and south of the Union Canal at Rosemount Park and eastwards towards St Michael's Hospital
- **the Canal Corridor** eastwards of the Edinburgh Road aqueduct and Maidlands - another 'green wedge' on both sides of the canal, extending out to the countryside
- **broad landscaped strips** on either side of Blackness Road and Edinburgh Road.

Youth Provision

The current West Lothian Local Plan makes no specific provision for the development of youth facilities in Linlithgow despite the increase in numbers of young people in the town (there are approximately 1800 young people between the ages of 12 and 21 years) and the increasing rate of anti-social behaviour and binge drinking reported by Police Scotland. Although community-based youth provision is essential to provide opportunities for young people to build confidence/self esteem and to develop skills and knowledge, such provision has in fact decreased over the last ten years with a number of council and voluntary youth groups closing due to a number of factors. While the uniformed and sporting youth organisations are strong in the town, they too suffer from a lack of resources, staffing and rely on the commitment of a few individuals to continue to run. However, such organisations are often viewed as elite by young people and a certain level of ability, income and dedication is needed to participate.

There is an apparent lack of facilities for young people in Linlithgow who do not necessarily wish to join clubs or to participate in the organised sports provision available in the town. It is possible that youth-friendly recreational and pastime facilities such as a youth centre or a cyber café might be beneficial, but precise needs will be best defined through appropriate research.

In particular, a possible opportunity for suitable premises for a youth facility presents itself in the proposed relocation of the police station to the County Buildings as part of the Partnership Centre project (Proposal R2), leaving the existing police offices vacant.

Proposal R6 - Establishment of Permanent Youth Centre

The Planning Forum supports the appropriate provision of youth facilities and it is proposed that a study be undertaken into the need for appropriate provision, including the feasibility of converting all or part of the existing Police Station building at Court Square into a Youth Centre. Use of such a facility would also help resolve the shortage of community meeting accommodation in the town.

8. Education

(See West Lothian Local Development Plan, Main Issues Report, paragraph 3.88.) The current educational context is that Linlithgow is served by two secondary schools – Linlithgow Academy (non-denominational) and St Kentigern’s RC Academy in Blackburn. Linlithgow Academy is fed by eight primary schools, four in the town plus Bridgend, Torphichen, Westfield and Winchburgh Primary Schools. St Joseph’s RC Primary School is the only local school associated with St Kentigern’s.



Assembly hall, Low Port Primary School.



Corner of Linlithgow Bridge Primary School.

Linlithgow’s schools have an extremely high reputation and are undoubtedly a significant factor in attracting people to move into the area. The high demand for places is a chronic problem for

Linlithgow Academy which is likely to remain until the completion of a new non-denominational secondary school at Winchburgh (see West Lothian Local Development Plan, Main Issues Report, paragraph 3.96). Primary school rolls wax and wane to some degree, but the four Linlithgow non-denominational primaries are constantly under some pressure, necessitating the adjustment of the catchment area for each school.

School capacity has been used as a mechanism to justify the policy of ‘restraint’ on development in Linlithgow, and, for this reason, West Lothian Council had, until recently, consistently refused to deal with capacity problems by creating extensions to local schools. Therefore, the only tools available to deal with school capacity problems in recent years have been development control and management of intakes through ‘roll capping’. However, around 2010, the Council increased the capacity of Linlithgow Academy by 110 (just under 10%), to 1320 pupils, to cater for an expansion in the catchment area to include Torphichen and Westfield. Previously, these primary schools fed Bathgate and Armadale Academies respectively. Additionally, the extra accommodation in Linlithgow Academy is designed to accommodate pupils from the initial phases of the large-scale residential expansion of Winchburgh.

When the non-denominational secondary school for Winchburgh is built, understood to be by 2019, this will remove Winchburgh and probably Bridgend from Linlithgow Academy’s catchment area, reducing pressure on the Academy and freeing up some places to cater for new housing development in Linlithgow. (See West Lothian Local Development Plan, Main Issues Report, paragraph 3.96.) Additionally, there is potential to re-zone Torphichen and Westfield Primary Schools to feed once more into more conveniently-located secondary schools in the Armadale/Bathgate area. Either or both of these eventualities would allow the housing proposals in this Plan to be implemented without the need to provide an additional secondary school in Linlithgow.

However, it is considered that one new primary school will be required to serve the proposed new housing, and this is proposed to be sited in the proposed new housing area at Edinburgh Road.

Proposal ED1 - New Primary School at Edinburgh Road

Construction of a single-stream non-denominational primary school.

9. Health Facilities

Current best practice, as exemplified by facilities at Livingston, Blackburn, Bathgate and Broxburn, is to integrate the provision of health and social care services in order to allow all groups of people to live as independently as possible. Past increases in Linlithgow's population have placed a heavy demand on health and social care provision in the town, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly and those with disabilities.

The present Linlithgow Health Centre, situated in Linlithgow's High Street, was created by converting the previous co-operative supermarket and is physically incapable of fulfilling an integrated healthcare role. As a result, there is no resident social work support available. The Health Centre has limited rooms for consultation and for staff meetings, and vital therapy space is at a premium, while resident General Practitioners and those providing locum cover are presently required to share existing consultation rooms.

In order to overcome the space limitations and create a 'one stop' facility for the town where health and social care can be provided in one building, it is necessary to either relocate or extend the present Health Centre. At the outset, the Planning Forum believes that the resulting health facility should, from the community point of view, remain in the town centre where it would be more convenient for patients, being centrally situated near the shops and other facilities, and easily reached by public transport. Additionally, it would contribute to the vitality of the town centre. The most obvious solution would be to demolish the Health Centre and construct a new purpose-built health and social care facility in a phased redevelopment on the existing site and adjacent land, perhaps with three floors, lift, loch view, etc. Associated with any new facility should be parking arrangements which permit surgery visits to be done without stress on finding a parking location, while maintaining parking for doctors. A site outside the town centre is not favoured.

Proposal HE1 – Creation of Integrated Health Centre

The Planning Forum supports the construction of a new Health Centre (with combined health and social care facilities) on an appropriate site in the town centre, preferably through redevelopment of its current site.

Consideration should be made to having more local capacity to deal with minor ailments. Accident &

Emergency facilities at local hospitals are overstretched because of demand for many minor issues that should be cared for locally without any need to visit a hospital emergency department.

Care for the Elderly - Linlithgow's capacity to support a growing ageing population and to increase the quality and capacity for local healthcare needs consideration in the future development of the town. As well as being accessible for all ages and abilities, it is vital to ensure there are adequate buildings and infrastructure to cope with these changes.

- St. Michael's Day Care Centre is no longer fit for purpose and, although proposals to relocate to the new Partnership Centre in the County Buildings are to be welcomed (Proposal R2), the outlook from within will be no better than at present – a building with a view of the loch or townscape would be more appealing than a car park. A central location is preferred, subject to the provision of adequate access for ambulances and mini-buses.



St Michael's Day Centre (Chris Long).

- St. Michael's Hospital, while owned and run by NHS, should be factored into any new integrated health development, either to permit replacement of the existing building in the current location or to find suitable land for a new building to be created.
- Rooms and buildings to facilitate activities for the elderly – this is mostly covered by existing rooms and halls for hire but few have good access for infirm or disabled people. A review is required of the type of space needed and accessibility/toilets/etc.

10. Funding

The implementation of this suggested Plan for Linlithgow will depend crucially on the realisation of land value, as described earlier in this report. The following table gives an idea of rough development costs which would have to be met. Proposals not included in this table are to be regarded as self-financing, would be financed as an integral part of adjacent development (for example road access to a housing site), or would be entirely funded from other sources such as the Scottish Government, West Lothian Council, or a community trust.

For the purposes of this Plan document, it is estimated that £20,900,000 of development works for the benefit of the community would have to be raised through the realisation of land value. Based on Government figures suggesting that the average value of bulk housing land in Scotland is around

£1,100,000 per hectare, it can be deduced that, based on a gross density of 25 houses per hectare, the value per housing plot is £44,000.

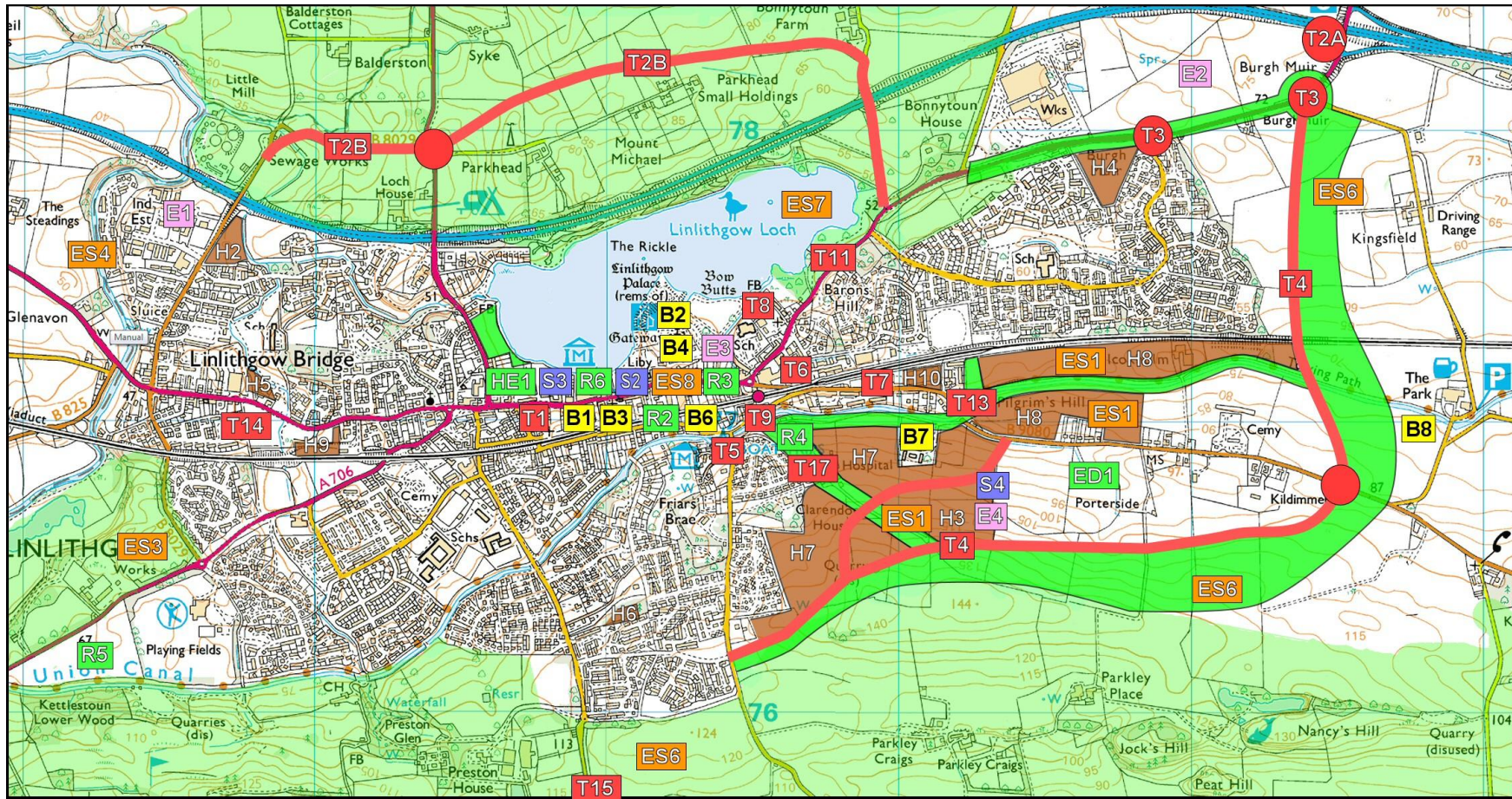
Assuming for the purposes of this exercise that £29,000 per plot can be extracted from the land value, it would be necessary to build 720 houses to fund the £20,900,000 share of the cost of development works. Rounded down to 700, this would take up 28 hectares/69 acres of land. Including another 4 hectares for the 100 council houses envisaged, this would mean the need for 32 hectares/79 acres – this could be comfortably accommodated into the proposed development areas to the south-east of the town. Of course, additional ground provision within the development areas would be needed for a primary school and for generous landscaping, allotments, etc.

Table 4 – Possible 'Planning Gains'

Proposal Number	Description of Proposal	Notional Cost	Contribution from Housing Land Value	Other, Alternative or Additional Sources of Finance
B1 and T1	Townscape Heritage Initiative/Conservation Area Enhancement & Traffic Management to 'Reclaim' the High Street	2,500,000	1,250,000	Heritage Lottery Fund; Historic Scotland
H1	Social-Rented Housing (subsidy @ £40,000 per house) 120 houses (See also MIR 3.86.)	7,200,000	4,800,000	Scottish Government
T2A	Four-way Motorway Interchange	4,500,000	1,500,000	Scottish Government and developers of Business Park (Proposal E2)
T2B	High Street Relief Road	6,000,000	6,000,000	
T3	Blackness Road Roundabouts	200,000	100,000	Business Park
T6, T7, T8	Car Parking at Regent Centre, Edinburgh Road and Blackness Road	2,000,000	1,500,000	ScotRail
T12, T13, T14, T15	Cycle Network (outwith new development areas)	400,000	200,000	Sustrans, West Lothian Council
H5, H6 R4; T17	'Green Wedges' at Clarendon and by canal	1,750,000	1,750,000	
R3	Community Theatre/Cinema, Victoria Hall site	6,000,000	500,000	Lottery, Creative Scotland, charities, major donors, loans
R5	New/Upgraded Playing Fields, community facilities and additional parking, Kettilstoun	5,000,000	300,000	West Lothian Council; environmental/sports charities, Lottery, community, private sector, etc
R6	Permanent Youth Centre	500,000	500,000	(LYPP)
ED1	New Primary School	2,300,000	2,000,000	West Lothian Council
HE1	Integrated Health Centre	4,000,000	500,000	NHS, West Lothian Council
	TOTALS	42,350,000	20,900,000	

Note – Eastern Local Distributor Road is taken as part of Housing Proposals H5 and H6, not counted as a 'planning gain'.

PROPOSALS MAP



Map Legend and Colour Key

- | | |
|---|--|
| Areas of Great Landscape Value | T _x Transport/Accessibility Proposals |
| 'Green Wedges' Wildlife Corridors & Development Free Areas | Road Links |
| H _x Housing Proposals | S _x Proposals for Retailing and Town Centre |
| ES _x Proposals for Environmental Sustainability | R _x Community/Recreation Proposals |
| B _x Proposals for Built/Architectural Heritage and Tourism | ED1 Education Proposal |
| E _x Proposals relating to Employment | HE1 Health Facility Proposal |

List of Proposals

Note: Proposals which have general application across the town are not indicated on the Proposals Map above.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- ES1 Installation of District Heating Systems in New Housing Developments
- ES2 Installation of District Heating Systems in Existing Built-up Areas
- ES3 Development of Solar Farm
- ES4 Development of Hydro-Electric Power Plants on River Avon
- ES5 Sustainable Design of New Developments
- ES6 Small Farms and Tree Planting
- ES7 Mitigation of Loch and Watercourse Pollution
- ES8 Measures to Cut Down High Street Air Pollution

BUILT/ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AND TOURISM

- B1 Townscape Heritage Initiative/Conservation Area Enhancement
- B2 Restoration and Re-use of Linlithgow Palace
- B3 Preservation of Riggs and Public Access to Annet House Rigg Garden
- B4 Tourist Information Centre
- B5 Promotion of Larger Hotel in Linlithgow
- B6 Extension of Learmonth Gardens
- B7 Canal Side Facilities near St Michael's Hospital
- B8 Canal Marina near Park Farm

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

- E1 Completion of Mill Road Industrial Estate
- E2 Burghmuir Business Park
- E3 Business Centre at or near The Cross

- E4 Home/Business Accommodation

HOUSING

- H1 Social-Rented and 'Affordable' Housing
- H2 New Council Housing – Mill Road
- H3 New Council Housing – Additional 100 houses
- H4 Private Housing – Boghall East
- H5 Private Housing – Stockbridge North
- H6 Private Housing – Westerlea, Friarsbrae
- H7 Mixed Housing – Clarendon to Edinburgh Road
- H8 Mixed Housing – Wilcoxholm Farm
- H9 Private Housing – Sawmill Site, Falkirk Road
- H10 Private Housing - Whisky Bond Site, Edinburgh Road
- H11 Quality and Design of New Housing Developments

TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY

- T1 Traffic Management to 'Reclaim' the High Street
- T2A Four-way motorway interchange at Burghmuir
- T2B High Street Relief Road
- T3 Roundabouts on Blackness Road at eastern end of Springfield Road and at the Kingsfield Road junction
- T4 Eastern Local Distributor Road
- T5 Relief of Traffic over Canal Bridge at Manse Road
- T6 Decker Car Park at Regent Centre
- T7 Commuter Car Park at Edinburgh Road
- T8 Tourist Car Parking at Blackness Road
- T9 Improvements to Access to the Railway Station and to Rail Services
- T10 Improvements to Bus Services
- T11 Parking for Tourist Buses
- T12 Formation of Cycle Network

- T13 Provision of Cycle Route/Footpath Link between Union Canal Towpath and Maidlands
- T14 Upgrading of Sellars Road and Formation of Pedestrian/Cycle Link north-east of Sainsbury's Store
- T15 Cycle/Footpath Links to Livingston and Bathgate via Beebraigs Country Park
- T16 Modal Share/Active Travel Policy for New Housing Areas
- T17 Cycle and Pedestrian Links across 'Green Wedge' at Clarendon

RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

- S1 Investigation of Successful Retail Business Initiatives Elsewhere
- S2 Redevelopment of Guyancourt Vennel
- S3 Establishment of Arts Retail Quarter
- S4 Neighbourhood Shops within New Housing Areas

COMMUNITY, SPORTS, EDUCATION & HEALTH FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE

- R1 Provision of Community Rooms
- R2 Linlithgow Partnership Centre
- R3 Redevelopment of site of Victoria Hall to form a Community Theatre/Cinema
- R4 Formation of Clarendon Public Park with Woodland Planting and Community Orchards
- R5 New/Upgraded Playing Fields, Community Facilities and Additional Parking, Kettilstoun
- R6 Establishment of Permanent Youth Centre
- ED1 New Primary School at Edinburgh Road
- HE1 Creation of Integrated Health Centre

11. Implementation

As a first step, it is essential that this document, *Linlithgow – A Plan for the Future*, is not seen as a document restricted to ‘planning’; for, as the title indicates, the document is about the holistic future of the town. The document has to be seen as a purposeful document and the major contributor to the West Lothian Local Development Plan as it applies to Linlithgow; it therefore must be accepted as such by the West Lothian planning authority.

But the document needs to be accepted by West Lothian Council as a corporate body, and by other relevant public agencies; it therefore needs to be presented to and underwritten by the West Lothian Community Planning Partnership. As a minimum, new planning applications affecting the town will need to be carefully scrutinised by the planning and service departments of West Lothian Council to ensure they are consistent with the recommendations of *Linlithgow – A Plan for the Future*.

However, we believe we need to go further than await piecemeal planning applications from property developers; rather we consider that the way forward is by setting up a development consortium or development trust (existing or newly constituted) to oversee and manage the implementation of the *Plan for the Future*.

If the way forward is through a development consortium then a binding legal agreement between West Lothian Council and the development consortium of the housing and commercial developers involved should be signed, under Section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. The agreement would set out the construction of the public works, and of the housing developments that would pay for them. The development consortium would be expected to adhere to performance or contract completion bonds. Unless already in public ownership, the development consortium would be required to buy the necessary land to carry out the

public works, and West Lothian Council would be expected to apply its best endeavours to assist acquisition through the use of agency compulsory purchase powers.

If the way forward is through a development trust then the trust would acquire and take ownership and resultant control of the development land. This approach would be in line with the Community Empowerment Act recently passed by the Scottish Parliament and the opportunities afforded by that legislation should be thoroughly investigated.

At the outset, the overall development package would have to be the subject of a detailed development brief/masterplan - the Council and/or Development Trust would be expected to involve and consult the citizens of Linlithgow on its contents in accordance with current best practice.

It would be essential that a dedicated Steering Group be established to oversee the planning and implementation of this *Linlithgow - Plan for the Future*.

- If led by West Lothian Council, it would be attended by the three local councillors (as appropriate to avoid conflicts of interest in relation to decision-making on planning applications), relevant Council officials, representatives of the development consortium and any development trust, Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council, Linlithgow Civic Trust, representatives of West Lothian Community Planning Partnership, and any individuals able or willing to contribute positively to the project.
- If community led, a similar approach could be taken. Day-to-day co-ordination and enforcement would be the responsibility of an officer reporting to the Steering Group, and employed for this purpose by either the Council, the development consortium or the suggested development trust.