



**Site reference – E-BB2 – Inchmuir Road, Bathgate**  
**Representation to Proposed West Lothian Local Development Plan – November 2015**

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This is an **objection** to the Proposed Plan.

We are proposing the addition of the site at Inchmuir Road to become part of the allocated residential development sites and therefore object to **Policy HOU1 and Appendix 2** in so much that the site at Inchmuir Road should be included as;

- ***Land at Inchmuir Road - capacity to deliver up to 70 homes within the plan period***

**In making this representation we are keen to highlight where development at Inchmuir Road would accord with other policies within the Proposed Plan;**

**HOU1** – change the Inchmuir Road site (E-BB2) and add it to Appendix 2 as an effective housing site. We have concerns over the over-reliance on a concentration of sites at Wester Inch, Whitburn Road and Standhill Farm.

This area of Bathgate is accounting for over 700 new homes within the plan period concentrating development activity in a localised geographic area, risking the development of a series of large similar looking neighbourhoods dominated by standard product.

Given this concentration of development, it is unlikely that the necessary number of new homes can be delivered during the plan period. The developers will respond to market demand and it is impossible that the requisite number of homes could be sold in a ‘single’ location over the defined plan period.

It would be more effective and credible for West Lothian Council to allocate additional sites in a variety of locations that would enable Bathgate to provide a genuine choice of locations, house types and different tenures options. Inchmuir Road would help achieve this mix.

Inchmuir Road would reflect the ongoing development on the opposite side of the A7066 (H-BA-2 – Meikle Lane) and offer new homes at a highly accessible location, situated adjacent to (and benefitting from the amenities of) The Cairn Hotel. The site has been allocated as an employment site for many years yet little interest has been shown in its development for the permitted uses.

**EMP1** – in seeking to change the preferred use of this site to residential, proposals must confirm with the criteria set out in Policy EMP1;

- *The allocation of the Inchmuir site will have no detrimental impact on the overall (or local) supply of employment land;*
- *The site has never been developed despite previous employment use allocations – there is no demand to develop the site for business/employment use;*
- *Residential use would be compatible with the neighbouring hotel use. To the west, sufficient existing landscaping/tree belt would be supplemented to ensure no detrimental impact on the residential use or neighbouring employment uses;*



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- *The loss of this site would not fragment a larger area of employment land;*
- *There would be no unacceptable traffic/transportation impacts; and*
- *The proposals would complement the neighbouring Cairn Hotel whilst providing affordable, attractive homes at an accessible location close to local amenities and employment.*

**HOU2** – as per the criteria set out in PAN2/2010, the site is effective.

**HOU3** – the site could be developed in accordance with the criteria laid out in HOU3, further emphasising the sites' credibility as an appropriate housing site within the settlement boundary.

**HOU5** - the landowner is happy to comply with West Lothian Council policies with regards to the provision of an appropriate level of affordable housing.

**Site Characteristics**

E-BB-2 covers approximately 6 acres and is located adjacent to the Cairn Hotel and the A7066 though accessed off Inchmuir Road. It is a generally flat, roughly rectangular and overgrown site that although allocated for business and employment uses for many years but has never been developed.

Immediately to the west is Genius Gluten Free, a light industrial use. There is a mature and substantial tree belt separating the two sites providing clear separation and enabling an alternative use to be considered at E-BB2. On the opposite side of Inchmuir Road (to the south) is a complex of light industrial/business units owned and operated by West Lothian Council. These would not conflict with a well-designed and landscaped residential development.

**Effectiveness**

In assessing likely or allocated housing sites, it is important to understand the likelihood that they will be developed and the potential constraints that may exist that could delay the development of these sites. Paragraph 55 in PAN 2/2010 outlines a set of criteria to test the effectiveness of a potential housing site. We have tested the Inchmuir Road site against these criteria:

- **Ownership** – *the site is under single ownership and can be developed in the short term;*
- **Contamination** - *the site has never been developed – the site is not contaminated;*
- **physical characteristic** – *the site is a regular size and flat – there are no physical constraints to development;*
- **deficit funding** – *no deficit funding would be required to develop the site for residential use;*
- **marketability** – *the site is of an appropriate size to be attractive to a developer and/or housebuilder. Bathgate continues to be an attractive location. The neighbouring hotel with*



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*associated facilities is attractive to future residents and a compatible neighbouring use. Supplemented by existing landscape features and boundary treatment this is an attractive location to develop new homes;*

- **infrastructure** – *sufficient infrastructure exists and/or the landowner is happy to make appropriate contributions as necessary;*
- **land use** – *site E-BB-2 is currently allocated for employment uses. The site has never been developed, and no serious interest ever shown. It is adjacent to an existing and established hotel with existing treatments providing more than adequate screening to an adjacent employment use to the west. Light industrial/business uses to the south of the site would not conflict with a residential development.*

The deliverability of the site is considered to be a key advantage when compared to other housing allocations across West Lothian. The land is under the control of a willing landowner keen to help deliver the whole project. There are no obstacles to the delivery of development in the short term and the site could contribute to the initial 5-year land supply.



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*Residential Development Proposal - Indicative Layout.*

