



# West Lothian Council

## THE WEST LOTHIAN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP)

### CONSULTATION RESPONSE PORTAL

#### Have Your Say on the Proposed Plan

##### Introduction

West Lothian Council has published its Proposed Plan together with supporting documents including an Environmental Report (SEA), Habitats Regulation Appraisal, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessment. These can be viewed on the West Lothian Council website at [www.westlothian.gov.uk/proposedplan](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/proposedplan).

If you wish to make representations on the Proposed Plan or associated documents you are encouraged to use this online consultation portal. It's quick and easy and will help us to process representations more efficiently, reducing the overall cost and environmental impact of the exercise.

You do not need to complete this questionnaire in a single visit. Just simply put your Survey Reference Number (CODE) in the top right corner of the screen to allow you to continue with your submission at a later date.

If you need assistance with completing or submitting your representation online please call the Customer Service Centre (CSC) on 01506 280000. Please advise the Customer Service Centre that your enquiry relates specifically to the Local Development Plan and ask for it to be logged and directed to the Development Plan and Environment Team. Someone will contact you. Alternatively you can email us at [wlldp@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:wlldp@westlothian.gov.uk) We will endeavour to respond as quickly as possible but in any event within 3 working days of receiving your enquiry.

It is important that all representations are submitted no later than midnight on Sunday 22 November 2015. Representations received after that time will not be considered.

Your comments should be concise, having regard to paragraph 84 of Scottish Government Circular 6/2013: Development Planning which states that representations should be no more than 2,000 words plus any limited supporting productions.

##### Data Protection Statement

*Please be aware that when you make representations on the Proposed Plan through the consultation portal (and/or in a conventional written format) personal information provided as part of a representation cannot be treated as confidential. Representations require to be made available online and for public inspection at the council's office (this would include your name but would exclude any information which would be subject to the Data Protection Act 1998 i.e. signature, postal address, telephone number, email).*

*We are also required to pass these details to the Scottish Government's Directorate of Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA). This is because they may at a later date wish to invite you to an Examination in Public of the Proposed Plan to discuss your representation.*

*Before using the consultation portal you should also note that any information posted may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. West Lothian Council will not be liable for any loss or damage arising from or in connection with the disclosure of any information including the disclosure of user generated content.*

## 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

### Your Details

Please indicate in what capacity you are making this submission: \*

Please note that this is a mandatory field

- as an individual (and representing your own views)
- as a representative of a private or commercial organisation (and representing the views of that organisation)
- as a representative of a public organisation (and representing the views of that organisation)
- as an agent (and making comments on behalf of other individuals that you represent or third parties)
- other

Please complete the following contact information: \*

Please note that this is a mandatory field

Title

First Name

Surname

Email Address

Telephone

Postal Address

Organization Name

Client's Name

Is this the first time you have made a written representation on the Proposed Plan? \*

Please note that this is a mandatory field

- yes
- no

If you have previously submitted a site to be considered for development when the Council was initially seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI), or commented on the Local Development Plan at the Main Issues Report (MIR) stage, or made a previous submission to the Proposed Plan please provide the reference given to you at that time if known.

EOI & MIR reference number can be found on any email or written communication we may have previously sent you

Enter EOI (Expression of Interest) reference here

Enter MIRQ (Main Issues Report) reference here

Please enter your survey reference number in the text box below. \*

Survey Reference Number (CODE) can be found in the top right corner of this screen  
 Survey Reference Number (CODE) will allow you to save your responses and return to finish the survey later

Please keep a note of your Survey Reference Number (CODE) for future reference

Please note that this is a mandatory field

## 2. FOREWORD (page 4)

This introduction by the Leader of the Council establishes the role of the LDP and how it will help deliver the council's core objectives.

Do you wish to make a comment?

- yes
- no

Please use the text box below for comments.

Your comments should be concise and limited to no more than 2,000 words. You should fully explain the issues you wish to be considered when the Proposed Plan is presented to Scottish Ministers for Examination. Please indicate whether you are seeking a change to the Proposed Plan (i.e. your representation is an objection) or if your representation supports the Proposed Plan as written.

## 3. BACKGROUND (page 6, paragraphs 1.1-1.5)

Provides a brief historical context to the economic development of West Lothian which helps explain how settlements established and have developed.

Do you wish to make a comment?

- yes
- no

Please use the text box below for comments.

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#### 4. CONTEXT (page 7, paragraphs 2.1-2.2)

Provides wider context for the LDP in geographic terms and explains how the LDP fits with the Strategic Development Plan (SDP1).

Do you wish to make a comment?

- yes
- no

Please use the text box below for comments.

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#### 5. ROLE AND PURPOSE OF PLAN (page 7, paragraphs 3.1-3.5)

Establishes the role and purpose of the LDP in terms of its being a material consideration in the determination of any planning applications for development in West Lothian and, when adopted by the Council, will replace the West Lothian Local Plan. It also sets out what documents the plan must comply with i.e. the Planning Act (Scotland) 2006 and what documents will accompany the plan i.e. the Action Programme etc.

Do you wish to make a comment?

- yes
- no

Please use the text box below for comments.

Your comments should be concise and limited to no more than 2,000 words. You should fully explain the issues you wish to be considered when the Proposed Plan is presented to Scottish Ministers for Examination. Please indicate whether you are seeking a change to the Proposed Plan (i.e. your representation is an objection) or if your representation supports the Proposed Plan as written.

#### 6. VISION STATEMENT AND AIMS (page 8, paragraphs 4.1-4.3)

Establishes the vision for the LDP in terms of outcomes desired over the plan period and identifies the key aims of the plan by individual subject areas i.e. Economic Development & Growth, Community Regeneration, Sustainable Housing Locations, Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery, Town Centres and Retailing, the Natural and Historic Environment, Climate Change and Renewable Energy and Waste and Minerals.

Do you wish to make a comment?

- yes
- no

If you wish to make comments please begin by selecting the relevant sub-section(s) of Vision Statement and Aims from the list below.

- Economic Development and Growth (page 8)
- Community Regeneration (page 8)
- Sustainable Housing Locations (page 9)
- Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery (page 9)
- Town Centres and Retailing (page 9)
- The Natural and Historic Environment (page 9)
- Climate Change and Renewable Energy (page 9)
- Waste and Minerals (page 9)

Please use the text box below for comments.

Your comments should be concise and limited to no more than 2,000 words. You should fully explain the issues you wish to be considered when the Proposed Plan is presented to Scottish Ministers for Examination. Please indicate whether you are seeking a change to the Proposed Plan (i.e. your representation is an objection) or if your representation supports the Proposed Plan as written.

Community  
Regeneration  
(page 8)

Market evidence demonstrates that the need for employment land of this type and stock within Livingston and West Lothian is now much reduced, and unlikely to pick up in the new LDP's life. A recent report prepared by Ryden states that; "Areas such as Fife, West Lothian, Falkirk and Grangemouth have experienced a reduction in enquiries from this normally active (industrial) business sector." (Appendix 3) However demand for housing in West Lothian of the right type and scale remains strong given the area's prime location with good strong transport connections to Edinburgh, Glasgow and other key employment areas within West Lothian along the M8 corridor. As such, we strongly believe that the site should be retained as a housing allocation in the forthcoming Local Development Plan, providing an ideal location for a deliverable housing development of 50 - 60 units.

Sustainable  
Housing  
Locations (page  
9)

Measuring a total area of 2.7 acres (1.1 ha), the site is relatively small in comparison with other large housing sites allocated and preferred in the emerging LDP Proposed Plan. It would be expected that the site could accommodate between 50-60 residential units.  
This small number

## 7. THE SPATIAL STRATEGY (INCLUDING POLICY FRAMEWORK) (page 10, paragraphs 5.1-5.10)

In the context of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP), the LDP identifies West Lothian as being one of thirteen Strategic Development Areas where development will be focused in sustainable locations where infrastructure is either available or can be provided and in locations where there are no environmental constraints.

Do you wish to make a comment?

- yes  
 no

If you wish to make comments please begin by selecting the relevant sub-section(s) of the Spatial Strategy from the list below.







- Economic Development and Growth (page 12, paragraphs 5.11-5.22 )
- Flexibility within traditional industrial estates (page 14, paragraphs 5.24-5.25)
- Enterprise Areas (page 17, paragraphs 5.24-5.25)
- Local business opportunities, small business start-ups and working from home (page 17, paragraph 5.26)
- Tourism (page 17, paragraphs 5.27-5.28)
- Promoting community regeneration (page 19, paragraphs 5.29-5.35)
- Housing land requirements for the LDP (page 20, paragraphs 5.36-5.49)
- Effective Housing Land and Generous Supply (page 23, paragraphs 5.50-5.53)
- New Housing Sites and Design (page 24, paragraphs 5.4-5.56)
- Strategic Allocations (including previously identified Core Development Area Allocations) (page 25, paragraphs 5.57-5.61)
- Whitburn/Charette (page 26, paragraph 5.62)
- Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge (page 26-27)
- Deans South, Livingston; Area for Comprehensive Re-development (page 27, paragraph 5.68)
- Affordable Housing (page 27, paragraphs 5.69-5.74)
- Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People (page 29, paragraph 5.75)
- Residential Care and Supported Accommodation (page 29, paragraphs 5.76-5.77)
- Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery (page 30, paragraphs 5.78-5.84)
- Providing for Community Needs (page 32, paragraphs 5.85-5.88)
- Education (page 32, paragraphs 5.89-5.92)
- Healthcare Provision (page 33, paragraphs 5.93-5.96)
- Sports Facilities (page 33, paragraphs 5.97-5.101)
- Green Infrastructure and Green Networks (page 34, paragraphs 5.102-5.105)
- Water and Drainage (page 34, paragraphs 5.106-5.107)
- Travel in and around West Lothian (page 34, paragraphs 5.108-5.112)
- Roads (page 35, paragraph 5.113)
- A71 Corridor (page 35, paragraphs 5.114-5.115)
- A801 Corridor (page 35, paragraphs 5.116-5.117)
- A89/A8 (page 35, paragraphs 5.118-5.126)
- Rail (page 37, paragraphs 5.127-5.130)
- Walking and Cycling (page 37, paragraphs 5.131-5.132)
- Town Centres and Retailing (page 39, paragraphs 5.133-5.138)
- Landscape Character and Local Landscape Designations (page 41, paragraphs 5.139-5.143)
- Countryside Belts (page 42, paragraph 5.144)
- Development in the Countryside (page 42, paragraphs 5.145-5.147)
- Lowland Crofting (page 44, paragraphs 5.148-5.152)
- Green Networks, Local Biodiversity Sites and Geodiversity Sites (page 45, paragraphs 5.153-5.155)
- Forestry (page 46, paragraphs 5.156-5.163)
- Union Canal (p.49 paragraphs 5.164-5.165)
- Pentland Hills Regional Park (page 49, paragraphs 5.164-5.165)
- Country Parks (page 50, paragraph 5.169)
- Allotments/Community Growing (page 51, paragraphs 5.170-5.171)
- Temporary/Advance Greening (page 51, paragraphs 5.172-5.174)
- Biodiversity (page 52, paragraphs 5.175-5.180)
- Geodiversity (page 53, paragraph 5.181)
- West Lothian Open Space Strategy (page 53, paragraphs 5.182-5.184)
- Historic and Cultural Environment (page 54, paragraphs 5.185-5.187)
- Conservation Areas (page 55, paragraphs 5.185-5.188)



- Former Bangour Village Hospital, Dechmont (page 56, paragraph 5.189)
- Conservation Area at Abercorn/Hopetoun Estate (page 56, paragraph 5.190)
- Other Areas of Built Heritage and Townscape Value (page 57, paragraphs 5.191-5.199)
- Listed Buildings (page 58, paragraphs 5.185-5.187)
- Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes (page 59, paragraphs 5.200-5.201)
- Historic Battlefields (page 60, paragraph 5.202)
- Archaeology (page 60, paragraph 5.203)
- Scheduled Monuments (page 60, paragraphs 5.204-5.206)
- Public Art (page 61, paragraphs 5.207-5.208)
- Climate Change Measures (page 62, paragraphs 5.209-5.214)
- Low Carbon Development and Renewable Energy (page 63, paragraphs 5.215-5.221)
- Wind Farms and Wind Turbines (page 65, paragraphs 5.222-5.225)
- Energy and Heat Networks (page 66, paragraphs 5.226-5.229)
- Off-gas Grid Areas and Renewable Heat Requirement for New-build Housing (page 67, paragraphs 5.230-5.232)
- The Water Environment and Flood Risk Management (page 67, paragraphs 5.233-5.239)
- Air Quality and Noise (page 70, paragraphs 5.240-5.242)
- Edinburgh Airport (page 71, paragraph 5.243)
- Noise (page 71, paragraph 5.244)
- Contaminated Land (page 71, paragraphs 5.245-5.246)
- Vacant and Derelict Land (page 72, paragraphs 5.249-5.250)
- Minerals and Waste (page 73, paragraphs 5.251-5.256)
- Site Restoration (page 75, paragraphs 5.257-5.238)
- Unconventional Gas Extraction including Hydraulic Fracking (page 75, paragraph 5.259)
- Waste (page 76, paragraph 5.260)

Please use the text box below for your comments.

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Promoting community regeneration (page 19, paragraphs 5.29-5.35)

Market evidence demonstrates that the need for employment land of this type and stock within Livingston and West Lothian is now much reduced, and unlikely to pick up in the new LDP's life. A recent report prepared by Ryden states that: "Areas such as Fife, West Lothian, Falkirk and Grangemouth have experienced a reduction in enquiries from this normally active (industrial) business sector." (Appendix 3) However demand for housing in West Lothian of the right type and scale remains strong given the area's prime location with good strong transport connections to Edinburgh, Glasgow and other key employment areas within West Lothian along the M8 corridor. As such, we strongly believe that the site should be retained as a housing allocation in the forthcoming Local Development Plan, providing an ideal location for a deliverable housing development of 50 - 60 units.

Housing land requirements for the LDP (page 20, paragraphs 5.36-5.49)

The Strategic Development Plan (SESPlan) Policy 5 - Housing, identifies that for the period from 2009 up to 2024, there is a requirement for sufficient housing land to be allocated so as to enable 107,545 houses to be built across the SESplan area, including on land which is currently committed for housing development. 22,300 of this required is required to be delivered within West Lothian. It was the intention of West Lothian Council to deliver this requirement, through a number of Core Development Areas (CDA's) which would provide large scale housing delivery along with associated infrastructure and services. However, given the financial crash, these growth areas were not as successful as hoped and did not deliver the housing figures as expected given the large scale of the developments. Small sites such as the Fleming House property can therefore provide a certain, short term boost to the housing land requirement with little large scale investment in infrastructure needed for other CDA locations. The West Lothian Housing Land Audit (2014) identifies a total supply of 22,315 houses may be delivered across West Lothian between 2014 and 2019. This figure matches the SESplan requirement but it only offers a snap shot of the projected supply in any given year and therefore cannot be the single only source of projecting future housing land performance. Despite the total supply, around 7,953 of these sites are identified as constrained. With many of these likely to be slow or unlikely to be delivered for a number of reasons; the council should seek to find alternative sites to replace and enhance the supply. The redevelopment of Fleming House for a residential led mix of uses would provide certainty to the landowner as SPP emphasises the role of Development Plans (para 120) is to provide certainty. This approach would help Bizspace Limited to formally market the site with a clear disposal strategy and enable genuinely interested commercial development companies to deliver housing in future.

Effective Housing Land and Generous Supply (page 23, paragraphs 5.50-5.53)

PAH 2/2010 identifies the criteria for effective housing supply. We have used the criteria to assess the effectiveness of the site, i.e. that it can be delivered. Guidelines state that it must be demonstrated that within the five-year period beyond the date of the audit the site can be developed for housing (i.e. residential units can be completed and available for occupation), and will be free of constraints. A mixed use, residential led development at Fleming House would provide a sustainable and deliverable source of housing which is in high demand for this region. In keeping with the surroundings, development in this area would benefit from existing services and infrastructure and could be delivered without compromising the amenity of surrounding land uses.

New Housing Sites and Design (page 24, paragraphs 5.4-5.56)

A mixed use, residential led development at Fleming House would provide a sustainable and deliverable source of housing which is in high demand for this region. In keeping with the surroundings, development in this area would benefit from existing services and infrastructure and could be delivered without compromising the amenity of surrounding land uses.

## 8. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL BY SETTLEMENT (page 79)

Provides details of development proposals which are supported by the LDP in each town and village across West Lothian and assigns each one a unique reference for ease of identification.

Do you wish to make a comment?

- yes  
 no

If you wish to make comments please begin by selecting the relevant Settlement(s) from the list below.

- Addiewell & Loganlea (page 79)  
 Armadale (page 80)  
 Bathgate (page 81)  
 Blackburn (page 82)  
 Blackridge (page 83)  
 Breich (page 83)  
 Bridgehouse & Bridgecastle (page 83)  
 Bridgend (page 83)  
 Broxburn (page 84)  
 Burnside (page 84)  
 Dechmont & Bangour (page 85)  
 East Calder (page 85)  
 East Whitburn (page 86)  
 Ecclesmachan (page 86)  
 Fauldhouse (page 86)  
 Greenrigg (page 86)  
 Kirknewton (page 87)  
 Landward area (page 87)  
 Linlithgow & Linlithgow Bridge (page 89)  
 Livingston (page 90)  
 Longridge (page 93)  
 Mid Calder (page 93)  
 Newton and Woodend (page 93)  
 Philpstoun/East & West Philpstoun/Old Philpstoun (page 93)  
 Polbeth (page 93)  
 Pumpherston (page 93)  
 Seafield (page 93)  
 Stoneyburn/Bents (page 94)  
 Threemiletown (page 94)  
 Torphichen (page 94)  
 Uphall (page 94)  
 Uphall Station (page 94)  
 West Calder & Harburn (page 95)  
 Westfield (page 95)  
 Whitburn (page 96)  
 Wilkieston (page 97)  
 Winchburgh (page 97)

Please enter site reference(s)/proposals reference (as appropriate) and location/site address below.

[Site Reference/ Location / Site Address can be found in the relevant Settlement Statement](#)

Livingston (page 90)	site reference	location/ site address
	No allocation but within the Employment Boundary Area	Fleming House, Fleming Road, Kirkton Campus, Livingston

Please use the text box below for comments.

Your comments should be concise and limited to no more than 2,000 words. You should fully explain the issues you wish to be considered when the Proposed Plan is presented to Scottish Ministers for Examination. Please indicate whether you are seeking a change to the Proposed Plan (i.e. your representation is an objection) or if your representation supports the Proposed Plan as written.

Livingston (page 90)	Comment
	Located within an employment boundary area within the proposed plan, however evidence suggests that there is an over supply of business/employment land and therefore we seek to have the use class of the site relaxed

### 9. APPENDICES (page 99)

A number of appendices are included at the end of the LDP which provides additional detail on specific elements of the Proposed Plan.

Do you wish to make a comment?

- yes
- no

If you wish to make comments please begin by selecting the relevant Appendix(es) of the Proposed Plan from the list below.

- Appendix 1 - Employment Land Allocations (page 99)
- Appendix 2 - Schedule of Housing Sites / Site Delivery Requirements (page 119)
- Appendix 3 - Schedule of Land Ownership (page 259)
- Appendix 4 - LDP Supplementary Guidance (SG) and Planning Guidance (PG) (page 265)
- Appendix 5 - List of Policies (page 273)
- Appendix 6 - List of Proposals (page 275)

Please use the text box below for your comments.

Your comments should be concise and limited to no more than 2,000 words. You should fully explain the issues you wish to be considered when the Proposed Plan is presented to Scottish Ministers for Examination. Please indicate whether you are seeking a change to the Proposed Plan (i.e. your representation is an objection) or if your representation supports the Proposed Plan as written.

Appendix 1 - Employment Land Allocations (page 99)	The site is located within the Kirkton Campus Employment Area Boundary, however it is not specifically allocated as an employment site within the campus itself. Kirkton Campus provides business accommodation for primarily Class 4, 5, and 6 uses. The Employment land Allocation provided in Appendix One of the Proposed Plan (see Appendix 4) suggests that due to the decline in demand for the properties on site, there is a need to diversify the acceptable use classes as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997; from the familiar Class 4,5,6 (business, general industry, storage and distribution) to include Class 2 - Financial/Professional Services or other uses not in a class of their own e.g. sui generis. As such, it is evident that there is now a surplus of Employment land available within Livingston and West Lothian. A review of the property's planning history shows that planning permission was granted in 2013 for the change of use of 3 units within Fleming House to change from office space to Fitness Centre - reference 0809/FUL/12 (see Appendix 5). This strengthens our evidence that a need for serviced office accommodation of this form and scale within West Lothian is no longer high in demand should other compatible uses be proposed where there is a market interest. With the building now ageing and with more superior and better located premises available elsewhere within West Lothian the landlord cannot justify rental values to compete with these other locations. The quality of location, building and purpose is a definitive factor and as such any risks to losing further occupiers may lead to a downward decline of the property itself. This is not a desirable position to reach. Bizspace Limited is therefore looking for support and future certainty from the Local Plan process to help stem this effect. With Livingston and the wider West Lothian area seeing a decline in the demand for office accommodation of this scale, the evidence suggests that alternative uses are being considered by the council to prevent an increase in vacant properties. As such, it is believed that this site provides an excellent opportunity for quick and effective housing development which would contribute towards the strategic requirements whilst offering a wider flexible mix of business uses that are compatible and viable at this location.
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### 10. GLOSSARY (page 280)

An explanation of unfamiliar terms or expressions used in the LDP is provided to assist understanding of the document.

Do you wish to make a comment?

- yes
- no

Please use the text box below for comments.

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### 11. PROPOSALS MAPS

The LDP comprises a series of five maps which define settlement boundaries and illustrate land use zonings.

Do you wish to make a comment?

- yes
- no

If you wish to make comments please begin by selecting the relevant Proposals Maps from the list below.

- Proposals Map 1 - West Lothian
- Proposals Map 2 - Linlithgow & Broxburn Area
- Proposals Map 3 - Livingston Area
- Proposals Map 4 - Bathgate Area
- Proposals Map 5 - Villages

Please use the text box below for your comments.

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Proposals Map 3 - Livingston Area

### 12. ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS

Alongside the LDP is a suite of documents which are required by statute as part of the preparation and supporting evidence for the LDP.

Do you wish to make a comment?

- yes
- no

If you wish to make comments please begin by selecting the relevant Accompanying Documents from the list below.

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report.
- Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EQHRIA).
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).
- Habitats Regulations Appraisal.
- Transport Appraisal (TA).
- Action Programme.

Please use the text box below for your comments.

Your comments should be concise and limited to no more than 2,000 words. You should fully explain the issues you wish to be considered when the Proposed Plan is presented to Scottish Ministers for Examination. Please indicate whether you are seeking a change to the Proposed Plan (i.e. your representation is an objection) or if your representation supports the Proposed Plan as written.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report.

Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EQHRIA).

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

Habitats Regulations Appraisal.

Transport Appraisal (TA).

Action Programme.

### 13. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Do you wish to submit any additional comments on the LDP?

- yes
- no

**Please use the text box below for your additional comments on the LDP.**

Your comments should be concise and limited to no more than 2,000 words. You should fully explain the issues you wish to be considered when the Proposed Plan is presented to Scottish Ministers for Examination. Please indicate whether you are seeking a change to the Proposed Plan (i.e. your representation is an objection) or if your representation supports the Proposed Plan as written.

Located on Simpson Parkway, the site is located towards the western edge of Livingston, within Kirkton Campus, an existing established industrial/business park (Appendix 1). Fleming House is a two storey business/industrial unit, offering 1,477 m<sup>2</sup> business space, with units ranging from 167 sq ft to 4,195 sq ft (15 sq m to 389 sq m). It offers flexible managed workspace for companies looking for office or workshop premises. Under agreement, company's can rent space for a short duration of a few months or alternatively opt for a longer term arrangement on space for lease. These options provide extremely adaptable solutions to suit companies specific business needs when looking for commercial space for rent in Livingston. However, the market has been in significant decline for this type and format of business space at this location. Currently there is only a 67% occupancy and market interest has been extremely challenging despite refurbishment of the premises, landlord incentives and other innovative marketing techniques to attract further occupiers.

The current Employment Area designation within the context of a challenging business space property market, as described above, does not offer the landowner certainty about future re-development prospects. Rapleys has undertaken "soft" marketing of the site to potential housebuilding interests to gauge market interest. Whilst there is interest, these companies are not willing to fully commit without the certainty of a Local Development Plan allocation despite the locational attraction, the availability of land, free from constraint and a willing landowner.

Fleming House is bounded by an area safeguarded for open space both to the east and the north of the site. The site is currently identified in the adopted West Lothian Local Plan 2009 (WLLP) as being situated within an Employment Land Area Boundary (Policies EM 5-6). These policies seek to protect the redevelopment or loss of employment land to other uses not supported by the policy unless as per Policy EM6 "there is a clear demonstration of the direct benefits to those working in that employment area and where:

- the retention of the site or premises for use classes 4, 5, and 6 had been explored without success;
- the use would not restrict the range of uses which can be carried out by businesses and industry on nearby sites; and
- the proposed use would cause no traffic, amenity or environmental problems."

Given the evidence of poor market interest for any business/industrial use at this location (see Appendix 2), the landowner wishes to persuade West Lothian Council to allocate the site for housing development given the current shortfall of suitable, deliverable housing sites with Livingston and West Lothian. It is believed that the site provides a ready made, effective opportunity for housing development.

Market evidence demonstrates that the need for employment land of this type and stock within Livingston and West Lothian is less and unlikely to pick up in the new LDP life. A recent report provided by Ryden states that; "Areas such as Fife, West Lothian, Falkirk and Grangemouth have experienced a reduction in enquiries from this normally active (industrial) business sector." (Appendix 3) However demand for housing West Lothian of the right type and scale remains strong given the areas prime location and connections to Edinburgh, Glasgow and other key employment areas within West Lothian along the M8 corridor. As such, we strongly believe that the site should be retained as a housing allocation in the forthcoming Local Development Plan, providing an ideal location for a deliverable housing development of 50-60 units.

This representation aims to demonstrate that there is an over supply of serviced employment space of this stock and that a future economic viable use is to re-develop the site for residential use. The residential use is effective because as a small scale site it can be delivered in a short period of time and can be readily integrated into the existing urban form.

#### Changed Ownership

Bizspace Limited recently acquired the Fleming House property from a portfolio belonging to Highcross Strategic Advisers Limited. The new owners have undertaken a strategic review of its portfolio of sites. Amongst a range of options following that review, Bizspace Limited wish to explore re-development options for the property given the weak market performance for serviced office accommodation. A range of uses, including retention of a reasonable level of business space, is proposed. The uses may include ancillary supporting services (such as childcare, self-storage/"pop up" storage) with residential use required to enable the development to occur. Re-definition of the proposed employment area boundary to accommodate the proposed uses would help Bizspace Limited plan with greater certainty in the short to medium term by securing planning permission for a mixed use residential led development.

#### Poor Market Interest for Business Space of this Type

Given the evidence of poor market interest for business/industrial use at this location (there are currently 12 vacant units within the business centre, totalling a combined floorspace of 670 sq m or only 67% occupancy rate) (see Appendix 2), the landowner is seeking West Lothian Council to relax the safeguarded uses for this site to expand the potential of the site for redevelopment within a mix of uses, including residential.

Market evidence demonstrates that the need for employment land of this type and stock within Livingston and West Lothian is now much reduced, and unlikely to pick up in the new LDP's life. A recent report prepared by Ryden states that; "Areas such as Fife, West Lothian, Falkirk and Grangemouth have experienced a reduction in enquiries from this normally active (industrial) business sector." (Appendix 3) However demand for housing in West Lothian of the right type and scale remains strong given the area's prime location with good strong transport connections to Edinburgh, Glasgow and other key employment areas within West Lothian along the M8 corridor. As such, we strongly believe that the site should be retained as a housing allocation in the forthcoming Local Development Plan, providing an ideal location for a deliverable housing development of 50 - 60 units.

#### Opportunity for Change of Use Compatible

The site is located in a predominantly business/industrial area set within mature parkland. However the vacancy rate for most units in the vicinity, coupled with the high number of undeveloped opportunity sites for employment uses, does not create the image of a busy commercial business area nor does it offer confidence that future investment will be forthcoming to meet the Council's requirements. The site is highly accessible, with frequent bus services running around the town providing connections to further beyond. The redevelopment of this site to a mix of ancillary uses, led by housing, would therefore not be out of keeping with the place setting, and can be readily adapted to accommodate the wider range of uses proposed. On the contrary to do nothing, continue to operate an underutilised out of date business centre would cause future detriment to the overall parkland amenity of the area through lack of occupation, further vacancy and potential degradation of the local environmental quality as a result.

This representation aims to demonstrate that there is an over-supply of serviced employment space of this type of stock and that a future economic viable use is to re-develop the site for a mix of supporting uses, led with residential. The residential use is effective because as a small scale site it can be delivered in a short period of time and can be readily integrated into the existing urban form.

#### Employment Land

The site is located within the Kirkton Campus Employment Area Boundary, however it is not specifically allocated as an employment site within the campus itself. Kirkton Campus provides business accommodation for primarily Class 4, 5, and 6 uses. The Employment land Allocation provided in Appendix One of the Proposed Plan (see Appendix 4) suggests that due to the decline in demand for the properties on site, there is a need to diversify the acceptable use classes as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997; from the familiar Class 4,5,6 (business, general industry, storage and distribution) to include Class 2 - Financial/Professional Services or other uses not in a class of their own e.g. sui generis. As such, it is evident that there is now a surplus of Employment land available within Livingston and West Lothian.

A review of the property's planning history shows that planning permission was granted in 2013 for the change of use of 3 units within Fleming House to change from office space to Fitness Centre - reference 0809/FUL/12 (see Appendix 5). This strengthens our evidence that a need for serviced office accommodation of this form and scale within West Lothian is no longer high in demand should other compatible uses be proposed where there is a market interest. With the building now ageing and with more superior and better located premises available elsewhere within West Lothian the landlord cannot justify rental values to compete with these other locations. The quality of location, building and purpose is a definitive factor and as such any risks to losing further occupiers may lead to a downward decline of the property itself. This is not a desirable position to reach. Bizspace Limited is therefore looking for support and future certainty from the Local Plan process to help stem this effect.

With Livingston and the wider West Lothian area seeing a decline in the demand for office accommodation of this scale, the evidence suggests that alternative uses are being considered by the council to prevent an increase in vacant properties. As such, it is believed that this site provides an excellent opportunity for quick and effective housing development which would contribute towards the strategic requirements whilst offering a wider flexible mix of business uses that are compatible and viable at this location.

#### Housing

Measuring a total area of 2.7 acres (1.1 ha), the site is relatively small in comparison with other large housing sites allocated and preferred in the emerging LDP Proposed Plan. It would be expected that the site could accommodate between 50-60 residential units. This small number would provide a deliverable source of housing for Livingston without the need to use greenfield land, or to extend the town into the urban edge.

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) para 40 requires spatial strategies within development plans to promote a sustainable approach to redevelopment. It requires spatial strategies within development plans to promote a sustainable pattern of development appropriate to the area. To do this, decisions should be guided by the following policy principles:

- optimising the use of existing resource capacities, particularly by co-ordinating housing and business development with infrastructure investment including transport, education facilities, water and drainage, energy, heat networks and digital infrastructure;
- using land within or adjacent to settlements for a mix of uses. This will also support the creation of more compact, higher density, accessible and more vibrant cores;

considering the re-use or re-development of brownfield land before new development takes place on greenfield sites;

considering whether the permanent, temporary or advanced greening of all or some of a site could make a valuable contribution to green and open space networks, particularly where it is unlikely to be developed for some time, or is unsuitable for development due to its location or viability issues; and

locating development where investment in growth or improvement would have most benefit for the amenity of local people and the vitality of the local economy.

The Strategic Development Plan (SESPlan) Policy 5 - Housing, identifies that for the period from 2009 up to 2024, there is a requirement for sufficient housing land to be allocated so as to enable 107,545 houses to be built across the SESplan area, including on land which is currently committed for housing development. 22,300 of this required is required to be delivered within West Lothian.

It was the intention of West Lothian Council to deliver this requirement, through a number of Core Development Areas (CDA's) which would provide large scale housing delivery along with associated infrastructure and services. However, given the financial crash, these growth areas were not as successful as hoped and did not deliver the housing figures as expected given the large scale of the developments. Small sites such as the Fleming House property can therefore provide a certain, short term boost to the housing land requirement with little large scale investment in infrastructure needed for other CDA locations.

The West Lothian Housing Land Audit (2014) identifies a total supply of 22,315 houses may be delivered across West Lothian between 2014 and 2019. This figure

matches the SESplan requirement but it only offers a snap shot of the projected supply in any given year and therefore cannot be the single only source of projecting future housing land performance. Despite the total supply, around 7,953 of these sites are identified as constrained. With many of these likely to be slow or unlikely to be delivered for a number of reasons; the council should seek to find alternative sites to replace and enhance the supply. The redevelopment of Fleming House for a residential led mix of uses would provide certainty to the landowner as SPP emphasises the role of Development Plans (para 120) is to provide certainty. This approach would help Bizspace Limited to formally market the site with a clear disposal strategy and enable genuinely interested commercial development companies to deliver housing in future.

PAN 2/2010 identifies the criteria for effective housing supply. We have used the criteria to assess the effectiveness of the site, i.e. that it can be delivered. Guidelines state that it must be demonstrated that within the five-year period beyond the date of the audit the site can be developed for housing (i.e. residential units can be completed and available for occupation), and will be free of constraints on the following basis:

- land ownership: the site is in single ownership has no issue releasing it for development.
- physical: the site is free from constraints related to slope, aspect, flood risk, ground stability and vehicular access
- contamination: previous use has not resulted in contamination of the site
- marketability: the site can be developed in the period under consideration, with several house builders already showing a keen interest;
- infrastructure: the site is well connected to the existing roads network, in an established urban area, with existing public transport connections
- land use: housing is the sole preferred use of the land in planning terms with marketability point to housing being a realistic option.

Para 58 of PAN 2/2010 advises that Local Authorities should "ensure that at all times sufficient effective land is available to meet the housing land requirement for at least the following 5 years."

A mixed use, residential led development at Fleming House would provide a sustainable and deliverable source of housing which is in high demand for this region. In keeping with the surroundings, development in this area would benefit from existing services and infrastructure and could be delivered without compromising the amenity of surrounding land uses.

Within a constant changing market, the projected figures generated in the HLA were compiled in 2012/13 when the market was less prosperous than at present. Given the recent improvements to the house market across West Lothian and the wider SESPlan area, it is important that a plentiful and effective allocation of sites is available for delivery.

#### Conclusion

Bizspace Limited objects to the designation of property at Fleming House within the existing Employment Area and seeks this definition to be relaxed to enable a wider range of commercial uses, to support a residential led scheme to be developed here.

A redefinition of the site within the emerging replacement LDP would provide certainty to the new owners and enable it to extend the "soft marketing" recently conducted with interested housebuilders to advance the redevelopment of the site.

We have demonstrated the business space itself is no longer attractive to the weak market for this type of office stock and there are better, higher quality locations and office facilities elsewhere within a reasonably over-supplied office stock in West Lothian. The loss of this use at this site is therefore acceptable given other, better opportunities elsewhere.

We have demonstrated the demand for smaller, quicker deliverable housing sites of the scale, position and type suited to this site is good, as the housebuilding sector recovers. This is evident across all sizes and products - more specifically mid market products, and for affordable needs would be best suited to this location. The land is available and can be delivered in the life of the new plan.

Before pressing the submit button please review your submission and make any changes. Once you have pressed SUBMIT you will be unable to go back to the survey.

Once we have received your submission we will send you a copy for your records. This could take up to 5 working days. If you do not receive a copy in that time please contact the Customer Service Centre.

## CONFIRMATION OF YOUR PARTICIPATION

We will send you an email notification as soon as your survey is submitted.

Please enter your email address below.