

**Design Statement  
&  
Indicative Site Layout**

**Main Street  
Dechmont  
West Lothian**

Prepared by  
**Clarendon Planning and Development Ltd**

On behalf of  
**John Macfarlane & Colin Macfarlane**

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## BACKGROUND

## SITE

Main Street  
Dechmont  
West Lothian

## PAN REFERENCE

0042/PAC/14

## INTRODUCTION

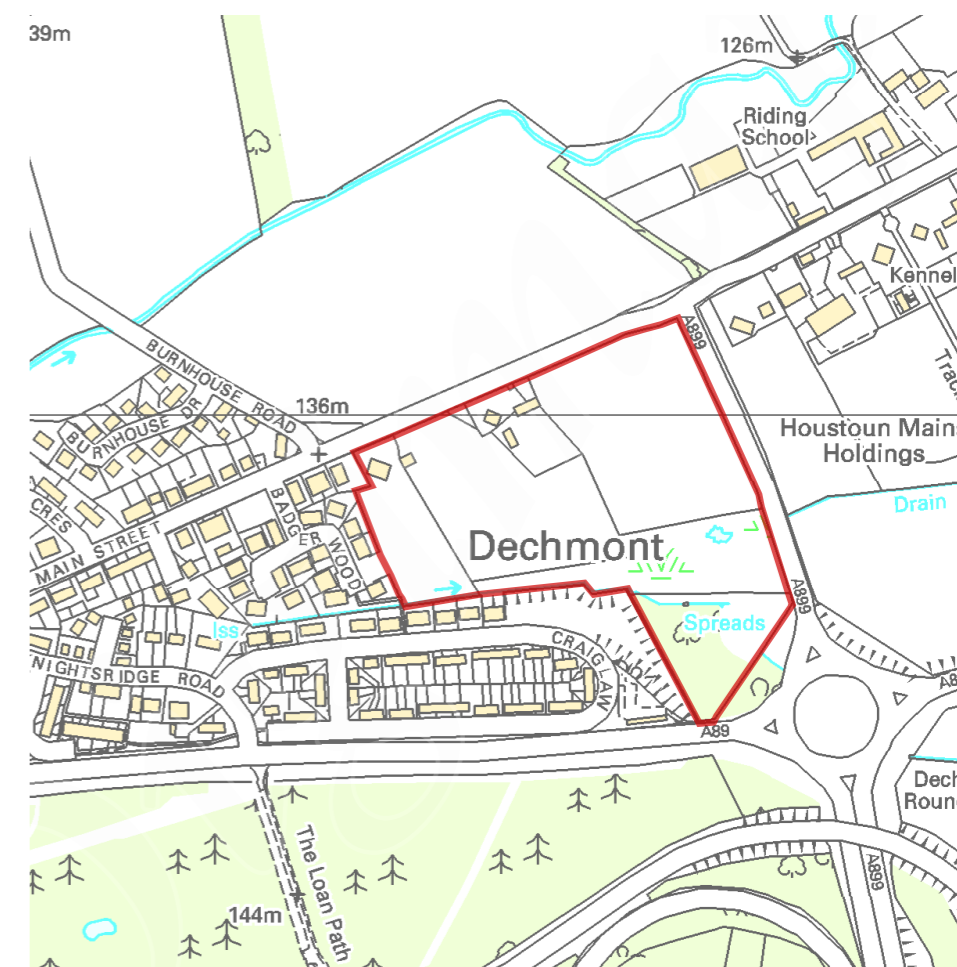
Clarendon Planning and Development act for the landowners - John Macfarlane and Colin Macfarlane - who seek to apply for Planning Permission in Principle for residential development on land south-east of Main Street, Dechmont, West Lothian.

This Design Statement supports the Application and is informed by and related to the Planning Statement, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and other supporting technical reports, with the intention of demonstrating the key design process stages including site and area analysis, concept plans and indicative design solution.

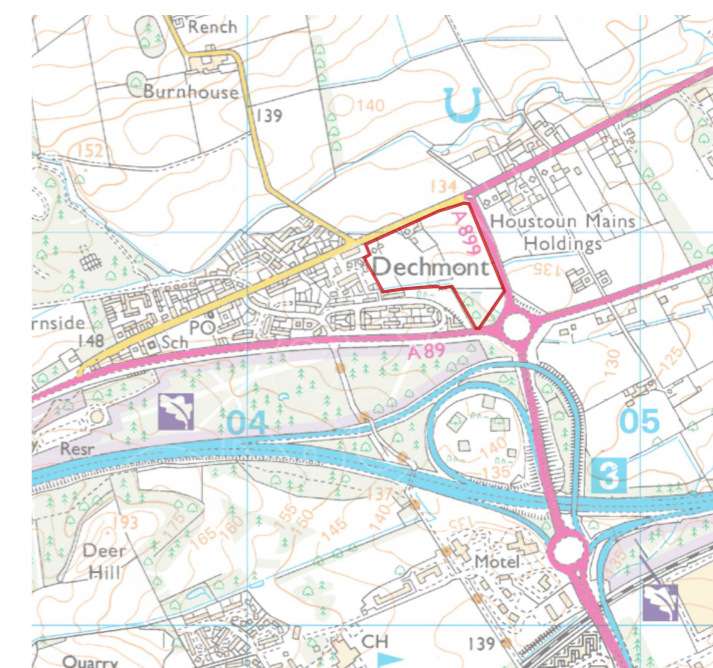
This design approach is in accordance with Government and best practice design policy and enables a flexible but clear Design Framework which can directly inform detailed design stages by setting the parameters and key criteria for successful place creation.

Design analysis of the site has also taken into account the adopted *West Lothian Local Plan* and the Council's *Supplementary Planning Guidance on Residential Design (2012)*.

Given the 'in principle' nature of the application, the intention is not to produce a fixed design but a design concept with an indicative site layout that can set the design parameters for detailed design considerations.



Location Plan



Site Context

## SITE & AREA OVERVIEW

## THE SITE

The site extends to approximately 15 acres and sits on the eastern edge of Dechmont, bound by Main Street to the north, the A899 to the east, the A89 / Dechmont Roundabout to the south-east and established housing to the west and south-west.

The site comprises rough grazing land and existing small-holding buildings with the south-east of the site characterised by more marshy land including woodland and vegetation.

Site boundaries are demarcated by mature hedgerow fronting Main Street to the north and hedgerow and mature trees along the eastern site edge. The woodland within the south-east of the site bounds the site from the road network beyond.

Access is currently via Main Street and the site is generally level with a slight slope towards the south/south-east.

Established housing includes bungalows and 2 storey modern detached dwellings to the west and ex-local authority 2 storey terraced housing to the south.



Aerial Photograph & Site Views



## SITE CONTEXT

Whilst Dechmont is a relatively small settlement, the urban area is located within an overall area of significant development and change. Its location on the northern fringe of Livingston, the largest town within West Lothian, and adjacent to the M8 motorway network, places it within an area of significant development pressure.

The image to the right highlights the proposed site in yellow within its landscape context. As can be seen, Dechmont is contained to the north-west, west and south-west by an Area of Great Landscape Value and Conservation Area associated with the Bangour Hospital site.

Dechmont is separated from the M8 and Livingston urban area by mature woodland, which creates a distinct gap between the settlements.

The site forms the last remaining 'contained' area adjacent to the settlement with the tree-lined A899 providing separation to the Houston Mains area of Uphall to the east.

To the south-east, the landscape is dominated by the motorway network with the Livingston urban area expanding including new commercial and industrial development.

Any expansion of Dechmont therefore has to address how to retain Dechmont's separate identity from the surrounding urbanised area.



Landscape and Urban Context



Looking west; M8, & woodland gap between Livingston & Dechmont



Bangour Hospital Conservation Area to north-west of Dechmont



M8 bridge / fly-over infrastructure south-east of Dechmont



Dobbies Garden Centre to south-east of Dechmont Roundabout

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES & GUIDANCE



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### National Level

In terms of placemaking, key design policy at national level is contained within *Creating Places* (Scottish Government, 2013) and *Designing Streets* (SG, 2010).

The proposal seeks to address the essential qualities which should be integral to new development, including:-

- creation of a settlement extension which has a distinctive identity and sense of welcome
- safe and attractive place to live with ease of movement between uses and adjoining areas
- utilising existing built and natural features
- in-built adaptability in terms of a flexible design

Consideration has also been given to on-going advice, research and best practice in analysing site context and developing a concept design. This includes reference to *PAN67 (Housing Quality)*, *PAN68 (Design Statements)*, *PAN83 (Masterplanning)*, *Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative examples*, *Polnoon masterplanning exemplar* and the Scottish Government's *Inspirational Designs exemplars*.

### West Lothian

The adherence of the proposal to relevant local planning policy, as set out within the *Adopted West Lothian Local Plan (2009)* is detailed within the supporting Planning Statement with particular regard to Policies HOU5 (open space), HOU6 (density), HOU7 (design and layout), HOU8 (access and parking), HOU9 (residential amenity) and HOU10 (affordable housing).

The concept design and indicative design solution contained herein elaborates upon how the key design policies have been addressed.

### Supplementary Guidance

West Lothian's *Supplementary Planning Guidance: Residential Development Guide*, gives clear guidance on achieving successful design and sets out the core urban design principles expected. The Guidance aims to create housing with a sense of place through good design and effective layouts and provides a useful 'pre-design' checklist of information requirements., addressed hereafter.

This Application is for Planning Permission in Principle thus definitive street design, landscape/open space design and building types and forms are the subject of the detailed design stage.

However, the SPG provides a basis for addressing key design considerations including context, character, identity, sense of place, movement, density, building type mix, scale, massing, plot coverage, street design, boundary treatment, green infrastructure, open space scale, amenity, landscaping, parking and cycle/pedestrian linkage.

The design proposal is based on analysis of the above and seeks to create a strong, coherent and contextual design for the expansion of Dechmont.



## SUPPORTING APPRAISALS

The emerging design is based on a number of supporting assessments and appraisals. In line with West Lothian's SPG, a summary of the main assessments is provided below as a 'pre-application' checklist.

### Planning Background

- Site is currently part designated Countryside under Adopted West Lothian Local Plan Policies ENV22-23 but is included as a preferred housing site within the West Lothian Local Development Plan Main Issues Report (committee approved for consultation June 2014)
- The western part of the site is within the designated Dechmont settlement boundary (Adopted Local Plan Policy HOU2)
- A national cycle route runs along the south of the site (along the A89), protected under Adopted Local Plan Policy TRAN9/10
- Further to the west, an Area of Great Landscape Value contains the north, west and south-west of the settlement, protected under Adopted Local Plan Policies ENV19-20
- To the west of the Dechmont, is the large allocated housing site at Bangour Hospital (Adopted Local Plan Proposal HBnI for 500 units including conversion of listed buildings), which is also a designated Conservation Area under Adopted Local Plan Policies HER17-20
- The proposed site has no planning application history but has been promoted via West Lothian's new Local Development Plan, pre-Main Issues Report Call for Sites in 2011 and as noted above is now included as a preferred site within the MIR stage of the new LDP

### Geology, Ground Conditions & Contaminated Land

- Stage 1 Desktop Study (included with application), appraised potential restrictions to site development in terms of ground stability (non-intrusive geotechnical appraisal), potential contamination sources, groundwater, and gas emissions, concluding that no major issues are identified, subject to the provision of standard Stage 2 intrusive investigations to confirm geotechnical design
- Coal Mining Risk Assessment (included with application), notes site is within a High Risk area but mitigation and further measures are recommended to allow for development

### Aviation & Pipeline Safeguarding

- Site is outwith Aviation Safeguarding Zone and hazardous installation consultation zones

### Risk Of Flooding / Site Drainage

- The Flood Risk Assessment and Outline Drainage Strategy (included with application), confirms that the site is not subject to fluvial flood risk and surface water flood risk can be managed on site with creation of SUDS wetland and flood storage area within the southern part of the site - the natural low-lying area on the eastern edge of the site has also been incorporated for this purpose

### Archaeology

- The Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (included with application) did not identify any remains or artefacts predating the post-medieval period but noted the presence of three banked field boundaries and potential remains of a 19th century farmstead on the eastern edge of the site which would require recording. No impact was identified upon Scheduled Monuments, Inventoried Parks and Gardens or Inventoried Battlefields whilst there is no intervisibility between the proposed development and Listed Buildings in the wider area

### Biodiversity

- Site not designated as Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protected Area (SPA). The Phase 1 Ecological Assessment notes that no areas of exceptional habitat are present on the site whilst recommendations are made for ensuring protected and other species are satisfactorily addressed

### Landscape

- The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment provides an analysis of key viewpoints and potential mitigation measures including boundary treatment which have been incorporated

### Transportation & Connectivity

- The Transport Assessment confirms the Council's preference for one vehicular access to the site, being off Main Street and confirms that proposed traffic flows can be accommodated within the existing road network. Linkage of new paths to existing routes is incorporated.

### Infrastructure - Utilities, Education

- Mains services are available whilst the Education Assessment addresses schooling needs.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The applicant undertook pre-application community consultation events in February and June 2014, as detailed within the supporting PAC report.

This provided a visual and text presentation of the planning and design context for the proposed development at Dechmont, including presentation of the what were considered to be the main design and landscape issues. The latter event also provided an indicative site layout.

The main concerns raised at the Public Consultation event focused on wider traffic impact, scale of housing, type of housing, open space and footpath links. These issues are addressed hereafter.

The event allowed for gaining of local knowledge of the site and locality and helped inform design proposals including the retention of the south-east area as natural habitat.



Pre Application Event



Pre Application Event