

Design Statement

**Murieston Road
Murieston
Livingston**

Prepared by
**Clarendon Planning and Development Ltd
& EMA Architects**

On behalf of
BDW Trading Ltd and H&J Russell

March 2015

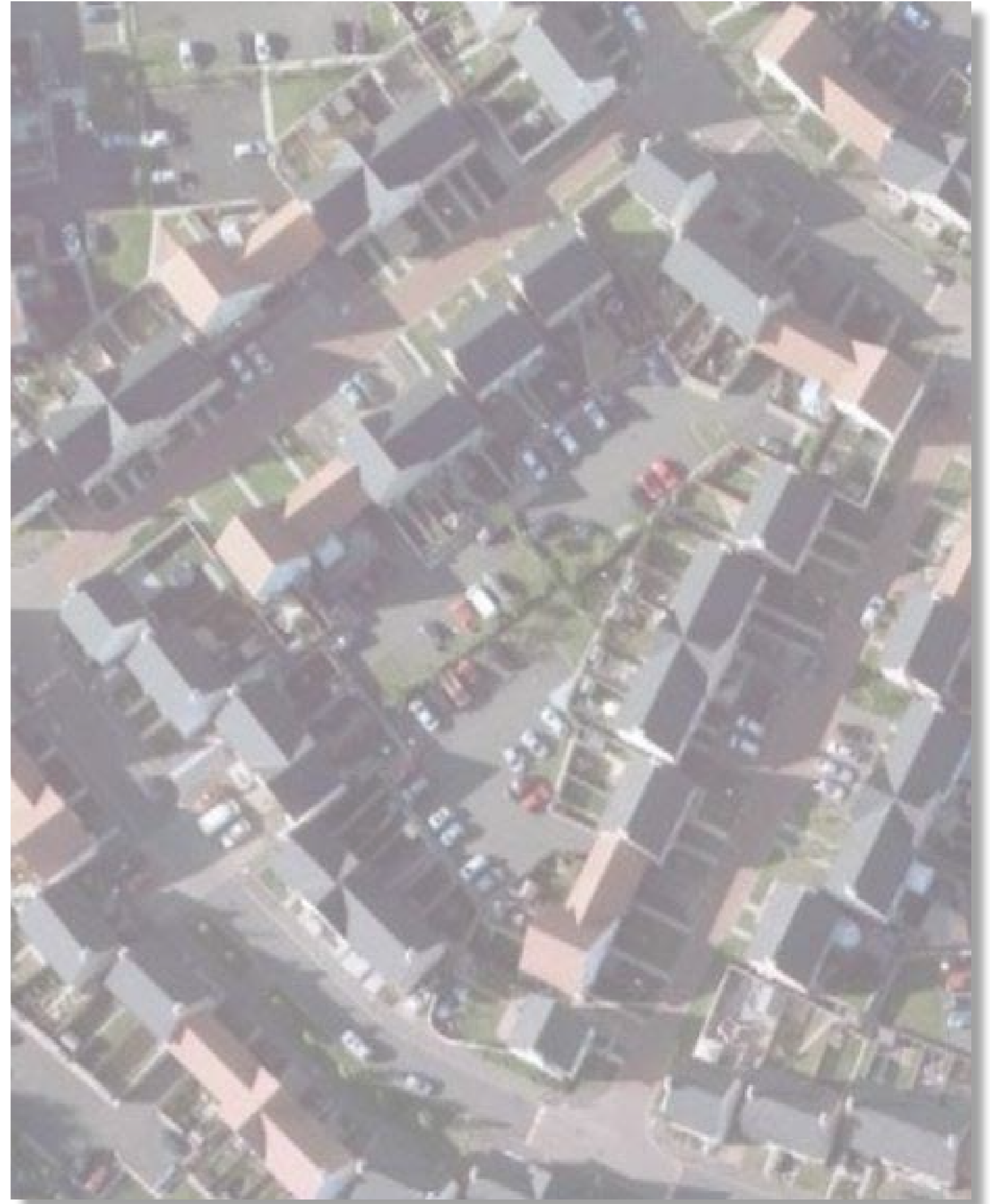


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SECTION I

BACKGROUND



SITE Murieston Road, Murieston, Livingston, West Lothian

PAN REFERENCE 0216/PAC/14

INTRODUCTION

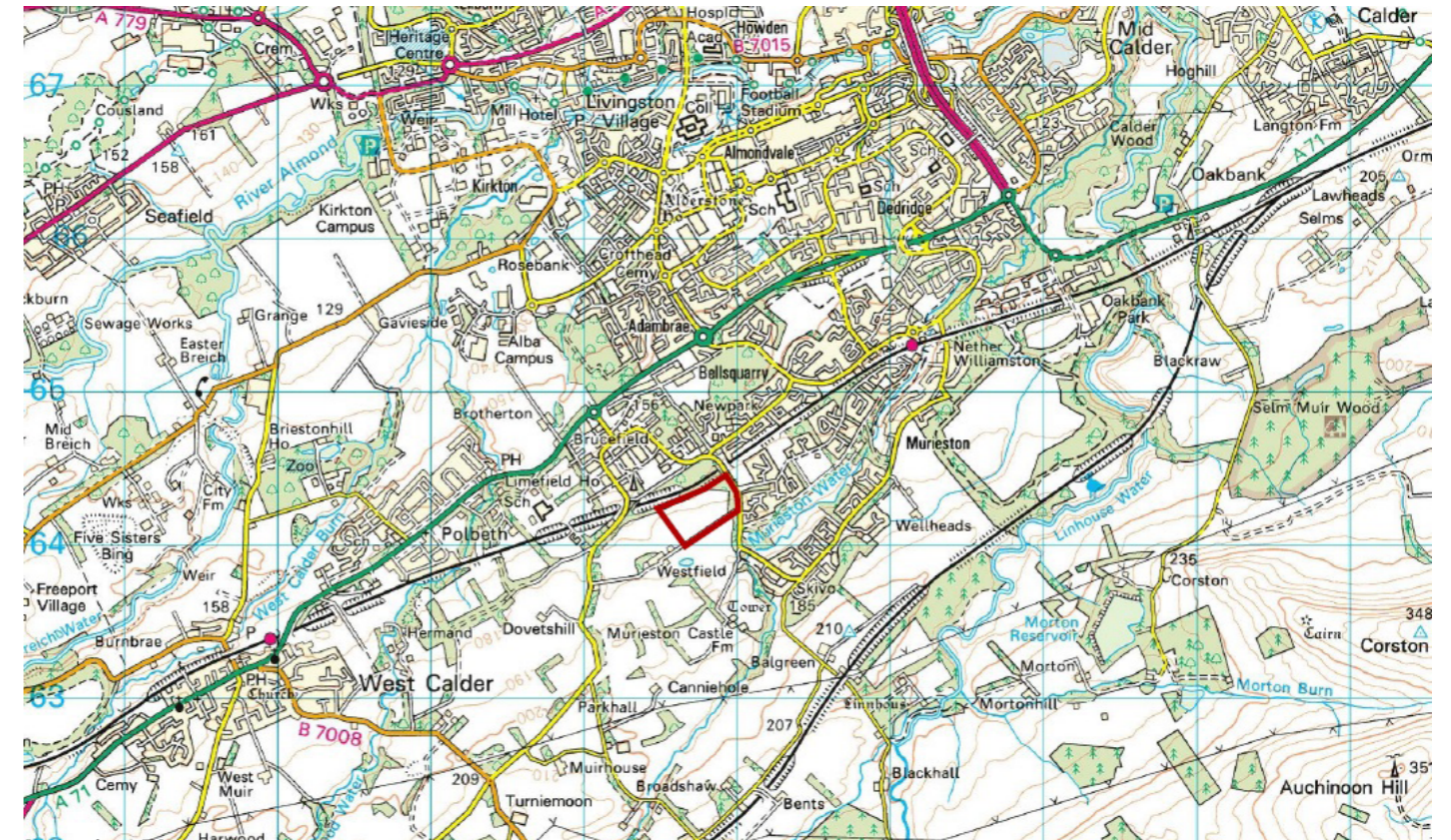
Clarendon Planning and Development act on behalf of BDW Trading Ltd ('the developer') and H&J Russell ('the landowner') who seek Planning Permission in Principle for residential development on land west of Murieston Road, Murieston, Livingston.

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.

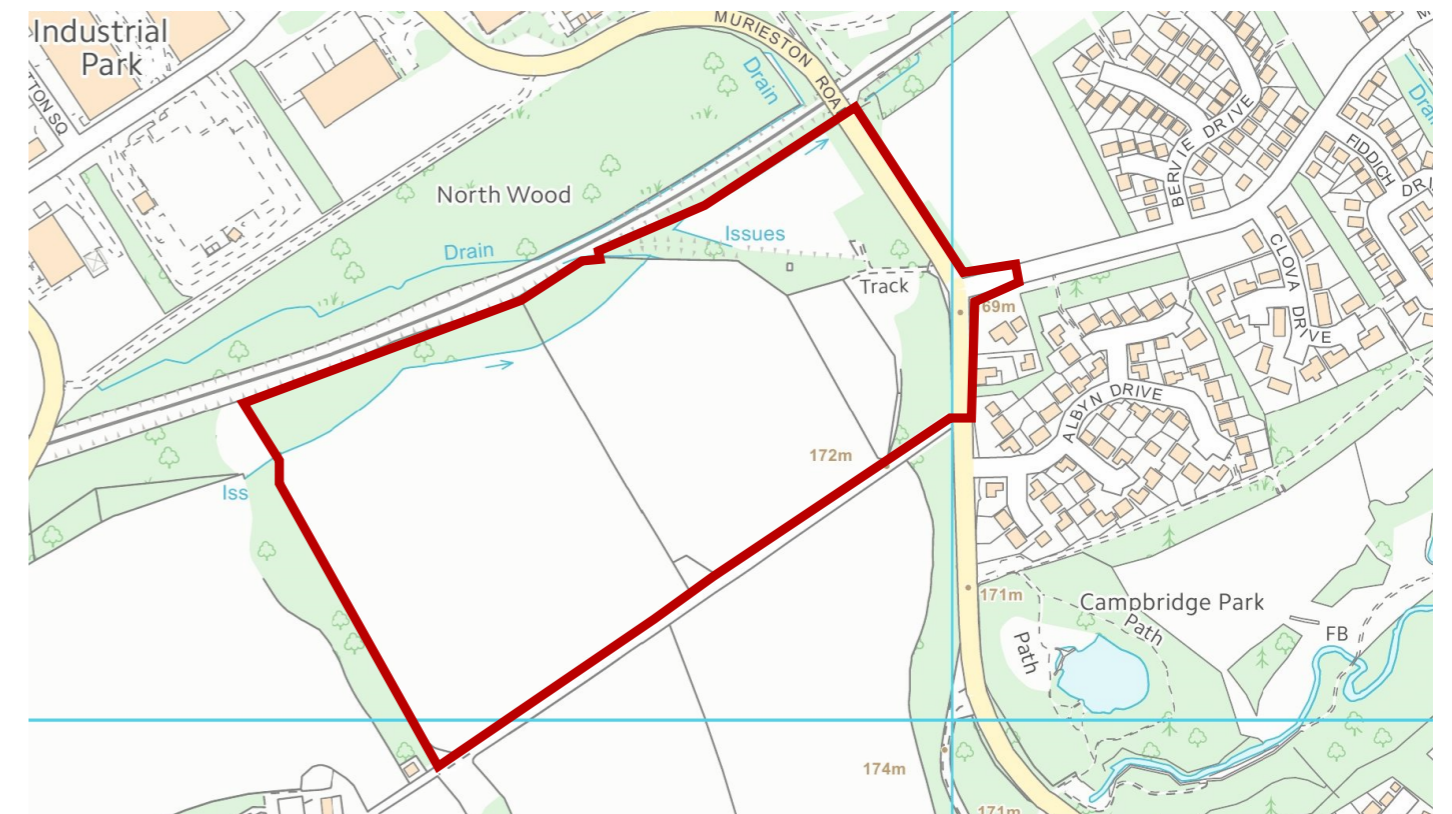
This design approach is in accordance with national policy set out in Scottish Planning Policy, Creating Places and Designing Streets plus wider best practice on urban design. Design analysis of the site has also taken into account the adopted *West Lothian Local Plan* and the Council's *Supplementary Planning Guidance on Residential Design (2012)*.

The statement sets out the key Design Principles and Guidance, Site Assessment based upon key design analysis, Community Involvement in the early stages of the design process, a PlaceVision Statement establishing the intended approach and Design Concept including an indicative development framework.

This statement sets out the background analysis and parameters for detailed design and includes concept plans and an indicative site layout prepared by EMA Architects on behalf of the applicant.



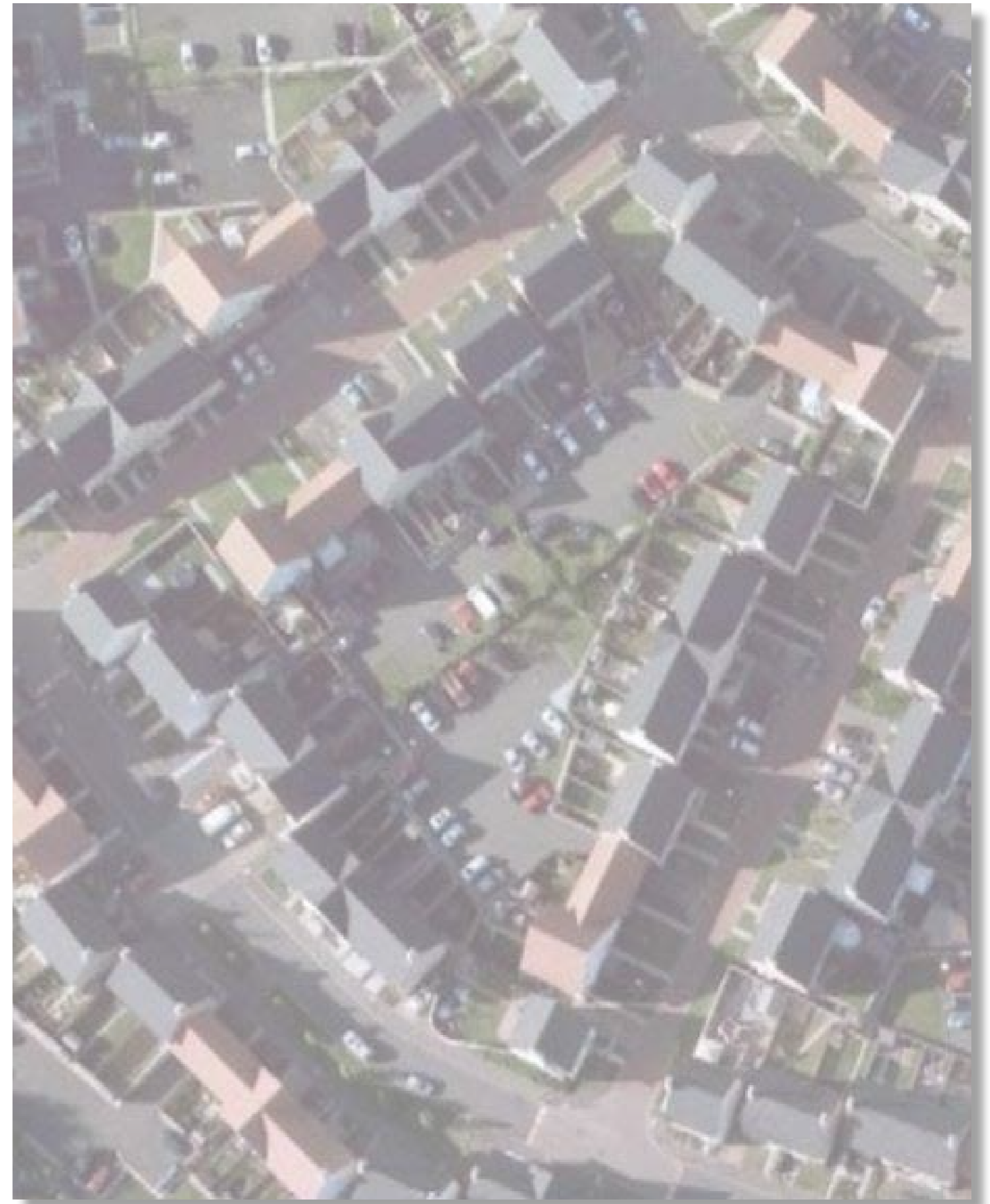
Location Plan



Site Boundary

SECTION 2

DESIGN PRINCIPLES
&
GUIDANCE



DESIGN PRINCIPLES & GUIDANCE

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*, the Scottish Government's *Inspirational Designs exemplars* and wider urban design practice.

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 within this statement illustrates how local 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 aims to provide a place-sensitive, coherent approach for the development of land west of Murieston Road.



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 designated Countryside under Adopted West Lothian Local Plan Policies ENV22-23 but is included as an alternative housing site within the West Lothian Local Development Plan Main Issues Report (August 2014)
- Core Path WLI4 (Murieston Trail), extending from south-east of the site, provides cycle/path links to town centre and cycle network
- Woodland along the site's northern boundary (outwith the site) is protected as an area of special landscape control (Policy ENV21)
- 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 2012 and a representation was submitted to the aforementioned Main Issues Report in October 2014

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. Site not within Coal Mining Risk Area and historic limestone mine area in north-east of site will be excluded from proposed development area

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 northern part of the site (and onwards connection with existing watercourse) - the natural low-lying area on the northern edge of the site has also been incorporated for this purpose

Archaeology

- The Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (included with application) did not identify any significant remains or artefacts with majority of features deemed to be of negligible cultural heritage value (post-medieval boundaries, quarries, woodland plantation, twentieth century structures). The former Westfield Mine in the north-east corner of the site is deemed of local cultural heritage value. Further intrusive investigations as necessary are recommended albeit this latter feature is intended to be excluded from the development area. No significant indirect impact is considered likely upon the scheduled monument south of the site (Murieston Castle) or the B-Listed Westfield House to the west of the site.

Biodiversity / Trees

- 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.
- A Tree Survey has been undertaken which has included an impact assessment of removal of trees to facilitate access from Murieston Road. It is noted that the survey confirms that the trees to be removed are of a generally declining condition with defects and the adjoining area is of secondary woodland. New compensatory planting is recommended.

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

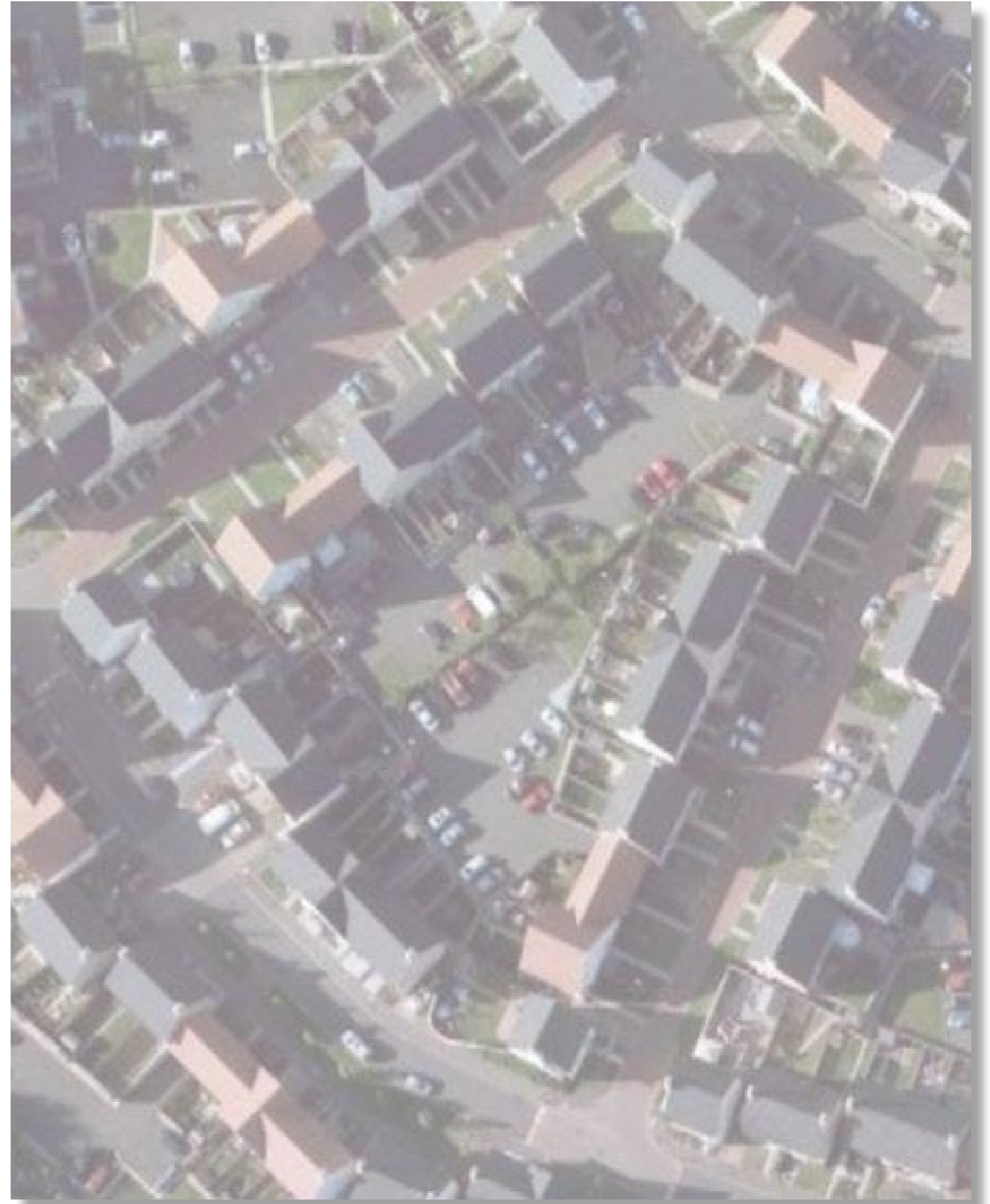
- The Transport Assessment confirms the site's accessibility and associated sustainability benefits with impact on road/junction capacity capable of being mitigated/accommodated.

Infrastructure - Utilities, Education

- Mains services are available whilst the Council note that capacity exists at The James Young High School with extensions planned or possible at St.Margaret's Academy and Bellsquarry Primary School (as also noted within the LDP MIR)

SECTION 3

THE SITE



SITE CONTEXT

Livingston is the key service centre within the West Lothian Strategic Development Area and is therefore a focus for significant residential and business growth in the coming decades, including the emerging Local Development Plan period to 2024.

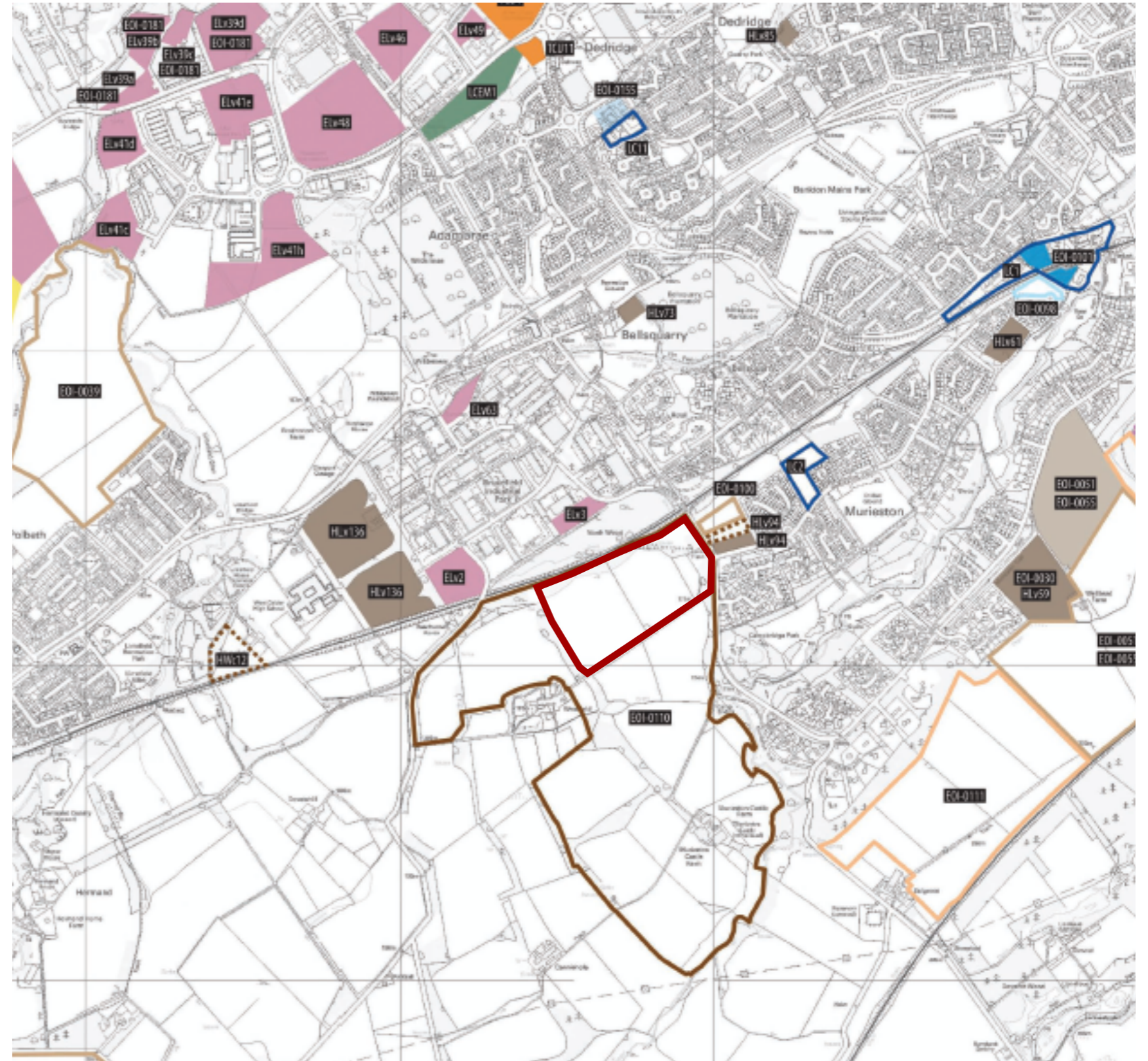
The LDP Main Issues Report highlights growth options (preferred and alternative) to the north and south of Livingston to augment existing Core Development Areas to the west and south-east of the town. The application site is shown outlined in red on the accompanying plan, forming the north-east corner of the much larger area assessed by West Lothian Council as having potential as an 'alternative' housing option south-west of Murieston.

The options for growth must also take into account infrastructure capacity (and in particular schools capacity) and south-west Livingston is deemed to be more favourable than other areas as outlined within the LDP MIR. In this regard, school capacity or options for extension exist in The James Young High School and Bellsquarry Primary catchment areas.

Livingston, as a planned new town, has experienced phased growth over time and the application site continues the established pattern of urban growth in the south-west of the town, where Murieston and Bellsquarry are still growing residential areas in close proximity to services and employment opportunities such as Livingston South rail station and Brucefield Industrial Estate.

In this regard, the application site is located within an established growth area, in one of the main accepted areas of future growth within a locality with infrastructure capacity.

The proposed site at Murieston Road is **contained within the wider landscape by established woodland boundaries to the north, west and south (with scope for further planting to augment site edges) and provides a clear opportunity for bringing forward new housing.**



LDP MIR Options

THE SITE

The application site extends to approximately 14.5 hectares (including existing woodland) with immediate surroundings including the established residential areas of Murieston and Bellsquarry to the east and north-east and Brucefield Industrial Park to the north.

The site is bound to the east by Murieston Road, which forms a local distributor road and bus route connecting the Murieston, Bellsquarry and Bankton residential areas along with the Brucefield industrial area to the A71 arterial route approximately 1km to the north (and onwards to Livingston town centre and the M8). Established mixed woodland and scrubland extend along the site's eastern edge fronting Murieston Road.

The northern boundary is formed by established woodland and a minor watercourse with the Edinburgh-Glasgow rail line and further woodland beyond (towards Brucefield Industrial Park).

The western boundary is formed by mixed woodland and dry stone walling and the southern boundary is formed by a tree-lined access track running between Murieston Road and Westfield House/Farm.

The site itself comprises rough grazing land and falls gradually from south to north towards an existing watercourse running parallel with the rail line and is bisected by a field boundary including a number of mature trees.

Access is currently taken from a minor farm access road leading off Murieston Road.



Application Site

SITE VIEWS



Woodland boundaries to north-east



Woodland boundaries to north



Tree-lined track on southern boundary



Murieston Road