

West Lothian Local Development Plan

Post Examination – Proposed Modifications

Environmental Report (Strategic Environmental Assessment): Screening Report

Section 1) Introduction

West Lothian Council has been preparing a local development plan which will replace the currently adopted West Lothian Local Plan 2009 (WLLP 2009) to accord with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by the Planning (Scotland) etc. Act 2006.

The new West Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP) requires to be consistent with the Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh and South East Scotland (SDP), which was approved (with modifications) by Scottish Ministers in June 2013, subject to preparation of Supplementary Guidance on Housing Land.

The WL LDP Proposed Plan (PP) focuses on providing for, and managing, future land use change across the council area in line with SESplan SDP requirements. The LDP comprises a development strategy for the period to 2024 and a detailed policy framework to guide future land use in a way which best reflects the SDP vision, strategic aims and objectives.

Preparation of the LDP PP has been informed by the views and comments received on the LDP Main Issues Report (MIR) (2014) and accompanying Environmental Report (ER) which was prepared in October 2015 under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 (EASA) to accompany the LDP Proposed Plan. The MIR stage was the main opportunity for those with an interest in the development of West Lothian, and the protection of its environment, to input to the plan-making process.

An Examination into unresolved objections to the PP was held by the Scottish Government Directorate of Planning Enforcement & Appeals (DPEA) commenced in October 2016. No Hearing Sessions were held. The Examination report containing the Reporters' recommendations was received by the council on 8th January 2018.

In the Environmental Report which the council submitted to the DPEA a comprehensive assessment of policies and proposals in the LDP Proposed Plan was undertaken. See attached web link: Main Report:

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/4643/Strategic-Environmental-Assessment-Environmental-Report-August-2014/pdf/SEA-ENVIRONMENTAL-REPORT-August2014.pdf>

The extensive appendices to the SEA Environmental Report main statement are below:

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/4644/Strategic-Environmental-Assessment-Environmental-Report---Appendices-August-2014/pdf/SEA-ENVIRONMENTAL-REPORT-Appendices-August2014.pdf>

while the associated maps are found here:

https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/10266/Strategic-Environmental-Assessment-Environmental-Report-August-2014---maps/pdf/SEA_Maps_1-9_August_2014_-after_page_162.pdf

An update report was prepared in October 2015 for additional sites put forward to the Proposed Plan at the MIR stage:

https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/9834/Strategic-Environmental-Assessment-SEA/pdf/SEA_update_FINAL.pdf

Following the Examination process, the Reporters have recommended the inclusion in the LDP of additional housing sites and a new employment site. The new sites are set out below in Section 2.

After adoption of the WL LDP, the council will prepare a statement as required under EASA, setting out its relationship with the ER and the influence of comments received in relation to it. Thereafter, the SEA Consultation Authorities will be notified of adoption of the LDP along with the Post-Adoption SEA Statement. Finally, the SEA monitoring regime will be refined and monitoring of the adopted LDP will be undertaken.

Section 2) New Sites

It is not proposed to replicate the full background and methodology of the SEA process that has already been comprehensively set out in the previous Environmental Reports prepared in conjunction with the Proposed Plan and listed above. Instead a short screening process has been carried out on the new sites introduced to the LDP Proposed Plan by the Reporters.

Modifications to the plan propose nine entirely new housing allocations. One is within an existing settlement boundary at Eucal Business Centre, Craigshill, Livingston (Site H-Lv 32 / Map Change 15).

Four are new sites outwith existing settlement boundaries at:

- Kettlestoun Mains on the western edge of Linlithgow, lying north of the A706 and west of the B8029 (Site H-LL 13 / Map Change 9);
- Beechwood Grove Park to the east of Uphall Station immediately south of the railway line (Site H-PU 4 / Map Change 21);
- Langton Road to the south east of East Calder immediately north of the A71 and south of Langton Road (Site H-Ec 10 / Map Change 26); and

- Hartwood Road West to the south of West Calder, west of Hartwood Road and south of the recreation ground (Site H-Wc 6/ Map Change 22).

Two of the sites confirm recent planning application appeal decisions (and as such there is no need for them to undergo SEA) at:

- Brotherton Farm north of the A71 in south west Livingston; and
- Wellhead Farm to the south east of Murieston.

The two remaining sites are re-allocations from proposed employment sites (and as such have previously undergone SEA) at:

- Tarrareoch Farm in the southern part of the Southdale development in Armadale; and
- Appleton Parkway in Eliburn, Livingston lying between Houston Road and the railway line.

In addition, there was one small extension to the north of employment site at Deer Park, Livingston (Site E-Lv 44 / Map Change 19).

The sites at Brotherton Farm and Wellheads Farm have been the subject of separate, detailed appeal hearings whilst the sites at Tarrareoch Farm, Armadale and Appleton Parkway, Livingston have previously been subject to SEA at the LDP Proposed Plan stage, consequently this screening will only focus on the five new housing allocations and the minor employment allocation for the site at Deer Park, Livingston.

Maps for the screened sites listed above are provided in Appendix 1.

Finally, in relation to polices in the LDP as they were assessed at the Proposed Plan stage and the Reporters have not recommended major significant changes, or new polices. As such, the council is satisfied there are likely to be no significant environmental effects arising.

Section 3) Site Assessment

Does the Proposal / Allocation.....																								
SEA Topic	Air			Biodiversity			Climatic Factors		Cultural Heritage					Landscape & Townscape			Material Assets			Population & Health	Soil	Water		Comment
	Avoid AQMA areas/ avoid exacerbating air quality of AQMAs/ avoid areas which could become AQMAs?	Have good proximity to jobs/ services (enabling access within 500m)?	Have good access to existing or proposed public transport?	Avoid adverse effect on integrity of designated international nature conservation sites?	Avoid causing significant effect on designated national/ regional/ local biodiversity sites & ancient woodlands?	Avoid adverse direct impact on species/ habitats/ or makes a positive contribution to the site?	Occupy a relatively efficient location in terms of energy	Doesn't occupy a location at risk of increased flooding or erosion?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) effects on listed buildings and/ or its setting?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) impact on scheduled monuments?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) effects on a Conservation Area?	Avoid adverse effects (or create positive) on Conservation Areas &/or other areas of architectural interest?	Avoid AGLVs / Areas of Special Interest/ Areas of Special Landscape Control/ Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty?	Avoid conspicuous locations that require extensive landscape enhancement?	Avoid loss of/ adverse effects on public open space/ improve open space provision (quantity/ quality)?	Avoid loss of land important to the avoidance of coalescence/ conurbation?	Safeguard mineral resources from sterilisation (within Areas of Mineral Resource Potential)?	Minimise use of "Greenfield" land?	Avoid co-location of sensitive development with industrial facilities/ economic allocations?	Avoid loss of prime quality agricultural land and peatland?	Maintain status of baseline water bodies?	Minimise flood risk (on site or elsewhere)?		
Assessment	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?	√, /, ?		
Eucal Business Centre, Craigshill, Livingston.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	No environmental issues.
Kettlestoun Mains, west side of Linlithgow	√	√	/	√	X	X	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	/	√	√	Site partially former used quarry. Issues of location of battlefield, landscape setting and proximity to River Avon and LBS addressed through Development Management process.
Beechwood Grove Park to the east of Uphall	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	X	√	X	√	?	√	√	√	Issues of Protected Species (Great Crested Newts) addressed through Development Management process as	

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SEA Topic	Air			Biodiversity			Climatic Factors		Cultural Heritage					Landscape & Townscape			Material Assets			Population & Health	Soil	Water	Comment
	Avoid AQMA areas/ avoid exacerbating air quality of AQMAs/ avoid areas which could become AQMAs?	Have good proximity to jobs/ services (enabling access within walking distance)?	Have good access to existing or proposed public transport?	Avoid adverse effect on integrity of designated international nature conservation sites?	Avoid causing significant effect on designated national/ regional/ local biodiversity sites & ancient woodlands?	Avoid adverse direct impact on species/ habitats/ or makes a positive contribution to the environment?	Occupy a relatively efficient location in terms of energy	Doesn't occupy a location at risk of increased flooding or erosion?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) effects on listed buildings and/ or its setting?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) impact on scheduled monuments?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) effects on scheduled monuments?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) effects on Conservation Areas & other areas of architectural interest?	Avoid AGLVs / Areas of Special Landscape Control/ Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty?	Avoid conspicuous locations that require extensive landscape enhancement?	Avoid loss of/ adverse effects on public open space/ improve open space provision (quantity/ quality)?	Avoid loss of land important to avoidance of coalescence/ conurbation?	Safeguard mineral resources from sterilisation (within Areas of Mineral Resource Consent)?	Minimise use of "Greenfield" land?	Avoid co-location of sensitive development with industrial facilities/ economic allocations?	Avoid loss of prime quality agricultural land and peatland?	Maintain status of baseline water bodies?	Minimise flood risk (on site or elsewhere)?	
Assessment	√	√	?	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Station																						advised by Reporters. Council preparing Habitat Management Plan for adjacent Ponds site	
Langton Road to the south east of East Calder	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	X	√	X	√	√	Landscape impact, as visible from A71, can be addressed through east edge shelter belt woodland planting to provide a new settlement boundary.
Hartwood Road West, SW West Calder	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	X	√	X	√	√	Landscape impact, as visible on south approach to village, can be addressed through east edge shelter belt woodland planting to provide a new settlement boundary.
Deer Park extension Livingston: site E-Lv 44	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	North boundary prominent along the M8, already addressed in local plan with requirement of high quality landscaping.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the council does not consider there is need for a further major Strategic Environmental Assessment to address the Reporters recommendations for modifications to the LDP Proposed Plan to reflect inclusion of the sites detailed above.

The issues identified by this ER Screening Report are likely to have no significant environmental effect and can, as the Reporters have pointed out, be further considered at the Development Management process when development proposals come forward.

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