

WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

SCREENING REPORT

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING
SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE (SG)**

STEP 1 – DETAILS OF THE PLAN

Responsible Authority:

West Lothian Council

Title of the plan:

Affordable Housing : Supplementary Guidance

What prompted the plan:

(e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)

The adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018 gives an undertaking to produce Supplementary Planning Guidance in relation to a variety of policy topics including affordable housing. The guidance provides procedures for implementation of Policy HOU 4 of the new West Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP)

The previous Affordable Housing Supplementary Guidance was approved by the Council in 2006. The Guidance was prepared with reference to Scottish planning policies in force at the time and also the West Lothian Community Plan, the Finalised West Lothian Local Plan and the Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan.

All these documents have since been updated or replaced setting an amended policy context within which to address the provision of affordable housing. There is recognition of the need to ensure that the council's supplementary guidance is up to date and reflective of the most current policies and practices.

Plan subject:

(e.g. transport)

Implementation of HOU 4 of West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018 – New market housing developments must provide affordable housing levels as set out in the policy and in compliance with the terms of Affordable Housing Supplementary Guidance.

Screening is required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

Based on Boxes 3 and 4, our view is that:

An SEA is required, as the environmental effects are likely to be significant: Please indicate below what Section of the 2005 Act this plan falls within

Section 5(3)

Section 5(4)

An SEA is not required, as the environmental effects are unlikely to be significant: Please indicate below what Section of the 2005 Act this plan falls within

Section 5(3)

Section 5(4)

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Date:

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STEP 2 – CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN

Context of the Plan:

The West Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted on 4 September 2018. The LDP has been subject to SEA and is the primary means by which development sites are allocated. Each site allocated for development within the plan has been subject to an individual site assessment. These site assessments have been SEA'd and their impacts assessed as part of the higher level LDP.

The SG sets out the operation of policy HOU 4 of the West Lothian Local Development Plan dictating how the appropriate proportion of affordable housing, to be provided as part of new development, should be delivered in practice in line with principles established through the Local Housing Strategy.

Whilst the required proportion of affordable housing to be delivered as part of new development has the potential for environmental effects these were not considered to be significant and are in any case dictated by Policy HOU 4 rather than the SG.

The proposed Supplementary Guidance will not direct development to specific sites but will support consistent interpretation and application of policy HOU 4 through the development management process.

Description of the Plan:

The proposed Supplementary Guidance expands on the principles set out in the Policy HOU 4 and provides detailed guidance to help achieve the affordable housing outcomes expected from private residential development proposals across West Lothian.

The proposed Supplementary Guidance will not direct development to specific sites but will support consistent interpretation and application of policy HOU 4 through the development management process.

The Supplementary Guidance will be reviewed at least every 5 years in line with the statutory review of the West Lothian Local Development Plan.

What are the key components of the plan?

The SG will provide specific guidance on the following key elements :-

1. Percentage of Affordable Housing and thresholds in each ward

New market housing developments must provide affordable housing levels as set out in the table below :-

Council Ward	LHS Priority Area	% Affordable Housing required	Threshold for commuted sums
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	1	25	< 25
East Livingston and East Calder	1	25	< 25
Livingston South	1	25	< 25
Livingston North	1	25	< 25
Linlithgow	1	25	< 25

Bathgate	2	15	< 40
Armadale and Blackridge *	2	15	< 40
Whitburn and Blackburn *	2	15	< 40
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley *	3	10	< 60

2.The Supplementary Guidance will expand on the principles set out in Box 3 (above) and provide detailed guidance to help achieve the outcomes expected from development proposals across West Lothian. The guidance provides a basis for assessing the design of all new residential development across West Lothian.

Have any of the components of the plan been considered in previous SEA work?

Yes. The document is produced to support Policy HOU 4 in the West Lothian Local Development Plan which was adopted on 4 September 2018. An Environmental Assessment has previously been undertaken in respect of policies and proposed land allocations in the adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan. The Environmental Assessment undertaken in respect of these policies concluded that they would have no significant environmental implications. Any impacts of the policies were considered to be largely positive. In order to ensure compliance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, a Screening Opinion for this Supplementary Guidance is required.

In terms of your response to Boxes 7 and 8 above, set out those components of the plan that are likely to require screening:

The proposed Supplementary Guidance will expand on the principles set out in the aforementioned policy HOU 4 and provides detailed guidance to help achieve the affordable housing outcomes expected from residential development proposals across West Lothian. The guidance will support consistent interpretation and application of policy HOU4 through the development management process. The potential environmental effects of any proposed development considered under the terms of the policy HOU 4 can only be properly assessed at the planning application stage when the specific site and development details are known.

**STEP 3 – IDENTIFYING INTERACTIONS OF THE PLAN WITH THE ENVIRONMENT AND
CONSIDERING THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF ANY INTERACTIONS**

Plan Components	Environmental Topic Areas										Explanation of Potential Environmental Effects	Explanation of Significance
	Biodiversity, flora and fauna	Population and human health	Soil	Water	Air	Climatic factors	Material assets	Cultural heritage	Landscape	Inter-relationship issues		
Affordable Housing Supplementary Guidance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>The SG provides clear guidance on what the council will expect from new residential developments</p> <p>The SG relates specifically to HOU 4 of the LDP which, in turn, is integral to the strategic objectives of the LDP which include promoting development in the most sustainable locations where its impact can be minimised; promoting community regeneration through the development of brownfield sites; ensuring that all essential infrastructure and facilities are provided to support development.</p>	<p>The SEA for the LDP considered any potential effects. The SG is not considered to have any additional significant environmental effects.</p>

STEP 4 – STATEMENT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE SCREENING

Summary of interactions with the environment and statement of the findings of the Screening:

(Including an outline of the likely significance of any interactions, positive or negative, and explanation of conclusion of the screening exercise.)

The SG provides guidance on the operation of the Council's Affordable Housing Policy (HOU 4) contained within the West Lothian Local Development Plan covering the West Lothian Council area. It summarises the evidence for housing need in the area, notes the different types of affordable housing and considers the Council's approach to its delivery. Priority groups are identified. Guidance is provided on the calculation of the financial contribution, factors affecting site viability, pre application discussions, planning applications and Section 75 requirements.

The SG is closely allied with the policy context of the adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018 and government guidance and is intended to maximise the level of affordable housing within future plans for residential development which come forward.

It is anticipated that the new residential developments which will come to be built over time will be more sensitively located and designed, provide a range of housing tenures in better harmony with their surroundings and make a more efficient use of land and natural resources.

The SG relates to development within existing settlements or areas already allocated for development and the effect and impact of such development will ordinarily be of a localized nature and has for the most part already been accounted for.

In common with all other Supplementary Guidance prepared by West Lothian Council, the guidance has been subject to consultation, in this case with various planning consultants and developers, council service providers and regard has been had to the responses and feedback which has been received.

In conclusion, the implementation of this SG is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects in its own right and therefore SEA is not required.

When completed send to: SEA.gateway@gov.scot or to the SEA Gateway, Scottish Government, Area 2H (South), Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ.

