

# Monitoring Statement

West Lothian Local Development Plan

*August 2014*



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## Monitoring Statement

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*August 2014*



# Contents

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<b>1</b>	Introduction	5
<b>2</b>	The changing context for the <i>West Lothian Local Development Plan</i>	7
<b>3</b>	Strategy	9
<b>4</b>	The countryside of West Lothian	12
<b>5</b>	The built and archaeological heritage	18
<b>6</b>	Employment	21
<b>7</b>	Housing land supply in West Lothian	30
<b>8</b>	The Core Development Areas (CDAs)	42
<b>9</b>	Transport and accessibility	47
<b>10</b>	Town centres and retailing	60
<b>11</b>	Community, sports, education facilities and open space	65
<b>12</b>	Natural resources, waste management and renewable energy	71
<b>13</b>	Implementation	76





## 1 Introduction

1.1 When approved, the *West Lothian Local Development Plan* (LDP) will replace the existing *West Lothian Local Plan* (WLLP), which was adopted on 13 January 2009.

1.2 The LDP, together with the *Strategic Development Plan* for Edinburgh and South East Scotland (SDP), which was approved by Scottish Ministers in June 2013 and has now replaced the *Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan 2015* (E&LSP), the strategic plan to which the WLLP was required to conform with, will then constitute the new development plan for West Lothian.

1.3 The council is required to publish a *Monitoring Statement* alongside the *Main Issues Report* (MIR) for the LDP. The principal functions of the *Monitoring Statement* are to monitor changes in the principal characteristics of the area and monitor the impact of policies and proposals of the existing local plan.

1.4 In accordance with guidance contained in Circular 1/2009, this *Monitoring Statement* focuses on the wider impact of the plan on area and population wide indicators and on how far the objectives and the vision of the previous plan have been realised. The *Monitoring Statement* is intended to provide a way of identifying the issues to be taken into account in the MIR.

1.5 Since the WLLP was adopted, the council has published two monitoring reports, the first in 2010 and the second in 2011. In line with these reports, this *Monitoring Statement* is structured on the topic chapters which were included in the WLLP. It sets out progress against key indicators and provides an overview of the demographics, housing, retail, economic and environmental trends in the plan area.



1.6 The Planning Vision for West Lothian to 2015, as set out in the WLLP, is as follows:

*West Lothian will continue to prosper as a place to live and work. Demand for housing and employment growth will be met in a way which minimises the environmental impact of growth and brings positive benefits through improved opportunities for those currently living and doing business in West Lothian, and those who seek to do so in the future.*

This vision remains relevant for the new LDP.

1.7 The 20 years prior to the adoption of the WLLP saw a period of sustained growth within West Lothian, with the area amongst the fastest growing in Scotland. This trend was predicted to continue during the life time of the local plan. Shortly before the adoption of the plan, however, the economic climate in the UK changed for the worse, with the country experiencing recession.

1.8 This has had a significant impact on the council's ability to deliver a number of the growth proposals contained within the local plan which set out a long term planning strategy for West Lothian with a number of large scale housing allocations which were expected to have a development timeframe of 15 years or more.

1.9 Four years after adoption of the plan, it should come as no surprise that much still remains to be done to implement the local plan strategy and deliver the vision set out in the plan. That said, however, there is now evidence of good progress in certain areas and it is anticipated that the growth envisaged in the plan will be capable of being delivered, albeit over a longer timeframe than originally envisaged.

## 2 The changing context for the *West Lothian Local Development Plan*

### West Lothian Council area

2.1 Major changes in the physical characteristics of parts of West Lothian have taken place in the last ten years, and the process of physical and economic regeneration is ongoing. Rapid growth in some areas has put additional pressure on infrastructure, particularly school capacity, resulting in a significant level of investment by the council and the development industry over the last few years. Key challenges for the council have been the delivery of infrastructure to provide for community needs whilst balancing this against the need to protect and enhance West Lothian's landscape.

2.2 The main settlements are the traditional towns of Armadale, Bathgate, Broxburn, Linlithgow and Whitburn and the former new town of Livingston. These are augmented by a number of smaller towns and villages including East Calder, Fauldhouse, Longridge, Mid Calder, Uphall, West Calder and Winchburgh and villages in the upper Breich Valley. Livingston is the largest town in West Lothian and is the principle administrative centre in addition to being a sub-regional shopping destination for the wider Lothians.

2.3 The area is relatively compact with a diversity of landscapes which include *designed landscapes* such as Hopetoun House adjacent to the Forth Estuary; the river valleys of the Almond, the Avon and the Breich Water; and the upland areas of the Pentland Hills to the south. The landscape is also marked in places by the remnants of its industrial heritage in the form of coal and oil shale bings which have become iconic and unique features of the local landscape.

### Population and household growth

2.4 In recent years, West Lothian has been one of the fastest growing parts of Scotland. Scottish Government projections indicate that the population and number of households in West Lothian will continue to increase, creating a requirement for additional housing, although the rate of increase is likely to be dependent on economic factors and the availability of mortgage finance and funding solutions for the necessary infrastructure to support development.

2.5 The most recent population estimate for West Lothian is 175,990 (*source: NRS Mid-Year Estimates 2012*), an increase of almost 11 per cent on the 2001 Census. About half of the increase is due to net in migration. This is the fifth highest rate of growth amongst the 32 local authorities in Scotland and now accounts for 3.3 per cent of the total of Scotland. It represents the highest population estimate ever in the area.

2.6 By 2035 the population of West Lothian is projected to be 205,345, an increase of 19.3 percent compared to the population in 2010. By comparison, the population of Scotland is projected to increase by 10.2 per cent between 2010 and 2035.

2.7 West Lothian's projected population change is different from most other comparator local authorities and the Scottish average in that most of this projected change is estimated to be through natural change - the birth rate being higher than mortality rate. This is likely to be due to the relatively young population that West Lothian has with more people who are in the age bracket to have children. In the longer term, however, West Lothian will be faced with a growing elderly population and this will present challenges in provision of certain types of housing, its location and other services.

2.8 Population growth has been greatest in Armadale, Bathgate, Broxburn and Livingston, whereas population decline has been greatest in Polbeth and Whitburn and some of the smaller villages such as Breich, Dechmont and Torphichen.

2.9 Population change is illustrated in Table 1

Table 1 - Population change

Year	Population	Change from previous year	Dwellings	Change from previous year	Households	Change from previous year
1998	153,090		62,056			
1999	154,680	1,590	63,182	1,126		
2000	156,690	2,010	64,696	1,514		
2001	158,714	2,024	66,327	1,631	65,062	
2002	159,960	1,246	67,166	839	65,939	877
2003	161,020	1,060	68,332	1,166	67,085	1,146
2004	162,840	1,820	69,504	1,172	68,259	1,174
2005	163,780	940	70,754	1,250	69,309	1,050
2006	165,701	1,921	71,770	1,016	70,236	927
2007	167,770	2,069	72,981	1,211	71,351	1,115
2008	169,510	1,740	73,948	967	72,248	897
2009	171,040	1,530	74,397	449	72,569	321
2010	172,080	1,040	75,123	726	73,158	589
2011	175,300	-	75,397	274	73,469	311
2012	175,990	690	75,729	332	73,761	292

Source: GROS, NRS and West Lothian Council Development Planning Services, 2013. (Population estimates 2002-2010 are to be rebased using the 2011 Census. Comparing current 2002-2010 data to 2011 and 2012 data is not recommended.)

2.10 Household growth has also grown steadily in the last ten years and in 2012 there were 73,761 households in West Lothian which represents a 0.4 per cent increase on just the previous year. Scottish Government projects that by 2035 the number of households will increase to 86,660 and by 2035 will have further increased to 95,160.

2.11 The communities of West Lothian retain a strong sense of identity. Their scale as small to medium sized towns and villages offers a quality of life which is an attractive alternative to Edinburgh and Glasgow. Maintaining and enhancing their viability, identity, sense of place and landscape setting in the context of continuing economic and physical change is a significant challenge for the council, developers and local communities.

2.12 Improving design quality and creating attractive, distinctive places through new development has been a key aim of the West Lothian Local Plan with the plan identifying a hierarchy of policies, guidance and design tools to help promote good design in new development. This approach will continue in the development strategy for the LDP, led by and informed by supplementary guidance, design briefs, development frameworks and master plans.



### 3 Strategy

3.1 The adopted *West Lothian Local Plan* takes a balanced approach to accommodating development whilst protecting and enhancing the environment.

3.2 In terms of promoting development, the key challenge remains providing the necessary infrastructure to support the level of growth proposed in the plan to meet the strategic requirements which were set out in the E&LSP. The 'credit crunch' and subsequent economic downturn has caused problems in delivery as developers are now finding it difficult to raise finance to deliver key infrastructure.

3.3 To enable some development to proceed, interim education solutions have been agreed in the core development areas (CDAs). The council has also forward funded education infrastructure and planning applications for school extensions to support implementation of the development strategy.

3.4 A West Lothian Local Infrastructure Fund (LIF) has also been established and funding from this has been allocated to help provide a new primary school in Armadale.

3.5 In addition, the council held Housing Recovery Conferences in 2011 and 2012, providing stakeholders with an opportunity to discuss the housing land supply problems and put forward potential solutions. Following the event, *Housing Recovery Action Plans* were prepared and approved by the council.

3.6 The Armadale CDA was the first CDA to see a site start. Other highlights since the adoption of the plan include:

- implementation of a second phase of a council house building programme for 545 houses;
- the opening of the Airdrie to Bathgate railway line with new stations and associated parking and interchange facilities now operational at Armadale, Bathgate and Blackridge;
- site start at Winchburgh and Calderwood CDAs;
- site start at Heartlands, Whitburn; and
- Minded to grant decisions for CDA developments at Mossend and at East Broxburn (Candleworks).

3.7 Whilst good progress has been made, major infrastructure hurdles remain to be overcome if the development strategy is to be implemented in full and this means that there continues to be a risk that some developments will not proceed beyond a certain stage and that some developments may not proceed at all, at least in the foreseeable future.



#### Problem areas/issues

3.8 Public sector funding and resources have been severely constrained in recent years and this trend is expected to continue over the plan period. The most significant consequence is that it compromises the ability of the council and other agencies to deliver infrastructure which in turn can delay, or at worse, prevent some developments from occurring.

3.9 Since the start of the economic downturn in 2008, many developers have also found it difficult to provide major up-front funding for infrastructure to enable their schemes to proceed.

3.10 One of the consequences of the anticipated population level increase in West Lothian (19 per cent by 2035) is that it significantly adds to the burden of providing for community needs in terms of infrastructure, including schools, health and transport.

3.11 There has been some progress in bringing infrastructure forward to support the development plan strategy. In some instances,

the council has been able to step in and forward fund infrastructure and is recovering costs from developers as their developments progress. This model seems to be working well and is clearly valued by the development industry. The intention is that it should continue over the plan period.

3.12 Partnership working with key infrastructure providers is also just as crucial to delivery as is securing the necessary levels of funding. By working smarter and linking to the investment programmes of infrastructure providers, eg. Scottish Water and Transport Scotland, there is an opportunity to maximise benefits and contain costs.

3.13 While new development sites coming forward through the LDP should ideally be those where the infrastructure burden is lighter on both the council and developers, in order to ensure that sites are effective and can be delivered quickly and within the plan period, there is an expectation that developer contributions will continue to be required.

Table 2 - Population change by settlement

Settlement	2001	2012	Change (No)	Change (%)
<b>Addiewell / Loganlea</b>	1,353	1,342	-11	-0.8
<b>Armadale</b>	9,606	11,202	1,596	16.6
<b>Armadale CDA</b>	--	28	--	--
<b>Bathgate / Boghall</b>	15,490	20,289	4,799	31.0
<b>Blackburn</b>	5,371	5,478	107	2.0
<b>Blackridge / Westrigg</b>	1,624	1,948	324	20.0
<b>Breich</b>	356	205	-151	-42.3
<b>Bridgend</b>	802	789	-13	-1.7
<b>Broxburn</b>	8,941	10,030	1,089	12.2
<b>Dechmont</b>	994	722	-272	-27.4
<b>East Calder</b>	4,837	4,813	-24	-0.5
<b>East Whitburn</b>	1,063	1,144	81	7.6
<b>Ecclesmachan</b>	181	200	19	10.5
<b>Fauldhouse</b>	4,967	4,947	-20	-0.4
<b>Greenrigg</b>	895	1,048	153	17.1
<b>Kirknewton</b>	1,545	1,867	322	20.8
<b>Linlithgow &amp; Linlithgow Bridge</b>	13,127	13,642	515	3.9
<b>Livingston</b>	48,081	54,431	6,350	13.2
<b>Longridge</b>	749	957	208	27.8
<b>Mid Calder</b>	3,322	3,426	104	3.1
<b>Newton</b>	125	141	16	13.1
<b>Philpstoun</b>	375	423	48	12.7
<b>Polbeth</b>	2,683	2,399	-284	-10.6
<b>Pumpherstoun</b>	1,288	1,228	-60	-4.6
<b>Seafield</b>	1,284	1,340	56	4.4
<b>Stoneyburn</b>	2,110	2,007	-103	-4.9
<b>Torphichen</b>	791	609	-182	-23.0
<b>Uphall</b>	4,618	4,718	100	2.2
<b>Uphall Station</b>	990	947	-43	-4.4
<b>West Calder</b>	2,710	3,078	368	13.6
<b>Westfield</b>	448	571	123	27.6
<b>Whitburn</b>	10,958	10,788	-170	-1.5
<b>Wilkieston</b>	241	160	-81	-33.4
<b>Winchburgh</b>	2,482	2,535	53	2.1

Source: GROS and West Lothian Council Development Planning Services, 2011



## 4 The countryside of West Lothian

4.1 West Lothian has a diverse natural heritage including a small section of attractive foreshore, designated as a special protection area, and sixteen Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) has continued to progress site condition monitoring reports for all of these SSSI's and their findings have been discussed with the council.

4.2 The council continues to progress a review of the Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) identified in the local plan and potential Local Biodiversity Sites (LBS). In total, there are around 120 potential LBS. This work, undertaken by The Wildlife Information Centre (TWIC) and involving SNH, the Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT) and specialist habitat advisors, systematically re-assesses the condition of the sites and boundaries from known biodiversity records using an established and proven methodology.

4.3 Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) funding has also been used to re-survey some sites. This is work intended to inform a new set of LBS for inclusion in the local development plan. These LBS will subsequently replace LWS. While approximately a quarter of the sites have been assessed, those remaining will be completed as part of a small specialist consultancy contract.

4.4 There are six Regionally Important Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) in West Lothian. A West Lothian Geo-diversity Sites working group was established in 2010 comprising representatives from the British Geological Survey (BGS) and SNH and has a remit to review the original two hundred sites within the 2006 *West Lothian Geo-diversity Audit*. This work has resulted in the identification of fifty main priority sites. Site boundaries have been established and work, by BGS, is almost complete on producing geological citations for each site. These sites will form a new set of Local Geo-diversity Sites (LGS) to replace RIGS for inclusion in the local development plan. West Lothian Council signed Scotland's *Geo-diversity Charter* in April 2013.



### *West Lothian Local Biodiversity Action Plan*

4.5 Underpinning the council's work across the countryside of West Lothian is the *West Lothian Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2005-09* (LBAP). TWIC has since conducted a short overview of the LBAP and it has been concluded that there should be a move away from a species approach to considering wider ecosystems. This will be considered further when drafting the local development plan.

4.6 An action plan for the River Almond has been produced by the Cramond Angling Club, and on the River Avon, Falkirk Council is leading work with the River Forth Fisheries Trust (RFFTS) in relation to tackling invasive species along the river corridor. The council is now contributing to a Forth wide scheme managed by the RFFTS to tackle invasive species.

4.7 Alongside SEPA, and through their Forth Area Action Management Plan, the council continues to be involved in water quality issues for water bodies within West Lothian. There are also links to the Flood Risk Management Planning process.

4.8 An update of concise Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) guidance for developers has been finalised involving all four Lothian authorities, SEPA and Scottish Water. In addition, a West Lothian SUDs working group continues to identify and review all West Lothian SUDs facilities. Once the audit is complete, this group will seek to work through various issues, including maintenance.

4.9 The council leads the Linlithgow Loch Catchment Management Group, and from earlier studies by the Scottish Agricultural College and Centre for Hydrology and Ecology, it has become clear that there are a number of complex inter-related processes affecting the loch.



4.10 The formation of an independent charitable Trust to undertake fund raising for environmental improvements in and around the loch continues to be considered alongside the new Linlithgow Community Development Trust. New links have been established with the Linlithgow Anglers Federation due to their ongoing environmental improvement works on the River Avon and Mains Burn / Mill Burn tributaries that originate from the loch. A Catchment Management Plan for the loch has been prepared by the partners in March 2013.

#### Local Nature Reserves

4.11 Easter Inch Moss, Blackburn (including Seafield Law) is the first Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in West Lothian. A revised management plan, progressed by CSFT, was agreed with the local management group in 2011. Comprehensive improvements will be considered over the 2012-17 period. A major grant application to SNH for peat restoration on the moss is currently under consideration.

4.12 A second LNR is proposed around Harperrig Reservoir on the north side of the Pentlands with a management plan prepared by SNH, the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and the council. Further phases of woodland planting, to be undertaken by CSFT, are also under discussion with landowners. A legal agreement on the formal LNR designation has been agreed with the City of Edinburgh Council which owns the land immediately around the reservoir, but has yet to be formally completed until the future of the reservoirs west side car park is agreed with local residents. Other proposals by Kirknewton Community Development Trust are underway, with the help of CSFT, to link Kirknewton village to Selm Muir Wood and also onwards to the Cauldstane Slap former drove road route across the Pentland Hills.

## Woodlands and forestry

4.13 The council continues to support the Central Scotland Forest Initiative. The existing *Forest Strategy* has been reviewed by CSFT and adopted for the period 2013-17.

4.14 The council has worked with CSFT on a number of schemes to lever in grant aid on public sites from Forestry Commission Scotland, Landfill Tax Trusts and other grant sources. A number of schemes were progressed over the period 2012/13 including work at Addiewell Bing and the former Knowes Colliery, Fauldhouse.

4.15 A significant emerging issue is the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) that arises from the Scottish Government's *National Planning Framework 2* (NPF2) and is set to continue in the emerging NPF3. The CSGN seeks a 'step-change' in the environmental quality of Central Scotland and there is an expectation that the West Lothian green network will be shown in the new local development plan.

4.16 This has already been mapped and will be discussed with external partners. The council, along with other local authorities in the network, signed a concordat with CSGN in January 2013 and it intends, among other initiatives, to "*embed CSGN principles in ..... local development plans.*"

4.17 The council continues to participate in the Lothians & Fife Green Network Partnership which involves all four Lothian authorities, Fife Council, SNH and FCS. The partnership adopted the *Edinburgh & the Lothians Forestry & Woodland Strategy 2012-17*, and along with the new CSFT strategy, West Lothian will continue to play a key role in the delivery of woodland creation and management in east central Scotland. Flowing from these documents, the council will prepare its own *West Lothian Tree and Woodland Strategy* and associated action plan during 2013/14.

4.18 A major asset running through West Lothian is the Union Canal. Planning permission for a mixed use development at the Winchburgh CDA was granted in April 2012 and the master plan includes substantial new canal related facilities in the vicinity of the former clay pit site near the proposed town centre.

4.19 The council has agreed to grant planning permission for the redevelopment of the Candleworks site in Broxburn which secures various developer contributions including contributions for canal improvements. Discussions are also at an early stage with other East Broxburn CDA developers on improvements to the canal in this area. The council is working with Scottish Canals (previously British Waterways Scotland) who have obtained a grant from Sustrans to upgrade the urban section of the towpath from Greendykes Road to the A89. The council will attempt to fund several missing links connecting the towpath to Broxburn Primary School and adjacent residential areas.

4.20 In Linlithgow, the more limited development opportunities on the canal have not been progressed. However, Scottish Canals have successfully applied to change the use of the six temporary leisure moorings at Back Station Road to permanent residential use and part of the canal towpath that forms a core path through the town, was resurfaced in 2011 as a partnership project between Sustrans, the cycling charity, Scottish Canals and the council. A second phase, west of Preston Road towards Linlithgow Academy / leisure centre, has recently received funding and a connection to the sports facility itself will be considered for funding in a future round of grants.



## Canals

4.21 In 2012, Scottish Canals undertook consultation on a draft *Waterspace Strategy* with the aim being to, *"increase animation on Scottish canals in a way that ensures harmony between all waterway users and creates an increasingly attractive community space and destination for boaters and tourists"*.

4.22 The strategy indicates there may be a number of appropriate locations on the canals to create clusters of residential and commercial boats. However, for the Union Canal, there are currently only five official residential moorings and these are at Ratho in the City of Edinburgh Council area.

4.23 While Linlithgow is mentioned as a *"desirable location that would appeal to people wanting to live on the water"*, there is no mention of Winchburgh or Broxburn and their associated CDA developments that include canal side improvements in the longer term.

## Landscape protection

4.24 37% of the area of West Lothian comprises Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLVs) and Areas of Special Landscape Control (AoSLC). Since the local plan was adopted in 2009, SNH has issued guidance to councils on reviewing landscape designations and a commitment was made by the council to undertake a review during the local development plan process.

4.25 The West Lothian Landscape Character Assessment 1998, has been reviewed and updated. The study was completed in autumn 2011 and nine broad landscape character types have been identified, with 23 individual landscape character areas within these main types.

4.26 The council has undertaken a review of AGLV and AoSLC local landscape designations to inform the local development plan. While the review is limited to local landscape designations it does address how other spatial designations outwith settlements such as Countryside Belts, Areas of Special Agricultural Importance and Historic Gardens and Landscapes interact with local landscape designations.

### Access to the countryside

4.27 The council continues to support the independent West Lothian Access Forum which advises the council on access issues and involves a wide range of partners.

4.28 The West Lothian finalised *Core Path Plan (CPP)* was submitted to Scottish Ministers in Autumn 2012 but the Scottish Government has required the council to undertake additional consultation on the proposed minor technical changes, before releasing the report and before the plan can be adopted, hopefully later in 2013. In the meantime, the council has continued to invest in the maintenance of core and other paths and has also had discussions with Falkirk Council, the CSFT and CSGN, via SNH on the River Avon Heritage Trail and the forthcoming John Muir Trail which is set to open in April 2014.

### Pentland Hills Regional Park

4.29 The council continues to be involved in the administration of the Pentland Hills Regional Park (PHRP) through a Joint Committee. A key activity within West Lothian includes the progression of the Harperrig Local Nature Reserve designation and implementation of improvements contained within the locally agreed action plan in 2009. This is due for review in 2014.

4.30 The CSGN has funded consultants to look at specific woodland creation opportunities for the *Pentland Hills Surrounding Areas Woodland Action Plan* and the area between Harperrig and the A70 towards the administrative boundary with the City of Edinburgh Council has also been assessed for opportunities for the creation of woodland to improve the habitat networks along the Water of Leith. Several planting schemes at Harperrig were completed in 2010/11 and further schemes are under discussion for 2013/14, subject to securing available grant funding.

4.31 Interest remains in several large-scale, commercial wind turbine proposals in the southwest part of West Lothian along the flanks of the Pentland Hills at Fauch Hill and Harburnhead near Cobbinshaw Reservoir and which are currently under consideration at a Public Local Inquiry.

### Problem areas/issues

4.32 In terms of green space, West Lothian has a strong track record of establishing and improving this as part of the Central Scotland Forest and latterly through the Central Green Network (CSGN). CSGN is one of 14 national developments designated in the *National Planning Framework for Scotland 2 (NPF2)* whose aim is to deliver nothing less than a step change in the quality of the environment, woodland cover and recreational opportunities across Central Scotland over the next few decades. The CSGN will have implications for the forthcoming local development plan in that the green network will need to be portrayed in the plan at the West Lothian wide and settlement wide level and opportunities identified for improvement to both habitat and active travel. The Green Network should not be seen as a barrier to development but an opportunity to improve green spaces for people and habitat.

4.33 It is proposed that the CSGN is largely achieved through the private sector, public agencies and partners working together to align their policies, programmes and actions to restore and approve the rural and urban landscape throughout central Scotland. This presents an opportunity to further develop connected, multi-functional greenspaces across the area to add to the already significant resource that is available. This can also include new active travel routes such as paths and cycleways.

4.34 The re-survey of existing Wildlife Sites with a view to considering them as Local Biodiversity Sites, will require further fieldwork and the *Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP)* is in need of updating. The finalisation of the Geo-diversity sites by BGS may also require some minor funding.

4.35 The CPP requires to be adopted, but placed in the context of reduced budgets available for access, though there is still the opportunity to work with CSFT and Sustrans to obtain external grants.



## 5 The built and archaeological heritage

5.1 An updated Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) was published in December 2011. This revision will ensure that SHEP reflects the new legal context which underpins Scottish Ministers' strategic policies for the historic environment.

5.2 Through SHEP, Scottish Ministers announced that Historic Scotland would prepare an *Inventory of Historic Battlefields* to identify and provide information on Scotland's nationally important fields of conflict to aid in their future management, preservation and enjoyment. Following consultation in 2011 the site of the Battle of Linlithgow Bridge (1526) was included in the inventory.

5.3 The number of listed buildings in West Lothian has altered since adoption of the *West Lothian Local Plan*, reflecting a resurvey of Bangour Village and the de-listing of some buildings to the rear of Lochside Mews, Linlithgow. The total number of listed buildings in West Lothian is currently 437. 43 are identified as category A, 215 category B and 179 as category C (at 21 March 2012). There has been no increase in the number of scheduled monuments of which there are 53. Historic Scotland has advised that it is revising the designation of Linlithgow Palace, Peel and Royal Park, while other sites close to Tarbrax and South Cobbinshaw are being considered for scheduling. Designations are being checked elsewhere.

5.4 There have been no new conservation area designations since adoption of the local plan. There are three *Inventory gardens* and *designed landscapes* in West Lothian - the House of the Binns and Hopetoun House and Harburn House - as well as parts of Hatton House, Newliston House and the historic battlefield at Linlithgow Bridge. Historic Scotland's resurvey programme is currently under review and a survey of the Lothians is planned for 2014-16 although this schedule may change. It should be noted that a portion of the Newliston House gardens and designed landscape is within the West Lothian Council area.



5.5 The council has indicated a willingness to sign up to a Joint Working Agreement with Historic Scotland which will set out the responsibilities and commitments of both parties in relation to dealing with listed building consent case work. Supplementary planning guidance (SPG) on the Historic Environment is to be drafted by the council, although a timetable is yet to be established.

5.6 There would be benefits to having SPG in place to reinforce local plan policies on listed buildings and also to make up for the deficit left by the withdrawal of the *Memorandum of Guidance* and consolidate and build on existing provisions. West of Scotland Archaeology Service, which has a service level agreement with the council, has already prepared guidance on archaeology which could form part of the SPG. SPG will, therefore, be considered further alongside preparation of the local development plan.

5.7 Draft SPG relative to shop fronts and adverts in Linlithgow Palace and High Street, Mid Calder and Torphichen conservation areas has been reported to the council's Development and Transport Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) and is in a finalised draft for presentation to and approval of the Council Executive. The SPG is intended to help retailers, commercial operators and their agents improve the quality of design when altering or replacing shop fronts and associated signage.

5.8 A number of Buildings at Risk in West Lothian have been successfully conserved and found new uses. These include Howden House, Livingston and the Star & Garter, Linlithgow. Other restorations include properties at Calder Road, Bellsquarry and Auchenhard House near West Calder. The condition and future of the former Bangour Village Hospital and Victoria Halls in Linlithgow have become more critical. The Bangour Village Hospital site is currently being marketed and the council is in discussion with the owners, NHS Lothian, about a revised master plan. Initiatives are at an early stage of discussion for Duntarvie, Winchburgh and Hatton Gateway, Kirknewton. Initiatives have also been implemented for the historic town centres of West Lothian.



#### Problem areas/issues

5.9 The preparation of SPG for the Historic Environment will have resource implications for the council. The council will be required to consult with Historic Scotland on proposals affecting inventoried historic battlefields following recent changes to legislation which became effective in August 2012. The condition and future of the former Bangour Village Hospital and Victoria Halls, Linlithgow will continue to require monitoring.



## 6 Employment

6.1 The economic potential of West Lothian, given its location in the heart of Scotland's Central Belt, its strong business base, its growing tourism industry, and the skills and employability of its people, is significant. Realising this potential and reinforcing West Lothian as a major contributor to the Scottish economy remains a key challenge.

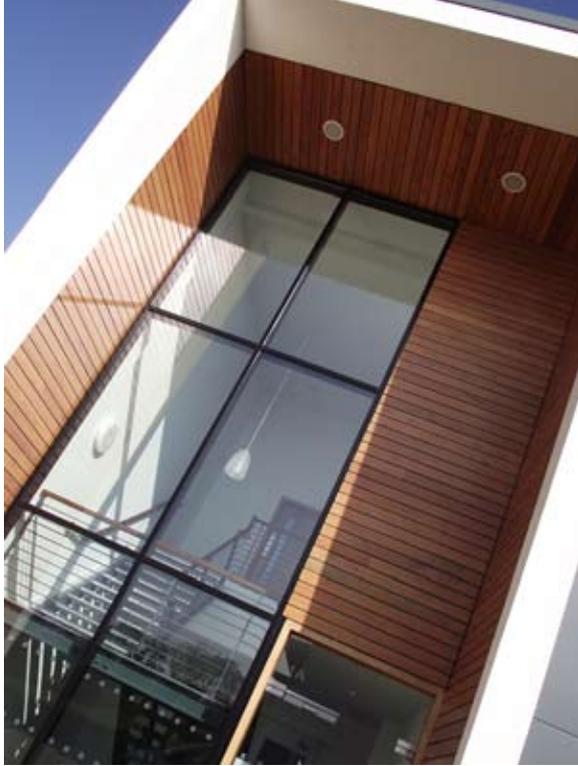
6.2 The *West Lothian Local Plan* continues to support the council's economic development strategy as set out in the *West Lothian Economic Strategy 2010-20*. This makes it clear that West Lothian's economy has reacted positively to constant change over the last thirty years, moving from one that was dominated by manufacturing, to strong growth in service sectors including financial services, retail, and wholesale distribution. This diverse economy is reflected in the fact that no single business sector now account for more than a quarter of all employment in the district.

6.3 Levels of employment and economic activity are high in West Lothian: 79.4% of West

Lothian's working age population is economically active, the joint seventh highest level of any Scottish local authority. There are 74,800 jobs based in the area. Key sector strengths are in food and drink manufacture, distribution and logistics, construction, biotech and life sciences, financial services and retail.

6.4 In terms of progress in employment development within West Lothian, significant planning applications have been determined in recent years with some developments now on site and others completed (see table 3).

6.6 The less than vibrant economic climate does however present a major challenge to the area's growth aspirations and the LDP presents an opportunity to refresh planning strategy. Going forward, it will ensure that West Lothian is well placed to benefit from recovery, for example, by pro-actively embracing the new green economy (characterised by high levels of energy efficiency and the development of low carbon goods, processes and services) will generate wider economic and social benefits, including the development of local skills and job creation.



### Key economic facts

- levels of employment and economic activity are high in West Lothian; 78% of West Lothian's working age population are economically active, the second highest level of any Scottish local authority;
- West Lothian has a population of about 173,000 in 2011, the youngest and one of the fastest growing in Scotland with an average age of 38 compared with an average age of 40 in Scotland as a whole;
- at 6.9%, unemployment in West Lothian is slightly lower than the 7.8% rate for Scotland and 7.8 % the rate for Great Britain (Office for National Statistics – April 2012-March 2013);
- educational attainment has improved in West Lothian over the last ten years with 97.8% of all pupils gaining a qualification in 2011-2012, in comparison with the Scottish average of 94%, and attainment in general continues to rise;
- In 2011, some 4,500 businesses are known to be operating in West Lothian (4,225 of which are VAT/ PAYE registered);
- an analysis of unfilled job vacancies shows that the rate of vacancies is slightly lower in West Lothian than in Scotland as a whole – 58 per 10,000 working age population for West Lothian, compared to 60 for Scotland.
- 60% of Scotland's population (some 3 million people and 54% of Scotland's businesses) is within one-hour travel time of West Lothian.

### Employment trends in West Lothian

6.6 West Lothian has performed relatively well over the period since adoption of the local plan in terms of the percentage of the workforce being employed, compared with both the Scottish and the British average. The general trend between 2008 and 2011 was however a gradual decline in West Lothian, Scotland and Great Britain in the percentage of people in employment, although in the latest statistics April 2011 to March 2012, there has been a gradual recovery in employment figures at a West Lothian and Great Britain level, although this is still to reach the levels pre-2008 when the economic downturn began to take a significant effect (see table 4).

6.7 The Annual Business Inquiry (ABI) provided information on the number of jobs available in West Lothian until 2008. Thereafter figures were provided by the new Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES). Because of a discontinuity in the analysis of the move from the ABI to BRES, the number of jobs in West Lothian appears to be much higher in 2009 than previous years. Despite the discontinuity coinciding with the economic downturn there is a noticeable reduction in jobs within West Lothian, reflecting the trends at Scotland and Great Britain level. Taking into account the jobs lost as a result of the closure of the VION site in Broxburn, the true total at the start of 2013 might be approximately 71,500 employee jobs (see table 5).

6.8 The percentage of all people who are economically active is higher in West Lothian than it is in Scotland and Great Britain. Furthermore, the percentage of all people that are unemployed is lower in West Lothian than it is in Scotland and Great Britain (see table 6).

6.9 Since adoption of the local plan, the number of unemployment and job seekers allowance claimants has increased as a result of the economic downturn, but there has been a recent decline in the numbers of people claiming benefits (see table 7).

6.10

- In July 2013, the number of JSA jobless in West Lothian was 4,041. This was a decrease of 135 on the previous month and indicated a minor improvement in employment activity.
- In July 2013, West Lothian's benefit claimant rate of 3.7% was lower than the rate for Scotland (3.8%), but higher than the comparable rate for Great Britain (3.5%).
- In July 2013, West Lothian's unemployment rate ranked 15th highest out of all Scottish local authority areas (i.e. 15 out of 32 authorities). This was an improvement of one place on the previous month.

- In July 2013, youth unemployment (18-24 year olds) in West Lothian was 1,230. This represented an increase of 35 on the previous month.
- The JSA is payable to people under pensionable age who are available for, and actively seeking, work.

6.11 It should be noted that JSA based unemployment figures do not provide a definitive figure on economic inactivity. However, the headline JSA figure does help to indicate the latest trend or change at a national or local level and whether the economic recovery is gaining momentum or stalling (see table 8).

6.12 Table 9 indicates that unemployment amongst the younger people of employable age in West Lothian has been at a higher rate in the month of June compared to the Scottish and British average. The rates amongst 25-49 year olds and 50-64 year olds fares better compared with the Scottish and British averages and is largely similar and comparable.

6.13 Unemployment data for the UK based on the preferred government measure (ILO) is for the three months to May. The number of people unemployed has fallen by 57,000 to 2.51 million (a rate of 7.8%). The total number of people claiming JSA in June has dropped by 21,200 to 1.48 million (see table 9).

6.14 Table 10 indicates that West Lothian has a marginally less economically inactive percentage of population compared with the Scottish and British average.

#### Quarterly data on key benefits (Feb 2013)

6.15 Key out of work benefits represents a combined total for people on JSA, Employment and Support Allowance or incapacity benefit, Lone Parents and others on income related benefits). The total for West Lothian on key out of work benefits was 15,560 (13.7% of people of working age). This represents an increase of 940 on the previous quarter - a result of a large increase in JSA claimants in January and February 2013, including those losing their job as a result of the Vion closure.



6.16 VAT/PAYE registrations and de-registrations are the best official guide to the pattern of business start-ups and closures. They are an indicator of the level of entrepreneurship and of the health of the business population. As such they are used widely in regional and local economic planning. Table 11 demonstrates that West Lothian performs well in this area of the economy, compared with Scotland and Great Britain as a whole.

6.17 Further information and more detailed statistics relating to the economic well being of West Lothian can be found in both the *West Lothian Economic Profile 2013* and the *West Lothian Economic Update*.

6.18 It is also worth noting that the development plan is only one contributory factor to economic well being. Other key factors of economic well being can include national and European economic policies and other more complicated factors beyond the remit of the development plan such as the global economic downturn and increases in costs of goods and services.

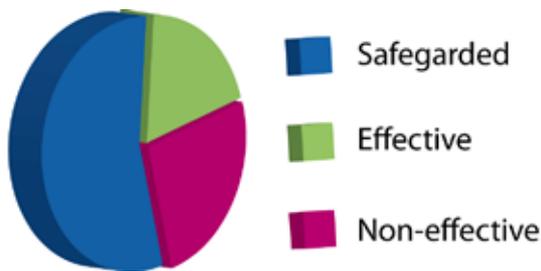
#### Employment land supply in West Lothian

6.19 A review of the employment land supply has been carried out and some additions and deletions to the established supply are proposed in order to ensure that an appropriate ranges of sites are available.

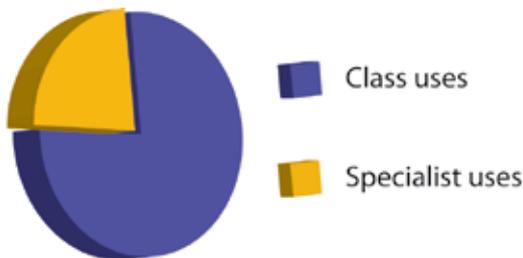
6.20 Employment land supply in West Lothian totals approximately 613.55 hectares (November 2011). However, of this only 119.27 hectares is immediately available for development. Over half of the employment land supply is on safeguarded sites including the single user safeguarded employment sites at Linhouse (ELv54) and Eliburn (ELv25), Livingston. Under the terms of SPP, the Scottish Government no longer considers it necessary through national policy to identify and safeguard large single-user high amenity sites for inward investment. The future of these sites will require to be re-assessed as part of the local development plan. Although outwith the council's administrative area, the recently approved master plan for Edinburgh Airport may give rise to opportunities for employment growth in West Lothian.

6.21 The *Economy Technical Note* prepared in support of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) provides details on the employment land supply for West Lothian. This can be summarised as follows:

Allocated sites: 613.55 hectares, of which 119.27 hectares is effective i.e. land judged to have no significant constraints; 157.11 hectares is non-effective i.e. land with identified development constraints; and 337.17 hectares is safeguarded for potential company expansion or particular uses.



6.22 Of these land allocations, 474.3 hectares is allocated for classes 4 (business), 5 (general industrial) and 6 (storage and distribution) uses (as specified in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997. 170.5 hectares is allocated for 'specialist' uses.



In taking forward the employment land requirements set out in the SDP and *Economy Technical Note*, the local development plan will be required to support the allocation of 123 hectares of strategic employment land.

6.23 At March 2010, the total employment land supply of West Lothian was 613.55 hectares, of which 123 hectares is identified as strategic.

6.24 In terms of implication for the West Lothian Local Development Plan, this will require that 35 hectares of land be allocated for strategic sites.

6.25 Some 29% of land within West Lothian is effective, i.e. immediately available for development.

6.26 A review of employment land allocations identified in Appendix 5.1 of the WLLP is underway and will inform the local development plan.

6.27 The local development plan will be required to reflect the recent designation of an Enterprise Area in West Lothian. The Enterprise Area is to comprise three sites - two in Broxburn and one in Livingston. The principal purpose to the Enterprise Area is to enable businesses to take full advantage of the food and drink manufacturing opportunities in West Lothian. The sites can be viewed on the [Scottish Government's website](#).

6.28 The council is also developing an *Economic Strategy*, which it intends to publish and consult on later in 2013. The terms of this will require to be reflected in the local development plan.

## Problem areas/issues

6.29 There is continuing pressure for non-class 4, 5 and 6 uses within employment areas or on allocated employment sites. This issue will be addressed in the LDP. In the interim, SPG is in preparation which will consider relaxing restrictions in certain employment areas to allow for appropriate non class 4, 5 and 6 uses that may be suitable within employment areas and industrial estates. The existing categorisation of class 4, 5 and 6 uses within the adopted local plan will also be reviewed for certain sites as part of the review of employment land supply. This review is currently underway and will inform the forthcoming LDP.

6.30 The Vion plant in Broxburn closed in early 2013 following the closure announcement in July 2012. The closure resulted in 1,700 redundancies. This

has had a significant impact to the local economy. In addition to the workers directly affected by the closure, the increased unemployment and reduced local income could reduce demand for other goods and services provided by local businesses, therefore creating further adverse consequences for the local economy.

6.31 In an attempt to provide support, the Scottish Government, working closely with West Lothian Council, economic and employment agencies, as well as representatives of the Vion employees, convened a task-force to explore options to encourage the creation of new employment opportunities within the area and to provide assistance in securing alternative jobs for those made redundant. This resulted in a *West Lothian Economic Recovery Plan* being agreed.

*Table 3 - Major employment developments*

Extension of the Glen Turner Distillery at Starlaw on the west side of Livingston to include grain and malt distilleries, maturation warehouses and ancillary buildings with associated works. The development has now been completed.
Construction of the Glenmorangie bottling facility and ancillary offices at Alba Campus, by Livingston (site ELv41). The development has been completed.
Completion of significant infrastructure works at site EWb4, Cowhill, by Whitburn in terms of roads, drainage and other services.
Planning consent was granted in October 2009 for the construction of a new access road and sub division of the site for future development of business units at Williamston South, Livingston (site ELv60). Work has still to progress significantly on site, however a bellmouth access to the site has been formed to enable the planning permission to remain valid. Further work will take place on site when demand for employment land increases.
Work continues at Riddochhill, Blackburn (EBb1) in terms of removal of the burning bing and rehabilitation of land and the site is now being marketed for sale or rent as a joint venture between the council and a private developer. The site is only a few months from completion in terms of being an effective employment site.
Works have begun on employment site ELv39 Rosebank, Livingston adjacent to the Alba Campus. The western and northern parts of the site are effective. The eastern part of the site has a vehicular access in place.
Outline planning permission for the mixed use development at Calderwood, east of East Calder, was approved by the council in March 2013 and includes provision for an additional 20ha of employment land to the south of Camps Industrial Estate.
Outline planning permission has been granted for a mixed use development at Southdale, Armadale, which includes up to 45ha of employment land. The employment land is highly accessible being close to park and ride and station facilities and the M8. The employment land has not yet been serviced.
Planning permission in principle was granted in April 2012 at Winchburgh. The development includes up to 40ha of employment land. The employment land is identified in the master plan and it is intended that it will be developed after the proposed new motorway junction is completed.

Table 4 - Numbers in employment

Date	West Lothian	West Lothian (%)	Scotland (%)	Great Britain (%)
Apr 08 - Mar 09	86,000	75.7	73.3	72.0
Apr 09 - Mar 10	82,900	71.8	71.2	70.3
Apr 10 - Mar 11	83,900	72.9	71.0	70.2
Apr 11 - Mar 12	82,600	71.7	70.7	70.2
Apr 12 - Mar 13	85,800	74.3	70.7	70.9

Source: Office of National Statistics (ONS) annual population survey June 2013

Note: numbers are for those aged 16 and over, % are for those of working age (16-59/64)

Table 5 - Number of jobs in West Lothian

Year	West Lothian (employee jobs)	Scotland (employee jobs)	Great Britain (employee jobs)
2005	73,700	2,398,800	26,496,600
2006	75,000	2,376,900	26,355,100
2007	74,300	2,408,500	26,602,200
2008	76,000	2,420,400	26,677,200
2009	78,900	2,406,800	26,642,600
2010	74,600	2,330,500	26,581,300
2011	73,000	2,332,700	26,561,700
2012	74,100	2,119,200	23,570,500
2012	78,500	2,118,900	23,570,500

Sources: (1) year 2005 to 2008 (ONS annual business inquiry employee analysis – from Nomis on 8 September 2012) and year 2009 to 2011 (BRES – Business Register and Employment Survey – from Nomis on 27 August 2013)

Table 6: Employment and unemployment

April 2012 - March 2013	West Lothian	West Lothian (%)	Scotland (%)	Great Britain (%)
<b>All people</b>				
Economically active†	91,600	79.4	76.9	77.1
In employment†	85,800	74.3	70.7	70.9
Employees†	78,500	68.4	62.4	60.9
Self employed†	7,100	5.8	7.8	9.5
Unemployed (model-based)§	6,300	6.9	7.8	7.8
<b>Males</b>				
Economically active†	47,800	83.7	81.9	83.1
In employment†	44,600	78.0	74.6	76.1
Employees†	40,500	71.3	63.3	62.3
Self employed†	4,100	6.6	10.9	13.2
Unemployed§	3,200	6.7	8.8	8.2
<b>Females</b>				
Economically active†	43,800	75.3	72.0	71.2
In employment†	41,200	70.7	67.1	65.8
Employees†	38,100	65.5	61.6	59.5
Self employed†	3,000	5.1	4.9	5.8
Unemployed§	2,600	6.0	6.7	7.4

Source: ONS annual population survey 2013

† - numbers are for those aged 16 and over, % are for those aged 16-64

§ - numbers and % are for those aged 16 and over. % is a proportion of economically active

Table 7 - Unemployed / Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants

Proportion of resident working age population estimates						
Date	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
June 2008	1,616	2.9	642	1.1	2,258	2.0
June 2009	3,418	6.1	1,156	2.0	4,574	4.0
June 2010	3,537	6.3	1,306	2.5	4,843	4.3
June 2011	3,100	5.5	1,433	2.5	4,533	4.0
June 2012	3,004	5.3	1,391	2.4	4,395	3.9
June 2013	2,710	4.8	1,455	2.5	4,165	3.7

Source: ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 10 June 2013]

Table 8 - Total JSA claimants (July 2013)

	West Lothian	West Lothian (%)	Scotland (%)	Great Britain (%)
All people	4,041	3.6%	3.8%	3.4%
Males	2,618	4.7%	5.2%	4.4%
Females	1,423	2.5%	2.5%	2.4%

Source: ONS claimant count with rates and proportions - JSA claimants survey July 2013

Note: % is a proportion of resident working age people

Table 9 - JSA claimants by age and duration (June 2013)

	West Lothian	West Lothian (%)	Scotland (%)	Great Britain (%)
<b>Aged 18-24</b>				
Total	1,230	8.1	7.4	6.2
Up to 6 months	780	5.1	4.8	3.8
Over 6 months and up to 12 months	265	1.7	1.3	1.2
Over 12 months	185	1.2	1.3	1.2
<b>Aged 25-49</b>				
Total	2,150	3.7	4.1	3.6
Up to 6 months	1,120	1.8	2.0	1.7
Over 6 months and up to 12 months	515	0.8	0.8	0.7
Over 12 months	515	0.8	1.3	1.1
<b>Aged 50-64</b>				
Total	610	1.8	2.1	2.1
Up to 6 months	330	1.0	0.9	0.9
Over 6 months and up to 12 months	140	0.4	0.4	0.4
Over 12 months	140	0.4	0.8	0.8

Source: ONS claimant count - age duration with proportions June 2013

Note: % is number of persons claiming JSA as a proportion of resident population of the same age

Table 10 - Economic inactivity (January – December 2012)

	West Lothian	West Lothian (%)	Scotland (%)	Great Britain (%)
<b>All people</b>				
Total	24,600	21.7	23.1	23.1
Student	4,300	17.5	23.3	25.2
Looking after family/home	5,900	24.0	20.1	25.2
Temporary sick	N/A	N/A	2.5	2.0
Long-term sick	7,100	28.8	28.5	22.0
Discouraged	N/A	N/A	0.8	0.8
Retired	5,100	20.9	17.7	16.3
Other	1,300	5.2	7.1	8.5
Wants a job	7,300	29.8	25.4	24.9
Does not want a job	17,300	70.2	74.6	75.1

Source: ONS annual population survey 2013

Notes: Numbers and % are for those aged 16-64

% is a proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64 and gender

## Businesses

Table 11 - VAT registered businesses (2011)

Area	West Lothian	West Lothian (%)	Scotland (%)	Great Britain (%)
Births	515	12.2	10.9	11.3
Deaths	425	10.1	9.1	9.8
Active firms (at end of year)	4,225	-	-	-

Source: Business Demography - 2011

Note: % is a proportion of count of active businesses



## 7 Housing land supply in West Lothian

7.1 The *Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan*, prepared jointly by the four Lothian authorities and approved by Scottish Ministers in June 2004, set out a number of sources of housing land to meet a total requirement of 70,200 new houses, the majority of which were to come from land already identified through the planning system:

- The effective (base) land supply identified in *Housing Land Audit 2001*;
- Output from constrained (non-effective) sites in *Housing Land Audit 2001* that would become effective;
- Sites already identified through local plans but not yet audited as effective;
- Windfall sites; and
- New sites which did not have consent and did not appear in adopted local plans.

7.2 The *West Lothian Local Plan* was adopted in 2009 and allocated land for approximately 25,000 houses. The local plan was intended to meet the housing need requirements which had previously been identified in the E&LSP and, which in turn, had been informed by Scottish Government projections of an increase in the number of households in the Lothians. The council took a long term approach to its development strategy and it was accepted that many of the houses in the established supply would be built after 2015.

7.3 This scale of development was to be mainly achieved through the allocation/ identification of core development areas (CDAs).

7.4 While the E&LSP was replaced by the *Strategic Development Plan* for Edinburgh and South East Scotland (SESplan) in July 2013, it is nevertheless still appropriate and relevant for this monitoring statement to consider the performance to date of the WLLP against the E&LSP.

7.5 The annual HLA, prepared by the council and agreed with house-builders, is the principle tool used to monitor the availability of sufficient effective land to meet strategic housing land requirements for a minimum of five years ahead. It also provides a snapshot of the amount of land available for the construction of houses at any particular time and provides an information source for a variety of purposes, including school roll forecasts, infrastructure provision and affordable housing provision.

7.6 The most recently agreed HLA reflects the housing land position as at 31 March 2012. It programmes future completions from this supply over the Audit period 2012-2017, gives an indication of completions in years 2017-2019 and includes a number of strategic allocations.

7.7 The HLA 2012 anticipated that 577 house completions would be achieved in the first year, 2012/2013. This represents an average completion rate of 48 houses per month. Recent survey work suggests that the actual number of house completions for 2012/13 was 511.

7.8 It can, therefore, be seen that the average number of completions per month has been in the region of 43. It is anticipated that the rate of build will continue to pick up over the coming months, largely as a result of the new council house building phase 2 programme, but even without this fillup, it represents a significant improvement on completions achieved during 2011/12 and provides grounds for believing that the house building industry may have turned a corner and that a recovery in the housing market has begun.

7.9 Between the 2001 base date of the now superseded *Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan* and 31 March 2012, there was an average build rate in Edinburgh and the Lothians of 3,835 houses per annum, this figure being substantially below the required average of 5,000 houses per year identified to meet structure plan targets.

7.10 The average completion rate in West Lothian over the same period was 836 houses per annum which is also below the structure plan target. As a consequence, West Lothian would have needed to achieve a total of 6,907 completions over the remaining three years of the structure plan period (to 2015) to meet the designated target of 16,100. Even if economic conditions do improve and mortgage lending increases, it is very unlikely that house completion rates will revive to this extent.

7.11 Given that low housing output has been experience over a prolonged period, it will take time for completion rates to recover and for this reason it will be difficult to achieve a five year effective housing land supply in the short to medium term given the need to catch up and 'make good' low output during the recessionary period. In any event, the structure plan has now been replaced by the strategic development plan which will set new targets for housing land once supplementary guidance is approved.

7.12 The downturn in the housing market the period 2001 - 2002 has severely affected the number of completions since the early part of 2008 (see table 13).

7.13 West Lothian's build rates had in fact been relatively robust in the earlier years of the E&LSP and have only diminished latterly as the economic downturn has taken hold. It graphically illustrates the effect of the limited finance available on the demand for market housing and consequentially the ability/willingness of house builders to build new properties. The overall contribution made by West Lothian to the Lothian wide housing completions has also fluctuated quite significantly, from a peak of 29% in 2004 and 2005 to a record low of 8% for 2012.



7.14 There had also been a reduction in expectations for housing output over the next five years, as when further analysed, the average completion rate per annum reduced from 731 to 683. The effective five year land supply in the E&LSP area stood at 14,676 houses, with 3,418 or 23% being within West Lothian.

7.15 Nationally, the economic downturn has had a significant effect on the rate of new build. It has become clear that many housing sites are subject to delay in commencement and are being delivered at a slower rate than programmed in the HLA previously. Many of the reasons for the decline in the level of house building are outwith the council's control (e.g. lack of mortgage funding, lack of development finance available, significant reduction in the number of house building companies and a shortage of investment to support the house building industry).

7.16 Discussions with Homes for Scotland and individual developers have confirmed that one of the key difficulties in bringing forward sites is the cost of up front infrastructure and other developer contributions, especially for large sites.

7.17 The council's substantial new build housing programme (248 built, 545 under construction and 1,000 planned) has helped sustain housing output over the last few years. During 2007/08, public sector housing only contributed to 6% of the house completions in West Lothian. By 2011/12, this has increased to 26%. There is, however, no certainty that a similar level of building will be sustained by the council in the longer term, post 2017. The council has recognised that the 'credit crunch' has severely impacted on development delivery and has introduced interim measures to address infrastructure requirements associated with development.

7.18 Whilst there has been some indication of an improvement in mortgage availability, it is, at best, a modest one from a very low base and it must be seen in that context. There is a construction industry wide view that the house building sector is unlikely to return to pre-2008 levels of development any time soon, and by implication, it also makes it improbable that the Scottish Government's previous national target of delivering 35,000 house completions per annum by 2015 can be achieved.

7.19 Whilst the amount of land across the former structure plan area programmed for development over five years drastically reduced in recent years, it is important to be aware that there remained a further 35,159 houses programmed for development beyond 2017. Table 15 details the five year and other programmed land supply for West Lothian and the rest of the E&LSP area.

#### Effective housing land supply

7.20 Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) requires all planning authorities to maintain a five year effective supply of housing land at all times. The effective housing land supply is defined as *'the part of the established housing land supply which is free or expected to be free from development constraints in the period under consideration and will be available for the construction of housing'*. Table 16 sources data from the 2012 HLA to provide a comparison between each of the Lothian council's effective land supply and updated land supply targets at that point in time.

7.21 The E&LSP, and the West Lothian Local Plan 2009 flowing from it, were approved and adopted respectively during a time of growth within the housing market. The exceptional circumstances, in which the five year effective supply of land has been diminished by house builders developing existing sites at a much reduced rate, were not, however, anticipated.

7.22 Development slowed due to a severe reduction in the demand for new housing and the lack of credit available to house builders and house purchasers. Table 17 actually shows that there was more than sufficient land available and free from constraint but the number of house completions anticipated over the next five years was low, largely due to market conditions.

7.23 Only 81% of the Lothian-wide housing land supply was achieved in 2008. This fell dramatically to 46% in 2009, was 45% in 2010 and fell again to 36% in 2011 and 29% in 2012. All Lothian council areas failed to meet the target in 2012.

7.24 In agreeing the 2012 audit, the council was once again obliged to recognise the low level of activity in the housing market and pragmatically phased sites to allow a realistic lead-in time for them to be developed.

7.25 The effect of the current economic downturn has nevertheless compounded the issues of delivering the former E&LSP requirement. And although infrastructure has always been identified as a potential constraint to delivering housing, the effects of the economic slowdown were not.

7.26 In different economic circumstances it is reasonable to conclude that these same sites would be delivering at a significantly faster rate and there is, as demonstrated above, sufficient land to allow for this. In fact there is land, free from planning constraints, for in excess of 35,000 houses across the former E&LSP area, over and above the five year effective supply.

7.27 In August 2011, the Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan Joint Liaison Committee was advised that the five year effective housing land supply continued to fall below the E&LSP requirement but concluded that this was primarily for economic, infrastructure and marketing reasons rather than a particular lack of land identified for housing. For this reason it did not deem it appropriate to advise the member authorities to make additional land allocations at that time.



7.28 This position was endorsed by the council on 4 October 2011. However, the council decided that it would convene a Housing Recovery Conference to engage with the house building industry to identify measures that could be taken to help support and increase the delivery of new housing in West Lothian.

7.29 The most tangible product of the conference was a sixty five point *Housing Recovery Action Plan* and this was reported to and endorsed by the Council Executive.

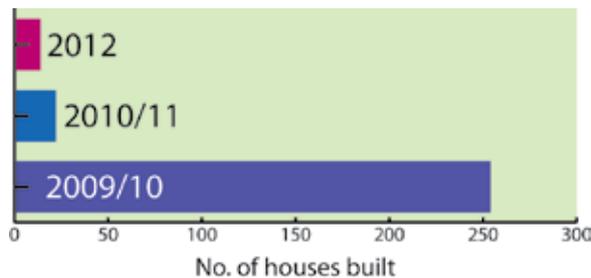
7.30 A second Housing Recovery Conference was held on 2 November 2012 and the council was able to report that the rate of house building in West Lothian had significantly increased since the first event with planning permission having been granted for 3,700 new houses and 'minded to grant' approvals waiting to be released for a further 3,600 houses, once the necessary legal agreements had been concluded. There was particular satisfaction that housing developments at two major growth areas (Winchburgh and Heartlands, Whitburn) had commenced.

7.31 During 2012/13, 511 house completions were achieved in West Lothian, a significant increase from the previous year when only 229 house completions were achieved. This is a welcome turn around and further progress is expected over the next few years. However, there will need to be a strong economic recovery and an improved mortgage market if a five year effective housing land supply for West Lothian is to be achieved.

#### Windfall sites

7.32 In calculating the amount of new housing land to be allocated in order to meet the development plan requirement, the E&LSP assumed that windfall development would account for 14,000 dwellings over the plan period - an average of 1,000 houses per year.

7.33 Windfall sites arise unexpectedly and are by definition not part of the planned housing base land supply. They present opportunities for new housing involving the re-use or redevelopment of previously developed sites, i.e. brownfield sites which were not included within the development plan and are not counted towards meeting the housing land requirement. In 2009/10, 254 houses were built on windfall sites in West Lothian, reducing to just 22 in 2010/11 and 14 in 2012.



7.34 In West Lothian, there were, at the time of the HLA 2012, 134 houses on windfall sites in the effective housing land supply programmed for development between 2012 and 2017 and accounting for 4% of the total effective land supply. Furthermore, it was anticipated that new sites would inevitably come through the planning system raising the actual number of completions above that programmed in the agreed HLA 2012. The anticipated programming of windfall sites forming part of the current effective housing land supply is shown in table 18.

#### Housing contribution by structure plan source

7.35 As a summary of all housing completions according to the source of housing land, as defined in the former E&LSP, is set out in table 19.

#### Completions by land use

7.36 In West Lothian, between 2001 and 2012, 51% of housing completions occurred on brownfield sites. This compares with the Lothian's average of 72%. 39% of programmed housing development in West Lothian is on brownfield sites. Table 20 shows the year-by-year assessment of brownfield development.

#### Affordable and social housing

7.37 1,191 affordable houses were completed in the E&LSP area during 2011/2012 and 70 of these houses were in West Lothian.

7.38 The effective housing land supply in the Lothians includes land for around 11,544 affordable houses. 43% of these houses are in Edinburgh with 25% in West Lothian, 19% in Midlothian and 14% in East Lothian.

7.39 The first new build council houses in West Lothian for several years were completed during 2009/10 on sites in Bathgate, Boghall, Livingston and Whitburn (248 houses). A second phase of 545 houses, embracing sites in Armadale, Bathgate, Blackburn, Livingston, Uphall and Whitburn is well advanced and proposals are being formulated for a further phase of 1,000 council houses, to be completed by 2017.

7.40 In recognition of the change in economic circumstances combined with the publication of a new Planning Advice Note (PAN 2/2010) from the Scottish Government on affordable housing, the council is reviewing its own SPG on affordable housing.

7.41 The Scottish Government monitors the number of affordable housing houses securing planning permission in each local authority area through the *Affordable Housing Securing Planning Consent* survey.

7.42 During the HLA 2012 period (1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012) the following development sites secured planning permission for affordable houses.

7.43 Whilst no land was transferred to the council for social housing during 2011/12, commuted payments from developers totalling some £30,865 were received.



7.44 The substantial slow down in housing output has meant that the council's *Affordable Housing Policy* has thus far not delivered affordable housing land on the scale required to meet the council's aspirations for affordable housing completions.

7.45 To date, only two affordable housing sites have been transferred from developers to the council (Wester Inch, Bathgate and Allison Gardens, Blackridge). No sites have been transferred from developers to housing associations as a result of the council's *Affordable Housing Policy*. Whilst recent progress with planning applications for core development areas (CDAs) is encouraging, the council has to be realistic about the number of affordable house completions that will be achieved from these sites in the short to medium term.

#### Progress with major housing sites

7.46 Progress on major housing sites is illustrated in Table 22. Progress with CDAs is outlined in section 7.

#### Development guidance

7.47 The council has recently approved new supplementary planning guidance (SPG) for medium to large scale residential development, i.e. where more than ten dwellings are proposed or, in the case of applications for planning permission in principle, sites with a capacity for more than ten dwellings.

7.48 The new *Residential Development Guide* (RDG), which replaced the 2002 edition, brings together a number of elements that help contribute towards a cohesive housing layout in order that developments are even more sustainable and integrated.

7.49 Significantly more emphasis is given to ensuring that new housing is not designed in complete isolation of its surroundings, and for the first time it reflects the Scottish Government's policy statements *Designing Places* and *Designing Streets* which, together, encourage a change in emphasis away from housing layouts dictated by the geometry of roads and which are more related to 'placemaking' and the character of an area.

7.50 The requirements for public open space and play areas in new residential developments have been substantially revised, taking account of the council's *Open Space Strategy*, and is the most significantly changed element of the new RDG.

7.51 Unless there is a compelling case for direct on site provision of amenity/active open space and play provision, developers will instead be required to make a financial contribution towards the improvement/upgrading of existing facilities.

7.52 Generally, the new RDG seeks to encourage high quality and innovative housing developments that are visually attractive, well integrated into their surroundings, designed on environmental sustainability principles and which offer a good standard of amenity to new and future occupants, while also protecting the amenity of existing residents.

#### Development briefs

7.53 The council has continued to prepare development briefs for sites. These are designed to guide the development of land to be disposed of by the council and are a material planning consideration to be taken into account in the determination of future applications for planning permission.

#### Problem areas/issues

7.54 The effective housing land supply in West Lothian, and indeed throughout the Lothians, was below the Scottish Government requirement to maintain a five-year effective supply in 2012. However, until SESplan Supplementary Guidance

on housing land is formally adopted, the council has no definitive housing requirement against which the effectiveness of the **current** five-year housing land supply can be measured. Calculations based on the 2013 Housing Land Audit indicate an effective supply of 3,625 units. This is the current development intentions of house builders. However, the actual supply of effective land or land capable of becoming effective within 5 years is 14,470.

7.55 The solutions to delivering an increase in new house completions are regarded as many and varied and include negotiating with house builders on phasing of existing allocated sites, including reaching some accommodation on the payment of developer contributions.

7.56 It is also recognised that infrastructure constraints need to be addressed through a number of mechanisms and it is noted that the council is already providing assistance, for example, through reviewing school catchments and by providing school extensions, and that further initiatives along similar lines to assist the house building industry will be explored. The council will continue to show creativity and willingness to assist developers bring forward early phases of planned development where this can be done without undermining the proper implementation of infrastructure.

7.57 The housing land supply will be reviewed as part of the local development plan.

Table 12 - Core development areas in West Lothian

Core development area	Maximum number of dwellings
Armadale	2070
Winchburgh / East Broxburn/Uphall	5500
Livingston and Almond Valley	5000

Source: Adopted West Lothian Local Plan 2009

Table 13 - House completions between 2001 and 2012

	2001 to 2002	2002 to 2003	2003 to 2004	2004 to 2005	2005 to 2006	2006 to 2007	2007 to 2008	2008 to 2009	2009 to 2010	2010 to 2011	2011 to 2012	Total	Average
<b>West Lothian</b>	1,281 (28%)	925 (22%)	1,158 (29%)	1,288 (29%)	1,175 (27%)	714 (16%)	928 (22%)	422 (10%)	543 (18%)	530 (21%)	229 (8%)	9,193 -	836 (22%)
<b>Lothians</b>	4,503	4,147	3,963	4,457	4,309	4,336	4,272	4,061	2,946	2,490	2,704	42,188	3,835

Source: Housing Land Audits 2001 to 2012

Table 14 - Comparative forecast house completions from 2012 to 2017

	2012 to 2013	2013 to 2014	2014 to 2015	2015 to 2016	2016 to 2017	Total
<b>West Lothian HLA 2010</b>	527	758	802	787	781	3,655
<b>West Lothian HLA 2011</b>	555	683	698	797	767	3,500
<b>West Lothian HLA 2012</b>	577	554	714	796	777	3,418

Source: Housing Land Audits 2010 to 2012

Table 15 - The effective land supply

	2012 to 2013	2013 to 2014	2014 to 2015	2015 to 2016	2016 to 2017	Total	Other programmed land (post 2017)
<b>West Lothian</b>	577	554	714	796	777	3,418	9,876
<b>Lothians</b>	2,255	2,643	3,224	3,375	3,179	14,676	35,159

Source: Housing Land Audits 2002 to 2012

Table 16 - Five year land supply and other effective land

	5 year land supply target	Effective 5 year land supply target	% of target	Total land supply
West Lothian	6,907	3,418	49%	9,876
Midlothian	7,801	3,902	50%	7,081
East Lothian	3,697	2,064	56%	4,318
Edinburgh	9,610	5,297	55%	13,884
Lothians	28,015	14,676	52%	35,159

Source: Housing Land Audit 2012

Table 17 - Effective 5 year housing land supply (from 2012 to 2017) and other effective land

	Remaining target completions to 2015	Supply to 2015	% target	Total effective land supply*	% of total effective land supply v's requirement
West Lothian	6,907	1,845	27%	13,294	192%
Midlothian	7,801	1,904	24%	10,983	141%
East Lothian	3,697	1,019	28%	6,382	173%
Edinburgh	9,610	3,354	35%	19,176	200%
Lothians	28,015	8,122	29%	49,835	178%

Source: Housing Land Audit 2012

\*Includes 5-year land supply

Table 18 - Windfall sites in the effective housing land supply

	2012 to 2013	2013 to 2014	2014 to 2015	2015 to 2016	2016 to 2017	Total	Total effective land supply	% total effective land supply
West Lothian	76	14	19	19	6	134	3,418	4%
Lothians	575	515	530	501	281	2,402	14,676	16%

Source: Housing Land Audits 2002 to 2012

Table 19 - Housing completions by structure plan source

	Base supply	Constrained in base supply	Emerging local plan sites	Strategic allocations	Windfall	Other sources of land (includes small sites)	Total
West Lothian	99	0	0	12	14	104	229
Lothians	468	127	203	417	1,024	428	2,667

Source: Housing Land Audits 2002 to 2012

Table 20 - Housing completions on brownfield sites (% of all completions)

	2001 to 2002	2002 to 2003	2003 to 2004	2004 to 2005	2005 to 2006	2006 to 2007	2007 to 2008	2008 to 2009	2009 to 2010	2010 to 2011	2011 to 2012	Total
West Lothian	21%	29%	43%	54%	69%	71%	73%	30%	60%	56%	54%	51%
Lothians	67%	72%	75%	75%	73%	72%	75%	63%	79%	67%	74%	72%

Source: Housing Land Audits 2002 to 2012

Table 21 - Sites to be developed by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and West Lothian Council

WLLP Site reference	Location	No of houses
--	Crusader Rise, Livingston	22
HLv115	Oldwood Place, Livingston	90
--	Ferrier Crescent & Marches Drive, Armadale	19
--	Alderstone Road, Livingston	45
--	Burngrange Park, West Calder	39
HBg51	Site east of Kaim Park Hotel, Bathgate	24

Source: West Lothian Council

Table 22 - Progress on Major Housing Sites in West Lothian (excluding CDAs)

Site reference	Location	No of houses allocated in the WLLP	Comments
HBn1	Former Bangour Village Hospital, Dechmont	250	<p>Agents for the site, which is owned by NHS Lothian, have recently invited tenders to purchase and develop the former hospital buildings and land extending to approximately 220 acres.</p> <p>The council remains supportive of the redevelopment of this important site, but at the appropriate housing density that secures the refurbishment of the listed buildings within the conservation area and the management of the surrounding woodlands. Monitoring of the condition of the buildings at Bangour continues to ensure the buildings are protected.</p>
HLv98	Drumshoreland, east of Uphall Station/ Pumpherstun	960	<p>The council is minded to grant planning permission for up to 625 houses on part of the Drumshoreland site, subject to a planning obligation being entered into.</p> <p>As a consequence of the long delay in progressing the proposal for housing at Drumshoreland, and because a new school was urgently required to serve the existing communities of Pumpherstun and Uphall Station, the council was compelled to independently pursue the implementation of a new primary school. The school was opened in February 2012. The school has been designed so that it can be easily extended to support housing development in the area.</p>
HWb34	Heartlands, Whitburn	1970	<p>The local plan makes a substantial allocation for new residential development in Whitburn at Heartlands, land that was formerly part of Polkemmet Colliery. An extensive programme of remedial works to address contamination issues has been ongoing for several years and is well advanced.</p> <p>A detailed planning application for the roads and infrastructure for the first phase of the residential development has also been approved and building work commenced on the employment land to the north, the roads and infrastructure are now complete.</p> <p>The council has granted planning permission for an office building, a hotel, a health club and a restaurant. The master plan for the business park shows a mixture of class 4 (office), class 5 (general industrial) and class 6 (storage and distribution) along with ancillary uses such as a restaurant and health club.</p> <p>Detailed planning permission for the associated new motorway junction on the M8 was granted in June 2008 and construction works are ongoing with completion expected in September 2013. A planning application for the approval of reserved matters relating to a supermarket on land to the south of the B7066 was granted by committee in August 2009.</p>

Site reference	Location	No of houses allocated in the WLLP	Comments
HWb34 continued			More recently an application for a supermarket on the north side of the B7066, within the business park, was approved, subject to a legal agreement relating to the revocation of the previous supermarket consent and delivery of replacement business land. While it had been expected that the supermarket developer would be Tesco, recent press announcements have indicated that this is no longer the case. The planning permission for a supermarket development at Heartlands does, however, remain valid and there is an opportunity for another operator to develop the site.
HBg39	Wester Inch, Bathgate	2,025	<p>Since 2004/05 over 1,400 houses have been built from the current allocation of over 2000 homes.</p> <p>Affordable housing land has been transferred by the developers to the council and this site has been developed as part of the council house building programme. The local centre has yet to be started but the extension of the distributor road network to Whitburn Road has been completed. Housing associations have purchased completed dwellings from private house builders thus increasing the total amount of affordable housing at Wester Inch.</p> <p>An extension to Simpson Primary School was completed in July 2010 and a further two classrooms were fitted out in 2011 to increase capacity further. The fitting out of the final classrooms will be completed by the end of 2013.</p> <p>Three play areas have been constructed following the transfer of land from developers.</p> <p>The distributor road at Wester Inch, linking Blackburn Road with Whitburn Road is now open. The phase three land can now be brought forward for development. Further ground stabilisation works are underway to facilitate the completion of the phase two development.</p>
HWf1 and HWf2	Westfield	540	The adopted local plan makes a substantial housing allocation in Westfield for around 540 new houses. The allocation is split over two sites, HWf1 (North Logie Brae) extending to just over 10 hectares and HWf2 (South Logie Brae & Paper Mill) which is the larger of the two sites at 23.5 hectares.
HWf1 and HWf2 continued		.	There have, over the years, been several planning applications for parts of the site but a new comprehensive application, consolidating the entire allocation and in respect of 540 dwellings was approved in August 2010
10/79 HLi27	Linlithgow High Street		To facilitate the development of 41 retirement apartments, McCarthy and Stone commenced the demolition of the bus depot on the High Street, Linlithgow in June 2013.

Source: West Lothian Council



## 8 The Core Development Areas (CDAs)

8.1 The adopted *West Lothian Local Plan* identified three CDAs in West Lothian: and they make up around 50% of the housing land supply in the WLLP.

- Armadale: 2,070 houses and 50 hectares of employment land;
- Livingston and the Almond Valley: 5,000 houses and 60 hectares of employment land; and
- East Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh: 5,500 houses and 45 hectares of employment land.

8.2 After a slow start, development is now underway at Armadale, Calderwood (East Calder) and at Winchburgh. Planning applications are also being considered at Broxburn and Mossend (West Calder).

8.3 During 2012, the first house completions in CDAs occurred at the Southdale development at Armadale. Development has also commenced at the Winchburgh and Calderwood CDAs. Progress has also made been with planning applications at Mossend and at East Broxburn.



## Armada CDA

8.4 There are three parts to the Armada CDA. Standhill, Colinshiel and Armada South.

### Standhill

8.5 Planning applications were submitted for Standhill North and Standhill South in 2006. Whilst these applications remain live, there is currently no named house builder associated with these sites and so the timescale for progressing the sites is uncertain.

### Colinshiel

8.6 Dundas Estates has submitted a planning application for around 300 houses on a 14 hectare site at Colinshiel. The balance of the land is not currently the subject of a planning application.

### Armada South

8.7 The council has granted planning permission in principle to EWP Investments Ltd at Southdale for a mixed-use development including residential (circa 1,000 houses), commercial, retail, school and leisure. Full planning permission has been granted for 192 houses and a supermarket at Southdale and works on the infrastructure required to support the housing and the supermarket started in 2011. Two house builders are currently building at the Netherhouse site and the supermarket has been completed and is now trading.

8.8 Funding is in place to build the first phase of a new primary school and to extend two existing primary schools in Armada. These works are needed to support the housing that has been approved.

8.9 The council has also granted planning permission for up to 400 houses on a brownfield site at Lower Bathville.

8.10 The Airdrie to Bathgate railway opened in December 2010 and the station at Armada opened in March 2011. The new station will improve the marketability of Armada as a residential and employment location.



### Livingston and Almond Valley CDA

8.11 The Livingston and Almond Valley CDA comprises land for 2,800 houses and 20 hectares of employment land at Calderwood and land for 2,200 houses and 40 hectares of employment land at West Livingston/Mossend.

#### Calderwood

8.12 Planning permission in principle was granted for 2,300 houses at part of the Calderwood CDA in 2013. The application site comprises most of the Almondell allocation and part of the Raw Holdings West allocation. A detailed planning application for 196 houses on part of the Almondell site has also been approved. It is anticipated that the first house completions on the site will take place in early 2014.

8.13 A draft development framework for the Raw Holdings West allocation was rejected by the council in June 2011. A detailed planning application for 90 houses at Raw Holdings was approved by the council in August 2012. This development started in spring 2013.

8.14 Planning permission for a retirement development at part of the Almondell allocation was granted in February 2011.

8.15 A planning application for the proposed extension of St. Paul's Primary School, East Calder, is being prepared. This extension is required to support the proposed housing at Calderwood and at other sites within its catchment area.

#### West Livingston/Mossend

8.16 The council is minded to grant planning permission for a private development comprising 181 houses at Mossend subject to a planning obligation being entered into. Other planning applications at Mossend are currently being considered.

8.17 Planning permission has been granted for an extension at Parkhead Primary School. This is needed to support the proposed housing at Mossend and at other sites within the catchment area.



### Winchburgh/ East Broxburn/Uphall CDA

8.18 This CDA comprises land for 3,450 houses and 40 hectares of employment land at Winchburgh and 2,050 houses and 5 hectares of employment land at East Broxburn.

#### Winchburgh

8.19 Planning permission in principle was granted for the Winchburgh CDA in April 2012. Planning applications for the first phase infrastructure and housing were approved in 2012 and work started on site during the course of that year. Two house builders are on site and the first houses were occupied in July 2013.

8.20 Funding has been secured to extend the Holy Family/Winchburgh Primary School building. This is needed to support the housing that has been permitted.

#### Broxburn

8.21 Planning permission has been granted for a supermarket at the Candleworks site which forms part of the mixed use allocation at Broxburn. On the balance of this site, the council is minded to grant planning permission for a housing development comprising up to 100 houses.

Two other CDA planning applications are currently being assessed:

- around 350 houses on a 14.5ha site at Greendykes Road; and
- around 800 houses and a primary school at West Wood allocation.

## Problem areas/issues

8.22 Since the start of the credit crunch in 2007, the economic climate in the UK has changed for the worse with the country going through periods of recession and weak economic growth. Developers have found it difficult to finance housing developments and this situation threatens the delivery of housing and other developments within the CDAs. The main issues have been the cost and difficulty of raising debt finance, shorter repayments periods, the tighter mortgage market and the general uncertainty over the long term market conditions.

8.23 As a consequence of the changed economic conditions, in the first two years following adoption of the local plan, progress with CDA proposals was slow. However, during 2012, significant progress was made in advancing some CDA proposals and this has continued into 2013 and there is now greater optimism that these sites will begin to make an increased contribution to housing output in West Lothian.

8.24 The challenge for the council, landowners and developers will be to build on the existing momentum and ensure that the rate of house building can be accelerated and that development commences on more sites within the CDAs in order that the requirement for an effective five year housing land supply and the council's aspirations for sustainable economic growth can be met.

8.25 The council has had to be flexible and creative to ensure that developments in CDAs can progress. For example, interim infrastructure solutions have been progressed as funding is not yet in place to deliver some of the key infrastructure that is needed to support implementation of the CDA strategy in full. The council has also financially supported CDA proposals by forward funding some of the key infrastructure that is needed through its Local Infrastructure Fund.

8.26 Following on from successful Housing Recovery Conferences in 2011 and 2012, the council now has a better understanding of the problems that are holding back housing development in West Lothian and has put in place *Housing Recovery Action Plans* to address the issues.



## 9 Transport and accessibility

9.1 Due to its location in the Scottish Central Belt, West Lothian is well served by three railway lines and a number of major roads including two motorways. In total there are five key road transport corridors which pass through and serve the area. East-west connectivity is generally good by rail, road, bus and even bicycle. However, connectivity for all modes of transport is poor between the areas north of the Bathgate Hills and the main centres of population and employment around Bathgate Livingston and Uphall/Broxburn. There is also a general shortage of safe and convenient cycle and pedestrian routes between and within most towns in West Lothian. The exception is Livingston with its comprehensive network of traffic-free paths and some main corridors such as the A89.

9.2 Parts of the road network are already heavily constrained and some stretches and junctions will come under further pressure even without any further development. The western approaches from West Lothian into Edinburgh along the A89/A8, M8, A71 and A70 suffer congestion at peak times.

9.3 Over the last few years, there has been significant investment in transport infrastructure. This includes road and junction improvements in Livingston, e.g. improvement at Alderstone Road, Almondvale, Braehead and Campus Roundabouts, and the construction of a link road between Almond Interchange and Howden South Road. In addition, there have been a number of new sustainable and active travel schemes including the expansion of rail station car parks at Bathgate and Uphall stations, the construction of new stations at Bathgate, Armadale and Blackridge and the completion of a number of walking and cycling schemes in various towns.

9.4 In addition, major rail schemes like the re-opening of the Airdrie - Bathgate line and the Edinburgh Glasgow Rail Improvement Programme (EGIP) bring significant benefits to the area and help to achieve modal shift from the car to more sustainable modes of transport.

9.5 Transport investment continues to be necessary to make conditions safe for all, improve accessibility in and around West Lothian and support sustainable economic growth. In addition to more traditional transport planning challenges like engineering requirements, availability of funding and social inclusion/accessibility issues, the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 will have implications for the implementation of transport schemes and proposals.

9.6 Local transportation schemes are implemented in accordance with the council's transport programme which is updated annually. For more strategic schemes, the council continues to work with other agencies, including SEStran and the Scottish Government in promoting and implementing jointly funded solutions. Consultation with community councils, interest groups and other stakeholders continues as transportation schemes are brought forward.

9.7 Improvements to public transport services within West Lothian and to towns outwith the area continues subject to resources, including providing fully integrated bus stops with shelters, travel information and high rise kerbs for ease of access.

9.8 The main agencies involved in implementing the major transport initiatives such as the Forth Replacement (Queensferry) Crossing, the Avon Gorge improvements and the Edinburgh Glasgow Improvement Programme (EGIP) include the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, the rail industry and the various bus and rail providers as well as the council. Implementation of major transport initiatives can involve substantial capital investment. Their implementation often depends on the availability of funding contributions from the Scottish Government. Through the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), SEStran as well as individual local authorities, will have a role in identifying, promoting and funding strategic provision within the Lothians. The RTS is currently being reviewed and updated to take account of relevant development since 2008. Table 23 advises of progress on various transport initiatives identified in the local plan.



## Road

### Forth Replacement (Queensferry) Crossing

9.9 Construction of the Replacement Forth Crossing, recently named the Queensferry Crossing, started in 2011 with completion expected by 2016. Works are completed on the upgrade of Junction 1a of the M9 at Kirkliston and now provides an all-way junction providing direct access to/from the M9 for West Lothian traffic using the new bridge.

9.10 As part of the *Managed Crossing Strategy for the Forth Replacement Crossing*, a *Public Transport Strategy* was developed by Transport Scotland in consultation with a number of partner organisations including West Lothian Council, the Regional Transport Partnership and bus operators and was published in 2010. The strategy was refreshed in 2012 and includes a number of traffic management proposals which may impact on or complement transport initiatives identified in the local plan for example, the new motorway

junction on the M9 at Winchburgh. Other schemes under consideration include the installation of bus lanes on the A89 between Broxburn and Newbridge and the A8 between Eastfield Road at Edinburgh Airport. If implemented these schemes would deliver some of the bus priority measures identified in the RTS and support development in the Broxburn area.

9.11 In addition to the schemes on the main A90/M9 corridor the council, in partnership with Transport Scotland, has developed a package of mitigation measures that will help to lessen the impact of the expected traffic growth on the A904 through Newton.



### Trunk road network

#### M8

9.12 A new junction (4a) on the M8 near Whitburn, which is required to support the development plan, is under construction. The new junction will be complemented by a new park and ride site which will be served predominantly by express buses between Glasgow and Edinburgh. However, local bus services will also terminate here to produce an integrated public transport interchange. The site has been secured through the Heartlands development and access arrangements have been included in the layout for Junction 4a.

The strategy also includes M8 public transport improvements such as bus hard shoulder running on the M8 eastbound from junction 3 to Newbridge. A Livingston Park and Ride — adjacent to junction 3 on the M8 is included but no facility at Beugh Burn is indicated.

#### M9

9.13 A new junction on the M9 close to Winchburgh is required to support the Winchburgh CDA. Planning approval for the new junction has been granted and the planning permission for the Winchburgh CDA indicates that the junction will be delivered before 1000 houses are occupied. Land for an associated bus based park and ride is safeguarded in the master plan.

9.14 The Falkirk Local Plan was adopted in 2011 and identifies opportunity TR.BNS1 for west facing slips at Junction 3 of the M9 at Burghmuir, on the east side of Linlithgow. The proposed Falkirk Local Development Plan was published in April 2013 and continues to safeguard land for the slips (Proposal INF05). Land for the slip roads is also safeguarded in the *West Lothian Local Plan*.

9.15 Hard shoulder running on the M9 but only on approach to Newbridge is also provided for.

### Local road network

#### A801

9.16 Land continues to be safeguarded in the local plan for a new Avon Gorge crossing. A new bridge at Avon Gorge is supported both through the National Planning Framework 2 (NPF2) and the adopted Falkirk Local Plan which safeguards land to implement this project (development opportunity TR.RUR3 A801 Avon Gorge Bridge and approach road). The proposed Falkirk Local Development Plan includes proposal INF07 A801 (Avon Gorge) corridor upgrade. Both Falkirk and West Lothian Councils continue to actively pursue the construction of the bridge and to secure Scottish Government funding for the project; £5million in TIF funding has already been identified by Falkirk Council.

9.17 An updated SPG for the upgrading of the A801 between junction 4 of the M8 motorway and the Pottishaw roundabout was approved by the Council Executive in August 2010. Preliminary design work has commenced on the dual carriageway scheme identified in the local plan.



## Livingston

9.18 A number of initiatives necessary to support development in Livingston Town Centre have now been implemented. Braehead Junction has been modified and signalised and a link road from Almond Interchange and Howden South Road and the new Civic Centre has been completed. In addition, parking charges have been introduced by the main Almondvale town centre car park owner.

## A71

9.19 A new relief road to the west of Wilkieston between the A71 at Coxydene and the B7031 (Bonnington Road) is required to support ongoing development allocations in Calderwood and the West Livingston CDAs. The council has granted planning permission for the Almondell allocation of the Calderwood CDA which includes provision for the relief road and land required for the scheme is also being safeguarded.

9.20 A revised SPG for developer contributions towards the A71 was reported to the council's Development and Transport Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) in December 2012 and is currently out to consultation. The revised SPG sets out a strategy for securing developer contributions required towards the A71 public transport improvements which would support housing growth in West Lothian. The key principles of developer contributions remain unchanged between the 2006 draft SPG and the revised SPG.

## A89

9.21 The refreshed public transport strategy for the Forth Replacement (Queensferry) Crossing identifies a package of measures for public transport improvements at Newbridge and interfaces with a number of current local plan policies. SPG for the A89 needs to reflect these elements of the strategy as well as ensuring delivery with other partners of a cohesive package of public transport improvements from Kilpult Roundabout through to Newbridge.

9.22 The refreshed strategy also proposes public transport improvements on the M8. These include bus hard shoulder running on the M8 eastbound from Junction 3 to Newbridge and a park and ride site adjacent to Junction 3 on the M8 near Livingston. However, a potential park and ride facility at Beugh Burn has not been included.

## Travel Plan Co-ordinator

9.23 In December 2007, the council approved SPG requiring developers to contribute towards a travel plan coordinator. In late 2008, following the economic downturn, the Council Executive resolved to agree suspending the contributions for a two-year period. A further suspension has been agreed to January 2014. The need for developers to submit travel plans to support their planning applications remains. The council will continue to explore with developers innovative ways in which a travel co-ordination service should be delivered, which could involve developers carrying out their own monitoring and submitting the results to the council.



## Rail

9.24 A number of initiatives have recently been put in place helping to increase accessibility to the rail network:

- re-opening of the Airdrie to Bathgate rail line including the provision of parking at the new stations in Armadale and Blackridge;
- a second platform at Uphall Station and Livingston North;
- the introduction of extra parking at rail station car parks at Uphall Station and Bathgate providing more opportunities to access rail services;
- the completion of Phase 1 of Fastlink providing improved access to more direct strategic bus services to Edinburgh; and
- low frequency direct bus service to Glasgow.

9.25 There is pressure for further park and ride facilities along the Edinburgh to Glasgow rail line particularly at Linlithgow as this station and train services are heavily congested.

9.26 Consultation on the Edinburgh to Glasgow Improvements Programme (EGIP) is now underway with the Tranche 1 consultation completed in January 2012 and the Tranche 2 consultation completed in Autumn 2012.

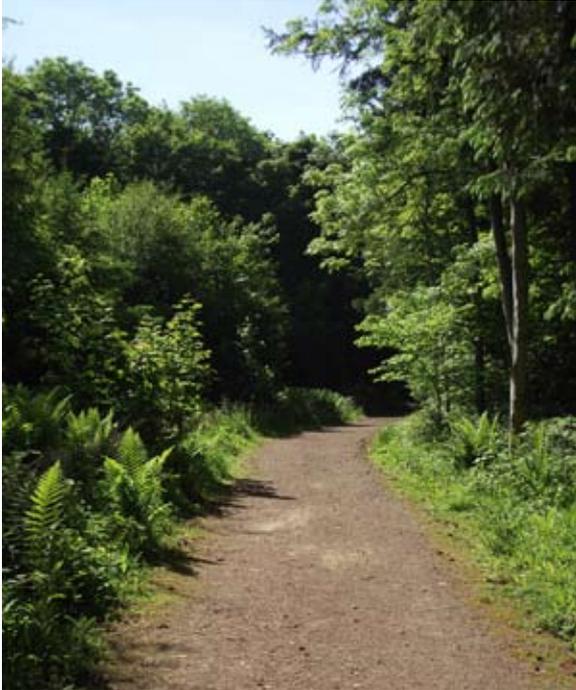
9.27 The original EGIP proposal included the electrification of the railway line between Edinburgh and Glasgow, an increase of rail services of up to six trains an hour (including express services travelling from city centre to city centre

in around 35 minutes), and the electrification of the Stirling/Dunblane/Alloa line. In July 2012, Transport Scotland announced a re-phasing of the project which resulted in a significant reduction of its scale and the removal of some key elements such as increased service frequency, improvements to the Stirling/Dunblane/Alloa line and the removal of the Dalmeny Chord. The removal of the latter from the EGIP project may make it more difficult to deliver a much-needed new station at Winchburgh. Further discussions on this are required and the council has raised the matter with Scottish Government.

9.28 The major works taking place in West Lothian as part of the revised EGIP programme will be electrification of the line from Newbridge junction to Linlithgow and Falkirk. The electrification of this route will improve connectivity and benefit the area.

9.29 Planning permission in principle for the Winchburgh CDA, including provision of a developer-funded rail station and rail-based park and ride facility, was granted by the council in April 2012 and land for a station is safeguarded in the master plan.

9.30 Network Rail has abandoned a proposed underpass solution for Kirknewton level crossing and has replaced the existing half barrier crossing with full-width barriers with object detection.



## High Speed 2 Developments

9.33 In January 2013 the UK government announced detailed plans for extending the proposed High Speed 2 (HS2) rail link north from Birmingham to Manchester and Leeds. HS2 developments may offer opportunities for new connections and services in West Lothian. Further details will emerge as the project is developed.

## Cycling and walking

9.34 Work is substantially complete on the 14 mile replacement cycle path alongside the Airdire/Bathgate rail line. Discussions are ongoing between the council and Network Rail on the vesting of the path. Opportunities remain to form additional connections to the route especially at Armadale, Calderwood and West Livingston.

9.35 Since the last monitoring report, a number of new cycle schemes have been constructed. These include:

- a new section of NCR76 linking the Hopetoun Estate and Blackness along the seafront;
- new sections of cycle track adjacent to the A89 at Uphall;
- a new path between Hopetoun Estate and Blackness;
- the completion of the missing link on the Railway Path in Livingston;
- a new path linking the Springfield estate, Linlithgow, and the town centre;
- improved links from Seafield to NCR75; and
- the erection of 500 new signs on the Livingston path network.

8.36 Proposals for 2013/14 and 2014/15 are:

- Lower Bathville to NCR75, Armadale;
- A7066 Boghall to Wester Inch upgrade path to cycle path;
- cycle path; links to canal towpath in Linlithgow;
- Realignment of NCR75 at Blackridge station;
- Starlaw roundabout to Boghall roundabout, provision on new cycle path;
- Riddochhill to Wester Inch provision of new cycle path;
- Whitburn to Armadale Station, provision of new cycle path; and
- cycle path link from south side to Bathgate railway station.



#### Problem areas/issues

9.35 The early construction of link roads through the core development areas is essential to delivering and maximising the rate of development. Without agreement between the different developers who own the land needed to provide the entire link, or an agreement on the phasing between adjacent development sites, constraints must be introduced to avoid existing network capacity being exceeded.

9.36 The council continues to make the case for a new rail station at Winchburgh.

9.37 Strategic infrastructure is also under pressure and investment is needed at the strategic level which integrates with development plans.

9.38 While the council has a capital budget for cycling, walking and safer streets due to the large number of schemes under consideration e.g. further improvements along the canal towpath at Linlithgow and in and around Livingston, it is seeking support funding from other grant sources including SUstrans.

Table 23: Progress update on transport initiatives

<b>Replacement Forth Crossing</b>
Construction started in 2011 with completion expected by 2016.
<b>Edinburgh Airport enhancement</b>
Linked to the <i>West Edinburgh Planning Framework</i> (approved May 2008) and Edinburgh Airport master plan. In January 2011, BAA published a consultation draft of a Second Master Plan for Edinburgh Airport. The final master plan was published in July 2011.
<b>Grangemouth freight hub</b>
A <i>National Planning Framework 2</i> (NPF2) project. A watching brief remains over impacts on the A801. Scottish Government has recently announced that a bid by Falkirk Council for TIF funding to assist in delivery has been successful.
<b>Rosyth International Container Terminal</b>
A <i>National Planning Framework 2</i> (NPF2) project. A watching brief remains over impacts arising from the development particularly in relation to the Replacement Forth Crossing.
<b>Tram network (West Edinburgh Tram Extension) (WLLP policy TRAN 26)</b>
Implications arising from the decision of Edinburgh City Council to continue with Phase 1 but terminate the line at St Andrews Square will need to be considered for any consequences on the wider tram network. However, extension to Broxburn, Uphall and Livingston remains a possibility. Although not actively being pursued at present this remains a proposal within the emerging <i>Strategic Development Plan</i> although it is unlikely to go forward within the lifetime of the local plan.
<b>Enhancement of Shotts railway line, including an Edinburgh-Livingston- Glasgow express service (medium term) (WLLP policy TRAN 24)</b>
Still active with the introduction of additional fast Glasgow to Edinburgh services having been implemented. The Shotts line is the most in need of upgrading. For a wide part of West Lothian it provides the only rail link to Glasgow. A bus-rail interchange and improved park and ride at West Calder along with improvements to Addiewell Station are required and land will be safeguarded for these purposes. As part of the Rail Electrification Programme – Control period 5 (2014-19) Transport Scotland have committed to the electrification of the of 75km of the Shotts Line between Holytown and Midcalder junctions.
<b>East Calder Parkway Station (medium term) (WLLP policy TRAN 25)</b>
Land reservation no longer required proposals is not taken forward in the approved Strategic Development Plan.
<b>Bathgate line upgrading including new station at Boghall with park and ride and interchange, and re-opening to Airdrie (WLLP policy TRAN 22)</b>
The line was opened during 2010 and is now fully operational. A new station and park and ride were provided at Bathgate in 2010. The station and park and ride at Boghall are not actively being pursued.
<b>M8 rapid transit, bus park and ride and interchange (medium term) (WLLP policy TRAN 27)</b>
Not actively being pursued at present but remains a proposal within the emerging Strategic Development Plan. However, the bus lane proposals on the M8 corridor are currently not supported by Transport Scotland.
<b>A801 completion at Avon Gorge (with Falkirk Council) (WLLP policy TRAN 29)</b>
Land continues to be safeguarded in the local plan, linked to the Armadale core development area and more strategic projects outwith West Lothian i.e. the Grangemouth Freight hub and the A801 Avon Gorge. The new bridge at Avon Gorge is supported both through the <i>National Planning Framework 2</i> (NPF2) and the adopted Falkirk Local Plan which safeguards land to implement this project (development opportunity TR.RUR3 A801 Avon Gorge Bridge and approach road). The proposed <i>Falkirk Local Development Plan</i> includes proposal INF07 A801 (Avon Gorge) corridor upgrade. Both Falkirk and West Lothian Councils continue to actively pursue the construction of the bridge and to secure Scottish Government funding for the project; £5million in TIF funding has already been secured by Falkirk Council.
<b>Uphall Rail Station (WLLP policy TRAN 22)</b>
The station at Uphall has been upgraded and an additional car park constructed to increase parking capacity.

**Winchburgh Rail Station (WLLP policy TRAN 23)**

Land for a station is safeguarded in the master plan for the Winchburgh CDA. Transport Scotland continues to object to the proposed rail station at Winchburgh because of potential conflict with the Edinburgh to Glasgow Improvement Project (EGIP) scheme.

The original EGIP proposal included the electrification of the railway line between Edinburgh and Glasgow, an increase of rail services to up to six trains an hour (including express services travelling from city centre to city centre in around 35 minutes), and the electrification of the Stirling/Dunblane/Alloa line. In July 2012, Transport Scotland announced a significant reduction of the scale of the project and the removal of some key elements such as increased service frequency, improvements to the Stirling/Dunblane/Alloa line and the Dalmeny Chord.

However, as part of the Rail Electrification Programme – Control period 5 (2014-19) Transport Scotland have committed to the electrification of the Stirling, Alloa, Dunblane line services with journey time improvements for passengers travelling to Edinburgh or Glasgow. This work to be complete by December 2018.

The inclusion of the Stirling/Alloa/Dunblane within the electrification workstream will benefit the case for a Winchburgh Station since time savings on the route assist in the delivery of a train pathway to allow stopping of these services at Winchburgh. Further discussions on this are required and the council has raised the matter with Scottish Government Ministers. Discussions remain ongoing.

**Kirknewton level crossing (WLLP policy TRAN 24)**

Installation of full barrier works is completed and fully operational. A road rail partnership has been set up and will monitor the operation of the crossing and will meet regularly to discuss any issues which arise.

**Edinburgh to Glasgow Improvement Project (EGIP)**

The original EGIP proposal included the electrification of the railway line between Edinburgh and Glasgow, an increase of rail services to up to six trains an hour (including express services travelling from city centre to city centre in around 35 minutes), and the electrification of the Stirling/Dunblane/Alloa line. In July 2012, Transport Scotland announced a significant reduction of the scale of the project and the removal of some key elements such as increased service frequency, improvements to the Stirling/Dunblane/Alloa line and the Dalmeny Chord.

However, as part of the Rail Electrification Programme – Control period 5 (2014-19) Transport Scotland have committed to the electrification of the Stirling, Alloa, Dunblane line services with journey time improvements for passengers travelling to Edinburgh or Glasgow. This work to be complete by December 2018.

The inclusion of the Stirling/Alloa/Dunblane within the electrification workstream will benefit the case for a Winchburgh Station since time savings on the route assist in the delivery of a train pathway to allow stopping of these services at Winchburgh.

The implications of the amended EGIP proposals for a new station at Winchburgh will require to be assessed. At present, Transport Scotland is indicating that to ensure EGIP delivers its strategic aims of reduced centre-to-centre journey times between the cities, a new rail station at Winchburgh cannot be accommodated. Further discussion on this is required and the council has raised the matter with Scottish Government ministers.

**New junction on M8 at Whitburn (J4M8) (WLLP policy TRAN 27)**

The works are now complete and the motorway junction opened on 14 September 2013.

**A89 Corridor: park & ride at Kilpunt****Land for the extension of Light Rapid Transit (Edinburgh Tramline 2) to Broxburn, Uphall and Livingston (from Newbridge) will be safeguarded following a study of the A89 / A899 corridor. (WLLP policy TRAN 20 and TRAN 26)**

SPG for the A89 Corridor requires to be prepared.

The provision of park and ride facilities at Kilpunt is under review. Alternative options are being considered including bus lanes on the A89.

As part of the Managed Crossing Strategy for the Forth Replacement Crossing, a Public Transport Strategy updated in mid 2012, was developed by Transport Scotland in consultation with a number of partner organisations, including West Lothian Council. It includes a number of traffic management proposals, one of which identifies the key role Newbridge has on the network. It recognised that the scope of further assessment at Newbridge should be focused on improving public transport movement and not on any infrastructure improvements which would solely benefit general traffic. City of Edinburgh Council in partnership with West Lothian Council and Transport Scotland is preparing a study of the Newbridge roundabout to develop and test preliminary public transport design improvements.

Although not actively being pursued at present the extension of Edinburgh Tramline 2 remains a proposal within the emerging Strategic Development Plan although it is unlikely to go forward within the lifetime of the local plan.

**A71 bypass at Wilkieston (pending review with the City of Edinburgh Council); and a relief road north of Wilkieston. The SPG for the A71 requires to be updated. (WLLP policy TRAN 29)**

SPG, approved on 20 June 2006, applies only to developers at Calderwood and West Livingston/Mossend Core Development Areas. The western half of the bypass will be provided by the main Calderwood developer after the appropriate housing development level is reached. The SPG is in the process of being reviewed and updated to reflect changes to funding support from SEstrans as it is no longer a funding body and remaining developer contributions towards bus priority measures and half of the Wilkieston bypass. Land is safeguarded for a relief road north of Wilkieston.

**Blackridge Station (WLLP policy TRAN 22)**

The station is now operational and SPG is in place for developer contributions. SPG was approved in November 2010.

**A801 dualling (WLLP policy TRAN 29)**

Updated SPG for the upgrading of the A801 between junction 4 of the M8 motorway to the Pottishaw roundabout was approved by the Council Executive in August 2010. Some contributions have been collected and feasibility design work on the proposed dualling is underway.

**M9 - the westbound slips at Junction 3 of the M9 at Burghmuir, Linlithgow and associated coach park and ride facility; land reservation at Duntarvie to serve Winchburgh CDA (WLLP policy TRAN 29)**

**Study to investigate initiatives to enhance public transport links.**

**Park and ride.**

The *Falkirk Local Plan* was adopted in 2011 and identifies opportunity TR.BNS01 (Champany Slips) on the M9. Similarly the *West Lothian Local Plan* policy TRAN29 safeguards the westbound slips at Junction 3. The proposed park and ride at this location is not being considered.

The planning application for the Winchburgh Core Development Area (CDA) includes the proposed new junction onto the M9. The application has been approved. Transport Scotland has agreed to the new junction at Winchburgh as part of the Winchburgh CDA proposals.

**Armadale Station (WLLP policy TRAN 22)**

The station became operational in early 2011. SPG was approved on 29 June 2009 for developer contributions towards a southern park and ride facility at Armadale Station.

**National Cycle Route 75 (WLLP policy TRAN 9)**

Work is substantially complete on the 14-mile replacement cycle path at Airdrie/ Bathgate rail line. Opportunities remain to form additional connections to the route especially at Armadale, West Livingston and Calderwood.

**To provide an Edinburgh– Linlithgow–Stirling cycle route (NCR 76) as an extension to the national cycle network (WLLP policy TRAN 10)**

A link to take the cycle route north around the area at Abercorn Church is complete providing more direct access along the coastline to Blackness.

**M8 Whitburn park and ride (WLLP policy TRAN 27)**

This proposal is linked to the completion of the M8 motorway junction at Heartlands. Provision to access the park and ride site is made in the junction layout for J4A.

**West Lothian Fastlink Phases 1 (M8- Livingston) & 2 (via Broxburn/Airport) (WLLP policy TRAN 17 and TRAN 18)**

Funding is not available for Phase 2 of Fastlink at this time. However, land released as a result of the completion of the second phase of the Fastlink project, at Cousland Roundabout (Northwest quadrant), will be safeguarded for the development of park and ride facilities. Although not actively being pursued at present this remains a proposal although it is unlikely to go forward within the lifetime of the local plan.

**M8/M9 Rapid Transit park and ride at Cowhill, Whitburn****Deer Park (Livingston) Linlithgow (M9), Winchburgh (WLLP policy TRAN 26)****Other park and ride sites****East Broxburn, Kirknewton (rail station), West Calder (Gavieside) (WLLP policy TRAN 27)**

The additional park and ride spaces at stations on the Bathgate to Edinburgh line are now complete at Livingston North, Uphall and at Bathgate.

The M8 and M9 bus lanes/rapid transit proposals are not actively being pursued at present but remain a proposal within the emerging Strategic Development Plan although they are unlikely to go forward within the lifetime of the local plan.

However, land is safeguarded at Cowhill, Whitburn and Deer Park, Livingston on the M8 corridor for bus based park and ride.

Land is also safeguarded at Linlithgow and Winchburgh for bus based park and ride. Land is also safeguarded for rail based park and ride associated with the proposed Winchburgh rail station. The requirements for Winchburgh are identified in the approved master plans.

Land is also safeguarded at East Broxburn, Kirknewton and West Calder as part of the CDA development proposals identified in the local plan.

**Land safeguarding - Houston Road–Drumshoreland Road link, Pumpherston to serve allocated housing at Drumshoreland and closure of Drumshoreland Road (WLLP policy TRAN 30)**

Development led requirement. Master plan proposals to date have shown the link road and the closure of the Drumshoreland Road. The provision of the road will be secured with the development proposal.

**Land safeguarding - A706–B7066 link, Polkemmet, Whitburn (WLLP policy TRAN 30)**

Development led requirement. Master plan proposals to date have shown the link road and the provision will be secured with the development proposal.

**Land safeguarding - Wester Inch – Bathgate Town Centre link road; distributor roads (phase 1 under construction) (WLLP policy TRAN 30)**

Development led requirement. Master plan proposals to date have shown the link road and the provision will be secured with the development proposal. Most of the road infrastructure is in place and the final phases to complete the link to Whitburn Road are under construction.

**Land safeguarding – the Broxburn Distributor Road (Clarkson Road/ Greendykes Road) (WLLP policy TRAN 30)**

Development led proposals. Planning applications have been lodged for a supermarket and housing developments in this area which includes the provision of the link road.

**Land safeguarding - Distributor road to access the employment site at Linhouse (WLLP policy TRAN 30)**

Development led requirement. The provision of this road has not progressed.

**Land safeguarding - Broxburn, town centre relief road between Greendykes Road and East Mains Industrial Estate is safeguarded as a necessary link in the CDA development proposals for the area. Pre-requisite to development allocation at Candleworks (WLLP policy TRAN 30)**

Development led requirement. Part of infrastructure needed for the East Broxburn CDA. Masterplan proposals to date have shown the link road and the provision will be secured with the development proposal.

**Review of parking standards (WLLP policy TRAN 32)**

Consultation on revised standards is complete and the revised standards were approved in October 2011.

**Travel Plans (WLLP policy TRAN 5)**

Travel plan co-ordinator - Following the approval of the SPG on 11 December 2007, on 25 November 2008 the Council Executive resolved to agree to suspend the contributions for a two-year period. A further suspension to November 2012 is proposed. The need for developers to submit travel plans to support for their planning applications remains. The council will continue to explore with developers innovative ways in which a travel co-ordination service should be delivered, which could involve developers carrying out their own monitoring and submitting the results to the council.

**A parking management scheme will be developed for Linlithgow town centre (WLLP policy TRAN 34)**

This proposal is currently being considered. Some localised parking restrictions have been introduced at locations within Linlithgow town centre. Park and ride provision secured at Edinburgh Road was completed in February 2011.

**Strategic Livingston Transport Plan will be required to identify what network and sustainable transport improvements are necessary within the town centre (WLLP policy TRAN 6)**

Key elements of this have been completed with the introduction of the traffic lights at Braehead junction and the new link road between the Almond Interchange and the B7015 Howden South Road. Major development opportunities in Livingston town centre are limited which is impacting on securing developer funding.

**A link between Sellars Path and East Mill Road should be safeguarded on the north side of the A803 to complete a round Linlithgow recreational walking and cycling route**

Development led requirement. Planning applications are currently being considered with this link included.

**Distributor road at Livingston West**

Required as part of the West Livingston/Mossend CDA and land is safeguarded for its provision. This will link Toll Roundabout to the A71 in the south with connections to Alba Campus and Kirkton Campus. A planning application has been submitted for the Mossend area of this CDA allocation.

**Safer routes to schools (WLLP policy TRAN 14 and TRAN 15)**

This is achieved through good design practice and, where appropriate, legal agreements to secure contributions outwith the development sites.

**Home Zones/Residential Design Guide (WLLP policy TRAN 11)**

The Scottish Government's *Designing Streets* was published in May 2010 and is the latest policy document to influence the design and layout of residential areas. The council's roads design guidance is currently being reviewed to incorporate this latest policy. The *Residential Design Guide* was published August 2013.

**Integrated bus and rail park and ride (WLLP policy TRAN 19)**

**A site at Uphall West/Beugh Burn is also safeguarded to improve bus rail interchange ties to Uphall rail station. Land for the provision of the track and for the potential expansion of the existing stations at Livingston North and Uphall Station is safeguarded. Land for new station sites at Boghall, Bathgate, Armadale and Blackridge, associated park and ride facilities and new road links to the stations is also safeguarded (WLLP policy TRAN 22)**

The Airdrie to Bathgate rail scheme is now completed and operational.

However, an additional stop at Boghall will continue to be safeguarded because this is required to conform with the *Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan 2015*. Although not actively being pursued at present it is unlikely to go forward within the lifetime of the local plan. The need for safeguarding will be reviewed as the *Strategic Development Plan* for Edinburgh and South East Scotland progresses.

**Distributor links to strategic road network in the Armadale CDA area. (B8084 to A89, Colinshiel and B8084 to A801, Armadale South)**

Development led requirement. Part of the infrastructure needed for the Armadale CDA development. Master plan proposals to date have shown the link roads and the provision will be secured with the development proposal.

**M9 bus lane (Linlithgow and Winchburgh)**

Not actively being pursued at present but remains a proposal within the emerging *Strategic Development Plan*.



## 10 Town centres and retailing

10.1 Retail development continues to be attracted to West Lothian and the local plan continues to support the council's town centre and retailing strategy. In November 2008 the council published a *Retail Capacity Study*, which sets the context for convenience retail provision within West Lothian. Consultation on its findings was carried out during the early part of 2009. In June 2009 the Council Executive considered the outcome of the consultation and agreed a report which set out the material considerations which the council would take into account when considering planning applications for supermarkets.

10.2 The study sets the context for convenience retail provision within West Lothian for the next twenty years and is the starting point for judgements of retail capacity and potential retail impact. It will inform both development plan policy and Development Management decisions. The study identified four scenarios which considered varying degrees of retaining retail spend within West Lothian. The council has agreed that levels of retail expenditure within the catchment areas outwith Almondvale, Livingston should be set at 80% for Bathgate and Linlithgow and 70% for other catchments. This would provide for maximum floorspace to assist in the retention of retail expenditure within the area and allow for a fairer distribution of spend within those centres outwith Livingston.

### Livingston: sub-regional centre

10.3 The past few years has seen continued growth in Livingston, consolidating it as the sub-regional retail centre for the Lothians and principal retail centre in West Lothian. Demolition of the former council headquarters at West Lothian House has made way for a purpose-built Primark store which opened in December 2011. The Livingston store has helped to increase the overall floor space of The Centre by 6.2% adding 60,000 square feet and increasing footfall in the phase 1 area. In addition, Dobbies Garden Centre also opened a new 52,000 square feet store at Houstoun Mains, Livingston in March 2011.



#### Bathgate: district centre

10.4 In summer 2009, the demolition of the former Edgar Allan foundry commenced, thus making way for a major expansion of Bathgate town centre to include non-food retail units and a supermarket, in support of policy TC 7 of the local plan. The new Morrisons supermarket and petrol filling station and a McDonald's drive through opened in October 2011. Further expansion of the area is also underway with work due to commence on the adjacent retail park before the end of the year. The Bathgate Partnership Centre on South Bridge Street officially opened 28 October, 2011. This new building includes a replacement library, Community Centre, registration office, accommodation for the Advice Shop and Council Information Services (CIS), cashier office, a community cafe, Adult Basic Education HQ, council office accommodation, and meeting spaces for community groups, as well as a landscaped garden complete with an orchard. The opening of the new partnership centre has provided opportunities to re-use some of the now vacated premises and have been redeveloped to create new commercial premises and new businesses in the town centre.

#### Other town centres:

##### Armadale

10.5 As a result of predicted housing growth within the local plan, there is significant demand for retail floorspace in the town. As existing convenience retail provision in the town is limited there is very considerable leakage of expenditure to partially address this issue. Planning permission was granted in November 2010 for a 40,000 square feet (gross) Asda store within the new local centre at Armadale station. The store opened in September 2012.

##### Broxburn

10.6 The past few years has seen the submission of two planning applications for convenience stores in Broxburn. In June 2011 a planning application was submitted by Sainsbury's for the erection of a 5,600 sqm supermarket with associated petrol filling station at Peniel Place, Broxburn. It was however withdrawn prior to a determination being made. The second planning application was submitted by Tesco in August 2011 for a retail store and associated petrol filling station at the former Candleworks site. The developer is also proposing to fund and implement the missing section of the local distributor road from Clarkston Road to Greendykes Road, as required by the local plan and the planning brief, and the remediation of the contaminated land which is known to be present on the site. The Tesco store was granted planning permission in March 2012.



## Linlithgow

10.7 Linlithgow has three supermarkets, and a traditional High Street, which offer a number of specialist shops and eaters for visitors and tourists. The *West Lothian Retail Capacity Study* states that convenience turnover and expenditure are virtually in balance, indicating that there is sufficient floorspace to meet the needs of the catchment area. A planning application was received for a mixed-use development including supermarket at an out-of-centre site north east of the town centre (Burghmuir) but was subsequently withdrawn on 16 April 2013. Planning applications for the extension of the existing Regent Centre and a decked car park were granted planning permission in principle on 27 June 2013.

## Whitburn

10.8 Town centre activity is concentrated along West Main Street, which contains a mix of convenience, comparison and retail services. East Main Street and Manse Road/Longridge Road

serve as secondary retail locations. The town lacks quality convenience retail for a settlement of this size and is currently dominated by retail provision in Livingston and Bathgate. Two planning consents have been granted for the erection of a supermarket with associated petrol filling station, one at Heartlands Business Park, Cowhill, Whitburn and one at Polkemmet Road/Dixon Terrace, Whitburn. It should be noted, however, that the permissions have been constructed so that only one can be implemented. There is currently no operator linked with either consent and therefore the timescale for implementation is uncertain.

## Retail occupancy

10.9 The quarterly table on shop occupancies (see table 24) shows the number of shop units occupied (excluding charity shops) as a percentage of total stock for each of West Lothian's six town centres. The percentage of charity shop units in each town is shown separately. A comparison is made between the latest quarter and the same quarter from the previous year. West Lothian wide totals are also given.

10.10 There was an increase in overall shop occupancy, compared to the previous quarter of 2012, in three of the town centres. Whitburn had the largest increase (6%) in shop occupancy but the lowest shop occupancy rate in West Lothian at 87.2%. Armadale increased its shop occupancy by 1.5% to stand at 94.1%, becoming the town with the highest shop occupancy closely followed by Linlithgow (94.0%), which experienced a 1.3% drop in occupancy compared with the same quarter of last year.

10.11 Bathgate's overall occupancy decreased by 2.9% compared to the same quarter last year. The total shop occupancy of 91.9% for West Lothian is well above the occupancy rates of Scotland (89.8%) and the UK (89.1%). (Scottish Retail Consortium, February 2013).

#### Town Centre Regeneration Fund

10.12 The Scottish Government's Town Centre Regeneration Fund (TCRF) sought to support the regeneration and growth of town centres. £60m was made available in 2009-10 as a one off allocation to fund additional capital projects and works across Scotland.

10.13 The TCRF complements the council's Capital Programme for Town Centre Improvements. The initial bids to the first TCRF application round at the end of May 2009 were unsuccessful. However, revised proposals were re-submitted to the second round deadline at the end of August 2009 and both applications by the council for Bathgate and a thematic and multi town application covering Almondvale, Armadale, Broxburn/Uphall, Linlithgow and Whitburn were successful.

10.14 For Bathgate this represented a total funding package of £860,000 which included funding from the council's capital programme and Enterprising Bathgate (the Business Improvement District Company established in 2008). The total package for the wider West Lothian towns bid was £2,285,300 again boosted by the council's capital programme.

10.15 The application packages were developed in consultation with a variety of town stakeholders, with active town centre management groups operating in Bathgate, Broxburn & Uphall, Linlithgow & Linlithgow Bridge, and Whitburn. The programme of works has delivered improvements focused around improving the public realm and streetscape, enhancing shopper/visitor experiences, improvements to, and the creation of, new civic space; upgrades to retail shop fronts in town centres and improved accessibility.

#### Future Capital Expenditure Programme

10.16 The Council Executive has approved that the future spend of the Town Centre Capital Expenditure Programme be equalised over the five traditional towns and remaining lifetime of the budget as shown below. This would allow a balanced investment by the council across the traditional towns by 2013.

10.17 In addition, the Council Executive has approved future Town Centre Capital funding until 2018.

#### West Lothian Villages Improvement Fund

10.18 In May 2013, the Council Executive approved the Villages Improvement Fund which came into operation in June 2013. A capital fund of £1.65million, phased over the period 2013-14 to 2017-18 will be available to deliver and progress the fund.

10.19 The fund has two distinct work streams including shop front improvement scheme and small scale village improvement and initiatives.

10.20 There are 26 settlements and communities identified as potentially eligible to apply to the fund, none of which were supported through the Scottish Government's Town Centre Regeneration Fund. There are different levels of funding, split based on population:

- £35,000 each for the top five villages per population;
- £15,000 each for the middle 15 villages; and
- £5,000 each for villages with less than 500 population.

## Public realm design guides

10.21 Public realm design guides for Armadale, Bathgate, Broxburn/Uphall and Whitburn have been approved by the Council Executive as supplementary planning guidance (SPG) to ensure a consistent approach to regeneration and development within town centres. These establish a clear framework for public realm investment and provide the basis for the town centre improvement works.

10.22 The design guidelines section from each have been extracted and prepared as *Premises Improvement Design Guidelines* leaflets which form part of the ongoing Premises Improvement Schemes in each of the towns.

## Problem areas/issues

10.23 It is evident that challenging times lie ahead, particularly for more traditional town centres. The depressed economic climate has already seen many familiar retail names disappear and retrenchment within the industry is widely predicted to accelerate, particularly given the increased market share which internet shopping has assumed. It is therefore all the more important that innovative schemes such as the Bathgate Business Improvement District (BID), the first of its kind in Scotland, continues to be supported by the council.

10.24 A review of retail policies will be considered as part of the local development plan process to reflect the terms of SPP and to address any emerging issues in West Lothian. Continuing consultation with local businesses and community councils will be required to direct the agreed substantial level of capital investment in West Lothian town centres towards beneficial projects.

Table 24 - Shop unit occupancy

Shop unit occupancy comparing Quarter 2 -2013 and Quarter 2 -2012 expressed as percentage of total town centre shop units				
Town Centre	Quarter 2 - 2012 (%)		Quarter 2 - 2013(%)	
	Overall occupancy	Charity shops	Overall occupancy	Charity shops
Armadale	92.6%	0.0	94.1	0.0
Bathgate	95.0%	3.2	92.1	2.2
Broxburn	93.5%	0.6	92.3	0.6
Linlithgow	95.3%	2.0	94.0	2.7
Whitburn	81.2%	1.7	87.2	0.9
Almondvale	90.3%	0.7	91.6	0.6
West Lothian	92.1%	1.7	91.9	1.4

Source: West Lothian Council, April 2013

Table 25 - Future Capital Expenditure Programme budget (£)

	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Budget	2010/11 Budget	2011/12 Budget	2012/13 Budget	Total
Armadale	10,590	92,879	106,641	110,117	113,593	433,820
Broxburn/Uphall	24,287	122,813	92,553	95,573	98,594	433,820
Linlithgow	88,497	225,452	38,928	39,957	40,986	433,820
Whitburn	0	98,856	108,225	111,654	115,085	433,820
Bathgate	95,726	160,000	57,320	59,365	61,409	433,820
Total	219,100	700,000	403,667	416,666	429,667	2,169,100

Source: West Lothian Council, 2011

Table 26 - Town Centre Capital Funding

2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Total
£465,000	£480,000	£494,000	£509,000	£524,000	£2,472,000

Source: West Lothian Council, 2013

Note: Decisions have yet to be made on how this will be split between the town centres



## 11 Community, sports & education facilities and open space

### Cemetery provision

11.1 The council continues to implement approved SPG to secure developer contributions towards the provision of new cemeteries and cemetery extensions. Fauldhouse cemetery has been expanded and a new visitor waiting room provided, following the grant of planning permission in 2009.

11.2 Further work, funded by the council, has been concluded for a new West Calder cemetery at Hermand and also an extension to Woodbank cemetery at Armadale. Negotiations have been concluded to secure land for a new cemetery in East Calder adjacent to the south entrance to Almondell Country Park

### Education provision

11.3 Since the local plan was adopted, significant progress has been made in the provision of additional and improved education infrastructure.

### Catchment reviews

11.4 Several catchment area reviews were required to support the implementation of the local plan. The catchment areas in both the denominational primary and denominational secondary sectors between the City of Edinburgh Council and West Lothian Council were amended and approved by both authorities in June 2011. The boundaries of the catchment areas now reflect the administrative boundaries of each local authority.

11.5 Statutory consultation on a catchment area review for Armadale Academy, Bathgate Academy, Deans High School and Linlithgow Academy concluded in 2011. The catchment areas for Armadale Academy and Bathgate Academy were reduced in size and the catchment areas for Linlithgow Academy and Deans High School, Livingston were increased.



11.6 Catchment reviews for all primary schools in Bathgate, Bellsquarry Primary School (Livingston) and Parkhead Primary School (West Calder) concluded in 2012.

11.7 A school consultation to establish a catchment area for a new non-denominational primary school in Armadale commenced in April 2012 and the new catchment arrangements were approved in August 2012 and will be implemented following construction of the new primary.

11.8 In 2013, a catchment review in central Livingston was completed.

Further catchment area reviews will be progressed in 2013/14 to support the implementation of the development strategy.

#### Problem areas/issues

11.9 Despite the major investment in education infrastructure which has taken place in West Lothian over recent years, education constraints remain in several locations because of lack of school capacity. The council will continue to investigate how these constraints can be overcome and promote strategies accordingly.

#### Major developments for community and open space

11.10 A number of significant planning consents have been granted for community facilities and open space.

11.11 New play parks have been developed at Almond Park, Craigshill, Almondell Country Park, Bridgend Park, Broxburn Sports Centre, Deanburn, Linlithgow; Glenwood Drive, Armadale and Spottiswood Gardens, Mid Calder.



### *Public Art Strategy*

11.12 For many years West Lothian has been the home of significant pieces of public art through the legacy of the former Livingston Development Corporation. A public art strategy was approved in January 2010 detailing plans for creating more opportunities for art in the community, which will help to facilitate high quality public art on the ground from developer contributions secured through the council's approved SPG on public art. The *Public Art Strategy* has been revised and updated and is due for consideration by the council in Autumn 2013. The first allocation from the Public Art Fund was made in February 2010 to the Grassroots Project which produced four artworks.

11.13 SPG seeking developer contributions towards public art was reviewed during 2011 and in January 2012 the scale of developer contributions was reduced to reflect the changed economic climate. Arts projects have been completed at Uphall Main Street and Wester Inch, Bathgate and are under way at the new Breich Primary School. A major publication on *West Lothian's Public Art Out in the Open* was released by the council in May 2013.

11.14 All the 70 public art works across West Lothian have been surveyed and maintenance works identified. These are being prioritised for treatment from the Public Art Fund.

### *Almondvale Park Study, Livingston*

11.15 The Almondvale Park study was approved by the council in May 2013 and a series of recommendations for upgrading the park in the centre of Livingston agreed.

## Allotment Strategy

11.16 A new *Allotment Strategy* for West Lothian to help enable community groups to create new allotments was approved by the Council Executive in September 2010 and is now being used by the council's NETS and Land Services to assess various community proposals as they come forward. The four main themes of the allotment strategy are to:

- engage and consult with community interests;
- respond to sustainable long term established allotment demand;
- support and facilitate community allotment run services; and
- encourage and promote environmental sustainability.

11.17 Three potential new allotment sites have been tested by the council - Starlaw and Campbridge have potential ground contamination issues, whilst a site at Killandean in Livingston is likely to be developed.

## Review of Open Space Strategy and Sports Facilities Strategy

11.18 The council's *Open Space Strategy* was the subject of an interim review in 2010 which was subsequently approved by the Council Executive in September of that year. The updated strategies include cemeteries and churchyards, woodland areas and allotments, multi use games areas and dedicated play area locations that were not a priority in the initial strategy published in 2005. The strategies inform planning analysis and decisions concerning planning applications submitted to the council.

11.19 The council has also expended a large amount of its capital budget on priority areas of open space/sports facilities identified within both strategies and cemetery provision which are now contributing to the quality of community life and improved accessibility to interesting features and sites within improved landscape settings. Details are available from the council's NETS and Land Services section. Work is about to commence a further updating of the 2005 – 15 *Open Space Strategy* and associated open space audit database.

## Problem areas/issues

11.20 There is insufficient reference in the local plan to 'urban sports' under policy COM 2, which was highlighted as a result of a previous planning application for a supermarket on the speedway/ dog track in Armadale. This is likely to be dealt with under a separate policy in its own right in the local development plan.

11.21 Restrictions on the council's capital and revenue budget will also reduce the ability for the council to fund improvements to open space and sports facilities as part of these 10 year strategies and will require other forms of funding to be found.

11.22 An unprecedented volume of enquiries are being received for allotment proposals and these are being assessed.

11.23 A reduction in the number of larger scale planning applications, as a result of the economic downturn is resulting in less developer contributions being received for public art. There is a substantial backlog of maintenance of public art but works have been undertaken on several priority pieces e.g. "Strive" at Almondvale and "Old Man of Hoy" at Dedridge, Livingston.

Table 27 - School projects

<b>Armadale</b>
Armadale Academy
A replacement Armadale Academy opened in August 2009.
Armadale Primary School
Works to extend this school will be completed during 2013.
St Anthony's Primary School
An extension at St. Anthony's Primary School in Armadale was implemented over the summer of 2011, increasing the capacity of the school from 171 pupils to 198 pupils. Further works to the school will be completed by the end of 2013.
<b>Bathgate</b>
Balbardie Primary School
Planning permission has been granted to extend this school. Works will be completed during 2014.
Bathgate Academy
There is a need to increase the capacity of Bathgate Academy and proposals are in hand to extend the school from 1,210 pupils to 1,320 pupils. The timing of these works will depend on the rate of house building within the catchment area.
Boghall Primary School
Planning permission has been granted to extend this school. Works will be completed during 2014.
Simpson Primary School
To meet demand for school places arising from the Wester Inch housing development in Bathgate, an extension to Simpson Primary School was carried out in spring 2010 and is now open. Two additional classrooms were fitted out in summer 2011. Other classrooms will be fitted out before the end of 2013.
St Mary's Primary School
Works at St Mary's Primary School, Bathgate to increase capacity to a full double stream were completed in 2011.

<b>Breich</b>
Woodmuir Primary School
In September 2011, planning permission was granted for the erection of a 567sqm primary school with associated car parking, playing field and multi use games area on the site of the existing local park and playing field at Breich. This school replaces the existing Woodmuir Primary School. Substantial improvements will also be carried out to the adjacent park as part of the wider scheme. Construction of this replacement school commenced in June 2012 and was completed in summer 2013.

<b>Broxburn</b>
St Nicholas Primary School
Planning permission has been granted to extend this school. Works will commence once funding has been secured.

<b>East Calder</b>
St Paul's Primary School
A planning application for extending this school will be submitted in 2013/14.

<b>Linlithgow</b>
Linlithgow Academy
Works at Linlithgow Academy to increase capacity to 1,320 pupils were completed in August 2011.

<b>Livingston</b>
St. Margaret's Academy, Livingston
An extension to St. Margaret's Academy, Livingston was completed in September 2011 to provide capacity for an additional 110 pupils. This extension was needed as an interim solution, pending the full funding being available to provide a new denominational secondary school at Winchburgh. It is anticipated that St. Margaret's will be further extended at some point in the future to support the development strategy.

<b>Pumpherstion</b>
Pumpherstion and Uphall Station Community Primary School
A new Pumpherstion and Uphall Station Community Primary School opened early in 2012. Provided developer contributions are secured, this school will be extended to support planned housing development within the catchment area

<b>West Calder</b>
Parkhead Primary School
Planning permission has been granted to extend this school to a full double stream primary. The works will go ahead once developer contributions have been secured.

<b>Whitburn</b>
Whitburn Academy
Whitburn Academy has capacity for 1,210 pupils and the school roll is currently well below that level. However, the spare capacity is required to serve committed development within the catchment area (i.e. sites which already have planning permission). Much of that capacity will be taken up by the housing to be built at Heartlands (Whitburn). The school will need to be further extended to support housing development within the catchment area.

<b>Winchburgh</b>
Winchburgh Primary School/Holy Family Primary School
Developer contributions exceeding £1m have been received for extending this building. Minor internal works were carried out during 2012. The building will be extended to provide additional capacity by the end of 2013 to support planned housing growth at Winchburgh.

Table 28 - Major developments for community and open space

The new £7million Bathgate Partnership Centre opened in September 2011, which brings council and community services together under one roof.
Planning permission has been recently granted at Livingston Station Community Centre, 4 Main Street, Deans, for construction of a multi use games area including flood lighting.
The existing health centre at Blackridge has been refurbished rather than await the provision of a new site for a new health centre to the south of the A89.
Sites at East Calder, Winchburgh and Gavieside continue to be safeguarded within CDA master plans for future community and open space developments.
A new third generation pitch has been developed at Armadale Academy. This surface is used primarily for football and rugby training with the major advantage being its ability to accommodate competitive football matches thereby reducing the burden on the existing grass pitches.
A major £186,000 scheme at Parkhead/Limefield Park Polbeth has been completed which upgrades access on either side of the Harwood Water.
Almondell Country Park visitor centre upgraded.
Westfield Park, ( Westfield) is to be provisioned with fitness equipment, footpath upgrade, play equipment, new fencing, hard and soft landscaping and footpath upgrades..
Armadale's new library and museum space at Armadale Community Education Centre, North Street, Armadale is now open. The council has also secured funds as part of the approved supplementary planning guidance 'Developer Contributions for a Replacement Armadale Library'.
Improvements to Stewartfield District Park (, Broxburn) (has planning permission) include works to footpaths etc, and the provision of a fitness track, bmx track, and a seating viewpoint area.
Dechmont Park is to benefit from an £80,000 upgrade. The works include , new footpath, fitness, goals seating and a, basketball court.

Source: West Lothian Council, 2013



## 12 Natural resources, waste management and renewable energy

### Minerals

12.1 Within West Lothian there are recognised deposits of several minerals which are required for a range of local and wider needs and therefore have the potential to be extracted. Minerals can only be worked where they are found and a supply of minerals is required to meet the needs of society. However, minerals extraction can give rise to potential conflict with environmental and community aspirations.

12.2 Potentially workable reserves of opencast coal, refractory fireclays, brick-making clays, igneous rock, dimension stone, silica sandstone (which is considered to be a nationally important resource), sand and gravel, peat and oil shale exist in West Lothian. An area in the north west of West Lothian is also identified under the Petroleum Exploration Development Licences (PEDL).

12.3 A summary of progress on mineral related developments is set out in table 29 at the end of this section.

12.4 The local plan makes a substantial allocation for new residential development in Whitburn at Heartlands (local plan allocation Hwb4). An extensive programme of remedial works to address contamination issues has been ongoing for several years. The extraction of remaining minerals and the subsequent restoration and aftercare of the site has brought significant environmental benefits to this part of West Lothian. The creation of restored countryside and a development platform for a substantial mixed-use development of housing, retail and employment uses will bring significant social and economic benefits to the town of Whitburn and the wider area.

## Problem areas/issues

12.5 Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) will require to be reflected in the local development plan. The council will also have to ensure that the management of Mining Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2010 are taken into account in future supplementary guidance and the local development plan to ensure that minerals developments are assessed against these Regulations. The Regulations follow on from the EC Mining Waste Directive 2006/21/EC relating to the management of extractive waste (i.e. topsoil, overburden, silt ponds etc) and seek to ensure that such waste is managed so as to prevent or reduce, as far as possible, any adverse effects on the environment and human health.

12.6 Work continues to ensure that developments at Woodend Washer Bings northwest of Armadale are appropriately regularised in terms of enforcement.

12.7 Major renewable energy developments and proposals are identified in Table 30.

### Proposals under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989

12.8 The council is aware of the Scottish Government's targets for the development of renewable energy resources as part of Scotland's contribution towards international commitments required to address global climate change. The council is also aware of the implications imposed on licensed electricity suppliers under the terms of the Renewables Obligation (Scotland) 2002 and the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and this will continue to be taken into account in determining proposals for renewable energy development. Such schemes producing under 50 MegaWatts of electricity require planning permission from the council. Above that threshold, applications are determined in accordance with Section 36 of The Electricity Act 1989 by the Scottish Government; if the council objects to such a scheme a public local inquiry must be held.



12.8 Significant proposals both in terms of height and number of wind turbines as well as electricity generation were submitted to the Scottish Government in early 2012. The council has made representations on two developments at Harburnhead (north of the A70) and Fauch Hill (south of the A70), close to the Pentland Hills. Both sites are outwith the local plan search areas for wind farms. The proposals are for 22 turbines at 126m to tip and 23 turbines at 125m to tip. Both sites are the subject of a public local inquiry and decisions are expected from Scottish Ministers later this year.

12.9 The council continues to receive a large volume of proposals for small scale wind farm/ single wind turbine developments largely as a result of developers having the opportunity to benefit from 'feed in tariffs'. The majority of proposals have been withdrawn or refused due to adverse landscape and visual impacts. Some appeals have also been dismissed. The number of single turbine proposals being submitted has started to reduce, partly as a result of the UK Government reducing the amounts of money available through 'feed in tariffs'.

### *Landscape Capacity Study* and further guidance on wind energy and renewables

12.10 The council has commissioned a *Landscape Character Study* and *Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Energy Development in West Lothian*. Supplementary guidance has been prepared and consultation was undertaken in summer 2013. Comments received will be considered and reported to the Development and Transport Policy Development Scrutiny Panel.

### Waste and recycling

12.11 The council will have to ensure that any text or policies in the local development plan reflect current guidance and legislation regarding waste management and the move towards a Zero Waste Plan (ZWP). The final version of the ZWP has been published and supersedes the previous Area Waste Plans. This may lead to the requirement for more waste management sites throughout West Lothian.

12.12 In June 2009, planning permission was granted for a waste management facility at Caputhall Road, Deans, Livingston. Whilst some limited development has taken place on this site, the council is currently reviewing its options for meeting its waste management obligations. Other waste management facilities have been granted planning consent at Levenseat and the Pond Industrial Estate, Bathgate, the latter has yet to begin on site. A recent application has also been received at Levenseat for the erection of advanced thermal treatment (gasification) plant, associated plant and buildings, storage facilities, landscaping and boundary treatment including utilisation and export of secondary heat.

12.13 There may also be a requirement for additional Community Recycling Centres and Community Bring Sites in the future.

### Contaminated land

12.14 The council has continued to assist in the redevelopment of brownfield land across the area. Detailed site investigation has taken place on former industrial land within the CDA, including the former Albyn Oil Works in Broxburn and the former Caradale Brickworks in Armadale. These large contaminated sites will be remediated as each CDA progresses.

12.15 The former Auldathie landfill site near Winchburgh continues to be the subject of discussion to bring forward its restoration. A Planning Permission in Principle consent has been granted for the Winchburgh CDA which requires the developer to submit a detailed Restoration Strategy. This *Restoration Strategy* was approved in June 2013.

12.16 The council's *Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy* - first published in 2001 - has been reviewed and updated in 2012. This details exactly how the council will progress inspection of potentially contaminated sites across the area and how these issues will be communicated to communities and other relevant stakeholders.

### Problem areas/issues

12.17 The council's strategy for rationalisation of depots to manage future waste obligations will require to be reflected in the local development plan.

### Climate change and renewables

12.18 The challenge of sustainable development is ever more acute and growth will continue to put pressure on the area's environmental assets. Climate change presents a major threat, and makes reducing the area's greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation), and responding to and preparing for changes in the climate (adaptation) imperative.



12.19 The LDP has a key role in locating development in more sustainable places and promoting both mitigation and adaptation measures such as reducing the need to travel, sustainable design and energy efficiency measures and reducing flood risk. The LDP and site allocations will be subject to a *Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)* to minimise the potential of flood risk to any site allocations. A draft SRFA accompanies the MIR.

12.20 Over the past few years there has been a considerable increase interest in development of on-shore wind energy in West Lothian. A robust spatial framework and policy guidance is needed to ensure that interest in on-shore wind energy development is directed to the right locations.

12.21 The *Renewable Energy Strategy* for the West Lothian Council area was developed by the council in 2012 to:

- support the Scottish Government in meeting national renewable and carbon reduction targets;
- prioritise energy efficiency measures where appropriate;
- reduce energy costs;
- generate financial income; and
- stimulate the local economy.

12.22 The strategy focuses on renewable and low carbon technology opportunities for the council's assets including:

- buildings (domestic and non domestic);
- land;
- street lighting; and
- an initial review of the potential for heat networks to the public and private sector across the council area.

12.23 It also considers the role of the council in supporting and promoting renewable energy in the wider community.

12.24 The implementation of the *Renewables Energy Strategy* will build upon the positive work already taking place to reduce the council's carbon footprint through energy efficiency measures. Trials of energy efficient LED lighting have been conducted, and a Renewables Project Officer has been recruited to take forward specific plans for the installation of renewable technologies on council owned land and properties. Opportunities for the development of a heat map for West Lothian are also being explored to support the planning and deployment of local low-carbon energy projects.

### Petroleum Exploration Development Licences

12.25 The north west of West Lothian is covered by a Petroleum Exploration and Development Licence (PEDL) licence for exploration for petroleum. The SPP requires development plans for areas covered by PEDLs to identify the factors that will be taken into account when deciding planning applications for wellheads and transmission infrastructure. West Lothian contains reserves of onshore gas including Coal Bed Methane (CBM). PEDL cover part of the area for CBM extraction and there may be opportunities in West Lothian to release methane from unmined coal seams or capture methane accumulated in coal mine workings.

#### Table 29 - Mineral related developments

On September 20, 2011, planning permission was granted (subject to a section 75 legal agreement) for the formation of a 154 ha opencast coal and auger mining development on land at Rusha Farm, near Breich. Preparatory work began on site in early 2012. A detailed application was also approved in September 2011 for a temporary access track to serve this site. A proposal to extend the site is under consideration by the council.

**Silica** Sandstone extraction continues at Levenseat, near Fauldhouse, but has been scaled down due to competition in the market place from abroad.

A review of conditions on minerals permission at Niddry Castle Bing, by Winchburgh was approved on 17 February, 2012. Extraction has continued from the site and development projects, including the Queensferry Crossing, have been utilising the shale secondary aggregate.

**Reclamation** of the former coal bing at Riddochhill/Pottishaw, Blackburn, is largely complete. The rehabilitated site will form an extension to the Whitehill Industrial estate.

Source: West Lothian Council, 2013

#### Table 30 - Major renewable energy developments and proposals

An extension was granted at Blacklaw to allow the construction of an additional 24 wind turbines (126.5m in height, 12 within West Lothian) in and to the south west of West Lothian and work has begun on site.

Tormywheel wind farm development, south west of Breich: An application has been re-submitted under section 42 to amend condition 1 of planning permission 0042/FUL/05 (for 15 x102m high turbines) to extend the time period to begin the development from five years to seven years.

An application was received in April 2012 for a 6x125m high wind turbine development to the north of Cobbinshaw Reservoir in the south west of the district at Pearie Law and was refused planning permission by the council on 25 June 2013. An appeal has been lodged with the Scottish Ministers.

Source: West Lothian Council, 2013



## 13 Implementation

### Education

13.1 Policy IMP 1 of the WLLP requires developer contributions for Armadale Academy. At the end of June 2013, around £208,000 had been paid over by developers.

13.2 Policy IMP 2 of the WLLP requires developer contributions for denominational secondary education infrastructure. At the end of June 2013, over £3.1million had been paid over by developers and £680,000 had been drawn down to help fund an extension at St. Margaret's Academy, Livingston.

13.3 Policy IMP 3 of the WLLP indicates that if education constraints cannot be overcome, there will be a presumption against housing development. Regrettably, there continues to be several areas of West Lothian where education constraints remain and as a consequence planning applications for housing have been refused.

13.4 The lack of primary school capacity in Bathgate is a severe problem but the council has changed school catchment areas and has an approved investment strategy to alleviate the problem. Several planning applications in Bathgate have been the subject of planning appeals following the refusal of planning permission on the grounds of lack of school capacity. In each case the appeal has been dismissed.

13.5 The council will continue to investigate how education constraints throughout West Lothian can be overcome and catchment area reviews are being undertaken and planned to help maximise school capacities.

## General education issues

13.6 The council already has in place several SPGs which set out a strategy for securing the developer contributions required to provide new education infrastructure which will support housing growth in West Lothian. Further SPG is to be prepared. The council is, however, aware that the economic climate makes it extremely difficult for the development industry to fund infrastructure provision and because of this is continually looking at the most efficient way of providing new education infrastructure solutions. Further school/site specific SPGs will be brought forward during 2013/14 and beyond.

13.7 In order for the CDAs in West Lothian to be fully built out, new non-denominational secondary schools are still required at Calderwood and Winchburgh. Until funding is available to deliver these, the scale of CDA development in these areas will need to be restricted so that school capacity thresholds are not breached.

13.8 The council has the option of implementing further extensions at St. Margaret's Academy, Livingston if there is insufficient funding to deliver a new build denominational secondary school at Winchburgh in the short term. At some stage, however, development will be constrained if a new denominational secondary school is not provided.

## Problem areas/issues

13.9 Despite the major investment in education infrastructure which has taken place in West Lothian over recent years, education constraints remain in several locations



## Flooding and water

### Flood risk

13.10 The Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 requires local authorities to exercise their powers with a view to reducing overall flood risk. It also has a legal obligation to work cooperatively with other authorities, agencies and individuals to plan and manage the risk of flooding in its area. The council's current strategy is under review in light of the introduction of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009. It remains committed, however, to reducing the overall risk of flooding in its area and to using all the measures at its disposal to achieve this objective.

13.11 These measures include the assessment of development proposals to ensure that developments are not at risk from flooding and the inclusion of measures as an integral part of development proposals to mitigate the effects of runoff from new developments elsewhere, including receiving watercourses.

13.12 The council also promotes both statutory and voluntary measures to alleviate the risk of flooding to non-agricultural land in its area and to relieve the effects of severely impaired drainage where this adversely affects quality of life. There are completed flood prevention schemes in both Bathgate and Linlithgow. A further flood prevention scheme is under construction in Broxburn. A Flood Prevention Scheme at West Burnside south of Broxburn was completed in early 2013.



**13.13** Flood Risk and River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) are being progressed by the council in conjunction with relevant parties including adjoining local authorities, SEPA, SNH and Scottish Water. The first RBMP is due for publication in 2015.

#### Sustainable drainage

**13.14** The Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 requires local authorities to carry out their statutory functions and duties in a way, which adheres to the principles of the European Water Framework Directive. The council is committed to the principles of sustainable urban drainage (SUDs) as an integral part of new developments in its area. It aims to work with all stakeholders to ensure that sustainable drainage systems are designed to meet the requirements of regulators, are constructed in accord with the approved design and are then vested, where appropriate, by Scottish Water as Drainage Authority and/or the council as Roads Authority.

#### Enforcement

**13.15** An *Enforcement Charter* has been approved by the Council Executive and is working to the benefit of the customers and the council. Over the twelve month period to June 2013 more than 200 enforcement cases were reported to the council. During this time the council served 8 Breach of Condition Notices, 22 Enforcement Notices and 10 Stop Notices.



### Air quality

13.16 Air quality in West Lothian generally continues to meet required standards, but not, alas, in central Broxburn. The exceedance of the Air Quality Objectives for fine particulates (known as PM10) and Nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) means that the council is obliged to declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Local authorities are not legally required to meet the Air Quality Objectives but they must demonstrate that they are taking all reasonable steps in working towards them.

13.17 The AQMA is a material consideration to take into account when assessing development proposals in Broxburn.

### Next steps

13.18 The council's Environmental Health Unit is assessing whether there is a need to designate an 'Air Quality Management Area' (AQMA) in Linlithgow. The exceedance of the Air Quality Objective for fine particulate matter may require that the council declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in the near future. Before it can be declared, a one month public consultation must be carried out.

### Summary and conclusions

13.19 The development strategy set out in the *West Lothian Local Plan* is being implemented, albeit at a slower pace than originally anticipated, with progress being made in each of the Core Development Area allocations that form the main basis of the 2009 local plan. The strategy remains relevant for the emerging *West Lothian Local Development Plan*, as reflected through the approved *Strategic Development Plan for South East Scotland*.