



Housing

West Lothian Local Development Plan: background paper

This paper identifies and interprets the housing requirements which the West Lothian Local Development Plan will seek to address.



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1 Introduction

1.1 One of the key issues the new *West Lothian Local Development Plan* (LDP) is required to address is the scale, nature and location of land for new housing at a local level, albeit that this must be done to conform with the strategic housing requirements of the *Strategic Development Plan* (SDP).

1.2 This background paper provides information on housing land supply issues in regard to the LDP - both the context for the preparation of the Plan, and the approach the LDP takes in response to that context. It addresses both market and affordable housing issues, provides information on the national, strategic and local context, and provides explanation and justification of the approach taken in the LDP.

1.3 The paper supports the *Main Issues Report* (MIR), which is the first key stage of the preparation of the LDP, by identifying and interpreting the housing requirements which have emerged from the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HoNDA), together with other factors influencing housing growth including Scottish Government planning policy, environmental and infrastructure constraints and market conditions. It identifies overall growth options for the West Lothian Council area, for the period to 2024 within the context of the broad development strategy and housing requirements set out in the SDP.



2 Context and overview

2.1 The LDP has to take account of the *National Planning Framework*, *Scottish Planning Policy* and a number of other national policy documents. It must also be consistent with the SDP.

The National Planning Framework (NPF2)

2.2 NPF2 notes that there is a need to plan for substantial growth in the number of households in the Edinburgh city region, of which West Lothian is a part. The planning system must ensure that the supply of development land is adequate, that major sites identified for housing are made available in good time and that more affordable housing is provided.

In September 2012, the Scottish Government announced a review of the *National Planning Framework for Scotland* and it is anticipated that (NPF3) will be finalised and published in summer 2014.

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

2.3 In recent years, there has been greater emphasis on the links between housing policy and planning. *Scottish Planning Policy 3: Planning for Housing* (2008) established the relationship between housing need and demand assessments, the local housing strategy and strategic

development plans and this has been retained in the consolidated *Scottish Planning Policy* (SPP) and as part of the new development plans framework.

2.4 SPP articulates the Scottish Government's policies in relation to new housing development in Scotland. Notably, it encourages planning authorities to take a positive approach to development and requires that the settlement strategies in development plans should promote a more sustainable pattern of growth.

2.5 SPP also identifies a specific commitment to increasing the supply of new homes and raising the rate of new house building and gives repeated emphasis to the fact that there should be a 'generous' supply of appropriate and effective land for the provision of a range of housing. This can, perhaps, be regarded as a means of 'future proofing' the LDP, to the extent that it gives it flexibility if unpredictable changes to the effective land supply occur during the life of the plan. Separate guidance, but to similar effect, was set out in a [letter](#) from the Chief Planner (October 2010) on the subject of providing an effective land supply for housing.

2.6 Planning authorities are instructed to manage land supply through the annual *Housing Land Audit* (HLA) which is prepared in consultation with housing and infrastructure providers. The HLA can be used to monitor the availability of effective sites and housing completions. Furthermore, SPP indicates that development plans should identify triggers for the release of future phases of effective sites, such as where the housing land audit or development plan action programme indicates that a five year effective land supply is not being maintained.

2.7 SPP advises that the scale, nature and distribution of the housing land requirement for an area should be primarily based on the outcome of a Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HoNDA), although wider strategic economic, social and environmental policy objectives should also be taken into account.

2.8 Planning authorities are instructed to set out a settlement strategy in the development plan to provide a long term context for development, and may, as part of that strategy, choose to direct development to particular locations to achieve desired policy outcomes.

The key considerations in a settlement strategy are identified as:

- the efficient use of existing buildings, land and infrastructure,
- accessibility by a range of transport options;
- co-ordinating housing land releases with infrastructure investment;
- the deliverability of the strategy, and;
- the protection and enhancement of the natural, built and cultural heritage.

2.9 The LDP is required to allocate land for housing on a range of sites that are effective or capable of becoming effective to meet the housing land requirement up to year 10 from the predicted year of adoption, ensuring a minimum of five years effective land supply at all times.

2.10 SPP states that planning authorities should ensure that sufficient land is available to meet the housing requirement for each housing market area in full, unless there are serious local environmental or infrastructure constraints which cannot be resolved to allow development within the life of the plan. In these circumstances, consideration is to be given to meeting a proportion of the housing requirement in another housing market area or a different part of the strategic development plan area. The SESplan HoNDA, as agreed by CHMA and the Scottish Government, was produced on the basis that the entire SESplan area is one functional housing market area though it is acknowledged that there may be sub areas operating within it.

2.11 Planning authorities are also encouraged to promote the efficient use of land, buildings, infrastructure and previously developed land before sanctioning development on greenfield sites and SPP requires that planning authorities take account of a broadly similar range of factors as detailed at paragraph 2.8.

2.12 Urban capacity studies are given their place in SPP and are identified as a mechanism for assessing opportunities for further housing development within existing settlements, focusing on previously developed land and reviewing land that may have previously been allocated for uses other than housing.

2.13 In relation to affordable housing, SPP states that where the HoNDA and local housing strategy identify a shortage, it should be addressed in the development plan as part of the housing land allocation. As with market led housing the need for affordable housing should be met, where possible, within the housing market area where it has arisen.



2.14 SPP identifies a 'benchmark' figure of 25 per cent of the total number of housing units of each development site to contribute to affordable housing where this is justified by a housing need and demand assessment. Planning authorities are however able to depart from this where local circumstances and the housing need and demand assessment suggests otherwise.

2.15 Since SPP was launched, the Chief Planner has issued a [letter](#) to Heads of Planning (March 2011) and which elaborates further on the subject of providing for affordable housing in the current economic climate. In particular, it invites planning authorities to consider whether contributions of 25 per cent or more are likely to be deliverable and observes that levels of affordable housing requirement that act to stifle overall levels of housing development are likely to be counter-productive. It cautions against securing land for proposals requiring high levels of subsidy unless the authority is confident that a source for this subsidy can be identified and it encourages development plan policies on the subject of affordable housing to build in a consideration of development viability and for authorities to demonstrate a willingness to respond flexibly to current circumstances. In September 2012, the Scottish Government announced a review of

SPP and it is understood that it will be finalised and published in summer 2014.

[Planning Advice Notes \(PANs\)](#)

2.16 Additional Scottish Government advice is set out in a series of Planning Advice Notes (PANs) with the most pertinent being [2/2010 - Affordable Housing and Housing Land Audits](#).

2.17 This PAN provides advice and information on the delivery of affordable housing as part of providing high quality, sustainable communities. It explains the role of local authorities, Registered Social Landlords and developers in planning for and delivering a range of affordable housing types and tenures to meet identified need.

2.18 Consistent with SPP, the PAN encourages a flexible approach with regard to providing a range of tenures, the percentage of affordable units identified in development plan policy, provision on alternative sites and, in some cases, the use of a commuted sum. There is an enhanced recognition in the PAN that the private sector requires both a flexibility in the forms of delivery of affordable housing as well as certainty about the required provision stated through development plan policies.

2.19 The PAN stresses that affordable housing should ideally be integrated into a proposed development, such as by provision of a portion of low cost housing or the transfer of a portion of the site to be developed by a Registered Social Landlord or local authority. However, it also advises that a commuted sum (for off-site provision) is a matter for negotiation between the developer and the local authority, having regard to development costs, other contributions that are being sought, and other relevant factors such as layout and design. This advice encourages flexibility and local solutions in delivering affordable housing consistent with the approach taken on a range of other issues, such as agreement on sums required for infrastructure, and more widely, a concordat with local government.

Strategic Development Plan (SDP)

2.20 SESplan, the Strategic Development Plan Authority, initially published its *Proposed Plan* in November 2011, and following a period of time set aside for representations to be made, it was submitted to the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA) on 10 August 2012. The report on the Examination of the proposed SDP was submitted by the DPEA to Scottish Ministers for consideration on 12 April 2013 and it was subsequently approved by Scottish Ministers on 27 June 2013, replacing the *Edinburgh & The Lothians Structure Plan*.

2.21 The SDP was, however, approved with a number of 'modifications', the most pertinent in a housing context being an instruction to prepare supplementary guidance to identify the individual housing requirements for each LDP area. This was identified as a significant deficiency of the SDP and a period of 12 months from its date of approval was set for the completion of this exercise.

2.22 The SDP has been tasked with identifying the housing land requirement for the plan area and to broadly indicate where land should be allocated in local development plans to meet requirements up to year 12 beyond the predicted year of plan approval and an indication of the possible scale and location of housing land up to year twenty. The LDP was also tasked with identifying how much of the housing land requirement should be met by site allocations in the local development plan capable of development by the end of year seven. This approach was intended to build in up to two years for the adoption of local development plans following approval of the SDP.

2.23 The SDP defines the whole of West Lothian (excluding the Pentland Hills) as one of thirteen Strategic Development Areas (SDAs). It prescribes how much of the housing land requirement should be met by site allocations in LDPs.

2.24 Somewhat uniquely, West Lothian is identified as a single SDA, which helpfully, provides greater flexibility for the emerging LDP to identify future development locations to accommodate West Lothian's share of the housing land shortfall. The SDP indicates that the new allocations required for the area could be directed towards existing committed developments if it can be demonstrated that they can contribute towards the housing requirement within the specified time periods.

2.25 The smaller settlements in west West Lothian may also provide for additional growth. It is however important to be aware that any requirement for development will require to be carefully considered taking into account existing and proposed infrastructure requirements, sustainable development principles and landscape designations.

2.26 In determining the phasing and distribution of strategic housing development, the current economic climate and the impact it is having on the delivery and demand for new housing has been taken into account.

2.27 Central to the SDP strategy is the implementation of established and approved development plan strategies, which are set out in current approved or superseded structure plans, adopted and emerging local plans. In the case of West Lothian, this included the now superseded *Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan* (ELSP) and the *West Lothian Local Plan 2009* (WLLP). This approach enables the Core Development Areas (CDAs), identified in the former structure plan and the current adopted WLLP, to be taken forward and the vision for their implementation realised.

2.28 In terms of housing numbers, the development strategy set out in the originally Proposed SDP identified a requirement for 155,600 houses across the whole SESplan area over the period 2009 - 2032. Of these, the SDP advised that 105,600 houses had already been provided for in allocations identified through current development plans and planning approvals.

2.29 SESplan used the most recent HLA available to it at the time (the 2010 HLA). This constituted the Existing Housing Land Supply and is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - SESplan Housing Land Requirement (in Proposed Plan)

SESplan Housing Land Requirement	155,600
Existing Housing Land Supply	105,600
Loss of supply due to demolitions	5,500
Completions 2009 / 2010	4,300
Windfall Assumption	17,000
Total Supply	121,400
Housing Land Shortfall	34,200

Source: SESplan Proposed Plan /

Note: All figures have been rounded to the nearest 100 units

2.30 To meet this requirement, the majority of land to be allocated for housing was to be directed towards SDAs identified in the SDP. On the assumption that all of the existing housing land supply would come forward, LDPs were required to identify additional housing land, over and above existing allocations and consents, for 3,300 new homes (2009 - 2019) and 6,850 new homes (2019 - 2024).

2.31 With regard to the proposed plan, as originally submitted to the DPEA, the West Lothian share of this figure was identified as 1,750 homes - 500 units over the period 2010 - 2019, and a further 1,250 units over the period 2019 - 2024. Further allocations were to be required beyond 2024. The proposed SDP only set out an indication of the scale (24,050 new homes) required over the period 2024 - 2032 and did not split this across the other SESplan member councils, namely City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian, Fife and Scottish Borders councils.

Figure 2 - Housing Land Requirement for West Lothian (in Proposed Plan)

Committed development	22,300	
Windfall, demolitions and completions	2,400	
Net supply	24,700	
SDP Housing Land Requirement	2009 / 2019	500
	2019 / 2024	1,250
	2024 / 2032	TBC

Source: SESplan Proposed Plan

2.32 The proposed SDP did not break down allocations for the period 2024 - 2032 for a number of reasons but principally to address concerns that there was already deemed to be an abundance of housing land within the SESplan area. It was argued that it was primarily the current economic climate which was adversely impacting on deliverability rather than the availability of suitable sites.

2.33 Scottish Government Circular 6 / 2013 also advised that the proposed SDP was only required to give a broad indication of housing requirements for the later plan period. To allocate at local authority level was recognised as being fraught with uncertainty and the intention was that the SDP would be reviewed after five years when the economic climate might have improved and the availability of infrastructure to provide for housing requirements may be more readily available. Monitoring of the SDP and preparation of SDP2 was intended to allow for further assessment of how the 24,050 houses required over the period 2024-2032 were to be allocated.

2.34 In the event, and as noted above, Scottish Ministers concluded that these figures should be removed from the plan and that the actual quantum of housing that should be directed to each of the six LDP areas be determined through the preparation of supplementary guidance. This guidance, informed by an assessment of infrastructure and environmental capabilities and constraints, and with particular emphasis being placed on new development being focused on brownfield land, was submitted for the approval of Scottish Ministers on 16 May 2014 following a period of public consultation. It is anticipated that it will be approved in mid to late June 2014.

2.35 The housing land requirement across the SESplan area was originally calculated using the HLA 2010 as a baseline. Since the approval of the SDP, HLA 2012 has been produced. This was the most recent housing land supply data available because it took account of new sites added to the supply since 31 March 2010, and was employed in the new calculations. (West Lothian sites are identified in Annex 1).

SESplan Area Urban Capacity Study 2009

2.36 Urban capacity sites are those sites within urban boundaries and classified as constrained ('non-effective'); sites with housing potential such as employment sites where residential development would be considered a viable alternative use; and other sites not assessed through the development plan process but which come to the attention of the council as being suitable, at some stage, for housing. This may include sites currently in alternative use.

2.37 An urban capacity study (UCS) was carried out in 2009 for the SESplan area with the aim of providing quantitative housing windfall values to assist in the formation and justification of future SDP Housing Policy. The study identifies specific sites which (at that time) were deemed to have a reasonable likelihood of being developed and estimated the capacity of each site.

2.38 The results of the urban capacity study are summarised in Figure 3. For West Lothian, 158 potential sites were identified covering a gross area 231 hectares.

Figure 3 - Urban Housing Capacity

	West Lothian	SESplan
Number of Sites	158	627
Gross Area (Ha)	231	947
Gross Units	4,979	17,792
No of Units 'Discounted'	3,884	9,565
Net Units	1,095	8,227
Annual Average	186	1,342

Source: SESplan Area Urban Capacity Study 2009

2.39 Of the near 1,100 unit net capacity across West Lothian, 300 units were sourced from vacant and derelict land, 28 from land currently in use as commercial/industrial buildings, and 560 units from intensification of current local plan allocations. See Figure 4.

Figure (4) - Urban capacity by land type

	West Lothian	SESplan
Vacant and derelict land and buildings	303	2,914
Intensification of LP sites	560	2,011
Car parks / conversion	4	16
Redevelopment on non residential land	28	2,856
Vacant land not previously developed	193	423
Allocated in plan for non residential use	7	7
TOTAL	1,095	8,227
Annual average	156	1,175
Annual contribution of conversion/sub-division	30	167
Annual total	186	1,342
% of SESplan total	14%	-

Source: SESplan Area Urban Capacity Study 2009

2.40 It is important to be aware that inclusion of the sites in the UCS does not represent an endorsement of these sites by the council. A list of the sites which are identified in the UCS is provided as Annex 2. This also indicates whether planning permission has been granted for the development of these sites since the 2009 base date of the study.

2.41 It should also be understood that not all of the sites identified in the UCS will necessarily be developed for housing and other sites that have not been identified may also come forward in due course. To reflect this, the amount of land identified was 'discounted' to arrive at a realistic level of likely output from windfall sites.

2.42 In terms of the contribution to meeting the housing land requirement it is assumed that the level of windfall development identified in the UCS would apply for the first seven years. 75 per cent of this level would apply to the remainder of the first phase of the SDP (to 2024) and the level would be reduced to 50 per cent for the longer term. Following discounting, a process to calculate how much of the unconstrained capacity will actually come forward for residential development, it was estimated that this could yield over 1,000 new dwellings in West Lothian over the first seven year period - an annual average of approximately 186 units per annum.

The Local Housing Strategy (LHS)

2.43 There is a statutory requirement on local authorities to prepare a *Local Housing Strategy* (LHS) supported by an assessment of housing need and demand. The LHS is tasked with providing the strategic direction to tackle housing need and demand and to inform the future investment in housing and related services across a local authority area.

2.44 The 2012 West Lothian LHS sets out the key issues, proposed outcomes and the way in which housing and related services will be developed in West Lothian between 2012-2017. It also includes an analysis of the housing market in West Lothian. The LHS covers all housing types and housing need across the area and relates to home-owners, council and housing association tenants as well as tenants of private landlords and private landlords.

2.45 Meeting housing need and demand in West Lothian is identified as a key challenge for the LHS. The main issues that are faced in relation to housing need and demand are:

- Securing an adequate supply of housing to meet housing need in West Lothian;
- Provision of a good choice of tenure, size and type of housing; and
- Ensuring that housing contributes to well balanced communities.

2.46 An analysis of demographic information for West Lothian indicates a rapidly growing and ageing population and an increase in the number of smaller households.

2.47 The estimated population for West Lothian (according to the National Records for Scotland (NRS) Mid-2012 Population Estimates) was 175,990. The population of West Lothian accounts for 3 per cent of the total population of Scotland.

2.48 This represents an increase of 0.4 per cent from 175,300 in 2011 and the cumulative increase between 2001 and 2012 is estimated at 10.7 per cent. This is the fifth highest rate of growth amongst the 32 local authorities in Scotland.



2.49 The 2012 estimate of the number of households in West Lothian is 73,761. This is a 0.4 per cent increase in the 2011 figure of 73,469, compared to a 0.4 per cent increase in Scotland as a whole.

2.50 The total number of households in West Lothian is projected to change from 73,160 in 2010 to 95,160 in 2035, which is an increase of 30 per cent. In Scotland as a whole, the projected number of households is set to increase by 23 per cent over the same 25 year period.

2.51 In Scotland, the number of lone adult households is projected to increase by 49 per cent over the 25 year period. In West Lothian, the number of lone adult households is projected to increase by 70 per cent, and the number of larger households in West Lothian is projected to fall, with the number of households of two or more adults with children decreasing by 23 per cent over the 25 year period. The average household size is projected to decrease from 2.33 in 2010 to 2.12 in 2032.

2.52 The housing supply target identified in the LHS has been arrived at using a standard methodology that has been adopted by all six SESplan member authorities and uses data set out in the SESplan HoNDA. In developing the housing supply targets, several factors have been taken into account;

- SESplan housing land requirements;
- SESplan and Lothian Housing Need and Demand Assessments;
- The *West Lothian Local Plan*;
- The annual *Lothians Housing Land Audit*;
- The likely availability of funding for affordable housing;
- Analysis of housing completions since 2003 across all sectors;
- Affordable housing policy.

2.53 A key issue highlighted in the LHS is the significant demand for affordable housing in the coming years. The Scottish Government has identified an affordable housing supply target of 30,000 units in the lifetime of the current Parliament. The LHS notes that the SESplan HoNDA identifies the demand for affordable housing between 2012 and 2016 as being 1,499 units and a further need for 371 affordable homes for each of the next 10 years is also identified.



2.54 The housing need figure in the SESplan HoNDA of 1,855 equates to five times the annual need figure of 371. However, it is clear that funding levels and legislative changes are unlikely to permit this level of affordable housing to be constructed over the duration of the current LHS. The council is nevertheless actively engaged in the implementation of a new build council housing programme, and this has now been extended into a third phase.

2.55 It is anticipated that approximately 70 units per annum of registered social housing will also be built. The RSL housing is likely to be a mix of tenures including social rent, shared equity and mid-market rent. There is also a limited opportunity for unsubsidised affordable housing to be built.

2.56 The LHS also considered the housing related issues for particular needs groups as part of the development of the SESplan HoNDA and these groups included gypsy / travellers.

2.57 The council has reviewed the services it provides to gypsy/travellers, following consultation with representatives of the minority community, stake holders and service providers and it was subsequently concluded that there was no longer any demand for pitches on the council run permanent site in Bathgate which had seen occupancy rates falling to an average of 30 per cent.

2.58 It has, instead, been proposed to further develop a joint partnership approach offering support, advice and assistance, with West Lothian Council retaining the lead role. This will build on the existing outreach service which has been operating since the Travelling Persons Site was built. A focus group has been set up with 13 internal / external agencies who will work with gypsy/travellers community to further enhance the service. Through the recent restructure process within Housing Needs Service it is proposed to have a permanent dedicated Gypsy Travellers Liaison Officer in post. They will take the lead to ensure access to health, education, support, housing and assist in tackling discrimination and ensure inclusion in relevant consultations. They will build on relationships already established.

2.59 The LHS embraces an action plan and it commits the council to working with strategic partners to deliver support services which assist in achieving outcomes at both an individual and community level.

Extent and phasing of housing commitments

2.60 The *West Lothian Local Plan* was adopted in 2009, shortly after the economic recession set in, and there is, as a consequence, a significant supply of undeveloped housing sites still contained in that plan. The reduced supply of commercial finance and mortgages, and the lack of consumer confidence and economic uncertainty, has resulted in sites stalling or being developed at a much reduced rate and new sites starting being greatly reduced. In better economic circumstances these same sites would have delivered much greater output. Assuming market conditions begin to recover, it is not unreasonable to expect a significant number of these sites to once again start to be built out and yield output over the course of the new local development plan.

2.61 In a West Lothian context, the contributions made by the Core Development Areas (CDAs) thus far, has been insignificant. These sites have been disproportionately affected by the economic downturn, but this is hardly surprising given that each of these sites has its own series of complexities in terms of land assembly, legal agreements and subsequently long lead in times. It is nevertheless encouraging that the Winchburgh CDA secured outline planning permission in April 2012 and that a site start commenced very shortly thereafter in July 2012. Calderwood is underway and planning approvals for developing constituent parts of the Broxburn CDA at Candleworks and CDAs at Mosside and Armadale have also been granted, with work on the latter well advanced. Additionally, development has commenced on one of the largest non CDA sites, Heartlands at Whitburn.

2.62 Through the Housing Land Audit process, the scale and phasing of these commitments, and the extent to which they are likely to cover future needs in the period of the West Lothian LDP (2014 - 2024) has been reviewed and taken into account.

Potential additional sites

2.63 In January 2012, the council authorised the initiation of a 'call for sites' consultation in advance of the *Main Issues Report* for the local development plan. As part of this exercise, developers and landowners were invited to submit expressions of interest for land they wished to see allocated for development through the LDP process. In all, some 258 submissions were received, but 19 council owned sites were subsequently withdrawn leaving a total of 239. All these sites have been recorded in a database (SPaDE) and subjected to a comprehensive site assessment process.

Constraints

2.64 Some parts of West Lothian are particularly susceptible to environmental and infrastructure constraints which have the potential to limit or at least delay growth. The unprecedented rate of development experienced between 2002 and 2007, and the significant additional growth provided for in the current WLLP has highlighted a number of areas where infrastructure capacity issues exist, particularly in relation to primary and secondary schools and roads. As a consequence, strategic constraints were systematically identified and reviewed with regard to all of the candidate housing sites which are to be allocated for development

Market conditions

2.65 The economic downturn is continuing to have a debilitating effect on output and capacity in the house building sector. Output in Scotland fell from 25,736 homes in 2007 to 9,893 in 2011, a decrease of 62 per cent. In the West Lothian Council area alone, completions declined from a high of 1,288 in 2004/05 to 714 in 2006/07 and, according to the Housing Land Audit, fell further to 204 in 2011/12. Economic recovery remains patchy and mortgage lending to house purchasers, particularly first time buyers, is still constrained with the consequence that the market is still in a fragile state.



Figure 5 - Actual House Completions in West Lothian Since 2001

2001 - 2002	1,281
2002 - 2003	875
2003 - 2004	1,158
2004 - 2005	1,288
2005 - 2006	1,175
2006 - 2007	714
2007 - 2008	928
2008 - 2009	422
2009 - 2010	543
2010 - 2011	530
2011 - 2012	229
2012 - 2013	523

Source: Housing Land Audits 2001 to 2013

Note: It is acknowledged that these completion figures are, in some instances, at variance with returns reported by Building Standards for the same period. This is largely due to differences in the way completions are defined for the purpose of auditing, but become reconciled over time.

2.66 There is an industry wide view that the house building sector is unlikely to return to pre-2007 levels of development for many years, and it is important that a realistic view is taken as to what rate of building can be sustained by the market over the period of the plan. Scottish Government would also appear to have stepped back from a previous optimistic target of delivering 35,000 house completions per annum by 2015. This figure was originally identified in

National Planning Framework 2, SPP3 and a policy document entitled *Firm Foundations - The Future of Housing in Scotland*. This latter document has been superseded by *Homes Fit for the 21st Century: the Scottish Government's Strategy and Action Plan for Housing in the Next Decade: 2011-2020* which, pointedly, makes no such reference.

2.67 *Homes Fit for the 21st Century* reinforces recent reforms to the planning system and commitments to ensuring a generous supply of land for housing in the right places. It focuses on the need to increase the supply of affordable housing across all tenures and recognises that this is during a period where there is a decline in house building, restrictions on mortgage lending and very limited public resources.

2.68 The paper signals the Government's intention to adopt a more radical approach to increasing housing supply through the development of new funding models, identification of new sources of finance and provision of a wider range of affordable housing options. It notes that in the current economic climate, planning authorities they may need to take a more flexible and responsive approach to the identification of housing sites (without undermining the principles of sustainable placemaking). Furthermore, land which was developable before the downturn may have to be reappraised and other sites identified.



3 Identifying housing need and demand

3.1 This section explains the approach which has been taken to calculate the need and demand statistics for housing and which underpin the housing land calculations for the plan area.

Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HoNDA)

3.2 The Scottish Government specifically requires that development plans are informed by Housing Needs and Demand Assessments (HoNDAs). They are produced by local authorities and form a critical part of the evidence base that is used to calculate housing supply targets in local housing strategies and to set housing supply targets in Strategic and Local Development Plans.

3.3 They are prepared in accordance with guidance provided by the Scottish Government (2008) and identify the need for both market and affordable housing, the results of which inform the development of the *Local Housing Strategy* (LHS), the MIR and the LDP. Current guidance is in the process of being updated by the Scottish Government.

3.4 The core outputs of the HoNDA provides:

- an estimate of total future households, estimate of household groups with specific housing requirements, e.g. families, older people, minority ethnic groups etc;
- an estimate of total households in housing need;
- an estimate of future households requiring market housing; and
- an estimate of future households requiring market housing.

These figures are based on the population and household projections produced by the General Register Office for Scotland (now National Records for Scotland) and an assessment of backlog, existing and future housing need. This assessment is used to judge the scale of allocations for housing that requires to be made.

It outlines what the level of housing need is likely to be in order for policies on affordable housing to be developed. It also provides evidence on specific housing requirements and the mix of housing that may be in demand during the period of the LDP.



3.5 To achieve an understanding of the housing market area for the Lothians, West Lothian Council worked with the three neighbouring Lothian authorities and jointly commissioned Tribal Consulting to update the Lothian Housing Needs and Market Study 2005, which in turn, gave rise to the [Lothian HoNDA Update 2009](#). The Centre for Housing Market Analysis (CHMA) subsequently confirmed the Lothian HoNDA update as 'robust and credible' in March 2009 and SPP indicates that such endorsement should serve to exempt it from being considered at a development plan examination.

3.6 Meanwhile, Scottish Borders Council commissioned Outside Research to update its Local Housing Assessment 2006 and Fife Council undertook an in-house update to its Housing Need and Affordability Assessment 2004. All six local authorities then commissioned Tribal Consulting to pull together these three local studies to produce an overarching HoNDA for the SESplan area as means of aligning them. This approach was agreed by Scottish Government.

3.7 The SESplan HoNDA drew on the inputs and outputs from the individual studies and reviewed their findings. As the approach for the SESplan HoNDA modified those taken by the three local HoNDAs, the results, in terms of needs and demand, differed slightly from those reported in the individual studies.

For a detailed description of the methodology used to reconcile the individual assessments, refer to Appendix 1 of the [SESplan Housing Needs and Demand Assessment Technical Report](#). However,

the conclusion of both HoNDAs was that there was a high demand for all tenures of housing in West Lothian with the affordable housing sector being particularly pressured.

3.8 The SESplan HoNDA subsequently received its own robust and credible status from the CHMA in June 2011 and went on to inform the SESplan MIR and the *Proposed Plan*, helping to define the housing allocations identified earlier.

3.9 It should be noted that the constituent SESplan member authorities have produced several supplementary documents in response to the recommendations from the CHMA and the SESplan HoNDA is actually a collection of eight reports and documents.

- *SESplan Housing Need and Demand Study* May 2011 (version 12)
- *SESplan Housing Need and Demand Study: Technical Report* December 2010 (Version 3 – May 2010)
- *SESplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment – Approach to Consultation*
- *SESplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment Addendum* (version 3)
- *Identifying Housing Market Area for the SESplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment*
- *SESplan Local Economy*
- *SESplan Stock Chapter – Final*
- *Review of Housing and Housing Support for Particular Needs Groups for SESplan Local Authorities*

3.10 The SESplan HoNDA was produced on the basis that the entire SESplan area is one functional housing market area, although it is acknowledged that there may be sub areas operating within it. This conclusion reflected evidence on the extent of the Edinburgh travel to work area which was a key factor in determining the boundary of SESplan.

Summary of the SESplan HoNDA

The housing market

3.11 The HoNDA suggested that the housing market in the SESplan area was and will remain pressured with only moderate improvement in the level of supply compared with demand over the next ten years. The economic climate and the housing market in particular, have had significant impacts on local housing markets. New, affordable mortgages are increasingly difficult to find and stagnant or falling prices are further discouraging existing.

Housing need

3.12 Analysis showed that of the 546,119 households in the SESplan area, 46,357 (or 8 per cent) were in some kind of housing need. Within West Lothian, the comparable figure was 6,145 households out of 72,290 (or 9 per cent).

3.13 Approximately 19,560 of households in the SESplan area were shown to be unable to afford to buy/rent an appropriate dwelling in the private sector. That figure translated to 2,100 in a West Lothian context and represented around 3 per cent of all households in West Lothian. Guidance indicated that these households should be housed over a ten-year period, resulting in around 210 households to be housed in West Lothian each year.

3.14 In addition, it is expected that around 400 emerging households (newly forming households and in-migrant households) over the course of the year to be unable to afford to buy or rent market housing, and a further 392 existing households to develop housing needs they cannot resolve within the market sector.

3.15 Overall, in each of the next ten years, it is expected that the average number of households needing social/affordable housing in West Lothian will be in the order of 1,060. However, over this period, only 689 social/affordable dwellings are forecast to be become available each year. This is clearly insufficient to meet requirements - leaving as surplus imbalance within West Lothian of 371 dwellings per annum (assuming no new social/affordable housing is developed over the period). The number of households currently in need and those falling into need over the plan period are important inputs to the forecast of the requirement for new housing.

Housing demand

3.16 Turning to demand for affordable and market housing within the SESplan area, the HoNDA anticipated that by year five there would be 1.02 households in need of social/affordable housing for every dwelling that became available (that suggests that need/demand exceeded supply by 2 per cent). Supply was also fairly tight in the market sector, with 0.95 private sector households for every private dwelling. This put vacancies at about 5 per cent of the stock) in year one and saw it grow increasingly tighter over the projection period. This assumed that new build continued at planned levels over the 20 year period.

3.17 In West Lothian the situation was, if anything, more acute, with no vacancies in the affordable sector from the base year, and no vacancies in the market sector from year five. This situation continued to deteriorate, and by year twenty demand was shown to exceed supply by 5 per cent.

3.18 Overall, the analysis confirmed a reasonably tight housing market across the SESplan area, with particular pressures for social rented/affordable housing. The analysis also suggested that demand and supply of market housing was at or was close to balance. Overall, the housing system was tight, and growing tighter over the planning period in spite of planned developments.



Figure 6 - Demand for New Houses Net of Turnover (West Lothian)

West Lothian	Years 1-5	Years 6-10	Years 11-15	Years 16-20	Total Demand 2009-2032
Affordable	268	321	152	154	4,987
Market	847	847	866	774	18,861
Total	1,115	1,169	1,018	928	23,848

Source: SESplan HoNDA

SESplan	Years 1-5	Years 6-10	Years 11-15	Years 16-20	Total Demand 2009-2032
Affordable	2,381	2,574	1,121	1,183	40,026
Market	5,138	4,873	5,421	4,921	115,518
Total	7,519	7,447	6,542	6,104	155,545

Source: SESplan HoNDA

Figure 7 - Demand for New Houses Net of Turnover by Plan Period (SESplan)

SESplan	2009-2019	2010-2024	2024-2032	Total Demand 2009-2032
Affordable	24,775	5,603	9,649	40,026
Market	50,056	27,105	38,357	115,518
Total	74,831	32,708	48,006	155,545

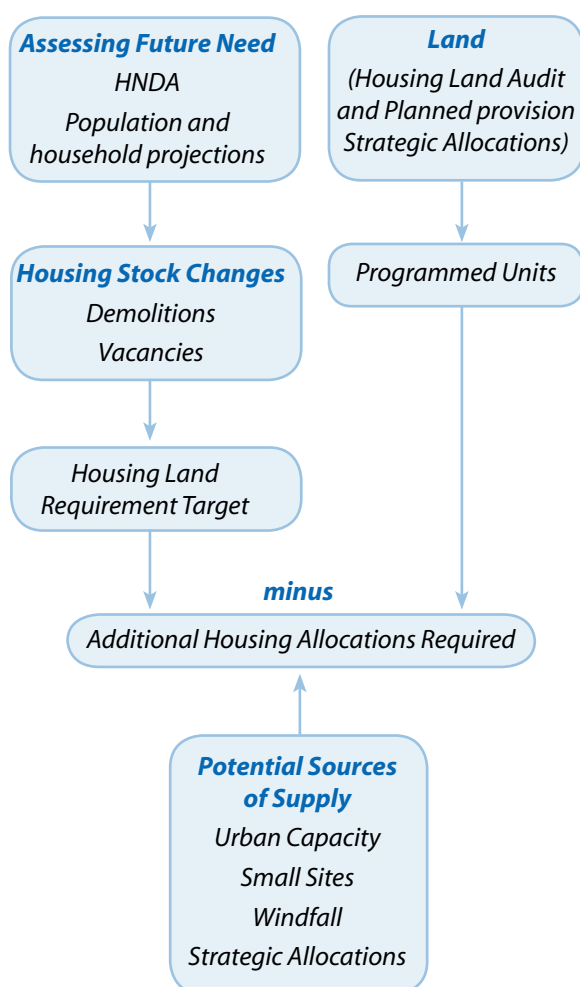
Source: SESplan HoNDA

4 Calculating the housing land requirement and supply

Housing land requirement

4.1 An analysis of evidence has been gathered on demographic change, house building and programmed housing supply to feed into the established mechanism for calculating the local development plan housing land requirement outlined in Figure 8.

Figure 8 - Housing land requirement stages



4.2 The housing land requirement is the outcome of an assessment of housing need and demand (expressed in housing units) which reflects the planning strategy and the environmental and infrastructural constraints of the plan area.

4.3 There are five main components to the assessment of the SESplan housing land requirement:

- Additional housing need
- Population growth
- Vacancy rates (including second and holiday homes)
- Demolition of existing housing stock
- Households currently in housing need

Additional housing need

4.4 The starting point for assessing the housing land requirement for the SESplan area (and by extension, the LDP) was to forecast demand for new housing over the plan period. And a key component of the demand forecast was the projection of household change.

4.5 The General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) produces household projections for local authority areas and the SESplan HoNSA initially made use of household projections with a base date of 2006.

4.6 These projections took into account trends in migration, changes in the population structure and household formation rates. It is however important to be aware that they were not forecasts but trend based and they assumed that factors which influenced demographic change remained stable. They did not take account of changes in local and national economic conditions nor strategic and local planning policies.

4.7 The projections indicated how many households required to be created to cater for the projected population and the two main drivers leading to increased numbers of households were:

- Population change consisting of natural change (the difference between the number of births and the number of deaths) and net migration (the difference between the number of people moving to an area and the number of people moving away from the area).
- Average household size generally decreasing due to factors such as people living longer and, as they age, tending to live in one or two person households; families having fewer children; couples waiting longer to have children; and people choosing to live on their own and not have children.

4.8 The 2006 based projections for the whole of the SESplan area and West Lothian are set out in Figure 9.

Figure 9 - Original 2006 Based Household Projections

			West Lothian	SESplan
2008			72,290	545,860
2015			79,360	593,550
2024			88,650	652,690
2032*			95,838	700,023
Change	2008-2024	No	16,360	106,830
		%	22.6	19.6
	2008-2032	No	23,548	154,163
		%	32.6	28.2

Source: General Register Office for Scotland / * The GRO(S) projections cover a 25 year period, from 2006 to 2031. The 2032 figure is a simple interpolation of the series.

4.9 These projection show that over the period to 2032, the number of households in West Lothian was expected to increase by over 23,000 representing a growth of almost 33 per cent. This gives West Lothian a higher average household size than the both the SESplan area and Scottish averages but is not unexpected since a significant part of the increase will be generated from within West Lothian itself as families establish and grow. There is a continued trend towards a reduction in the average household size and household projections show that the largest increases in terms of household formation is for smaller households of one adult or one adult and one or more children but a reduction in two adults with one or more children households.

4.10 A difficulty with these 2006 based figures, however, was that they reflected a period of very strong economic growth for the region during which inward migration was probably at its height, and therefore, not particularly representative of prevailing economic conditions.

4.11 It was recognised that a less buoyant economic climate would inevitably contribute to a reduction in inward migration in the short term and would have knock on effects for demand and on new house completions. The decline in new house completions is well documented elsewhere in this paper.

4.12 Therefore, in order to reflect a more realistic forecast of demand, and recognizing that households would not form at the rates predicted, the GROS projections were subsequently adjusted.

4.13 GROS produced new estimates of households in 2008 which were lower than the 2006 based projection for this date and these were used as the base date of the rebased projections which essentially assumed a 25 per cent reduction in the demand for new housing. (see Figure 10).

Figure 10 - 2008 Re-based Household Projections

			West Lothian	SESplan
2008			72,248	543,673
2015			81,363	601,950
2024			86,362	633,576
2032*			93,371	679,519
Change	2008-2024	No	14,114	89,903
		%	19.5	16.5
	2008-2032	No	21,123	135,846
		%	29.2	25.0

Source: General Register Office for Scotland / * The GRO(S) projections cover a 25 year period, from 2006 to 2031. The 2032 figure is a simple interpolation of the series.

Population growth

4.14 The estimated population for West Lothian (according to the National Records for Scotland (NRS) Mid-2012 Population Estimates) was 175,990. The population of West Lothian accounts for 3 per cent of the total population of Scotland. This represents an increase of 0.4 per cent from 175,300 in 2011 and the cumulative increase between 2001 and 2012 is estimated at 10.7 percent. This is the fifth highest rate of growth amongst the 32 local authorities in Scotland.

Vacancy rates

4.15 In order to accurately estimate the demand for new housing over the SDP period, account has also to be taken of changes to the 'non-effective stock'. At any one time, a proportion of the existing housing stock will be unoccupied and, therefore, not helping to meet housing need or demand. This vacant stock includes housing on the market, either new-build or where the owner has left vacant possession; housing in the process of being modernised or refurbished; and housing awaiting re-let.



4.16 For the purposes of the SESplan SDP housing land requirement, the number of vacant dwellings was calculated by applying the vacancy rates from the 2001 Census to the projections of household change. Figure 11 details this.

Figure 11 - Increase in vacant dwellings

		West Lothian	SESplan
Ratio of vacant units to total households (2001)		1.7	-
Household Change	08-19	9,115	58,277
	19-24	4,999	31,626
	24-32	7,009	45,943
Increase in Vacant Stock	08-19	150	2,090
	19-24	80	1,120
	24-32	120	1,650

Source: 2001 Census of population / GROS Household projections 2006

4.17 Second and holiday homes make up a statistically insignificant element of the total SESplan housing stock. There was no evidence to suggest that the number of second and holiday homes would substantially increase or decrease in the period to 2032 and, therefore, this element was disregarded in the overall calculation.

Demolition of Existing Housing Stock

4.18 Demolitions reduce the existing stock and so the loss of this stock required to be compensated for by an increase in the housing land requirement. The allowance made for possible loss of stock due to demolitions was based upon the average number of demolitions in each of the SESplan local authority areas over the last five years. An allowance for demolitions was only made for the period 2010 to 2024. A detailed housing requirement forecast was not required for the eight year period beyond 2024 and it wasn't in any event practicable to produce a reasonable estimate of likely demolitions for this period.

Figure 12 - Forecast of housing demolitions 2010 to 2024

	West Lothian	SESplan
Annual Average	20	400
2010-2019	180	3,600
2010-2024	200	5,520

Source: Scottish Government publication: Housing Statistics for Scotland - Demolitions

NB - Demolitions for West Lothian assumed for the next 10 years only.



Households currently in Housing Need

4.19 The SESplan HoNDA included a calculation for households currently in need and unable to meet their needs through the market. This figure, detailed in Figure 13 was added to the SESplan housing requirement. The West Lothian component is also shown for the sake of completeness.

Figure 13 - Households in need from the SESplan HoNDA

	West Lothian	SESplan
Households in need	2,100	19,560

Source: SESplan Housing Need and Demand Study, March 2010 / SESplan HoNDA

Housing Land Supply

4.20 The housing land supply is made up of several interconnected elements:

- Established housing land supply
- Windfall assumptions
- Urban capacity sites
- Small sites
- Shortfall, made up by new allocations

Housing Land Audit (HLA)

4.21 The land supply is recorded and monitored through the annual HLA, a collaborative process previously undertaken by the four local authorities within the Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan area, i.e. the City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian. The process involved consultation and engagement with other council services and external stakeholders including infrastructure providers and Homes for Scotland.

4.22 The HLA provides the main source of statistics on the current housing supply - showing which sites have planning permission and which are programmed to be built. Scottish Planning Policy obliges planning authorities to carry out regular monitoring of housing completions, and also, to programme projected completions to ensure a continuing and generous supply of land for housing.

4.23 The HLA has three key functions. These are to:

- demonstrate the availability of sufficient effective land to meet the strategic housing land requirement for a minimum of five years ahead;
- to provide a snapshot of the amount of land available for the construction of houses at any particular time; and
- to provide an information source for a variety of purposes, including school roll forecasts, infrastructure, and affordable housing provision.

4.24 The HLA includes every potential housing site with a capacity of five or more units, ordered by tenure and planning status, and maps them. It programmes future completions from this supply over the five year audit period and it tries to give an indication of likely completions for a further two year period.

4.25 The HLA provides commentary on three specific categories of housing land supply, effective, constrained and established and these are explained later in this document.

4.26 While initially drawing on data from the 2008 HLA, the SESplan SDP ultimately adopted the 2010 HLA and it is these figures on which the original SDP housing land requirement was determined.

4.27 However, the most up to date and complete housing data available to the council when preparing the LDP was HLA 2012. This reflects the housing land position at 31 March 2012 and has subsequently become the base audit for the housing land supply figures underpinning the SDP and the subsequent draft supplementary guidance. It has been adopted as the relevant HLA for LDP purposes but a range of figures have been produced for the sake of comparison and completeness.

Figure 14 - Key Data from the West Lothian HLAs 2009-2012

	2009	2010	2011	2012
Sites under construction	2,447	2,185	1,822	2,113
Sites with consent	3,393	3,249	3,051	2,805
Sites without consent	12,900	9,709	8,174	9,213
Small sites	198	150	150	150
Total Effective Housing Land Supply	18,938	15,293	13,197	14,281
Constrained sites	7,927	8,220	9,856	8,566
Total Established Housing Land Supply in West Lothian	26,865	23,513	23,053	22,847

Source: Housing Land Audits 2009 to 2012

4.28 Other important statistics with implications for West Lothian and the production of the LDP and arising from the HLA 2012, are discussed below.

Figure 15 - Extract from the Housing Land Audit 2012

Programmed completions	2012 - 2013	577
	2013 - 2014	544
	2014 - 2015	714
	2015 - 2016	796
	2016 - 2017	777
	2012 - 2017	3,418
	2017 - 2018	756
	2018 - 2019	685
	Total Post 2019	8,435
	Total Post 2017	9,876
	Total Effective Supply	14,281

Source: West Lothian HLA 2012

4.29 The HLA 2012 showed that for the five year period from 2012 to 2017, the total number of houses forecast to be built in West Lothian was 3,418 (or an average of 684 houses per annum). This figure represents the level of output that the house building industry agreed was realistic from the existing established supply and is widely referred to as the *Effective 5 Year Housing Land Supply*.

4.30 In addition to this, 9,876 units were programmed for development beyond 2017. This is called the *Effective Post 5 Year Housing Land Supply*.

4.31 At 31 March 2012, the *Total Effective Housing Land Supply* in West Lothian was 14,281 units (3,418 + 9,876 + [987 under construction]).

4.32 Because the actual number of completions achieved during the audit year never exactly matches the forecast target for that year, the future five year land supply target is recalculated annually as part of the HLA process.

4.33 It has previously been explained that West Lothian's share of the now superseded E&LSP housing land requirement was 16,100 units and at 31 March 2012, 9,193 completions had been achieved. This left a shortfall (or *Recalculated Housing Requirement/Housing Land Supply Target*) of 6,907 units.

4.34 The HLA 2012 indicated that annual completions between 2012 and 2015 would have had to be in excess of 2,300 to achieve the E&LSP target, a highly improbable figure on the basis of current build rates and market conditions and much greater than had ever been achieved before, even in the best of economic times. The number of houses forecast to be constructed over this period was in fact 1,845 and this represented only 27 per cent of the target completions.

4.35 Figure 16 shows this in the context of previous years and as a comparison with the consolidated performance of the E&LSP authority. Figure 17 summarises key data.

Figure 16 - Effective 5 Year Housing Land Supply 2009-2012 (based on the now superseded E&LSP Housing requirement)

	HLA 2009	HLA 2010	HLA 2011	HLA 2012
West Lothian	43%	37%	31%*	27%*
Lothians	46%	45%	36%*	29%*

Source : Consolidated Lothian HLAs 2010-2012

The above figures have been calculated using the projected programmed completions for three and four years respectively, given that the E&LSP2015 target date was 2015 for completions. As a consequence, they are not wholly comparable with the figures for earlier years.

Figure 17 - Key data from HLA 2012

Total completions required to be made by West Lothian over the now superseded <i>Edinburgh & The Lothians Structure Plan</i> period (2004 - 2015)	16,100
Completions achieved 2011- 2012	229
Cumulative completions 2001 - 2012	9,193
Cumulative completions required 2012 - 2015 <i>this is calculated by subtracting cumulative completions from total completions over structure plan period, i.e., 16,100 - 9,193 =</i>	6,907
Effective 5 Year Land Supply <i>this is calculated by totalling the five "programmed completions" columns in the HLA 2012 i.e. 577 + 554 + 714 (+796 + 777)</i>	3,418
Total Effective Land Supply for the West Lothian element of the now superseded <i>Edinburgh & The Lothians Structure Plan</i> area <i>this is calculated by adding the Effective 5 Year Land Supply to the Effective Post 5 Year Effective Land Supply plus the number of houses under construction i.e., 3,418 + 9,876 + 987 =</i>	14,281

This figure has been calculated using the projected programmed completions for 5 years (notwithstanding the fact that the ELSP2015 target was 2015).

Source: Housing Land Audit 2012

Established housing land supply

4.36 The established housing land supply comprises all sites with a capacity of five or more units that have a current planning consent for residential development, including the remaining capacity of sites under construction at the start of the structure plan period, together with allocated sites in adopted local plans. This includes land which is considered to be effective and land which is considered to be constrained. These terms are more fully explained below.

4.37 At the time the SDP MIR was initially being prepared, the HLA 2008 was the main data source, not the HLA 2010, and there was, consequently, an identified supply of land in the Edinburgh and Lothians, Fife and Scottish Borders Structure Plans that had not yet become part of the established land supply. Figure (18) quantifies this additional land which had yet to be embraced in audits.

Figure 18 - Additional land identified in Structure Plans (at 2008)

	West Lothian	SESplan
2008-2019	2,922	16,958
2019-2024	3,934	11,204
2024-2032	5,144	19,604
Total	12,000	47,766

Source: Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan 2015, Scottish Borders Structure Plan Alteration, Fife Structure Plan 2006 - 2026 / SESplan Housing Technical Paper

Effective housing land supply

4.38 Effective housing land supply is unconstrained land that can be developed for housing, which is free from constraints in terms of ownership, physical contamination, deficit funding, marketability, infrastructure and land use, within the period under consideration. Measuring the effective land supply helps to identify if there is sufficient capacity of effective land, ordinarily for a five year period,

4.39 The expected output from the effective land supply over the SDP plan period is summarised in Figure (19).

Figure 19 - Output from effective sites (2010)

	West Lothian	SESplan
2010-2019	5,603	44,276
2019-2024	3,550	17,985
2024-2032	5,003	26,839
2010-2032	14,156	89,100

Source: HLA 2010 / SESplan Housing Technical Paper

4.40 It is relevant to the preparation of the LDP to be aware that the five-year effective land supply actually decreased across the whole of the structure plan area between HLA 2009 and HLA 2010. In West Lothian it went from 43 per cent of the target to 37 per cent. This was attributed mainly to the programming of some sites being pushed back as developers indicated that they did not intend to commence development in the next five years, which was a graphic reflection of the lack of demand and lack of availability of development finance.

Constrained housing land supply

4.41 Constrained housing land supply is land that is not expected to be developed in the short term and within the period under consideration. Such sites may be affected by infrastructure constraints, land contamination or ownership / marketing issues.

4.42 Where sites are constrained for whatever reason, it would be erroneous to assume that such constraints are permanent and that such sites would never make a contribution to meeting the housing land requirement. As the SDP looks at land requirements into the longer term, it was, therefore, appropriate to include this source of housing land as potentially contributing to the housing land requirement within the plan period. Figure 20 details the expected output from those sites that were regarded as constrained at the time of the 2010 HLA.

Figure 20 - Output from constrained sites (2010)

	West Lothian	SESplan
2010 - 2019	2,097	7,035
2019 - 2024	3,208	5,510
2024 - 2032	2,845	3,945
2010 - 2032	8,150	16,490

Source: HLA 2010 / SESplan Housing Technical Paper

4.43. As previously explained, the total established land supply is the sum of the effective and constrained land supply and this is detailed in Figure 21.

Figure 21 - Established Housing Land Supply (2010)

	West Lothian	SESplan
Effective Supply 2010 - 2032	14,156	89,100
Constrained Supply 2019 - 2032	8,150	16,490
Established Supply (Total) 2024 - 2032	22,306	105,590

Source: HLA 2010 / SESplan Housing Technical Paper

Windfall assumptions

4.44 The SDP recognises that over the course of the plan period, some of the demand for new housing will be met on land on which house building is not specifically anticipated. So called 'windfall sites' are those not specifically allocated for development within the development plan but for which planning consent is, nevertheless, granted. Historically, such sites have made a significant contribution to meeting the housing land requirement.

4.45 An allowance has therefore been made for this contribution to the housing land supply over the SDP period and is summarised in Figure 22.

Figure 22 - Anticipated output from windfall development

		West Lothian	SESplan
Annual contribution	2008/2015	186	1,135
	2015/2024	80	790
	2024/2032	53	528
Total contribution	2008/2015	1,625	11,104
	2015/2014	400	3,950
	2024/2032	424	4,224

Source: SESplan Urban Capacity Study 2009 / SESplan Housing Technical Note

Small sites

4.46 Small sites, those of fewer than five houses, have historically made up a significant proportion of total new house building in the SESplan area and small site completions also contribute to meeting the housing land requirement with a notional estimate having been allowed for.

Shortfall

4.47 When the housing numbers attributed to the existing housing land supply, windfall assumptions, urban capacity sites and small sites have been subtracted from the housing land requirement, the residual figure is the shortfall i.e. the number of housing units remaining to be found to meet the SESplan SDP requirement in full.

Summary

4.48 In summary, the supply of effective and constrained sites together with a likely estimate of windfall sites and demolitions is detailed in Figure 23.

Figure 23 - Summary of established and windfall land supply and demolitions

	West Lothian	SESplan
Effective 2010-2019	14,156	89,100
Constrained 2019-2024	8,150	16,490
Windfall 2024-2032	2,070	17,010
Demolitions 2010-2032	200	5,520

Source: SESplan Housing Technical Paper

4.49 In order to determine the original SDP housing land requirement the demand and supply forecasts which are set out above were used to calculate five separate housing land requirement scenarios which can be found in the *SESplan Housing Technical Note*.

4.50 In the event, *Scenario 4* was adopted, which was based on the SESplan HoNDA and HLA 2010. The SESplan HoNDA went on to receive 'robust and credible' sign off from the Scottish Government.



4.51 The housing land requirement for the three periods of the SDP (2008 to 2019, 2019 to 2024 and 2024 to 2032) was calculated by deducting the total supply deriving from current sites, including an allowance for windfall development, from the total demand for housing and allowing for vacant dwellings and demolitions. It concluded that there was a requirement for a total of 34,200 additional new homes across the SESplan area with land for 14,000 new homes being required over the period to 2019, 7,200 over the period 2019 to 2024 and the balance achieved thereafter.

The full housing land requirement calculation for *Scenario 4* is set out in Figure 24.

Figure 24 - SESplan Housing Land Requirement Scenario 4 (SESplan HoNDA and HLA 2010)

	2009 - 2019	2019 - 2024	2024 - 2032	2009 - 2032
Housing Demand	74,837	32,709	48,007	155,553
Housing Supply (2010)*				
Effective	44,276	17,985	26,839	89,100
Constrained	7,035	5,510	3,945	16,490
Completions (2009/2010)	4,360	0	0	4,360
Total	55,671	23,495	30,784	109,950
Windfall Assumptions	8,830	3,970	4,210	17,010
Loss of supply (demolitions)	3,600	1,920	0	5,520
Shortfall	13,936	7,164	13,013	34,113
Cumulative	13,936	21,100	34,113	34,113

4.52 Specifically, the original SESplan Proposed Plan identified a requirement for the West Lothian LDP to allocate land for an additional 1,750 houses for the period up to 2024. This was in addition to the 22,300 houses already allocated in the current *West Lothian Local Plan*.

4.53 From the 2010 *Housing Land Audit* 500 of these new houses were to be capable of development over the early part of the SDP plan period (2009-2019) with the balance of 1,250 meeting the housing land requirement over the interim SDP plan period (2019-2024).

4.54 In the event, however, these additional requirements changed. The DPEA advised Scottish Ministers that that housing land provision figures contained in the Proposed Plan were considered inadequate and that the evidence base for the allocation of housing land was not held to comply with SPP.

4.55 Specifically, there was criticism that the SDP had not adhered sufficiently to the outputs of the HoNDA which was taken in support of the SDP. The SDP proposed delaying the release of land for some 11,000 of the houses assessed as being critical for the period to 2024 by the HoNDA but the DPEA, and subsequently, Scottish Ministers, took the view that the reasons given for this approach were not related to any specific strategic economic, social or environmental policy objectives. In any event, there has been an acknowledgement that land with a higher capacity than the numerical housing requirement identified to date will have to be allocated in each LDP because not all sites prove to be effective or capable of delivering in the timescale anticipated.

4.56 Particular attention has been drawn to environmental and other restrictions on land availability within the boundary of the City of Edinburgh and intimations given that a significant proportion of its' housing need and demand should be accommodated, at least in part, by the other SESplan member authorities. It was recognised that this would require to be informed by a robust assessment of the likely scale of potential house completions which could be expected, in anticipation of economic recovery, and based on an analysis of opportunities and of infrastructure and environmental capabilities and constraints.

4.57 At the strategic level, the DPEA and Scottish Ministers concluded that the overall approach to housing land was not consistent with the visions for the SDP plan area, this being to be the main growth area and the key driver for the Scottish economy, and it was suggested that failure to identify the land required would be liable to hinder recovery and economic growth.

4.58 Against this background, the SESplan authorities brought forward draft supplementary guidance which was agreed at a meeting of the SESplan Joint Committee on 30 September 2013. It was subsequently ratified by the West Lothian Council Executive at a meeting on 29 October and made available for public consultation between 12 November and 23 December 2013.

4.59 The supplementary guidance takes as its starting point the fact the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HoNDA) had identified a requirement for a total of 155,544 houses to be provided across the SESplan area over the period to 2032.

4.60 The SESplan HoNDA distributed this figure across the three SDP plan periods 2009-2019 (74,835 houses), 2019-2024 (32,710 houses) and 2024 - 2032 (47,999 houses) and the supplementary guidance indicates how the housing requirement over the first two periods (to 2024), a total of 107,545 houses, is to be distributed across the six LDPs. See Figure 25.

Figure 25 - Assessed Housing Requirements (for SESplan) by Plan Period

	SESplan area
Assessed Housing Requirement 2009 to 2019	74,835
Assessed Housing Requirement 2019 to 2024	32,710
Assessed Housing Requirement 2024 to 2032	47,999
Assessed Housing Requirement 2009 to 2032	155,560

Source : SESplan Approved Plan

4.61 In order to identify sufficient land to accommodate the housing land requirement, the supplementary guidance reviewed the opportunities and of the environmental and infrastructure capacities and constraints. This included a refresh of data and information collated to support the approved SDP, including an update of the established land supply based on *Housing Land Audit* (HLA) 2012 instead of HLA 2010, a review of the output from all brownfield sites in the established supply and the housing market in terms of viability and deliverability and a refresh of the Spatial Strategy Assessment undertaken to support the Proposed Plan. The latter included a review of the entire SESplan area against criteria such as infrastructure capacity, land availability, green belt and transport.

4.62 The guidance is consistent with the spatial strategy set in the approved SDP, which builds on existing committed development and where possible focuses new development on brownfield land across the thirteen SDAs identified. The strategy steers housing growth to sustainable locations where there is infrastructure capacity or which minimise the requirement for additional investment.

Figure 26 - SESplan Housing Land Requirement by Local Development Plan area

	Plan Period		Total
	2009 - 2019	2019 - 2024	2009 - 2024
West Lothian	11,420	6,590	18,010
City of Edinburgh	22,300	7,210	29,510
East Lothian	6,250	3,800	10,050
Midlothian	8,080	4,410	12,490
Fife	17,140	7,430	24,570
Scottish Borders	9,650	3,280	12,930
Sub Total	74,840	32,720	
Total		107,560	

Source: SESplan Draft Supplementary Guidance
(Note: Total figures rounded to nearest 10)

4.63 Based on HLA 2012, and including an allowance for constrained and windfall sites to come forward and for demolitions, the total supply across the SESplan area to 2024 has been calculated as 83,207 units. One of the functions of the LDP will be to re-assess the extent to which the sites comprising this figure remain capable of delivering house completions by 2024, but in order to meet the total requirement of 107,560 units, it has been indicated that LDPs will need to identify land to accommodate at least an additional 24,338 units.

4.64 The analysis undertaken in preparing the supplementary guidance suggested that additional sites needed to be allocated outwith SDAs and that the most appropriate locations for these were in the City of Edinburgh, Fife and the Scottish Borders. An indication of how much land may be needed outwith SDAs and how this could be distributed is also shown in Figure 27.

4.65 West Lothian is divided into three Strategic Assessment Areas (Areas 6, 7 and 8) principally along the lines of transport corridors and previous Core Development Areas set out within the former Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan. The decision was taken to amalgamate the three SAAs into one SDA to allow maximum flexibility for the LDP and to meet existing education requirements. Based on existing development and allowances there is a requirement for three additional secondary schools that are proving challenging to deliver. Providing additional school places are a key constraint on further development.

4.66 West Lothian is highly accessible with three rail corridors and two motorways but Transport Scotland, through consultation on the LDP site submissions has advised that they may have concerns over the cumulative impact of development on the M8 and M9 and associated junctions, particularly Newbridge. A new rail station at Winchburgh, could assist in the delivery of more sustainable travel patterns in West Lothian.

4.67 The call for sites undertaken to inform the LDP yielded significant amounts of land. These sites have been assessed and filtered to take into account environmental and infrastructure constraints and council aspirations regarding community regeneration and council house build programme. The West Lothian LDP has also been informed by discussions with Homes for Scotland who advised that there is a limited market in the west of West Lothian (Area 7) despite the existing Armadale Core Development Area. There is a market along the M9 Corridor (Area 6) in settlements including Linlithgow, Livingston and Winchburgh, but there remains issues of infrastructure and environmental constraints.

4.68 The scale of existing housing commitments in West Lothian (land is already committed for 22,300 houses) and the delivery of associated essential infrastructure needed to support this growth was recognised as being already challenging and that additional development would require significant levels of investment to deliver the infrastructure required to support growth beyond that already committed. If it was not forthcoming then there was a risk that development could not be delivered within the plan period. The proposed West Lothian component of the 24,388 SESplan shortfall has been identified in the draft SG as 2,130 houses.



Figure 27 - Additional allowances within and outwith Strategic Development Areas

Strategic Development Area	Additional allowances
West Lothian	2,130
West Edinburgh	2,700
South East Edinburgh *(2,500 in City of Edinburgh/450 in Midlothian)	*2,950
Edinburgh City Centre	0
Edinburgh Waterfront	0
East Lothian	3,560
North Dunfermline	2,630
Ore/Upper Leven Valley	3,220
A7/A68 Borders Rail Corridor	1,350
A701 Corridor	750
Eastern Borders	160
Central Borders	295
Western Borders	110

Outwith Strategic Development Areas	Additional allowances
City of Edinburgh	2,500
Fife	1,950
Scottish Borders	80
SESplan Total	24,380

Source : SESplan Draft Supplementary Guidance

4.69 It is a principle of the supplementary guidance that new housing land allocations should complement and not undermine the delivery of existing committed development.

4.70 The key, however, will be ensuring that the housing requirements set out in Figure (26) can be delivered. In the case of West Lothian, significant infrastructure improvements are essential to support the delivery of the housing land requirement set out in the supplementary guidance, in particular, school extensions and new schools to provide the additional pupil places required to meet development. A constraint applies across West Lothian until new secondary schools are provided at Winchburgh and East Calder. There are also significant capacity constraints at Armadale, Bathgate and Whitburn.

4.71 In view of the fact that the West Lothian LDP is scheduled to be adopted in 2016, several years into the first plan period (2009 - 2019), a very significant increase in the completion of new houses needs to be achieved almost immediately if requirements are to be met. It is recognised that maintaining a supply of 'effective land' for at least five years to ensure a generous supply of land for house building at all times, in accord with Scottish SPP, will still be challenging.

5 Conclusion

5.1 The provision of land for housing and the timely release of that land to enable building of homes is, arguably, one of the key elements of the West Lothian LDP.

5.2 This paper has sought to explain the basis on which the housing land requirement has been determined, initially for the SDP, and how this has been extrapolated and interpreted for the purposes of informing the LDP.

5.3 By estimating the need and demand for additional households within the area and setting a housing supply target, the overall minimum land supply requiring to be allocated within the LDP has been identified.

5.4 It has been explained that a Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HoNDA) was undertaken, in accordance with Scottish Government guidance, and how this provided 'a robust and credible' evidence base underpinning the housing supply target.

5.5 In translating the housing supply target into a housing land requirement a range of factors have been identified, including the existing supply already identified in the HLA and other factors such as windfall development.

5.6 The SDP provides the spatial strategy for development over the plan period and generally seeks to steer new housing to sustainable locations where there is already infrastructure capacity or where additional investment could be minimised. This allows a number of Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) to be identified, and in the case of West Lothian, embraces most of the council area with the exception being mostly land to the south of the A70 and in the vicinity of the Pentlands.

5.7 Until such time as SESplan and the member authorities have reported to their respective committees on the notification from Scottish Ministers, and the Supplementary Guidance on housing land is formally adopted, the council has no definitive housing requirement against which the effectiveness of the five-year housing land supply can be measured. That does not, however, prevent a calculation being undertaken on the basis of the known draft requirements and the result of this arithmetical exercise is produced in Figure 28.

5.8 While it suggests that a Five Year Effective Housing Land Supply would not be achieved (in the context of the 2012 HLA) it is necessary to appreciate that the land supply scenario has now been superseded and the calculations do not include any of the new allocations that are intended to be brought forward through the new LDP to meet the terms of the SDP Supplementary Guidance. It is one of the main functions of the LDP to address such issues, building on the already substantial amount of land previously allocated for housing in West Lothian and which was previously recognised by a DPEA Reporter as the maximum permitted by the (now superseded) Structure Plan. The Main Issues Report is similarly known to favour a development scenario that goes significantly beyond what the current draft SG is demanding and amply demonstrates the Council's commitment to supporting and encouraging growth in the housing sector.

Figure (28) - Calculating the Interim 5 Year Effective Housing Land Supply in West Lothian (based on HLA 2012)

	2009 to 2019
SESplan Housing Land Requirement (completions required to be achieved over the period)	11,420
Actual Completions (at 31 March 2012)	1,302
Net Requirement (for remainder of plan period to 2019)	$(11,420 - 1,302) = 10,118$
Annual Requirement from 2012 (draft)	$(10,118 \div 7) = 1,445$
5 Year Annual Supply Requirement (draft)	$(1,445 \times 5) = 7,225$
Effective Housing Land Supply at 2012	3,418
Actual Shortfall (draft)	$(7,225 - 3,418) = 3,807$
Percentage of 5 Year Requirement Being Met	47%

* NB: These figures do not include any new allocations that may subsequently be made in the LDP

The HLA 2012 has been used as the main source of data in producing the LDP. However a separate document the Housing Land Supply Position Statement provides an update of land supply figures with reference to the HLA 2013.



Additional tables

Figure 29 - Estimate of Need and Demand for Housing by Local Development Plan Area

	Plan Period		
	2009 -2019	2019 -2024	2024 -2032
West Lothian	11,420	5,090	7,338
City of Edinburgh	34,290	14,200	22,505
East Lothian	5,210	2,740	3,820
Mid Lothian	1,700	500	171
Fife	16,260	7,400	10,363
Scottish Borders	5,955	2,780	3,802
Sub Total	74,835	32,710	47,999
Total 2009-2032			155,544

Source: SESplan Supplementary Guidance
(Note: figures rounded to nearest 10)

Figure 30 - Established Land Supply and Other Factors (West Lothian)

	2009 -2019	2019 -2024	2024 -2032
Effective Land	4,859	3,227	5,208
Constrained Sites	2,701	3,580	2,285
Windfall	480	400	640
Completions 2009-2012	1,302	0	0
Demolitions	568	100	160
Total (Effective, Constrained, Windfall and Completions minus Demolitions)	8,774	7,107	7,973

Source: SESplan Supplementary Guidance

Figure 31 - Established Land Supply and Other Factors (SESplan)

	2009 -2019	2019 -2024	2024 -2032	2024 -2032
Effective Land	34,404	18,814	16,109	69,327
Constrained Sites	6,892	7,064	4,924	18,880
Windfall	5,803	3,855	4,698	14,356
Completions 2009-2012	11,771	0	0	11,771
Demolitions	3,596	1,800	320	5,716
Total (Effective, Constrained, Windfall and Completions minus Demolitions)	5,274	7,933	25,411	108,618

Source: SESplan Supplementary Guidance

Figure 32 - Need and Demand Compared to Established Supply and Other Factors (West Lothian)

	2009 -2019	2019 -2024	2024 -2032	2024 -2032
Need and Demand	11,420	5,090	16,510	7,338
Established Supply & Other Factors	8,774	7,107	15,881	7,973
Balance	-2,646	2,017	-629	635

Source: SESplan Supplementary Guidance

Figure 33 - Need and Demand Compared to Established Supply and Other Factors (SESplan)

	2009- 2019	2019- 2024	2009- 2024	2024- 2032	2009- 2032
Need and Demand	74,835	32,710	107,545	47,999	155,544
Established Supply & Other Factors	55,274	27,933	83,207	25,411	08,618
Balance	-19,561	-4,777	24,388	22,588	46,926

Source: SESplan Supplementary Guidance

Figure 34 - Historic Average Annual Completions 2004 - 2012 and Established Land Supply

	Plan Period			Established Land Supply 2009-2024 required average
	2004 -2008	2008 -2012	2004 -2012	
West Lothian	1,026	431	729	1,059
City of Edinburgh	2,445	1,753	2,099	1,406
East Lothian	636	363	499	432
Mid Lothian	236	507	372	662
Fife	1,384	870	1,127	1,118
Scottish Borders	566	464	515	820
SESplan	6,293	4,388	5,341	5,497

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Glossary of terms and abbreviations

Affordable housing	Housing of a reasonable quality that is affordable to people on modest incomes. In some places the market provides some or all of the affordable housing needed, while in other places it will be necessary to make housing available at a cost below market value to meet an identified need.
Allocation	Land identified in a local plan/local development plan as appropriate for a specific land use.
Brownfield land	Land which has previously been developed. The term may cover vacant or derelict land, ie. occupied by redundant or unused buildings and developed land within the settlement boundary where further intensification of use is considered acceptable.
Constrained housing land supply	That part of the established housing land supply which may be affected by infrastructure constraints, land contamination or ownership/marketing issues.
Effective housing land supply	That part of the established housing land supply which is free or is expected to be free of development constraints in the period under consideration, and will therefore be available for the construction of housing.
Established Housing Land Supply	The total housing land supply - including both unconstrained and constrained sites. Includes the effective housing land supply, plus the remaining capacity of sites under construction, sites with planning consent; sites in adopted local development plans and where appropriate other buildings and land with agreed potential for housing development.
Greenfield land	Land in a settlement or rural area which has never been developed, or where traces of any previous development are now such that the land appears undeveloped.
Housing demand	The quantity and type/quality of housing which households wish to buy or rent and are able to afford.
HLA Housing Land Audit	The established means for monitoring housing land supply, which takes the form of an annual report. It has two key functions: to demonstrate the availability of sufficient effective land to meet the requirement for a continuous five-year supply; and to provide a snapshot of the amount of land available for the construction of housing at any particular time.
HMA Housing Market Areas	A geographical area which is relatively self contained in terms of reflecting peoples' choice of location for a new home i.e. a large percentage of people settling in the area will have sought a house only in that area.
Housing need	Refers to households lacking their own housing or living in housing which is inadequate or unsuitable, who are unlikely to be able to meet their needs in the housing market without some assistance.
Housing requirement	The number of housing units for which land must be identified to meet future demand. This is derived by considering market demand, changes in the number of people and households, the existing housing stock and the existing availability of land for housing.
Housing supply target	Identified by the <i>Local Housing Strategy</i> in response to the outcomes of the Housing Need and Demand Assessment.
HoNDA Housing Need and Demand Assessment	A detailed assessment that provides the evidence base for defining housing supply targets in the Local Housing Strategy and allocating land for housing in development plans and which is prepared in accordance with Scottish Government guidance.

Infrastructure
Public transport, roads, sewerage, water supply, school, gas, electricity, telecommunication, etc. which are needed to allow developments to take place.
LDP Local Development Plan
These plans set out a detailed vision and strategy for an area. In doing so they provide detailed guidance of development including where development should, or should not take place. Local Development Plans will in time replace Local Plans and are to be reviewed every 5 years.
LHS Local Housing Strategy
Provides the strategic direction to tackle housing need and demand and to inform the future investment in housing and related services across the local authority area.
NPF2 National Planning Framework 2
A strategy for Scotland's development to 2030, setting out strategic development priorities to support the Scottish Government's central purpose – sustainable economic growth. Planning authorities are required to take the Framework into account when preparing development plans and it is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
PANs
Planning Advice Notes provide advice from Scottish Government on good practice on planning matters as well as other relevant information.
RSL Registered Social Landlord
A not for profit housing association or housing cooperative that is registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
SDP Strategic Development Plan
These plans set out a clear vision and spatial strategy for an area. Largely the plans focus on key land use and development issues that cross planning authority boundaries. Strategic Development Plans have replaced Structure Plans.
SDA
Strategic Development Area

SESplan
The organisation that operates on behalf of City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian, Borders and Fife Councils. The key role of SESplan is to prepare and maintain an up to date Strategic Development Plan for the area.
Small sites
These are classified as sites of under five residential units.
SPP Scottish Planning Policy
Scottish Government statement of national planning policy, published in 2010.
SG Supplementary Guidance
Provides further information or detail in respect of policies or proposals set out in the Strategic Development Plan or Local Development Plan. Statutory guidance adopted in connection with a plan, forms part of the development plan.
Windfall site
A site which becomes available for development during the plan period which was not anticipated to be available when the plan was being prepared.

List of key background papers

- SESplan Approved Plan, June 2013
- Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance, September 2013
- SESplan Proposed Strategic Development Plan, November 2011
- SESplan Action Programme, November 2011
- SESplan Main Issues Report, May 2010
- SESplan Housing Technical Note, November 2011
- SESplan Housing Needs and Demand Assessment, 2010.
- SESplan Urban Capacity Study, 2009
- Edinburgh & Lothians Housing Land Audits 2008, 2010 and 2011
- Circular 1/2009: Development Planning, Scottish Government.
- Circular 2/2008: Statutory Guidance on Strategic Development Planning Authorities
- Planning Advice Note (PAN) 02/2010: Affordable Housing & Housing Land Audits, August 2010
- Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), Scottish Government, February 2010
- NPF2- National Planning Framework 2
- Letter from the Chief Planner (October 2010) on the subject of providing an effective land supply for housing.
- Letter from the Chief Planner (March 2011) on the subject of providing for affordable housing in development plans.
- Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006.
- The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
- Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2008