

West Lothian Local Development Plan Main Issues Questionnaire

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The council has commenced preparation of its first *Local Development Plan* (LDP). The LDP will replace the *West Lothian Local Plan* and will set out a local interpretation of the requirements of the *Strategic Development Plan* (SESplan) and national guidance. The LDP is a land use plan that identifies site specific development opportunities, sets out the council's key development priorities and provides the policy context for the consideration of applications for planning permission.

The current *West Lothian Local Plan* was adopted by the council in January 2009 is available to view on the council's website at <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/WLLP>

The *Main Issues Report* (MIR) for the West Lothian LDP is the first key stage in the preparation of the LDP and we are seeking your views on this. All documentation for the MIR can be viewed at <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/MIR>

Full details on the timetable and stages for preparing the LDP are set out in the Development Plan Scheme 6 which is also available online: <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/2725/Development-Plan-Scheme>

A questionnaire to accompany the MIR is set out below and we would be happy if you would complete and return to us.

There are 98 questions that accompany the *Main Issues Report*. You do not have to respond to all of the questions set out only those which you feel are of particular relevance to you. Completed questionnaires should be returned to us by e-mail to wlldp@westlothian.gov.uk by no later than **5pm on Friday, 17 October 2014**.

Alternatively, please download a copy of the form and send it to us at: Development Planning, West Lothian Council, County Buildings, High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7EZ (postal address only).

You can keep up to date on the LDP by subscribing to our LDP e-newsletter. If you have not already subscribed, you can do so by going to the following link and following the relevant instructions:

<https://newsletters.westlothian.gov.uk/eNewsletterPro/optin/optinealert.htm>

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Please note that any comments you make will be open to public scrutiny, but we will keep your contact details private and confidential and will only use your name or business name.

By filling in this questionnaire you are helping to shape the future of West Lothian

It would also be helpful if you would complete the *Equal Opportunities Questionnaire*, set out at the end of this document.

Local Development Plan Vision Statement

By 2024 West Lothian's population will have grown and an improved employment position within a more diversified local economy will have been established. It will be better connected by road and public transport and will have a greater choice of housing and an appropriate range of education, community, health, retail, recreation and leisure facilities and a network of green spaces to meet the needs of its growing population. Development will take place in a sustainable way that protects and improves the area's built and natural heritage assets, meets the challenges of climate change and renewable energy and helps regenerate deprived areas and improves the quality of life for people living in West Lothian.

Question 1

Do you agree with the *vision for the LDP*, or, are there other aspects that should be considered?

Question 2

Do you have an alternative vision, and if so, what is it?

Question 3

Do you agree with the proposed 'Aims' of the LDP? If not, why not?

Question 4

Do you have an alternatives, and if so, what are they?

Main Issue 1: Economic Development and Growth (paragraphs 3.1 - 3.31)

Which areas of West Lothian would be best to direct new economic development towards?

How can the LDP support the council's *Economic Strategy* and facilitate the creation of jobs?

Preferred approach

The council's *preferred approach* to employment land is to review the range of uses which could be accommodated on employment land with a view to accommodating a more flexible approach. This flexible approach will involve removing the single user status of two large sites (Linhouse and Eliburn in Livingston), and allowing a wider range of uses on currently allocated employment sites at locations to be identified in the LDP. Such an approach, for example, would apply to certain traditional employment allocations and industrial estates such as East Mains Industrial Estate, Broxburn and Deans & Houstoun Industrial Estates, Livingston and at Whitehill and Whiteside Industrial Estates, Bathgate and Murraysgate, Whitburn reflecting the broad range of uses which already exist at these locations and to allow for other employment/commercial orientated uses to be accommodated e.g. car showrooms, trade centre outlets and certain leisure uses.

The LDP will continue to support development of existing employment allocations, including sites within the core development areas, and support the servicing of employment allocations to assist in attracting inward investment. New employment land allocations will also be identified to supplement and in some cases complement the existing supply, including a new strategic employment site at Balgornie adjacent to the recently opened Junction 4a on the M8 at Whitburn.

In addition, the LDP will seek to encourage small business development by promoting small workshop developments within communities and home working in appropriate locations. In a limited number of cases, existing employment land is identified as being suitable for potential residential development.

The council's preferred use of the former Vion plant in Broxburn is to allocate the site for housing.

The preferred approach would also include meeting the requirements of the SDP in full.

Alternative approach

Question 5

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to employment land which would introduce an opportunity for a broader range of land use to be supported within existing employment land allocations and industrial estates?

If not, why not?

Question 6

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to employment land?

Question 7

Do you have any other alternative approaches? What are they and how would you make them work?

Question 8

Has the council identified enough employment land in West Lothian to meet requirements and are the larger employment sites in the right locations?

Question 9

Do you agree that the single user employment site at Linhouse, Livingston (ELV54) should be sub-divided for employment and mixed uses, including residential use of up to 250 houses?

If not, why not?

Question 10

Do you agree that the former strategic employment allocation at Eliburn, Livingston (ELv25) should continue to be promoted for employment uses but not as a single user site?

If not, why not?

Question 11

Do you agree that a site at Balgornie Farm, north of Whitburn, should be allocated for strategic employment land purposes?

If not, why not?

What other locations would you suggest?

Main Issue 2: **Community Regeneration** (paragraphs 3.31 - 3.34)

Where should the focus for community regeneration in West Lothian be and what should this seek to deliver?
How can the LDP incentivise development to take place within regeneration areas?
How can the LDP support the council's Regeneration Plan?

Preferred approach

The council's preferred approach to community regeneration is to focus regeneration initiatives on areas identified in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2012. This principally includes the smaller settlements in the west of West Lothian identified as Armadale, Blackburn, Blackridge, Fauldhouse, Stoneyburn and Whitburn. Other areas include Bathgate and Boghall and settlements within the Breich Valley where headline levels of disadvantage including unemployment, financial exclusion, poor health and lower education attainment have been identified.

These communities are often characterised by a range of factors which can include high levels of unemployment, low income, lower levels of education attainment, and access to services. To create more balanced communities, address issues of multiple deprivation and to attract private sector investment it is proposed to seek to identify initiatives to generate more investment in these communities.

Alternative approach

Question 12

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to community regeneration in West Lothian?

If not, why not?

Question 13

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to community regeneration in West Lothian?

If not, why not?

Question 14

Do you have any other alternative approaches?

What are they and how would you make them work?

Main Issue 3: **Housing Growth, Delivery and Sustainable Housing Locations** (paragraphs 3.35 - 3.63)

How much new housing is required in West Lothian?

Where should new housing development take place, and where should it not be encouraged?

How can the risks associated with the existing development strategy as set out in the *West Lothian Local Plan* be reduced?

How can the rate of house building in West Lothian be increased to ensure that the required five year effective housing land supply is achieved and that the assessed housing need and demand is met in full over the plan period?

Preferred Strategy

The council's preferred strategy is scenario 3 to provide for more housing than the minimum required by the supplementary guidance required to support the SDP and the LDP should allocate housing land for an additional 3,500 houses above existing committed development. This would result in a level of development beyond requirements set out in the housing supplementary guidance to support the SDP. However, this scenario is only preferred if the council can be satisfied that the infrastructure required to support this scale of development can be delivered in full and also in recognition that it is not anticipated that this increased allowance will be delivered by 2024 but is there to allow for the delivery of development into the period 2024-2032.

This recognises that the strategy in the existing adopted local plan is reliant to some extent on a limited number of large, complex sites with high infrastructure costs being brought forward. It is now considered that a range of smaller housing sites, in various locations across West Lothian, is needed in order to provide for greater choice and effectiveness of sites, introduce local flexibility for the LDP and to ensure that a generous housing land supply is available, providing as a minimum, an effective five year housing land supply at all times, as required by SPP.

There is also a need to sustain the momentum built up in some of the existing large housing growth areas and make sure that these developments are viable going forward. Modest additional allocations in some of these areas will provide a degree of future proofing of the plan and help meet part of the need and demand for housing beyond the end of the plan period. Much of the existing housing land supply in core development areas and elsewhere will not be built out within the plan period and allocating additional housing sites in these areas through the LDP will help to maintain investor confidence and inform investment planning.

The allocation required by the draft supplementary guidance prepared by SESplan of 2,130 new houses beyond existing allocations of 22,847 units provides for a total of 24,977 units over the period 2012-2024.

By contrast, the preferred strategy proposes 26,347 houses which provides 3,500 houses above the base supply houses which is an increase of around 15% above the base supply.

This scale of housing allocation will reduce the risk of the LDP development strategy not being successful and is justified on the basis of:

- the need to maintain a five year supply of effective housing land at all times as required by Scottish Government planning policy;
- the need to ensure that there is a generous supply of housing land to accommodate the needs and demands of those seeking a house in West Lothian;
- the need to maintain West Lothian's attractiveness as an area which provides a range and choice of housing sites for those wishing to invest;
- linking the council's Economic Strategy to that of the housing market by providing a range and choice of house types suitable to indigenous and inward investors and the construction industry;
- providing for future affordable housing build programmes;
- continuing to redevelop appropriate brownfield sites;
- allowing the WLLP core development allocations and the strategic allocation at Heartlands, Whitburn to deliver over the long term whilst achieving the five year effective supply through the allocation of predominantly small to medium sized sites where requirements for infrastructure to assist delivery are less onerous on developers;
- allocating above 3,500 will generate the need for a 4th new secondary school which will be expensive to deliver in addition to existing infrastructure commitments;
- replacing allocations in the adopted *West Lothian Local Plan* which may no longer be supported by the site owners or due to reasons of development viability; and
- recognising that as the LDP progresses some housing sites may be delayed or may no longer come forward for a variety of reasons including unexpected development viability.

The preferred strategy is based around an aspiration for growth aimed at delivering sustainable economic prosperity and quality of life for communities in West Lothian and in particular building on the existing significant core development area allocations and strategic sites and will provide a broader range of housing sites.

Alternative Strategy 1

Alternative Strategy 2

Question 15

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' strategy for housing growth in West Lothian?
If not, why not?

Question 16

Do you agree with 'Alternative Strategy 1' for housing growth in West Lothian?

If so, why?

Question 17

Do you agree with 'Alternative Strategy 2' for housing growth in West Lothian? If so, why?

Question 18

Do you have another alternative strategy?

What is it and how would you make it work?

Question 19

How can the council maintain an effective five year housing land supply given the current economic climate?

Preferred and alternative options for housing sites, including potential de-allocations from the *West Lothian Local Plan* (paragraphs 3.64 – 3.73)

Preferred Option

The council's preferred option is that some housing sites allocated in the adopted *West Lothian Local Plan* and identified in Housing Land Audit 2012 are not included in the LDP. Details of sites are set out in the Settlement Statements accompanying the MIR.

Alternative Option

Question 20

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' option for the removal of existing housing allocations from the development plan?
If not, why not?

Question 21

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' option for the removal of existing housing allocations from the development plan?
If not, why not?

Question 22

Do you have any other alternative options?
What are they and how would you make them work?

See attached statement. It is considered that further sites can be released in Livingston.

The Core Development Areas (paragraphs 3.74 - 3.76)

Preferred Approach to the Core Development Areas

The council's 'Preferred' approach to the core development areas is to continue to support their delivery and allow for further longer term allocations at Winchburgh.

Alternative Approach to the Core Development Areas

Question 23

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to the core development areas?
If not, why not?

Question 24

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to the core development areas?
If not, why not?

Question 25

Do you have any other alternative options?
What are they and how would you make them work?

See attached statement. It is considered that further sites can be released in Livingston.

Preferred Approach to Heartlands, Whitburn

The council's 'Preferred' approach to Heartlands, Whitburn is to look favourably on proposals for additional housing within the existing housing allocation, subject to infrastructure constraints being resolved.

Alternative Approach

Question 26

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to Heartlands, Whitburn?

If not, why not?

Question 27

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to Heartlands?

If not, why not?

Question 28

Do you have any other alternative options?

What are they and how would you make them work?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to Linlithgow is that the "area of restraint" be re-considered to allow for greenfield release of housing, employment and potential tourist related development. Should the area of restraint be removed, any development would be dependent upon the delivery of a new secondary school at Winchburgh and therefore would be focussed principally in latter plan period. Any land release would follow a sequential approach as set out in paragraph 3.93

Alternative approach

Question 29

Should the definition of Linlithgow as an 'area of restraint' be removed, and if so, how should the town be developed in the future?

Should a sequential approach be applied to the release of land in and around Linlithgow to accommodate any new development?

Question 30

What alternatives are available in order to meet demand for housing (including affordable housing) and employment land opportunities in Linlithgow?

Question 31

Should land continue to be safeguarded for west facing slip roads on the M9 at Junction 3, Linlithgow? If so, should new development be promoted in Linlithgow to ensure that funding for these can be secured?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to the Deans South estate, Livingston, is that the area be identified for comprehensive redevelopment for approximately 300 new houses.

Alternative approach

Question 32

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach for addressing the Deans South estate?

If not, why not?

Question 33

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach for addressing the Deans South estate?

If not, why not?

Question 34

Do you have any other alternative approaches?

What are these and how would you make it work?

Affordable housing (paragraphs 3.101 – 3.107)

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to affordable housing is to review the terms of the current affordable housing policy and set this out in supplementary guidance.

Alternative approach

Question 35

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to affordable housing? If not, why not?

Question 36

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to affordable housing? If not, why not?

Question 37

Do you have any other alternative approaches? What are they and how would you make them work?

Main Issue 4: Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery

How can we ensure that new development in West Lothian makes best use of existing infrastructure?

How can we make sure that the cost of providing new infrastructure needed to support new development does not fall unduly on the tax payer?

How can we ensure that developer contribution costs are affordable and do not make the development of sites unviable?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to infrastructure provision, in particular education provision, is to promote additional growth which can for the most part utilise existing infrastructure capacity, and minimise additional significant new infrastructure requirements over and above existing planned upgrades and requirements. Developer contributions will continue to be sought, the basis for which will be set out in a combination of generic and specific supplementary guidance. The council's preferred approach to infrastructure delivery is supported by Policy 9 of the SDP. The preferred approach is also to further develop funding mechanisms and supplementary guidance to assist in delivery.

Alternative approach

Question 38

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to infrastructure provision? If not, why not?

Question 39

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to infrastructure provision?
If not, why not?

Question 40

Do you have any other alternative approaches?
What are they and how would you make them work?

 Question 41

How can the level of infrastructure required to support the scale of development proposed be delivered?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to promoting access to/from/within West Lothian is to address outstanding constraints in the strategic and local road network which are essential to accommodate community growth and in particular economic and housing growth and tackle existing traffic issues whilst promoting sustainable transport measures on an incremental basis in conjunction with new development, and as resources allow. Within this, the preferred approach is to promote development on or very near to existing public transport facilities or where there is potential for new facilities. This approach will help to sustain and improve services which in turn will become more attractive alternatives to the private car.

Alternative approach**Question 42**

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to promoting access to/from/within West Lothian?
If not, why not?

Question 43

Do you agree that the council should continue to work towards the provision of a new rail station at Winchburgh?
If not, why not?

Question 44

Do you have any other alternative approaches?
What are they and how would you make them work?

Main Issue 5: **Town Centres and Retailing** (paragraphs 3.160 – 3.171)

What do we need to do to promote and sustain our traditional town centres in West Lothian and consolidate the sub-regional centre at Almondvale, Livingston?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to town centre retail provision in West Lothian is to:

- sustain and improve town centres by applying the sequential approach to proposals for retail and leisure development;
- reduce leakage from some areas in accordance with the council's Retail Capacity Study;
- facilitate the creation of a new town centre in Winchburgh;
- safeguard existing and promote new local neighbourhood centres: and
- bring about village and town centre improvements by highlighting development opportunities, supporting the development of brownfield sites, implementing improvements through the capital plan and, where appropriate, securing developer contributions.

The preferred approach includes removing retail policy restrictions currently in place in Bathgate and Linlithgow town centres to allow for a broader range of uses which will support the take up of empty units. In addition, initiatives to support and promote development above shops will be encouraged, subject to availability of infrastructure and to the operation of existing business premises not being unduly prejudiced.

Alternative approach

- sustain and improve town centres by applying the sequential approach to proposals for retail and leisure development;
- reduce leakage from some areas in accordance with the council's Retail Capacity Study;
- facilitate the creation of a new town centre in Winchburgh;
- safeguard existing and promote new local neighbourhood centres; and
- bring about village and town centre improvements by highlighting development opportunities, supporting the development of brownfield sites, implementing improvements through the capital plan and, where appropriate, securing developer contributions.

This approach excludes removing current retail policy restrictions in place in Bathgate and Linlithgow town centres.

Question 45

Do you agree that the 'Preferred' approach to town centres and retail provision in West Lothian is appropriate?

If not, why not?

Question 46

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to town centres and retail provision in West Lothian?

If not, why not?

Question 47

Do you have an alternative approach?

What is it and how would you make it work?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to the West Lothian natural environment is to direct development to appropriate brownfield sites within settlements in the first instance but also to bring forward the release of greenfield sites in sustainable locations where there are no alternatives in order to meet strategic requirements. When considering greenfield release the council will have regard to the LLDR and other relevant factors, particularly sustainability but also issues of townscape and settlement coalescence. This may allow for some release of new development sites on the edge of settlements, thereby maximising use of existing infrastructure, whilst protecting visual amenity and the biodiversity value of the countryside and preventing coalescence of settlements.

In some instances it may be necessary to extend countryside and landscape designations to protect the purposes for which the land was designated be it landscape value, landscape character and landscape enhancement, buffers to coalescence of settlements, protection of prime quality agricultural land and historic gardens and designed landscapes in West Lothian.

Alternative approach

Question 48

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to the natural environment in West Lothian?

If not, why not?

Question 49

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to the natural environment in West Lothian?

If not, why not?

Question 50

Do you have an alternative approach?
What is it and how would you make it work?

 Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to landscape designations is to reduce the number of landscape designations in order to reflect the findings of the Local Landscape Designation Review and identify candidate Special Landscape Areas (cSLA). Special Landscape Areas will replace AGLVs and Areas of Special Landscape Control. This approach is in accord with best practice and guidance prepared by Scottish Natural Heritage and Scottish Government.

Alternative approach**Question 51**

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to landscape designations in West Lothian?
If not, why not?

 Question 52

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to landscape designations in West Lothian?
If not, why not?

Question 53

Do you have an alternative approach?
What is it and how would you make it work?

 Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to housing development in the countryside is to continue to support development in appropriate circumstances for example, sensitive redevelopment of steadings; limited enabling development to secure restoration of historic buildings or structures; and replacement of houses in a habitable condition. Existing Supplementary Guidance will be updated to clarify the circumstances in which development will be permitted, and the design standards expected. The current flexibility in policies on business and tourism development in the countryside will be maintained and it is proposed to carry forward the existing policy on 'very low density rural housing in the countryside' otherwise known as 'lowland crofting' but only in the west of West Lothian.

Alternative approach 1**Alternative approach 2****Question 54**

Is the 'Preferred' approach to housing development in the countryside appropriate?
If not, why not?

Question 55

Do you agree with any of the 'Alternative' approaches to housing development in the countryside?

Question 56

Do you have an alternative approach?
What is it and how would you make it work?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to business, tourism and recreational uses in the countryside is to generally continue with the current policy approach set out in existing supplementary guidance.

Alternative approach

Question 57

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to business, tourism and recreational uses in the countryside?
If not, why not?

Question 58

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to business, tourism and recreational uses in the countryside?
If not, why not?

Question 59

Do you have an alternative approach?
What is it and how would you make it work?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to the green network is to define the part of CSGN in West Lothian as a network of multi-functional green corridors focussing on the existing network. This would build on the existing initiatives extending the network into the rural hinterland to connect with adjacent local authorities existing and emerging networks, and penetrating into urban areas, linking with the council's Open Space Strategy and Core Paths Plan.

Alternative approach

Question 60

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to the green network in West Lothian?
If not, why not?

Question 61

Does the proposed West Lothian wide green network capture the best strategic opportunities or are there any missing links?

Question 62

Do you have any suggestions for a green network across West Lothian?

Question 63

Do you have any suggestions for a green network across West Lothian?

Question 64

Do you have an alternative approach? What is it and how would you make it work?

Question 65

What are your views on the proposed extension to the Pentland Hills Regional Park in West Lothian?

 Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to biodiversity and geodiversity sites is to review and update the existing list of locally designated sites (Wildlife Sites and Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites RIGS) and to protect and promote improvements to them through Supplementary Guidance where appropriate. Policy protection for carbon-rich soils will be reinforced.

Alternative approach**Question 66**

Do you have any general or specific issues with the proposed list of Local Biodiversity Sites and Local Geodiversity Sites?

 Question 67

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to Biodiversity and Geodiversity in West Lothian?
If not, why not?

Question 68

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to Biodiversity and Geodiversity in West Lothian?
If not, why not?

Question 69

Do you have an alternative approach?
What is it and how would you make it work?

Question 70

Do you have any views on what should be considered for the second Open Space Strategy for 2015/16?
Why should these be considered?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to the historic environment is to review the current range of policies related to the historic environment, updating where necessary to reflect changes in legislation, and to prepare supplementary guidance to protect and promote built heritage assets and to consider designating conservation areas at Abercorn village and Hopetoun Estate. In addition, conservation area appraisals of all conservation areas will be progressed where resources allow.

Alternative approach

Question 71

Is the 'Preferred' approach to the historic environment in West Lothian appropriate?
If not, why not?

Question 72

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to the Historic Environment in West Lothian?
If not, why not?

Question 73

Do you have an alternative approach?
What is it and how would you make it work?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to Bangour Village Hospital site is to support at least 550 houses at the site, with the precise number of houses being agreed through detailed assessment of a master plan and other supporting information. Delivery of the site will be allied to the delivery of the infrastructure required to support the development whilst having regard to the built and natural environmental sensitivities of the site.

Alternative approach

Question 74

Is the 'Preferred' approach to Bangour Village Hospital appropriate?

If not, why not?

Question 75

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to Bangour Village Hospital?

If not, why not?

Question 76

Do you have an alternative approach?

What is it and how would you make it work?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to the former Bangour General Hospital site is to assess development proposals against development in the countryside policies in the LDP.

Alternative approach

Question 77

Is the 'Preferred' approach to Bangour General Hospital appropriate?

If not, why not?

Question 78

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to Bangour General Hospital?

If not, why not?

Question 79

Do you have an alternative approach?

What is it and how would you make it work?

Archaeology and the Union Canal (paragraphs 3.210 – 3.212)

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to the Union Canal is to promote its tourism and recreational potential and to allow for sympathetic ancillary development at the most appropriate locations along its length, having regard as to how this best fits with the wider strategy being developed by Scottish Canals for the whole waterway and in consultation with other neighbouring local authorities.

The canal also has potential to be used as a means of sustainable transport, both for leisure and commercial purposes, and it is important that opportunities to enhance local use, access and bio-diversity are maximised.

Securing the long term maintenance of this important historic structure is also paramount and it is concluded that this is best achieved by ensuring that it is well used and has as diverse a range of functions as practicable.

The rural setting of the section of the Union Canal between Winchburgh and Broxburn should continue to be protected as countryside belt or as a candidate special Landscape Designation Area as identified in the draft Local Landscape Designation Review.

Alternative approach

Question 80

Is the 'Preferred' approach to the Union Canal appropriate?
If not, why not?

Question 81

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to the Union Canal?
If not, why not?

Question 82

Do you have an alternative approach?
What is it and how would you make it work?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to public art is to continue to seek developer contributions appropriate to the scale and type of development and to review supplementary guidance.

Alternative approach

Question 83

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to public art?
If not, why not?

Question 84

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to public art?
If not, why not?

Question 85

Do you have an alternative approach?
What is it and how would you make it work?

Main Issue 7: Climate Change and Renewable Energy (paragraphs 3.214 - 3.225)

How can future patterns of development in West Lothian increase climate resilience and contribute towards meeting Scottish Government targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing renewable energy?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach for renewable energy is to retain the supportive policy framework for renewable energy developments, extending it to all low carbon energy technologies and implement the terms of supplementary guidance for wind energy developments.

Alternative approach

Question 86

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to renewable energy?
If not, why not?

Question 87

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to renewable energy?
If not, why not?

Question 88

Do you have an alternative approach?
What is it and how would you make it work?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to flood risk is to maintain and update existing policies and supplementary guidance on flood risk, taking account of legislative requirements and emerging Scottish Government guidance, including the RBMP as appropriate.

Alternative approach

Question 89

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to flood risk appropriate?
If not, why not?

Question 90

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to flood risk?
If not, why not?

Question 91

Do you have an alternative approach?
What is it and how would you make it work?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach to air quality is to maintain and update existing policies on air quality, taking account of legislative requirements and any emerging Scottish Government guidance.

Alternative approach

Question 92

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to air quality appropriate?
If not, why not?

Question 93

Do you have an alternative approach?
What is it and how would you make it work?

Main Issue 8: Minerals and Waste (paragraphs 3.233 – 3.246)

How can planning policy promote and ensure sustainable approaches to waste management and mineral resources in West Lothian?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach towards mineral extraction is to continue to implement the policy approach set out in the SDP and the adopted WLLP. The policy approach set out in these will however, be reviewed to take account of the guidance contained within SPP. This may be pursued through supplementary planning guidance.

Alternative approach

Question 94

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to mineral extraction?
If not, why not?

Question 95

Do you agree with the 'Alternative' approach to mineral extraction?
If not, why not?

Question 96

Do you have an alternative approach?
What is it and how would you make it work?

Preferred approach

The council's 'Preferred' approach towards waste management is to support the objectives of the Zero Waste Plan, to accommodate new provision through extensions to existing recycling facilities, or in other suitable areas and to provide a policy framework which supports the development of these facilities.

Alternative approach

Question 97

Do you agree with the 'Preferred' approach to waste management?

If not, why not?

Question 98

Do you have an alternative approach?

What is it and how would you make it work?

Additional information

Extra page for additional information you want to give on question(s). Please state the question number text refers to.

MURIESTON VALLEY, LIVINGSTON

Introduction

RK Property Ltd own land at Murieston Valley, Livingston. They wish this land to be identified as a housing site in the West Lothian Local Development Plan. It is appreciated that the site is small, at 0.5 hectares, and thus cannot contribute that many units. However, it can accommodate a reasonable housing development that would complement adjoining residential areas whilst protecting the best of the trees on the site.

This is an area that will experience further development in the future. The adjoining site now has planning permission for a new dwelling and land owned by the Council just beyond that is being promoted for residential development.

Recent Planning History

The site has been the subject of a 2013 planning application by RK Property Ltd for residential development, which was the subject of a local review at which the decision to refuse planning permission was upheld (ref: 0020/P/13). The application was originally refused by the case officer under delegated powers for reasons relating to the loss of open space and woodland and possible noise from the adjoining railway. It was subsequently accepted, however, following the submission of a noise assessment, that the railway would not be an issue and so the review was finally dismissed based upon the loss of open space and trees only.

Clearly, the above decision is material to the release of the site for housing, but has been tempered to a considerable extent by the Council's recent decision to allow a new dwelling on the adjoining site (ref:0264/FUL/14), which has the same status and characteristics as the site being promoted here. This application was refused for similar reasons to the RK Property Ltd application, but was then allowed following a local review, with an acceptance that the site was white land and a dwelling could be constructed on this site without impacting upon existing mature trees.

The Site

The site is 0.5 hectares and an L-shaped area of land that lies immediately north east and (part) north west of Moriston Drive, a development of modern two storey housing built in the late 1990s. The site represents only part of the land belonging to the applicant, as they also own the remaining land that forms the north western edge to Moriston Drive. The owner remains willing to discuss how best to manage this remaining land as open space and is willing to pass ownership to the local authority, the local community, or to seek a factoring solution with ownership and maintenance the responsibility of those owning and occupying any new houses on the land.

The site takes access from Murieston Valley, which is a distributor road connecting Moriston Drive, and a number of other modern residential areas, with Murieston Road to the south west. Murieston Valley is not a through road, but instead ends at a roundel further to the north east of the application site and opposite Livingston South Railway Station.

The Edinburgh to Glasgow railway line bounds the northern edge of the application site. Undeveloped ground exists to the north east and south west. To the north west of the site, between Moriston Drive and the railway, lies a substantial strip of woodland planting protected as open space in the West

Lothian Local Plan. This is the only land protected in this way, as the site itself, and the remaining open land in the vicinity of it, is otherwise shown as 'white land' on the West Lothian Local Plan Proposals Map,

The site is mostly flat and level, with a slight fall towards Murieston Valley. It presently contains three mature individual trees towards the north eastern edge of the site. A planted screen of young trees runs along the western boundary with Moriston Drive; an area of dense young woodland planting occupies the land to the north. The site is within an area covered by a blanket TPO, which protects all trees over a certain defined size.

The site is not subject to any national, regional or local biodiversity or heritage designations. It is not within an area at risk from flooding.

Effectiveness

To be considered as a potential housing allocation, Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) requires a site to be effective, which is considered in terms of the following criteria set out in Planning Advice Note 2/2010: Affordable Housing and Housing Land Audits at paragraph 55.

In terms of this site, it is considered effective for the following reasons.

- Ownership – RK Property Ltd own the site and have previously proposed development upon it. They remain committed to developing the site and continuing to maintain the important trees and areas of planting elsewhere on the land they also own.
- Physical – The site is free from constraints related to slope, aspect, flood risk and ground stability. A suitable vehicular access can be provided to Murieston Valley, which was accepted by the Council's Transportation section as part of the previous planning application in relation to the site. The site has limited biodiversity interest, which has been confirmed by a qualified ecologist, and noise impact from the railway need not be an issue, again as confirmed by a qualified noise consultant. The trees on the site are the subject of a TPO, as are those on adjoining land. Two separate tree surveys have been undertaken relating to the site and adjoining land for RK Property Ltd and Miss Carson/Mr Sneddon, the applicants for the adjoining site. Both reports have both confirmed that certain trees will anyway need to be removed due to age, disease or woodland management reasons and development can take place on the remaining land whilst keeping the best tree specimens. These reports are available on the respective online files for application refs: 0020/P/13 and 0264/FUL/14
- Contamination - The site forms part of a large area of land along Murieston Valley that was used in the past for the disposal of ash from Edinburgh. This area was remediated by Livingston Development Corporation in advance of the area being developed, but, as there may be some residual issue with contamination, a full site investigation will be undertaken prior to any development taking place on the land. This was raised as a concern by neighbours in relation to both application refs: 0020/P/13 and 0264/FUL/14, but considered capable of being dealt with by suitably worded planning conditions.
- Deficit funding – No deficit funding is required. Development will be financially viable and also capable of meeting all required developer contributions.
- Marketability – This part of Livingston has a strong housing market, both new build and second hand, and there is little doubt that new houses in this area will sell, probably off plan.

- Infrastructure – The site can be provided with required infrastructure, with Scottish Water confirming that drainage and water capacity is available in discussions with the owner. There is also an available gas and electricity supply and telecoms.
- Land use – Given that this is a residential area, further housing is the likely preferred option for its development.

HUNTER ROAD, LIVINGSTON

Introduction

RK Property Ltd own 0.4 hectares land at Hunter Road, Livingston. They wish this land to be identified as a suitable housing/other development site in the West Lothian Local Development Plan. It is appreciated that the site is small and thus cannot contribute that many housing units. However, it can accommodate a reasonable housing, or other form of development, that would complement adjoining residential areas whilst protecting the best of the trees on the site.

The Site

The site is situated between Hunter Road and Kaims Grove. It is contained on two sites by residential development and on the third by Hunter Road. Hunter Road is not a through road, but connects with Kirkton Road South giving access to the wider area and Livingston central.

The site is relatively flat. It contains a number of mature trees that are subject to a TPO. It has a gas governor on the frontage next to Hunter Road, with a gas pipeline crossing the site towards Kaims Grove. The site is otherwise overgrown.

The owner has had an ecologist look at the site and there would appear to be no protected species, although it is accepted that the trees do offer a habitat for birds, and possibly bats, and so a full ecological investigation would need to be undertaken before any development could take place.

Of the trees on the site, the main specimens worthy of retention are close to the northern boundary and Hunter Road. The owner is in the process of having an arboriculturalist do a full tree survey for the site to assess the current age and health of these trees and others on the land. This will be available shortly. It is expected that good management will require at least some of the trees to be removed, whether or not the site is developed.

The site has no recent planning history.

There is some indication that the site has been developed in the past from a review of historic maps, and the possibility that there may be the remains of a building sited centrally upon it, although there are no surface remains visible. It is known that the wider area has been the subject of previous archaeological surveys. These suggest that before the site can be developed, a further invasive study would need to be undertaken to assess whether the site has any heritage interest. The owner is willing to fund this.

The site is shown as 'white land' on the West Lothian Local Plan Proposals Map,

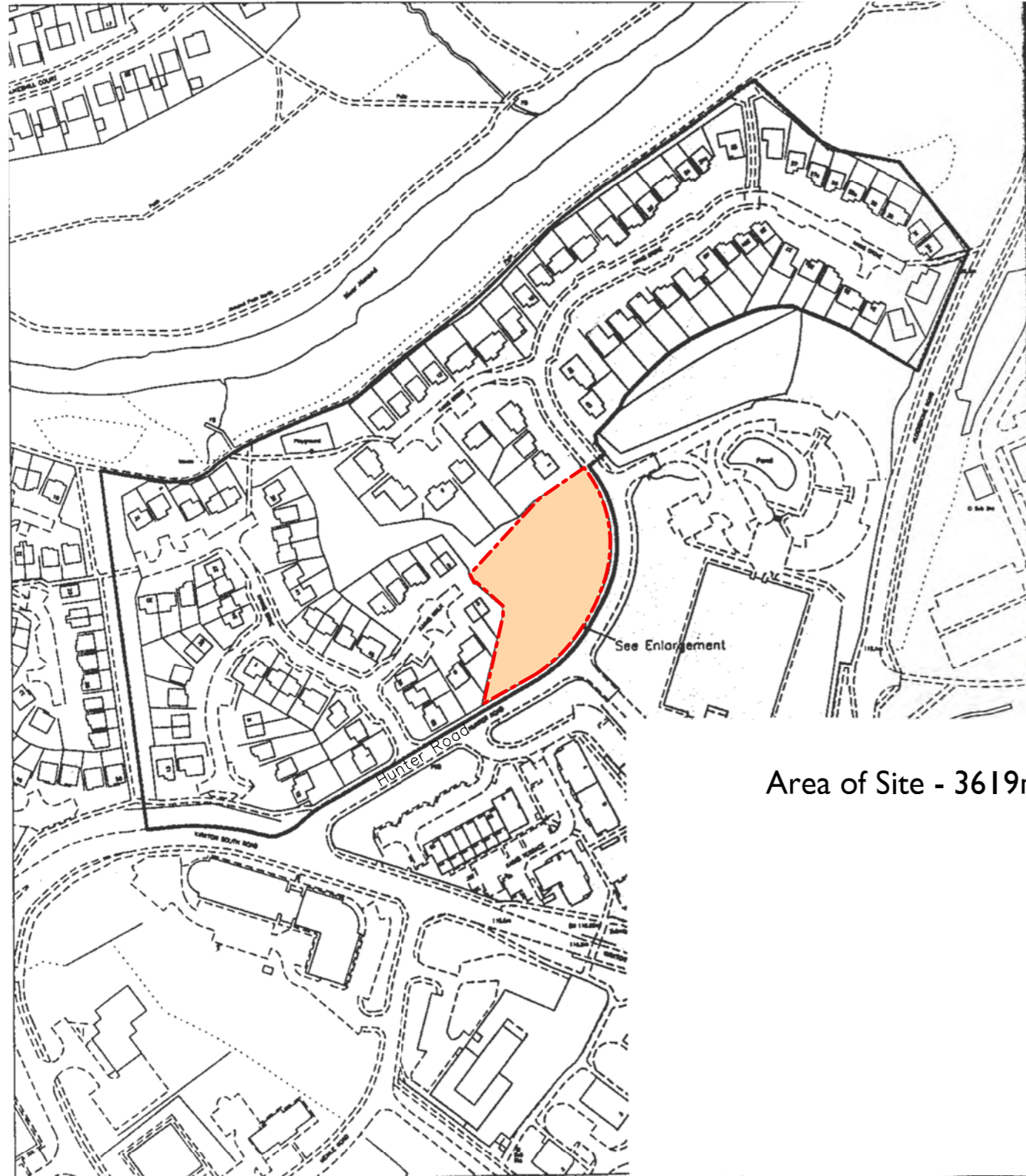
The site is not otherwise subject to any national, regional or local biodiversity or heritage designations. It is not within an area at risk from flooding.

Effectiveness

To be considered as a potential housing allocation, Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) requires a site to be effective, which is considered in terms of the following criteria set out in Planning Advice Note 2/2010: Affordable Housing and Housing Land Audits at paragraph 55.

In terms of this site, it is considered effective for the following reasons.

- Ownership – RK Property Ltd own the site, are committed to developing it and otherwise continuing to maintain the important trees.
- Physical – The site is free from constraints related to slope, aspect, flood risk and ground stability. A suitable vehicular access can be provided to Hunter Road. The site has limited biodiversity interest, with that existing relating principally to the trees. The trees on the site are the subject of a TPO, but it is considered that development can take place whilst retaining the best specimens. An arboriculturalist is currently preparing a full tree survey and this should be available shortly. The arboriculturalist's early conclusions are that certain trees will anyway need to be removed due to age, disease or woodland management reasons and development can take place on the remaining land whilst keeping the best tree specimens. The existence of gas governor and gas pipeline will limit development, but there remains developable land either side of this and away from the best trees that can be used.
- Contamination - The site is unlikely to be contaminated, but a full site investigation will be undertaken prior to any development taking place on the land.
- Deficit funding – No deficit funding is required. Development will be financially viable and also capable of meeting all required developer contributions.
- Marketability – This part of Livingston has a strong housing market, both new build and second hand, and there is little doubt that new houses in this area will sell, probably off plan.
- Infrastructure – The site can be provided with required infrastructure, with Scottish Water confirming that drainage and water capacity is available in discussions with the owner. There is also an available gas and electricity supply and telecoms.
- Land use – Given that this is a residential area, further housing is the likely preferred option for its development. The owner has, however, also investigated the possibility that this could be a suitable site for a small neighbourhood retail development or a pharmacy and/or medical practice. It is important that the Council indicate that the site is suitable for development in order that one of these uses can be pursued to the stage of detailed proposals being presented to the Council as a planning application.



Area of Site - 3619m² (0.9acre)

REV	DATE	DRAWN	DESCRIPTION	CHECK	APP'D
REVISIONS					

0 | 50 | 100

CLIENT	Shakeel Ahmed				
JOB	Residential Development, Hunter Road Livingston				
DRAWING	Site Location Plan				
STATUS	Preliminary				
Drawn PH	Checked PH	Approved ...	DATE March 2012	NO s/3943	DR NO -(--)-



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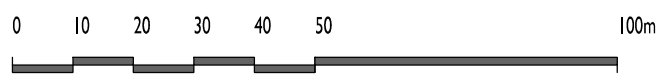
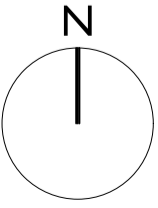
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Do not scale from this drawing



LAND OWNED BY APPLICANT
"ZONED AS SAFEGUARDED
OPEN SPACE" IN CURRENT
LOCAL PLAN

APPLICATION SITE
UNDEFINED IN CURRENT
LOCAL PLAN - 0.5HA



yeomanmcallister