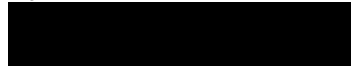


MIRQ0051

West Lothian Local Development Plan – Main Issues
Report – Public Representations and Comment.

West Calder – Site E01-0031

Representations by John Duff Planning on behalf of



John Duff Planning

6th October 2014

West Lothian Local Development Plan – Main Issues Report – Public Representations and Comment.

West Calder – Site E01-0031

Representations by John Duff Planning on behalf of [REDACTED]

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The site covered by these representations is located adjacent to West Calder Cemetery, coded as site E01-0031 and is owned by [REDACTED] / his family. The site has been owned by the family for many years and extends to 2.73 ha.

1.2 The site is currently unused by the family and whilst it has been considered by West Lothian Council as an extension to the adjacent cemetery [an idea now dropped in favour of a new facility in another part of West Calder], it is ideally located within the town speed limit area and is clearly defined by a mature tree screen to the west.

1.3 The owners were most encouraged to be advised that the site had past the rigorous screening process used by West Lothian Council for the substantial number of sites brought forward as part of the Call for Sites.

1.4 It was however disappointing to be advised that the site had been categorised as a “Preferred Alternative Site” for residential development.

2.0 Representation to have site included in Proposed West Lothian Local Development Plan.

2.1 The site owners have now had the opportunity to consider the Main Issues Report and are most encouraged by the overall strategy being adopted in the MIR [Main Issues Report] – the introduction to the MIR states

“...set out a strategy to enable delivery of housing requirements and demand in the most sustainable locations.”

2.2 The MIR further states in the main aims – Main Issue 3 that it seeks to maintain West Lothian as a Growth Area.

2.3 The owners of the land at West Calder support this strategic thrust however consider that it is imperative to include sites of a wide range of sizes as only then will the plan ensure the early delivery of housing.

2.4 We are all only too aware with the credit crunch that finance for property has become very difficult to secure and many lenders are still very cautious about large schemes with major upfront costs. The site in West Calder - E01-0031 – can be developed quickly without resort to major up front funding and its support in the Council's own assessment makes it immediately available for development.

2.5 [REDACTED] and his family are committed to bringing this site forward for development at an early date, can confirm they entirely own the site and it is not burdened with any third party ownerships.

2.6 Further small sites such as this in West Calder are likely to appeal to a local market, local developers ensuring the maximum local economic benefit to West Lothian.

2.7 By including the site in West Calder in the Proposed Local Development Plan it will also ensure the early delivery of housing a key part of the Housing Land Supply in West Lothian – focussing solely on large sites is likely to delay the delivery of housing and increase the risk of successful challenges to the Local Development Plan at Planning Appeal.

2.8 This site is the only small site in West Calder in the MIR and that alone appears, as it has complied with the Council's detailed site assessment, to be a strong reason to include the site in the LDP ensuring the widest / earliest possible housing choice.

3.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

3.1 The owners of site - E01-0031- located in West Calder, support the broad strategy being adopted by West Lothian Council in its MIR.

3.2 It is most encouraging that this site, located within the speed restricted area a boundary which is seen by many as the urban limit, has been rigorously assessed by the Planning Department and meets all their criteria for residential development sites.

3.3 To ensure the early delivery of housing it is essential wherever possible to ensure there is a wide supply of sizes of sites in the Proposed Local Development Plan. This site - E01-0031- is ideal in this regard as it can be brought forward for development at an early date something not possible with many of the large sites identified in the MIR that will require substantial and complex bank funding to allow development to proceed.

3.4 Early development of sites such as this one will support the Council Strategy and support the Housing Land Supply an aspect essential to achieve the objectives of the Proposed LDP.

3.5 [REDACTED] strongly encourages West Lothian Council to include this site in West Calder for early development by identifying it in the Proposed Local Development Plan as a Residential Development site.

3.6 By identifying the site for housing development in the forthcoming Proposed Local Development Plan, West Lothian Council will

* Ensure that housing is available early in this part of West Calder.

* Support the Council's strategy and Housing Land Supply

* Maximise the local economic benefit for this part of the Council area and

* Avoid development delays that inevitably will occur with many of the larger sites in the plan.

* Broaden choice as key aim of the MIR / LDP

3.7 The family welcome this opportunity to provide comments to West Lothian Council and would be delighted to engage in any further discussion about this representation or the delivery of the site that may be appropriate.

John Duff Planning

6th October 2014