

Philpstoun Community Council

Response to Main Issues Report August 2014 West Lothian Local Development Plan

Philpstoun

Philpstoun along with Old Philpstoun is referred to in the main issues report on page 167.

It identifies the village as being an area of restraint.

The restraints being

Narrow country roads, an impediment to significant new development.

New development would compromise the character and landscape setting of the area or constitute ribbon development. Union Canal and railway bound the area that can be developed.

Lack of social and community facilities.

Limited drainage capacity.

The area could accommodate a very modest element of infill development, assuming an appropriate site can be identified.

There is nothing controversial in what is said. There is the reference to “Review settlement envelope” as a priority. I have not been able to work out if this is a general reference or if a specific need has been identified.

Of the sites identified within the Philpstoun Area.

COU36 : Bowling Club : 0.13Ha : 5 units : Preferred site.

It is disappointing that after the hiatus suffered by the Bowling Club this site has become available for development. Philpstoun Community Council is happy for a small scale housing development.

EOI-0192 : Wyndford Brae : Ard Craig Developments: pp621

0.26Ha : 150-200 units : Not Preferred .

The number of units is an obvious mistake given the size of the site. The developer is Ard Craig Developments which makes me think the site is on the other side of the burn. Going east from Philpstoun to Old Philpstoun the road dips down to cross the Pardovan burn before rising along Station Road. There is a landscape break in the dip. This is an important landscape feature recognised by previous Local Plans and in planning applications even at Appeal. Philpstoun Community Council supports the current line of the settlement envelope and the Not Preferred status of this site.

EOI-0074 : Land north of Fairniehill : Aithrie Estates : pp233

Mixed use residential and leisure : 3.9Ha : 100 units : Not Preferred.

This is a large site and would be a significant addition to Philpstoun. It is of a scale that Philpstoun could not cope with at present and if it was to happen would fundamentally change the character of Philpstoun. Philpstoun Community Council supports the Not Preferred status of this site.

EOI-0073 : Philpstoun North Bing : Hopetoun Estate Trust : pp230

Quarry use then leisure uses : 11Ha : Not Preferred.

The main issues report seems to treat this as a housing development site and judges as that. So I am unsure if the development plan is trying to preclude housing or the quarrying operation. However the proposed operations on Philpstoun South Bing are more than enough for any community to

endure at any one time. It is noted that at the current rate of removal from Niddry Mains Bing there would be no call for this material for a long time. Although it is strange that a planning permission was granted to add substantially to Philpstoun South Bing, yet this is a proposal for the removal of material from Philpstoun North Bing. Philpstoun Community Council would like the Bing to be left as it is and supports the Not Preferred status of this site.

EOI-0067 : Binns Mill, East Philpstoun : Aithrie Estates : pp211

Leisure Uses : 0.95Ha (error? site bigger) : Not Preferred

EOI-0069 : Land to south east of East Philpstoun at Craigton Quarry : Hopetoun Estate Trust / Aithrie Estates : pp217

Rural leisure/ holiday accommodation : 60Ha : Not Preferred

For both sites “Development would result in visual intrusion” again the plan seems to be considering this as housing or major development and judges it as such. I would have thought that both would be low impact rural businesses and could be judged by policies in the local plan rather than being identified as development areas. Philpstoun Community Council does not want these areas identified as development sites, but would expect them to be judged by the countryside policies in the local plan when a planning application is submitted. Philpstoun Community Council would then be in a better position to comment on the scheme.

EOI-0207 : Site at Auldcathie Landfill site Winchburgh : Regenco – Winchburgh Ltd : pp679

Golf course as restoration after-use for Auldcathie landfill site : 75Ha : Alternative

I am unsure as to what this site is an alternative to. Winchburgh Comprehensive Development Area is a massive greenfield development that fundamentally changes Winchburgh. The western boundary of Winchburgh moves significantly towards Philpstoun. The use of the landfill site as a golf course will hopefully mark the boundary of the westward expansion of Winchburgh and provide a softer landscape edge to the town. Philpstoun Community Council supports this use for the landfill site.

Linlithgow

EOI-0015 Springfield South / Boghall East Linlithgow : Gardiner Estates : pp45

3.2Ha : Preferred

“release is supported in this instance as the site provides a natural infill between the existing residential areas”

EOI-0045 Land East of Manse Road, Linlithgow : Church of Scotland : pp143

2Ha : 50 units : Preferred

Although “the southern part of the site lies within a candidate Special Landscape Area (cSLA) as proposed by the West Lothian Local Landscape Designation Review.” but “given the small scale involved could be considered as having no significant impact on the integrity of the overall landscape.”

EOI-0050 Riccarton Farm, Porterside, Linlithgow : Aitken Brothers : pp159

Residential, transport improvements, community benefits, recreation and education : 20Ha : 50 units : Not Preferred

“The site also lies within a candidate Special Landscape Area (cSLA) as proposed in the West Lothian Local Landscape Designation Review.” The map showing the landscape areas is bad. From what I can make out the site was at the edge of Area of Great Landscape Value, but is now inside the cSLA.

“would also be visually and environmentally intrusive due to site levels”

“supports development within the core development areas and other strategic locations”

EOI-0103 Land known as Burghmuir, Linlithgow : Wallace Land Investment and ?? : pp328
Mixed use housing, hotel, care home etc : 48 Ha : 50 units : Not Preferred
“education capacity constraints”

“Development of this site would constitute an intrusive physical expansion of Linlithgow, well beyond the limit of development, out with the settlement envelope of the town, which is already provided for in the adopted West Lothian Local Plan.”

EOI-0114 Wilcoxholm Farm, Edinbush Road, Linlithgow : John Kerr Ltd : pp364
20Ha : 200 units : Preferred in part

Education capacity constraints... prevents development of this site in the short to medium term”

“supported as an allocation in part”

“represents a potential longer term logical expansion to the town”

EOI-0128 Braehead, Linlithgow : West Lothian Council : pp414
0.1819Ha : Not Preferred

“There is no educational capacity available to support development”

EOI-0165 Land at Kingsfield, Linlithgow : Bellair Property Investments Ltd : pp530
Mixed use, predominantly housing : 19.4Ha : Not Preferred

“education capacity constraints”

“Development of this site would constitute an intrusive physical expansion of Linlithgow, well beyond the limit of development, out with the settlement envelope of the town, which is already provided for in the adopted West Lothian Local Plan.”

EOI-0168 Land at Preston Farm, Linlithgow : Mr W Aitken : pp541
10Ha : 50 units : in part preferred

The report says that part of the site is out with cSLA and that is preferred for development. The map seems to show that the whole site is within cSLA.

EOI-0184 Clarendon House, 30 Manse Road, Linlithgow : West Lothian Council : pp596
Mixed use and residential : 10 units : Preferred.

Site within house boundary.

EOI-0210 Clarendon Farm south of Linlithgow : Manor Forrest Ltd : pp689

Residential :26Ha : 60 units (another document has 120 units) : Preferred

The site is at the edge of AGLV but it is difficult to determine where the cSLA will run as the boundary is being redrawn in this area and the map is not clear.

Philpstoun Community Council has concerns with the extensions to Linlithgow proposed.

Linlithgow may have been identified as an area of restraint in recent years, but this has slowed development not stopped it. There has been an increase in facilities that better reflect the size of Linlithgow, but there are still deficiencies that need to be addressed as part of any development. It is a very difficult task for the Local Plan to solely direct development to local needs and therefore more likely to find acceptance within the community. Not doing this well will add greatly to the difficulties of living in an area without all the resources that are desirable for modern life in Linlithgow and its surrounding area, that also includes Philpstoun. Linlithgow is not just a resource for the people who live in Linlithgow, it also has a hinterland that includes the Philpstoun Community Council area.

Philpstoun is a small village located in the countryside between Linlithgow and Winchburgh. Philpstoun is small and relies on other places for services. Linlithgow is the primary focus for the village for amongst other needs, shopping, the doctor, secondary school and the train station. This is shown in that all buses that serve Philpstoun also go to Linlithgow. None go to Winchburgh.

Linlithgow has a very important landscape setting. To the north and south it is bounded by areas identified of landscape value, to the west by the Avon and to the east by the rich farmlands separating it from Philpstoun. It has the feeling of a settlement that has reached or exceeded its natural capacity. Philpstoun welcomed the WLLP that identified the Linlithgow as an area of restraint.

The landscape between Philpstoun and Linlithgow is a concern to Philpstoun Community Council. There is a worry as to the extent landscape has been considered in the Development Plan process. Site EOI-0015 has the statement "release is supported in this instance as the site provides a natural infill between the existing residential areas". The two main roads into Linlithgow from the east the A803 and the B9080 get fairly close to the centre of town without the full effect of Springfield impinging into your view. The A803 in particular is interesting as you would still have a feeling of travelling through countryside before seeing the Palace and then arriving at the town. This feeling had been affected over the years and the loss of this site in particular seriously degrades this feeling. A landscape analysis would have identified the character of this important route into Linlithgow, but to say the site is "a natural infill" gives no indication of that analysis being carried out. The B9080 is still a countryside route into Linlithgow, with the canal bridge as an arch separating the rural from the town.

Philpstoun Community Council supports that EOI-0103 and EOI-0165 are Not Preferred. They would mean that Linlithgow would make a big lurch towards Philpstoun.

Philpstoun Community Council has concerns with EOI-0114 and EOI-0210. Both are at the edge of a cSLA. It is difficult to judge the proposal as the sites are only to be developed in part. What is to happen to the unused part. Is it to be extensively landscaped and the land put into trust so that it is a final boundary to Linlithgow or will another chunk be removed from the countryside at a later date. What landscape analysis has been done for these sites that make them Preferred, or will the landscape analysis happen later that will determine the final size of these schemes. EOI-0114 in particular straddles the canal and will greatly impact on this rural corridor into Linlithgow. The site also consists of rising ground and a ridge line that would be highly visible if developed, a reason that excluded site EOI-0050.

Philpstoun Community Council supports that EOI-0050 is a Not Preferred. This is a site that would be highly visible if developed.

The issue of schooling is important. We are unsure as to the current school capacities and how they will change when the new schools in Winchburgh start to open, particularly the secondary school. EOI-0128 a site within the settlement envelope of Linlithgow is tiny and yet it is a Not Preferred site as "there is no educational capacity available to support development". The large sites proposed for development may take some time before they can be developed, mainly due to school capacity. It seems strange that educational capacity could be overcome for the much larger sites but not for a very small one inside the settlement envelope. If there are to be changes to the catchment areas this will be done by a separate process to the Local Plan. Philpstoun Community Council expects that any additional development will not have any cumulative effect that will result in calls for the catchment areas to be redrawn. Linlithgow is the natural bigger brother of Philpstoun and it is important that that relationship remains intact.

There has been concern recently over the provision of GP services. A recent retirement and no ability to extend the current practice does not give the confidence needed that the proposed level of development can be serviced. There have been times in fast developing Livingston where significant areas have not been able to access a GP. However, the GP service develops in Linlithgow it is important that people from Philpstoun are able to access it by bus or car.

As identified in the Main Issues Report, Philpstoun is primarily a commuter settlement and needs access to employment away from Philpstoun. The railway station in Linlithgow is very useful. Unfortunately, given the bus service, particularly in the evening, a car is the usual mode of transport to the station. There is inadequate parking near the station. The new car park at the cricket ground was a welcome addition but is now full.

To the east of Philpstoun is what has been identified as a Core Development Area at Winchburgh. Although extensive areas of land have been identified for development, after much delay, it is only recently that a start has been made. There are many aspects of the Core Development Area that could be desirable to Philpstoun; the opportunity for employment, a different town centre experience and alternative rail access. All this will only be achieved if the scheme as a whole is a success. If large areas of land are released in Linlithgow for development then this will have an impact on how successful Winchburgh is. Of note are the 2500 houses that are proposed for South Queensferry and immediate area that could also affect the success of Winchburgh.