

**Land at Brotherton Farm,
Livingston**



Design Statement, Part 1 of 2

7N



Brotherton Farm, Livingston

Design and Access Statement

01 September 2014



Masterplan

Alba
Business
Campus

Allocated for
Residential
Development



Executive Summary

This Design and Access Statement supports an application for Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) for a residential development on a site at Brotherton Farm, south west of Livingston, West Lothian.

The proposals demonstrate how part of West Lothian's identified strategic housing shortfall can be delivered by development on this 12.4 Hectare site in a manner which will not be detrimental to the principles of the Countryside Belt.

Contents

Section 01: Site and Context.....	5
Section 02: Site Analysis	19
Section 03: Design Principles	29
Section 04: Design Proposals	37





01

Site and Context

Site Context

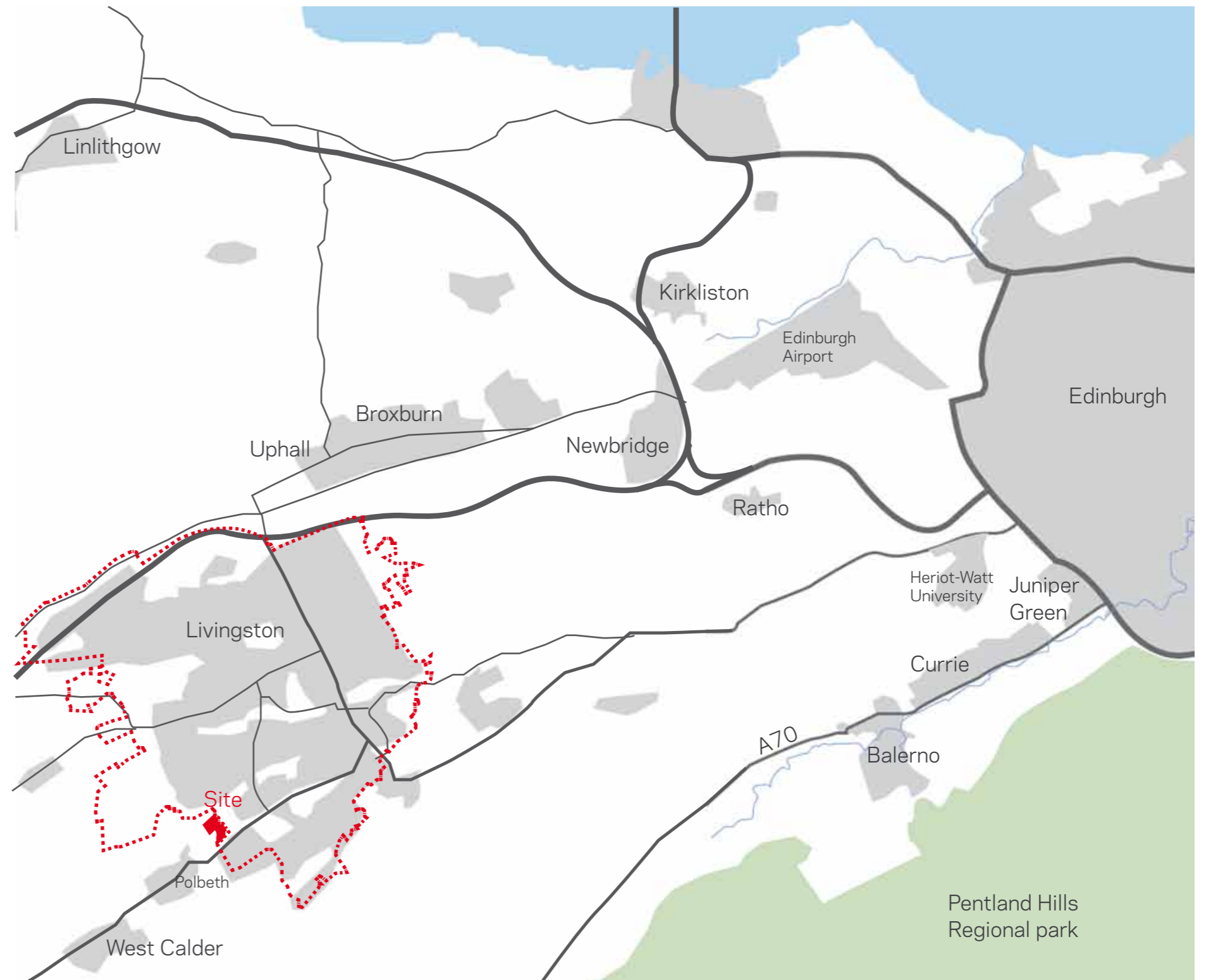
Location

Livingston is the largest town in West Lothian and second largest (after Edinburgh) in Lothian. It sits about 13 miles west from Edinburgh in the Almond Valley and part of the Central Belt. The proposed site sits on the southwestern boundary of the Livingston settlement.

The settlement started in the ancient village of Livingston. Later the villages of Bellsquarry and Livingston Station were also founded. Livingstone's expansion into a town was set by the New Towns Act of 1946 which identified 5 locations for new towns to be built. Livingston was the fourth to be built and was designated a New Town in 1962.

Livingston further expanded in the 1980s and 1990s due to high-tech industry. Today it is known for its large retail centre.

According to the 2011 census the population is over 56,000 people.



Site

Livingston settlement boundary

Livingston and the development site in context

Site Context

Livingston



Knightsbridge

Nether Dechmont

Deans

Ladywell

Craigshill

East Calder

Livingston

Howden

Mid Calder

Livingston Village

Almondvale

A71

Seafield

Kirkton

Dedridge

Kirkton Campus

Alba Campus

Bellsquarry

Murieston

Brucefield Industrial Park

Site

Polbeth

A71

Site Context

Site

The site is situated within south-west Livingston and comprises agricultural land extending to 12.4Ha (30.6 acres). The land is bounded by established woodland to the east, the Brucefield Industrial Park and the A71 to the South, agricultural land to the west and the Alba Business Campus to the north. Access to the site will be via the existing roundabout spur on the A71.

Why is the site suitable for development?

- o The site is in good proximity to local transport connections and services
- o The site is accessible via existing Wilderness Roundabout on the A71
- o There are opportunities to connect footpaths to established woodland areas, proposed recreational route and beyond to the wider area
- o The site is surrounded by generous areas of woodland and open green space which provides a sage and pleasant environment.
- o Proposed development areas are very well screened from view by existing tree belts and landscape topography



Site Context

Local Character

This area of Livingston has a distinct suburban edge character. Along Bankton Road mature trees and landscape planting is interspersed with housing or industrial development. The photographs to the right show a mix of character and setting.



Bankton Road



Polbeth



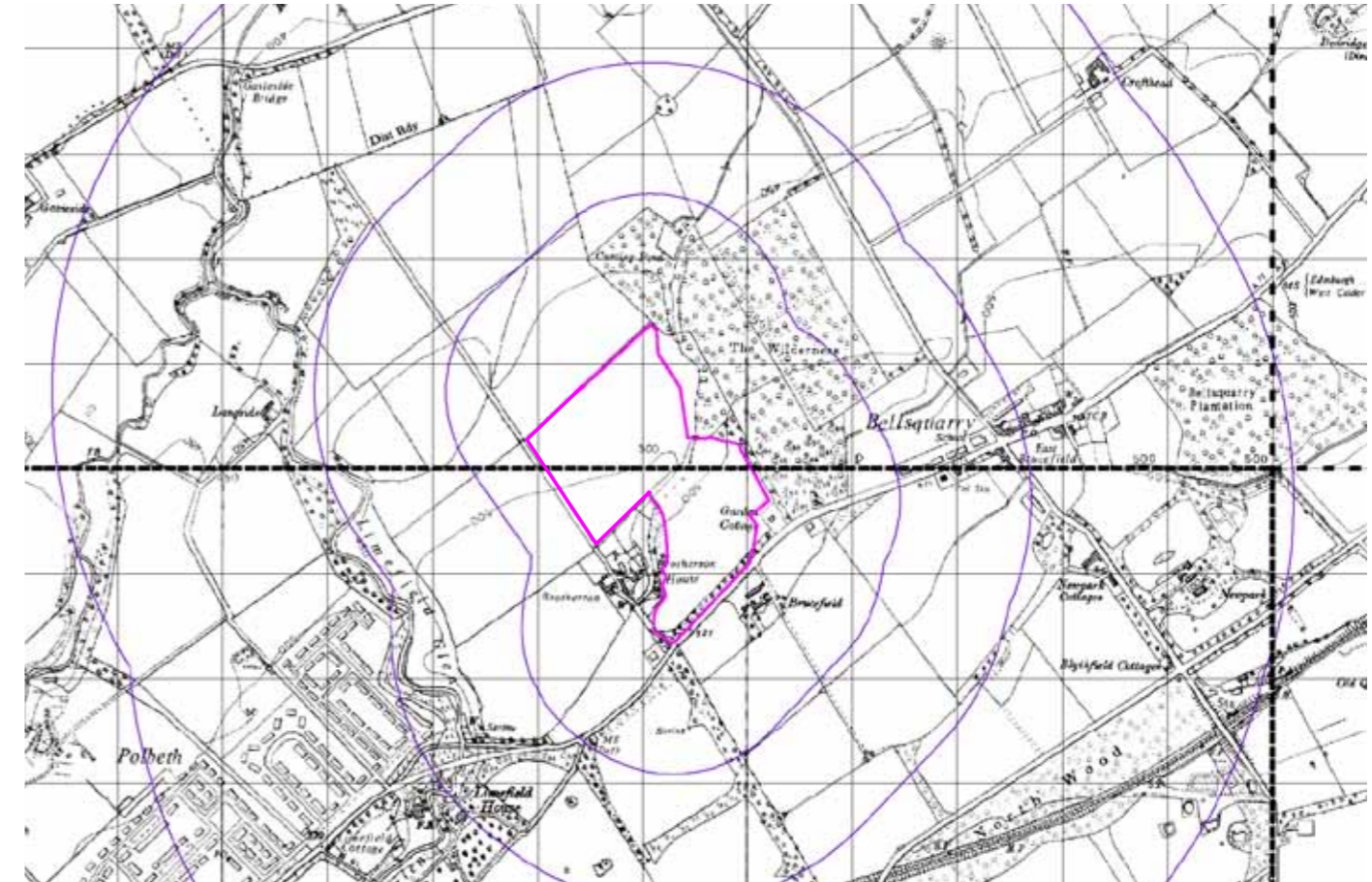
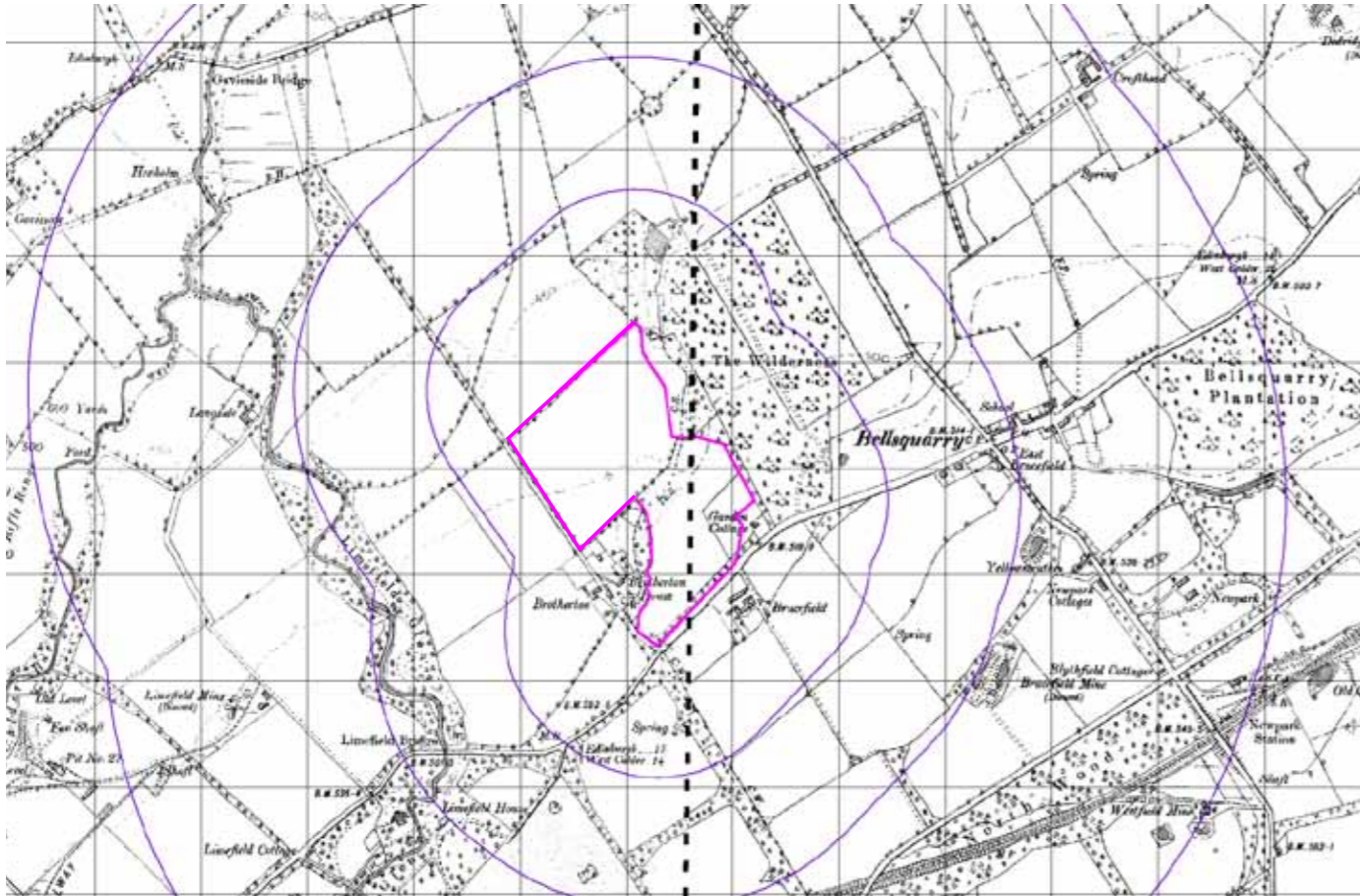
Brucefield Farm, local pub and carvery



Brucefield Industrial Park

Site Context

Area History

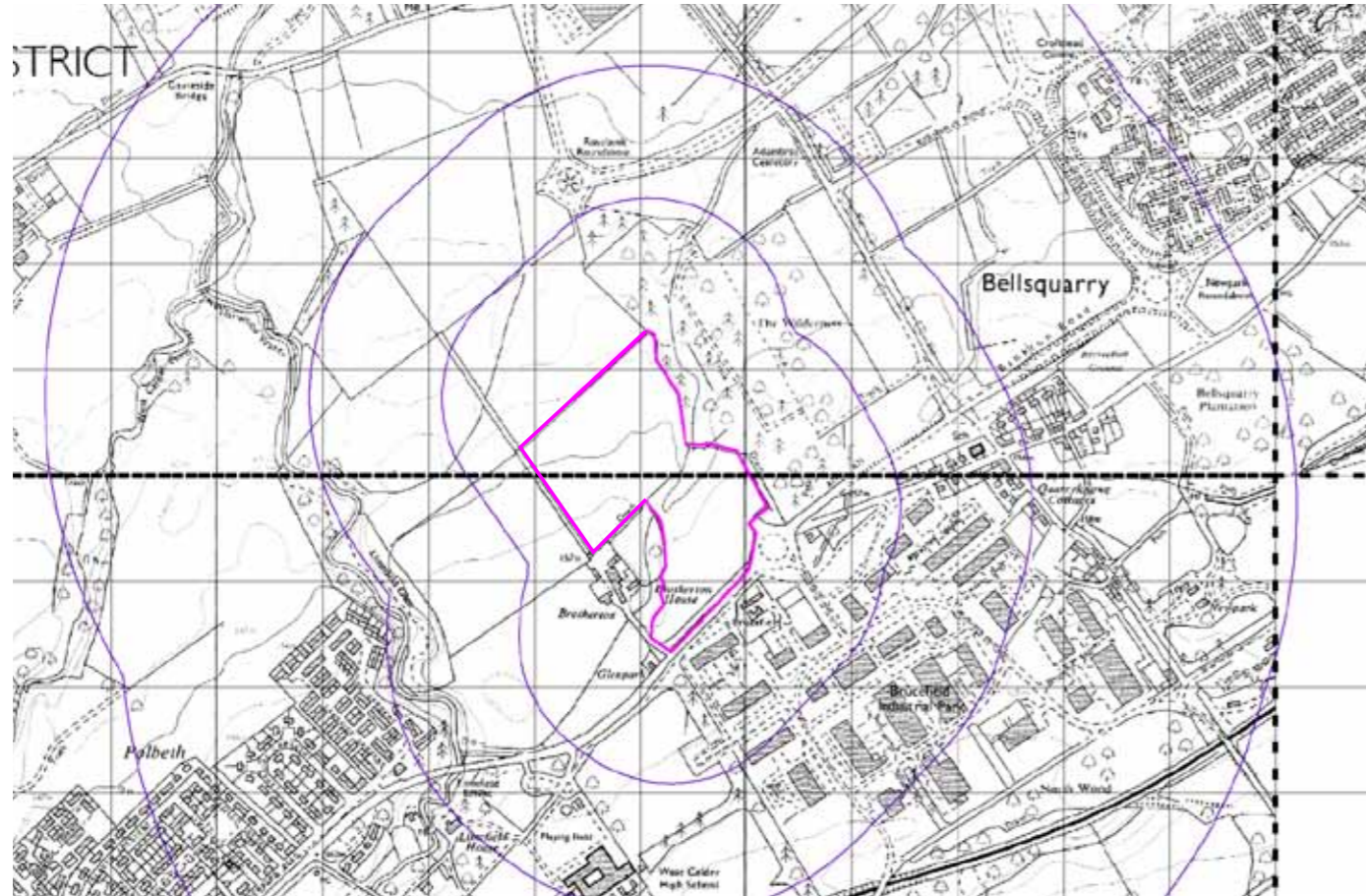


1895

Brotherton Farm and key area landscape features (The Wilderness, Limefield Glen, tree belts and field lines) already clearly visible.

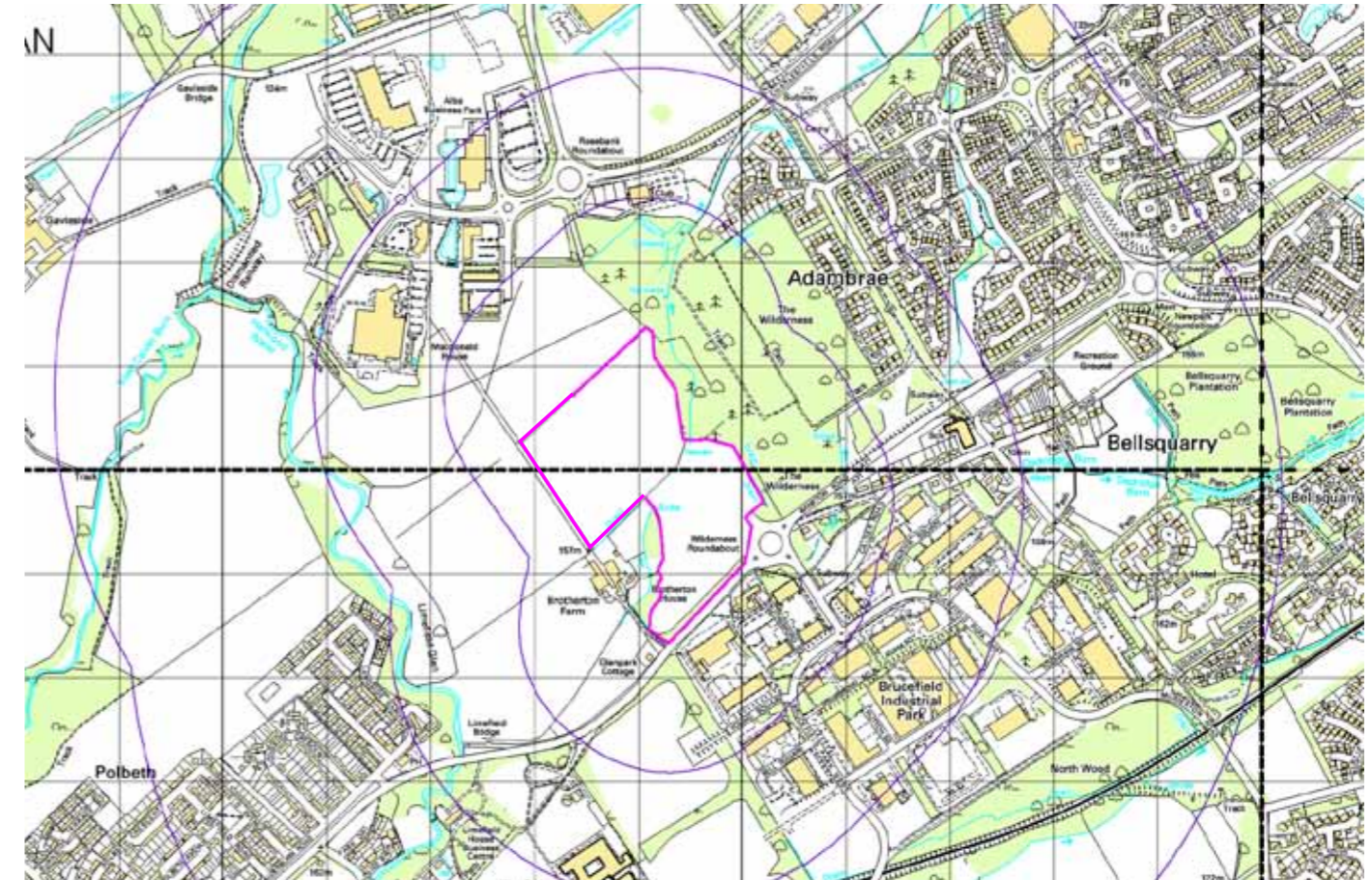
1957

By 1957 Polbeth housing had been built.



1991- 1994

Brucefield Industrial Estate and the western part of Dedridge housing had been built.



2013

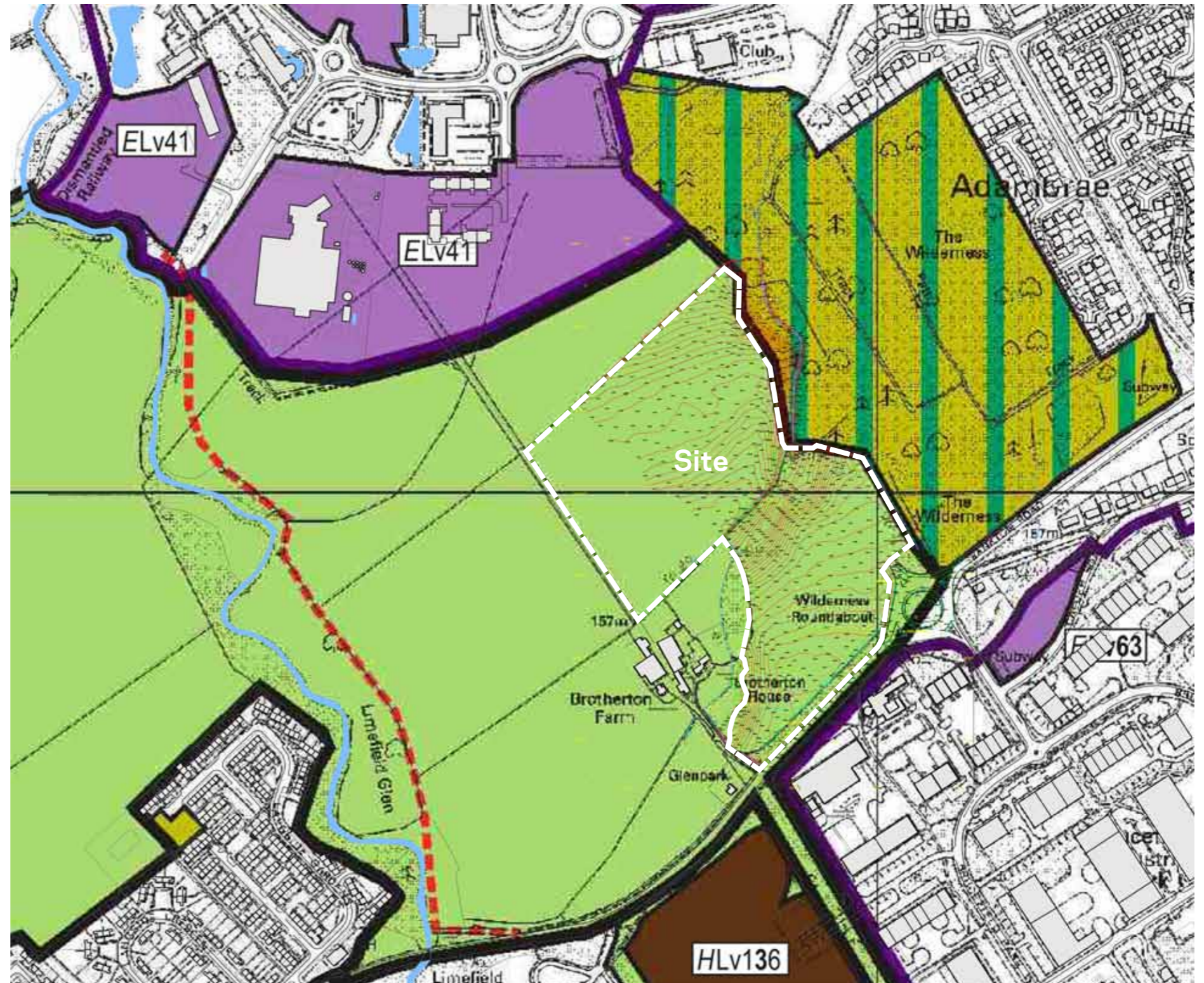
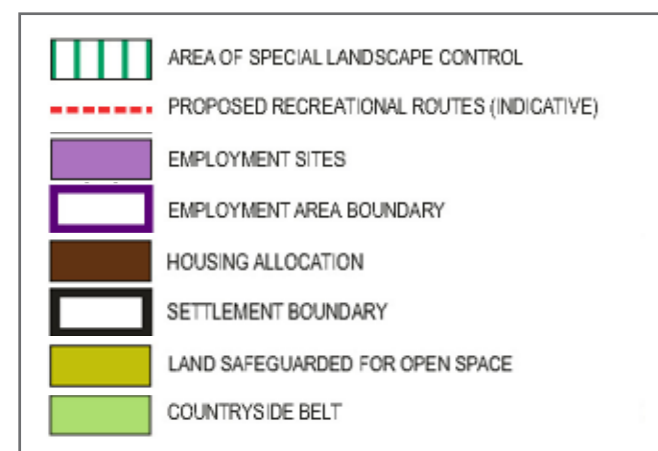
Alba Business Campus as well as Adambrae and Bellsquarry housing are built out. Key landscape features have barely been affected by development over the last 100 years and remain to this day.

Planning Context

Local Policy

West Lothian Local Plan
January 2009

The map to the right is an extract from the West Lothian Local Development Plan and shows that the site sits on the edge of the Countryside Belt between development to the north and to the south.



West Lothian Local Plan - January 2009

Planning Context

Design Policy Guidance

Government Policy, Local Policy and Best Practice for Design

The core documents of relevance in this instance include the following:

- o Scottish Planning Policy 2014: The development proposal has been guided by the key policy principles set out in the SPP 2014, with particular reference to the six qualities of successful places referred to in paragraphs 41-46.
- o Creating Places: A Policy Statement for Scotland, June 2013
- o Designing Streets: A Policy Statement for Scotland, March 2010
- o West Lothian Local Development Plan, January 2009

The Scottish Government publish a series of Planning Advice Notes on Best Practice aimed to provide planning authorities and applicants guidance on shaping future developments. These are important documents and are material considerations in the determination of planning applications. They specifically relate to good practice and should inform planning authorities and applicants alike.

- o PAN 44 Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape
- o PAN 67 Housing Quality
- o PAN 68 Design Statements
- o PAN 83 Masterplanning
- o PAN 72 Housing in the Countryside

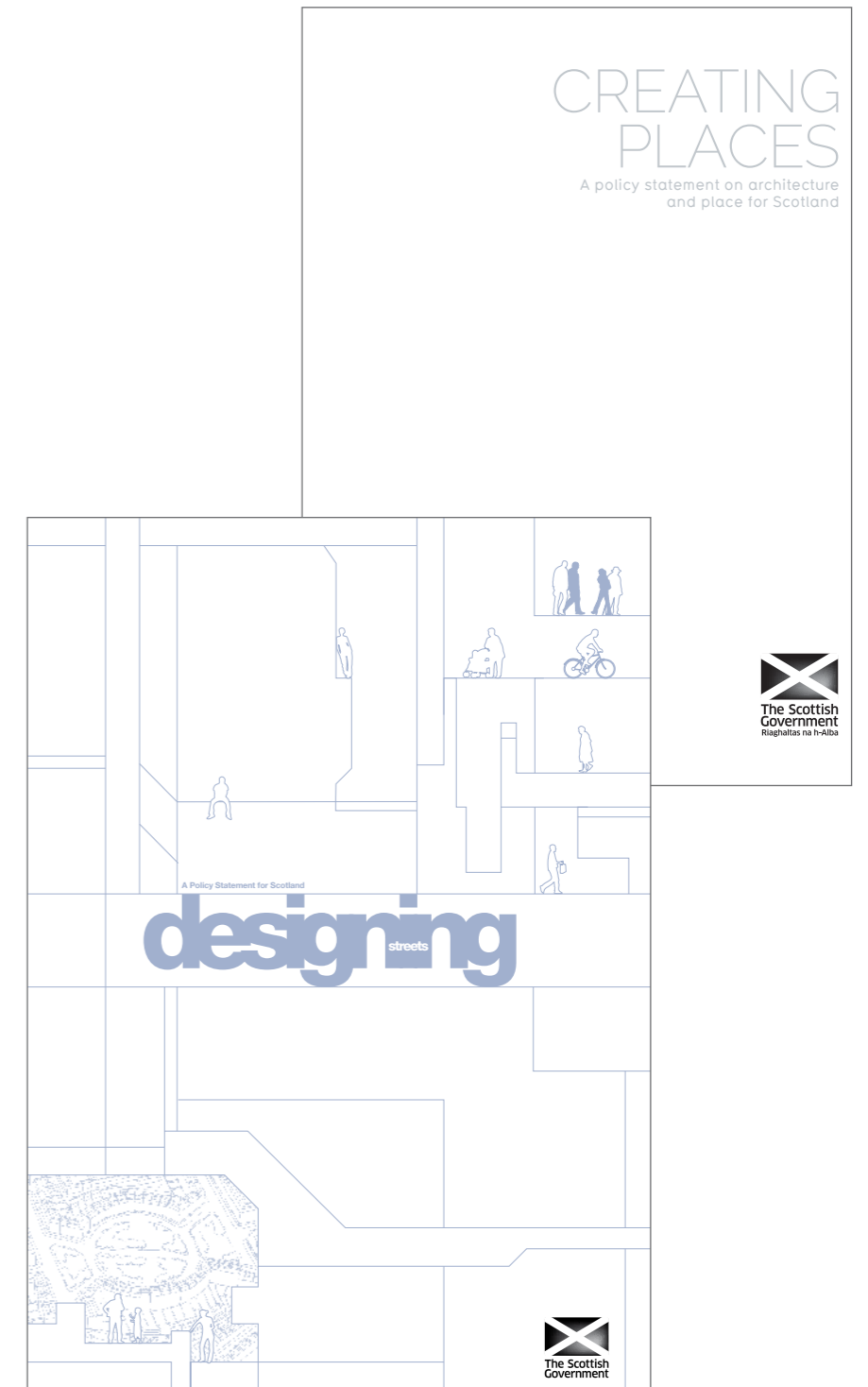
Designing Streets: A Policy Statement for Scotland, March 2010

Designing Streets is the first policy statement in Scotland for street design and marks a change in the emphasis of guidance on street design towards placemaking and away from a system focused upon the dominance of motor vehicles. It has been created to support the Scottish Government's placemaking agenda and is intended to sit alongside the 2010 planning policy document Designing Places, which sets out government aspirations for design and the role of the planning system in delivering these.

Designing Streets promotes the development of places which are well integrated with adjacent land uses and requires that they are highly permeable, particularly for non-car based travel modes.

Key principles of Designing Streets include:

- o The built environment should place a high priority on pedestrian and cycle movement;
- o Where possible, cycling activity should be accommodated within road carriageways;
- o Road widths can vary throughout a development, and a variety of treatments should be adopted;
- o A design speed of 20mph should be borne in mind for roads within a development;
- o The distance between building frontages can vary between 10m and 18m;



Planning Context

Design Policy Guidance

Creating Places: A Policy Statement for Scotland, June 2013

Creating Places is Scotland's policy statement on architecture and place which sets out the comprehensive value good design can deliver.

Architecture and place has an established, strong relationship with planning. The policies contained in the document are material considerations in determining planning applications and appeals.

The document contains an action plan that sets out the work that will be taken forward to achieve positive change.

The statement is in four parts:

1. The value of architecture and place,
2. Consolidation and ambition,
3. A strategy for architecture and place,
4. Resources, communications and monitoring.

PAN 44 – Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape

The approach expressed by PAN 72 is supported by PAN 44 Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape. PAN 44 stresses the importance of sensitively responding to local landscape and setting, existing urban form and settlement patterns, and considering the visual impact.

“Insensitive development can undermine the special environmental quality of towns and their setting in the countryside which have drawn people to live and invest in them in the first place”.

The approach to the planning of town expansion areas is well tested. PAN 44 and PAN 72 provide the context to good design practice stressing the importance of good contextual design.

“Careful attention to landscape fit should be given by housing developers, and the principles of good design should be applied consistently by authorities in their planning decisions”.

Understanding the landscape capacity and the surrounding context for Livingston has been an integral part of the masterplan process. Our approach has been to consider an appropriate form and density of development to properly reflect the transition from suburban to rural at a location at the edge of the settlement with open countryside beyond. The proposed residential development is in harmony with and respectful to its landscape setting.

PAN 67 - Housing Quality

PAN 67 recognises that the planning process has an essential role to play in ensuring that:

- o The design of new housing reflects a full understanding of its context – in terms of both physical location and market conditions;
- o The design of new housing reinforces local and Scottish identity; and,
- o New housing is integrated into the movement and settlement patterns of the wider area.

The guidance states that many people also want to live in a place that has a distinct identity, rather than one that could be anywhere, and that every development should be planned and designed as part of a place that does more than just house people.

Further the guidance seeks an overall approach to designing housing considering the design of streets, open space and relationship with the wider landscape/context.

The proposed development at Brotherton Farm sits well into the existing settlement pattern, using it as a basis for the assessment of landscape capacity. The identified site is well protected from views either screened by trees or topography. Sound principles of landscape planning, urban design and placemaking are at the heart of a proposal that seeks to fit with its surroundings and the existing settlement and landscape patterns rather than ignore them.

PAN 68 – Design Statements

PAN 68 outlines good practice in preparing Design Statements and the extent of supporting information and analysis that will inform and shape the design process.

“A design statement should explain and illustrate the design principles and design concept of the proposed layout; landscape; scale; and mix; details and materials; and maintenance. It should show, as briefly as necessary, how these will help to achieve the qualities in Designing Places.”

PAN 72 – Housing in the Countryside

PAN 72 reinforces the approach and methodology outlined by PAN 83 and states:

“... landscapes have different capacities to accommodate development. It is therefore crucial that the proposed location and siting of new housing considers the impact on the landscape, in terms of both immediate and wider surroundings...”

The guidance goes on to state that: **“The importance of layout within a site cannot be over stated”.**

The proposal for Livingston works well within the site’s capacity and its siting is respectful to both its immediate and wider surroundings and topography.

PAN 83 - Masterplanning

The plan led system and masterplan approach is supported by government policy guidance and good planning and design practice. PAN 83 supports this approach stating that:

“In general, masterplanning is required for areas of large-scale change such as town extensions”.

PAN 83 and PAN 68 both also recognise context as a critical starting point. Development should be contained and should not be linear or sprawl or detached from the settlement edge. Good design is about providing shape and context and providing a good environment for all. Government guidance strongly supports this approach and provides that the landscape and topography should inform and contain the layout of any new development.

Working with the landscape and topography is at the heart of the proposal for Brotherton Farm, Livingston. It takes a very sensitive approach to masterplanning in a landscape setting and on the edges of rural landscape.

Planning Context

Pre-Application Community Consultation

Community Consultation

A pre-application community consultation was undertaken on the 18th of March 2014 between 2pm and 8pm. The consultation provided local residents with the opportunity to view and comment on the development proposals.

Key comments, both positive and negative, were:

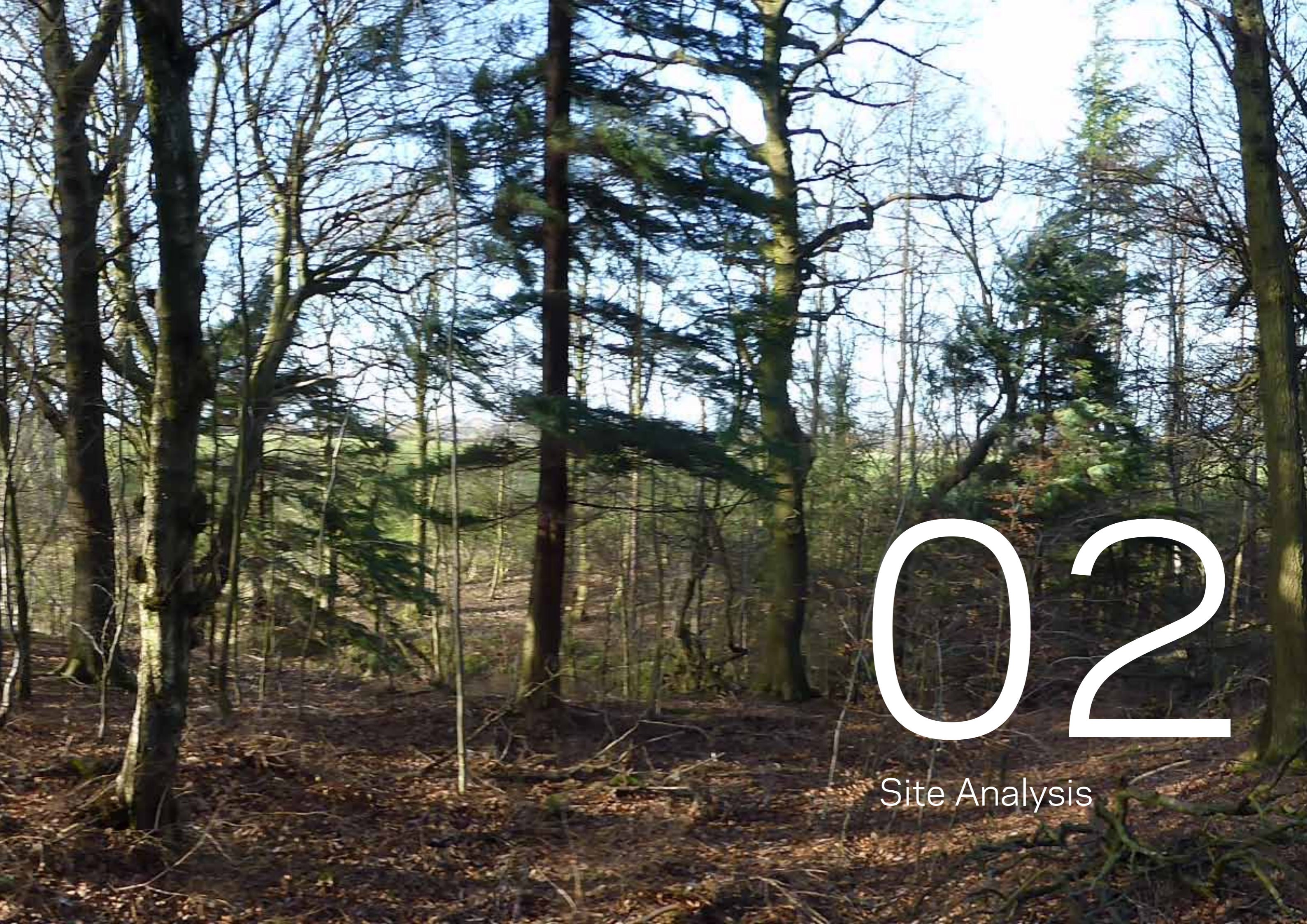
- o The location of the site means the development would not inflict significant impact onto residents.
- o There is a significant need for new homes in the Livingston area.
- o The site is within the Countryside Belt and there are other sites in the area already allocated for housing. However these sites are large and progress has been slow during the recession. A short term solution to the local housing shortage is needed
- o The inclusion of a 20m tree belt between the woodland and the development was suggested in answer to concerns about the impact of the development on the wildlife living within the woodland.
- o There is concern about the negative impact the development could have on traffic on the A71 and on routes through Bellsquarry.

The Masterplan for the development was subsequently amended in response to local residents comments and concerns raised through the community consultation. A Pre-Application Consultation Report (PAC) has been prepared by Gladman as part of this PPIP. Please refer to the report for further information.



Presentation for public consultation . Exhibition on 18th March 2014 at Bellsquarry Village Hall.





02

Site Analysis

Site Analysis

Connections

The site is well located to benefit from easy pedestrian and cycle access. All of the footways in Livingston are designated for cycle use. It is proposed that a new footway be provided through The Wilderness, to the south of Silverbirch Glade, by upgrading and extending an existing informal route.

There is also the possibility of a pedestrian connection to the Alba Business Campus to the north. These pedestrian and cycle connections demonstrate the 'Easy to Move Around and Beyond' principle identified as one of the six qualities of a successful place in SPP paragraph 46.



- Surfaced public footpaths
- Unsurfaced footways
- Proposed footpath link



Site Analysis

Public Transport

The site is located near to the A71 bus corridor, giving a total of 4 buses per hour in each direction between the site, the town centre, and various onward destinations. The proposal therefore meets the locational requirements of SPP and PAN75, and the policy principles of accessibility for guiding decisions in SPP paragraph 29.

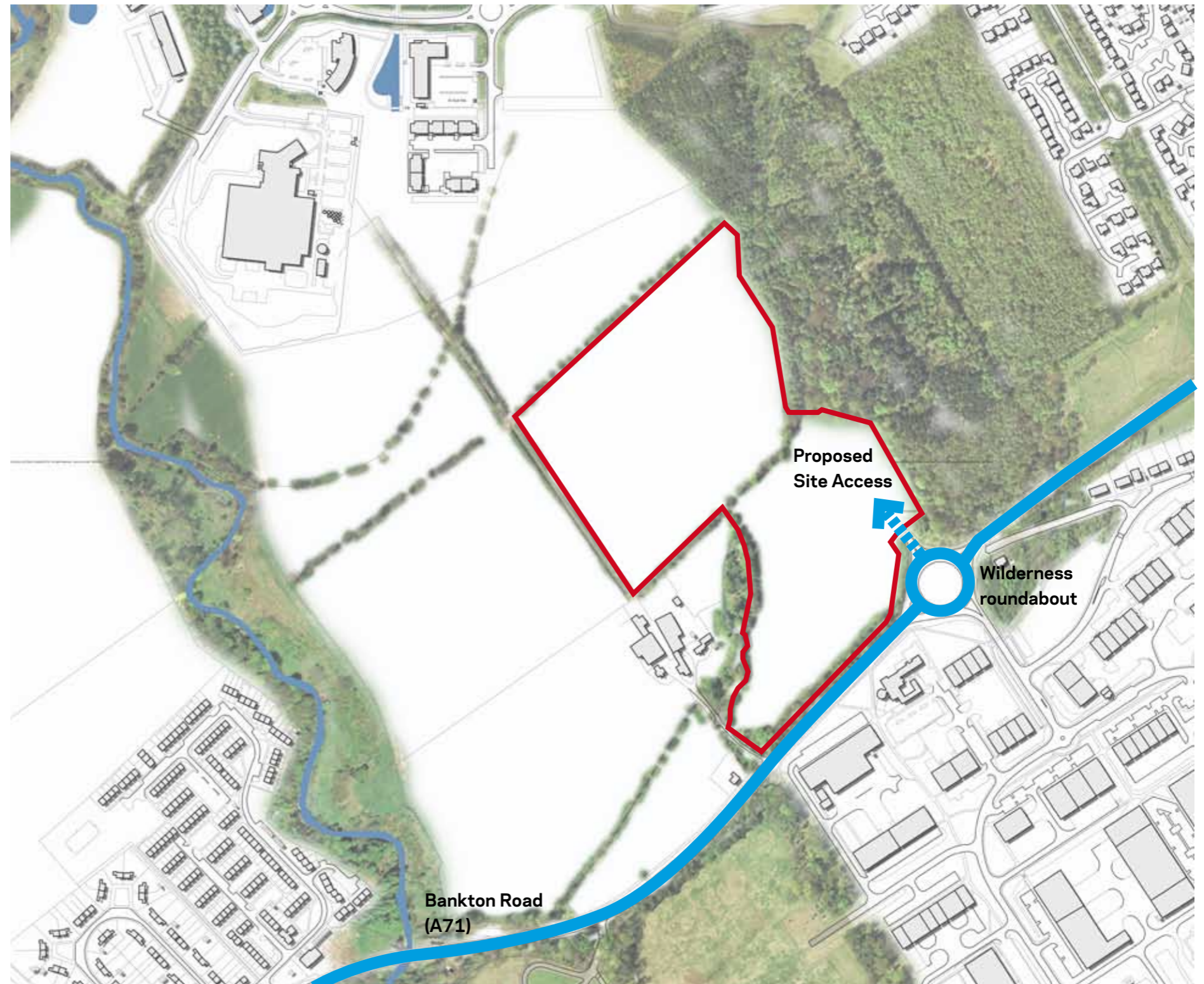
-  Bus stop
-  Bus route. Nos. 26, 36, 71, 77



Site Analysis

Vehicle Access

Vehicle access to the site will be via the existing Wilderness Roundabout spur on the A71.



Site Analysis

Landscape Character

The site occupies an edge of settlement location comprising agricultural fields, and is located within the Livingston Countryside Belt. It comprises of open agricultural fields bounded by a mix of tree belts and woodland. The combination of tree lined boundaries, woodland and the detailed topographic pattern of the site considerably restrict the visibility of the site from the surrounding area.

The site is located within the eastern section of the 'Lowland Plateau', and specifically within the 'West Lothian Plateau' Landscape Character Area (LCA). The 'Lowland Plateau' occupies much of western West Lothian and extends westwards outwith the district, comprising a gently undulating slightly elevated plateau predominantly dominated by a grassland.

The site itself comprises a simple landscape pattern of medium scale agricultural fields which extend westwards from the edge of Livingston to Polbeth and beyond. This field pattern reflects the predominant east - west grain of the undulating low ridges and shallow valleys which cross the area. Boundaries are regular and relatively geometric or slightly curving, although their existing tree lines are too fragmented to significantly reinforce and emphasise the landscape pattern of the site. This is an area with a strong contrast between the enclosing pattern of woodlands and tree lines to the south and east of the site with a more open, expansive character to the west and north.

Horner + Maclennan (h+m) landscape architects have prepared a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of the proposed development at Brotherton Farm, Livingston which has informed the masterplan. The key aspects of the assessment are incorporated within this Design Statement but please refer to the LVIA itself for more detailed information.



Grassland with strong tree lined boundary lines



Tree lined boundary along Bankton Road

Site Analysis




Topography and Key Site Features

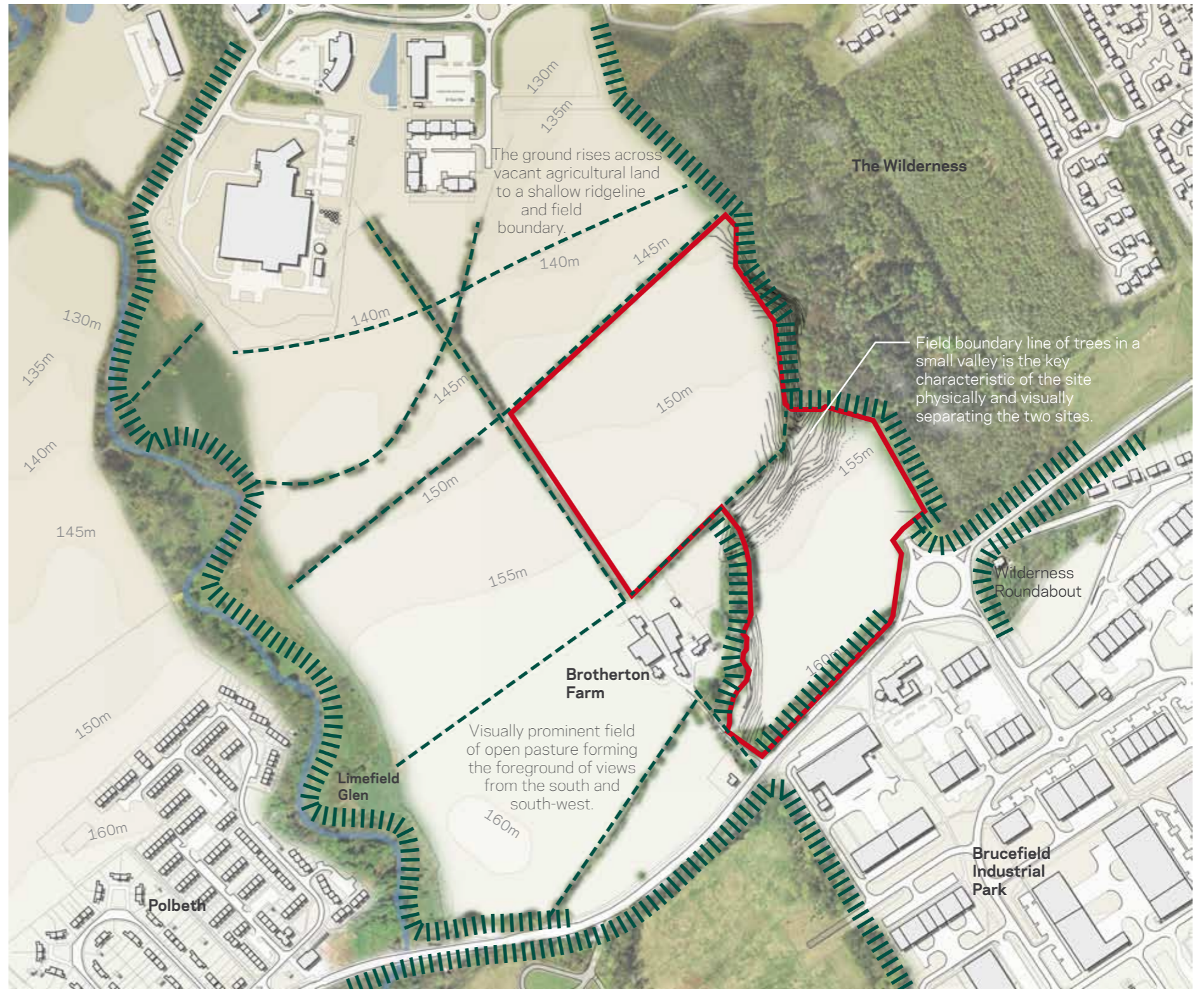
Topography

Overall, with the exception of localised features such as the east-west valley across the site and small local ridges, the site gently slopes down in a north-west direction.

Key Site Features

- o The site is generally located in an area where views to it from the surrounding area are relatively limited
- o Strong field boundary lines with lines of sporadic trees set out the structure of the landscape
- o Glenfield Glen, The Wilderness, tree belts along Bankton Road, the complex of Brotherton Farm buildings, tree belt east of Brotherton Farm and tree belt along farm access path to the north of Brotherton Farm form strong containment edges in the immediate landscape
- o Brotherton Farm is a cluster of residential and agricultural buildings, set within a tree group which assists in masking its overall extent and scale

-  Site boundary
-  Field boundary line with trees and hedgerows
-  A strong containment edge formed by trees



Site Analysis

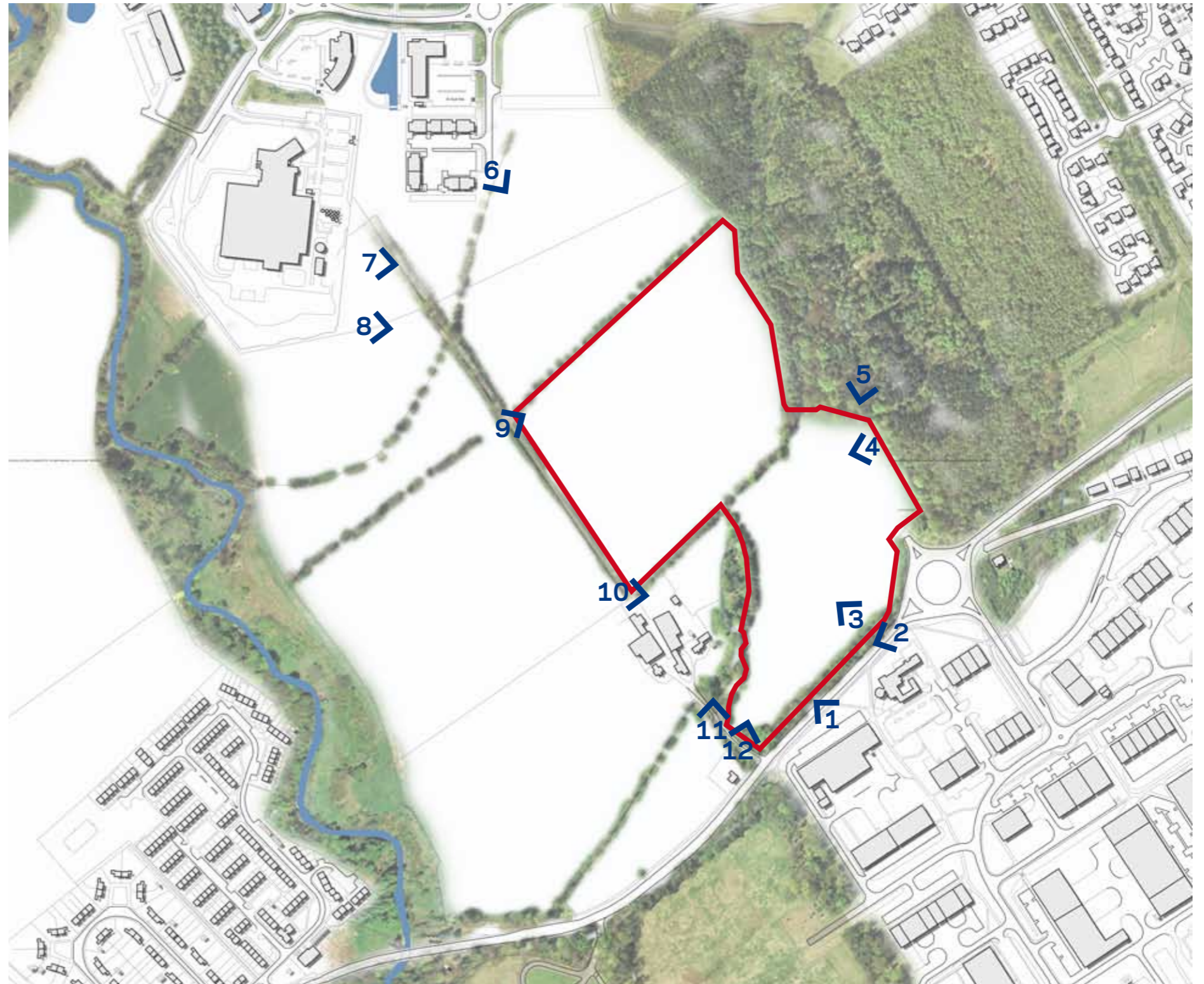
Site Views and Visual Enclosure

Key Views

Views of the site are largely mitigated by landscape and topography features:

- o North - Views from Kirkton Campus and the north are largely mitigated by topography, tucking the site behind a local ridgeline.
- o South/southwest - Views are broken up by trees and vegetation along Bankton Road (A71).
- o East - The site is not visible from the east due to thick screening of The Wilderness.
- o West/southwest - Views from the west both from Bankton Road (A71) road and from Polbeth are screened by Limefield Glen and trees in the area around Brohterton Farm.

The views identified on the plan are illustrated on the following pages.



Site Analysis

Key Views and Visual Enclosure



View 1: View from Bankton Road through tree belt to proposed site beyond



View 2: View south-west along Bankton Road with site on the right.



View 3: View north-west over site to Brotherton Farm, tree belt and fence line Topography sloping away northwards.



View 4: Small valley with trees along the fence line in the centre of site.



View 5: View through The Wilderness trees onto the proposed site.



View 6: View from Kirkton Campus toward proposed site.



View 7: View of campus, adjacent field, edge of site and The Wilderness in background.



View 8: View towards The Wilderness. Localised dip and steep topography hide proposed site from views.



View 9: View north-east along proposed site fence line.



View 10: Brotherton Farm building and treebelt screening proposed site beyond.



View 11: Brotherton Farm house sheltered by tree belt.



View 12: View over proposed site from its southernmost corner.

Site Analysis

Surrounding Areas Typology and Density



The following analysis of surrounding residential developments indicates the density of development in the vicinity of the site.



1. Langside Crescent, Polbeth

Density: 17.8 dwellings per Hectare
 Plot sizes: 200 - 1100 m sq
 Dwelling sizes: 45 - 63 m sq in footprint (2 storeys)

2. Langside Gardens, Polbeth

Density: 33.3 dwellings per Hectare
 Plot sizes: 120 - 140 m sq
 Dwelling sizes: 42 - 58 m sq in footprint (1-2 storeys)



3. Cypres Glade, Livingston Village

Density: 16.4 dwellings per Hectare
 Plot sizes: 340 -520 m sq
 Dwellings: 88 - 133 m sq in footprint (2 storeys)

4. Saltscoats Gardens, Bellsquarry

Density: 11.4 dwellings per Hectare
 Plot sizes: 350 m sq - 1300 m sq
 Dwelling sizes: 148 - 180 m sq in footprint (2 storeys)