

WLC REF: MIRQ0151

West Lothian Council Planning Department  
Consultation on Main Issues Report

I am writing to express my opinions to answer selected questions that have been asked in the Main Issues Report that effect the planning for new housing around the Linlithgow area.

I think the vision set out in this document is admirable and that most of the conclusions it draws are justifiable. In particular I support the idea of prioritising development of brownfield site over greenfield sites (section 2.6) but I acknowledge that to provide the housing necessary for the probable increase in population green field sites may have to be considered too.

In relation to point 3.80 e.g. should the current area of restraint continue, I think there are a number of issues that need to be considered, all of which are mentioned in the MIR. As mentioned before it is of course preferable to develop brown field sites before green land and in particular it should follow that no developments are considered on the green land around surrounding Linlithgow before brown field sites are developed (currently there is a brown filed site EOI-0062 which has not been developed closer to town than the green field sites EOI-0210 and EOI-0114). In my opinion it should be a priority to develop EOI-0062 with high density and thus affordable housing e.g. flats, that would be in high demand due to their close proximity to the train station.

There are still several issues that were initially identified and resulted in the “area of constraint” which I believe are still relevant. The basic layout of the town means that a lot of traffic has to go down the main street which in itself is not a bad thing but an increase in the population may make this traffic bottle neck much worse. The placement of the new houses would make a big difference here, especially with access to the M9 as it currently is, any development to the East of Linlithgow would cause a lot more traffic to go through town to get onto the M9 going West. This is cause for concern as most of the large propose new development areas are to the East. I believe that it would be a mistake to develop these areas before the infrastructure can be improved by at least creating a new junction onto the M9 heading West from the East side of town thus decreasing congestion.

The other issue that concerns me is the solution to the Secondary School capacity for Linlithgow. Whereas the new school on Winchburgh will help the area generally I would not support a position where the children from the new developments, or anywhere else in Linlithgow, have to travel to a different town to attend school if this is what is being proposed.

In response to Question 29 “should the area of restraint be removed” my wife and I are in disagreement. She would like the area of restraint retained – favouring keeping prime agricultural land unchanged (although she’s very supportive of developing brownfield sites). I agree that the brownfield site EOI-0062 should be built upon, but we’re not clear whether this would require a lifting of the area of restraint. However I would also support the lifting of the area of restraint in general to a limited extent - I strongly believe that the large areas of green land should only be released after the remaining concerns about travel infrastructure and schooling are resolved. I therefore support the idea of sequential release of land.

I believe that the development of EOI-0114 and EOI-0210 are a poor choices as this encroaches onto land that has been deemed a Candidate for Special Landscape Area (cSLA), by the West Lothian Local Landscape Designation Review (June 2013). Indeed I am surprised that this area isn’t included in the cSLA area – being some beautiful agricultural land that people can enjoy as they walk along the canal.

In response to question 31 "should land continue to be safeguarded for development of the M9 slip road", yes I think the development of this slip road is essential to any development plan but no I would not promote development just to justify the slip road!

In summary I am in support of limited development that is supported by the necessary investment in infrastructure and schooling. I would appreciate it if you could respond to my comments to let me know they have been considered.

One point in particular that I would like a response to is why there is block of houses (including mine) in EOI-0114 which is shaded grey as if they are also part of the area that is proposed to be developed?

Yours sincerely,

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