

HolderPlanning

Town Planning and Development Consultants

Development Planning
West Lothian Council
County Buildings
High Street
Linlithgow
EH49 7EZ

17th October 2014

Our ref: EWPI/011
Your ref: WLLDP - MIR

Dear Sir,

**WEST Lothian LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – MAIN ISSUES REPORT
SUBMISSION ON BEHALF OF EWP INVESTMENTS LTD – LAND SOUTH OF ARMADALE**

Please find enclosed representations made on behalf of EWP Investments Ltd in response to the Main Issues Report consultation.

The representations relate to land South of Armadale and seek the site's allocation for residential-led mixed use development within the Proposed Local Development Plan. The following documents have been provided:

- Site Specific Representation (HolderPlanning – October 2014)
- Development Framework (EMA - October 2014)
- Housing Land & Supply Assessment (HolderPlanning – October 2014)

The site in question was previously brought to the attention of the Council during the 'Expression of Interest' exercise undertaken in 2011.

Our submission on Housing Land & Supply indicates that there do not appear to be a sufficient number of 'Preferred Sites' for housing identified within the Main Issues Report to meet the Housing Supply Target in the two periods identified by SESplan i.e. 2009 – 2019 and 2019 – 2024. Furthermore, the plan will fail to maintain a five years' effective land supply at any time.

Accordingly, a substantial number of additional effective housing sites need to be allocated to reflect the terms and requirements of SESplan and Scottish Planning Policy.

The accompanying Development Framework and Site Specific Representation, demonstrate the land South of Armadale's suitability for development. The proposed site is effective, offering capacity for around of 815 new homes and 7.68 ha of business/employment land set within an appropriate location offering good landscape fit and the potential to create robust and

defensible boundaries. The site is accessible by a range of transport modes and located within walking distance of local services. Overall, Development of the site would represent a sustainable and natural extension to the existing settlement.

EWP Investments Ltd notes the terms of the questions posed by the Main Issues Report. Of particular relevance to this submission are the following:

Question 15 Do you agree with the Preferred Strategy for Housing Growth in West Lothian?

Question 18 Do you have another alternative strategy?

Question 19 How can the council maintain an effective five year housing land supply given the current economic climate?

The combined terms of our submission effectively provide the EWP Investments Ltd response to the above questions. These can be summarised as follows

Question 15

EWP does not agree with the Preferred Strategy for Housing Growth in West Lothian. Whilst the broad intention of providing circa 15% additional houses over and above the base supply is noted, for the reasons presented within our Housing Land and Supply Paper the Preferred Strategy fails to address the requirements of SESplan and Scottish Planning Policy both in terms of meeting the partitioned Housing Supply Target and ensuring the maintenance of an effective five years' housing land supply.

As a result, there is a pressing need to revisit and increase the number of 'new' housing sites for which allocations are required.

Question 18

EWP does not propose an alternative strategy to that proposed by the Main Issues Report. Rather, the existing preferred strategy needs to be reconsidered and amended to include a substantial number of additional effective housing sites to ensure the requirements of SESplan and Scottish Planning Policy are appropriately addressed.

Question 19

In order to maintain an effective five year housing land supply the Council needs to review its current over-reliance on the delivery of housing from known 'constrained' sites. Additional, effective, housing sites will be required if an effective five year housing land supply is to be maintained.

In light of the above, EWP considers there to be a clear justification and context for the identification of their land South of Armadale as a 'Preferred New' development site within the Proposed Local Development Plan, suitable for mixed use development including 815 homes and 7.68 ha of business/employment land.

We trust that the terms of this representation are clear and would be happy to discuss any aspect in greater detail with West Lothian Council.

Yours faithfully,



Callum Fraser
Director

HolderPlanning

West Lothian Local Development Plan Main Issues Report

On behalf of

**EWP Investments Ltd
Land South of Armadale**

HOUSING SUPPLY AND DEMAND

16th October 2014

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report considers issues relating to housing supply and demand and the adequacy of the West Lothian LDP Main Issues Report in addressing the requirements of SESplan, its related Supplementary Guidance and Scottish Planning Policy.
- 1.2 As described below, the content of the MIR is not consistent with any of these, and therefore should not be progressed in its current form.

2. SESplan and Supplementary Guidance (SG)

- 2.1 SESplan is the Strategic Development Plan (SDP), which was approved in 2013. Policy 5 (Housing Land) explains that for the period from 2009 up to 2024, there is a requirement for sufficient housing land to be allocated so as to enable 107,545 houses to be built in the SESplan area. Moreover, it indicates that the requirement for the period 2009 to 2019 is for 74,835 houses. It then goes on to say that:

“Supplementary Guidance will be prepared to provide detailed further information for Local Development Plans as to how much of that requirement should be met in each of those six areas, both in the period 2009 – 2019 and in the period 2019 to 2024”

- 2.2 In contradiction of this, analysis of MIR and supporting background paper on Housing indicates that West Lothian Council has effectively brought together the requirements for 2009 – 2019 and 2019 – 2024 into a single requirement of 18,010 for 2009 – 2024. A similar approach has recently also been adopted by City of Edinburgh Council within Proposed LDP2.
 - 2.3 There is no basis to combine the two periods in this manner and, on this basis alone, the MIR is not consistent with SESplan Policy 5, the text of which was introduced by way of a modification by the Scottish Ministers to ensure that housing need and demand was met within the appropriate timescales.
 - 2.4 The MIR and Housing Background Paper misinterpret SESplan Policy 5. The two partitions identified in SESplan Policy 5 relate to meeting the housing requirement in those two periods, as identified in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment.
 - 2.5 Moreover, as explained below, the bringing together of these requirements has the effect of constraining the delivery of housing by not providing enough land in the first period to allow the housing requirement to be met.
 - 2.6 Table 3.1 of the Supplementary Guidance identifies West Lothian’s housing requirement as 11,420 for 2009 – 2019 and 6,590 for 2019 – 2024. In accordance with SESplan Policy 5, sufficient housing land needs to be allocated within the West Lothian LDP to enable these numbers of houses to be built in each period. As explained in detail below, the MIR is deficient in this regard.
 - 2.7 It is notable that the Scottish Government and an Appeal Reporter have recently addressed this matter of interpretation.
-

2.8 Firstly, the Scottish Government involved themselves in the context of the Supplementary Guidance. In this regard it was notable that the SESplan Authority's Proposed SG contained the following sentence in paragraph 3.13.

“Member authorities will base their calculation of the five year land supply on the period 2009 – 2024, taking into consideration housing completions”

2.9 On the 18 June, the Scottish Ministers issued a direction requiring this sentence to be deleted the final sentence of their letter stating:

“While it may be considered to provide useful further information or detail, the inclusion of this also gives rise to a potential inconsistency between SESplan itself and the supplementary guidance. Ministers therefore consider that to avoid such inconsistency, to ensure compliance with the legislation and to avoid potential further delays in the process, that the relevant sentence be removed.”

2.10 The SG has now been approved with this modification.

2.11 Secondly, a recent appeal decision (PPA-230-2124) on a proposal for housing in Ratho reached the following conclusion in respect to interpretation of SESplan Policy 5:

“Paragraph 24 -I agree with the appellant about the basis for calculating the annual average and thus the 5 year requirement. Policy 5 of SESplan clearly states in the last sentence of the first paragraph that the requirement for each council area should be met for each of the two periods. To roll them together, resulting in a much lower average requirement for the first period, would be contrary to this intention.”

2.12 SESplan Policy 6 (Housing Land Flexibility) requires West Lothian Council to maintain a five year land supply at all times and that the scale of this supply shall derive from the housing requirement identified through the SG.

2.13 SESplan Policy 7 (Maintaining a Five Year Land Supply) indicates that sites for greenfield housing development proposals either within or outwith the identified SDAs may be allocated in LDPs to maintain a 5-year housing land supply. The SDAs are identified in Policy 1A of SESplan and development principles are identified in Policy 1B. West Lothian is identified as a single SDA.

2.14 Thus, the combination SESplan policies referred to above requires land to be allocated in the West Lothian LDP sufficient to allow enough houses to be built to meet the housing requirements identified in Table 3.1 of the Supplementary Guidance. Below we explain why the MIR does not comply with this requirement.

3. West Lothian Local Development Plan: Main Issues Report (August 2014)

3.1 Paragraphs 3.37 – 3.47 of the MIR identify the above noted SESplan policies and their terms, before presenting the housing requirements of the SESplan Supplementary Guidance within Figure 11. Figure 11 correctly identifies West Lothian’s partitioned housing requirements i.e. 11,420 homes in the period 2009 – 2019 and 6,590 homes in the period 2019 – 2024. Paragraph 3.48 then states

“The housing land requirement set out in Figure 11 will require to be translated into site allocations in the LDP”

3.2 If this were the case, then we would have no objection. However, the information contained within the MIR and associated Appendices is not sufficient to verify this statement and, based upon our own analysis, we conclude that the List of Preferred Housing Site (Appendix 3) would fail to meet this objective.

3.3 The remainder of paragraph 3.48 – 3.50 provides brief commentary on West Lothian’s established housing supply, concluding that *“much of the housing requirements over the LDP plan period will therefore already be met through land allocations made in the West Lothian Local Plan”*. Paragraph 3.51 sets out the intention to allocate a number of new sites to *“augment the supply”* and *“ensure that a wider choice of housing is available, that a generous supply of housing land is provided and an effective five years housing land supply can be made available at all times”*. Appendices 1-4 set out the preferred housing allocations and suggested alternative sites, together with proposed phasing.

3.4 Paragraph 3.52 identifies the requirements of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) that local authorities provide a generous housing land supply to meet housing needs across all tenures and to maintain at all times a five year effective supply of housing. Also the need to allocate land on a range of sites which are effective or capable of becoming effective to meet the housing land requirement up to year 10 from the predicted year of plan adoption, ensuring a minimum of 5 years effective land supply at all times.

3.5 The MIR notes at paragraph 3.53 that *“to achieve a five year effective supply at all times may result in more sites being required to be identified in the LDP for development”*. Further, at paragraph 3.54 the MIR acknowledges that there may be a need to exceed the allocations currently set out in the SDP in order to achieve a sufficiently generous housing land supply and provide an effective five year supply at all times across the plan period.

3.6 Paragraphs 3.55 – 3.62 set out three scenarios to provide for housing requirements. ‘Scenario 3’ is recommended as the preferred option. Scenario 3 states:

Provide for a total of 26,347 houses which represents 3,500 houses above the base supply

3.7 It is notable that the Council’s base supply figure of 22,847 units contains 8,566 units which are identified as being ‘constrained’ – equating to 37% of base supply.

3.8 As noted, neither the MIR or the Housing Background Paper contain sufficient information to determine how the LDP will allocate sufficient land capable of becoming effective and delivering

the scale of housing requirements for the periods 2009-2019 and 2019-2024 as identified by SESplan Supplementary Guidance.

3.9 Whilst Appendix 3 does contain a List of Preferred Housing Sites and Proposed Phasing this fails to take realistic account of delivery timescales, notably with respect to the 'new' housing sites. Given that the LDP is not scheduled for adoption until 2016, we can reasonably assume that little or no development will take place on these sites until 2017 at the earliest.

3.10 Neither does Appendix 3 appear to take appropriate account of the 'constrained' nature of many of the sites – 70 of which have been included within Appendix 3 and identified as producing outputs during the periods 2009-2019 and 2019-2024. It is crucial that this source of housing supply is underpinned by a robust explanation, supported by those that control the delivery of those sites. Otherwise they should not be counted. At present, therefore, there is significant uncertainty as to what assumption, if any, should be made for housing delivery from constrained sites.

3.11 In an attempt to address these key matters, we have undertaken our own assessment of Housing Land Needed to be provided for by the LDP. This is presented in the table on the following page:

Table 1 – Housing Land Needed

Setting the LDP Housing Land Supply Target	2009 – 2019	2019 - 2024	2009 - 2024
(1) Housing Land Requirement	11,420	6,590	18,010
(2) + 15% to ensure a generous supply	1,713	989	2,702
(3) LDP Housing Land Supply Target	13,133	7,579	20,712
Meeting the LDP Housing Land Supply Target			
(4) Effective Supply 2013-2019	4,336	3,227	7,563
(5) Constrained Sites coming forward	0	0	0
(6) Housing Completions 2009-2013	1,825	0	1,825
(7) Windfall	480	400	880
(8) Demolitions	-568	-100	-668
(9) Total Supply from Existing Sources	6,073	3,527	9,600
(10) LDP Housing Land Supply Target	13,133	7,579	20,712
(11) Total Supply from Existing Sources	6,073	3,527	9,600
(12) House building Target to be met through new LDP allocations	7,060	4,052	11,112
New LDP Allocations			
(13) Estimate of Total Houses Built on New LDP Allocations	912	2281	3,193
(14) Shortfall/Surplus	6,148 Shortfall	1,771 Shortfall	7,919 Shortfall

- 3.12 Table 1 disaggregates the Housing Requirement into the two periods specified in SESplan Policy 5 and the Supplementary Guidance i.e. 2009 – 2019 and 2019 – 2024.
- 3.13 Working down the table, it is straight forward to identify the starting point which is the housing requirement +15% for each of the periods (Line 3). Paragraph 116 of Scottish Planning Policy, states:
- “Within the overall housing target, plans should indicate the number of new homes to be built over the plan period. This figure should be increased by a margin of 10 to 20% to establish the housing land requirement, in order to ensure that a generous supply of housing is provided. The exact extent of the margin will depend on local circumstances, but a robust explanation for it should be provided in the plan”.*
- 3.14 We have therefore adopted a generosity margin figure of 15% for current purposes.
- 3.15 The second part of the table deals with the existing potential sources of housing supply. The first component of this is the effective supply. The figure for 2009-2019 has been calculated from Housing Land Audit 2013 and excludes the ‘new’ sites within the MIR. The figure for 2019-2024 reflects the information contained with the SESplan SG Technical Note and MIR Housing Background Paper (Line 4). Clearly, this figure requires to be updated but unfortunately the Council MIR documentation does not do this.
- 3.16 Line 5 contains an estimate for the delivery of constrained sites. Given that the MIR and Housing Background Paper, upon our analysis, does not provide a robust explanation, supported by those that control the delivery of those sites, regarding likely development output we have concluded that constrained sites should not be counted on within Table 1.
- 3.17 Line 6 identifies total completions for the period 2009-2013 sourced directly from the Housing Background Paper which takes account of Housing Land Audit 2013.
- 3.18 Line 7 contains an assumption for the delivery of Windfall sites, but this is not justified by any evidence as required SESplan Policy 5. Notwithstanding this position we have utilised the Council’s figure of 880 homes from windfall sources during the period 2009 to 2024, which is the amount that was identified within the SESplan SG Technical Note)
- 3.19 Line 8 contains details of demolitions. We have taken these figures from the SESplan SG Technical Note and MIR Housing Background Paper.
- 3.20 Line 9 calculates the Total Supply from Existing Sources i.e. Effective Supply + Constrained + Windfall + Completions – Demolitions.
- 3.21 The second part of the table concludes by subtracting the existing housing supply sources from the LDP Housing Supply Targets (Line 12).
- 3.22 The third part of the table addresses the new LDP allocations. As noted, MIR Appendix 3 contains a List of Preferred Housing Sites and Proposed Phasing however this fails to take realistic account of delivery timescales with respect to the ‘new’ housing sites. Appendix 3 appears to be, very optimistically, assuming that new sites will deliver significant housing numbers in the period 2014-2019.

- 3.23 Given that the LDP is not scheduled for adoption until 2016, we can reasonably assume that little development will take place on these 'new' sites until 2017 at the earliest given the associated timescale to secure planning permission, and this assumes that planning applications relating to new sites are granted permission before the LDP is adopted.
- 3.24 Appendix 3 estimates that 3,193 units will be delivered by these new sites by 2024 – which is a 7 year period from 2017. Specifically, Appendix 3 assumes delivery of 2010 units (2014-19) and 1183 units (2019-2024). As an estimate it might therefore be reasonable to assume that 2/7 of 3,193 will be built in the period to 2019 (i.e. 912) which is the figure we have used at Line 13 in the 2009 – 2019 column. The remaining 2,281 units have been programmed across the 2019 – 2024 period. This is a rough calculation, and it is essential that the Council, in preparing the Proposed LDP, make as accurate an assessment as possible of the delivery programme of new sites.
- 3.25 Line 14 subtracts the estimate of total houses built on new LDP allocation (Line 13) from the House Building Target to be met through new LDP allocations (Line 12) to determine whether an overall shortfall or surplus exists.
- 3.26 This demonstrates that within the period 2009 – 2024 there is a significant shortfall in the number of houses that are likely to be delivered as an outcome of the MIR strategy. In the first period there is a shortfall of 6,148 homes to be precise (Line 14). Within the period 2019 – 2024, there is a shortfall of 1,771 houses. It should be noted that this shortfall in the second period is in addition to the shortfall in the first period. Therefore, overall, by the end of 2024 there will be a total deficit of 7,919 houses.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The MIR is not consistent with SESplan and its Supplementary Guidance, or Scottish Planning Policy in respect to meeting housing land requirements. A substantial number of additional effective housing sites need to be allocated, and various sections of the MIR need to be rewritten to properly reflect the terms and requirements of SESplan and SPP. Additional analysis is also required to substantiate the basis for assumptions on supply flexibility and housing delivery from constrained sites.



ema
architects + masterplanners



SOUTHDALE, ARMADALE

SUBMISSION TO WEST LOTHIAN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN MAIN ISSUES REPORT

EWP INVESTMENTS

OCTOBER 2014

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
- 1.2 CONTEXT

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- 2.3 THE COMMUNITY
- 2.4 OPPORTUNITIES

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- 3.1 CONCEPT
- 3.2 LANDSCAPE
- 3.3 MOVEMENT

4.0 CONCLUSION



"It is fantastic to see the incredible amount of work that has gone in to regenerate what was previously a heavily mined area into such a successful commercial and residential development. Testament to this success is the number families and businesses who have, and are looking, to locate there." Fiona Hyslop, MSP for Linlithgow.

Existing Lochan





Armadale Station

1.1 : EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document has been prepared in support of our representation for this site and its inclusion within the emerging Local Development Plan (LDP) in respect of land south of Armadale, West Lothian.

The Main Issues Report document (August 2014) identifies the land as being "not preferred" for residential / mixed use development.

The purpose of this submission is to support the inclusion of the site into the emerging LDP, and to propose that the extent of the site be adjusted to better reflect defensible boundaries which are evident in the landscape setting of the site.

The document will illustrate the context and character of the site, together with any constraints and opportunities, and will present indicative development proposals which can be achieved without detriment to the character and setting of the town.

Author: ema architects + masterplanners



Aerial showing proposed site

One of Scotland's largest regeneration projects, this £400m development occupying over 440 acres will create up to 4,500 permanent jobs when complete.



Existing Lochan

EXPLORE



SHOP

ASDA



LEARN

Armadale Academy



The Goth



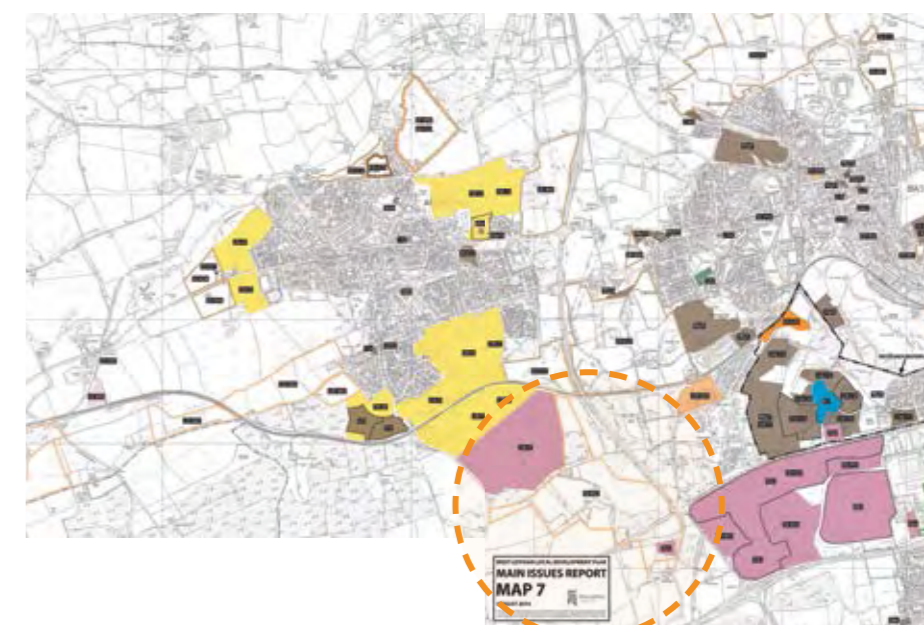
Arnold Clark Car Garage

1.2 : SOUTHDALE, ARMADALE

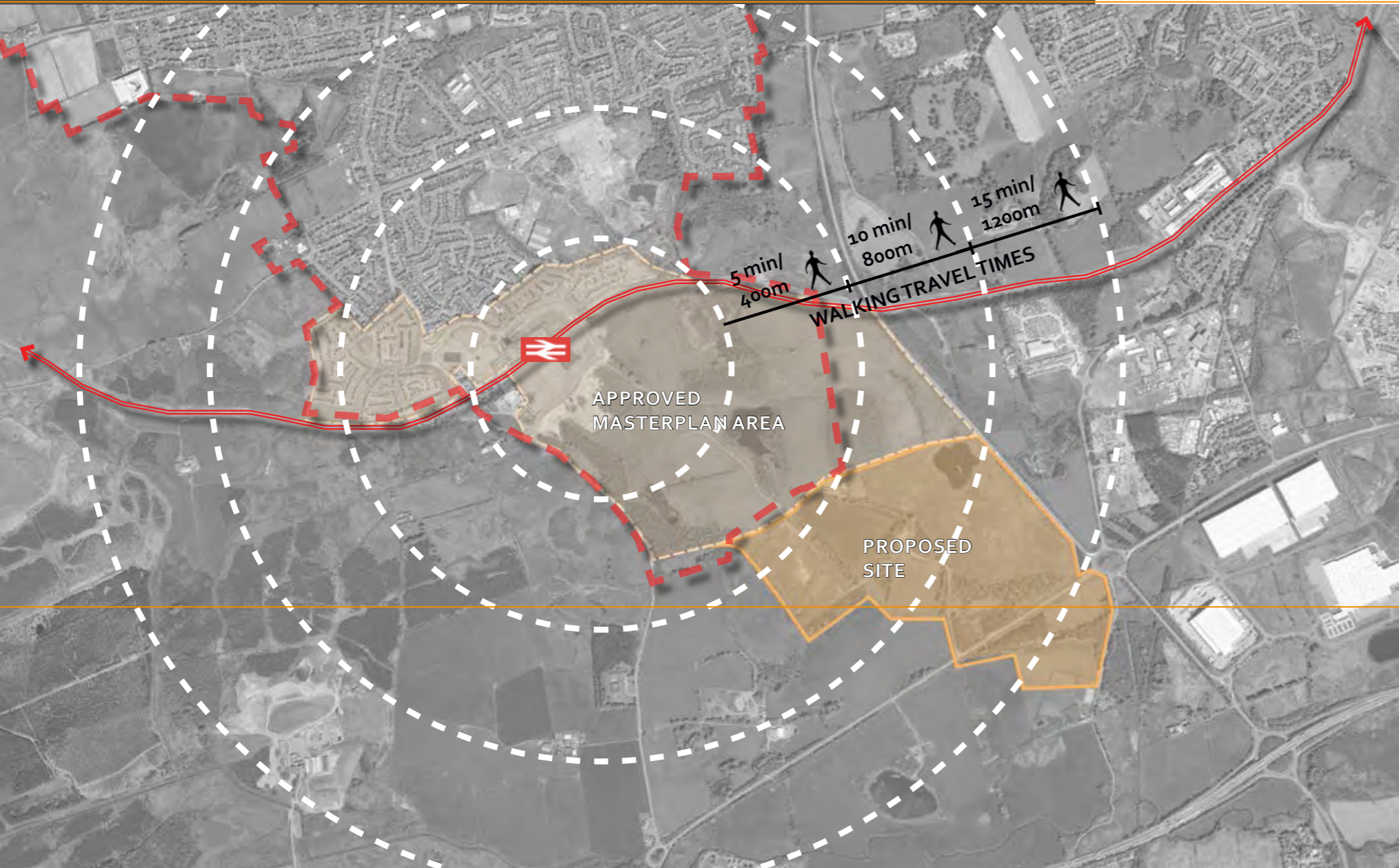
Southdale is one of Scotland's largest and fastest growing regeneration projects. The land forms a major part of the Armadale south CDA allocated for development in the West Lothian Local Plan in 2009. It is a southern extension to the town of Armadale in West Lothian, almost equidistant between Edinburgh and Glasgow, this £400m mixed-use development offers considerable opportunities for both residential and commercial developers.

The vision for Southdale, which is being developed by EWP Investments Ltd, is of a thriving community fully integrated into Armadale and offering new homes, new schools, shops, cafés and restaurants, leisure facilities, local jobs, convenient road, rail and cycle links, as well as a wide range of other amenities. Land has also been set aside for a variety of employment uses.

Southdale could eventually encompass over 440 acres with easy access to the M8, A801 and Armadale Railway Station. Subject to undermining and opencast mining, due to historic mining activity, the site is being brought into productive use through extensive remediation.



Extract from MIR document illustrating the Council's preferred sites (brown) and sites not supported (outlined areas)



2.1 : THE SITE

The proposed expansion of the Armadale south CDA will be within a 15 minute walk of the emerging local centre at the heart of the approved masterplan.

The site also commands excellent views over the West Lothian countryside, with parks, tree-lined avenues and new walkways around the lochans, all incorporated into the Southdale masterplan / expansion.

It's masterplan design connects homes: to the new primary school, to parks, to shops and restaurants, to transport links and to other services.

Southdale is designed to be a community, it is an ideal place to live, work and play with excellent access.

63% of Scotland's population and 54% of businesses are within an hour's drive of Southdale



Armadale train station



View looking back towards Armadale



Glimpse through the trees from A801 looking west over the lochan

2.2 : LANDSCAPE SETTING

The land which was mainly open cast mining in the past is contained between 3 roads: the A801 in the east, Station Road in the west and the A706 in the south. The areas proposed for development are effectively invisible from these surrounding roads as a result of the topography and woodland, there is therefore no prospect of coalescence.

Some of the landscape takes the form of historic hedgerows, boundary trees and some block woodland planted at the time of the reinstatement of the open cast land. There is an opportunity to protect and enhance this woodland and to incorporate the attractive lochans to create beautiful public parks and community woodland areas.





Southdale is designed as a community where people live, work, educate their children and connect with their neighbours and friends.

The new community in Southdale is fully integrated into Armadale and once complete will deliver a wide range of excellent amenities for the area.

With community support Southdale has already delivered:

- ASDA supermarket
- Arnold Clark Citroen dealership
- 191 new houses by Bellway and Taylor Wimpey

In the next phase, with enabling works well underway, Southdale will deliver:

- A new primary school
- Marston's pub restaurant – "The Rowan Tree"
- Private nursery run by childcare operator, Wee Gems
- 170 new houses under construction by Bellway and Taylor Wimpey

Future phases within approved masterplan will deliver:

- Over 600 additional houses
- Shops, cafés, restaurants and local amenities
- Hotel, leisure facilities and public parks
- Business and other employment uses
- Potential new health centre



1. The site is located within walking distance of the new station, supermarket and proposed primary school, thus providing a range of jobs / services within a sustainable location.
2. The new development will be located on the southern edge of Armadale adjacent to the approved masterplan. The site will be well served by the necessary utilities required to implement the original consent and we foresee no issues with servicing the proposed site. Any future development will be fully compliant with national guidance and latest technical standards on carbon reduction.
3. The site is seen as a natural extension to the southern edge of Armadale contained within the existing road network. The areas proposed for development are effectively invisible from these surrounding roads as a result of the topography and woodland, there is therefore no prospect of coalescence. It is not considered to be a particularly conspicuous location.
4. Development of the site will provide greater access to the countryside, maximising connections, footpath links and access to important landscape features such as the lochans.
5. The area is of poor agricultural land having previously been an open cast mine. The development will facilitate the potential remediation of the ground thus improving its structure and visual quality.
6. The site is separated from Bathgate by the A801. This will be further reinforced by woodland planting and by the retention of the open space on the east of the A801 as open countryside. There is no real issue with coalescence.
7. The proximity of residential and commercial properties should be encouraged providing the opportunity to walk to potential employment opportunities. This co-location can be accommodated through successful masterplanning and landscaping similar to that of the approved development around Southdale.
8. An ecological assessment of the site will be carried out in accordance with local authority guidance and any mitigating measures proposed. This exercise was successfully carried out for the approved Armadale Masterplan.
9. There are no significant issues with flooding. The ground investigation will recommend any remediation required due to potential mine workings on the site.
10. The site has the potential to deliver circa 800 new homes and approximately 8 hectares of employment land.

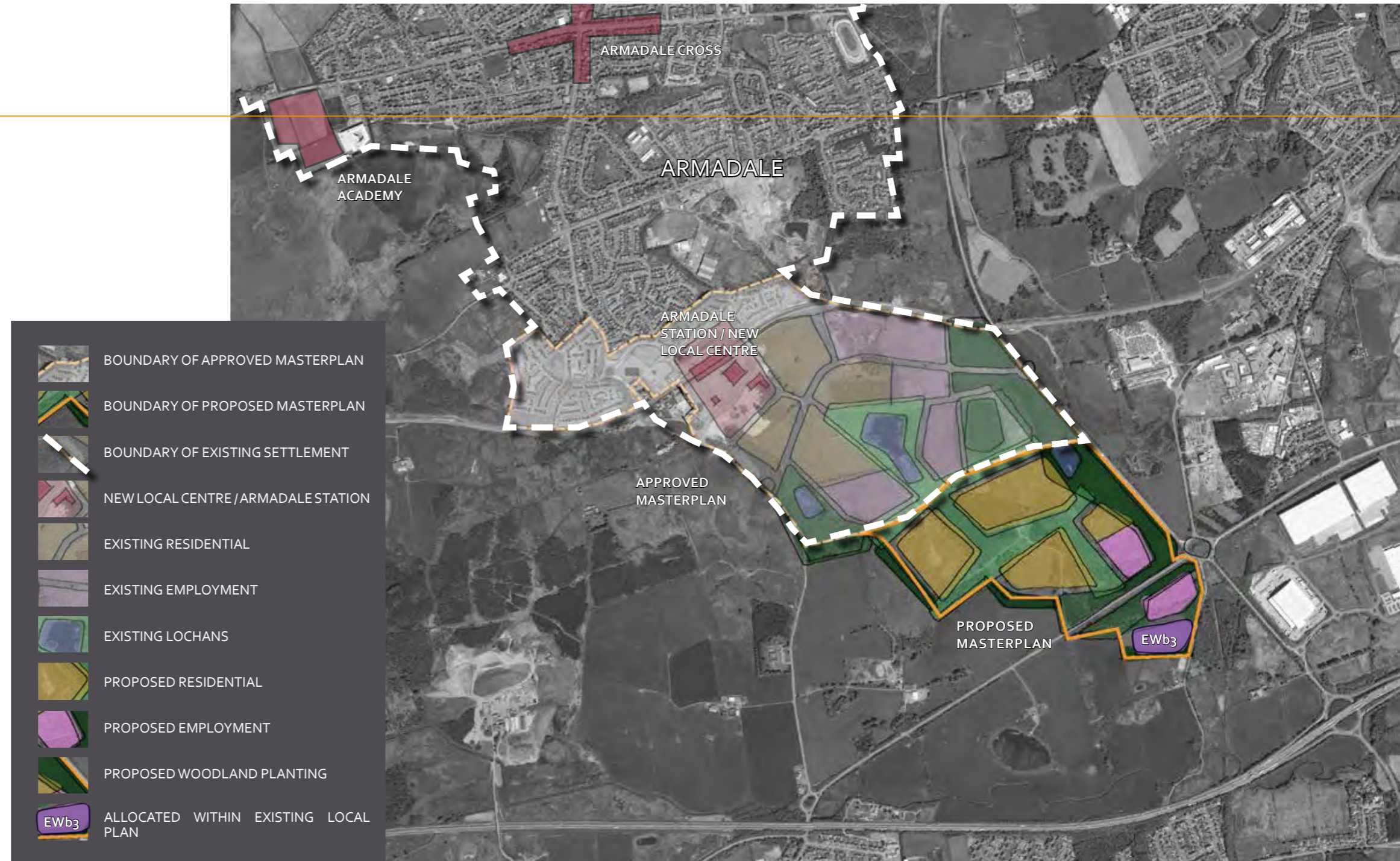


3.1 : CONCEPT

The concept of the new neighbourhood aims to build upon the success of Southdale and bring investment, jobs and housing to an area which has the necessary infrastructure and is already suited to this type of development.

The concept aims to:

1. Create a new neighbourhood in a sustainable location within walking distance of a new primary school, train station, national cycle route and existing local amenities.
2. Reinforce the countryside belt between Armadale and Bathgate by improving the landscape setting with new and reinforced community woodland and public parks.
3. Add to the existing range of uses in the approved Southdale CDA with a balanced mix of housing and employment land.



The proposals have been developed to work within and reinforce the existing landscape structure.

The landscape design seeks to:

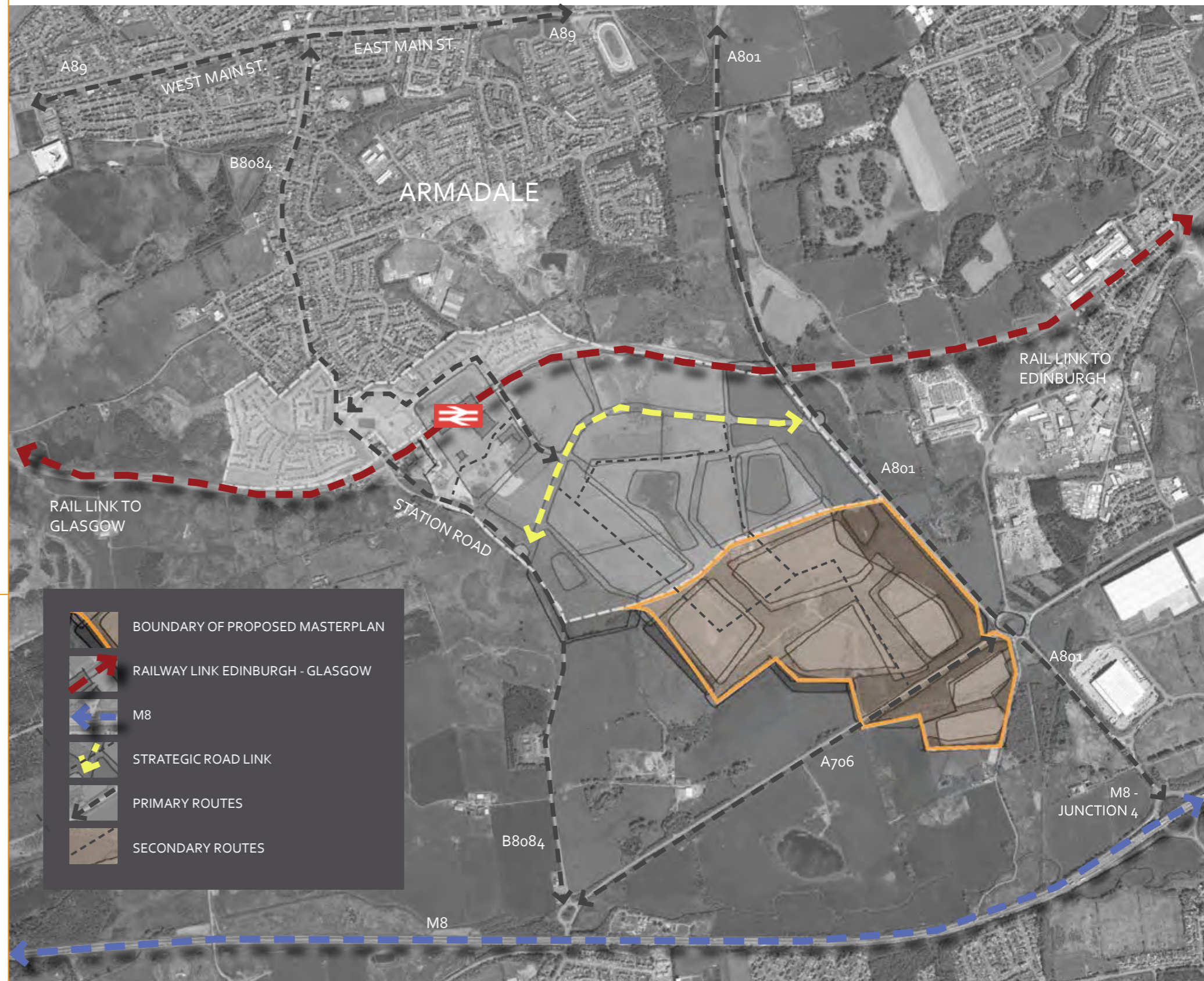
1. Extend existing landscape and create new green networks reinforcing the existing lochans towards the A706 in the south.
2. Reinforce perimeter planting on eastern boundary to form buffer to A801
3. Create public park on eastern side of A801 which will protect against coalescence with Bathgate
4. Provide new enclosing woodland planting along western boundary
5. Create east / west green corridors with improved footpath access and increasing permeability and connectivity
6. Provide the potential to improve connections to the wider footpath network and cycleways



The movement and access strategy has been developed around the existing road network and that of the already approved Southdale Masterplan.

The strategy aims to:

1. Create a new mixed use development in a sustainable location with good access to the M8 and local public transport networks providing connection to Glasgow and Edinburgh
2. Make new road connections between the approved strategic road link for the south of Armadale from Station Road to the A801 and A706 to the south, there by improving access options to the south of Armadale
3. Take primary access from the approved strategic road link from Station Road to the A801
4. Create a network of secondary streets providing access to proposed development pockets
5. Provide a network of footpaths through the new neighbourhood maximising connection to the surrounding area, train station, national cycle route and wider footpath network



This site represents an excellent opportunity to provide much needed family housing in a sustainable location next to a station, primary school and local centre within an area already suited to this type of development.

The character of Armadale will be preserved and the settlement will sit in an improved landscape setting with new community woodlands and parks. The development could be described as expansion to the already approved masterplan and established residential pockets.

Existing views to and from the existing settlement of Armadale would be preserved and enhanced.

The development of the site provides the opportunity for further investment in the community of Armadale, which is already seen the benefit of the 2009 West Lothian Local Plan allocation.





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EWP
INVESTMENTS

West Lothian Local Development Plan Main Issues Report

On behalf of

**EWP Investments Ltd
Land South of Armadale**

SITE SPECIFIC REPRESENTATION

16th October 2014

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The following submission has been prepared on behalf of EWP Investments Ltd in response to the West Lothian Local Development Plan Main Issues Report (MIR).
- 1.2 EWP Investments Ltd is the lead developer of the existing 'Armadale South' mixed use development within the Armadale Core Development Area. Known as 'Southdale', the Armadale South development is one of Scotland's largest and fastest growing regeneration projects which, upon completion, will create a thriving community fully integrated into Armadale and comprising new homes, schools, retail and leisure facilities, and employment land.
- 1.3 This submission supports the southern extension of Southdale for further residential-led mixed use development. The site extends to approximately 69 hectares and has a development capacity of 815 new homes and 7.68 ha of business/employment land.
- 1.4 It should be noted that a representation was submitted on behalf of EWP Investments Ltd in response to the 'Expression of Interest' exercise undertaken in 2011. The site was given the reference EOI-0023 and is referred to as 'Land South of Armadale' by the Main Issues Report.
- 1.5 Furthermore, EWP Investments Ltd aspiration to extend the existing CDA boundary to the south has been the subject of discussions with West Lothian Council during consideration of the existing phases of the Southdale development. The development potential of the subject site has previously been brought to the attention of, and is known to, West Lothian Council.
- 1.6 This representation should be read in conjunction with our representation on Housing Supply and Demand issues, which considers the context set by SESplan and its Supplementary Guidance in terms of the housing requirements for West Lothian and the housing supply position set out in the MIR. This concludes that there do not appear to be a sufficient number of Preferred Sites for housing within the MIR to meet the Housing Supply Target in the two periods identified by SESplan i.e. 2009 – 2019 and 2019 – 2024.
- 1.7 In our view, the proposed southern extension of Southdale is well placed to assist in meeting this shortfall. Development of the site would represent a natural extension to the southern edge of Armadale and would be contained within the existing road network, improving the housing mix in the town and providing wider planning gain and regeneration benefits.
- 1.8 The accompanying Development Framework document, prepared by EMA, has been produced to illustrate the proposals and the justification that supports this location as a logical expansion area for Armadale.

2. SESplan

- 2.1 Scottish Ministers approved SESplan with modifications on the 23rd June 2013. As a result, SESplan (as modified) constitutes the strategic development plan for the South East Scotland Strategic Development Plan Area and sets the context for the emerging West Lothian Local Development Plan.
- 2.2 SESplan identifies the whole of West Lothian as a Strategic Development Area (SDA). As indicated in paragraphs 26 and 113 of SESplan, priority will be given to housing development on brownfield sites and land within SDAs.
- 2.3 SESplan Policy 5 (Housing Land) explains that for the period from 2009 up to 2024, there is a requirement for sufficient housing land to be allocated so as to enable 107,545 houses to be built across the SESplan area. Of that total, the requirement for the period 2009 to 2019 is for 74,835 houses. It then goes on to stipulate:

“Supplementary Guidance will be prepared to provide detailed further information for Local Development Plans as to how much of that requirement should be met in each of those six areas, both in the period 2009-2019 and in the period 2019-2024”

- 2.4 The SG preparation process is now complete. Following public consultation in late 2013, the SESplan Joint Committee approved the SG for submission to Scottish Ministers on 10 March 2014. Scottish Ministers subsequently directed SESplan to modify the document.
- 2.5 In this regard it was notable that the SESplan Authority’s Proposed SG contained the following sentence in paragraph 3.13:

"Member authorities will base their calculation of the five year land supply on the period 2009 - 2024, taking into consideration housing completions."

- 2.6 On the 18th June, the Scottish Ministers issued a direction requiring this sentence to be deleted.
- 2.7 The SESplan Joint Committee considered the matter at its meeting on 30 June 2014 and recommend to the member authorities that the guidance be adopted with this modification.
- 2.8 Table 3.1 of the SG identifies West Lothian Housing Requirement as 11,420 for 2009 – 2019 and 6,590 for 2019 – 2024. In accordance with the SG, sufficient land needs to be allocated within the West Lothian LDP to enable these numbers of houses to be built in each period.
- 2.9 SESplan Policy 6 (Housing Land Flexibility) requires West Lothian Council to maintain a five year effective housing land supply at all times, and that the scale of this supply shall derive from the housing requirement identified through the SG.

2.10 SESplan Policy 7 (Maintaining a Five Year Housing Land Supply) indicates that sites for greenfield housing development proposals either within or outwith the identified SDAs may be allocated in Local Development Plans to maintain a five years' effective housing land supply subject to satisfying the following criteria:

- a) The development will be in keeping with the character of the settlement and local area
- b) The development will not undermine green belt objective
- c) Any additional infrastructure required as a result of the development is either committed or to be funded by the developer

2.11 The combination of SESplan policies referred to above requires land to be allocated in the West Lothian Local Development Plan, sufficient to allow enough houses to be built to meet the housing requirements identified in Table 3.1 of the Supplementary Guidance and to maintain a five years effective housing land supply at all times.

3. The West Lothian Main Issues Report

3.1 The MIR identifies 'Preferred Sites' and 'Reasonable Alternative' Sites for housing. Our understanding is that this consideration has been based largely upon the Council's 2011 request for 'Expressions of Interest' from landowners and developers to indicate the availability of specific sites for development. As indicated above, EWP Investments Ltd responded to this request and made West Lothian Council aware of the development potential of their Land at South Armadale.

3.2 Paragraphs 3.37 – 3.47 of the Main Issues Report (MIR) identified the SESplan policies and their terms, before presenting the housing requirements of the SESplan Supplementary Guidance within Figure 11. Figure 11 correctly identifies West Lothian's partitioned housing requirements i.e. 11,420 homes in the period 2009-2019 and 6,590 homes in the period 2019-2024. Paragraph 3.48 then states:

"The housing land requirement set out in Figure 11 will require to be translated into site allocations in the LDP"

3.3 Contrary to this, our analysis of the MIR and supporting background paper on Housing indicates that West Lothian Council has effectively brought together the requirements for 2009-2019 and 2019 – 2024 into a single requirement of 18,010 for 2009 – 2024. There is no basis to combine the two periods in this manner and, on this basis alone, the MIR is not consistent with SESplan Policy 5.

3.4 The MIR's strategy for meeting housing land requirements relies primarily on existing land allocations made in the West Lothian Local Plan being augmented by a number of new sites.

3.5 In this respect, the MIR's preferred Housing Land Option for the LDP is to *"plan for a total of 26,347 houses which represents 3,500 houses above the base supply"*. However, it is notable that the Council's 'base supply' figure of 22,847 units contains 8,566 units which are identified as being 'constrained' – equating to 37% of base supply.

3.6 It is relevant to point out that within Armadale itself, the MIR includes a number of known 'constrained' sites from which it is considered highly unlikely that development will take place during the Local Development Plan period.

3.7 With regard to the two remaining sites within the Armadale CDA to the north of the town, it is clear from the lack of activity since the adoption of the West Lothian Local Plan in January 2009 that these sites are burdened by significant constraints that have prevented their development over the past 6 years, irrespective of the recession. All of the sites are burdened with significant developer contributions, but each is also disadvantaged by its own specific constraints.

3.8 Standhill North and South (Site Refs CDA SN and CDA SS) are burdened by significant historic mineworkings and expensive road improvements on West Main Street. Ownership of the site

has changed but over the period since the adoption of the Local Plan, there has been no real interest from housebuilders. There is no planning permission for either site. The upfront costs of development (ground remediation and infrastructure), when combined with obligations for developer contributions required for sites within the Core Development Areas, mean that the site is unlikely to be developed in the foreseeable future.

3.9 Colinshiel (Site Ref: CDA CS) is the larger of the two northern sites. The site is in part in the ownership of a housebuilder, although the developer has shown no interest in moving proposals forward. Whilst there is a Minded to Grant planning permission in principle in place for some of the land, no activity has been recorded on the site since 2011. The site is known to be affected by very deep layers of peat and the value of development in Armadale does not justify the removal of the peat. The peat is below strategic parts of the site, which affect the ability to provide access. The transportation requirements include a new relief road on the northern boundary of the site, which when combined with the significant burden of CDA developer contributions, is thought to render the site economically unviable at this time.

3.10 The site at Lower Bathville (Site Ref CDA LB) situated to the north of Southdale and within the same Core Development Area, is seriously contaminated. While there is a current planning permission for 450 residential units there are doubts that it will be developed in the foreseeable future given the severe contamination issues. Current and historic site uses include an MOT test centre and timber factory, brickworks and quarry, a smithy and refuse tip, mining – underground and opencast, a steel works and engineering works, a landfill and former underground petroleum tanks. Site investigations have revealed contaminants both in the soil and groundwater; furthermore the site was used for waste disposal since c 1900 with materials such as inert brick, asbestos, ferrous scrap, rubber tyres, mineral oils and fuel oils deposited at the site.

3.11 Taken together, the above sites make provision for in excess of 1000 homes within the MIR. Each has significant question marks against their viability and delivery as a result of the issues noted.

3.12 Our detailed submission on Housing Land and Supply matters has demonstrated that the MIR's preferred strategy will result in significant shortfalls in the number of houses that are required to be delivered both in the periods 2009-19 and 2019-2024, and that the plan will fail to maintain a five years' effective land supply at any time.

3.13 Accordingly, the MIR is not consistent with SESplan and its Supplementary Guidance, or Scottish Planning Policy in respect to meeting housing land requirements. Therefore, a substantial number of additional effective housing sites need to be allocated to reflect the terms and requirements of SESplan and SPP.

3.14 The MIR recognises the development potential of Armadale, noting that *“the availability of infrastructure, strategic location, and existing facilities makes the town an attractive option for development”*. The MIR refers to *“delivery of infrastructure to support housing development, support for local employment opportunities, environmental improvements and provision of open*

space to support community growth; review settlement envelope” as the main priorities for the town.

3.15 Given this context, set against the demonstrable need for the emerging LDP to allocate a substantial number of additional effective sites to meet housing land requirement and ensure the maintenance of a five years’ effective land supply, EWP Investments Ltd consider it appropriate to review the town’s existing settlement boundary and consider additional opportunities for housing development – such as that presented by this submission.

4. Site Assessment

- 4.1 This section presents the case in favour of the allocation of land at Southdale (EOI-0023). As noted, further information is provided within the accompanying Development Framework.
- 4.2 Following assessment at the 'Expression of Interest' the site was not identified as a 'Preferred' Development Proposal within the Main Issues Report. The Council's assessment of the site is contained within Appendix 2b of the Environmental Report where the following conclusions were reached;

"The site is currently part of the countryside belt, preventing the coalescence of Armadale with Bathgate to the east and Whitburn to the west. New built development at this location would constitute an intrusive physical expansion of Armadale further southwards, well beyond the limit of development which is already provided for in the Armadale CDA by the adopted WLLP. The proposed allocation should not be supported".

Suitability for Housing

- 4.3 The site extends to approximately 69ha and primarily comprises agricultural fields and rough grassland. It lies to the immediate south of the existing South Armadale CDA site, as identified within the adopted West Lothian Local Plan.
- 4.4 The site is bound by the A801 to the east and the A706 to the south – affording the site strong physical boundaries. Agricultural land and the B8084 (Station Road) lie beyond the site's western boundary. A small part of the site is situated on the south side of the A706 adjacent to the existing roundabout at the junction of the A706/A801.
- 4.5 An indicative masterplan has been developed for the site which illustrates a possible development capacity of 815 houses and 7.68ha of business/employment land set within a landscape structure and ideally located to take advantage of the existing roads and public transport network which effectively surround the site. Access to the site is achievable from various locations on the A801 to the east and the B8084 to the west.
- 4.6 The proposal would complete the physical extent of Armadale to the south of the town, and would be developed as an extension to, and future phase of, the Southdale development which EWP Investments Ltd is actively progressing.
- 4.7 In this respect it is considered that the proposed extension to Southdale will assist in cross subsidising infrastructure requirements within existing phases of the Southdale development, providing further impetus to the regeneration of the town through housing development, with an associated increase in employment, population and local spending.
- 4.8 For example, the cost of the new distributor road from the A801 is around £3m. This alleviates traffic on Lower Bathville and facilitates other development. The cost of this requires to be supported by additional development. In the event that additional housing land is not zoned,

this may hinder development of the remaining 500 houses already consented at Southdale due to the burden of infrastructure costs.

4.9 The strategic location of South Armadale is a key benefit to the proposed new community. The site is approximately halfway between Glasgow and Edinburgh with excellent transport links to both cities via the M8. Furthermore, the site is located within walking distance of Armadale Station. This central location and excellent accessibility make Armadale a popular place to live, a fact recognised by the CDA allocation at South Armadale. The proposed extension to the Southdale development provides an opportunity for the further sustainable growth of the town, within a location that is clearly suitable for development.

4.10 Furthermore, it is notable that the low land values in Armadale dictate that the houses that are constructed are of lower value than those in other CDAs within the west of West Lothian. Extending the existing allocation at Southdale will, therefore, result in the development of additional affordable private housing.

4.11 We can confirm that the site meets the criteria contained within PAN 2/2010 for determining the 'effectiveness' of a site, as follows:

- Ownership:** The site is within the ownership of the EWP Investments Ltd.
- Physical:** There are no physical constraints to the development of the site.
- Contamination:** On the basis of available information, the site is not understood to be contaminated.
- Deficit Funding:** No public funding is required to develop housing on the site.
- Marketability:** South Armadale's highly accessible location and lower property values dictate that it is a sought after destination for house-buyers.
- Infrastructure:** The required infrastructure for housing development is available or can be made available by the developer.
- Land Use:** A residential led mixed use development is the preferred use in the context of this proposal.

4.12 As referenced at Section 2.10, SESplan Policy 7 (Maintaining a Five Year Housing Land Supply) indicates that sites for greenfield housing development proposals either within or outwith the identified SDAs may be allocated in Local Development Plans to maintain a five years' effective housing land supply subject to satisfying the following criteria:

- a) The development will be in keeping with the character of the settlement and local area
- b) The development will not undermine green belt objectives
- c) Any additional infrastructure required as a result of the development is either committed or to be funded by the developer

4.13 In our view the proposed southern expansion to the Southdale allocation conforms to the requirements of SESplan Policy 7, as described below:

The development will be in keeping with the character of the settlement and local area

4.14 The proposed development provides a logical extension to the Southdale development and would be designed as such, demonstrating clear integration and linkages with the existing settlement and reflecting the emerging settlement pattern within South Armadale.

4.15 The location of the site is notable for the number of urban influences which exist due to its close proximity to the urban edge. The settlement is already expanding in a southerly direction and the proposed allocation will continue this pattern. As the site is effectively enclosed by a combination of urban development to the north, and existing main roads to the south, east and west, in our view, it offers little merit as a landscape setting for Armadale.

4.16 The site is located below the existing skyline, while site topography and the extensive perimeter planting and boundary treatments proposed as part of the overall Development Concept will ensure that future development of the site would be only partly visible. The overall landscape resource would be significantly enhanced as a result of the creation of a public park along the site's eastern boundary, woodland plating along the western boundary and the provision of green corridors through the site.

4.17 The character of the settlement is already subject to change, and this will continue as the remaining phases of the existing Armadale South allocation are built-out. Development of the site will be complementary and in keeping with the character of the settlement, rounding off the development extent to the south of Armadale and creating a sustainable settlement pattern which ensures that even the edges of the town are within a 15 minute walk of the town centre.

The development will not undermine Green Belt Objectives

4.18 The site is not located within the Green Belt rather it is a greenfield site. As noted previously there are no environmental constraints to development taking place.

4.19 As explained above, development of the site can maintain the identity and character of Armadale. Contrary to the conclusions of the Council's Environmental Report coalescence is not an issue, the proximity of the site to Bathgate, the existing strongly defined eastern boundary (provided by the A801) and the proposed creation of a public park at this location combine to ensure that the revised settlement boundary of Armadale would be distinct and separate.

4.20 South Armadale is demonstrably an appropriate location within which to direct planned growth and further development at this location will undoubtedly support wider regeneration aspirations. The landscape setting of Armadale will be maintained by the proposed development which will also provide significantly enhanced opportunities for access to open space and the countryside

Any additional infrastructure required as a result of the development is either committed or to be funded by the developer

- 4.21 We are not aware of any infrastructure constraints that cannot be provided in accordance with this policy requirement. For example, the existing S.75 agreement associated to the existing planning permissions at Southdale obliged EWP Investments Ltd to transfer land free of charge for a 2-stream primary school (sufficient to serve 2000 houses) and land for a further extension to the school has also been set aside. Accordingly, there is no question as to the ability of an extended Southdale allocation to provide sufficient primary school capacity to serve any additional housing.
- 4.22 Further, as noted above, the proposed allocation will assist in cross subsidising infrastructure provision within existing phases of the Southdale development, providing further impetus to Armadale's planned regeneration.
- 4.23 In short, therefore, we consider that the allocation of the site for housing complies with SESplan Policy 7 which is the key determining policy.

Summary

- 4.24 The site's development would represent a sustainable expansion to the settlement of Armadale and be of a scale and form in keeping with the emerging character of the settlement and local area.
- 4.25 It is considered that the proposed southern expansion of the Southdale allocation is ideally placed to contribute to the regeneration of the town whilst playing an important role in helping to address the significant shortfall in effective housing land supply which has emerged upon analysis of the Main Issues Report.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 For the reasons presented within this submission, the accompanying Development Framework and the associated representation on Housing Supply and Demand, EWP Investments Ltd considers there to be a clear and justifiable case for an extension to the existing mixed-use allocation within South Armadale.
- 5.2 Given the need for the emerging LDP to allocate a substantial number of additional effective sites to meet housing land requirements and ensure the maintenance of a five years' effective land supply, Armadale's acknowledged attractiveness as a location for further development dictates that it is appropriate to review the village's existing settlement boundary and consider any additional opportunities for housing development.
- 5.3 As demonstrated, the proposed extension to the Southdale allocation is capable of making an important contribution towards addressing the major shortfall in the MIR's housing land supply and the site represents an appropriate location for further development in compliance with key planning policy provisions.
- 5.4 Accordingly, EWP Investments Ltd considers that their site at Southdale should be identified in the Proposed Local Development Plan as a '*Preferred New Site*' suitable for residential-led mixed use development with an indicative capacity for 815 new homes and 7.68ha of business/employment land.