

# HolderPlanning

Town Planning and Development Consultants

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West Lothian Council  
County Buildings  
High Street  
Linlithgow  
EH49 7EZ

15<sup>th</sup> October 2014

Our ref: TAYL/012  
Your ref: WLLDP - MIR

Dear Sir,

**WEST LOTHIAN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – MAIN ISSUES REPORT  
SUBMISSION ON BEHALF OF TAYLOR WIMPEY – WESTMUIR FARM, WEST CALDER**

Please find enclosed representations made on behalf of Taylor Wimpey in response to the Main Issues Report consultation.

The representations relate to land at Westmuir Farm, West Calder and seek the site's allocation for housing development within the Proposed Local Development Plan. The following documents have been provided:

- Development Framework (OPEN - October 2014)
- Housing Land & Supply Assessment (HolderPlanning – October 2014)
- Transport & Access Appraisal (Transport Planning – October 2014)

Westmuir Farm was not 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 Transport & Access Appraisal demonstrate Westmuir Farm's suitability for housing development.

The proposed site is effective, offering capacity for around 240 new homes.

Development of the site would offer an opportunity for a well-planned expansion to West Calder, in keeping with the character of the settlement and local area and capable of creating a new and robust defensible edge to the town. 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.

Taylor Wimpey 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 Taylor Wimpey's responses to the above questions, however these can be summarised as follows

**Question 15**

Taylor Wimpey 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**

Taylor Wimpey 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.

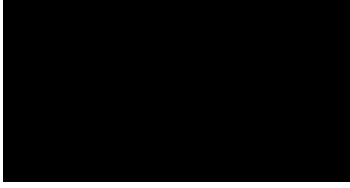
**Question 19**

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, Taylor Wimpey considers there to be a clear justification and context for the identification of Westmuir Farm as a 'Preferred New' housing sites within the Proposed Local Development Plan.

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

**Holder**Planning

# **West Lothian Local Development Plan Main Issues Report**

On behalf of

**Taylor Wimpey  
Westmuir Farm, West Calder**

## **HOUSING SUPPLY AND DEMAND**

16<sup>th</sup> 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**

| <b>Setting the LDP Housing Land Supply Target</b>                       | <b>2009 – 2019</b>     | <b>2019 - 2024</b>     | <b>2009 - 2024</b>     |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| (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                 |
| <b>Meeting the LDP Housing Land Supply Target</b>                       |                        |                        |                        |
| (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                  |
|   |                        |                        |                        |
| <b>(12) House building Target to be met through new LDP allocations</b> | <b>7,060</b>           | <b>4,052</b>           | <b>11,112</b>          |
| <b>New LDP Allocations</b>  |                        |                        |                        |
| <b>(13) Estimate of Total Houses Built on New LDP Allocations</b>       | <b>912</b>             | <b>2281</b>            | <b>3,193</b>           |
| <b>(14) Shortfall/Surplus</b>   | <b>6,148 Shortfall</b> | <b>1,771 Shortfall</b> | <b>7,919 Shortfall</b> |

- 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.



**West Lothian Local Development Plan  
Main Issues Report  
Potential for Development  
Transport and Access Appraisal Report**

**Westmuir Farm, West Calder**

**October 2014**

**Prepared for:**

Taylor Wimpey

**Prepared by:**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Background

- 1.1 Transport Planning Ltd has been appointed to advise on transport related issues associated with the potential allocation of a site for residential development at Westmuir Farm, Harburn Road to the south of West Calder.
- 1.2 The site is located to the southern edge of West Calder and it is bounded to the east by Harburn Road. The area of The Glebe lies to the north of the site and the site also extends slightly westwards towards Hartwood Road. To the west lies a site(s) fronting Hartwood Road that is also being promoted for residential development (LATE-0009/EOI-0066).



*West Calder – site outlined in red.*

- 1.3 Development on the site will likely consist of residential dwellings.
- 1.4 The site location is illustrated in Figure 1 of Appendix A.
- 1.5 The Main Issues Report (MIR) papers note when discussing West Calder *inter alia* that:-
- The availability of infrastructure, strategic location, and existing facilities make the town an attractive option for future development.
  - Blackburn and West Calder will be considered as being traditional town centres due to their size and range of facilities as opposed to local neighbourhood centres as currently identified in the WLLP.
  - Edinburgh to Glasgow rail route via Shotts is supported with sites for bus interchange and parking safeguarded at Addiewell, Kirknewton and West Calder stations.



- The settlement envelope should be reviewed.
- For the time being, there continues to be pressure on some sections of the network and particularly on urban routes through historic town centres such as Broxburn, Linlithgow, Uphall and West Calder due in part to their existing layouts and the lack of suitable alternative routes. Further development in some locations may therefore have a detrimental impact on the local road network and certain junctions, particularly at peak times unless appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.

1.6 It can be seen then that West Calder generally is accepted as a good location for development with recognition given to its place in the shopping hierarchy indicating a change in the town's scale and function (which development would help support) and onward travel links also identified as a positive benefit in the area.

### **Report content**

1.7 This short report considers the potential allocation site in terms of existing accessibility. Following this introduction the remainder of the report will consider the following:

- Existing Transport Network: describes the existing transport infrastructure in and around the potential allocation site; and
- Potential for Development on Allocation Site: provides information on the potential development area in terms of its potential links to the existing transport network and any associated transport infrastructure.

## 2. EXISTING TRANSPORT NETWORK

### Introduction

2.1 This section of the report discusses the existing transport network surrounding the potential allocation area. In line with current best practice, the accessibility of the site has been considered using the following hierarchical approach:

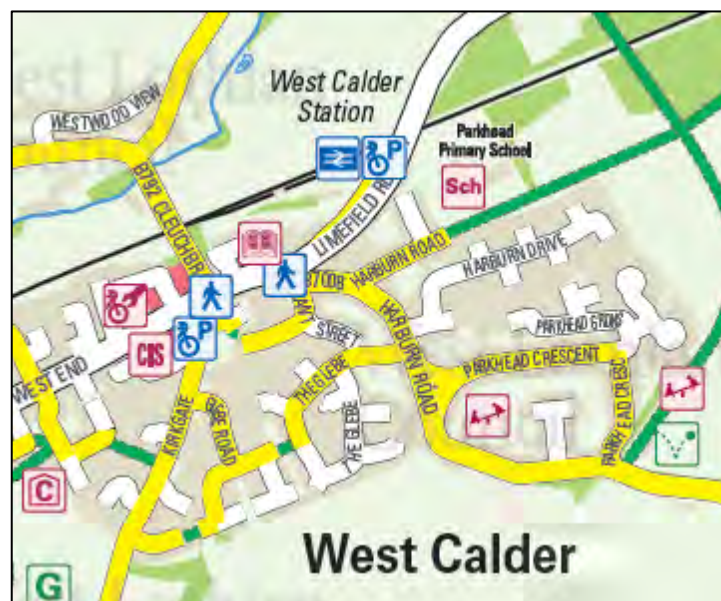
- pedestrians;
- cyclists;
- public transport; and
- private car.

### Pedestrians and cyclists

2.2 There are not currently any formal pedestrian routes within the site area although there are pedestrian routes adjacent to the east of the site on Harburn Road. These paths are typical of those found in an urban area and provide a network of connections offering onward connections northwards towards the town centre.

2.3 An existing access track lies towards the centre / west of the site. This link provides connections into the Westmuir Road / Glebe Road area and continues northwards to the town centre.

2.4 The area around the site is home to a wide network of advisory cycle routes as contained on the West Calder cycle map and illustrated in the extract below. A copy of the cycle map is contained in Appendix A.



*Extract from Local Cycle Map (identified routes in yellow - source WLC)*

- 2.5 Other routes in the town are lightly trafficked and suitable for shared use with cyclists.
- 2.6 The site is likely to lie within the catchment area of Parkhead Primary School which is located on Harburn Road within easy walking distance of the site. The existing catchment plan for Balbardie is contained in Appendix A.
- 2.7 In relation to secondary education, the site lies within the catchment of West Calder High School and again a catchment plan is attached within Appendix A.
- 2.8 It should be noted that although West Calder High School is located in Polbeth, core path 16 affords a walkable link to the school.
- 2.9 Figure 2 contained in Appendix A illustrates the connectivity of the site.

**Public transport**

***Bus services***

- 2.10 Bus stops are located on Harburn Road but the bulk of services in West Calder operate on the A71 to the north of the site and are accessible by using walking links on Harburn Road or via Glebe Road.
- 2.11 At the time of writing, these through services include First's route 26 offering 30 minute frequency connections between Fauldhouse and Livingston; Horsburgh's 36 service connecting Bathgate and Livingston on a 60 minute frequency and Blue Bus services that connect with Shotts and Lanark.



*Bus stop on Harburn Road*

**Rail services**

- 2.12 Located some 7 – 10 minutes’ walk north of the site (within 800m from the site), West Calder railway station allows rail access between Glasgow Central / Shotts and Edinburgh.
- 2.13 As noted in Section 1 of this short report, the Main Issues Report notes that “*sites for bus interchange and parking [are] safeguarded at Addiewell, Kirknewton and West Calder stations*”.

**Existing road network**

- 2.14 Harburn Road lies to the east of the site. Harburn Road lies within the urban limit at the site frontage and is subject to the 30mph limit. This changes to derestricted a short distance southeast of the site. Harburn Road is a typical two way single carriageway urban road entirely typical in its urban character. It already serves a range of residential dwellings and residential streets.
- 2.15 At its northern end, Harburn Road connects with the A71 at an existing signal set. The A71 was detrunked in the mid 1990’s but still affords a high level route connecting Irvine in the west with Edinburgh in the east.
- 2.16 The A71 also links with a wider network of strategic routes that afford connections with the central Scotland motorway network.

**Summary**

- 2.17 The site is well-situated in relation to the existing transport network. Foot / cycle paths are accessible in the locality and provide onward linkages to the facilities in the town.
- 2.18 Existing public transport services operate close to the site and these services combine to offer regular, frequent travel opportunities by bus and rail to key local destinations including Livingston, Glasgow and Edinburgh.
- 2.19 Finally, the site lies within a short travel distance of the main road network, notably the M8 which provides access to the wider network of central and southern Scotland.

### 3. POTENTIAL FOR DEVELOPMENT ON ALLOCATION SITE

#### Introduction

3.1 This section of the report provides initial comments on potential access to the development site.

#### Development access

##### *Pedestrians*

3.2 Footway provision can be made on Harburn Road along the development frontage and this can link to existing footway(s). Internal development links can connect with these footways.

3.3 Leading west, further connection for foot and cycle is available northwards towards Glebe Road.

3.4 Depending on other allocation possibilities to the west of the site area, the opportunity for connection through to Hartwood Road also exists.



*Verge on site side (left of picture) can be used to enable footway connections*



*Showing sites location (on left) within the existing urban area*

**Cyclists**

- 3.5 Cyclists will be able to utilise all of the new pedestrian accesses. Internally, cycle and foot links can be planned into the site layout.
- 3.6 Direct connectivity with the existing local cycle routes marked on the local cycle plan can be made using the connection opportunities available.

**Public transport**

- 3.7 The site is located within walking distance of bus routes and the rail station. The footway connections described above would afford connectivity with the A71 and West Calder rail station.

**Road access**

- 3.8 The site is able to be accessed from Harburn Road, most likely by way of a simple T junction.
- 3.9 Sketches TP219/SK/001 and 001A contained in Appendix A indicatively illustrate two simple T junction locations provided either as a crossroads with Parkhead Crescent or as a separate, stand alone, T junction.
- 3.10 Either of these options would afford access to the site within the existing urban limit and with appropriate visibility available.

- 3.11 Again depending on other allocation possibilities to the west of the site area, the opportunity for connection through to Hartwood Road also exists.

**Harburn Road / A71 signals**

- 3.12 As noted in section 1, the Main Issues Report (Transport Appraisal and Modelling Report) notes that *“For the time being, there continues to be pressure on some sections of the network and particularly on urban routes through historic town centres such as Broxburn, Linlithgow, Uphall and West Calder due in part to their existing layouts and the lack of suitable alternative routes. Further development in some locations may therefore have a detrimental impact on the local road network and certain junctions, particularly at peak times unless appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.”*
- 3.13 The signal controlled junction at the A71 / Harburn Road experiences some peak time delay and development of the site at Harburn Road [in passing it is noted that the sites appraised in the Transport Appraisal and Modelling Report in the area of the site subject of this report received high accessibility scores] would afford an opportunity to achieve some improvement at this junction.
- 3.14 In particular, the implementation of Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation could be implemented here and the signal linking between this set and that at Cleuchbrae optimised to achieve better performance outcomes.

## **4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **Summary**

- 4.1 Transport Planning Ltd was appointed to advise on transport related issues associated with the potential allocation of a site for residential development to the south of West Calder, West Lothian.
- 4.2 The site is accessible by a range of transport modes and located within walking distance of local services.
- 4.3 The development proposal will contain opportunities to link the internal network of the site to existing pedestrian, cycle and public transport networks.
- 4.4 Vehicular access can be taken to the site from Harburn Road.

### **Conclusion**

- 4.5 This report has assessed the transport issues surrounding the proposed development and it is concluded that there are no transport / accessibility reasons why the site, which is a straightforward addition to the existing fabric of the town, should not be allocated for residential development.



## APPENDIX A

Site location plan

Cycle map

School catchment plan (primary)

School catchment plan (secondary)

Accessibility plan

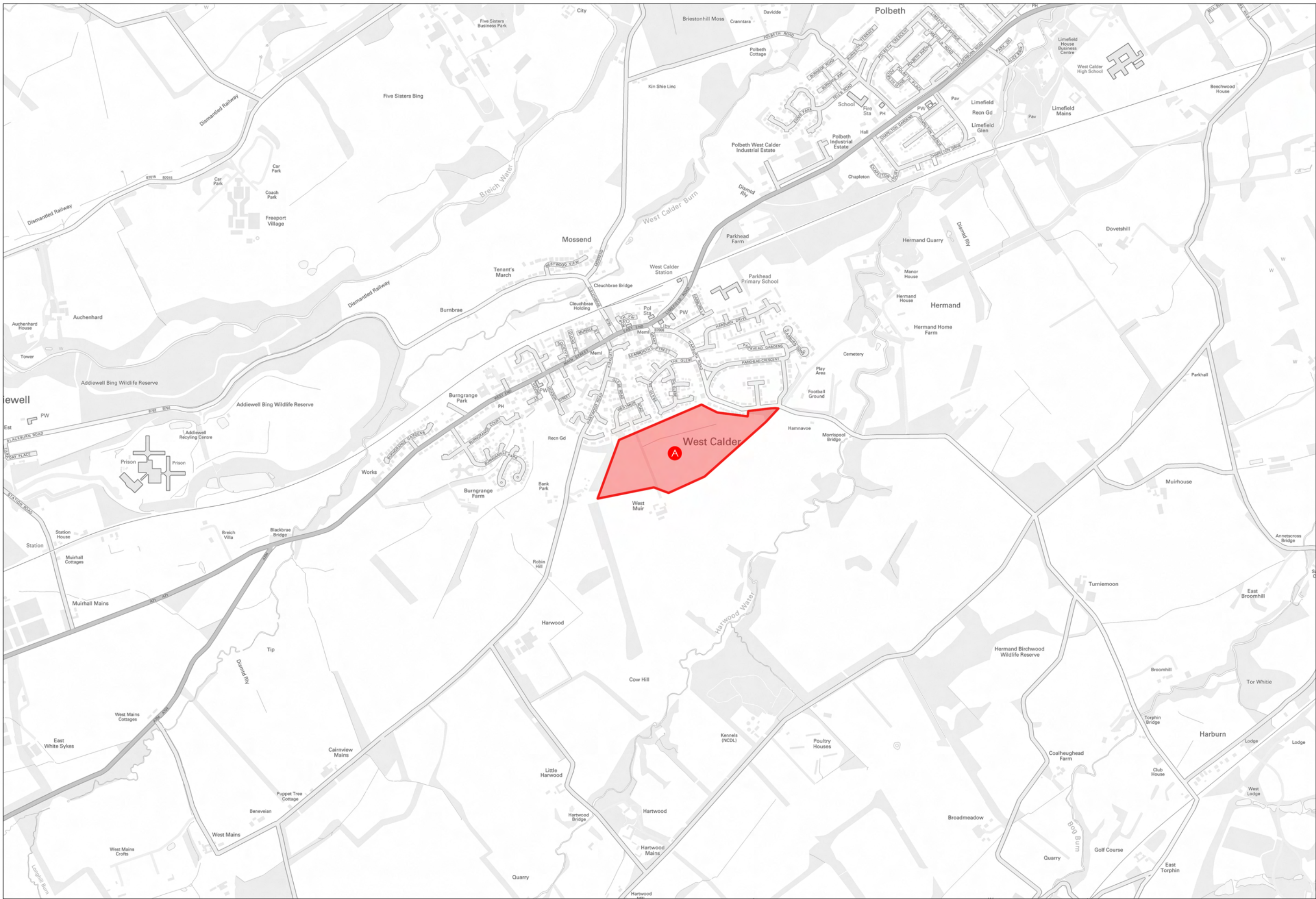
Sketches SK001 and 001A

**Westmuir Farm,  
West Calder**

Site Location Plan

**Key**

 Site of Proposed Development



Westmuir Farm, West Calder

Taylor Wimpey

Site Location Plan

Drawing Number:  
TP219 Figure 1

Scale:  
NTS @ A3

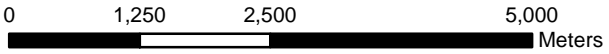
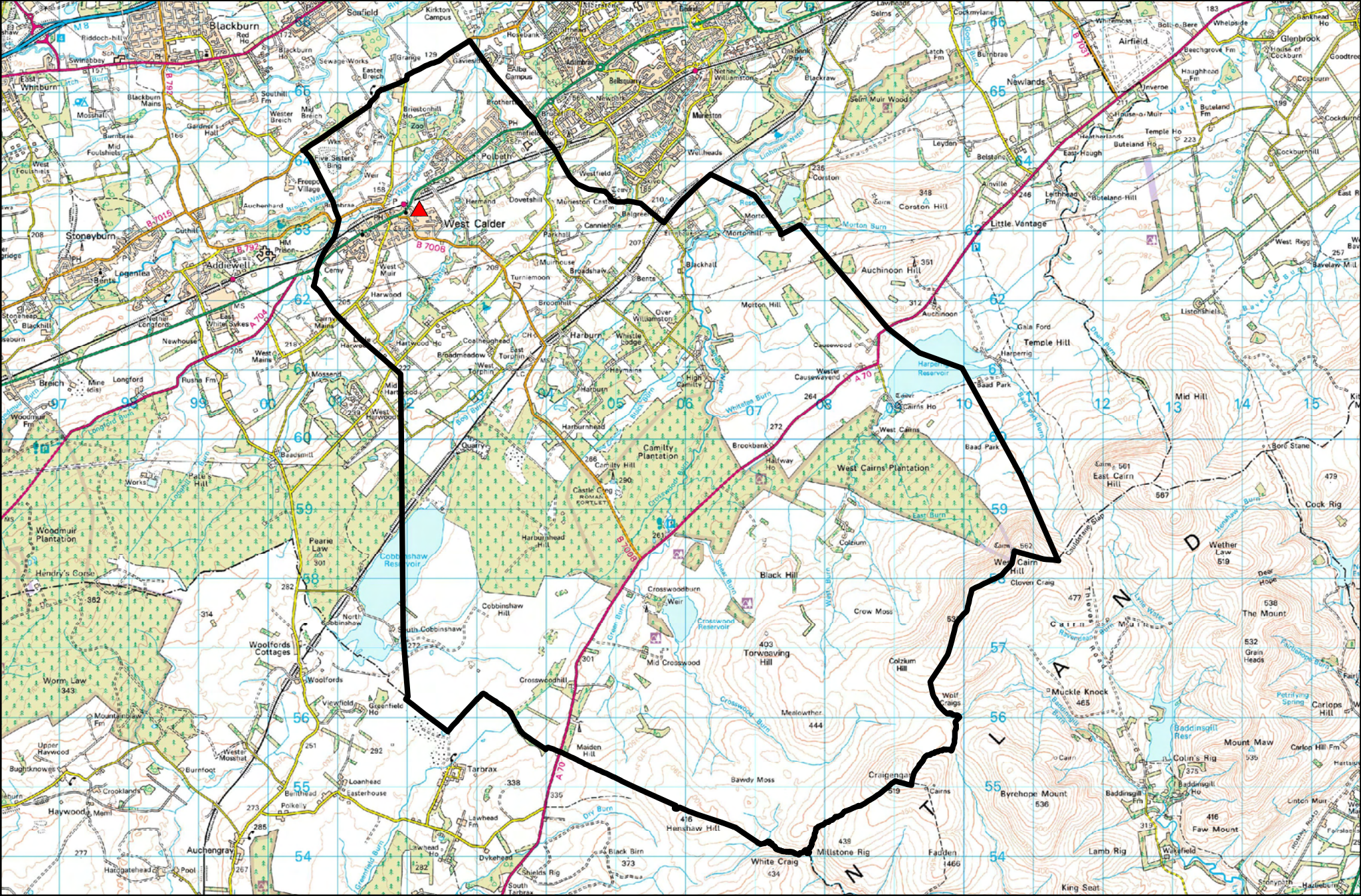
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Date:  
Oct 2014

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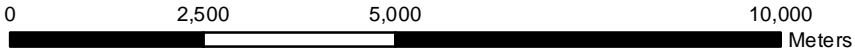
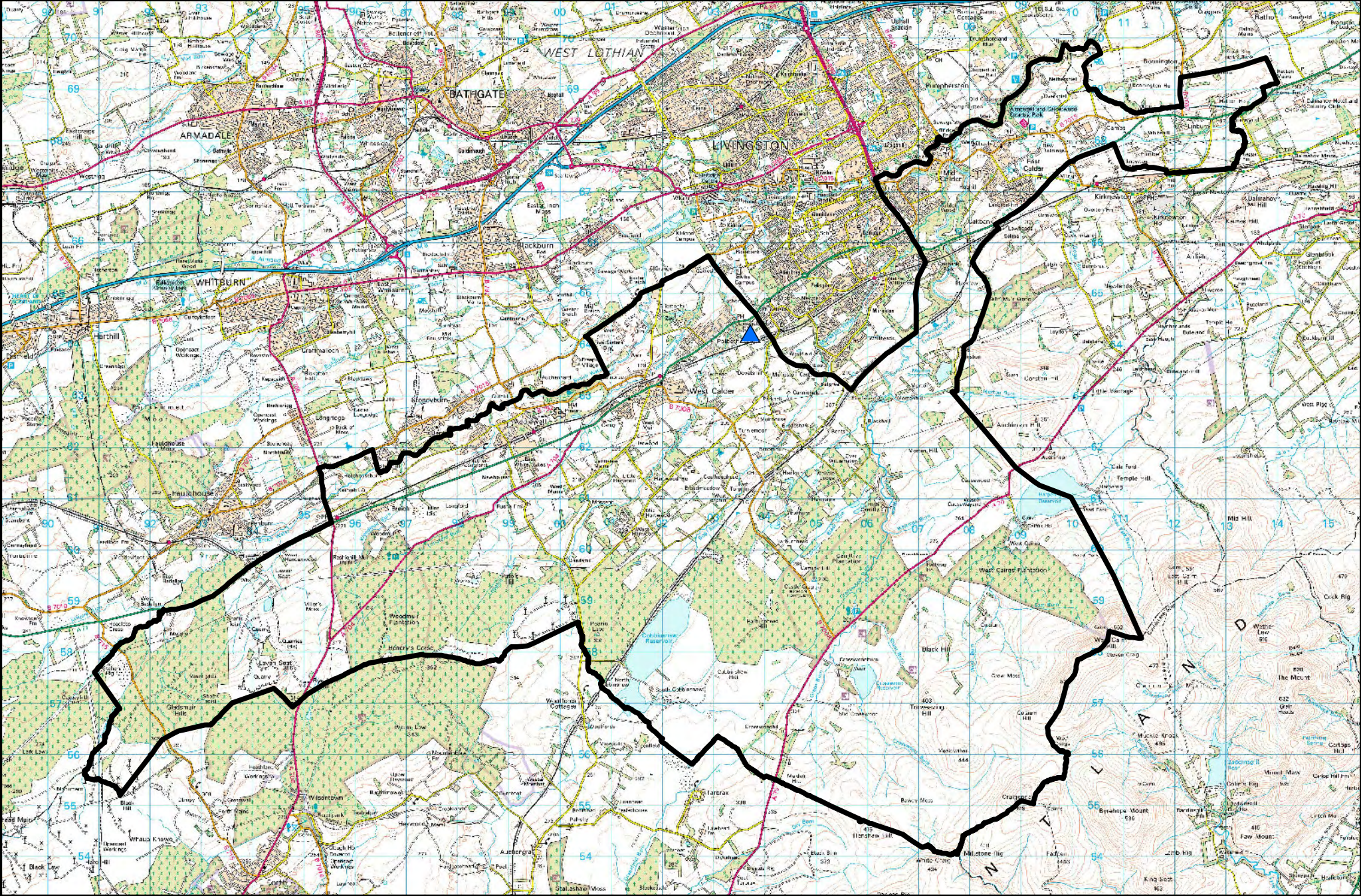
**Parkhead Primary School  
Catchment Area**

**Legend**

- ▲ primary school
- Catchment area

PAndI 06/09/12

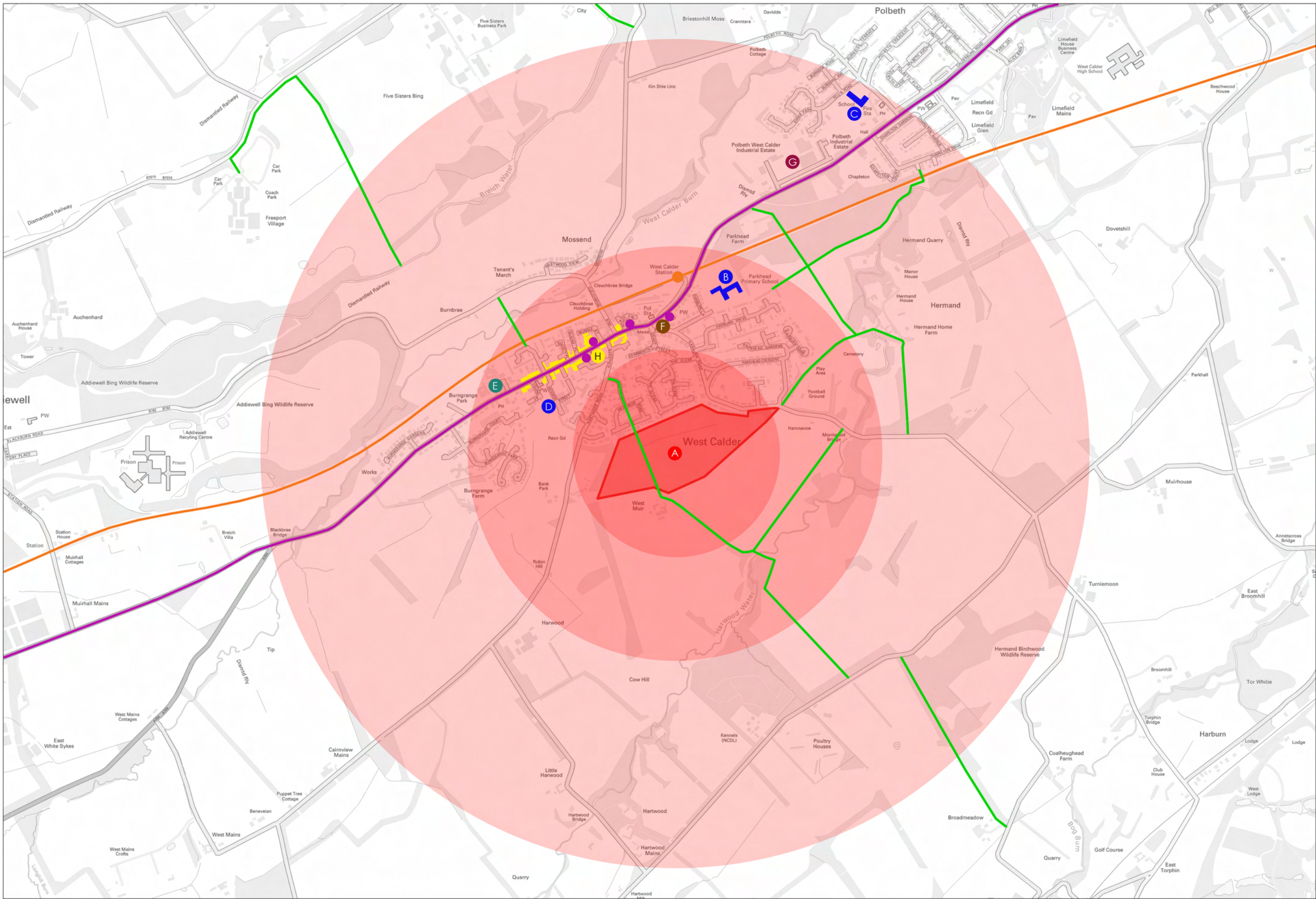




**West Calder High School  
Catchment Area**

- Legend**
- secondary school
  - Catchment area





**Westmuir Farm, West Calder**

Accessibility Plan

Key

- A Site of Proposed Development
- B Parkhead Primary School
- C St Mary's RC Primary School
- D West Calder Community Education Centre
- E West Calder Medical Centre
- F West Calder Library
- G Polbeth West Calder Industrial Estate
- H Local Shops
- Core Path
- Bus Route/Stop
- Railway Line/Station
- 400m Isochrone from Site
- 800m Isochrone from Site
- 1600m Isochrone from Site



Westmuir Farm, West Calder

Taylor Wimpey

Accessibility Plan

Drawing Number:  
TP219 Figure 2

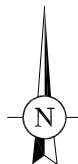
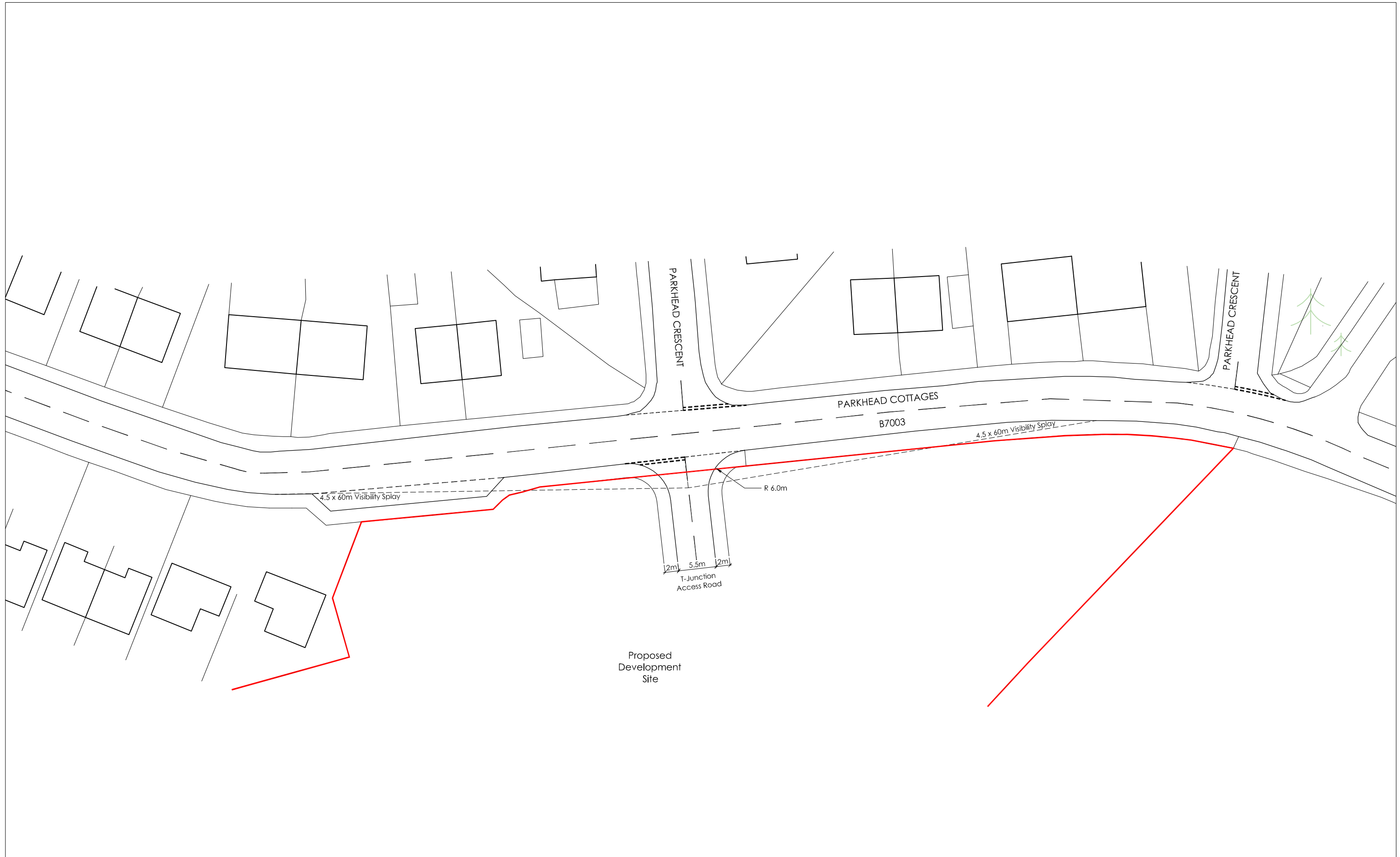
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Westmuir Farm, West Calder

Taylor Wimpey

Site Access Option

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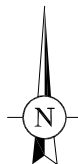
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Proposed  
Development  
Site



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Westmuir Farm, West Calder

Site Access Option

Taylor Wimpey

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1:500 @ A3

Date:  
Oct 2014

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# Representation to West Lothian MIR

Westmuir, West Calder

October 2014

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# 1. Introduction



Fig. 1: Location

## 1.1 Description

This document concerns the promotion of land to the south of West Calder, part of Westmuir Farm. The proposed development boundary is contiguous with the southern settlement edge, the site has a core path running through it and is not within a protected landscape.

The site size, identified by the red line on the adjacent plan, is approximately 13.35 Ha (32.98 acres) with an estimated capacity of around 240 new homes. However additional land is available to the south and south east along Harburn Road should the Council consider an alternative southern boundary to be more appropriate.

## 1.2 This Submission

This land is being promoted by Taylor Wimpey, and professional advice on developing the site has been given by Holder Planning on planning matters, Transport Planning on accessibility and by OPEN on masterplanning and landscape architecture.

This document seeks to offer an introduction to the site, setting out the opportunities in terms of being an effective site, close to the existing infrastructure, and being well-located for the future sustainable, radial growth of West Calder.

# 2.Planning Context

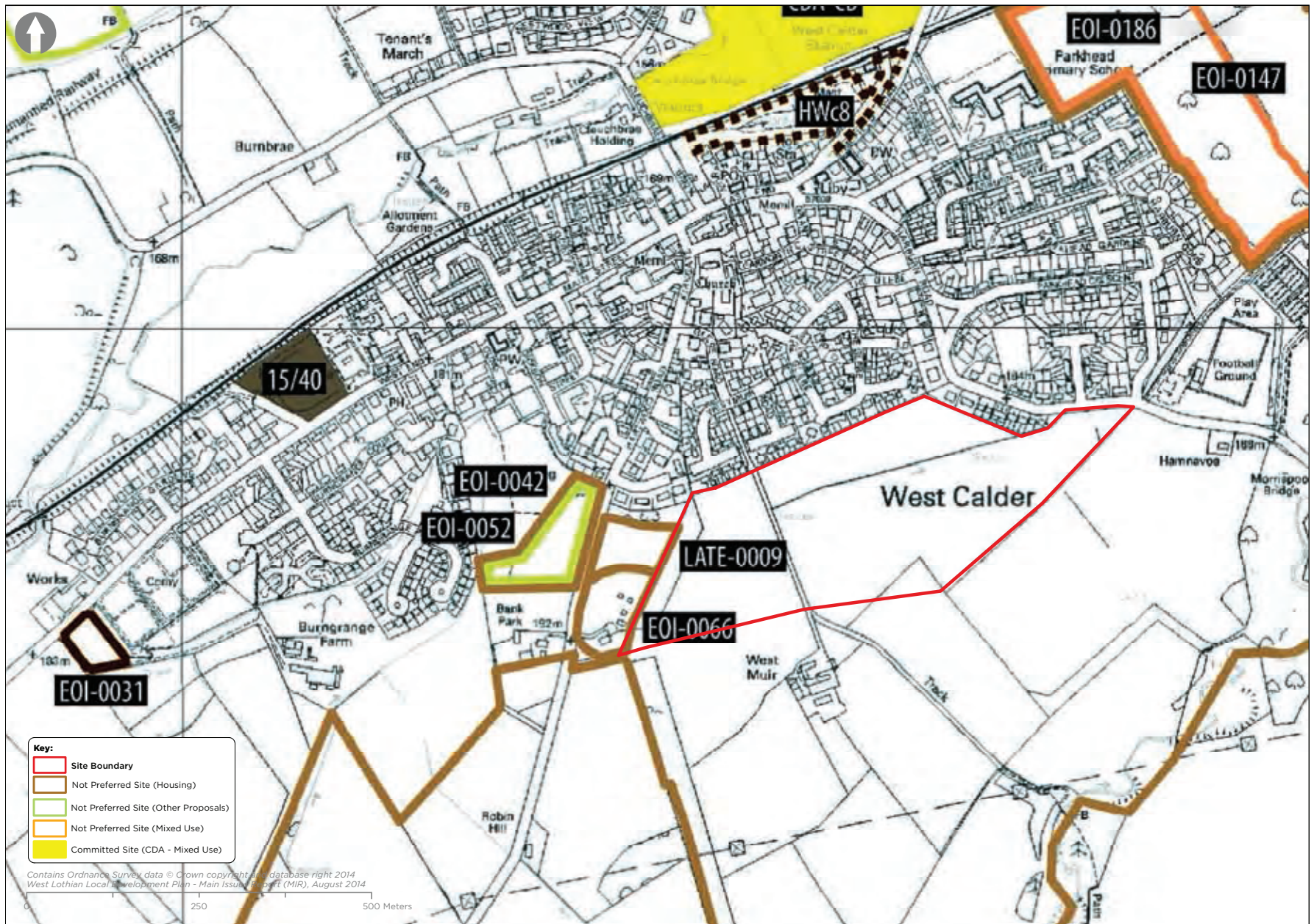


Fig. 2: MIR Extract

## 2.1 SESplan

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.

SESplan allocates West Lothian, in its entirety, as a Strategic Development Area. Strategic Development Areas are identified by SESplan's Spatial Strategy as the primary locations for growth and investment and the key focus and priority for new housing development.

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”*

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.

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.”*

On the 18th June, the Scottish Ministers issued a direction requiring this sentence to be deleted.

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.

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.

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.

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:

## 2.2 Main Issues Report

- 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

Thus, 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.

Paragraphs 3.37 – 3.47 of the Main Issues Report (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”*

Contrary to this, 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.

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.

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.

This position is reflected by the terms of the MIR affecting West Calder which, despite specifically recognising that:

*“the availability of infrastructure, strategic location, and existing facilities make the town an attractive option for future development”*



has chosen only to carry forward an existing committed site at Burngrange Park (39 units) whilst identifying a site to the west of West Calder Cemetery (EDI-0031) as a 'Preferred Alternative' to the HWc8 Local Plan site at Station Yard which is to be de-allocated.

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.

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.

As demonstrated by the remainder of this document, Westmuir Farm represents an 'effective' site that is immediately available for development. Development of the site would offer an opportunity for a well-planned sustainable expansion to West Calder, in keeping with the character of the settlement and local area and capable of creating a new and robust defensible edge to the town.

Westmuir Farm is therefore ideally suited for identification as a 'Preferred New' housing site within the emerging West Lothian Local Development Plan.

# 3.Place



Fig. 3: Facilities

### 3.1 Overview: West Calder

West Calder is a settlement of some 5 500 people located to the south-west of Livingston. It shares the industrial heritage of many of the West Lothian towns and was founded on the oil shale business in the 19th century. It benefits from a train station being located on the eastern edge of the town, on the Shotts line which connects Edinburgh Waverley with Glasgow Central. West Calder is also located on the main road network and has local employment opportunities, in particular at Polbeth, as well as being attractive to commuters.

The town has a largely traditional core, with some attractive buildings, whilst the housing areas date mainly from the mid-20th century to the present day.

The town supports a wide variety of facilities including banking, post office, library and a number of shops. There are schools both within the area and close-by. The proposed development site is well within acceptable walking distances to benefit from these facilities and to help sustain the settlement infrastructure. The diagram shows the location of many of these, and highlights the proximity of the site.

### 3.2 Assets and Protection

The designations diagram highlights the designations in and around West Calder. The south side of West Calder has no limiting designations, reinforced by the policy position of the adopted Local Plan.

The landscape to the east of West Calder is protected as open space whilst the land to the north is protected as an area of special landscape control. Listed buildings within the centre reflect it's more historic and traditional character.

Opportunities for consolidated growth of the settlement are therefore limited. Westmuir is the logical next area of growth as it is located on the south-eastern edge placing it closer to the railway and the primary school; the site can also offer good links to the existing town centre being within 5 and 10 minutes walking distance. This allows easy access to facilities and would constitute sustainable growth for the town. The core path that crosses through the site further enables connectivity and is seen as an asset to the site.

# 4.Site

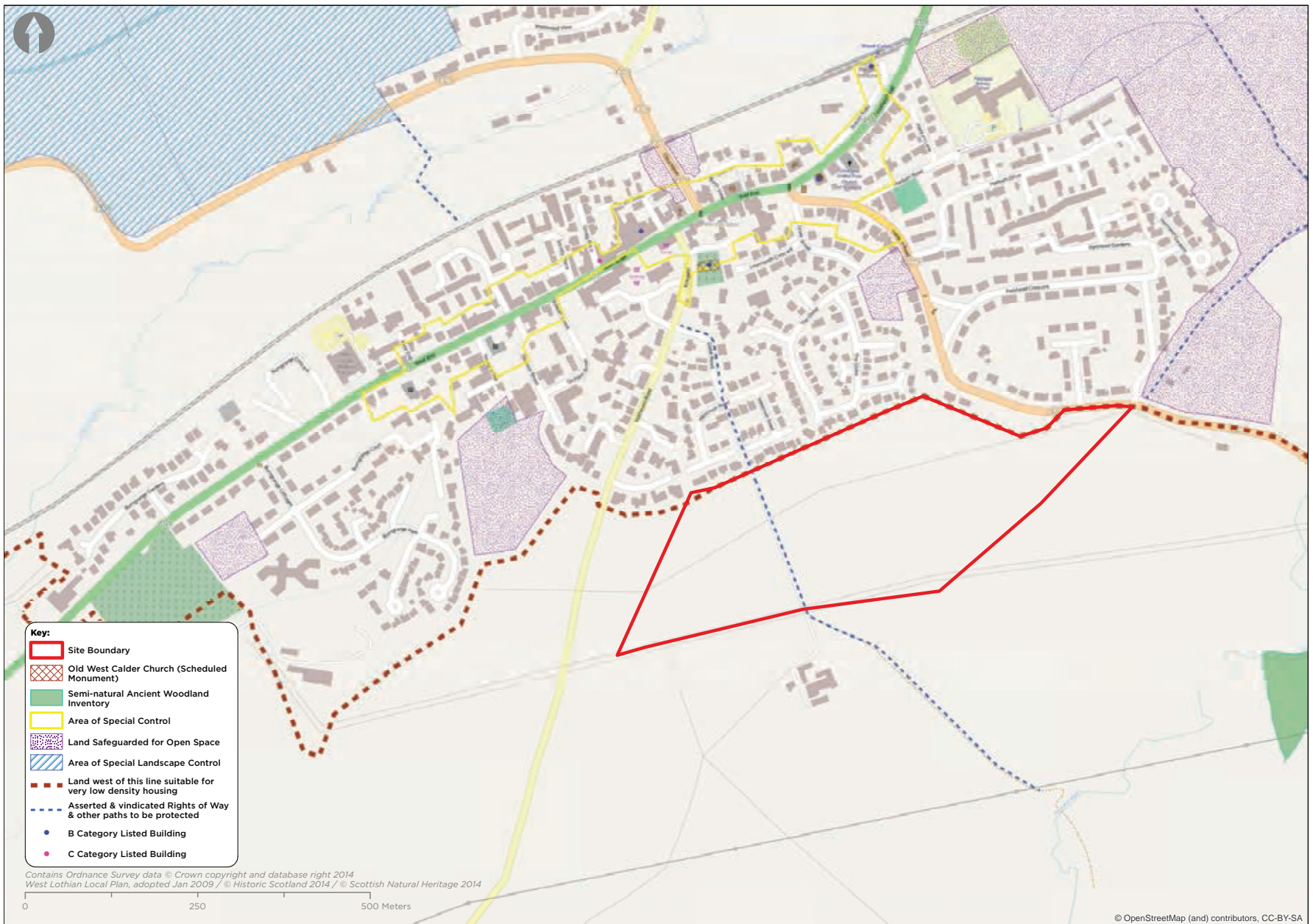


Fig. 4: Designations

## 4.1 Site Features

The site has little by way of features. It is currently used for grazing and is predominantly grassland. A field drain crosses the site from east to west and there is additional field drainage along the southern edge. A small group of beech trees, currently showing signs of stress down to drainage issues, are located within the eastern corner; nonetheless these make attractive features.

The other main area of existing vegetation is the hedgerow lining the core path that crosses the site from north to south. The core path is a historic link between the town and the farm that was accommodated when development took place around The Glebe. The hedgerow is well established and has a species mix, although mainly hawthorn.

Development lines the northern edge of the site and influence its character which is very much “urban edge”. Development is linear, and small back gardens have the effect of bringing development close to the site. The recent small development to the north-east of the site is particularly stark within the landscape. Overall, development forms a sharp edge with the landscape.

## 4.2 Topography

The site elevation is between 186 and 189m AOD over the whole of the site area, broadly commensurate with the south of West Calder. Overall the site slopes gently to the north, offering no constraint to the creation of appropriate levels for development.

## 4.3 Accessibility

### 1) Pedestrians and cyclists

There are not currently any formal pedestrian routes within the site area although there are pedestrian routes adjacent to the east of the site on Harburn Road. These paths are typical of those found in an urban area and provide a network of connections offering onward connections northwards towards the town centre.

An existing access track (and Core Path) lies towards the centre / west of the site. This link provides connections into the Westmuir Road / Glebe Road area and continues northwards to the town centre.

The area around the site is home to a wide network of advisory cycle routes as contained on the West Calder cycle map and which offer a good opportunity for linkages into this site.

Other routes in the town are lightly trafficked and suitable for shared use with cyclists.

The site is likely to lie within the catchment area of Parkhead Primary School which is located on Harburn Road within easy walking distance of the site. In relation to secondary education, the site lies within the catchment of West Calder High School;

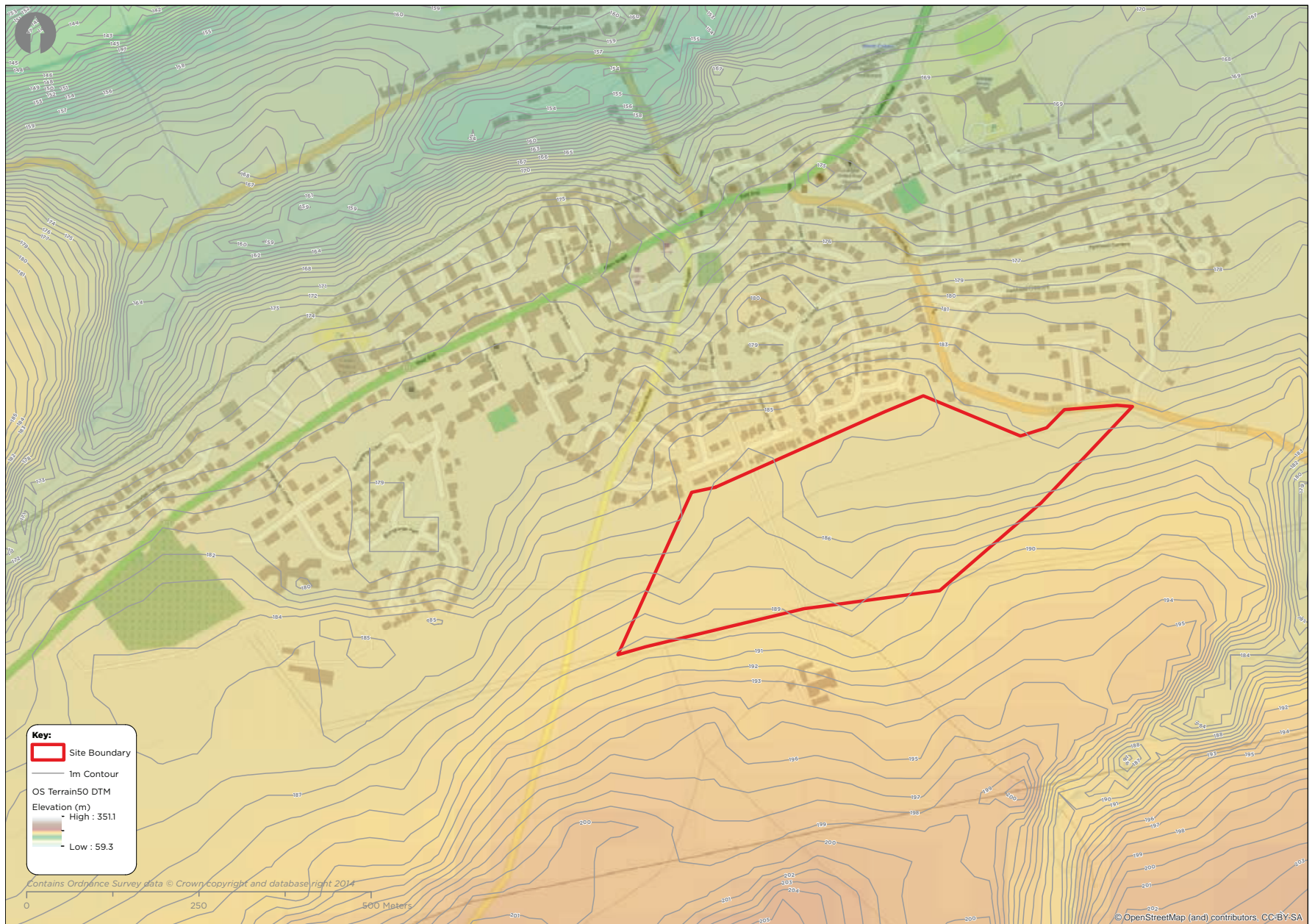


Fig. 5: Topography

it should be noted that although West Calder High School is located in Polbeth, Core Path 16 offers a walkable link to the school.

## 2) Public transport

### **Bus services**

Bus stops are located on Harburn Road but the bulk of services in West Calder operate on the A71 to the north of the site and are accessible by using walking links on Harburn Road or via Glebe Road.

Currently, these through services include First's route 26 offering 30 minute frequency connections between Fauldhouse and Livingston; Horsburgh's 36 service connecting Bathgate and Livingston on a 60 minute frequency and Blue Bus services that connect with Shotts and Lanark.

### **Rail services**

Located some 7 - 10 minutes' walk north of the site (within 800m from the site), West Calder railway station allows rail access between Glasgow Central / Shotts and Edinburgh. It should be noted that the Main Issues Report states that "sites for bus interchange and parking [are] safeguarded at Addiewell, Kirknewton and West Calder stations".

## 3) Existing road network

Harburn Road lies to the east of the site. Harburn Road lies within the urban limit at the site frontage and is subject to the 30mph limit. This changes to being derestricted a short distance southeast of the site. Harburn Road is a typical two way single carriageway urban road with an urban character. It already serves a range of residential dwellings and residential streets.

At its northern end, Harburn Road connects with the A71 at an existing signal set. The A71 was de-trunked in the mid 1990's but still affords a high level route connecting Irvine in the west with Edinburgh in the east.

The A71 also links with a wider network of strategic routes that afford connections with the central Scotland motorway network.



View looking north-west close to proposed access off Harburn Road



View looking south-west from core path across proposed development area

## Fig. 6: Site Photography



Access from Core Path to town centre  
(less than 5 minutes)



View looking north at Core Path junction

Proposed development land    Core Path: Maintain as pedestrian/cycle only subject to discussion    Westmuir Farm    Proposed development land



View looking south toward Westmuir Farm

Existing Village edge    West Calder town centre  
Hartwood Road: Potential secondary vehicular access



View looking north up Hartwood Road

# 5. Concept



## 5.1 Design Principles

Preliminary design principles for developing the site are shown on the attached Concept Diagram. The main points of note can be summarised as follows:

- Principle access will be from Harburn Road with the possibility of providing a second potential access from Hartwood Road. Additional pedestrian and cycle connections will be made via the (resurfaced) core path;
- Development will go back-to-back with existing development, will front onto Harburn Road, and be contained by significant planting along the southern and western edges;
- SUDS will be located within the low point and will be finalised through further engineering and topographic review; this will be incorporated into active green space;
- New housing should offer variety in type and size offering housing choice;
- All green space should be overlooked by frontage development;
- Opportunities for integration with the existing settlement area should be maximised.

## 5.2 Access

### 1) Pedestrians

Footway provision can be made on Harburn Road along the development frontage and this can link to existing footway(s). Internal development links can connect with these footways.

Leading west, further connection for foot and cycle is available northwards towards Glebe Road.

Depending on other allocation possibilities to the west of the site area, the opportunity for connection through to Hartwood Road also exists.

### 2) Cyclists

Cyclists will be able to utilise all of the new pedestrian accesses. Internally, cycle and foot links can be planned into the site layout. Direct connectivity with the existing local cycle routes marked on the local cycle plan can be made using the connection opportunities available.

### 3) Public transport

The site is located within walking distance of bus routes and the rail station. The footway connections described above would afford connectivity with the A71 and West Calder rail station.

### 4) Road access

The site is able to be accessed from Harburn Road, most likely by way of a simple T junction. Options can be explored but the preferred solution would be as a crossroads with Parkhead Crescent. This will be within the existing urban limit and with appropriate visibility available.

Again depending on other allocation possibilities to the west of the site area, the opportunity for connection through to Hartwood Road also exists.

### Harburn Road / A71 signals

As noted in the Main Issues Report (Transport Appraisal and Modelling Report) “For the time being, there continues to be pressure on some sections of the network and particularly on urban routes through historic town centres such as Broxburn, Linlithgow, Uphall and West Calder due in part to their existing layouts and the lack of suitable alternative routes. Further development in some locations may therefore have a detrimental impact on the local road network and certain junctions, particularly at peak times unless appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.”



The signal controlled junction at the A71 / Harburn Road experiences some peak time delay and development of the site at Harburn Road would afford an opportunity to achieve some improvement at this junction. In particular, the implementation of Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation could be implemented here and the signal linking between this set and that at Cleuchbrae could be optimised to achieve better performance outcomes.

### 5.3 Green Networks

Whilst the site itself has few features, there are several blocks of shelter belt and field boundary trees to the south of it. There is an opportunity to connect with these in order to both promote local biodiversity and create containment to the development form so that the existing abrupt edge does not get repeated.

Maintaining the existing track through the site, together with the hedgerow, allows the site to be developed within separate character areas that will aid place orientation. It will require crossing by the road network but can be sensitively achieved.

SUDS and green space will be combined to create meaningful green space with a combination of and passive space being anticipated. The principle route through the site could become a “green route” characterised by planting, boundary treatment and innovative SUDS solutions. This should link with the proposed and existing planting on the edges and allow existing and proposed paths to become fully integrated. Hence, through this development, not only biodiversity is enhanced but sustainable path networks.

### 5.4 Next steps

This representation offers an overview as to how development at Westmuir offers the next stage of logical growth to West Calder. The next stage will be to commence the masterplan process, carrying out increased technical surveys and research and working up more detailed plans that will fine-tune the preliminary estimate of capacity. Consultation will be an inherent part of that process which will be tested against the key principles of successful placemaking namely welcoming, distinctive, safe and pleasant, easy to move around, resource efficient and adaptable. The site will ultimately form the gateway approach from the south from one if not two of the major routes and so design will be an important consideration in ensuring delivery of a successful scheme.

# 6. Summary



The land being promoted at Westmuir consists of 13.35 Hectares of agricultural land on the southern edge of West Calder. West Calder is a small town with a vibrant town centre offering an extensive variety of facilities.

The proposed development site is well-located to maximise opportunities for linkages to schooling and transport as well as being within 5 to 10 minutes walking distance of shops and services. Foot / cycle paths are accessible in the locality and provide onward linkages to the facilities in the town.

Existing public transport services operate close to the site and these services combine to offer regular, frequent travel opportunities by bus and rail to key local destinations including Livingston, Glasgow and Edinburgh. The site also lies within a short travel distance of the main road network, notably the M8 which provides access to the wider network of central and southern Scotland.

The site is relatively free from constraint and can be easily developed. There are opportunities to enhance the edge of the settlement through the creation of a green network which will build on existing local assets and create a new defensible edge to the town as well as offering increased accessibility along pleasant green routes.

Westmuir would be an attractive place in which to live, could be developed over a number of years in accordance with a well-thought through masterplan and is a logical location for the future growth of West Calder.

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