

West Lothian Local Development Plan Main Issues Report consultation response

Question 1.

The vision is appropriate and concise but should include “active travel” in addition to road and public transport.

The vision should also make reference (perhaps abbreviated) to integration of required infrastructure within the Edinburgh city-region and with neighbouring authorities (particularly Falkirk Council and North Lanarkshire) where cross-boundary impacts and issues arise.

Question 3.

Agree in general, Yes, but the Aims should include :-

Issue 4: Collaboration within the City region and with neighbouring authorities to support the development of major infrastructure that will in turn support major development.

Issue 5: Protection of the vitality and viability of the existing network of town centres from the potential impact of new retail development

Issue 8: Commitment to public engagement and seeking support for mineral extraction proposals and a presumption against development where there is major opposition.

Question 5.

Yes; agreed. The Vion site seems to be a well suited windfall location for housing and will benefit Broxburn but consideration must be given to improved public transport linkages that would support Edinburgh-employed commuters. There is traffic congestion in the vicinity of Uphall Station at peak times that needs to be addressed, for example by the creation of a quality bus corridor along the A89 serving the Ingliston Park and Ride and Tram halt.

Question 15.

Yes, agree with the preferred strategy for housing growth, but with these additional comments:

New housing must be in sustainable locations that are well connected to employment and retail and leisure and service locations by modes other than the private car. A range and choice of housing types must be planned for, as well as a range of tenancies, including integrated social housing. Family friendly developments within walking distance of primary schools and ample open space should be promoted through the design and development management process.

Question 19.

In order to maintain an effective five year land supply in the current economic conditions:

- Allocate housing land to the most effective areas and sites.
- Allocate a range of sites of the most marketable sizes, 50 to 100 units, or as part of large masterplanned sites with committed enabling infrastructure.
- Require completion of a range of housing types (in terms of size and design) and tenures.
- Gain public support by preparing development briefs and supplementary planning guidance defining planning conditions and section 75 terms that will secure design and infrastructure to meet public expectations.
- Allocate sites in locations that will meet existing employment and social driven demand, with established or committed infrastructure, rather than speculative new sites.
- Look to cross-boundary integration of development areas and infrastructure across local authority boundaries, for example near Linlithgow.

Question 29.

The Area of Restraint definition for Linlithgow should not be removed; it should be redefined instead to look at a realistic limit of expansion in terms of landscape capacity and supporting infrastructure, plus promotion of access to the town centre by sustainable modes of transportation, particularly walking and cycling rather than private car, especially given the issues with air quality in the town centre. In particular, the easternmost boundary should be defined by the approximate easternmost extent of the Springfield.

Sequential Approach. This should be viewed with caution, given the significant commercial pressures for housing land development in Linlithgow. Development should be plan-led and sites should be allocated to meet foreseeable demand in this Local Development Plan, to provide certainty for the democratic and development management processes, rather than allowing ambiguity. A sequential approach could lead to a rush for development, seeking to exploit a perceived loophole in development plan policy and the risk of allowing inappropriate development.

Question 30.

A holistic approach needs to be taken to development that overrides land ownership considerations at the strategic level and seeks to remove ownership obstacles and force collaboration across ownership interests.

Question 31.

Land should be safeguarded for west-facing slips onto the M9 but this should be co-ordinated with Falkirk Council and any development contributions should apply to proposed developments in the wider Linlithgow area and also Bo'ness, as benefitting by reduced congestion in the town centre, rather than expected to fall upon proposed developments in the immediate vicinity of the M9.

Question 38.

In part-agreement with the preferred option. The cart must not lead the horse, so to speak: infrastructure should only be supported by appropriate development, meeting required compliance with wider planning policies and also national planning policy that requires a relationship between development and associated contributions. In the case of Linlithgow, the Planning Authority must develop closer working arrangements with Falkirk Council (outwith the Strategic Development Plan Authority) which looks specifically at spatial, travel and economic relationships between settlements in Falkirk Council area and Linlithgow. This relates in particular to west-facing slip roads on the M9 at Linlithgow. A wider developer contributions policy should be promoted that looks at development across the settlement of Linlithgow and draws appropriate contributions to support such a strategic item of infrastructure.

Additional Comments relating to Linlithgow.

There has been a notable loss of civic functions and related employment from the town centre of Linlithgow. There is a need to promote replacement administrative or economic activity.

Traffic volume is severe in the High Street, resulting in diminished air quality and congestion. Reduce through-trips (west-facing slip roads, alternative routings, reduced travel by parking facilities at either end also recycling to the east, and promotion of walking/cycling to station).

There is a specific locational need to co-ordinate land use planning and management of related impacts between West Lothian and Falkirk Council in the Linlithgow area.



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