

West Lothian Local Development Plan 2 Evidence Report

Schedule	Schedule 21. Education Infrastructure
<p>Information required by the Act and NPF4 regarding the issue addressed in this section</p>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended:</p> <p>To set out statutory compliance with the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • section 15(5)(c) the size, composition, health and distribution of the population of the district; • section 15(5)(d) the infrastructure of the district (including education facilities). <p>National Planning Policy 4 (adopted 13 February 2023):</p> <p>To set out evidence in relation to NPF4 policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 18 Infrastructure First - To encourage, promote and facilitate an infrastructure first approach to land use planning, which puts infrastructure considerations at the heart of placemaking. <p>Other relevant policies - Policy 2 – Climate mitigation and adaptation, Policy 15 – Local Living and 20-minute neighbourhoods. Policy 27 City, town, local and commercial centres</p> <p>National Planning Framework 4 (adopted 13 February 2023)</p> <p>This schedule aims not to repeat the content of other topics covered by the LDP2 Evidence Report. Other schedules which should be read alongside this schedule on Education Infrastructure are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 - Local Living • Local Place Plans
<p>Links to Evidence referenced in this schedule</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Lothian Council, School Roll Forecasts (2023 based) – approved by Education Executive on 26 June 2024 • West Lothian Council, Early Learning and Childcare - Community Focused Approach – consultation approved by Education Executive on 3 September 2024 • West Lothian Council Corporate Asset Management Strategy and General Services Capital Investment Programme 2024/25 to 2032/33 – approved by Council Executive on 22 February 2024

Summary of Evidence

Purpose, scope and structure of this schedule

This schedule focuses on Education within West Lothian. The schedule and its evidence are set out in the following sections:

1. Current Education Provision in West Lothian
2. School Roll Forecasting & Contributions

Part 1 – Current Education Provision in West Lothian

Capacity of education provision in West Lothian

1.1 The current capacity of education provision in West Lothian is:

- 52 Non-Denominational Primary Schools with a total capacity of 16,897;
- 16 Denominational Primary Schools with a total capacity of 4,236;
- 10 Non-Denominational Secondary Schools with a total capacity of 11,550;
- Denominational Secondary Schools with a total capacity of 3,190;
- 5 Additional Support Needs (ASN) Schools

1.2 There is also one Non-Denominational Infants School with a capacity of 50 (Dechmont Infants School which is currently mothballed) and is planned to be replaced by a P1-P7 primary school in future.

1.3 There is a cross boundary catchment arrangement where one non-denominational primary school (Kirknewton) feeds into a Secondary School in another authority (Balerno CHS in Edinburgh City Council area).

Early Learning and Childcare

1.4 All 3 and 4 year old children in West Lothian as well as a number of 2 year old children are entitled to 1140 hours of nursery provision per year. This is delivered through a combination of:

- 66 Nursery Classes / Nursery Schools operated by West Lothian Council
- 39 partner provider nurseries / playgroups
- Childminders across West Lothian.

1.5 The council operated nursery provision across West Lothian is currently under review with 9 settings currently under consultation for closure.

Calculating Capacity

1.6 West Lothian Council uses the 2014 Determining Primary School Capacity Guidance (2014) alongside an understanding of what is a sustainable long term roll for a school in terms of the maximum year group capacity determined by number of available classrooms.

1.7 In West Lothian a single stream primary school is considered to have a planning capacity of 231. 2 streams have a planning capacity of 462 and 3 streams of 693. Each capacity is based on streams consisting of 33 children per year. Because of the statutory limits on class sizes for P1-P3 classes West Lothian Council requires 8 classrooms per single stream to allow for the additional composite classes needed in the P1-P3 year groups.

1.8 Some schools may have additional limiting factors based on classrooms sizes, PE and Dining facilities or availability of outside play space. In general however the following capacities are used for schools with the following classroom availability:

Classrooms	Planning Capacity
2	50
3	75
4	100
5	125
6	150
7	198
8	231
9	252
10	273
11	306
12	360
13	387
14	415
15	441
16	462
20	574
22	640
24	693

Part 2 – School Roll Forecasting and Contributions

School Roll Forecasting

- 2.1 The Council undertakes annual School Roll Forecasting with the most recent published being the 2023 based forecasts which were approved by Education Executive on 26 June 2024.
- 2.2 This process combines data from School Rolls (SeeMIS database), NHS Lothian (0-5 child database) and the Housing Land Audit to forecast future infrastructure requirements across West Lothian. As each year's forecasts are published they will feed in to the ongoing LDP2 process.
- 2.3 The approved School Roll Forecasts provide a listing of the schools in West Lothian along with overall and year group entry capacities as well as identifying schools under future capacity pressure and future school investment.
- 2.4 The most recently published School Roll forecasts show 8-11 primary schools and 4-7 secondary schools reaching or exceeding their planning capacity at some point in the next 10 years. There are mitigation or extension strategies in place to deal with each forecast capacity requirement.

Pupil Product Ratios

- 2.5 Pupil Product Ratios are reviewed as part of the school roll forecasting each year to ensure they continue to reflect the most recent demographic trends. In West Lothian a product is used as follows:
- 0.35 Primary
 - 0.18 Secondary
- 2.6 The denominational / non-denominational split is calculated for each separate school catchment block based on past and current trends. Across West Lothian the overall split is approximately 80% non-denominational / 20% denominational demand.

Identifying Infrastructure Need

- 2.7 The requirement for Education Infrastructure is primarily driven by the ongoing pattern of house building throughout West Lothian. The Education Planning team works with housebuilders, landowners and developers through the Housing Land Audit process to understand the pattern of future house building currently underway in West Lothian.
- 2.8 This HLA then feeds into the School Roll Forecasting process and shows which schools have capacity pressure. These schools are then analysed using the Education Infrastructure capacity hierarchy to identify possible solutions. The hierarchy looks at options including:
- Managing out of catchment placing requests (within the current legal frameworks);
 - School catchment review;
 - Planning conditions to control the phasing of development;
 - Financial contribution to reconfigure existing schools;
 - Financial contribution to school extensions (classrooms or other facilities);
 - Use of temporary accommodation only where capacity issues are strictly time limited;
 - Financial contributions towards the provision of new schools.
- 2.9 Only where none of the other options are viable are financial contributions sought to extend existing schools or build new schools. Identification of existing spare education capacity and matching it to proposed future developments will be a key part of the call for ideas process as West Lothian LDP2 develops.
- 2.10 This education investment strategy is then discussed with West Lothian Council education services as well as developers with a specific interest in education projects that are driven by major single sites – especially in the existing Core Development Areas (CDAs).

Costings

- 2.11 Depending on what stage future project design is at, project costings are based on one of the following:
1. Outturn costs for delivered projects;
 2. Emerging bid costs for projects currently in procurement;
 3. Estimated costs based on detailed design solutions prepared by the council's Construction Services team, verified by a Quantity Surveyor;
 4. Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) metric based on floor space estimates for future projects that do not yet have a detailed design solution.

Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

This will summarise the steps taken by the planning authority to seek the views of all relevant stakeholders. This will also summarise the views expressed, and explain how they have been taken account of in the Evidence Report.

Pre-existing engagement

Homes for Scotland / Developers are consulted each year as part of the Housing Land Audit process to ensure future education infrastructure requirements are matched to the planned housing delivery on the ground.

West Lothian Council Property Services are consulted on the condition and suitability of the education estate as part of the annual condition / suitability survey.

Statements of Agreement / Dispute

This will include statements from stakeholders highlighting their agreement or the areas they dispute.

Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

West Lothian has experienced significant growth in housing stock and population over the LDP1 period. While pupil numbers have fallen in some areas of the county they have risen significantly in areas where housebuilding is underway. To deliver the Local Housing Land Requirement over the LDP2 period Education Infrastructure will be a key factor in ensuring compliance with Policy 18 Infrastructure First.

Based on the evidence the proposed plan is required to:

- Take into account existing infrastructure availability as a significant factor in the site selection process.
- Ensure potential new infrastructure is carefully matched to any current and future development sites to ensure sufficient education infrastructure is in place across West Lothian.