



West Lothian Local Development Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment
Environmental Report (Update – additional sites)

October 2015

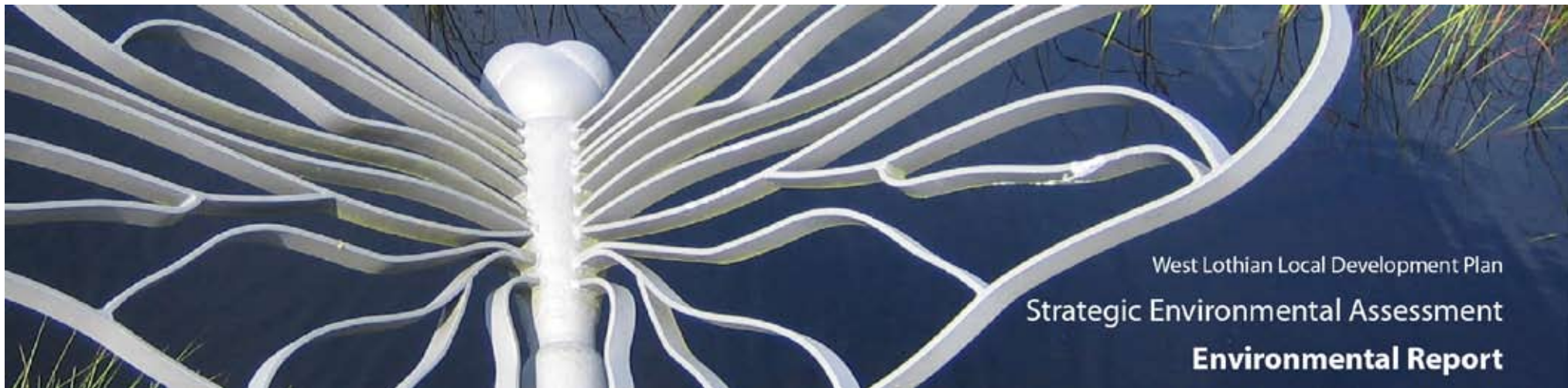


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Environmental Report

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this environmental report

1.1.1 West Lothian Council is required to establish a development strategy for the future development of West Lothian in the form of a Local Development Plan (LDP) to satisfy the requirements of the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by The Planning (Scotland) etc Act 2006. It will set out a short to medium term spatial planning strategy that broadly defines where development in West Lothian should be located, and how it should be delivered. This will replace the current adopted West Lothian Local Plan 2009 (WLLP 2009). There is a statutory requirement for the new WL LDP to accord with the terms of the first strategic development plan (SDP) for Edinburgh and South East Scotland (SESplan) which was approved by Scottish Ministers in June 2013.

1.1.2 The form and content of the LDP is prescribed by the aforementioned legislation and the first formal stage of the plan preparation process is the publication of a Main Issues Report (MIR). The MIR was published in August 2014. The MIR set out the key issues to be addressed by the WLLDP Proposed Plan (PP). It concentrates on the key changes since the 2009 local plan was adopted and on significant proposals for future development; it includes a preferred strategy, identifying where housing, economic and retail development should be located. Where reasonable and practicable, it also includes alternatives to the preferred strategy. It clearly sets out what would change from the currently adopted local plan. The MIR also identifies matters that it proposes to retain and continue from this adopted WLLP.

1.1.3 The MIR is the main opportunity for those with an interest in the development and protection of the environment of West Lothian to have an input. The views and comments received will inform the preparation of the WLLDP PP. The MIR underwent consultation in August - October 2014.

1.2 SEA Process

1.2.1 The MIR provides the basis for undertaking the environmental assessment of the WLLDP, under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 (EASA). The Act requires that any Plan, Programme or Strategy (PPS) prepared by West Lothian Council which is likely to have significant effects on the environment should go through a process of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The outcome (which is a key stage of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process) is called the Environmental Report (ER) and its primary purpose is to set out the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the strategy for development set out within the WLLDP PP.

1.2.2 SEA is a systematic and thorough process, which allows environmental considerations to be integrated into the MIR, as well as, inviting comments and representations on both the MIR and the ER from members of the public and stakeholders. SEA assesses and evaluates the likely significant impacts that the MIR will have on the environment. Dependent on the outcome of the assessment process, the SEA recommends mitigation and/or enhancement measures. This is to ensure that the PP is environmentally responsible and sustainable.

1.2.3 This is an additional update to the main ER to accompany the MIR for the WLLDP and its specific purpose is to:

- Identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant environmental effects of the additional proposed sites that have been submitted to the council after the MIR stage.

The short length of the additional list of potential development sites allowed for further input by the Consultation Authorities (Historic Scotland (HS); Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA); and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)), while the public will be able to offer views on them at the Proposed Plan stage. There was also input from internal council services such as the Flood Risk Team within Operational Services.

1.2.4 The ER is a key consultation document and was being published alongside the MIR and Monitoring Statement (MS) and has been reviewed at the WLLDP PP stage. Should any changes be made to the PP arising from the Reporter's findings following the Examination process, further review will be undertaken should this be required. The ER was published but only a few minor comments were received and addressed in the council's responses to comments on the MIR. Whenever there is a requirement to update the ER, there will be further opportunities to comment on such revised assessments. A post-adoption statement under EASA will also be prepared setting out the relationship between the ER and the WLLDP, and the influence of comments received during the public consultation stages.

1.2.5 In summary, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) aims to assist in promoting sustainable development through the integration of environmental objectives into the plan making process. Sustainable development is intended to enable a better quality of life without compromising the needs of future generations by balancing environmental, social and economic aspirations.

2. Environment Report update

2.1 Additional sites

2.1.1 The main Environmental Report is available on the council's website at: <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/4643/Strategic-Environmental-Assessment-Environmental-Report-August-2014/pdf/SEA-ENVIRONMENTAL-REPORT-August2014.pdf>

while the related detailed Appendices are located at: <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/4644/Strategic-Environmental-Assessment-Environmental-Report---Appendices-August-2014/pdf/SEA-ENVIRONMENTAL-REPORT-Appendices-August2014.pdf>

2.1.2 However, there were 19 additional sites that were submitted to the council after the closure of the MIR consultation period, or that the council became aware of. As the principles and objectives of the original ER report remain unchanged, it is not intended to reiterate all the various details again, but view the 2 documents referred to in above web links. The additional sites are listed below in Table 1 and have undergone the same SEA process as the original Expression of Interest (EOI) sites. The results are displayed in Table 2 below.

Table 1: Additional 'Expression of Interest' Sites submitted Post-MIR engagement exercise (August – October 2014)

Reference	Location	Proposed Use(s) (Units / Area)
MIRQ 0044	Croftfoot Farm, Fauldhouse	Proposes new for residential development (2 house plots).
MIRQ 0053	Bathgate Pond Industrial Estate, Bathgate	'Retirement village' including approximately 350 residential units together with a care home, community hub including health, retail, commercial and café, health studio, allotments and open space.
MIRQ 0159	Land at Niddry Mains House, Winchburgh	Residential (40 houses)
MIRQ 0162	Land South of Willowdean, Bridgend	Residential (90 houses)
MIRQ 0163	Land at Cousland Farm, south of A705, Livingston	Mixed Use
MIRQ 0172	Eastoun Farm, Bathgate	Residential (140 houses)
MIRQ 0134	Mavisbank/Drumcross, Bathgate (essentially an extension to EOI-0080 & EOI-0081)	Residential development and public park
EOI-0123	Brotherton Farm, Livingston	Residential (150 houses)
MIRQ – 0038(1)	Hunter Road, Kirkton, Livingston	Residential (0.4 ha site)
MIRQ - 0038(2)	Murieston Valley, Livingston	Residential (0.5 ha site)
MIRQ – 0046	Blackburn House Equestrian Centre, Seafield	Residential (12.6 ha site)
MIRQ – 0125	South of the eastern part of Hopetoun House Estate, by South Queensferry (East of Balfour Beatty site)	Residential (12 ha site)
MIRQ – 0153	Balmoral Gardens, Livingston	Residential
H-AM 18	Stonerigg Farm, Armadale	Residential (0.8ha – 11 house plots)
MIRQ- LATE2	Ex-West Calder High School, Limefield, Polbeth	Residential
MIRQ- LATE	West Calder High School, Parkhead, West Calder	Replacement Secondary School
MIRQ – LATE3	Old Rows (former Ritchie's Yard) Seafield	Residential
MIRQ – LATE4	Mid Street, Bathgate	Residential (0.10ha site - 10 houses)
MIRQ - LATE5	14-20 Glasgow Road, Bathgate	Residential (0.5ha site - 53 houses)

Table 2: Strategic Environmental Assessment of Additional 'Expression of Interest' Sites submitted Post-MIR engagement exercise (August – October 2014)

Does the Proposal / Allocation.....																								
SEA Topic	Air			Biodiversity			Climatic Factors		Cultural Heritage					Landscape & Townscape			Material Assets		P&H Population & Health	Soil	Water		Comment	
	Avoid AQMA areas/ avoid exacerbating air quality of AQMAs/ avoid areas which could become AQMAs?	Have good proximity to jobs/ services (enabling access within walking distance)?	Have good access to existing or proposed public transport?	Avoid adverse effect on integrity of designated international nature conservation sites?	Avoid causing significant effect on designated national/ regional/ local biodiversity sites & ancient woodland/ geodiversity sites?	Avoid adverse direct impact on species/ habitats/ or makes a positive contribution to the emerging green network?	Occupy a relatively efficient location in terms of energy consumption	Occupy a location at risk of increased flooding or instability due to climate change?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) effects on listed buildings and/ or its setting?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) impact on scheduled monuments and /or its setting?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) impact on locally important archaeological sites?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) effects on a Gardens & Designed Landscape?	Avoid adverse effects (or create positive) on Conservation Areas &/or other areas of architectural, historic or townscape interest, or historic urban form?	Avoid AGLVs / Areas of Special Landscape Control/ Areas of Special Control	Avoid conspicuous locations that require extensive landscape treatment / structural planting?	Avoid loss of/ adverse effects on public open space/ improve open space provision (quantity/ quality)?	Avoid loss of land important to avoidance of coalescence/ preservation of settlement identity?	Safeguard mineral resources from sterilisation (within Areas of Search)?	Minimise use of "Greenfield" land?	Avoid co-location of sensitive development with industrial facilities/ economic allocations?	Avoid loss of prime quality agricultural land and peatland?	Maintain status of baseline water bodies?	Minimise flood risk (on site or elsewhere)?	
Assessment	✓	/	?	✗																				
EOI: Ref / Site (SEA Topic column)	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #d9ead3;"></div> Preferred site <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #d9ead3;"></div> Alternative site <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #d9ead3;"></div> Not Preferred site </div> <div> arising from the following assessment of nine SEA topics </div> </div>																							
MIRQ 0044 Croftfoot Farm, Fauldhouse	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	Edge of settlement remote from services / rail station. Impact on woodland planted to accommodate previous development to west.
MIRQ 0053 Bathgate Pond Industrial Estate.	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	/	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	Edge of settlement adjacent to industrial estate with incompatible industrial neighbours and remote from services / rail station. Pluvial flooding in SE part of site.
MIRQ 0159 Land at Niddry Mains House, Winchburgh	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	/	✗	✓	✓	/	✗		Surrounded by allocated Winchburgh CDA. Minor impact on wood to allow access. River Flooding 200m to north of site. Airport & pipeline safeguarding issues and possible archaeological Investigation required.

Does the Proposal / Allocation.....																								
SEA Topic	Air			Biodiversity			Climatic Factors		Cultural Heritage					Landscape & Townscape			Material Assets		P&H Population & Health	Soil	Water		Comment	
	Avoid AQMA areas/ avoid exacerbating air quality of AQMAs/ avoid areas which could become AQMAs?	Have good proximity to jobs/ services (enabling access within walking distance)?	Have good access to existing or proposed public transport?	Avoid adverse effect on integrity of designated international nature conservation sites?	Avoid causing significant effect on designated national/ regional/ local biodiversity sites & ancient woodland/ geodiversity sites?	Avoid adverse direct impact on species/ habitats/ or makes a positive contribution to the emerging green network?	Occupy a relatively efficient location in terms of energy consumption	Occupy a location at risk of increased flooding or instability due to climate change?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) effects on listed buildings and/ or its setting?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) impact on scheduled monuments and /or its setting?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) impact on locally important archaeological sites?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) effects on a Gardens & Designed Landscape?	Avoid adverse effects (or create positive) on Conservation Areas &/or other areas of architectural, historic or townscape interest, or historic urban form?	Avoid AGLVs / Areas of Special Landscape Control/ Areas of Special Control	Avoid conspicuous locations that require extensive landscape treatment / structural planting?	Avoid loss of/ adverse effects on public open space/ improve open space provision (quantity/ quality)?	Avoid loss of land important to avoidance of coalescence/ preservation of settlement identity?	Safeguard mineral resources from sterilisation (within Areas of Search)?	Minimise use of "Greenfield" land?	Avoid co-location of sensitive development with industrial facilities/ economic allocations?	Avoid loss of prime quality agricultural land and peatland?	Maintain status of baseline water bodies?	Minimise flood risk (on site or elsewhere)?	
Assessment	✓	/	?	✗																				
EOI: Ref / Site (SEA Topic column)	 Preferred site Alternative site Not Preferred site arising from the following assessment of nine SEA topics																							
MIRQ 0162 Land south of Willowdean, Bridgend	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	/	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	While outwith previous allocation / urban boundary and extension into Countryside, not prominent & adjacent to school and bus terminus / close to services. Part of site in AGLV.	
MIRQ 0163 Land at Cousland Farm, south of A705, Livingston	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	Contributes to coalescence and is prominent site. 50% site suffers from fluvial & pluvial flooding.	
MIRQ 0172 Eastoun Farm, Bathgate	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	Significant loss of countryside. Remote from town centre services / schools / Rail Station. High risk of flooding west of Sandyside and along burn to east of site.	

Does the Proposal / Allocation.....

SEA Topic	Air			Biodiversity			Climatic Factors		Cultural Heritage					Landscape & Townscape			Material Assets		P&H <small>Population & Health</small>	Soil	Water		Comment	
	Avoid AQMA areas/ avoid exacerbating air quality of AQMAs/ avoid areas which could become AQMAs?	Have good proximity to jobs/ services (enabling access within walking distance)?	Have good access to existing or proposed public transport?	Avoid adverse effect on integrity of designated international nature conservation sites?	Avoid causing significant effect on designated national/ regional/ local biodiversity sites & ancient woodland/ geodiversity sites?	Avoid adverse direct impact on species/ habitats/ or makes a positive contribution to the emerging green network?	Occupy a relatively efficient location in terms of energy consumption	Occupy a location at risk of increased flooding or instability due to climate change?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) effects on listed buildings and/ or its setting?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) impact on scheduled monuments and /or its setting?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) impact on locally important archaeological sites?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) effects on a Gardens & Designed Landscape?	Avoid adverse effects (or create positive) on Conservation Areas &/or other areas of architectural, historic or townscape interest, or historic urban form?	Avoid AGLVs / Areas of Special Landscape Control/ Areas of Special Control	Avoid conspicuous locations that require extensive landscape treatment / structural planting?	Avoid loss of/ adverse effects on public open space/ improve open space provision (quantity/ quality)?	Avoid loss of land important to avoidance of coalescence/ preservation of settlement identity?	Safeguard mineral resources from sterilisation (within Areas of Search)?	Minimise use of "Greenfield" land?	Avoid co-location of sensitive development with industrial facilities/ economic allocations?	Avoid loss of prime quality agricultural land and peatland?	Maintain status of baseline water bodies?	Minimise flood risk (on site or elsewhere)?	

Assessment	✓	/	?	✗																			
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EOI: Ref / Site (SEA Topic column)

 Preferred site
 Alternative site
 Not Preferred site
 arising from the following assessment of nine SEA topics

MIRQ 0134 Mavisbank/ Drumcross, Bathgate (essentially an extension to EOI-0080 & EOI-0081)	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	Significant loss of countryside / currently AGLV. Coalescence issue with Ballencrieff Toll. Remote from town centre services / schools / Rail Station. Some high risk flooding in SW corner by Mavisbank & in southern section 1 in 200 below Bughtknowes
EOI-0123 Brotherton Farm, Livingston	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	/	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	Significant loss of countryside / currently AGLV. Remote from town centre services / schools / Rail Station. High risk of flooding from burn running through site centre.
MIRQ- 0038(1) Hunter Road, Kirkton, Livingston	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	/	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	Impact on mature woodland that adds to quality of town setting and previously avoided development when adjacent sites allocated.

Does the Proposal / Allocation.....																								
SEA Topic	Air			Biodiversity			Climatic Factors		Cultural Heritage					Landscape & Townscape			Material Assets		P&H Population & Health	Soil	Water		Comment	
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Assessment	✓	/	?	✗																				
EOI: Ref / Site (SEA Topic column)	 Preferred site Alternative site Not Preferred site arising from the following assessment of nine SEA topics																							
MIRQ-0038(2) Murieston Valley, Livingston	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	/	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	Impact on mature woodland that adds to quality of town setting and previously avoided development when adjacent sites allocated. Medium risk of surface flooding.
MIRQ – 0046 Blackburn House Equestrian Centre, Seafield	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	Leads to significant coalescence of built development in narrow countryside gap. Remote from services and public transport. Sewage works in area.	
MIRQ – 0125 South of the eastern part of Hopetoun Estate, by S Queensferry (East of Balfour Beatty site)	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	?	✓	Potential impact on Hopetoun House grounds and surrounding woodland. Remote from services and public transport.	

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Assessment	✓	/	?	✘																				
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MIRQ – 0153 Balmoral Gardens, Livingston	✓	✓	✓	✓	✘	✘	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✘	✓	/	✘	✓	✓	✘	✘	Impact on mature woodland that adds to quality of town setting and previously avoided development when adjacent sites allocated.
H-AM 18 Stonerigg Farm, Armadale	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✘	✓	✓	✓	✓	While part of site is brownfield, other part is green field, albeit situated within the settlement boundary.
MIRQ- LATE2 Ex-West Calder High School, Limefield, Polbeth	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✘	✓	/	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	Re-use of brownfield site. Site lies within the Sabcic ICI Wilton / Grangemouth Ethylene Pipeline and appropriate consultation with the operator and the HSE will be necessary. Scope for additional woodland planting in pipeline corridor where development not permitted. Contributes to Polbeth - Livingston green network.

Does the Proposal / Allocation.....																								
SEA Topic	Air			Biodiversity			Climatic Factors		Cultural Heritage					Landscape & Townscape			Material Assets		P&H Population & Health	Soil	Water		Comment	
	Avoid AQMA areas/ avoid exacerbating air quality of AQMA's/ avoid areas which could become AQMA's?	Have good proximity to jobs/ services (enabling access within walking distance)?	Have good access to existing or proposed public transport?	Avoid adverse effect on integrity of designated international nature conservation sites?	Avoid causing significant effect on designated national/ regional/ local biodiversity sites & ancient woodland/ geodiversity sites?	Avoid adverse direct impact on species/ habitats/ or makes a positive contribution to the emerging green network?	Occupy a relatively efficient location in terms of energy consumption	Occupy a location at risk of increased flooding or instability due to climate change?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) effects on listed buildings and/ or its setting?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) impact on scheduled monuments and /or its setting?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) impact on locally important archaeological sites?	Avoid adverse (or create positive) effects on a Gardens & Designed Landscape?	Avoid adverse effects (or create positive) on Conservation Areas &/or other areas of architectural, historic or townscape interest, or historic urban form?	Avoid AGLVs / Areas of Special Landscape Control/ Areas of Special Control	Avoid conspicuous locations that require extensive landscape treatment / structural planting?	Avoid loss of/ adverse effects on public open space/ improve open space provision (quantity/ quality)?	Avoid loss of land important to avoidance of coalescence/ preservation of settlement identity?	Safeguard mineral resources from sterilisation (within Areas of Search)?	Minimise use of "Greenfield" land?	Avoid co-location of sensitive development with industrial facilities/ economic allocations?	Avoid loss of prime quality agricultural land and peatland?	Maintain status of baseline water bodies?	Minimise flood risk (on site or elsewhere)?	
Assessment	✓	/	?	✗																				
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MIRQ- LATE Proposed West Calder High School, Parkhead, West Calder	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	/	✗	✓	✓	?	✓	Woodland replacement required within Parkhead land holding or former high school site. Retention of Core Path / right of way
MIRQ-LATE 3 Old Rows (Ex-Ritchie's Yard) Seafield	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	/	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	Urban infill site. Potential contaminated land issue related to raised ground needs addressed. Right of way on east boundary and protected open space playing field adjacent.
MIRQ-LATE 4 Mid Street, Bathgate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	/	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	Urban infill site.
MIRQ-LATE 5 14-20 Glasgow Rd, Bathgate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	/	✓	✓	✓	?	✗	Urban infill site. Adjacent to Bathgate Water. Height of retaining wall and ground floor level key.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Summary

3.1.1 The SEA of the additional sites proposed after the closure of the formal MIR consultation period indicates that of the 19 assessed: 11 are not considered suitable to advance into the Proposed Plan due to their scale of environmental impact which would be difficult to mitigate satisfactorily. These are:

- Croftfoot Farm, Fauldhouse.
- Bathgate Pond Industrial Estate, Bathgate.
- Land at Cousland Farm, south of A705, Livingston.
- Eastoun Farm, Bathgate.
- Mavisbank/Drumcross, Bathgate.
- Brotherton Farm, Livingston.
- Hunter Road, Kirkton, Livingston.
- Murieston Valley, Livingston.
- Blackburn House Equestrian Centre, Seafield.
- South of the eastern part of Hopetoun House Estate, by South Queensferry (East of Balfour Beatty site).
- Balmoral Gardens, Livingston.

While eight have minor environmental issues, these can generally be overcome or present opportunities for improvements and have been included in the Proposed Plan. These are:

- Land at Niddry Mains House, Winchburgh.
- Land South of Willowdean, Bridgend.
- Stonerigg Farm, Armadale.
- Ex-West Calder High School, Limefield, Polbeth.
- Proposed West Calder High School, Parkhead, West Calder.
- Old Rows (former Ritchie's Yard), Seafield.
- Mid Street, (former Swimming Pool site), Bathgate.
- 14-20 Glasgow Road, Bathgate.