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## **COUNCIL EXECUTIVE**

### **SITE SELECTION FOR SUPPORTED HOUSING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN WEST LOTHIAN**

#### **REPORT BY INTERIM HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES**

##### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To consider the provision of supported housing for young people at the proposed site adjacent to Almondvale Stadium, Livingston.

##### **B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council Executive;

1. Notes progress on selecting a site for supported housing for young people, and;
2. Approves the site adjacent to Almondvale Stadium, Livingston site for supported housing for young people.

##### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
<b>II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended and in accordance with the Homelessness (etc) Act 2003. Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014, Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	N/A
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	Reduce expenditure on additional homeless services. Reduce use and length of stay in B&B accommodation.
<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities.
<b>VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	£4million has been allocated in the General Services Capital Programme to address homelessness. Scottish Government funding of up to £944,000 may be available to support up to 16 mainstream units.

**VII Consideration at PDSP**

None

**VIII Other consultations**

Consultation has taken place with Scottish Government More Homes Division, Planning Services and Finance and Property Services.

**D TERMS OF REPORT**

**D.1 Background**

In February 2018 as part of the General Fund Capital Programme, £4million was approved to develop a new build 36 single person unit for people requiring supported and temporary accommodation. The new unit was to include the replacement of existing supported provision for young people at Newlands House, Bathgate as well as providing additional accommodation for young people requiring temporary accommodation.

On 17 December 2019 Council Executive approved a change in approach to focus on the requirement to address the pressing need for more accommodation for young homeless people. It was agreed that a supported accommodation unit consisting of 12 x one-bedroom studio flats and up to 16 x one-bedroom mainstream flats could be developed with the preferred location being in Livingston. The site selected for the development was at Nellburn Road, Livingston.

During 2019 and 2020 a design was developed and a planning application submitted in October 2020 with community engagement carried out prior to the Planning Application being submitted. The council's Development Management Committee refused the application on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021. A decision is therefore required on an alternative site to enable the accommodation requirements of young people to be met.

**D.2 Demand**

The requirement for supported accommodation for young people in West Lothian continues with the table below demonstrating an increase in Youth homeless presentations since the unit was approved on the 17 December 2019.

West Lothian has the second highest rate of youth homelessness in Scotland at 19.2 per 1,000 households, and has a history of significant numbers of homeless presentations by young people. The table also shows that the percentage of applicants from the 16-24 age group is considerably higher than the national average.

Year	West Lothian Applicants 16-24	West Lothian % of Homeless Applicants 16-25	National % of Homeless Applicants 16-25
2018/19	472	31.1%	24.3
2019/20	478	32.4%	23.7
2020/21	528	36%	25.2
2021/22	119 (Q1)	36.1 %(Q1)	Not known

### **D.3 Options for Supported Housing for Young People**

Following the refusal of planning consent at Nellburn Road a review of the potential sites was carried out. Three sites in Livingston were identified as being suitable and available for the purpose of the development. These are;

- Site adjacent to Almondvale Stadium
- Nellburn Road, Deans
- The Trim Track

The main considerations are location, local amenities, timescale for development, community and planning considerations. The site appraisal is noted at Appendix 1 with the preferred site being Option 1.

#### **Option 1: Almondvale Stadium site, Livingston**

This option could deliver supported housing by early 2023. The site is available immediately and in a priority area for the project. The size of the site would be sufficient for the development of the proposed 28 units plus a future affordable housing programme. It is integrated to adjacent council housing at Almondvale Stadium. Environmental Health do not consider the football Stadium presents significant noise issues for tenants of adjacent housing.

There would be a loss of some parking for council staff. There is no site investigation information and ground conditions could be a risk although there is existing new housing development on the site adjacent. There could be issues with Scottish Water and a flood risk assessment will be required as well as site investigations. The site is allocated in the Local Development Plan for mixed use development and is the preferred site for development. A site location plan can be found at Appendix 2.

#### **Option 2: Existing Site at Nellburn Road, Deans, Livingston**

This option would require reduced capacity to 20 units (8 x one-bedroom studio flats and 12 x one-bedroom mainstream flats). The key issues identified as a result of the refusal of the planning application would have to be addressed, notably identifying a suitable site for the gala day and securing agreement with the Gala Day committee and other interested parties.

No suitable locations have been identified for the relocation of the gala day and it is likely that there would continue to be community opposition to a development of this nature in this location. The issue of car parking at the football club would require to be addressed and there is currently no funding allocation for additional parking in the current budget.

This site is no longer considered suitable for the development due to the planning considerations and lack of alternative for the Gala Day.

#### **Option 3 Trim-Track site Almondvale, Livingston**

The site is available immediately. It is centrally located and close to local amenities including West Lothian College and it is allocated in the Local Development Plan for housing.

The size of the site would be sufficient for the development of 28 units required for the supported accommodation development plus a future affordable housing programme. Site investigations were completed for the previous council proposed development for 36 homes.

It is worth noting that Environmental Health has identified an issue with noise from nightclub. The noise would be both from the club itself and from people leaving it late at night. Planning have commented that, if a noise impact assessment was undertaken, even with a closed window test, it is unlikely that the site would be suitable for residential use, including temporary accommodation. This is a major consideration and restricts development on this site. The road junction may also need to be reconfigured with an estimated cost of £500,000.

Due to Environmental Health and Planning considerations along with the possible cost of the road junction this site is not considered to be suitable for the development.

#### **D.4 Next Steps**

Following a review of the sites available, Almondvale Stadium is considered to be the preferred site. If approved by Council Executive, the next steps are outlined in the table below.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>Complete</b>
Community Engagement and Planning Process	1 November 2021	31 January 2022
Tender Process	1 February 2022	28 March 2022
New Build Construction	9 May 2022	13 March 2023

There will be engagement with the football club and adjacent residents prior to the submission of the planning application. There is an opportunity for the club to promote the benefits of football as an activity to support health and well-being to young people who will live in the development.

#### **E. CONCLUSION**

The provision of supported accommodation for young people is urgently required to meet the needs of the young people of West Lothian. The three options outlined within the report provide alternative solutions for the delivery of the project. The Almondvale Stadium option is the preferred site to meet this need as it is the most viable option in terms of planning and site constraints as well as being in a good location for access to local services and amenities.

#### **F BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- West Lothian Council Executive 17 December 2019 New Build Temporary Accommodation in West Lothian.
- West Lothian Council Executive West Lothian Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) 2020/21 update.

Appendices/Attachments: 2

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**Interim Head of Housing Customer and Building Services**  
**26 October 2021**

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## Appendix 1 - SUPPORTED HOUSING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE Site Appraisal October 2021

### Option 1: Almondvale Stadium site (Almondvale, Livingston)

**Recommendation – to be approved**

#### Timeline

Report to Council Executive: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Site Start: May 2022

Site Completion: March 2023

Advantages/benefits	Disadvantages/risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Available immediately and in a priority area for the project</li> <li>Centrally located close to amenities and services.</li> <li>The size of the site would be sufficient for the unit</li> <li>Close proximity to West Lothian college, St John's Hospital and Arrochar House</li> <li>Links to football club</li> <li>Well integrated to adjacent council housing at Almondvale Stadium.</li> <li>Environmental Health do not have any major concerns about siting housing adjacent to the football stadium. There is adjacent housing nearby.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of parking</li> <li>No site investigation information – ground conditions could be a risk (although housing development adjacent)</li> <li>May be issues with Scottish Water</li> <li>Need a flood risk assessment.</li> </ul>

### Option 2: Existing Site at Nellburn Road, Deans, Livingston with reduced capacity

**Recommendation – this site cannot proceed as there is no alternative site for the gala day.**

Advantages/benefits	Disadvantages/risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site is in a priority area for the development close to amenities, services as well as part of a residential/community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning has been recently refused with on-going community opposition likely due to loss of amenity land due and impact of the development</li> <li>Site allocated in the LDP for 5 large units.</li> </ul>

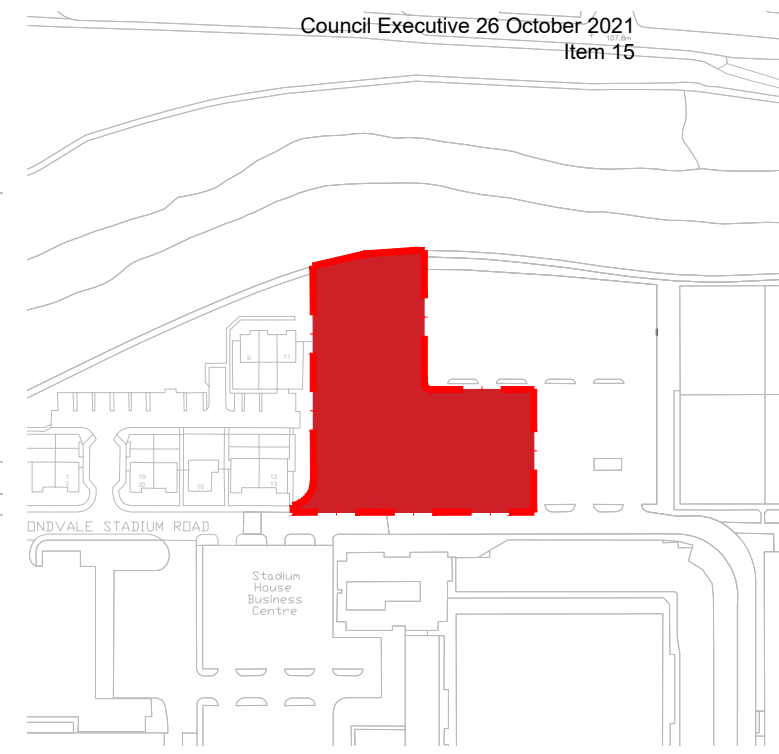
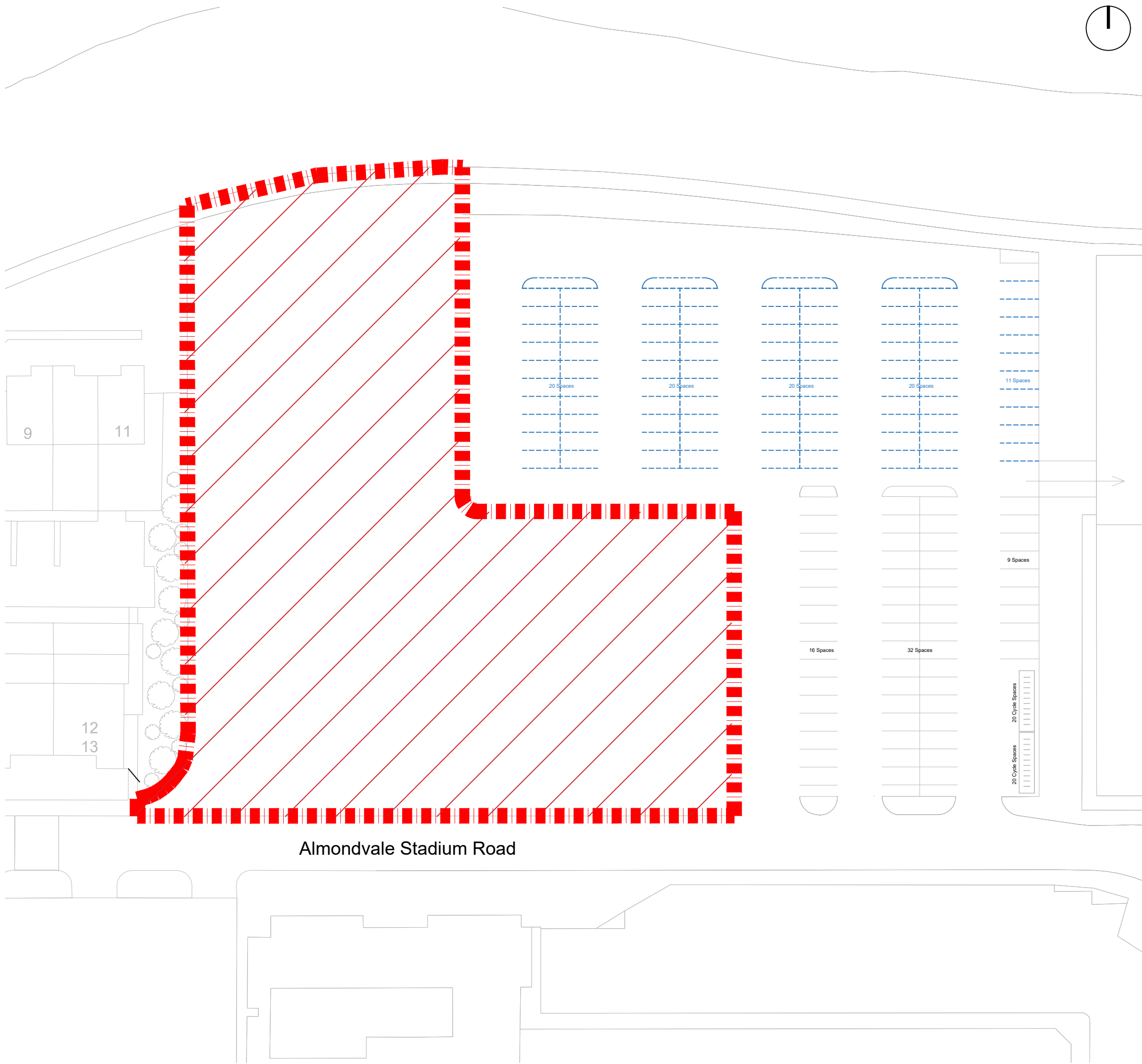
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a full design established that could be flexible to reduce the capacity of both the unit (from 12 to 8 studio flats) and the self-contained flats (from 16 to 12)</li> <li>• Site investigations have been done.</li> <li>• Land is zoned for housing on the LDP</li> <li>• Could reduce the height of the supported unit to two storeys (8 units) to assist with planning</li> <li>• Reduce the cluster to three buildings (12 units)</li> <li>• Potential for relationship to be developed with the football club to support young people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An alternative site for the Deans Gala day would have to be found and no suitable locations have been identified for the relocation.</li> <li>• Loss of capacity as would have to be reduced by 8 units (to 20 units).</li> <li>• Livingston United will move to a new league system which will require upgrade to facilities and potential car parking requirements.</li> <li>• Informal arrangement for car parking at present on land adjacent to the site may require to be formalised and likely to reduce parking spaces with the costs of the new car parking spaces within the leased area would be around £300,000 for 30 spaces.</li> <li>• Football matches every other Saturday August to June and mid-week training</li> </ul>
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### Option 3: Trim Track site Almondvale, Livingston

**Recommendation – This site is unlikely to be supported by Planning due to the noise issues from the adjacent night club.**

Advantages/benefits	Disadvantages/risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available immediately and in priority area for the project</li> <li>• Centrally located close to local amenities and established town centre residential development</li> <li>• Allocated in the Local Plan for housing</li> <li>• The size of the site would be sufficient for the 28 units required for the supported accommodation development plus a future affordable housing programme</li> <li>• Site investigations were done for the previous council Lovell development for 36 homes.</li> <li>• Opportunity for further development as part of the Affordable Housing Supply Programme with additional SG grant for more units.</li> <li>• Well integrated within the local area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise issue with nightclub and high risk of planning consent not being granted due to environmental impacts.</li> <li>• Road junction will need to be reconfigured. Possibly up to £500,000</li> <li>• Site levels and made ground across the site</li> </ul>



Location Plan

**Parking Numbers**

Existing Parking Spaces: 144no

Retained Spaces: 57no

New Spaces: 99no (Coloured Blue)

Total Current Spaces: 156no

Cycle Spaces: 40no

Site Area: 3982 sqm

*\*Trees drawn are indicative only*

Almondvale Stadium Road

PO3 Oct21 General Amends			
PO2 Oct21 Boundary Added			
Rev	date	details	A3 sheet
Status		INFORMATION	
 <b>West Lothian Council</b>			
ⓘ all dimensions to be checked on site ⓘ do not scale from drawings			
<b>Construction &amp; Design</b>			
Finance & Property Services			
West Lothian Civic Centre			
Howden South Road, Livingston EH54 6FF			
<b>Project</b>			
Young Persons Supported Accommodation			
Deans			
Livingston			
**			
<b>Drawing</b>			
Almondvale Stadium Option			
'L' Shaped Option			
date	03.08.21	scale(s)	1:500
drawn	JD	check	AM
project no.	CS17055	drawing no.	Rev
		P03	

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