



West Lothian
Council

Development Planning

(Draft) PLANNING BRIEF

Almondvale Roundabout (SW Quadrant)

NB version 23 standard clauses

SITE INFORMATION

LOCATION: The site lies off the Almondvale Roundabout on the junction with Alderstone Road to the east and Charlesfield Road to the north.

OWNERSHIP: West Lothian Council

AREA: Approx 0.5ha (TBC)

PLANNING POLICY

LOCAL PLAN:

The West Lothian Local Plan (adopted 2009)

POLICY: The site is allocated for town centre uses under the terms of the adopted WLLP. Policies TC2 and TC3 apply.

EXISTING USE: Vacant land

PROPOSED USES: A range of uses suitable to a town centre location could be accommodated on the site including retail, leisure, offices, business, recreation and residential development.

PREVIOUS PERMISSION: None

SPECIAL STATUS: None

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

Purpose of the Brief

The purpose of this planning brief is to guide the development of land to be disposed of by the council and identify key design, environmental and infrastructural requirements of the council as well as identify any additional community benefits that will be required as a result of the development of this site.

This brief is principally intended to be of assistance to potential developers of the site. They should demonstrate in their application that they have considered and addressed all the general and specific points raised in the brief. Any proposals submitted by the developer will be subject to the normal requirements of the statutory planning system and will be subject to any relevant new policy guidance, which may emerge between the issuing of these guidelines and the submission of a planning application.

The guidance provided in this planning brief is without prejudice to any further comments and decisions that may be made by the council on any formal consideration of a planning application to develop the site.

The council is committed to creating high quality environments by raising design standards across all forms of development and retaining/safeguarding any specific items of special merit such as specimen trees for example. It is the responsibility of developers to comply with the detailed requirements of these guidelines. Further guidance is set out in the council's Residential Development Guide, 2002 which is available from the council. This document is under review.

Please be aware that the accompanying plans and boundaries are indicative and should not be scaled. Exact boundaries must be agreed at the time of any planning application and disposal agreement.

Site Context

The site lies on the western edge of Livingston town centre and within the town centre envelope. It forms a corner site constrained by the two principle access routes of Charlesfield Road and Alderstone Road.

Development Mix

A mixed-use development with a presumption in favour of leisure/offices/business/recreational developments and flatted housing is considered appropriate.

Where private sector housing development is proposed a contribution towards affordable housing will be required in accordance with the terms of the council's Affordable Housing Policy. Land transferred to West Lothian Council or to a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) under the terms of the Affordable Housing Policy will require to be fully serviced. The date of transfer of such land to the council will be determined on a site-by-site basis. Potential purchasers should note that it is proposed to amend the Affordable Housing Policy. This will result in the need to update the current supplementary planning guidance covering affordable housing. It is recommended that prospective developers discuss affordable housing contributions with the council at an early stage. There are some specific exemptions that apply. Copies of the policy paper are available at

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/downloaddoc/1799514/1841832/1850797/1874545/affordablehousing>

Retail

The West Lothian Retail Capacity Study (WLRCS) was commissioned by the council in June 2008. The purpose of the study was to consider convenience shopping provision and make recommendations on the adequacy of retail floorspace provided within West Lothian in relation to current and projected available expenditure. The study also examined the core development areas identified within the West Lothian Local Plan and reported on their suitability to accommodate convenience retail development to serve these areas. This study is a material consideration in the consideration of planning proposals for convenience retail development. The study can be viewed at <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/205/207>

Housing Density

Within a range of 35 – 45 dwellings per hectare is considered appropriate.

Materials

There are no specific requirements regarding materials, but the developer may wish to consider some continuity with the themes established in the external materials of adjacent developments.

Vehicular Access

Access from Alderstone Road would not be possible due to the proximity of the signalised roundabout, the bus stop and the underpass. In addition, there is no scope either to provide a dedicated right turn lane.

Access from Charlesfield Road subject to junction spacing requirements (min 70m from roundabout) and visibility criteria being met. A capacity assessment of the junction and interaction with Almondvale Roundabout is required to support development of the site. A new access so close to a signalised roundabout is not ideal and although the site is relatively small it may require the provision of a dedicated right turn lane and localised road widening to accommodate this.

The approved Residential Development Guide (2002) sets out details on improving road safety and reducing vehicle speeds. It provides details in relation to roads hierarchy, road junctions, sightlines, private and housing association parking, footpaths and transport assessments and these must be adhered to when considering access points and road layouts. The council's Transportation Unit is reviewing their roads standards.

Parking

As a general guideline, car parking for new residential developments should be provided at the following rates:

Residential Development

Dwellings up to 2 bedrooms – 1 residents off-street space per dwelling + 50% visitors on-street space per dwelling;

Dwellings with 3 or more bedrooms – 2 residents off-street spaces per dwelling + 25% visitors on-street space per dwelling.

Office Development

For office developments, 1 parking space per 30sqm floorspace is required. For cycle parking, 1 space per 300sqm is required.

Retail Development

For food retail development, for the first 500sqm, 1 parking space per 25sqm is required and thereafter 1 space per 17sqm. For cycle parking, 2 spaces per 300sqm of gross floor area is required. For non-food retail, 1 parking space per 25sqm is required.

Hotel Development

Hotel development will require 1 parking space per bedroom plus additional provision for bars/restaurants of 1 space per 7sqm floorspace. For cycle parking 1 space per 300sqm is required.

Leisure and Commercial Development

For leisure and commercial developments, potential purchasers are advised to contact the council's Transportation team for requirements.

For all other developments, please contact the council's Transportation Unit for details of parking standards.

Cycle Parking

In flatted developments, cycle parking should be provided in covered, lockable enclosures. One cycle rack should be provided for every two flats.

For other developments "Sheffield" type cycle racks should be provided.

Footpath Links

The site is served by two underpasses – to the east at Alderstone Road and to the north at Charlesfield Road. The underpass at Alderstone Road should be retained.

Developers will be required to provide a new section of footway on the west side of Alderstone Road to connect the existing footway near Adambrae Roundabout with the footway at the bus stop near the Almondvale Roundabout (see site plan), to adoptable council standards. This footway is required to provide a pedestrian link between the site and the Adambrae area, which is considered important if the proposed site is developed for the use classes suggested in the brief.

Layout/Design

Buildings should be designed and positioned to avoid any effect on the privacy of houses adjacent to the site. A minimum of 18m between windows of habitable rooms should be taken as a guide (see the Residential Development Guide 2002 for details of relaxations).

The council has approved a Residential Development Guide 2002, which sets out specific detailed advice on development standards that developers will be expected to meet. Copies of the Guide can be made available on request although it should be noted that the guide is under review.

A high quality development will be achieved by applying a design solution appropriate to this specific site and a requirement for high quality design, layout and building materials.

In terms of particular design aspects, the developer will require to take account of the following:

- The design and layout of the development must create a secure environment where opportunities for potential crime are minimised, but without compromise to design quality and residential amenity. The layout should, wherever possible, exploit opportunities for natural surveillance. All paths, cycleways and open spaces should either be overlooked by development, or where paths and cycleways are not overlooked, they should be surfaced and lit. Landscaping adjacent to paths must be at a low level. The developer should have regard to PAN 77 Designing Safer Places.
- The risk of potential crime must be considered in the overall design and layout of the site and general surveillance of pedestrian footpath links and parking areas is required.
- The site to be laid out and orientated to maximise solar gain and minimise exposure.

- Developers will be required to design and specify housing and other buildings which take advantage of good practice in energy and water conservation.

In terms of particular design principles for this site, the council will require:

- Buildings to be designed and positioned to avoid overlooking and adherence to the council's privacy standards as expressed in the Residential Development Guide.

Play Space/Outdoor play spaces -

Where more than 20 houses are proposed there will be a requirement for contributions of £500.00 per unit towards play provision as per the requirements of the council's Residential Development Guide. Flats are currently exempt from this requirement. Developers should note, however, that the Residential Development Guide is currently under review.

Landscaping and Open Space/Landscape Treatment

Internal open space and communal landscaping should be kept to the minimum. It should be simple, durable and easily maintained.

Archaeology

From the information currently available to the council and its advisers, there are no known archaeological remains on this site.

Biodiversity

The council has a duty under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 to protect and conserve biodiversity and the West Lothian Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2005-2009 identifies habitats and species of significance. Developers will be required to assess the biodiversity status of the site including its potential as a habitat for wildlife by way of an independent site survey undertaken by appropriately qualified persons. The developer will be required to liaise closely with SNH and the council regarding these matters and *where required* submit proposed remedial measures to offset any adverse impacts of development.

Trees

There are a number of trees along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site. Trees on the southern boundary, forming a buffer to the housing development beyond should be retained.

Before any start of work on site, sturdy protective fencing should be erected to prevent damage to existing mature trees. Reference should be made to BS 5837:2005 - "Trees in Relation to Construction" in designing the landscape element of the scheme. A landscaping plan must be submitted with any planning application.

Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs)

The Council has no information to suggest that this site is necessarily susceptible to flooding. Records have only been maintained since November 1997 however and incidents of flooding have not always been brought to the Council's attention. The developer is advised that the site comprises a section of open watercourse, which includes a headwall and associated trash screen. The greatest risk of flooding in West Lothian is associated with obstruction of trash screens and failure or a lack of capacity associated with culverted watercourses.

A Flood Risk Assessment must be provided and the specification agreed with the council's Flood Risk Management Officer. In particular it must assess the likelihood of flooding on the site and the consequence of any flooding and recommendations for potential alleviation.

In April 2008 the council approved supplementary planning guidance on flooding issues in West Lothian. The guidance sets out the requirements for the preparation and submission of Drainage Assessments and Flood Risk Assessments for developments. It also includes reference to Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems within the West Lothian area. The SPG is available at <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/205/207>

The flow of surface water from the site is not currently subject to treatment and attenuation. The developer is expected to meet the treatment requirements of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). It is expected that the surface water drainage system will be vested in Scottish Water as drainage authority and

will, as a consequence, be designed and constructed fully in accord with Scottish Water's Construction Standards and Vesting Conditions 'Sewers for Scotland', Second Edition.

The forward flow of surface water from the site shall be attenuated. The critical 1:100-year post-development flow shall be attenuated to the equivalent of approximately five litres per second per hectare. There may be scope to include attenuation as part of the treatment facility required by SEPA. An end of line treatment system alone is unlikely to be acceptable. A series of source and site controls will be required as an integral part of the surface water drainage system.

The surface water drainage system shall be fully constructed in accordance with the approved plans and details prior to any unit being occupied. In April 2008, the council approved supplementary planning guidance on Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems. The guidance can be accessed at: <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/205/207>

The flow of surface water from the site shall be treated to meet the requirements of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). SEPA advise that for residential developments, two levels of SUDS treatment may be required for hardstanding areas (including roads). Reference should be made to SEPA's Regulatory Method (WAT-RM -08) for sewerage discharges.

Surface water must be drained to a watercourse, overland discharge area or surface water sewer. Only if this cannot be achieved should permission be sought to attenuate and drain to a combined sewer, but approval cannot be guaranteed and will be at the discretion of Scottish Water on a case-by-case basis.

It should be noted that SEPA does not assess issues associated with flood risk or the adoption of sustainable drainage infrastructure. It is therefore vital that developers consult directly with the council's Development Control Engineer, the Flood Risk Management Officer and Scottish Water on these issues.

In accordance with SEPA's 'Policy and Supporting Guidance on the Provision of Waste Water and Drainage in Settlements', there is a requirement that all developments within a sewered area be connected to the public sewer.

Developers must include surface water treatment to meet SEPA requirements. The developer must establish the extent and destination of post-development run-off and provide on-site attenuation proposals acceptable to the council.

A series of source controls to attenuate and treat surface water will have to be provided by the developer which may include water butts with overflow devices, permeable driveways, and above or below ground retention structures. This is in order to help minimise the cumulative effects of surface water downstream as a result of the development.

It is expected that surface water drainage systems, including sustainable drainage systems for residential developments, will be vested in Scottish Water as drainage authority and will, as a consequence, be designed and constructed in accord with Scottish's Water's "Construction Standards and Vesting Conditions- Sewers for Scotland: Second edition (2000).

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Drainage Impact Assessment

The development is adjacent to a watercourse, including a culverted watercourses and a functional flood plain and may have a raised groundwater levels. A Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA) will be required. It must be comprehensive and must address the issues of foul, surface and ground water, including land drainage. It must identify the issues affecting the site pre-development and should outline the strategy post-development. The DIA shall generally comply with the document Drainage Impact Assessment - A Guide for Scotland published by SEPA et al. There are local variations to the document and early consultation with SEPA, Scottish Water, and the council's Flood Risk Management Officer is recommended (Graeme Hedger on 01506 776554).

No works may start on site until the DIA has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. The DIA shall include the sensitivity analysis and detail all elements of the surface water drainage system pre and post-development, risk assessment, details of any temporary abatement proposed until the permanent drainage system is in place, evidence that the drainage system meets the treatment requirements of SEPA and evidence that the drainage system will be adopted by Scottish Water.

There is a particular issue of foul flow in West Lothian and it is important to consult with Scottish Water. Consequently, for the specific requirements of Scottish Water, developers are strongly advised to consult with them at an early date. Scottish Water can be contacted at connections@scottishwater.co.uk telephone: 0845 601 8855.

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Sensitivity analysis

A sensitivity analysis shall be carried out on the proposed layout to demonstrate that the critical storm up to and including the critical 1:200-year events will have no adverse effect on property forming part of the development or elsewhere.

Soil Protection

Due to heavy local soils and typically poor drainage characteristics, topsoil shall be stripped and stored during construction in accord with the guidelines in the council's Soil Sustainability Report. When it is not possible to avoid soil compaction, such as in the immediate environs of buildings, all debris shall be removed from site and intensive methods of soil cultivation be employed prior to the spreading of topsoil. Handling and trafficking of soil must be avoided during periods of wet weather and saturated ground conditions.

Energy Efficiency

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) identifies the use of energy efficient, micro generating and decentralised renewable energy systems as components in the move towards reducing emissions, but energy efficient design of buildings will make a significant contribution to reducing carbon emissions. Location, siting, orientation, design, materials and insulation are important factors in the energy efficiency of buildings. Section 72 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act requires all new buildings to be designed to avoid a specified and rising proportion of the projected greenhouse gas emissions from their use through the installation and operation of low and zero carbon generating technologies. This is a material consideration in the processing of a planning application. Applicants should consult with the Planning Authority and the council's Buildings Standards service if they require more information.

Reducing Carbon Emissions

The need to tackle climate change, and in particular reduce emissions of the greenhouse gases that contribute to it, is a principal challenge of sustainable economic growth. The 2010 Editions of the Building Standards Technical Handbooks, published on 6 April 2010, revise the Scottish Government's target setting for new buildings requiring delivery of a 30% reduction in CO2 emissions, reflecting the provisions of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

Developers will be required to ensure that their proposals meet with the latest building standards, guidance and methodologies provided in building regulations. Buildings must be designed to ensure that all new buildings avoid a specified and rising proportion of the projected greenhouse gas emissions from their use, calculated on the basis of the approved design and plans for the specific development, through the installation and operation of low and zero-carbon generating technologies.

The design of new development should therefore address the causes of climate change by minimising carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions and should include features that provide effective adaptation to the predicted effects of climate change. New development should be planned to make use of opportunities for decentralised and local renewable or low carbon sources of heat and power wherever possible.

The use of energy efficient, microgenerating and decentralised renewable energy systems will be components in the move towards reducing emissions, but energy efficient design of buildings will make a significant contribution to reducing emissions. Location, siting, orientation, design, materials and insulation are

therefore important factors to consider.

Waste Management

Space for collection, segregation, storage and possibly treatment of waste (e.g. individual and/or communal bin stores, composting facilities, and waste treatment facilities) should be allocated within the site layout. Prior to submitting a planning application, developers should contact the council's Waste Management team to determine site -specific requirements based on a proposed layout.

Sustainable Design

In anticipation of stringent government guidance requiring zero and low carbon, and, sustainable design standards for buildings, developers are encouraged to design and specify buildings and overall layout in a manner, which takes advantage of current and emerging best practice.

Education

The site is within the catchment areas of St Ninian's and Bankton primary schools and at secondary level James Young High School, St Margaret's Academy.

Please note that Education and Cultural Services is a statutory consultee in the planning permission process and an objection is a material consideration in the determination of planning permission. An objection by the Service could prevent planning permission being obtained. School rolls constantly change and prior to submission of planning permission it is recommended that future developers contact Education and Cultural Services to obtain an up to date steer on both the available capacity at the schools, education's position on any potential application and any contributions that are in place.

Prior to purchasing the site, the developer should contact the council's Education Services (Mark Brooks: 01506-281855) for up to date information on school rolls at particular schools. School rolls fluctuate and this would need to be considered in view of the available accommodation at the school and the Scottish Government's Education Department guidance that may apply at that time.

For all sites within West Lothian, Education Services require the developer to contribute to denominational secondary school provision in line with approved supplementary planning guidance. Contribution rates are £1,983 per residential unit. This applies to most residential development although a number of exemptions apply. Actual payments will be index linked to the changes indicated in the RICS Building Cost Information Service Tender Price Index using the 1st quarter 2010 as the base date and the levels of contribution will be reviewed regularly to take account of changed circumstances. See details within detailed Supplementary Planning Guidance for specific exemptions.

This Planning Brief was prepared within a specific timeframe. The situation with school rolls and capacity changes over each session. Government guidance may also change between school sessions. Consequently, there may be a need to phase a particular development with suspensive planning conditions that was not originally envisaged when this planning brief was prepared. Developers must consult with Education Services at an early stage in preparing their proposals (contact details on Site Plan).

The council has approved supplementary planning guidance on school commissioning costs in January 2007. There is a requirement for developer contributions in circumstances where new, or additional, school accommodation is necessary. Education Services can confirm the extent of this contribution (contact Mark Brooks: 01506-281855).

Ground Conditions

Interested parties must satisfy themselves on all matters relating to ground conditions within and adjacent to the site. It is known that made-up ground exists within the central part of the site.

A contour plan of the existing and proposed final levels on the site must be submitted with the planning application. This survey should include the land immediately to the east of the skate park.

Contaminated Land

The council is not aware of any land contamination issues on the site. However, developers must submit with any planning application a study and report assessing the site for contamination and adverse ground

conditions. If there is any indication of contamination, or other ground condition problems, a remediation strategy and environmental insurance must be provided by suitably qualified persons or organisations acceptable to the council and be made available with the submission of any planning application. The above requirement will not prejudice any action that may be taken under the statutory contaminated land regime.

The council has produced supplementary planning guidance (SPG) on land contamination which was approved by the Council Executive on 29 September 2009. This is available at <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/205/207>

Developers should contact the council's contaminated land officer for further information (contact Neil Brown, 01506 282423).

Noise

In June 2008, the council approved supplementary planning guidance (SPG) on noise issues. On sites that are likely to be noise sensitive, the assessments and mitigation requirements of the SPG must be considered and provided in any development proposals. Copies of the SPG are available at <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/205/207>. In this instance a formal noise assessment is considered unlikely.

Health Impact Assessment

In August 2008, the council approved supplementary planning guidance (SPG) on Health Impact Assessment. This site does not meet the types of development specified in the SPG that requires a HIA to be undertaken. Copies of the SPG are available at <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/205/207>

Construction Training and Local Employment Agreements

In December 2008, the council approved supplementary planning guidance entitled Construction Training and Local Employment Agreements. This SPG encourages developers in West Lothian to enter into Local Employment Agreements (LEA) with the council. These agreements would set out how the developer intends to make training opportunities available to local people and make available entry-level employment opportunities for disadvantaged priority groups e.g. long-term unemployed, single parents, incapacity benefit claimants, young people, minority groups. Developers are not compelled to comply with the SPG but are encouraged to bring forward proposals which are aimed at promoting training and entry-level employment opportunities on a voluntary basis. It is likely that larger scale developers will wish to sign up to the guidance, however there is no threshold established within the SPG. It can be viewed at the following link on the council's website: <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/205/207>

Controlling light pollution (and reducing lighting energy consumption)

In September 2009 the council approved supplementary planning guidance entitled Controlling Light Pollution and Reducing Lighting Energy Consumption. This SPG addresses two important environmental factors, namely nuisance light and energy usage. Specifically, it seeks to encourage developers, architects and lighting designers to provide non-obtrusive and energy efficient lighting designs when preparing proposals for any development which incorporates an element of out-of-doors artificial lighting. It relates to all exterior lighting situations regardless of the location of the lighting project or whether it is a stand alone project or part of an overall development. Potential developments and lighting situations include, but are not limited to industrial developments, retail developments, housing developments, transport interchanges, roads and footpaths (either stand alone or as part of an overall development), exterior sports grounds and arenas, feature lighting for civic enhancement, illuminated advertisements, and replacement of existing lighting installations.

All developments are required to take cognisance of this guidance when developing plans to be submitted with their planning application. Copies of the guidance are available at: <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/205/207>

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Provision of Digital Ducting Within New Developments

Planning Services has developed the above guidance in conjunction with Economic Development colleagues in the council. It was approved by the Council Executive on 13 April 2010. The guidance is designed and written for housing and other developers who intend or who wish to consider the laying of ducting on

development sites, and in particular within new housing developments, for the delivery of digital data services that are fit for purpose for digital service provision now and well into the future. It will also make developers aware of what they should be considering in providing such infrastructure where they may have not considered this as a factor in planning their developments. A copy of the approved guidance is available on request and can also be viewed at the following web link: <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/205/207>.

Services

All services are assumed to be available to the site. Developers must consult utility providers direct (initial contact details on Site Plan). Any services information shown on the site plan is diagrammatic only and must not be scaled. The developer must verify the actual position of mains and services directly with the relevant supplier.

Developer Contributions

In addition to the requirements set out above, the council has identified a series of additional contributions which developers of new sites are now required to provide. Details of this supplementary guidance can be found on the council's website at <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/205/207>. The following contributions would be applicable to this site.

Travel Plan Co-ordinator – Where residential development is proposed a “Travel Information Pack” requires to be provided to each householder. A travel plan will be required for class 4 developments. (Contributions are to be secured through Section 69 Agreement).

Note: Financial contributions towards a travel co-ordinator service were suspended for a two-year period from 25 November 2008.

Public Art – Applies to residential development (+10 units) and retail uses. In the case of a residential development with between 10 and 49 units the required contribution is £150 per unit. Developments with more than 50 units are charged at the higher rate of £250 per unit. Supplementary Planning Guidance can be viewed at <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/205/207>

Cemetery provision – To allow the council to plan for strategic cemetery provision, developers will be required to contribute £35 per house towards new cemetery provision. This contribution also applies to flats. An SPG is available on West Lothian Cemetery contributions and can be accessed at <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/205/207>.

General

Developers must satisfy themselves in all matters relating to the site including ground conditions, and are strongly advised to contact the Council's Development Planning and Transportation units and Development Management and Building Control units to discuss proposals prior to making an offer for the site. The above guidance is provided without prejudice to any further comments or decisions that may be made by the council on formal consideration of a planning application to develop the site.

Applicants are advised to discuss their proposals with the Development Management and Development Planning units prior to submitting any offer for the site, or a planning application. Application forms, neighbour notification procedures and fee scales are available from the Development Management Unit, County Buildings, High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7EZ, or contact: 01506-282456. Alternatively, forms can be downloaded from the web site at: <https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk/WAM/>

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June 2011