



West Lothian  
Council

Development Planning

# (Draft) PLANNING Guidelines

## ALDERSTONE ROAD WEST, LIVINGSTON

### SITE INFORMATION

**LOCATION:**

Located on the north western edge of Livingston town centre, the site lies on the western side of Alderstone Road and to the west of Almondvale Stadium and the Lidl supermarket. The site is bounded to the east by Alderstone Road, to the north and west by the River Almond and to the south by housing at Kaims Grove.

**OWNERSHIP:** West Lothian Council

**AREA:** 1.97 ha (gross)

### PLANNING POLICY

**LOCAL PLAN:**

West Lothian Local Plan

**POLICY:**

Sites for Town Centre Uses – TC2, TC3, TC5 and TC6.

**EXISTING USE:** partly maintained grassland/park land with some copses of woodland with some informal timber seating and pathway links.

**PROPOSED USES:** housing

**PREVIOUS PERMISSION** None

**SPECIAL STATUS:** None

### DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

**Purpose of the Guidelines**

These guidelines are intended to guide the development of land to be disposed of by the council. Their purpose is to identify key design, environmental and infrastructural requirements. It should be noted that the guidelines have been subjected to limited public consultation and have not been formally approved by the Council Executive.

The guidelines are intended to be of assistance to potential developers of the site. Developers should demonstrate in their application that they have considered and addressed all the general and specific points raised in the guidelines. 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 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.

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 presently comprises open space and a footpath system connecting Alderstone Road with the riverside walkway to the west. The land rises in the south towards Kaims Grove beyond an area of low lying poorly drained ground, and again towards the north, falling away steeply downwards to the River Almond in the north-western corner. The central section of the site contains man-made landscaped mounding where it fronts Alderstone Road, falling away to more level ground to the rear.
- The site commands open aspects and extensive views across the River Almond and open space to the west.

#### **Development Mix**

- Housing development is considered appropriate. Where council house build is proposed, terraced housing and the provision of houses for wheelchair users 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 (June 2006).

#### **Density**

- Approximately 35 dwellings per hectare.

#### **Vehicular Access**

- Access to the site must be taken from the southern set of traffic lights on Alderstone Road, which provide access onto Almondvale Stadium Road and the commercial area adjacent to the Almondvale Stadium.
- Upgrading of the junction with Alderstone Road will be required to allow for dedicated left/right turn lanes on Alderstone Road.
- Where private sector house building is proposed the full costs of upgrade are to be met at developer expense and will be determined upon submission of a Transport Assessment and discussion with the council's Transportation Unit.
- Provision of a 2 metre wide footway along the 'missing' section of footpath between points A and B on the attached plan.

#### **Parking**

- 150% provision for all residential units.

#### **Layout/Design**

- 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.
- Development will require to be of the highest quality in terms of design, layout and materials to reflect this location at the northwest 'gateway' to the town centre.
- 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.

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

- The northern part of the site consists principally of made up ground as a result of road building schemes. There is an opportunity to remove this material from here to create an extended and level development footprint.

- Potential flood risk on the western boundary in proximity to the River Almond.
- The site is poorly drained at the southern section.
- Views into the site will be important from housing to the north of the site, Alderstone Road and the development to the east and from the River Almond Walkway to the west.
- A clear distinction between public and private space.
- The design and layout of the development to create a secure environment where opportunities for crime are minimised, but without compromise to design quality and residential amenity.
- 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.
- A strong building line and active frontage to Alderstone Road. The building line, however, shall be set back from Alderstone Road to accommodate a land reservation for improvements to Alderstone Road (see accompanying site plan for details).
- The site to be laid out and orientated to maximise solar gain and minimise exposure.
- Development to take advantage of good practice in energy and water conservation.
- A 10 metre standoff zone to accommodate enhanced landscaping and Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) provision shall be required at the southern boundary of the site.
- 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.

### **Energy Efficiency**

- As required by Scottish Planning Policy 6: Renewable Energy, all planning applications proposing development with a cumulative floor space of 500 square metres or more will require on-site and appropriate renewable energy generation sources contributing an extra 15% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions beyond the 2007 building regulations standard.

### **Sustainable Development**

- Developers are encouraged to design and specify buildings and overall layout in a manner, which takes advantage of current and emerging best practice in zero and low carbon, and, sustainable design standards for buildings.

### **Need for a Drainage Impact Assessment**

- The applicant will be required to submit a site specific Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA) and Flood Risk Assessment as part of a planning application.

### **Surface Water Run-Off**

- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) will be required to treat surface water run-off from the site.

### **Footpath Links**

- Upgrading of the footpath on the western boundary is required. The footpath is to be surfaced, lit and brought up to a standard suitable for adoption by the council.
- Upgrading of the footpath to include that section of footpath under the road bridge to connect with the upgraded footpath required as part of the development proposals for the site to the east.
- Improvements required to walking routes between the site and Toronto Primary School to provide lit and paved routes to school.
- Developer contributions towards improvements to the wider network of walking routes to schools. Potential purchasers are asked to consult direct with Education Services.
- Footpath link to be retained east to west through the site and is shown indicatively on the accompanying site plan and surfaced, lit and brought up to a standard suitable for adoption by the council. The exact location of the footpath to be determined in consultation with Transportation having considered the requirements for road improvement and footpath links to schools.

### **Play Space**

- Developers will be required to contribute £500 per house to upgrade nearby existing facilities. However, this contribution does not apply to flats.

### **Landscaping and Open Space**

- Retention of trees at the boundary with Kaims Grove and enhanced with additional planting.
- Access for landscape maintenance should also be considered as open space may be consolidated into larger areas of open space to maximise informal use within the limited development area.
- If development is concentrated in the central part of the site, there will be a requirement to retain much of the older planting, principally gorse and shrubs at the northern part of the site and along the frontage with Alderstone Road.

### **Biodiversity**

- The river environment will require to be assessed for its biodiversity and ecology value and plans brought forward for its protection and improvement. The scope of the study should be agreed with the council's Development Management Unit. The River Almond and corridor form a Listed Wildlife Site.
- As a matter of course, where a site involves a man-made or natural watercourse, these must be surveyed for the presence of otter, water vole and great crested newts. There is a strong likelihood that water vole and otters may be present in this area, and great crested newts in the area of poorly drained ground. There may also be orchids present in the areas of rough grassland.
- The developer will be required to liaise closely with SNH and the council regarding these matters.
- Where required, the developer will be required to submit proposed remedial measures to offset any adverse impacts of development.

### **Boundaries**

- 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.

### **Education**

- The site is within the catchment areas of Toronto Primary School, Inveralmond Community High School, St Ninian's RC Primary School and St Margaret's RC High School.
- Developer contributions will be required towards denominational secondary school provision.

### **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.

### **Contaminated Land**

- Potential for site contamination. A Contaminated Land Survey will be required including a remediation statement and environmental insurance acceptable to the council and made available with the submission of any planning application.

### **Services**

- All services are assumed to be available to the site. The position of service equipment is shown on the attached Service Plan. These services may have an impact on and/or restrict the extent of development, and it is therefore important that, prior to making an offer for the site, developers contact all the service providers and the Health and Safety Executive direct.

### **Archaeology**

- An archaeological report will be required.

### **Developer Contributions**

- 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** – A "Travel Information Pack" requires to be provided to each householder.

**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.

**Affordable Housing** - Where over 5 residential units are proposed, there will be a requirement for any developer of this site to provide for 15% of the total site capacity to be available for affordable housing or by other means outlined in the policy. Commuted sums will only generally be applicable where the site capacity is between 5 and 19 units. Developments of 20 units and above will require the transfer of fully serviced land to the council or a Registered Social Landlord. The date of transfer of the land to the council will be determined on an individual site basis.

**Cemetery provision** – Where 5 residential units and above are proposed, there will be a requirement for any developer to contribute £35 per unit. This contribution also applies to flats. Developers should note this guidance is currently being reviewed.

**Play provision** - Contribution of £500 per house to upgrade nearby facilities within the policy catchment area as determined by the council's Nets and Land Services Unit.

**Education** - Developer contributions of £1767 per house and £1015 per flat are currently required towards denominational secondary school provision.

**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 Unit 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.

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