





West Lothian
Council

Development & Building Control

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDE 2002



preface

**A few words from the Chair of the Development Control Special Sub-Committee,
West Lothian Council**

West Lothian has experienced a welcome upsurge in house building activity in recent years and now accounts for over 40% of new house building in the Lothians. The rate of house building in the county is expected to continue to be at a high level for the foreseeable future as work on the emerging Structure Plan for the Lothians has revealed that substantial new housing allocations will be required to meet future housing needs.

The council is pleased to see high levels of investment in the county but the challenge is to ensure that the special qualities of West Lothian are protected and enhanced and that the quality of new development is high. This Residential Development Guide sets out the development standards that will be expected by the council in our quest for attractive, safe and environmentally sustainable residential developments in this new millennium.

I am pleased to commend this important policy document.

Alex Davidson
Chair of the Development Control Special Sub-Committee
March 2002





introduction

This guide sets out advice and guidance on the development standards that applicants will be expected to meet in planning application submissions for medium to large scale residential developments in urban areas within West Lothian.

A separate advice note, “How to Avoid Town Cramming”, is available which sets out guidelines applicable to single house plots and small infill sites in existing urban areas.

The guide should be read in conjunction with the Development Plan, other policy documents such as the finalised West Lothian Local Plan and any development briefs which contain detailed site specific requirements.

It is important to emphasise that this document is intended as a guide for residential development. The council will be prepared to interpret the development standards laid down in this guide in a flexible way if this can be justified on sound planning grounds.

Aims

Our aims for new housing developments are as follows:

- to ensure that new developments are visually attractive, safe, well integrated with their surroundings and designed on environmental sustainability principles in order to enhance the environment and lifestyle of the people of West Lothian.



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layout and design issues

Context and setting

Developers should seek to avoid creating schemes to a standard formula. Instead, they should seek to create places which relate well to their locality. The overall concept of a development must therefore be considered from the outset. The starting point should be to take account of local topography, existing building types and layouts, trees and planting and existing movement routes and linkages.

Scale and density

New houses must relate well to adjacent premises and must not have an overbearing effect or look out of place. Buildings of special townscape quality at key locations to

provide attractive and imposing landmarks will be encouraged.

The appropriate density for a site will be assessed on merit, taking into account site location and the character of surrounding areas. Generally, higher densities will be appropriate in town centre sites and close to neighbourhood centres and main public transport routes. Lower densities will generally be most appropriate in the least accessible areas.

Uniform densities and storey heights across a development should generally be avoided, particularly within large scale developments to add variety to the urban character.



*Left: Varied house types, Livingston
 Middle left: High density housing, West Calder
 Middle right: Sculpture, Livingston
 Right: Housing fronting onto distributor road*

Layout, design and materials

Developments set to a rigid building line with house types spaced at regular intervals and having the same materials throughout leads to monotonous, standardised development which contributes little to the urban environment and must be avoided.

In order to ensure that each new housing development has its own identity, developers should seek to create places of interest and individual character by imaginatively designing areas of open space and structural landscaping and providing distinctive features and landmarks at key viewpoints. Large estates with more than 100 houses should have a distinctive entry point or gateway identifying the scheme and a central or linear landscaped open space to achieve orientation and local character. Using a variety of colour and texture of building materials and a range of house types will also help to create places of interest and character. Materials should relate well to existing developments. This will be especially important in conservation areas.

Developments which are inward looking and turn their back on their surroundings should be avoided to ensure that they are well integrated with their surroundings and relate well to their locality. As a general rule therefore, housing should present an attractive frontage onto all roads and public areas within and surrounding a site. In many cases, direct frontage access will be possible. Where it is not, single sided development may be necessary to achieve an attractive frontage.

Street frontages dominated by parked cars must be avoided. The over use of house types with integral garages and terraced houses with in-curtilage parking to the front should therefore be avoided. Where garages are proposed, they should ideally be located in rear gardens or located where they can make a positive contribution to the streetscene.

Buildings which are sited at the back edge or close to the public footway will be encouraged to enclose space effectively. This will require car parking to be sited between houses, beneath upper storey structures or within parking courts. This will reduce the visual impact of the car and increase the amount of land available for private rear gardens.

Layouts should be designed so that excessive underbuilding is avoided. Details of any site regrading works (with before and after contours) should be submitted as part of the planning application. Details of finished floor levels must be submitted at the time the planning application is made.

Small awkward areas of open space which make little contribution to the overall development concept should be designed out.

All houses, unless otherwise agreed, must be capable of being accessed by disabled persons.

Open space and play areas

The following guidelines outline the minimum standards of provision which will be sought in new residential developments:

Scale of development	Amenity open space	Equipped play area / kick pitch
Up to 20 houses	No specific requirement	No specific requirement
21-49 houses	20m ² per house	Equipped play area of at least 400m ²
50-99 houses	20m ² per house	Equipped play area: 10m ² per house
100 houses upwards	20m ² per house	Equipped play area: 10m ² per house plus kick pitch – 5m ² per house

The provision of one or two large areas of amenity open space located centrally within a site will be preferable to the provision of several small pieces of open space scattered throughout the development. Open spaces should ideally be located at recognised focal points and along main through routes within a scheme where it is likely to be better supervised, used and maintained. All areas of amenity open space should contain areas of grass, trees and shrubs and be designed to minimise long-term maintenance costs.

Play areas and kick pitches should be located at least 25m from houses and should be overlooked by houses.

All play areas should contain at least one seat and a litter bin.

Play areas should generally be designed to serve children aged 0-12 years and should be designed to comply with BSEN 1176 (Parts 1-7), BSEN 117 and BSEN 7188. Larger play areas should also contain facilities for youths over 12 years e.g. aerial runway, single point swings, basketball hoops, wheeled areas for skateboarding and meeting points. An attractive range of facilities should be provided in all play areas in

order to provide for a range of play activities. As many of the following activities as possible should be catered for: balancing, jumping, climbing, sliding, rocking, rotating, scrambling, swinging, gliding, sitting. As a general guide, one item of play equipment should be provided for every 100m² of play space.

Play facilities should generally be located centrally within developments and must be located away from areas of major vehicle movements. There must be safe and convenient pedestrian access to all play areas.

Equipped play areas should generally be enclosed by fencing and dog grids.

Where a development caters primarily for the elderly or single people, the open space and play area requirements above will not apply and will be assessed on merit.

In some instances, consideration will be given to waiving the requirement to provide



play areas and / or kick pitches within sites if developers make a contribution towards the upgrading of existing nearby play facilities or the provision of a new play area serving several developments in the vicinity of the site. The size of the contribution will be worked out on the basis of £500 per house.



Above: Play area, Livingston
Right: Open space, East Calder

Tree issues

Every endeavour must be made to retain and accommodate existing trees within or adjacent to development sites unless there is an inherent risk to public safety presented by the trees in question which cannot reasonably be reduced by judicious tree surgery.

Where the status of the woodlands and shelter belts on or adjacent to a development site will change with the advent of development, the developer will be required to survey the trees and provide a detailed arboricultural report and risk assessment for the consideration of the council. The cost of any work identified as being necessary in the interests of public safety and agreed by the council shall be met by the developer who will be expected to enter into dialogue with adjacent landowners to this end. All tree work shall accord with BS 3998 : 1989 'Recommendations for Tree Work'.

Arboricultural reports must be prepared by a qualified, experienced arboriculturalist or forester familiar with current arboricultural practices.

Tree surveys / arboricultural reports must include the following:

- a scaled plan showing the crown spreads of existing trees within or adjacent to the site and their juxtaposition to the proposed development.
- a tree schedule, listing all essential tree data, including genus, species, vigour, age, safe useful life expectancy, height, stem diameter, crown spread, status.
- a brief but accurate description and evaluation of the tree's health and condition.
- a detailed risk assessment for all trees/woodlands in light of the proposed development.
- a statement confirming the amenity and conservation value and overall condition of trees or woodlands within or adjacent to the site.
- recommended arboricultural works in accord with BS3998.

Before any start can be made on site, sturdy protective fencing should be installed to prevent damage to existing shelter belts, woodlands, non-woodland trees and hedgerows. In considering trees in relation to layout, attention is drawn to BS 5837: 'Trees in relation to construction' (1991) and the council's leaflet 'Landscaping specification 1'.



TPO, Bellsquarry

The developer should retain, protect during construction and make good the existing drainage network that serves woodland on or adjacent to the site. Care should be taken not to sever the existing drains / ditches with footpaths, roads, etc.

No structure must be built closer than ten metres from the outer canopy of any mature tree.

The provision of new shelter belts, woodlands and non-woodland trees is encouraged within all residential developments in order to enhance the amenity of our communities. The minimum width of a shelter belt or woodland should be ten metres. More typically, however, shelter belts should be around 20m wide to provide long-term landscape value. Ground preparation, planting and management should accord with contemporary urban forestry and biodiversity enhancement techniques. Houses should be located at least 10m from the anticipated edge of any newly planted / proposed tree belt on maturity. The planting of native trees and shrubs should predominate. Developers must ensure that any non-native invasive weeds present on a site (such as Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam) are eradicated.



Landscaping

Landscape proposals should be presented at 1:200 scale and prepared by an experienced landscape professional, preferably an Associate of the Landscape Institute, the Institute of Horticulture or a Chartered Forester as appropriate. It is strongly recommended that the commission of such a specialist be extended to the supervision of the landscape works on site to ensure full compliance with the approved landscape plan.

Landscaping should be strategically placed and planted for best effect and designed for maximum impact and wildlife benefit. It must be simple, durable and easily maintained and of an appropriate content and density to establish quickly and successfully. The developer will be expected to incorporate some native climax tree species within the development and must endeavour to ensure one suitable small garden tree in each garden. Landscape works should comply with BS 4428 : 1989 'Code of practice for general landscape operations (excluding hard surfaces)'. Attention is also drawn to the council's leaflet 'Landscape specification 2'.

Developers will be encouraged to submit detailed landscape proposals prior to a planning permission being issued. In some instances, this may be insisted upon by the council. Conditions will normally be imposed requiring landscape works to be carried out as soon as possible. These conditions will be rigorously enforced.



Left: Landscaping and footpath, Linlithgow
Right: Tree belt, Philpstoun

Maintenance of open spaces, woodlands and play areas

Passing responsibility for areas of woodlands or play areas to homeowners by feuing conditions will not be acceptable. These areas should instead be transferred to the council, the Scottish Greenbelt Company, the Woodland Trust, or similar organisation approved by the council. Only areas of amenity open space should be factored.

The council will be prepared to adopt amenity open space, woodland areas and play areas provided there is a financial contribution from developers for future maintenance and management. For areas of open space and woodland, a capital sum equivalent to the maintenance cost of the land for 10 years will be required. Inflation will be allowed for in the calculation of this sum. For play areas, a lump sum equivalent to the cost of the play equipment will be required. This will be calculated at manufacturer's catalogue prices current at the time of handover. Cost of seats or other furniture in the play area will also be included. Further information on adoption procedures is available from the council's External Environment Unit.

Crime prevention

The risk of crime can be reduced through good design. Consultation with the architectural liaison officer of Lothian and Borders Police is therefore recommended. To minimise the risk of crime, developers will be expected to take account of the following when designing their schemes:

- houses should be grouped in clusters to allow mutual supervision and should back onto each other as far as practical.
- footpaths running between the back of houses should be avoided. Footpaths should be direct with pedestrians able to view the full length of the path on entry. Footpath links into developments should be designed to avoid excessive and unsupervised escape options available to criminals whilst still allowing essential links to schools, shops, play areas, open spaces, etc.
- there should be natural surveillance of parking areas, open spaces, play areas and footpaths with houses fronting onto these areas.
- lighting should have an even spread of illumination. High pressure sodium type lamps are preferred.
- fencing should be designed to discourage climbing. Vertically boarded fencing with sufficient gaps to allow intruders to be observed is preferred.
- landscape schemes should be designed with community safety in mind. As a general rule, shrub planting adjacent to footpaths should not exceed 1m in height once established. Footpaths through dense woodland should be avoided.



Play area, Livingston

- there must be a clear definition of public, semi-public and private spaces by the inclusion of appropriate boundary, surfaces and entrance treatment.

Further guidance is available in Planning Advice Note 46 “Planning for Crime Prevention”.





road issues

As the council is committed to encouraging sustainable forms of transport, reducing vehicle speeds and improving road safety, roads within new housing developments should be designed as part of an integrated network which positively discriminates in favour of pedestrians and cyclists. New housing developments will therefore require to include traffic calming measures, road markings, signage and other design features that achieve these key objectives.

A safe and efficient road network combines various types of road in hierarchical form from arterial routes to the domestic environment. The road hierarchy which should be established is as follows:

Road hierarchy

Main distributor roads

Provides for traffic movements into and out of town and links major residential and commercial districts.

District distributor road

Provides for major traffic movements within a town or district.

Local distributor road

- serves up to 1000 houses.
- 6.0m wide (may need to be increased to 7.3m on bus routes).
- limited frontage access (each access serving up to 4 houses - must be visitor parking nearby and turning facility with in curtilage to avoid reversing onto distributor road).
- 25mph design speed with safe crossing points.

General access road

- serves up to 200 houses if no emergency access is provided.
- serves up to 300 houses if emergency access is provided and 400 houses if loop road is provided
- 5.5m wide
- loop roads preferred
- frontage access
- 20mph design speed
- layout should be curvilinear
- traffic calming to be integral feature



Short cul-de-sac (with footways)

- 5.5m wide (narrowing points acceptable)
- frontage access
- turning facility requiring
- less than 20mph design speed
- layout should be curvilinear (tight bends with over run strips also acceptable)

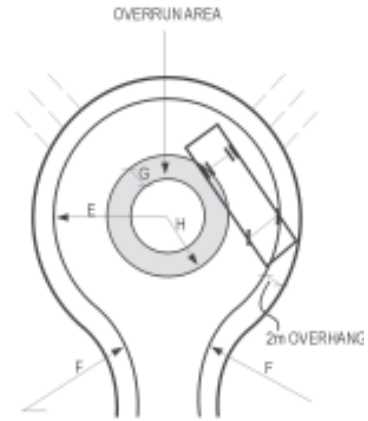
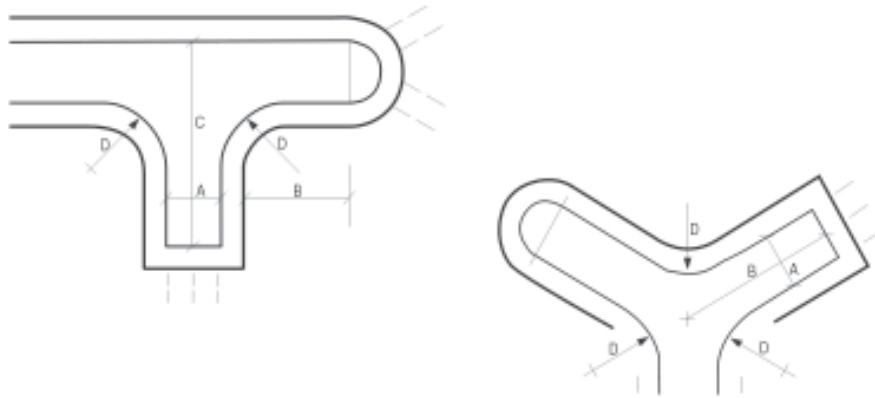
Left: Mixer court, Livingston South
Right: 20mph road markings, East Calder



Mixer court / Mixer court link

- up to 75m in length
- 5.5m wide (narrowing points acceptable)
- frontage access
- service strips and service strip crossing required
- turning facility required in mixer court (roundels preferred to avoid reversing movements)
- ramp at entrances required
- less than 20mph design speed
- layout should be curvilinear (tight bends with over run strips also acceptable)
- different colour and texture of materials from general access roads
- informal widening by 2.5m for visitor parking acceptable

TURNING AREAS (all dimension in metres)



Left: Sketches of turning areas
Below: Private road serving 2 houses

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT	5.0	12.5	15.0	6.0	10.5	10.5	2.0	6.0
RESIDENTIAL WITH BUSES	6.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	13.0		2.0	6.0 9.0



Private roads in urban areas

Up to 4 houses will be permitted from a 'private road' provided:

- the length of the driveway does not exceed 45m
- the driveway is 3.5m wide
- there are at least two in-curtilage parking spaces for each house served from the driveway
- allowance is made in the design for car turning movements
- none of the houses served by the shared driveway are more than 50m away from visitor parking bays

If the houses served off a 'private road' cannot be adequately lit from the public road network, the following procedure should be adopted:

- a 2m wide, publicly adoptable service strip adjacent to the shared driveway should be provided
- within the service strip, street lighting should be installed to the standards of the Council's Highways Unit
- the construction of the shared driveway shall be to adoptable standards but the geometry will be to a lesser standard.

Road construction consent will be required for any roads or footpaths which are to be adopted.

Construction consent will not be required for shared private driveways as they will not be considered for adoption. Details of road make-up will however have to be approved.

Road junctions

Junctions should be staggered. Crossroads will not be permitted.

See table, *Dimensions for priority junctions / sightlines* for specific requirements.

Sightlines

At priority junctions there should be full visibility to the left and right at a height of 1.05 metres above the carriageway level.

The distance back along the minor road is known as the 'x' distance. This is measured along the centre line of the minor road with the starting point being at the edge of the major road.

The 'x' distance shall be as set out in the table on the right.

The 'y' distance is the point where an approaching driver (on the minor road) shall be able to see clearly to the left and right of the nearest edge of the major road.

The 'y' distance is measured from the centre line of the minor road and is dependent upon the design speed of the major road as set out in the table on the right.

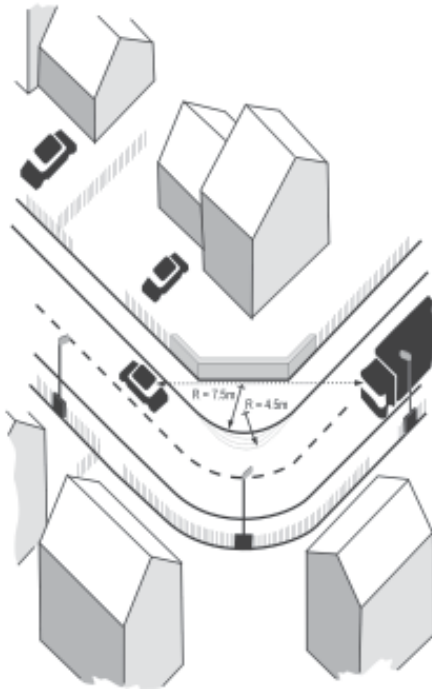
Relaxation of the 'y' distance will not be permitted. The visibility splay is achieved by joining point 'x' on the minor road to both 'y' points on the major road.

Visibility splays should be clearly shown on layout plan when the planning application is submitted.

The table below outlines the requirements which should be met:

Dimensions for priority junctions / sightlines					
Road type	Road type	Minimum spacing on major road (m)	Corner radii (m)	'x' (m)	'y' (m)
Local	Local				
Distributor	Distributor	100	10.5	9	90
Local	General				
Distributor	Access Road	100 (40+)	7.0 - 10.5	4.5	60
General	General				
Access Road	Access Road	25	6.0 - 7.5	4.5	60
General	Mixer Court or				
Access Road	Short Cul-de-sac	25	3.0 - 6.0	4.5	60
+ Absolute minimum					

VIEW OF A SPEED BEND



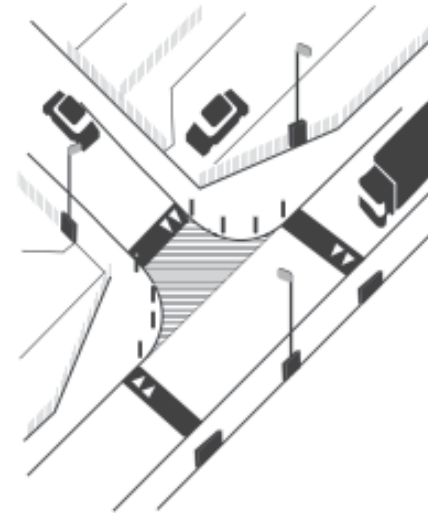
CONDITIONS OF USE
 New bend construction to angle between 80° and 100°
 Not suitable for Local Distributor Road

ASPECTS OF IMPLEMENTATION
 Overrun area located on inside of bend
 Good visibility across bend to be ensured
 The straight through view should not be blocked, e.g. building or wall
 Should be well illuminated
 15metres straight required between speed bend and adjacent reverse curve

ASSISTING FEATURES
 Vertical elements such as bollards or trees and shrubs can be planted to increase awareness

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
 Easily recognised feature increases driver awareness

RAISED JUNCTION



CONDITIONS OF USE
 Raised to same level as footway
 Not suitable for Local Distributor Road
 Suitable for any road width

ASPECTS OF IMPLEMENTATION
 Signing and lining to conform with Road Hump Regulations or change in material in 20mph zones
 Should be well illuminated
 Vertical measures to segregate pedestrians and vehicles

ASSISTING FEATURES
 Different surface
 Vertical measures such as bollards or trees and shrubs can be planted to increase awareness

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
 Vehicles parking on junction should generally be avoided
 Good crossing facilities for pedestrians
 Series may prove annoying to cyclists
 Limited use on bus routes

COMPLEMENTARY CALMING MEASURES
 6.6.4 (11) Central Island
 (21) Overrun Corners



Raised junction, Livingston

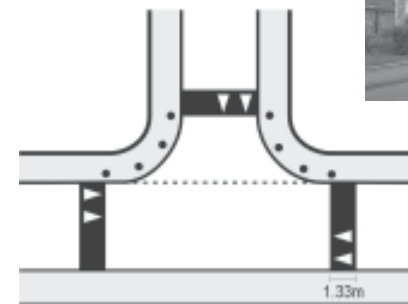
Traffic calming

All new roads within housing developments should have traffic calming features incorporated as an integral part of their design in order to restrain vehicle speeds to 30mph or less as appropriate (see Roads hierarchy, pages 13 - 14).

To restrain vehicle speeds to 30mph or less, traffic calming measures should be provided every 40m-70m.

Traffic calming measures could include tight bends, localised narrowing points, table junctions and raised areas (these will be particularly suitable where roads cross major pedestrian routes).

ROAD JUNCTION DESIGN



Part section through raised junction



Parking

Private housing

One allocated space per house.

Parking courts will be considered provided these are lit to adoptable standards, are overlooked and close to the houses they serve. Landscaping should be provided adjacent to and / or within parking courts to soften their impact but not obscure the parking area from informal surveillance. Core roads and visitor parking bays within parking courts should be constructed to adoptable standards. Private parking bays within parking courts should be clearly identified on site and will not be adopted.

To avoid parked cars dominating the surroundings, there should generally be no more than 12 spaces in any parking court.

In circumstances where each house only has one allocated private parking space, 50% visitor parking will be required.

If the level of allocated private parking space exceeds one space per house, the level of visitor parking can be reduced. The table below gives an indication of the level of visitor parking which will be acceptable:

Allocated (private)	Unallocated (visitor)
100%	50%
120%	45%
140%	40%
160%	35%
180%	30%
200% or more	25%



Visitor parking spaces should be overlooked but not too close to windows. Spaces should be well distributed throughout the development and should be located so that they are not intrusive. Lay-bys for one car should generally be avoided.

A 1m hardstanding should be provided around parking bays where there is no footway behind the parking bay. Where parking bays are at right angles to the carriageway and a footway is to be provided the footway should be located to the front of the parking bays, not at the rear.

Garages will not be taken into account when assessing the level of allocated parking spaces.

Parking standards for housing association developments

Where all houses have in-curtilage parking, visitor parking will be assessed in the same way as it is for private housing developments.

Where parking courts are provided, 150% parking provision is unlikely to be insisted upon provided none of the spaces are allocated. Each development will be assessed on merit taking into account information provided by housing associations on likely levels of car ownership.

In exceptional circumstances, in town centre sites with good public transport access for example, the total level of parking can be reduced to as low as 75% at the discretion of the council.



*Top left: Parking court
Bottom right: Lay by visitor parking*



Left: Footpath over looked by housing, Linlithgow
Right: Cycle rack

Cycle parking

In flatted developments, cycle parking should be provided in covered lockable enclosures.

Footpaths

Residential developments should be pedestrian friendly. To this end, developers should submit a pedestrian appraisal and design their layout to ensure that there will be convenient, safe and well lit footpaths to shops, local facilities (particularly schools) and adjoining housing areas. Where adjoining or developing local footpath networks exist developers will be expected to provide appropriate links. Where asserted or claimed rights of way exist these shall be integrated in the design as will established desire lines that may also cross a site.

The following requirements should be met:

- minor pedestrian routes should be 2m wide;
- major pedestrian/cycle routes should be 3m wide;
- dropped kerbs should be provided at crossing points;
- ramps should be provided in addition to steps, where appropriate (maximum gradient 10%, if gradient exceeds 8% a handrail will be required);
- gradients on footpaths should preferably not exceed 5% and only in exceptional cases should they exceed 8%;

- footpaths should be located so that there is natural surveillance of them from houses. High fencing on both sides of a footpath that encloses the route and creates an alleyway should be avoided;
- footpaths which are elevated in relation to houses and rear gardens should be avoided so as not to result in loss of privacy.

Transport assesment

A TA (Transport Assessment) will be required for residential developments exceeding 200 houses and in other circumstances where the council considers it necessary.

The scope of the TA should be agreed in advance with the council's Highways Manager.

Public transport, pedestrian movement, cycling and private vehicles should all be addressed by a TA.

Further Guidance

Further guidance for the design and construction of roads for adoption is set out in "Standards for development roads", a document prepared by the former Lothian Regional Council in 1992. A new guide for the design and construction of roads for adoption will be published by West Lothian Council in 2002.



plot considerations

Plot ratios

In order to avoid sites being over-developed the following plot ratio standards will apply:

- for detached and semi-detached houses, the minimum proportion of garden to building should be 70:30;
- for terraced houses the minimum proportion of garden to building should be 60:40.

Garden sizes

Gardens should provide adequate private space for drying areas, refuse storage, sitting out and childrens play.

As a general rule, the following guidance will apply:

- for detached houses, the rear private garden should be at least 100m²;
- for semi-detached houses, the rear private garden should be at least 60m²;
- for terraced houses, the rear private gardens should be at least 45m²;

These requirements may be relaxed in conservation areas or other areas where, for townscape reasons, less onerous requirements may be justified.

As far as is reasonably practical, garden gradients should not exceed 1:10.

Flatted developments should generally have some amenity open space which provides a setting for the development, refuse enclosures to store “wheelie bins” and storage for bicycles.

Distances between buildings

In order to avoid over-shadowing problems, layouts being too cramped and to ensure that there is a reasonable standard of privacy and day lighting within developments, it is appropriate to set standards controlling the distance between buildings. The following guidance will apply for single and two storey buildings:

Front to front distances	-	18m
Rear to rear distances	-	18m
Rear to side distances	-	12m
Front to side distances	-	15m
Side to side distances	-	A minimum of 1m either side of the mutual boundary will be expected. If there is a minor window on a gable, a minimum of 4m between buildings should be provided.

These requirements may be relaxed in conservation or other areas where, for townscape reasons, less onerous requirements may be justified.

The distances shall be increased at the discretion of the council for buildings exceeding two storey.

Privacy distances

Windows of apartments and kitchens, if not effectively screened, should be at least 18m apart when directly opposed.

This requirement may be relaxed in conservation or other areas where, for townscape reasons, less onerous requirements may be justified. Where windows are at an angle, the 18m privacy distance will be relaxed (see table below).

Angle at window of building to be erected not more than:

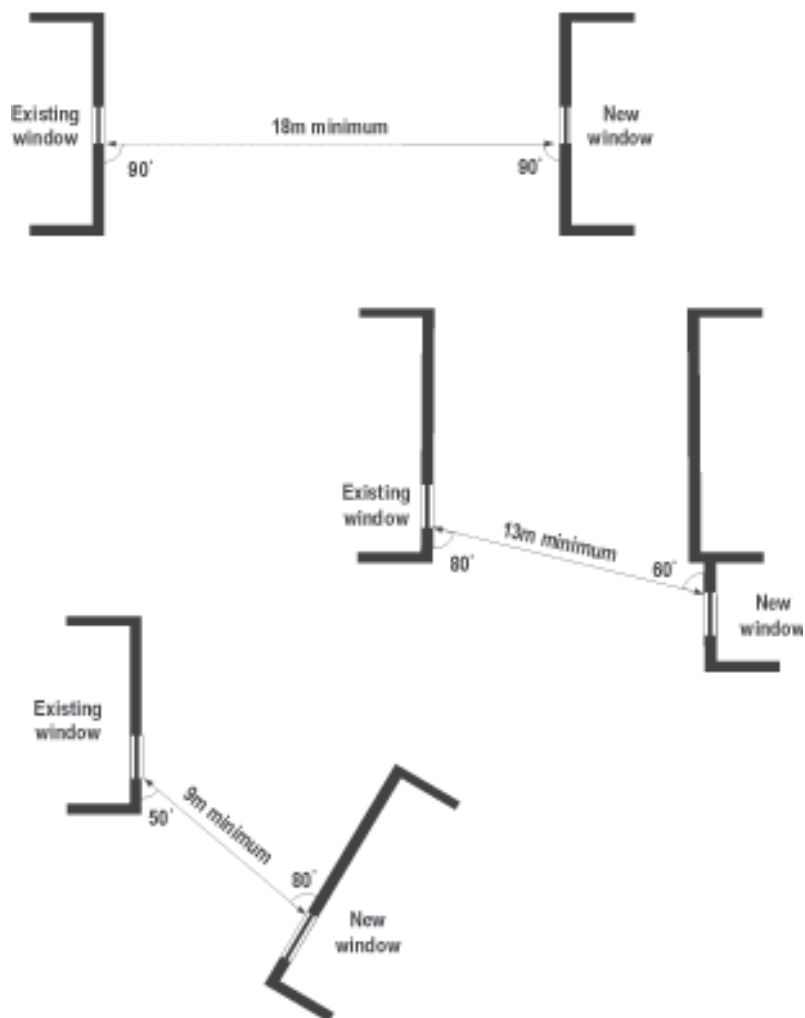
	90°	80°	70°	60°	50°	40°	30°	20°	10°	0°
90°	18	18	18	18	13	9	6	4	3	2
80°	18	18	18	13	9	6	4	3	2	
70°	18	18	13	9	6	4	3	2		
60°	18	13	9	6	4	3	2			
50°	13	9	6	4	3	2				
40°	9	6	4	3	2					
30°	6	4	3	2						
20°	4	3	2							
10°	3	2								
0°	2									

Distances shall be interpolated for intermediate angles

Angle means the horizontal angle included between:

- the shortest line joining any part of one window opening to any part of the other, and
- the vertical plane of the opening of the window.

WINDOW TO WINDOW DISTANCES



Driveways

A minimum driveway length of 6m and width of 3m should be provided. In mixer courts and mixer court links the 2m road verge can form part of the 6m driveway.

The first 2m of driveways should be finished in non-loose materials.

To avoid driveways being too steep and vehicles grounding, the maximum gradient for the first 2.5m of all driveways should not exceed 1:30. The maximum gradient for the remainder of all driveways should not exceed 1:8.

Walls, fences and railings

Attractive walls and railings at site entrances will be encouraged.

Long sections of unrelieved fencing in prominent locations should be avoided.

Rear gardens at corner plots should be screened by walls, rather than fencing.



Feature wall, Livingston

In mixer courts with grass service strips, fencing in front gardens will not normally be permitted. Elsewhere developers will be encouraged to provide front enclosures such as railings where conducive to traffic calming and visual variety.



sustainability and other considerations

Sustainability

The council recognises that good design of houses, layouts and landscape integration can promote sustainable development. Housing developments should therefore have regard to the following principles of sustainability:

- treat and attenuate water to minimise pollution and the risk of flooding;
- reduce the high consumption of energy through design and through locating new development close to the existing public transport network;
- foster and maintain biodiversity;
- build in accessibility and adaptability.

Sustainable urban drainage systems

Conventional drainage techniques can cause flooding and pollution downstream of urban areas. It is now generally accepted that a different approach is needed to reach a more sustainable solution.

Drainage methods that take account of water quality, water quantity, velocity and amenity are collectively referred to as Sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS).

SUDS are made up of a series of structures built to receive surface water run-off. Examples include filter strips, swales, soakaways and infiltration trenches, filter drains, infiltration basins, detention basins, retention ponds and wetlands. The use of porous



Pond, Livingston

road, footpath and car park surfaces will be appropriate only in areas which are not to be adopted.

The council will normally require developers to provide SUDS as part of their residential developments.

The council, East of Scotland Water and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency should be consulted on the selection of SUDS at an early stage.

Planning applications will not be determined until details of SUDS have been agreed. All SUDS should be designed with amenity and biodiversity as well as engineering considerations in mind.

In large schemes where several developers are involved, a co-ordinated approach to SUDS will be sought.

Normally, attenuation should be included as part of the surface water treatment facility.

The specification for the drainage system must comply with the SUDWP/CIRIA design manual for sustainable urban drainage systems.

Arrangements for the future maintenance of SUDS will need to be agreed with the council.

Flood risk

Where a development is considered by the planning authority to be susceptible to flooding or is likely to exacerbate an existing flood risk, the developer will be required to commission a Flood Risk Assessment and submit it as part of the application for residential development. A Chartered Civil Engineer with experience in hydraulic design and a particular demonstrable experience of sustainable urban drainage must carry out the assessment.

Developers will need to establish green field run-off values for the site and ensure that these are not exceeded post-development by means of on-site attenuation. The developer must seek a certificate from a Chartered Civil Engineer with experience in hydraulic design that the completed development complies with the green field run-off values for the site. In all areas a minimum of 1 in 25 year storm must be attenuated. In susceptible catchments this will be increased at the discretion of the Council up to 1 in 200 years.

Further guidance is set out in NPPG7 “Planning and flooding” and Scottish Office report “Design guidance on flood damage to dwellings”.

Culverting

Culverting of watercourses causes loss of important habitats, has a harmful affect on water quality and increases the risk of flooding. Streams should be integrated as part of the provision of open space and enhanced to maximise their biodiversity value.

Culverting of water courses should be avoided and will only be permitted under exceptional circumstances. Developers will be expected to install trash screens on all culverts on site or on watercourses leading from sites. Trash screens must be designed in accord with CIRIA Report 168 'Design guide for culverts and screens'.

Where water issues from a culvert 300mm or more in diameter on site or close to the boundary of a site, the outlet shall be fitted with a security device to deter access by children and large mammals. Hinged or partially hinged covers shall be used to help prevent debris from causing an obstruction.

Developers are required to clarify which management agent will be responsible for the maintenance of culverts and screens where these do not form part of the surface water sewer to be maintained by East of Scotland Water. Passing responsibility to occupiers will not be acceptable.



Development next to burn and TPO area

Energy efficiency

Developers will be expected to design layouts which take account of the following measures which will improve the energy efficiency of new housing:

- orientate houses to maximise passive solar gain – main habitable rooms should, as far as practical, face south, east or west;
- locate houses to minimise exposure – dense tree planting and earth mounding will reduce potential heat loss to buildings.

The use of courtyards will help to maximise shelter. Developers are also encouraged to provide flats and terraces to exploit their efficiency in terms of energy, materials and heat loss.

Biodiversity

The council is committed to preserving and enhancing the biodiversity of West Lothian through the Development Control process. Where appropriate, applicants will be required to assess the value of the site as a habitat for plants, birds and animals prior to planning applications being determined. Proposed remedial measures will need to be submitted with priority species and habitats identified in the West Lothian Biodiversity Action Plan recorded as present. Detailed guidance is available in a separate document "Planning for biodiversity action in West Lothian".

Contamination

Contaminated land is defined as land which is incapable of beneficial use unless remediated to overcome contamination hazards which pose a potential threat to health and safety for the intended land use.

Residential development as an end use for contaminated sites will require the most rigorous standard of land remediation. Developers must make known to the planning authority the presence of contamination within sites where residential development is proposed and submit as part of their planning application a site investigation which contains recommendations for the remediation of the site. The council will liaise with the Public Analyst on these reports.

Further guidance on contaminated land is set out in Planning Advice Note 33 "Development of contaminated land".

Protection against noise sources

Housing is regarded as noise sensitive development. All houses should therefore be located so that they are a suitable distance away from land uses and major transport routes that generate significant noise.

In some instances noise mitigating measures may be required to make development proposals acceptable. These measures might include screening buildings by landscaped bunds or the use of acoustic fencing. If problems cannot be overcome, there will be no alternative but to refuse planning permission.

Further guidance is available in Planning Advice Note 56 "Planning and Noise".

Off-site works

Developers will generally be required to carry the full costs that arise from their proposed housing development. In some instances, therefore, developers may be required to fund off-site works. These works will vary from site to site – works which may be required could include traffic calming measures, footpath provision, school



School under construction

extensions. Off-site works will be dealt with by the use of suspensive conditions or legal agreements. The council will only seek to negotiate off-site works which it considers are necessary to facilitate the development which is proposed.

Artwork

Where housing sites are located in town centres or are close to strategic transport routes, the provision of artwork will be expected to form part of the development proposals.

Impact of construction works

Each developer will be required to submit a written statement to the council which outlines the measures which will be taken to reduce the impact of construction work

on the environment and to have it approved by the council prior to starting works on site.

In particular, the statement should outline the measures which the developer will take to:

- avoid substances seeping into watercourses
- avoid noise, vibration and dust nuisance
- ensure that roads and footpaths in the vicinity of the site are kept mud free
- ensure that disturbance to existing residents from construction traffic is minimised.
- ensure that road gulleys remain clean and free from obstruction pre-adoption.

Proposed locations for site compounds, soil storage and temporary car parks for contractors and employees should be provided as part of the statement.

Developers are reminded that the council has powers under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to serve notices requiring public roads and footpaths to be kept mud free and has powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to deal with statutory nuisance. SEPA also has powers to deal with developers who pollute water courses.

Waste materials

The importation of waste material for landscaping or any other purpose may have waste management licensing implications. Generally, waste material can only be imported to a site if a waste management licence is in effect or if an activity exempt from licensing has been registered with SEPA. Similarly, any waste removed from a site must be deposited either at a suitably licensed site or at a site for which a relevant exempt activity has been registered.

Environmental assessment

Some projects, mostly of a major scale, must by law submit an Environmental Assessment (EA) as part of a planning application. Advice on whether or not an EA will be required, should be sought from the council at an early stage.

useful contacts

Early consultation with the Council and other agencies is recommended. Below is a useful list of contacts.

WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

Development & Building Control

County Buildings
LINLITHGOW
Tel. 01506 775222

Education Services

Lindsay House
South Bridge Street
BATHGATE
Tel. 01506 776000

Environmental Health

County Buildings
LINLITHGOW
Tel. 01506 775400

External Environment

County Buildings
LINLITHGOW
Tel. 01506 775380

Highways and Street Lighting

Peel House
Ladywell
LIVINGSTON
Tel. 01506 776200

Property Services

County Buildings
LINLITHGOW
Tel. 01506 775277

Strategic Planning & Transportation

County Buildings
LINLITHGOW
Tel. 01506 775222

OTHER AGENCIES

East of Scotland Water

55 Buckstone Terrace
EDINBURGH
Tel. 0131 445 4141

Scottish Environment Protection Agency (*Avon Catchment*)

Head Office
Erskine Court
The Castle Business Park
STIRLING
Tel. 01786 461407

Scottish Environment Protection Agency Clearwater House (*Almond Catchment*)

Heriot Watt Research Park
Riccarton
EDINBURGH
Tel. 0131 449 7296

Architectural Liaison Officer

Lothian and Borders Police

Police Headquarters
Almondvale
LIVINGSTON
Tel. 01506 445672

Scottish Natural Heritage

Laundry House
Dalkeith Country Park
DALKEITH
Midlothian
Tel. 0131 654 2466



**West Lothian
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Development & Building Control