

SPG

supplementary planning guidance

Co-location principles for the provision of new community and cultural facilities in the core development areas



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Supplementary planning guidance

CO-LOCATION PRINCIPLES FOR THE PROVISION OF NEW COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES IN THE CORE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Introduction

1.1 West Lothian continues to undergo major transformation and is expected to remain the fastest growing area in Scotland over the next 20 years.

1.2 The Finalised West Lothian Local Plan 2005 (WLLP), published in April 2005, seeks to implement the requirements of the Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan 2015 (E&LSP).

1.3 The WLLP supports a sustained level of growth with up to 25,000 new houses being planned for. 12,000 of the new houses will be in three Core Development Areas (CDAs): Armadale; Livingston and the Almond Valley; and Winchburgh/East Broxburn/Uphall.

1.4 A number of new community and cultural facilities will be required to support the development of the CDAs. The delivery of community and cultural infrastructure will provide the foundations to build a sense of place and quality of life within the new and expanded communities. The new facilities required include:

- 3 new secondary schools;
- the equivalent of 15 streams of new primary schools;
- health centres;
- libraries;
- CIS frontline services;
- Community recycling centres;
- Cemeteries;
- Sports facilities;
- Community education facilities;
- Arts and cultural facilities;
- Open space/play area provision;
- Local police and fire facilities;
- Post office; and
- Social policy related facilities.

This is not an exhaustive list. Other facilities may prove to be required once more detailed assessment is carried out.

1.5 Policy HOU 5 of the E&LSP states that planning permission should not be granted for housing development until all relevant infrastructure is provided or committed. Policy HOU6 of the E&LSP requires developers to contribute towards remedying any deficiencies in local facilities and amenities which result from the additional housing. The WLLP identifies new facilities known to be required to support the new housing coming forward in the CDAs.

1.6 It is anticipated that it will be possible to secure developer contributions through planning agreements under section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. Guidance on the scope of planning agreements is set out in Scottish Office Development Department circular 12/1996 (Planning Agreements).

1.7 Where the tests of this circular are satisfied, developers will be required to make fair and reasonable contributions towards the capital cost of delivering new community and cultural facilities. Developers will be required to provide serviced land for new community and cultural facilities where this is appropriate.

1.8 The council will prepare guidance setting out the levels of developer contributions. Guidance has already been approved by Policy Partnership & Resources committee for the new denominational secondary school at Winchburgh and for the replacement Armadale Academy.

1.9 In delivering community and cultural facilities, the local plan states that the aim will generally be to provide these with no detriment caused to the existing level of provision in adjacent communities.

1.10 The provision of *Partnership Centres* similar to the Strathbrock Centre in Broxburn where a number of public services are delivered from the one building is encouraged by the local plan.

1.11 In some cases, the improvement of existing facilities may be an alternative to new facilities being provided. In other cases, there may be scope to reprovide or rationalise existing facilities if there are clear benefits in doing so.

Key principles in moving forward towards a detailed strategy for the provision of community and cultural facilities

2.1 A Community Facilities, Health and Customer Services Working Group was formed towards the end of 2005 with the following remit:

- To identify requirements for new community, health and customer facilities to meet the needs of expanded communities and to identify sources of funding to deliver these facilities.
- To develop a strategy for the provision of these facilities.

2.2 A key objective for the working group is to identify opportunities for the co-location of facilities. This will help to ensure that new facilities are provided in a way that achieves best value for the council and other public sector stakeholders.

2.2 The working group has identified a number of key principles which will influence the co-location strategy. These are:

- There should be easy access to a range of facilities at the point of need. Specifically, appropriate facilities should be located within easy reach by walking, cycling and public transport of the population that uses them;
- All major expansion areas will require a physical and community heart acting as an *anchor* for other facilities to group around;
- Only compatible uses should be co-located;
- New models for delivering services to the customer need to be explored (e.g. consider dual or multi-purpose libraries where a number of services can be delivered);
- Integration of services should be considered where there are positive benefits for the customer and efficiencies for the council;

- The impact of technology on access to services and information needs to be taken into account (e.g. increased use of call centre and on-line services). Service providers need to establish a long term vision;
- Best examples of community and cultural infrastructure delivery from the rest of the UK should be established;
- Land for community and cultural infrastructure should be safeguarded in masterplans to be prepared by developers, taking into account the requirements of the WLLP and any other guidance produced by the council. In addition to safeguarding sites for specific facilities such as schools, *reserve sites* should be identified in masterplans for community uses that cannot be predicted at this stage. These sites would be safeguarded for a specified period of time after which their status would be reviewed.
- Asset management appraisal will play a key role in the decision making process; duplication of facilities must be avoided; within funding priorities and limits, existing facilities should be reprovided where there are efficiencies to be achieved;
- Where built facilities are involved, service units will be required to produce a *statement of need* for each model as outlined below. Construction Services will then lead on option appraisal and the preparation of strategic briefs and detailed project briefs and, where appropriate, accommodation schedules with input from other services and partner organisations as required;
- The design of buildings where different uses are co-located will need to take account of the needs of the different users; issues should be resolved as far as possible at the briefing stage with stakeholder consultation being carried out at the earliest opportunity. On-going consultation with stakeholders will be critical to the success of each project;
- Facilities and services need to be *future proofed* and have the necessary capacity for change;
- Buildings should be designed to enable maximum flexibility of use by community groups. The design of buildings should also be designed so that they are flexible for future expansion (or restructuring) to meet the changing needs of future populations. Building and infrastructure designs should be developed to minimise future revenue impact to the council. Sustainable construction design techniques and renewable energy technology should be incorporated wherever possible;
- There will be a need to engage with developers early so that land can be safeguarded in masterplans and agreement reached on funding;
- Local communities should be consulted and involved with the provision of new community and cultural facilities;
- The needs of partner organisations, including the voluntary sector, should be taken into account;
- A realistic consideration of costs, phasing and management will be necessary;

Potential models for the delivery of new community and cultural infrastructure

3.1 Whilst co-location is to be encouraged, it is clear from the work done so far by the working group that one model will not fit all circumstances. The following three main models for co-location have been identified. The specific models for each CDA will vary depending on local circumstances.

Model one - The partnership centre model

3.2 Based on the Strathbrock model, a number of public sector partners would be colocated in one building. Partnership centre buildings would demand a central location. Compatible uses could include CIS presence, health centre, police, post office, main library, arts exhibition space and community education. This is not an exhaustive list. Other uses could be compatible.

3.3 Commercial space within the building could be made available to provide complementary services to visitors to the building e.g. café, chemist, dentist, drop in creche.

3.4 Where a number of council services are to be provided within one building, consideration should be given to developing multi - skilled staff to deal with front line enquiries or transactions.

3.5 This model is likely to be appropriate for the new town centre at Winchburgh and for the Calderwood CDA (shared with East Calder). This model may also be appropriate for Armadale.

Model two - The secondary school model

3.6 At the Winchburgh, Armadale and Calderwood CDAs, new secondary schools are to be provided.

3.7 These will be designed in a way that allows community access to sports facilities. Some arts and cultural services may also be available at the secondary schools and in such cases community access to these facilities will be necessary. The secondary schools will be located outwith town centres.

Model three - The primary school model

3.8 In all of the CDAs, new primary schools will be required. These will be located in the centre of new residential neighbourhoods.

3.9 A project brief for the proposed Pumpherstons and Uphall Station Community Primary School at Drumshoreland has been prepared and this will become a model for similar schools in the CDAs. Where necessary, neighbourhood community facilities will be provided at primary schools along with wraparound and nursery facilities. Consideration will be given to providing satellite libraries, accessible by the public, at primary schools if there is a clear need for such facilities and the revenue implications can be accommodated within budget.

Definition of terms

4.1 The terms statement of need option appraisal, strategic brief and project brief are used in this guidance. The terms are explained below:

4.2 **Statement of need** – The statement of need is the clients' own first effort to define what is required. It will usually be prepared by the clients themselves. It is essential background for briefing consultants, explaining how the project fits within the client's organisational objectives and the business plan.

4.3 **Option appraisal** – The aim of an option appraisal is to identify ways of meeting the requirements defined in the statement of need, as well as possible sites, and to test them. This process, part financial feasibility and part design feasibility, is carried out by the clients in collaboration with Construction Services.

4.4 **Strategic brief** – The strategic brief lays out the clients' argument and rationale for the project. It states:

- To whom the strategic brief is addressed and what is requested of them.
- How the project relates to its role or mission statement, its objectives and business plan.
- The context – why the project is necessary and what current problems it will solve.
- What broadly will be provided and how it will support activities.
- Size and costs – both capital and operating, whole-life costing.
- The business case for the project.
- Programme and milestone dates.
- Quality requirements of the new space – materials, durability and maintenance.
- Environmental objectives.
- Statutory compliance implications.
- Political, community, corporate and future service delivery implications.

The exercise will probably be carried out by the clients and aims to ensure that the project is financially deliverable within established work programmes and timescales.

4.5 **Project brief** – Once the strategic brief has been approved, subject to any necessary amendment, work can start on the project brief. This is addressed to the design team; it sets down the requirements that the design is to satisfy. The project brief is the *bible* against which the design is assessed until the completion of production information. It may also form the basis of requirements for specialist consultants and sub-contractors in some non-traditional procurement paths.

Project briefing is a dynamic consultative process undertaken and developed

collaboratively by the client body and appointed design team over the initial plan of work stages up to the end of stage D.

The aim is to produce a document which defines the problem to which the design will be a solution.

Note: see separate supplementary planning guidance *A partnership approach to deliver the infrastructure required to support the development strategy contained in the West Lothian Local Plan* for more information on the different types of briefs to be prepared.

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