

<b>Topic Schedule</b>	<b>11. Brownfield Land</b>
<b>Information required by the Act and NPF4 regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p><b>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• section 15(5)(a) ‘the principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district’</li> </ul> <p><b>National Planning Framework 4 (adopted 13 February 2023)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 9 Brownfield - LDPs should set out opportunities for the sustainable reuse of brownfield land including vacant and derelict land and empty buildings</li> </ul> <p>This Topic Schedule aims not to repeat the content of other topics covered by the LDP2 Evidence Report. Other Topic Schedules which should be read alongside this Topic Schedule on Brownfield are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 02 - Biodiversity</li> <li>• 18 - Safety</li> <li>• 25 - Local Living and Community Infrastructure</li> <li>• 29 – Site Appraisal Methodology</li> </ul>
<b>Links to Evidence referenced in this Topic Schedule</b>	<p><b>WLC 015</b> <a href="#">Identifying Open Mosaic Habitat</a>  <b>WLC 016</b> <a href="#">Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland</a>  <b>WLC 042</b> <a href="#">Homes for Scotland Briefing Paper: Barriers to Housing Delivery</a>  <b>WLC 075</b> <a href="#">Nature Scot: Landscape indicator</a>  <b>WLC 135</b> <a href="#">Scottish Government: Housing Land Audit Guidance</a>  <b>WLC 154</b> <a href="#">Planning Advice Note 2/2010 - Affordable Housing and Housing Land Audits</a>  <b>WLC 172</b> <a href="#">Scottish Government Planning Guidance: Local Living and 20-minute Neighbourhoods</a>  <b>WLC 176</b> <a href="#">Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey 2024; Guidance Notes.</a>  <b>WLC 177</b> <a href="#">Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey Register</a>  <b>WLC 304</b> <a href="#">Draft West Lothian Empty Homes Framework, Report to Housing Services Policy Development Scrutiny Panel, August 2024</a>  <b>WLC 309</b> <a href="#">Employment Land Audit 23/24</a>  <b>WLC 316</b> <a href="#">Housing Land Audit 2024</a>  <b>WLC XXX</b> <a href="#">Housing Land Audit 2025</a>  <b>WLC 317</b> <a href="#">Housing Land Audits (2012 – 2023)</a>  <b>WLC 375</b> <a href="#">Supplementary Guidance - Development in the Countryside</a>  <b>WLC 389</b> <a href="#">West Lothian Vacant and Derelict Land Survey Return</a></p>

## Summary of Evidence

### Purpose, scope and structure of this Topic Schedule

This Topic Schedule focuses on brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings within West Lothian. The Topic Schedule and its evidence are set out in the following sections:

- Part 1 – Current Planning Policy
- Part 2 - Vacant and Derelict Land Survey returns.
- Part 3 - Buildings at Risk
- Part 4 - Empty Buildings
- Part 5 – Percentage of new homes built on brownfield land.
- Part 6 – Other considerations in the sustainable re-use of land in West Lothian

### Part 1 – Current Planning Policy

- 1.1 Policy 9 of NPF4 supports the sustainable reuse of brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings with an intent to reduce the need for greenfield development. The policy also requires the biodiversity value of brownfield land, which has naturalised, to be taken into account in determining whether the reuse is sustainable.
- 1.2 West Lothian LDP (2018) seeks to ensure that appropriate brownfield sites are redeveloped for appropriate uses; seeks to maximise the use of brownfield land and encourages the re-use of brownfield, vacant or derelict land in preference to greenfield sites.
- 1.3 LDP Policy ENV 2 (Housing Development in the Countryside) and Policy ENV 3 (Other Development in the Countryside) both allow an exception to development in the countryside where a proposal provides for the restoration of a brownfield site where there is no realistic prospect of it being returned to agriculture or woodland use and the site has no significant natural heritage value in its current condition. Proposals should make the best use of resources, integrate with services and facilities and demonstrate the highest standards in design and environmental quality to protect and enhance the established landscape character.
- 1.4 Supplementary Guidance ‘Development in the Countryside’ (**WLC 375**) repeats the terms of policy ENV2 and explains that the underlying justification for making an exception to general planning policy is; to secure the removal of inappropriate buildings; and improve visual and environmental amenity of the countryside. It also explains, not every rural brownfield site will be suitable for redevelopment and that in some instances redevelopment could have a profound urbanising effect upon the countryside; which it notes could potentially be more damaging than if the site had been left alone.

### Part 2 – Vacant and Derelict Land Survey Return

- 2.1 The Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (SVDLS) is updated by Local Authorities and published by the Scottish Government annually (**WLC 176**) and (**WLC 389**). The survey reports the annual take up of brownfield land and records new vacant or derelict sites.
- 2.2 Vacant land is previously developed land, without physical constraint, which the Planning Authority has indicated is currently available for redevelopment. It must be at least 0.1 Hectares in size and it must be located within a settlement boundary, as defined by the development plan.
- 2.3 This land must either have had prior development on it, or preparatory work must have taken place in anticipation of future development. The land must not be in use (except for temporary open space) and must be ready for new development (i.e., there are no physical impediments caused by a previous development which would prevent new development).
- 2.4 Vacant land and buildings - This classification is only used if it is not possible to identify a plot of vacant land on its own without including some associated non-derelict buildings.
- 2.5 Derelict land (and buildings) is land which has been so damaged by development, that it is incapable of development for beneficial use without rehabilitation. In addition, the land must currently not be used for the purpose for which it is held or a use acceptable in the local plan. Land also qualifies as derelict if it has an un-remedied previous use which could limit future development. The site must be at least 0.1 hectares in size to be included. In contrast to vacant land, derelict land can be located both within and outwith settlement boundaries (as defined by the development plan).
- 2.6 The SVDLS submitted in October 2023 (**WLC 177**) lists a total of 79 urban vacant and derelict sites equating to 335Ha, which equates to 3.7% of all of Scotland's urban vacant and derelict sites. This can be broken down to 44 urban vacant sites (95Ha) (5.3% of Scotland's urban vacant sites) and 35 derelict sites, 240 Ha, which amounts to 3.3% of Scotland's derelict land.
- 2.7 The amount of derelict and urban vacant land has reduced by 20% between 2017 and 2023. This is slightly less than the Scottish average of 24.7%.
- 2.8 The proportion of derelict sites located within a settlement is 24.2%. There are 17 sites with an average size of 3.4Ha. The proportion of derelict sites located in the countryside is 75.8%. There are 18 sites but with a larger average size of 10.1Ha. Across Scotland there is a 47.1% / 52.9% split of derelict land located within a settlement and in the countryside. 16.2% of West Lothian's population are within 500 metres of derelict land, this compares to 26.5% across Scotland.
- 2.9 There are 2 vacant and derelict sites, which amount to 0.38Ha within the 15% most deprived datazone.
- 2.10 There was a comprehensive review of sites in 2022. 33 sites were removed from the register, 30 of which were due to naturalisation. Other new uses included agriculture, storage and residential. 39 new sites were added, this included former community centres, depots,

foundry, pub, schools, farm buildings and employment sites. A significant proportion of the newly identified 39 sites are vacant employment sites.

- 2.11 There are 79 sites that are included in the current Vacant and Derelict Land Register (**WLC 177**). There are a variety of previous uses, ranging from mineral activity to public buildings such as schools, hospitals and community centres no longer in use.
- 2.12 There is a concentration of sizeable sites zoned for employment that are sitting vacant in West Lothian, especially in the Kirkton area of Livingston. Furthermore, there are employment sites that do not meet the 'vacant' land definition for the SVDLS but are underused. The Proposed Plan will therefore explore opportunities to re-purposes employment land for residential given the finding of an over-supply of employment land as set out in Topic Schedule 17 - Business, Industry, Community Wealth Building and Rural Development.
- 2.13 Vacant land is only classified as such in the SVDLR if it is within the settlement boundary as defined by the Local Development Plan. The former Freeport retail village is a sizable brownfield site that has been underused for approximately 25 years. The site is used for security training and film sets. The Proposed Plan should consider how the site can be re-purposed into a productive, sustainable use.
- 2.14 A sizeable site that has come forward for development is the Bangour Hospital site (over 81Ha). Since the last SVDLS return, development has commenced, and further planning applications have been approved. The SVDLS will require to be updated in the next return to reduce the size of the derelict areas and update the development potential to less than 5 years.
- 2.15 The Lower Bathville site in Armadale is a large (25.7Ha), prominent, derelict site located in a residential area. The site is now subject to a planning application (0683/P/23) for residential development.
- 2.16 The Former Paper Mill in Westfield is large (8.7Ha) derelict site that benefits from a residential planning consent. However, the site has so far failed to deliver any homes. The site will require to be assessed through the site methodology assessment to establish if the site is capable of delivering any homes. The biodiversity value due to naturalisation should also be taken into account. This includes the consideration of additional riparian buffers and European Protected Species, which have moved into the area.
- 2.17 Derelict and vacant land can have an adverse impact of people's health and wellbeing, the Proposed Plan should identify which brownfield sites are especially harmful to the character of an area and consider mechanisms to bring prominent, long-standing derelict land into productive use.

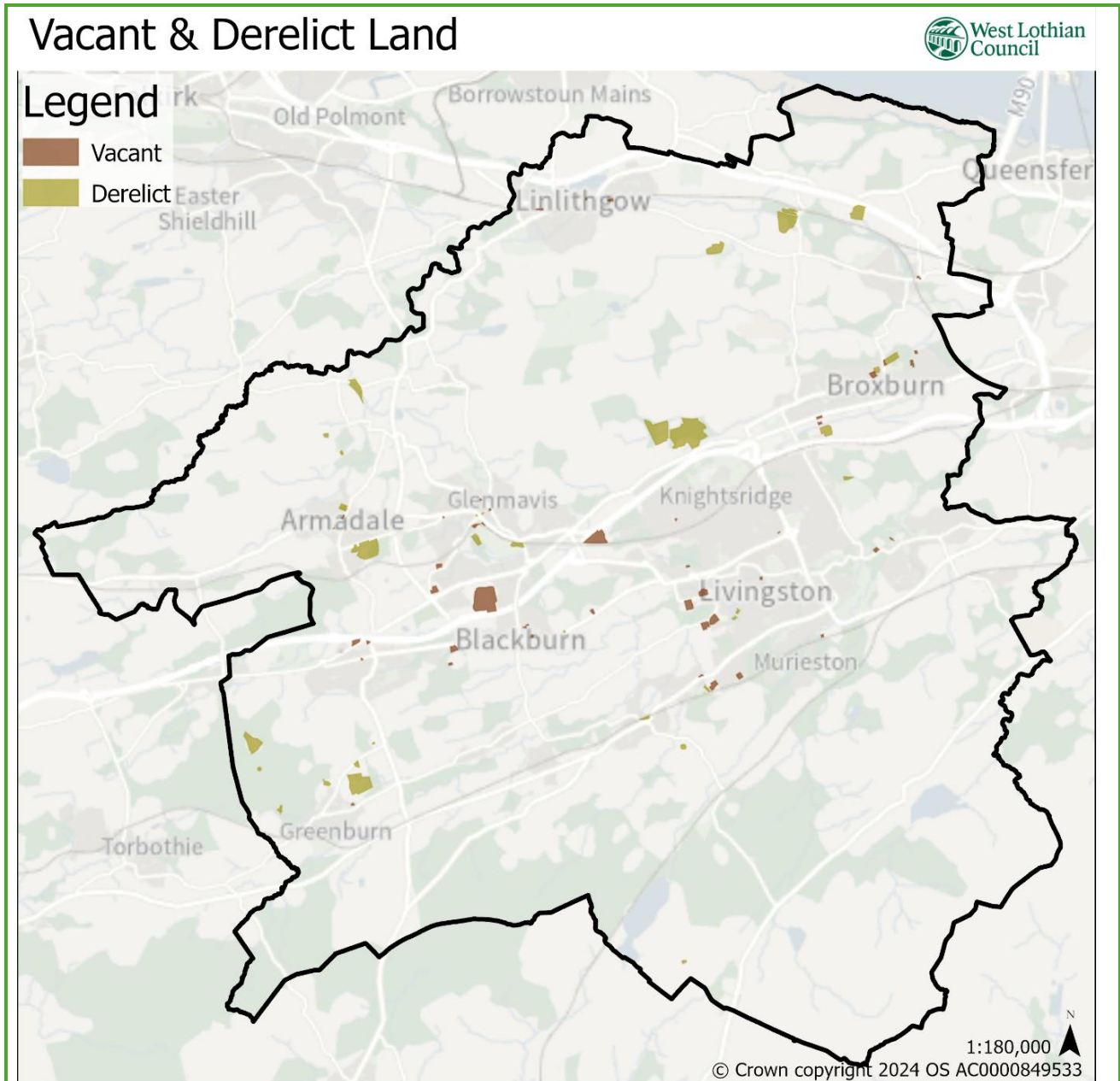


Figure 35. Location of Vacant and Derelict Land in West Lothian, 2024. An interactive version of this GIS layer is available on the WLC Register of Vacant and Derelict Land webpage (WLC 389).

Table 40. List of Vacant and Derelict Land in West Lothian (WLC 389).

Address	Site Area	Type	Previous Use	Ownership	Development Potential
LOWER BATHVILLE, ARMADALE	25.7	Derelict	Manufacturing	Unknown	> 10 years
EX GASHOLDER, ARMADALE	1.6	Derelict	Storage	Private Gas	5 - 10 years
EX NURSERY SCHOOL, ACADEMY STREET, ARMADALE	0.18	Derelict	Education	Private	< 5 years
FORMER ARNOLD CLARK FORECOURT, NORTH STREET, ARMADALE	0.69	Derelict	Transport	Private	< 5 years
EX- ARNOLD CLARK SHOWROOM, NORTH STREET, ARMADALE	0.1	Vacant Land	Retailing	Private	< 5 years

SCHEDULE 11 BROWNFIELD LAND V2

EX DALE CAFÉ SITE, NORTH STREET, ARMADALE	0.13	Vacant Land	Retailing	Private	< 5 years
NORTH STREET, ARMADALE	0.33	Derelict	Manufacturing	Private	> 10 years
VACANT LAND, DEANS, LIVINGSTON	13.41	Vacant Land	Agriculture	Public, other non-crown	uneconomical
RIDDOCHHILL, BATHGATE	35.82	Vacant Land	Mineral Activity	Local Authority	5 - 10 years
GUILDIEHAUGH DEPOT, BATHGATE	3.4	Derelict	General Industrial	Local Authority	< 5 years
FORMER FOUNDRY, BATHGATE	3.8	Derelict	Manufacturing	Unknown	< 5 years
FORMER CREAMERY GARAGE, BATHGATE	0.12	Vacant Land	Retailing	Unknown private	5 - 10 years
VACANT LAND TO THE SOUTH OF STANDHILL INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, BATHGATE	2.6	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown	5 - 10 years
BLOOMFIELD PLACE, BATHGATE	0.12	Derelict	Retailing	Private	unknown
EX ABBATOIR, BATHGATE	1.39	Vacant Land	Agriculture	Private	unknown
NORTH EAST MORRISONS, BATHGATE	0.88	Vacant Land	Manufacturing	Private	< 5 years
EX-DREADNOUGHT HOTEL, BATHGATE	0.14	Derelict	Hotel / Hostel	Private	5 - 10 years
RETAIL PARK SE CAR PARK, BATHGATE	0.31	Vacant Land	Retailing	Private	< 5 years
EX-COMMUNITY CENTRE, BATHGATE	0.27	Vacant Land	Education	Local Authority	< 5 years
TEMPORARY CAR PARK SITE, BATHGATE	0.13	Vacant Land	Residential	Private	5 - 10 years
FORMER COMMUNITY CENTRE, BLACKBURN	0.15	Vacant Land and Buildings	Community and health	Local Authority	5 - 10 years
ASH GROVE, BLACKBURN	0.26	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown	< 5 years
FORMER ADULT TRAINING CENTRE, BLACKBURN	0.42	Vacant Land	Education	Unknown private	< 5 years
BRIDGEND BING	9.9	Derelict	Mineral Activity	Unknown	unknown
WASTEGROUND, ALBYN, BROXBURN	0.52	Vacant Land	Agriculture	Unknown	> 10 years
ALBYN BING, GREENDYKES ROAD, BROXBURN	5.9	Derelict	Mineral Activity	Unknown	> 10 years
CANDLEWORKS, BROXBURN	2.02	Derelict	Manufacturing	Local Authority	unknown
WIMPEY DEPOT, UPHALL	6.9	Derelict	Unknown	Unknown	< 5 years
FORMER BROXBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL, BROXBURN	2.1	Vacant Land	Education	Local Authority	> 10 years
E-BU 1 YOUNGS ROAD SOUTH, EAST MAINS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, BROXBURN	1.19	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown	5 - 10 years
E-BU 3 CLIFTON VIEW 2, EAST MAINS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, BROXBURN	0.56	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown	5 - 10 years
BANGOUR GENERAL, DECHMONT	26.76	Derelict	Community and health	Private	> 10 years
EX HOSP BANGOUR VILLAGE, DECHMONT	54.49	Derelict	Community and health	Private	5 - 10 years
MILLBANK DEPOT, EAST CALDER	0.27	Vacant Land	Unknown	Local Authority	> 10 years
BROOMPARK FARM, EAST CALDER	1.1	Vacant Land	Agriculture	Unknown private	< 5 years
E-EW 1, WHITRIGG NORTH EAST, EAST WHITBURN	2.5	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown	5 - 10 years
E-EW 2, WHITRIGG SOUTH WEST, EAST WHITBURN	0.58	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown	5 - 10 years
DERELICT LAND, BENHAR, FAULDHOUSE	13.78	Derelict	Mineral Activity	Public, other non-crown	unknown

SCHEDULE 11 BROWNFIELD LAND V2

COAL BING, EAST BENHAR, FAULDHOUSE	0.78	Derelict	Mineral Activity	Public, other non-crown	unknown
FALLAHILL QUARRY, FAULDHOUSE	1.3	Derelict	Mineral Activity	Local Authority	unknown
NORTHFIELD BINGS, NORTHFIELD FARM, FAULDHOUSE	25.94	Derelict	Mineral Activity	Unknown	unknown
VACANT LAND, SHEEPHOUSEHILL, FAULDHOUSE	0.33	Derelict	Unknown	Unknown	unknown
VICTORIA COTTAGE BING, FAULDHOUSE	1.73	Derelict	Mineral Activity	Unknown	unknown
STONEHOUSE FARMHOUSE, LANGRIGG ROAD, FAULDHOUSE	1.35	Derelict	Agriculture	Unknown private	< 5 years
FORMER BSW TIMBER, FALKIRK ROAD, LINLITHGOW	0.55	Vacant Land	Wholesale distribution	Private	> 10 years
FORMER VICTORIA HALLS, 88 - 94 HIGH STREET, LINLITHGOW	0.13	Vacant Land	Recreation and Leisure	Unknown private	< 5 years
LAND AT EDINBURGH ROAD, LINLITHGOW	0.78	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown private	< 5 years
LAND OFF B7010, NORTH OF H-LR2, LONGRIDGE	0.27	Derelict	Unknown	Unknown	> 10 years
NELLBURN, DEANS SOUTH ROAD, LIVINGSTON	0.19	Vacant Land	Unknown	Local Authority	< 5 years
LAND AT CHARLESFIELD ROAD, LIVINGSTON	0.63	Derelict	Offices	Unknown private	< 5 years
LAND AT GARBETT ROAD, LIVINGSTON	0.78	Derelict	Offices	Unknown private	< 5 years
LAND AT FORESTBANK, LADYWELL, LIVINGSTON	0.11	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown	< 5 years
1 SIMPSON PARKWAY, LIVINGSTON	4.45	Vacant Land	Offices	Unknown private	< 5 years
LAND AT BAIRD WAY / SIMPSON PARKWAY, LIVINGSTON	4.7	Vacant Land	General Industrial	Unknown private	5 - 10 years
FORMER ETHICON PLANT, LIVINGSTON	3.35	Vacant Land	General Industrial	Unknown private	5 - 10 years
WILLIAMSTON NORTH, OAKBANK INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, LIVINGSTON	0.46	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown private	5 - 10 years
LAND AT ELIBURN INDUSTRIAL PARK, APPLETON DRIVE, LIVINGSTON	0.38	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown private	5 - 10 years
VACANT LAND AT BRUCEFIELD PARK SOUTH, LIVINGSTON	1.9	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown	5 - 10 years
LAND AT ALBA CAMPUS, LIVINGSTON	3.3	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown	5 - 10 years
LAND AT ALMONDVALE STADIUM ROAD, LIVINGSTON	0.4	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown	5 - 10 years
THE FIRS, LANGSIDE GARDENS, POLBETH	0.7	Vacant Land	Recreation and Leisure	Unknown	< 5 years
FORMER WEST CALDER HIGH SCHOOL, POLBETH	3	Vacant Land	Education	Local Authority	< 5 years
LIMEFIELD HOUSE BUSINESS CENTRE, POLBETH	1.1	Derelict	Offices	Unknown private	< 5 years
PHILPSTOUN SOUTH & NORTH BINGS, PHILPSTOUN	24.57	Derelict	Mineral Activity	Unknown	unknown
CRAIGTON QUARRY, PHILPSTOUN	11.18	Derelict	Mineral Activity	Unknown	unknown
DERELICT FARM STEADING, BY REDHOUSE, SEAFIELD	0.18	Derelict	Agriculture	Private	unknown
LAND AT REDHOUSE ROAD, SEAFIELD	0.9	Vacant Land and Buildings	General Industrial	Unknown private	< 5 years
LAND TO THE NORTH OF UPHALL INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, UPHALL	0.8	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown	5 - 10 years

LAND WITHIN UPHALL INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, UPHALL	0.56	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown	5 - 10 years
EX - KIRKFORFAR BRICK WORKS, UPHALL STATION	1.63	Derelict	Unknown	Unknown	unknown
EX BEATLIE SCHOOL, MAIN STREET, WINCHBURGH	0.35	Vacant Land and Buildings	Education	Local Authority	5 - 10 years
WEST CALDER, STATION GOODS YARD	1.3	Derelict	Transport	Unknown	unknown
COAL BING, COBBINSHAW, WEST CALDER	0.8	Derelict	Mineral Activity	Unknown	unknown
EX- BRICKWORKS, CRAIGRIGG, WESTFIELD	1.2	Derelict	Manufacturing	Unknown	unknown
COAL BING, BRIDGECASTLE, WESTFIELD	0.72	Derelict	Mineral Activity	Unknown	unknown
FORMER PAPER MILL, WESTFIELD	8.77	Derelict	Manufacturing	Private	5 - 10 years
LAND TO THE EAST OF E-WH 1, COWHILLS, HEARTLAND BUSINESS PARK, WHITBURN	2.1	Vacant Land	Unknown	Unknown	5 - 10 years
EX-MINERS CLUB SITE, WEST MAIN STREET (SOUTH SIDE), WHITBURN	0.19	Vacant Land	Community and health	Unknown	5 - 10 years
N.E. KING GEORGE V PARK, WHITBURN	0.53	Vacant Land	Recreation and Leisure	Unknown	5 - 10 years

2.18 It has been noted by the Woodland Trust that there are multiple sites, including the former paper mill at Westfield, which could contribute to the Nature Networks, Biodiversity, Forest Trees and Woodlands, & Blue Green infrastructure objectives.

### Part 3 – Buildings at Risk

- 3.1 The Buildings at Risk Register (**WLC 016**) was maintained by Historic Environment Scotland and provides information on properties of architectural or historic merit throughout the country that are considered to be at risk. Following a review of the Buildings at Risk Register, Historic Environment Scotland (HES) paused the Register while they consider options for its future on 3 September 2024. The website remains accessible and searchable, but it will not be updated and HES not accepting nominations for additions to the Register.
- 3.2 The Buildings at Risk Register shows there are 29 buildings classified as At Risk in West Lothian. Two further buildings are subject to active repair, and their status has been recorded as Restoration in Progress. The majority of these buildings sit within the Bangour Village Hospital site, which is currently being redeveloped.
- 3.3 LDP Policy ENV 29 sets out a specific policy on ‘Unoccupied and threatened listed buildings’ stating there is support for sympathetic restoration of such buildings through securing a viable use. NPF 4 Policy 7 m) gives general support for restoration of listed buildings on the Buildings at Risk Register.

### Part 4 – Empty Buildings

- 4.1 An Employment Land Audit (**WLC 309**) is carried out on an annual basis. This provides an analysis of vacancy rates on buildings on allocated employment land.

4.2 The table below shows that there has consistently been a 20% vacancy rate of buildings on allocated employment land. While some employment buildings have been demolished, there has been a trend of an increased number of buildings owing to sub-division of larger buildings.

Table 41. – Percentage of Occupied Buildings on Allocated Employment Land **(WLC 309)**.

	2016/17	2018/19	2022/23	2023/24
Occupied	1027	1269	1381	1352
Vacant	256	330	318	352
No data	304	0	0	0
<b>Total Identified Premises</b>	1587	1599	1699	1704
%age Total Identified Premises Occupied	80.05%	79.36%	81.28%	79.34%

4.3 As of 31 March 2024, there were 309 empty private homes in West Lothian (12 months or more) and 89 second homes. The Council employs an Empty Homes Officer and has a draft Empty Homes Framework **(WLC 304)**. This sets out a detailed approach to bring empty homes back into use.

## Part 5 – Percentage of new homes built on brownfield land

- 1.1 New Scottish Government guidance setting out the approach to the preparation and publication of Housing Land Audits (HLAs) for all planning authorities in Scotland was published in January 2025. **(WLC 135)**. This guidance replaces the Housing Land Audit section of Planning Advice Note 2/2010 **(WLC 154)**, reflecting the new legislative and policy context within the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (the Act), as amended, and National Planning Framework 4. It does however maintain the requirement to record whether development has taken place on greenfield or previously developed (brownfield) land.
- 1.2 Recording brownfield and greenfield development is crucial for sustainable land use planning and management. Brownfield sites, previously developed land, offer opportunities for redevelopment and revitalization, while greenfield sites, undeveloped land, need careful consideration to minimize environmental impact and protect natural habitats. Recording both types of sites helps the Council and developers make informed decisions, promoting responsible development practices and preserving valuable green spaces.
- 1.3 While it is understood that the redevelopment of brownfield land faces further challenges and costs in comparison to greenfield development, as can be seen from the table above, West Lothian has a good track record of delivering homes on brownfield land. Each site will be assessed on its own merits in terms of deliverability, viability as well as other considerations such as biodiversity, but the evidence points to the housing market in West Lothian is sufficiently buoyant to absorb abnormal costs associated with brownfield development to enable some housing delivery from brownfield sites.

Table 42. Percentage of new homes built on brownfield land. Source: calculated from Housing Land Audits (**WLC 316, WLC 317**).

2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
54%	38%	30%	48%	38%	36%	42%	43%	54%	31%	28%	28%

## Part 6 – Other considerations in the sustainable re-use of land

### Local Living

- 1.1 Scottish Government guidance on Local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods, 2024 (**WLC 172**), in support of Policy 15 of NPF4 supports “approaches to local living seek to redevelop brownfield, vacant and derelict land, helping to bring land back into permanent or temporary productive use, encouraging investment in our communities”. Evidence on Local Living and the council’s approach to this is set out in Topic Schedule 25 - Local Living.

### Biodiversity

- 1.2 NPF4 Policy 9 sets out that “In determining whether the reuse is sustainable, the biodiversity value of brownfield land which has naturalised should be taken into account”. The Site Appraisal Methodology Criteria in Topic Schedule 29 takes this into account.

### Contamination

- 1.3 NPF4 Policy 9 sets out that “Where land is known or suspected to be unstable or contaminated, development proposals will demonstrate that the land is, or can be made, safe and suitable for the proposed new use”. Evidence on contaminated land in West Lothian is set out in Topic Schedule 18 - Safety.

### Noise

- 1.4 NPF4 Policy 23 (e) sets out that “Development proposals that are likely to raise unacceptable noise issues will not be supported. The agent of change principle applies to noise sensitive development. A Noise Impact Assessment may be required where the nature of the proposal or its location suggests that significant effects are likely”. Topic Schedule 18 on Safety notes a review of existing LDP noise policy and the Supplementary Guidance on Planning and Noise should be carried out in the preparation of the Proposed Plan. A bespoke noise policy and planning guidance should be considered.

### Urban Capacity

- 1.5 Development Plan Guidance states in ‘other information planning authorities may wish to: prepare, or review for spatial implications’ for policies 9 (Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings) and 27 (City, town, commercial and local centres).

- 1.6 The Guidance also states that assumptions can be made about the delivery of land to meet the HLR. One such source of this information could be an Urban Capacity Study although there is no requirement to carry one out.
- 1.7 Sites identified through an Urban Capacity Study would not count towards the deliverable land pipeline or the spatial strategy unless the council are confident the site will be delivered. Windfall sites within the deliverable or deliverable component of the Housing Land Audit are not included until they benefit from planning consent. The mere identification of sites cannot count towards the deliverable land supply so there is no value in identifying them as part of future strategy. This would clearly not prevent brownfield sites coming forward as windfall sites during the lifetime of the LDP and Policy 16 of NPF4 supports the principle of the delivery on brownfield sites within settlements.

### Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

Based on the evidence the proposed plan is required to:

1. Set out opportunities for the sustainable reuse of brownfield land including vacant and derelict land and empty buildings.
2. Ensure that the reuse of brownfield, vacant and derelict land, the biodiversity value of brownfield land which has naturalised should be taken into account.
3. Ensure that where land is known or suspected to be unstable or contaminated, development proposals will demonstrate that the land is, or can be made, safe and suitable for the proposed new use.
4. Ensure existing LDP policy on noise and the Supplementary Guidance on Planning and Noise is reviewed, as well as considering a bespoke noise policy and planning guidance for LDP2. This could be a way to help facilitate further brownfield development.
5. Ensure that noise generating sources and uses are accounted in site allocations and developing the spatial strategy.
6. Engage further with Nature Scot to consider if brownfield assessments should also include landscape features to be taken into account. It is noted NPF4 makes provision for the biodiversity of brownfield sites to be taken into account, however Nature Scot is advocating an approach whereby reclamation should consider how best to retain or enhance the existing biodiversity and landscape features on site and how people might have used these areas whilst they have lain undeveloped.
7. Consider if further guidance is required to ascertain how biodiversity value will be taken into account. In particular, consider the inclusion of 'All vegetated brownfield sites should be assessed as to whether they meet the 5 criteria for 'Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land' (**WLC 015**), a national priority habitat, when assessing biodiversity value. If the 5 criteria apply, then invertebrate surveys should be undertaken, additional to other ecological surveys'.

### Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

To be updated post April 2026 engagement

**Statements of Agreement / Dispute**

To be updated post April 2026 engagement