

## West Lothian Local Development Plan 2 Evidence Report

<b>Schedule 24</b>	<b>Healthcare Infrastructure</b>
<b>Information required by the Act and NPF4 regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended:</p> <p>To set out statutory compliance with the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• section 15(5)(c) The health needs of the population of the district</li> <li>• section 15(5)(d) the infrastructure of the district (including health care facilities).</li> </ul> <p>National Planning Framework 4 (adopted 13 February 2023):</p> <p>To set out evidence in relation to NPF4 policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 23 Health &amp; Safety - LDP spatial strategies should seek to tackle health inequalities particularly in places which are experiencing the most disadvantage. They should identify the health and social care services and infrastructure needed in the area, including potential for co-location of complementary services, in partnership with Health Boards and Health and Social Care Partnerships.</li> <li>• Other relevant policies - Policy 2 – Climate mitigation and adaptation, Policy 15 – Local Living and 20-minute neighbourhoods. Policy 18 Infrastructure First. Policy 27 City, town, local and commercial centres</li> </ul> <p>National Planning Framework 4 (adopted 13 February 2023)</p> <p>This schedule aims not to repeat the content of other topics covered by the LDP2 Evidence Report. Other schedules which should be read alongside this schedule on Healthcare Infrastructure are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Living and 20-minute neighbourhoods</li> <li>• Local Place Plans</li> </ul>
<b>Links to Evidence referenced in this schedule</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Lothian GP Practice Data <a href="https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/4152a8b1493643799b9fde4ad8bff5b8">https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/4152a8b1493643799b9fde4ad8bff5b8</a></li> <li>• East Calder Health Centre Support Update <a href="https://coins.westlothian.gov.uk/coins/viewSelectedDocument.asp?c=e%97%9Dj%93m%81%8F">https://coins.westlothian.gov.uk/coins/viewSelectedDocument.asp?c=e%97%9Dj%93m%81%8F</a></li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>	
<b>Purpose, scope and structure of this schedule</b>	

This schedule focuses on Healthcare Infrastructure within West Lothian. The schedule and its evidence are set out in the following sections:

1. Current Healthcare Provision in West Lothian
2. Primary Care Future demand

## **Part 1 – Current Healthcare Provision in West Lothian**

### **1.1 Current Primary Care services:**

West Lothian is divided into 2 cluster areas for delivery of Primary Care services – east and west.

The West Cluster comprises 8 GP practices operating from 6 main locations: Bathgate, Armadale, Whitburn, Blackburn, Fauldhouse and West Calder with one practice operating a 7th satellite location in Blackridge.

The East Cluster comprises 12 GP practices operating from 9 locations: Broxburn, Linlithgow, Winchburgh, East Calder and 5 locations in Livingston.

All practices in West Lothian are currently type “17J” practices – that is practices run jointly by local GP partners as an independent business, operating to a standard, nationally negotiated contract with NHS Lothian. No practices are directly operated by the Health Board.

GP practice boundaries do not strictly follow local authority boundaries but 19 of the 20 practices in West Lothian operate predominately within the local authority area. The exception is Almond practice who operate from 2 locations in Kirkliston and Winchburgh and are thus split across the City of Edinburgh / West Lothian boundary. The City of Edinburgh portion of Almond practice is excluded from the capacity and list size calculations for LDP2.

### **1.2 Current capacity**

NHS Lothian undertook a West Lothian practice capacity survey in January 2026 which identified practice list sizes, number of clinical staff both in terms of those able to see undifferentiated patients – i.e. General Practitioners and Advanced Nurse Practitioners as well as other clinical staff employed by practices such as Practice Nurses, Mental Health Nurses, Phlebotomists, Physiotherapists and Pharmacists.

The survey also looked at building capacity including number of consulting rooms, admin space condition and ownership. The 2026 survey identifies that practices operate from buildings owned and operated by a number of different organisations including premises owned by NHS Lothian, West Lothian Council, GP practices who own their own building, practices owned by commercial landlords and shared ownership models.

Data showed that in nearly all West Lothian practices there was sufficient capacity for the current operations of staff employed by Primary Care practices with sufficient spare capacity to allow employment of additional staff to cater for expected growth in list sizes likely to come from housebuilding under LDP1. The exceptions were in East Calder and Almond (Winchburgh) which are nearing full capacity and Barbauchlaw (Armadale) and Linlithgow which have some limited evidence of possible future capacity pressures.

### 1.3 January 2026 List Sizes by practice

Practice Name	Town(s)	Operating location(s)	List Size	Total Rooms available (including community services)
Almond	Winchburgh	Winchburgh	6170	11
Linlithgow	Linlithgow	Linlithgow	15660	22
Ferguson	Broxburn	Strathbrock	6842	19
Linden	Broxburn	Strathbrock	6603	18
Wood	Broxburn	Strathbrock	7717	21
East Calder	East Calder	East Calder	16242	27
Barclay - Livingston	Livingston	Carmondean	12799	25
Carmondean	Livingston	Carmondean	10086	21
Howden	Livingston	Howden	12282	28
Craigshill	Livingston	Craigshill	8827	21
Dedridge	Livingston	Dedridge	10905	23
Murieston	Livingston	Murieston	6872	13
West Calder	West Calder	West Calder	10590	29
Barclay - Fauldhouse	Fauldhouse	Fauldhouse PC	8453	16
Ashgrove	Blackburn	Blackburn	7831	20
Whitburn	Whitburn	Whitburn	12919	31
Kingsgate	Bathgate	Bathgate PCC	8172	18
Newland	Bathgate	Bathgate PCC	9291	18
Simpson	Bathgate	Bathgate PCC	8624	21
Barbauchlaw	Armadale, Blackridge	Armadale, Blackridge	17311	29
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>204196</b>	

(excluding Kirkliston)

As can be seen from the table the 20 practices in West Lothian have a collective list size of around 204,000 West Lothian based patients. This is above the National Records of Scotland (NRS) estimate of population for West Lothian of 186,440 (mid 2024).

This rate of approximately 9% “Ghost Patients” is in the middle range of what would be expected and below the 12% rate found in the previous 2022 survey. This may reflect inaccuracies in the mid 2022 based NRS population estimates data that have been corrected in the mid 2024 estimates that more accurately reflect recent growth in West Lothian’s population.

### 1.4 Other services delivered by NHS Lothian

As well as directly employed staff there are a number of other services delivered in Primary Care buildings in West Lothian by NHS Lothian. This includes: district nurses, health visitors, school nurses, nursery nurses, midwives, physiotherapists, podiatrists, retinopathy screening, orthoptists, community psychiatric nurses (CPNs), speech and language therapists, dietitians, sexual health clinicians, phlebotomists and other specialist nurses. This usage varies significantly by practice but can have a significant impact on availability of space for employing additional primary care staff.

Individual practice requirements may vary slightly and some of the clinical spaces can be outwith the main GP practices if space is available to deliver HSCP requirements in other settings beyond GP practices.

## **Part 2 – Primary Care Future demand**

### **2.1 List growth forecasting**

As part of the 2026 Primary Care audit NHS Lothian undertook analysis of likely list growth at each practice in West Lothian. For most practices low to moderate increases of 0-20% are expected.

The exceptions are Almond, West Calder and Whitburn with significantly higher growth forecast - albeit in West Calder and Whitburn this high growth is forecast to be post 2035 as the housing allocations there are longer term build.

Given the poor condition of the existing building and the clear forecast growth in East Calder a new build GP practice was identified as the lead investment priority for West Lothian Health and Care Partnership and a business case approved. Both WLHSCP and NHS Lothian agree that a new Health Centre for East Calder is required. As requested by the Scottish Government, all Health Boards must undertake regular capital prioritisation exercises. Within NHS Lothian, replacement of East Calder Health Centre is noted as a 'category A priority – immediate requirement'.

Unfortunately, the proposal is currently on hold but it is hoped that NHS Lothian will be able to recommence delivery of the project soon following a positive announcement from Scottish Government in the 2026 budget speech.

### **2.2 Number of practitioners needed in relation to list size.**

Traditionally in Scottish Primary Care practice a ratio of 1:1500 (Practitioner:List Size) has been considered a maximum ratio between Full Time Equivalent (FTE) clinical staff able to see undifferentiated patients – i.e. General Practitioners (GPs) and Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs) to List Size. This number has historically been broadly used across a number of different health boards and policies.

NHS Lothian have made an assessment of the total infrastructure requirement for existing service delivery and future requirements.

Combining the direct Primary Care staffing ratio of

- 1:1500 GP/ANP to list size;
- 0.3:1500 for Primary Care Improvement Plan staff to list size (Physiotherapists, Pharmacists, Nurses, Phlebotomists etc employed directly by practices); and
- 1.14:1500 Health and Social Care Partnership staff (Midwives, Phlebotomists, Community Psychiatric nurses etc) to list size

This is a total clinical room requirement ratio of 2.44:1500.

This means a requirement for 1.62 clinical spaces for every 1,000 patients on a GP Practice list.

### **2.3 Developer Funding for practice expansion.**

The current West Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP) (2018), Policy HOU 7 Healthcare and Community Facilities in New Housing Development, sets out that developer contributions could potentially be taken where health service provision is identified as inadequate to meet the needs arising from a proposed development(s).

Such contributions were proposed to be set out in Supplementary Guidance to the LDP. Supplementary Guidance was not prepared prior to the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 coming into force and a decision was made that contributions would be sought via Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) instead.

Officers are working with NHS Lothian to examine the potential for healthcare infrastructure contributions in future. In order to do this, officers needed to agree a baseline for the primary care infrastructure requirement per 1000 practice list size. This is because the “necessity” test in Planning Circular Planning Circular 3/2012 requires proof that there is a shortfall in infrastructure capacity. The recent work of NHS Lothian has identified a requirement for 1.62 clinical spaces for every 1,000 patients on a GP Practice list.

At 16 of the 20 GP practices in West Lothian there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the anticipated growth in list size from current housing allocations. In 2 practices there is clearly a requirement for additional capacity while a further 2 practices require further investigation of service delivery and infrastructure availability to explore whether additional capacity is required.

#### **Red**

East Calder  
Almond (Winchburgh)

#### **Amber**

Linlithgow  
Barbauchlaw (Armadale & Blackridge)

#### **Green**

Ashgrove (Blackburn)  
Barclays (Fauldhouse)  
Barclays (Livingston)  
Carmondean (Livingston)  
Craigshill (Livingston)  
Dedridge (Livingston)  
Ferguson (Strathbrock - Broxburn)  
Howden (Livingston)  
Kingsgate (Bathgate Primary Care Centre)  
Linden (Strathbrock - Broxburn)  
Murieston (Livingston)  
Newland (Bathgate Primary Care Centre)

Simpson (Bathgate Primary Care Centre)  
 West Calder  
 Whitburn  
 Wood (Strathbrock - Broxburn)

The Council will continue to work with NHS Lothian to monitor primary care capacity as the Proposed Plan is developed and to ensure that the identified capacity pressures are addressed through the planning process and housing allocations reflect infrastructure requirements and availability.

Current staffing levels, recruitment issues, building maintenance etc naturally form part of the experience of communities as they engage with primary care services but staffing concerns and building condition do not form relevant planning considerations either as part of the development of LDP2 or development management decisions.

### Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

West Lothian has experienced significant growth in housing stock and population over the LDP1 period. While some general practice list numbers have increased, the evidence across West Lothian is that most GP practices in West Lothian have the physical space to undertake more consultations if additional staff could be recruited.

Officers have worked with NHS Lothian to examine the primary care infrastructure requirement per 1000 practice list size. The recent work of NHS Lothian has identified a requirement for 1.62 clinical spaces for every 1,000 patients on a GP Practice list.

Using this space requirement suggests that at 16 of the 20 GP practices in West Lothian there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the anticipated growth in list size from current housing allocations. In 2 practices there is clearly a requirement for additional capacity while a further 2 practices require further investigation of service delivery and infrastructure availability to explore whether additional capacity is required.

Based on the evidence the proposed plan is required to:

- Take into account existing infrastructure availability as a significant factor in the site selection process.
- Ensure potential new infrastructure is carefully matched to any current and future development sites to ensure sufficient healthcare infrastructure is in place across West Lothian.

### Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

Pre-existing engagement

Officers have been working with NHS Lothian on healthcare infrastructure and evidence required to justify developer contributions for healthcare in LDP 2.

The draft Evidence was published online and views sought from stakeholders in 2025. Given significant changes in evidence a further round of consultation was undertaken May 2026.

### Statements of Agreement / Dispute

Further information to be added May 2026 after additional consultation