

## Vennel planning guidance

Changes between the draft planning guidance presented to the development and transport PDSP 3 April 2017 and the planning guidance to be presented to the development and transport PDSP on 31 March 2020.

Nr	Heading	Draft Planning Guidance	Planning Guidance
1.	Site Area	1.10 ha	0.60 ha
2.	Existing Use	Includes youth club	Excludes youth club
3.	Local Plan	West Lothian LDP 2009	West Lothian LDP 2018
4.	Purpose	Development of land/buildings to be disposed of by the council	Development of land/buildings which have been declared surplus to the council's requirements
5.	Urban Design	A forthcoming masterplan for proposed redevelopment of the Vennel and former Watergait area of central Linlithgow.	Key urban design aims for the masterplan to be prepared by interested developers are listed.
6.	Urban Design	New development will require to be stepped, of one and two stories in height, to protect important views of the Palace church and loch and their settings.	New development will require to be stepped to protect important views of the palace, church and loch and their settings. Three-storey development may be acceptable on the High Street frontage, with one and two stories in height beyond this.

Comments:

A central Linlithgow base for LYPP is essential. Approve “disposed of “has been amended. Masterplan for the Cross and the whole Vennel area is an important obligation to be undertaken by the council. Views from the High Street to the church and the loch are valuable.

Nr	Comment	Response	Comment on response
	Many Linlithgow people acknowledge that this is a once in several lifetimes’ opportunity to substantially impact the centre of Linlithgow	Point noted.	
	We believe that the current draft Planning Guidance is insufficient to seek development proposals which will answer the requirements of the Linlithgow community.	There is no requirement for the council to produce planning guidance; therefore robust and succinct guidance is an added benefit and will assist in any future marketing of the site.	This comes back to the necessity for a Masterplan for the Cross and Vennel area.
	Engagement - In both the survey and the questionnaire over 80% of respondents wished to see the Linlithgow community actively represented at all stages of the compilation of the development brief. Policy HER 18 states “The Council will work with communities on the formulation and promotion of community led enhancement schemes where appropriate to the character of the area”	There will be a further opportunity for input into the process at pre-application consultation (PAC) stage and at later stages in the planning process	Experience has shown that it is difficult to change matters of concept at this stage. If the concept is solely in the hands of the developer the Community effectively have no say. The Community should be involved in the concept brief.
	Our response to the Draft Planning Guidance is as follows:		

	Design/ heritage - The majority answering either the survey (70%) or the questionnaire (95%) wish to see a design in sympathy with Linlithgow's traditional building in terms of built form and building materials.	Robust urban design and heritage guidance has been provided which is to be supported by a further documentation on townscape and historic environment; reference to submission of a Heritage Statement has been added to the Planning Guidance.	To what extent is the transfer of the site conditional on the granting of planning permission?
	Landscape - 70% of survey respondents wished to see more open space and gardens, 81% of questionnaire respondents wished to see an upgrade in the area through soft landscaping.	A detailed landscape plan is a requirement of the Planning Guidance and reference to this has been included in the Planning Guidance.	
	Vennel garden area - a primary concern of the residents of the north and west blocks of Vennel flats is the loss of the existing garden area to the south of the north block. We suggest that the garden be excluded from the development area on the plan.	The site is not within the area covered by the guidance.	
	Vennel parking - we also suggest that an area of residents only parking be included south of the north block.	Dedicated parking for the Vennel flats is to the west of the barrier adjacent the west block; reference to a requirement for a parking assessment has been added to the Planning Guidance.	
	Tourism - In the survey only 3% of respondents would not wish to encourage more tourists and 97% of those expressing	Tourism facilities are identified as a potential use in the Planning	There are no visitor facilities in the Partnership Centre. The

	an opinion in the questionnaire wanted this area of the town to be more attractive to tourists. Therefore facilitating more tourists is a prime requirement. 64% of respondents to the survey wish to see a visitors centre with public toilets as a part of the Vennel redevelopment.	Guidance; public toilets and visitors facilities are relocated to the Linlithgow Partnership Centre (Tam Dalyell House).	toilets are only available during Library opening hours.
	Slightly less than half of respondents (46% survey and 47% questionnaire) would like to see a loch side hotel.	Tourism facilities are identified as a potential use in the Planning Guidance.	
	Traffic, parking - parking of cars and tourist buses and traffic on the High St generally is a study in its own right and should be carried out in the context of Linlithgow as a whole.	Urban traffic analysis is beyond the scope of the Planning Guidance; a requirement for a parking assessment has been added to the planning guidance.	Will the car parking study feed into the brief for this development?
	Engagement - In both the survey and the questionnaire over 80% of respondents wished to see the Linlithgow community actively represented at all stages of the compilation of the development brief. Policy HER 18 states “The Council will work with communities on the formulation and promotion of community led enhancement schemes where appropriate to the character of the area”	There will be a further opportunity for input into the process at pre-application consultation (PAC) stage and at later stages in the planning process	Unless there is an involvement at the concept briefing stage there will be no effective involvement.
	Our response to the Draft Planning Guidance is as follows: Design/ heritage - The majority answering either the survey (70%) or the questionnaire (95%) wish to see a design in sympathy with Linlithgow’s traditional building in terms of built form and building materials.	Robust urban design and heritage guidance has been provided which is to be supported by a further documentation on townscape and historic environment; reference to submission of a Heritage	Noted

		Statement has been added to the Planning Guidance.	
	Landscape - 70% of survey respondents wished to see more open space and gardens, 81% of questionnaire respondents wished to see an upgrade in the area through soft landscaping.	A detailed landscape plan is a requirement of the Planning Guidance and reference to this has been included in the Planning Guidance.	Noted
	Vennel garden area - a primary concern of the residents of the north and west blocks of Vennel flats is the loss of the existing garden area to the south of the north block. We suggest that the garden be excluded from the development area on the plan.	The site is not within the area covered by the guidance.	Noted
	Vennel parking - we also suggest that an area of residents only parking be included south of the north block.	Dedicated parking for the Vennel flats is to the west of the barrier adjacent the west block; reference to a requirement for a parking assessment has been added to the Planning Guidance.	The parking south of the north block could be resident's only.
	Tourism - In the survey only 3% of respondents would not wish to encourage more tourists and 97% of those expressing an opinion in the questionnaire wanted this area of the town to be more attractive to tourists. Therefore facilitating more tourists is a prime requirement. 64% of respondents to the survey wish to see a visitors centre with public toilets as a part of the Vennel redevelopment.	Tourism facilities are identified as a potential use in the Planning Guidance; public toilets and visitors facilities are relocated to the Linlithgow Partnership Centre (Tam Dalyell House).	There are no visitor facilities in the Partnership Centre.
	Slightly less than half of respondents (46% survey and 47% questionnaire) would like to see a loch side hotel.	Tourism facilities are identified as a potential use in the Planning Guidance.	

	Traffic, parking - parking of cars and tourist buses and traffic on the High St generally is a study in its own right and should be carried out in the context of Linlithgow as a whole.	Urban traffic analysis is beyond the scope of the Planning Guidance; a requirement for a parking assessment has been added to the Planning Guidance.	Traffic survey underway
	Retail - although there was some concern at increasing the retail offering, (31% of survey respondents did not want more shops) there was a majority view (59% survey, 62% questionnaire) that small shops to attract specialist and / or tourist related retailers would be desirable.	Commercial / retail is indicated as a potential use in the Planning Guidance and cannot be discounted as it is within the Town Centre Boundary; support noted.	
	Housing - the majority of survey respondents (55%) supported more housing as a part of the project with a strong following (questionnaire 66%) for 25% of housing being social rented.	Housing is indicated as a potential use in the Planning Guidance.	
	Business centre - 43% (survey) and 40% (questionnaire) would like to see a business centre with facilities for start-ups, rentable desks and meeting rooms particularly for micro businesses and home workers. There are a high proportion of micro businesses and home workers in Linlithgow, a group which is currently unsupported in terms of central facilities.	Employment is a potential use in the Planning Guidance; a business hub has recently been initiated near the station.	The EH49Hub needs a home. It never was a true business centre.
	Community facilities - 59% of survey respondents wished to see flexible space for daytime clubs and evening youth activities and 30% liked the idea of a rentable quality function room for family and other events.	Linlithgow has considerable provision for community facilities including new provision at the Linlithgow Partnership Centre (Tam Dalyell House).	Linlithgow does not have considerable provision for Community facilities. There is no Community provision at Tam Dalyell House. Linlithgow needs something similar to the Bathgate Partnership Centre.

	<p>Youth centre – Linlithgow Young People’s Project, which currently occupies space in the Vennel, is highly regarded in Linlithgow as providing an invaluable service. There was mixed opinion regarding whether LYPP should occupy space at the Vennel or have a dedicated facility on the Low Port Centre site. What was not in doubt was that, as presently, LYPP need a town centre location near to bus services.</p>	<p>This is a matter for WLC estates to address and outwith the scope of the Planning Guidance.</p>	<p>Important</p>
	<p>Views - the draft PG states “new development will require to be stepped, of one and two storeys in height to protect important views of the palace, church and loch and their settings”. In reality, because of topography and trees within the peel the Palace cannot be seen from the High St even if there were no Vennel buildings. The spire of St Michael’s Parish Church and the tower of the Burgh Halls can only be glimpsed from certain angles given the current buildings outwith the proposed redevelopment area. 95% of questionnaire respondents wished current views to be retained but it would be perfectly practical to build to up to four storeys and not compromise these views, It is suggested that existing views of St Michaels spire be protected but not specify building height.</p>	<p>Views are better in winter when the leaves are off the trees and from the west area of the high street looking across the Vennel site towards the church; the Vennel shopping parade were designed as low-rise to protect views; reference to a Visual Impact Assessment has been added to the Planning Guidance.</p>	<p>Will never be able to see the Palace from the High St west of the Cross.</p>
	<p>Education - the design guidance states that housing should be restricted to retirement accommodation or one-bedroom flats on the basis of a temporary constraint on educational places. This constraint will be largely resolved once Winchburgh Academy is completed and therefore it seems illogical to restrict the type of accommodation based upon a temporary constraint.</p>	<p>New supplementary guidance setting out education requirements has been prepared by the council; new high school provision is to be provided at Winchburgh; any educational constraints will be addressed at the time of any application for residential development.</p>	

	<p>Elderly housing - only 19% of respondents to the survey (42% answering a slightly different question in the questionnaire) saw further apartments for the elderly as being a desirable requirement.</p>	<p>Any housing applications would be assessed on their merits.</p>	
	<p>Sustainability - in respect of policy NRG 1 referred to in the draft Planning Guidance we would wish to see a more proactive statement regarding renewable energy generation projects, such as a solar energy cooperative, heat recovery or heat/cooling from the Loch.</p>	<p>Sustainability principles are indicated in the Planning Guidance. It is premature to constrain future proposals which will have above average energy efficiency due to rising Building Standard requirements. Electronic vehicle charging and cycling requirements have been added to the Planning Guidance.</p>	
	<p>Loch - The water quality at Linlithgow Loch must not suffer at any stage of the development.</p>	<p>SEPA is a key consultee to the draft guidance and for any proposals forthcoming.</p>	
	<p>Cross flats - there is a majority view in the survey (82%) and the questionnaire (90%) that the Cross flats should be included in the development for aesthetic and one important social reason. The Cross flats are in a deteriorating condition and many residents complain of being cold through leaking windows and suboptimal insulation. The Cross flats building will fail at some point in the future. Whether this point is reached in 5, 10 or even 15 years is immaterial in the context of the proposed project. This project gives the opportunity for residents to be permanently rehoused in the new flats on</p>	<p>The Vennel flats are not appropriate to be included in the site area for the planning guidance; no change to Planning Guidance.</p>	<p>But still could be included in a masterplan</p>

	<p>the Vennel site prior to the demolition of the Cross flats. If this decision is delayed and the new flats on the Vennel site are all occupied then, on inevitable future demolition, the existing community of residents will be split up and rehoused, possibly all over West Lothian. Businesses would also need to be temporarily or permanently accommodated in new premises as part of a phased construction programme.</p>		
	<p>Other projects - a significant proportion of Linlithgow people view the Vennel redevelopment project as requiring the planned inclusion of other potential projects as well as the area depicted in the draft Planning Guidance namely; the double deck car park at the Regent Centre, the Victoria Hall, and the flats adjacent to the Cross (the Cross flats).</p>	<p>These other properties are outwith the site area and beyond the scope of the Planning Guidance and site boundary. Detailed design suggestions are premature at this stage of the development / planning process and leaders of the community council were advised of this in advance; these items are beyond the scope of this consultation summary and have not been reviewed; no change to Planning Guidance required.</p>	
	<p>The LLBCC Submission also includes:  Online survey and paper based survey at Linlithgow Library;  summary of Results of a Questionnaire recorded at the Exhibition for the Redevelopment of the Vennel 29th August 2017 at Low Port Centre; comments received online, from the door to door survey of Vennel residents and written comments received at the library; comments recorded at the</p>		

	exhibition for the redevelopment of the Vennel 29th August 2017 at Low Port Centre Linlithgow; Map - Possible Townscape & Landscape Framework;; Map – Possible Layout and Content of Development; Map – Possible Phasing of Development.		
--	--	--	--