

Midlothian Local Development Plan Main Issues Report Consultation

Report by Ian Johnson, Head of Planning and Development

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the key issues raised through responses received as a result of the consultation undertaken on the Midlothian Local Development Plan (MLDP) Main Issues Report.

2 Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 8 October 2013, Cabinet considered a report which provided an early update on the Main Issues Report consultation, and agreed that a further report providing an analysis of the issues arising from the consultation be brought to a future meeting of the Cabinet. This report provides a summary analysis, in advance of a seminar to discuss the implications of the consultation responses for the preparation of the Proposed Plan. It also refers to the *Supplementary Guidance - Housing Land*, prepared in connection with the approved Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh and South East Scotland (SESplan), and approved for consultation by the SESplan Joint Committee on 30 September 2013 and ratified by the Member Councils. Currently under consultation, this document will have a bearing on the housing land requirements to be provided for through the MLDP Proposed Plan.
- 2.2 Midlothian Council is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date development plan. This currently comprises the recently approved SESplan Strategic Development Plan and the Midlothian Local Plan 2008 (which will be replaced by the Midlothian Local Development Plan in due course). When the *Supplementary Guidance - Housing Land* is adopted around June 2014, this will form part of the development plan.
- 2.3 In March 2013, Council approved, for consultation purposes, the MLDP Main Issues Report as the first stage in the plan-making process. An Environmental Report (and its Non-Technical Summary), prepared in connection with the strategic environmental assessment of the Main Issues Report, was also made available for consultation. The consultation period lasted from 1 May until 31 August 2013. Details of the consultation process were provided to Cabinet at its meeting on 8 October 2013.

Response summary

- 2.4 The report to Cabinet in October advised that around 2100 consultation responses had been received. All of the submissions have been processed and are available to view online at: <http://midlothian-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/planningpolicy/mldp/mir?pointId=2500541>

- 2.5** Cabinet is reminded that the Main Issues Report is not a draft plan. It sets out those areas where the current Midlothian Local Plan 2008 may need to be updated to address significant changes arising from national policy direction, the strategic development plan (SESplan), or environmental and development pressures. It focuses on major policy issues and new development proposals only.
- 2.6** Appendix 1 provides a brief summary of the topics as presented in the Main Issues Report, together with a summary of the key aspects of the consultation responses. A fuller analysis of the points raised in the responses is available in the Members' library. This report recommends that the analysis should form the basis for a Cabinet seminar in January to which all Members will be invited.
- 2.7** Meantime, further work will be undertaken on the issues raised, and the summaries of the responses, to ensure that all relevant points raised in the consultation are taken into consideration in moving forward to the Proposed Plan stage and also to reduce the time required to prepare it. The summaries will be made available to all respondents through the online development planning portal.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

The resource implications relating to the analysis of the representations are provided for within the current budget. Some additional consultancy work can be accommodated within the current budget, for example, to refresh and supplement the Landscape Capacity Study but further development work on the A701 realignment and/or transport modelling requirements may have budgetary implications.

3.2 Risk

There is a statutory requirement to replace the Midlothian Local Plan 2008 within five years (i.e. December 2013), and to adopt the MLDP within two years of the approval of SESplan by Scottish Ministers (i.e. June 2015). Failure to meet this latter deadline could lead to legal challenge or Scottish Government intervention.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☒ Adult health, care and housing
- ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☒ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☒ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

3.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

This report contributes to meeting the target of publishing and consulting on the Main Issues Report and supporting Environmental Report, and preparing the Proposed Plan on the basis of the responses received, by Spring 2014. The back office system which accompanies

the online development planning portal is delivering efficiencies in the plan-making process and is making it more transparent.

3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

When prepared and adopted, the MLDP, together with its Action Programme, will provide strategic guidance and forward planning for investment in future growth and development in Midlothian over the period to 2024. Together, they will help to inform the future spending priorities of the Council and its community planning partners as well as other public, private and voluntary sector bodies.

3.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

An early awareness-raising exercise was undertaken in 2010 with a wide range of statutory agencies, communities, development interests and other interested parties, to inform preparatory work for the Main Issues Report. Pre-consultation on the Main Issues Report was carried out with Scottish Government, SESplan, neighbouring planning authorities and the wider group of key agencies (Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Transport Scotland, Historic Scotland, NHS Lothian, the South East Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran), Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Water, Forestry Commission Scotland and Architecture+Design Scotland).

Consultation on the Main Issues Report and Environmental Report was undertaken between 1 May and 31 August 2013. A Development Plan Scheme for Midlothian No.5 was published in March 2013, including a Participation Statement. All those who submitted representations were encouraged to use a new online development planning portal on the Council's website as a way of keeping in touch with, and providing input to, the various stages in the MLDP process.

Follow-up meetings are already underway with the statutory key agencies (Historic Scotland, SNH, SEPA, Transport Scotland, SEStran, NHS Lothian, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Water), the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Consultation Authorities (Historic Scotland, SNH and SEPA), and other stakeholders (including Forestry Commission Scotland, Lothian and Fife Green Network Partnership) to resolve matters raised in their submissions and inform the approach to be taken in the MLDP Proposed Plan and Action Programme. A number of meetings have also taken place with development interests to provide an opportunity for them to discuss their proposals.

3.7 Ensuring Equalities

An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment was prepared in relation to the Main Issues Report and is available in the Members' library. Its findings can be summarised as follows:

- the impact of the Main Issues Report on the following equality target groups was positive: age, disability, and people experiencing poverty or at risk of poverty;
- the impact on other target groups was considered to be neutral; and
- no negative impacts were found.

The assessment considered the public engagement arrangements for the Main Issues Report, with additional contacts being identified for consultation purposes, and further consideration being given to the suitability of consultation venues from an equalities point of view.

3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The Main Issues Report is a 'strategic action' requiring SEA. Environmental assessment of the Main Issues Report was undertaken and an Environmental Report prepared for consultation. Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) was carried out, through screening out any requirement for Appropriate Assessment (in relation to significant environmental effects on European Protected sites). Both the SEA and the HRA will be kept under review during the plan-making process.

3.9 IT Issues

There are no IT issues arising from this report.

4 Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (a) notes the initial summary and analysis of responses to the Main Issues Report as provided in the Appendix to this report and that a fuller analysis of the points raised in the responses is available in the Members' library;
- (b) agrees to hold a Seminar in January 2014, to which all Members will be invited, to review the key aspects of the responses received and the implications of these responses, and other relevant matters, for the preparation of the Proposed Plan; and
- (c) remits this report to Planning Committee for its information.

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Background Papers:

- Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh and South East Scotland (SESplan) June 2013
- *Supplementary Guidance - Housing Land* as approved for consultation by SESplan Joint Committee on 30 September 2013 (ratification by Midlothian Council 5 November 2013)
- Development Plan Scheme for Midlothian No. 5, March 2013
- Midlothian Local Development Plan Main Issues Report 2013 and supporting documents
- Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment

APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF RESPONSES RECEIVED BY TOPIC AS PRESENTED IN THE MAIN ISSUES REPORT (MIR)

1 Introduction

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR sets out the background to plan preparation and the approach taken to the preparation of, and consultation on, the MIR and supporting documents in particular.*

Response received: Around 2100 respondents submitted comments on one or more aspects of the MIR.

The “general comments” section attracted a number of submissions in respect of the overall impact of the MIR; the consultation process and published information; the online portal; and specific requests for change. The majority of comments focus on the impact of the MIR. Thirteen comments were received and relate to concerns about the scale and nature of proposed development; the gradual urbanisation of Midlothian; the importance of community identity, local infrastructure capacity and community aspirations; and the risk of coalescence.

Two responses criticise the Council’s approach to the consultation process - one for not directly engaging with the Damhead community on proposals that would affect it and the other regarding the way in which the consultation events were advertised and conducted. Five submissions consider the layout and content of the MIR is poor and confusing, that there is too much supporting information, and the maps are too small a scale to give any context to the issues. Two like the principle of set questions but want more opportunity to expand on other sections of the document or add new issues. One commentator requests that the Council make all MIR/MLDP information publicly available and one acknowledges the volume of work involved in the MIR process.

There were five responses to the online portal. Two like the option to submit online or in paper and the ability to expand the inset maps. However, three think the system is difficult to navigate, not user friendly and uses confusing graphics.

Seven submissions relate to requests for change. Three comments request a specific policy in respect of telecommunications development; enabling development for restoring listed buildings, designed landscapes and historic properties; and to support Newbattle Abbey College. Three suggest a more innovative approach to sustainable development and scale of growth and one seeks an amendment in respect of the SESplan supplementary guidance on housing land.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members’ library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

2 A Vision and Aims for the Midlothian Local Development Plan

2a) The Vision

Summary of MIR position: *There is no statutory requirement for the MLDP to contain a vision; it is acceptable to depend upon the SESplan vision. However, the MIR asks if there is support for the MLDP to include a Midlothian-specific Vision and if so, whether there is support for that set out in the MIR.*

Response received: Nine submissions support the Vision, and a further 13 give qualified support. Examples of suggested changes to the Vision are as follows: include reference to the BioCampus as a strong economic focus; include a stronger approach to protection, enhancement and integration of the natural heritage; include reference to enhancing tourism; seek better health and education facilities; and the City of Edinburgh Council suggests replacing “South East Scotland” with “Edinburgh City Region”.

Eight responses do not agree with the Vision, the general theme being that the Vision is at odds with the rest of the MIR, especially the achievement of vibrant self-contained communities. Many of the responses relate to proposals for the Damhead area, especially the proposed housing and A701 realignment.

Scottish Government suggests that the Vision could paint a more distinctive picture of Midlothian in 10 or 20 years’ time. A number of responses suggest the Vision should be more ambitious.

An internal comment has also been made as regards the need to relate the Vision more closely to the three key priorities of the Single Midlothian Plan.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members’ library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar. Some suggested changes are relatively straightforward to incorporate, and could reinforce the message the Council wishes to make relating to its aspirations for Midlothian. An amended version will be brought to Members for consideration. Addressing other responses will depend on the decisions taken regarding related issues covered in more detail elsewhere in the MIR, for example, the A701 realignment; until a view is taken on these other issues, it is not clear if the concerns regarding the Vision can be resolved.

2b) Aims and Objectives

Summary of MIR position: *To reflect changes in Government priorities, the MIR suggests a small number of changes to the aims and objectives as set out in the current adopted Midlothian Local Plan 2008 and asks if these changes are acceptable.*

Response received: Seven responses support the proposed changes to the aims and objectives; a further 27 responses seek some changes. Some comment that proposed changes, for example, relating to

'climate change and sustainable place-making', do not truly reflect what is proposed in the MIR. Others seek reference in the aims and objectives to: harnessing or developing rural/ small-scale enterprises, including community-generated development; acknowledging the provisions of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act and links that can be made between flood risk and the Central Scotland Green Network; pursuing the delivery of infrastructure, including sustainable transport; setting an overall emissions target for Midlothian; affirming the commitment to obligations under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act e.g. maintaining food productivity and safeguarding good agricultural land and highlighting the role of renewable energy; and seeking completion of the BioCampus as a major economic/ employment base.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar. The MIR only sought views on suggested changes to the aims and objectives as set out in the Midlothian Local Plan 2008; it did not provide details of the current aims and objectives. Some of the comments received seek additions to the aims and objectives that are in fact already provided for in the current MLP, and accordingly require no action. In response to other comments, a revised set of aims and objectives can be brought to Members for consideration, if desired, especially the need to forge a closer link with the Single Midlothian Plan priorities.

3 The Location of New Housing and Economic Land

3a) Sustainable Place-Making

Summary of MIR position: *The preparation of the development strategy for the MLDP as set out in the MIR (including the selection of the preferred and reasonable alternative development sites) is based on a number of criteria, including sustainable place-making factors developed in collaboration with Architecture+Design Scotland, and Members' views and local information as expressed at the series of Members' briefing sessions held prior to approval of the MIR for consultation. The MIR asks for views on whether the sustainable place-making criteria are the appropriate influences on development choices.*

Response received: There is generally support for the principles of sustainable place-making. However, there is concern expressed by the Damhead community who believe the principles are urban-focused and that greater value should be placed on rural land uses. Some comments also relate to the difficulties in achieving sustainable places due to the scale of additional development proposed, but consider that developers should be made to adhere to the principles. Other comments relate to strengthening the emphasis on a design-led approach whilst some advise that market influences cannot be ignored and may make some priorities unachievable, e.g. higher housing densities. Some respondents suggest that the approach could be taken forward to masterplanning of sites, particularly with respect to the relationship between new development and existing communities.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar. The principles set out in the MIR are expected to be applied and developed throughout the plan-making process and beyond, i.e. to design briefs and masterplans. They are intended to guide new urban development, i.e. the allocation of housing and economic development and, as a result, there is no rural focus at present. It is proposed that the sustainable place-making factors be adjusted where appropriate and brought to Members for consideration. The final selection of development sites which will comprise the spatial strategy underpinning the Proposed Plan can take account of the comments received regarding sustainable place-making, and the Proposed Plan can incorporate specific guidance relating to the relationship that should be created between the development sites and the host communities.

3b) The Development Strategy

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR explains that the development strategy will continue to safeguard committed (previously allocated) housing and employment land, and allocate additional housing and employment land as required by the SESplan Proposed Plan (as at the time of the Main Issues Report publication). The SESplan Proposed Plan required new allocations in each of the three Strategic Development Areas as follows:*

	Housing Units (2009-2019)	Housing Units (2019-2024)	Economic Land (hectares)
SE Edinburgh (Shawfair part)	100	350	20
A7/A68/ Borders Rail Corridor	350	900	10
A701 Corridor	250	500	15
TOTAL	700	1,750	45

The SESplan Strategic Development Plan has since been approved by Scottish Ministers but with the specific housing requirements (as set out above) removed; and a requirement for the preparation of supplementary guidance to define the location of a significantly larger quantity of housing land across the SESplan area. The draft Supplementary Guidance has been prepared and is subject to consultation during November and December 2013. In terms of the SESplan requirements for new housing allocations in Midlothian (as presented for consultation in the Supplementary Guidance), these remain almost unchanged from the SESplan Proposed Plan, with the addition of only 100 units to the above figures for the A7/A68/ Borders Rail Corridor in the 2009-2019 period.

Response received: The responses to the development strategy have been principally in respect of individual sites; these are presented in the separate sections below pertaining to each Strategic Development

Area (South East Edinburgh (Shawfair part); A7/ A68/ Borders Rail Corridor; A701 Corridor). However, a number of respondents have commented that effort should be concentrated on the delivery of the numerous allocated sites which are either incomplete or still undeveloped, and also on brownfield land, as opposed to allocating further greenfield land. Some new sites have been brought forward through the consultation process by developers or landowners.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

The calculation of new housing land requirements for the SESplan area assumes that all existing committed sites, along with new windfall sites, are developed as well allocating new housing sites at the scale set out in the above table (and adjusted by 100 units through the Supplementary Guidance). To meet its statutory duties, the MLDP will need to make provision to meet the SESplan housing and economic land requirements in full. The preferred development strategy as consulted upon in the MIR will meet these requirements, but Members may wish to adjust the site selection in the preferred strategy; if this is the case, sites from the alternative development strategy may need to be brought into the MLDP Proposed Plan to replace any sites lost from the preferred strategy.

The new sites suggested through the consultation process fall into two categories:

- those that were identified at the pre-MIR stage and were not considered suitable for inclusion in either the preferred or alternative strategies; and
- those that have not previously been identified and assessed.

In some cases, sites are too small to make a significant contribution to the strategic housing requirements; in other cases, they do not meet the sustainable place-making criteria e.g. ease of access to services and facilities, proximity to public transport, etc. The new sites are currently being assessed to see if any have merit as replacement sites and are referred to in the following sections pertinent to each Strategic Development Area. One issue as regards the inclusion of any new sites is that they have not been subject to scrutiny and consultation in the same way as the preferred and alternative sites.

South East Edinburgh (Shawfair part)

Summary of MIR position: *To meet the SESplan housing requirement (100 units in 2009-19; 350 units in 2019-24), the MIR identifies a preferred housing site at Newton Farm with a capacity for the required 450 houses, and scope for further longer term growth of 250 houses. It also promotes a 20-hectare site for employment use at Shawfair Park Extension. A reasonable alternative housing site has been suggested at Cauldcoats with a slightly lower capacity of 435 houses.*

Response received: The responses received in relation to the preferred and alternative development sites in the South East

Edinburgh (Shawfair) Strategic Development Area can be briefly summarised as follows:

Site Ref.	Site Name	Supports	Objects
Preferred sites			
S2	Newton Farm - 450 houses (+250 longer term)	1	5
S4	Shawfair Park Extension - 20ha. economic development	2	-
Alternative site			
S6	Cauldcoats - 435 houses	1	1

Expressions of support have been received for the preferred and alternative development sites. The key issues raised in opposition are as follows:

- objectors to site S2 Newton Farm are concerned about the loss of Green Belt, the impact on the setting of Newton House and the loss of prime agricultural land;
- East Lothian Council has indicated that this site would influence its future consideration of the Green Belt around Old Craighall;
- Transport Scotland comment on the reference in the MIR to accessing the A68/A720 junction in relation to site S2, stating that agreement for this should be sought prior to the publication of the Proposed Plan;
- Historic Scotland welcomes the mention of the need to take account of the A-listed Monkton House;
- Shawfair Business Park Ltd state that site S4 would allow Shawfair Park to achieve a scale equivalent to Edinburgh Park and thus attract larger, quality business to the area, with a potential job generation of 19,000;
- Buccleuch Estates feel that the development of site S4 should not go ahead until Shawfair Park and the site previously allocated for the expansion of the park have been developed; and
- Calistar Developments & HGP Ltd are promoting the alternative site S6 Cauldcoats, proposing land beyond that identified in the MIR for 1200-1300 houses.

Two new/additional sites, listed below, have been suggested in this corridor, both of which had previously been assessed and not taken forward into either the preferred or alternative strategies (note that site S9 is now much reduced).

Site Ref. (where previously assessed)	Site Name	Suggested Use
Shawfair		
Part of S3	Sheriffhall Mains	Housing - farm steading development
Danderhall		
S9	Edmonstone Road	Housing - 0.5ha

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar. The final selection of development sites which will comprise the spatial strategy underpinning the Proposed Plan will be a key issue for discussion at the Seminar, taking account of the comments made.

A7/ A68/ Borders Rail Corridor

Summary of MIR position: To meet the SESplan housing requirement (450 units in 2009-19; 900 units in 2019-24), the MIR identifies a preferred strategy which includes nine housing sites ranging in size from 30 houses to 400 houses. The site at Redheugh (400 units) can accommodate a further 200 units in the longer term, and would form the later phases of the current committed phase 1 of the Redheugh new community. In addition, the preferred strategy identifies an extension to Salter's Park employment site. As reasonable alternatives to the preferred sites, two sites are suggested, located in Bonnyrigg and Gorebridge. An additional development opportunity is also identified, at Rosslynlee Hospital, where it is considered appropriate to allow some housing development to support the reuse of the redundant listed building; due to uncertainties regarding delivery, this site has not been depended upon to meet the SESplan requirements.

Response received: The responses received in relation to the preferred and alternative development sites in the A7/ A68/ Borders Rail Strategic Development Area can be briefly summarised as follows:

Site Ref.	Site Name	Supports	Objects	
			Individual letter	Proforma letter
Preferred sites				
G1	Redheugh West - 400 houses (+200 longer term)	2	5	-
G9	Greenhall Centre - 30-50 houses	2	-	-
BG1	Broomieknowe, Bonnyrigg - 50-60 houses	5	15	-
BG2	Dalhousie Mains, Bonnyrigg - 240 houses	1	5	-
BG3	Dalhousie South, Bonnyrigg - 290 houses	1	8	-
D8	Larkfield West, Eskbank - 60 houses	2	5	-
E1	Kippielaw, Easthouses - 60-70 houses	1	11	1,279
R1	Rosewell North - 60-100 houses	2	13	141*
R3	Thornton Road North, Rosewell - 150 houses combined with R5	1	30	

R5	Thornton Road South, Rosewell - 150 houses combined with R3	1	25	
D1a	Salter's Park Extension - 12ha. economic devt.	1 (as housing)	-	-
Alternative sites				
G5	Stobs Farm 2, Gorebridge - 180 houses	2	1	-
BG5	Hopefield Farm 2, Bonnyrigg - 450 houses (+300 longer term)	4 (141*)	7	-
Additional development opportunity				
VR7	Rosslynlee Hospital - 120 houses	4	4	-

**Proforma letter objecting to Rosewell sites suggests Hopefield Farm 2 instead*

A number of expressions of support have been received for most of the development sites. The key issues raised in opposition are as follows:

- there is too much reliance on site G1 as no houses have been completed to date and the programming is unrealistic;
- Gorebridge Community Council considers that Redheugh should be a part of Gorebridge and not a stand-alone community;
- parts of some sites lie within Nationally Important Gardens and Designed Landscape requiring sympathetic design or retention as open space/ buffer zone;
- Flood Risk Assessment and/or Drainage Impact Assessment is required for some sites;
- Gorebridge Community Council considers that site G9 Greenhall Centre should be considered for social housing specifically aimed at the elderly;
- some sites are opposed on the grounds of coalescence, impact on Green Belt and effect on the Area of Great Landscape Value;
- the Larkfield area is a strategically important landscape and sensitive Green Belt area;
- site E1 (Kippilaw, Easthouses) attracted more opposition than any other site, including 1280 proforma letters, with a group formed to oppose the development, citing concerns about coalescence, impact on neighbouring buildings, risk from gas pipeline, traffic safety and congestion, pressure on local services, loss of informal recreational land, habitats and prime agricultural land, precedent, ground conditions, and need for development;
- Dalkeith & District Community Council oppose site E1;
- Buccleuch Property wishes the Salter's Park economic site (and site D1a Salters Park Extension) to be reallocated for residential/mixed use development citing no demand for a business allocation here;
- a common concern regarding the preferred sites at Bonnyrigg is the loss of Green Belt between Bonnyrigg and Eskbank and potential coalescence;
- access arrangements are an issue for site BG1 Broomieknowe;
- concerns about sites BG2 (Dalhousie Mains) and BG3 (Dalhousie South) relate to the lack of capacity of local facilities

- (schools/medical centres), local traffic issues, impact on the proposed Dalhousie Conservation Area, and doubt about the potential to improve access to Dalhousie Business Park;
- the overarching concern of Rosewell residents is that it will lose its character as a village due to the scale of growth, integrating newer residents into the community will be difficult, local facilities may be unable to cope, there is potential wildlife impact at Shiel Burn, construction traffic may cause subsidence from old mining activities, proximity to incompatible neighbours e.g. kennels;
 - Rosewell & District Community Council are concerned about the Rosewell sites and about the need to mitigate the risk of coalescence between Rosewell and Bonnyrigg;
 - Taylor Wimpey states that reasonable alternative site BG5 Hopefield 2 is deliverable, avoids the Green Belt and avoids coalescence, has excellent public transport and good access to Eskbank Station; and
 - Taylor Wimpey considers that reasonable alternative site G5 (Stobs Farm 2, Gorebridge) is deliverable and effective.

All points raised will be provided in more detail for Members' consideration at the forthcoming Members' Seminar.

There is also support for the continued allocation of committed development sites at Cowden Cleugh, Dalkeith (site H1), East Newtongrange/ Lingerwood/ South Mayfield (sites Q/R/U), and North Mayfield (site X/h41). A number of new/additional sites, listed below, were suggested in this corridor, some of which had previously been assessed and not taken forward into either the preferred or alternative strategies.

Site Ref. (where previously assessed)	Site Name	Suggested Use
Gorebridge		
G2a (reduced area to that previously assessed)	Monteith House Farm (a)	Housing - 100 units + business/ community facilities
G6	Stobs Farm 3	Housing - 300 units
	Ashbank	Housing - 150 units
Bonnyrigg		
	Dalhousie Mains/ Lothianbridge	Housing - 20-30 houses
Dalkeith/ Eskbank		
D5 (but now includes part of allocated economic site E3)	Hardengreen 1	Housing - 100 units
D6	Hardengreen 2	Housing
D7	Larkfield South West	Housing, retail or community use
	Thornybank (Charles Letts)	Housing - 3.8ha.
	Weir Crescent, Eskbank	Housing - 2.4ha.
Easthouses		
E2	Easthouses (Lothian Estates/ Clarendon)	Housing -150 houses?

Newtongrange		
NE1	Newbattle Home Farm	Housing - 180 units
NE6	Newbattle Glebe (The Beeches)	Housing - 70 units

Over and above these sites, some additional development opportunities have been put forward in the villages and rural area of Midlothian, as follows:

Site Ref. (where previously assessed)	Site Name	Suggested Use
VR4	Dewarton, land west of Main Street	Housing - up to 15 units
VR5	Fordel	Housing - 60 units
VR8	Whitehill	Housing - 12 units
	Cousland	Housing expansion
	Newlandrig	Housing - up to 10 units
	Cranstoun Estate: Edgehead/ Cousland/ other?	Housing and economic development

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar. The final selection of development sites which will comprise the spatial strategy underpinning the Proposed Plan will be a key issue for discussion at the Seminar, taking account of the comments made.

A701 Corridor

Summary of MIR position: To meet the SESplan housing requirement (250 units in 2009-19; 500 units in 2019-24), the MIR identifies a preferred strategy which includes three housing sites ranging in size from 180 houses to 320 houses. The site at Seafield Road, Bilston (320 units) can accommodate a further 230 units in the longer term. In addition, the preferred strategy identifies employment land for general business/industry at Ashgrove North and Oatslie (extension to existing site), and for biotechnology uses at The Bush. As a reasonable alternative to the preferred sites, one site is suggested, at Auchendinny. Additional housing development opportunities are also identified, at Pentland Plants, Bilson and Burghlee, Loanhead; due to uncertainties regarding delivery, these sites have not been depended upon to meet the SESplan requirements.

Response received: The responses received in relation to the preferred and alternative development sites in the A701 Strategic Development Area can be briefly summarised as follows:

Site Ref.	Site Name	Supports	Objects	
			Individual letter	Proforma/ petition
Preferred sites				
BN1	Seafield Road, Bilston - 320 houses (+230 longer	1	9	-

	term)			
RN5	Roslin Institute, Roslin - 180-200 houses	2	17	-
RN3 & RN6	Roslin Expansion - 260 houses	2	29	-
LD1	West Straiton - c. 60ha. mixed uses	2 (but with housing in short term)	19	24 ^{*1}
LD4	Ashgrove North, Loanhead - 11.5ha. economic development	1 (but for housing, not economic development)	-	-
RN4	Oatslie Expansion, by Roslin - 4.5ha. economic development	1	17	-
Alternative site				
A1a	Auchendinny - 250 houses	6	6	32 + 108 ^{*2}
Additional development opportunities				
BN3	Pentland Plants - 50 houses	1	8	-
LD3	Burghlee, Loanhead - 175 houses	2	10	65
LD2	East Loanhead (Hunter Ave/ Foundry Lane) - to be confirmed	1	-	-

*1 Comprises a petition from Straiton Park residents with 29 signatories, 5 of whom have already been recorded as submitting individual letters

*2 Comprises 32 proforma letters plus a petition signed by 108 additional objectors (note that the petition predates the MIR)

A number of expressions of support have been received for most of the development sites. The key issues raised in opposition are as follows:

- loss of Green Belt land e.g. land within the A701 loop and non-conforming uses at The Bush;
- loss of prime agricultural land;
- concern at the impact on landscape and rural character of the areas, for residents and visitors;
- concern at the threat of further development in Damhead beyond the MLDP;
- strong concern at the scale of development in Damhead, Bilston, Roslin and Auchendinny;
- the scales of potential development identified at Roslin and Auchendinny would ruin the villages and community spirit;
- the impact on infrastructure and its capacity to cope, e.g. road congestion, health care and schools;
- sites RN3, RN5 and RN6 may have an impact on the designated Roslin Battlefield site;
- sustainability of the proposals; and
- built development at Burghlee.

All points raised will be provided in more detail for Members' consideration at the forthcoming Members' Seminar.

A number of new/additional sites, listed below, were suggested in this corridor, some of which had previously been assessed and not taken forward into either the preferred or alternative strategies.

Site Ref. (where previously assessed)	Site Name	Suggested Use
Bilston		
BN1 extension	Seafield Road	Housing - 5ha.
	Myrtle Crescent	Housing
Loanhead		
	Land between sites LD1 and BN1	Mixed use
	Include land west of Straiton Bing (beyond A701 realignment) in site LD1	Mixed use
	North West Extension to site LD1 (beyond A701 realignment)	Housing - 450 houses
	Include site LD4 Ashgrove as part of Midlothian Gateway	Housing, not economic development
	Lasswade Road	Housing - 0.57ha.
Roslin		
RN7	Roslin Institute Extension	Housing - 120 houses?
Penicuik		
P1a	Glencorse Mains (a)	Housing - up to 600 units
P1b	Glencorse Mains (b)	
P1c	Glencorse Mains (c)	
	Milton Bridge (MOD)	Housing
	North West Penicuik	Housing - 37ha.
	Pomathorn Mill	Housing - 3.2ha.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar. The final selection of development sites which will comprise the spatial strategy underpinning the Proposed Plan will be a key issue for discussion at the Seminar, taking account of the comments made.

3c) A701 Realignment

Summary of MIR position: The MIR asks whether the proposal to safeguard a route for a realigned A701, as a replacement for the consented roadline (as shown in the current Midlothian Local Plan 2008) is supported. It also asks what the alignment of the road should be, with two alternative routes illustrated and other options possible. The rationale for the replacement roadline is to relieve growing congestion in the corridor, support growth which is committed and planned along the corridor (including at The Bush and the BioCampus Enterprise Area), and allow the existing roadline to be used for enhanced bus and cycling provision, with more limited access for private vehicles. A link between the A702 and A703 is included, principally to improve access to The Bush. Further, the MIR asks whether all of the land within the A701 realignment should be removed

from the Green Belt and what combination of land uses should be supported within this area.

Response received: The responses received are generally opposing the A701 route realignment; around 45 submissions and a further 63 proforma (standard) letters (with some variations) have been sent in opposition to the proposal. Around 28 respondents state that the realignment is not required, with a number of alternative transport improvements suggested such as improving existing roads and the Hillend junction; providing a direct bus route from Roslin to North Bridge; or a circular bus route on the bypass linking park and ride sites; or a rail link to Penicuik, etc.; or congestion charges, etc. These are listed more fully in the detailed summaries of the responses available in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

The reasons given for opposing the realignment include:

- loss of prime agricultural land;
- loss of Green Belt;
- potential for coalescence with the city;
- impact on Damhead community, cutting it in half;
- loss of rural character of Damhead;
- loss of wildlife, biodiversity, historical features and landscape (including Cameron Wood, Straiton Bing, historical graveyard, cropmarks);
- potential pollution (light / noise/ carbon dioxide);
- blight on local businesses and homes;
- unlikely to solve the congestion or improve access to The Bush;
- ground condition issues would have to be overcome e.g. subsidence and boggy land; and
- the cost estimates are questionable and more development may be required to provide funding for the road.

Some adjustment to the route of the roadline is suggested and one respondent suggests a delay of around 10 years to see what transpires in the area. 26 respondents ask that the Green Belt within the realigned A701 be safeguarded for reasons including amenity, biodiversity, coalescence, and lack of justification for further housing or for retail expansion at Straiton. Again, these reasons for opposing the realignment are listed more fully in the detailed summaries of the responses available in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

Some comments have been received, both in support of and opposing the current consented A701 realignment.

There is some opposition directed towards the link road between the A702 and the A703 related to environmental concerns (e.g. impact on hydrology and attractiveness for walkers and cyclists), traffic implications (e.g. 'rat-running' on the A703), and loss of research datasets.

Four respondents support the A701 realignment and comment on the delivery/funding and express route preferences. Scottish Government has not commented on the A701 realignment but has asked that

reference to The Bush should make the linkage to the upgrade of the A702. Two respondents support removal of the Green Belt designation within the realignment to enable co-ordinated masterplanning of the area, including retention of natural heritage resources, and avoid piecemeal development. The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) has offered assistance in detailed site appraisal to ensure proper management of the water environment.

Some comments neither for or against the A701 realignment have been received, for example, supporting the potential for improved cycling provision on the existing A701 or enhanced green network links.

Next steps: The proposal for a realignment of the A701 will be a key issue for discussion at the forthcoming Members' Seminar. If this proposal is to be supported and taken forward as a safeguarding in the Proposed Plan, work will be required to firm up on a preferred route. The development of the road proposal may require further transport modelling and junction micro-simulation; further discussion with Transport Scotland regarding the A701 Straiton junction and A702 Hillend junction on the A720 City Bypass will be required. One of the major considerations is also how such a proposal might be delivered and the implications of substantial development in the corridor in the absence of a realigned roadline e.g. access to major housing sites at Bilston.

3d) Penicuik Rail

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks whether there is support for further route investigation and a feasibility study to be undertaken into a new heavy or light rail route to Penicuik. This is to enable possible routes to be safeguarded in the MLDP to avoid their loss to alternative uses.*

Response received: The responses received are generally in support of undertaking a feasibility study relating to the potential for a Penicuik rail link (10 responses), subject to certain caveats such as continuing protection for cycle routes, walkways and green network links that are based on the disused rail routes. Two further comments were received suggesting heavy rail linked to the Borders rail line with spurs to other communities as far west as Penicuik. Five respondents favour a new light rail link or at least route investigation, including tram or a more innovative form of lightweight rail. Offers of assistance with the study have been received from two sources. Three respondents question the need for the Penicuik rail option, suggesting instead that priority be given to committed strategic projects in the A701 Corridor in support of the BioCampus and The Bush.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar. The offers of assistance with the study will be considered further. The draft Action Programme would need to assign responsibilities for taking the study forward, if this is included in the MLDP Proposed Plan.

4 Retailing

4a) Preferred Strategy for Retailing

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR sets out a preferred strategy for retailing based upon a network of centres comprising the town centres and Straiton commercial centre. In addition to supporting retail proposals in town centres and planned/ consented retail development in Shawfair town centre, Dalkeith bus station site, Gorebridge and Straiton, the strategy supports one new superstore in the A7/ A68/ Borders Rail Corridor in a location that would not undermine the delivery of committed supermarkets. In this corridor, new and/or rationalised comparison floorspace is supported in Dalkeith. Within the A701 Corridor, comparison floorspace is to be concentrated at Straiton through development to the west of the A701 within a realigned roadline. Opportunities for the environmental improvement of the public realm in all town centres are to be sought.*

Response received: Four respondents support the preferred strategy for retailing whereas 22 respondents oppose it. Some additional comments, both in support and objecting, were received regarding the manner of future development at Straiton. Some support the strategy overall, with the exception of the expansion of Straiton.

Those supporting the strategy include representatives of the development industry. They agree with the role as set out for Straiton retail park/commercial hub and support remodelling and diversification to include commercial leisure and food & drink uses. Investment is already being made to enhance the existing units, car park and bus routes. There is a suggestion that Straiton has potential to become a viable, sustainable and accessible town centre as part of a mixed use development, including housing. Land in the Pentland Industrial Estate should be allocated for non-food retail use.

Those opposing the strategy include the City of Edinburgh Council, Damhead and District Community Council, Bonnyrigg and Lasswade Community Council, the Midlothian Green Party, Friends of Burghlee Park, the West Midlothian Environmental Action Group (WMEAG), Transform Scotland, 12 residents (around half being from the Straiton/Damhead area), and representatives of competing retail locations.

Those specifically opposing retail growth at Straiton, cite the following reasons:

- this would put retail park development ahead of town centres which does not fit with national policy/SESplan sequential test;
- the impact of the economic downturn on retailing has not been taken into consideration;
- this could exacerbate the decline of town centres due to the opening of large stores;
- the approach will increase congestion and encourage the use of private transport or put pressure on infrastructure;
- this would create urban sprawl and retail parks are unsightly;
- retail parks take money from the local economy;

- the approach could destroy existing communities;
- investment would be better spread across Midlothian and not concentrated on already successful centres; and
- there is a circular argument in the case of the Straiton expansion that the new development is required to fund the new road (which may not be economically feasible) and the new road is required to support new development.

General points applicable across Midlothian include the view that new stores should be provided to meet convenience need in localised areas, particularly in conjunction with new development. Supermarkets do not meet all needs and, if built, should not be located outwith town centres. Gorebridge Community Council supports more retail development generally, as it creates revenue-generating opportunities. Tynewater Community Council queries the approach to retail policy in rural areas.

Comments relating specifically to the strategy for town centres are discussed under question 4c) below.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Member's library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar. The proposal for an expansion of the Straiton retail park/commercial hub will be a key issue for discussion at the Seminar.

4b) Straiton Commercial Hub

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if the notion of a 'Midlothian Gateway' is supported, with an expansion of Straiton to the west of the A701 for mixed use development including retail, commercial and other uses. The type of uses that would be appropriate was also sought.*

Response received: Around eight respondents, including various development interests, Gorebridge Community Council and four private individuals, specifically support the Straiton Commercial Hub proposal, in some cases with caveats. There is some support for acceptable uses to be broadened to incorporate residential, tourism and culture-related forms of development. The provision of jobs is a consideration. If the proposal is to be taken forward, the opportunity presents itself to improve the overall appearance of the area. There is scope for discussion about the inclusion or otherwise of local properties within the site. Gorebridge Community Council comments that there is a lack of comparable opportunities in Gorebridge and poor public transport will limit any benefits that might come to East Midlothian.

Nineteen respondents oppose the proposal including the City of Edinburgh Council, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Damhead and District Community Council, Roslin Heritage Society, WMEAG, the Midlothian Green Party, Transform Scotland, Ocean Terminal Ltd, Land Securities and eleven private individuals.

The reasons for opposing the proposal have largely been covered under question 4a) above. In addition to these points, the following matters have been raised:

- expansion of Straiton retail park would impact upon the vitality and viability of Edinburgh City Centre and other existing shopping centres in the city region by providing a “one stop shop”;
- retail spending is not increasing and investment will result in displacement from other locations;
- the additional floorspace should be allocated in town centres;
- the proposal is contrary to Scottish Planning Policy and SESplan as there is no mention of the sequential test;
- this may not be the best or most sustainable option for meeting additional retail provision, and the approach treats Midlothian too much as a stand-alone area, which is at odds with the notion of a network of centres with Edinburgh City Centre as the prime location;
- when first developed, Straiton was supposed to be contained within strict boundaries;
- Straiton is a retail park not a town centre and there are already empty units;
- the proposal is contrary to Circular 1:2009 as there is no consideration of a reasonable alternative;
- the notion of Straiton being a gateway is not supported as it appears to be to attract business from Edinburgh rather than something Midlothian needs;
- there would be loss of landscape character, habitats and land for community woodland or green networks;
- could use the land instead as part of a ‘food belt’ linked to the sale of food in local shops;
- the current retail park offers a poor quality retail environment; and
- the site is unsuitable for building due to ground conditions.

Next steps: As for question 4a) above.

4c) **New Superstore for A7/ A68/ Borders Rail Corridor**

Summary of MIR position: *On the basis of a retail study which identified capacity for further retail development in the A7/ A68/ Borders Rail Corridor, the MIR asked whether, in addition to the consented retail floorspace in the corridor (Shawfair, Dalkeith bus station, Gorebridge), a site should be identified in the MLDP for a new superstore in the Redheugh area or if such a facility would be better located further north in the Newtongrange area.*

Response received: Five respondents are in favour of this proposal including Gorebridge Community Council, two development interests, WMEAG and one private individual. Six respondents oppose the proposal including Transform Scotland, the Midlothian Green Party, three private individuals and one development interest who suggests there should be more than one superstore across the whole corridor, with an alternative location (Larkfield South) being suggested.

Gorebridge Community Council supports the Redheugh location, with additional facilities including retail aimed at passing tourists. This would provide jobs and improve the attractiveness of the area for new housing. One development interest supports the case for a new superstore, suggesting that Midlothian Local Plan site R (Lingerwood) would be suitable and would assist the delivery of housing sites Q/R/U

(East Newtongrange/South Mayfield) whilst another development interest is promoting an alternative site at Larkfield South which falls outwith the area indicated in the MIR. Newtongrange is also suggested as a location for a supermarket.

Opposition to the proposal claims there is no need for another large superstore which will damage town centres and have an adverse impact on road traffic. Smaller store development is favoured instead within town centre locations.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Member's library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar. The principle of a new superstore and the preferred location for this will be a focus for discussion at the Seminar.

4d) Town Centres

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks whether the MLDP should seek to control the change from retail to non-retail uses in Dalkeith town centre only. A more flexible approach would then be applied in other town centres to allow a change to more community-based or other uses in order to restore vitality to these centres, as a means to secure their long-term future.*

Response received: There is general support for the principle of permitting greater diversification within town centres (with caveats) and/or other measures in support of town centres. A number of comments and ideas were received regarding such support, for example:

- opening smaller supermarkets in town centres could assist their revival;
- a feasibility study into improving retail outlets in town centres should be undertaken;
- car parking in town centres should be easier and cheaper;
- significant investment is required to make town centres quality places which are safe, attractive and welcoming and there is a greater role to be played in terms of natural heritage;
- there is a need for shops in town centres selling cheap vegetables and support for farmers' markets;
- there is a need for more specialist/ niche shops in town centres;
- hotels on the edge of towns are detrimental to town centres;
- there should be economic and planning incentives for locally controlled retail business to stay in town centres;
- ground floor/ shop frontages should not be permitted to be converted to residential use;
- there should be provision for a switch from retail to non-retail uses in town centres other than Dalkeith but care to preserve retail where possible and changes permitted only to community-based uses; and
- there is concern about the conversion of shops to houses in Gorebridge.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Member's library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

5 Tourism

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if the approach to tourism as promoted through the current Local Plan should continue, i.e. support for tourist accommodation principally in settlements but also in 'gateway' locations with ease of access to the City Bypass. The alternative suggested is the identification of specific locations for tourist accommodation (hotels and/or self-catering) and, if so, where these should be located (e.g. related to Midlothian Snowsports Centre, golf developments, country house estates).*

Response received: Sixteen respondents support the current policy stance on tourism including VisitScotland, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Natural Heritage, a number of landowning estates and members of the public. Eleven disagree with it including Gorebridge Community Council, the Midlothian Green Party and a range of private individuals. In addition, 33 responses seek or support the inclusion of a specific policy, issue or amendment to the Council's position as set out in the MIR. These include Gorebridge, Damhead and District, and Tynewater Community Councils, VisitScotland, the Midlothian Tourism Forum, SNH, Scottish Enterprise, the National Mining Museum (Scotland), the Cycle Tourism Forum, the Midlothian Access Forum and a number of private individuals. Eight respondents, including the City of Edinburgh Council, Howgate Community Council, the National Mining Museum (Scotland), WMEAG and members of the public, raise concerns about the impact of tourist development on Green Belt locations, general amenity, transport networks, and/or agricultural land. Four respondents want to see the development and promotion of existing and new visitor attractions incorporating ancillary services to meet customer expectations and enhance the visitor experience. VisitScotland and the Midlothian Tourism Forum suggest that the MLDP should promote longer stay accommodation, of superior quality and the former points to the need for accessible accommodation for the disabled, young families and older visitors.

Comments of a more specific nature can be summarised as follows:

- there should be a focus on the inclusion of cycle tourism, with this promoted as a brand, with a new policy including the development of hubs based on the Borders Rail station sites and cycle route network development;
- safe cycle routes to Vogrie Country Park should be created;
- Hillend and Dalkeith Country Parks are suitable gateway locations;
- tourist development should be focused in and around Hillend;
- Damhead is a suitable tourist gateway for a small-scale/rural tourist initiative;
- planned developments that would enhance existing assets should be promoted;
- development trusts should be established to channel developer contributions from windfarm/mineral developments to assist heritage projects;
- there should be a new policy to enable development on country estates, golf courses, etc.; and
- there should be a new policy on regenerating historic buildings.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

6 Green Belt

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR raises questions about a number of potential alterations to the Green Belt in Midlothian partly as a result of changes to Scottish Planning Policy and partly as a consequence of allocating land for development. Responses to these proposed alterations are set out below as responses to site-specific changes followed by some general comments about Green Belt alterations. The site specific locations are:*

- a) *remove The Bush non-conforming area from the Green Belt but introduce a new policy designation here;*
- b) *remove the developed part of the Roslin Institute site at Roslin Biocentre from the Green Belt (excluding the 5-hectare extension) together with the Roslin Expansion proposed development sites and include them in Roslin urban envelope;*
- c) *remove Polton House and Eldin Industrial Estates from the Green Belt (developed areas only) and incorporate them into the urban areas of Bonnyrigg and Loanhead respectively;*
- d) *redraw the Green Belt boundary between Eskbank and Bonnyrigg along the A6094/ Eskbank Road and remove Green Belt status from land to the south, using green network proposals to maintain the landscape setting of both communities;*
- e) *remove all land within the route of the new proposed A701 realignment and prepare a masterplan for medium/longer-term development (or, as an alternative, remove only the proposed development sites here);*
- f) *retain in the Green Belt pending suitable economic development, the sites at Oatslie/Oatslie Extension, Ashgrove North and Sheriffhall South; and*
- g) *include support for essential infrastructure as an acceptable Green Belt use.*

The MIR also asks if any further changes to the Green Belt are suggested.

Response received:

- a) **The Bush:** The proposed change is supported by five respondents including SNH, the University of Edinburgh, the Friends of the Pentlands, one development interest and one private individual. The proposed change is opposed by seven respondents including Damhead and District Community Council, WMEAG, the Midlothian Green Party and four private individuals. Further specific points are raised in this context: Scottish Enterprise are seeking the inclusion of a policy to support development of the BioCampus similar to that proposed for The Bush; improved cycling and public transport provisions should be made for The Bush; and SNH are seeking supplementary guidance to reinforce the landscape framework of The Bush which will help mitigate its visibility from the A701, A702

and Pentland Hills and assist with providing a multifunctional green network.

- b) Roslin:** The proposed change is supported by three respondents including SNH, the University of Edinburgh and Friends of the Pentlands. The proposed change is opposed by six respondents including WMEAG, the Midlothian Green Party and four private individuals. A further specific point raised in this context by SNH is that design principles from Scottish Planning Policy (place-making factors) should be applied here.
- c) Polton House/ Eldin Industrial Estates:** The proposed change is supported by one respondent, SNH. The proposed change is opposed by five respondents including Lasswade and District Civic Society, WMEAG, the Midlothian Green Party and two private individuals. A further specific point raised in this context is that any change of use should be controlled and an option to revert the use to Green Belt should be retained if the site becomes vacant.
- d) Eskbank/ Bonnyrigg gap:** The proposed change is supported by one respondent, a development interest. The proposed change is opposed by six respondents including SNH, WMEAG, the Midlothian Green Party and three private individuals. SNH does not support the unconditional removal of Green Belt here but seeks a development brief or masterplan for this area focusing on place-making and links to existing communities, active travel links, retention and enhancement of landscape features which contribute to green networks and the wider landscape setting, and appropriate mechanisms to deliver the plan. A private individual has asked that a proportion (10%) of the sites at Bonnyrigg be retained for agriculture, allotments or greenspace.
- e) A701 realignment:** The proposed change is supported by four respondents including SNH, the Friends of the Pentlands and two development interests. The proposed change is opposed by 16 respondents including the City of Edinburgh Council, SNH, Damhead and District Community Council, WMEAG, the Midlothian Green Party, Transform Scotland, one development interest (seeking an alternative presentation) and nine private individuals. As regards the alternative of removing from the Green Belt only those sites earmarked for development, this is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, a development interest and a private individual. This approach is opposed by eight respondents including SNH, Damhead and District Community Council, WMEAG and five private individuals. Further specific points are raised in this context: Pentland Plants has asked that its site be removed from the Green Belt and allocated for housing; and SNH and various development interests have asked that the Council take a lead in masterplanning within the A701 realignment across multiple land ownerships.
- f) Green Belt economic sites:** The proposed change is supported by one respondent, WMEAG. The proposed change is opposed by five respondents including SNH, the Midlothian Green Party, one development interest and two private individuals. Further specific

points are raised in this context: a development interest has asked that Green Belt designation be removed from the South Sheriffhall site as this is not consistent with Scottish Planning Policy or SESplan and introduces uncertainty for investors; similarly the University of Edinburgh and Scottish Enterprise question why the Oatslie site remains in the Green Belt.

- g) Support for essential infrastructure:** The proposed change is supported by one respondent, the Friends of the Pentlands. The proposed change is opposed by 10 respondents including Damhead and District Community Council, WMEAG, the Midlothian Green Party and seven private individuals.
- h) Comments on the Council's overall approach to the Green Belt:** Ten respondents including Scottish Enterprise, Friends of the Pentlands, the University of Edinburgh and a range of development interests, support the Council's approach to the Green Belt, with qualified support in parts from 8 respondents including the City of Edinburgh Council and Lasswade District Civic Society. 24 respondents, mainly members of the public but also Damhead Community Council, Transform Scotland, WMEAG, the Midlothian Green Party and one development interest, do not support the Council's approach. It should be noted that some of these responses could relate to specific proposals within the Green Belt such as Green Belt deletion within the realigned A701. All responses are listed more fully in the detailed summaries of the responses available in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar. In supporting the Council's position, 13 respondents including SNH, SEPA, Scottish Enterprise, the Esk Valley Trust, RSPB Scotland, various development interests and private individuals, are seeking the inclusion of a specific policy, issue or amendment to Green Belt policy.

There are a range of responses on Green Belt (GB) policy of a more general nature, which raise points of note summarised as follows:

- GB land should be vigorously protected;
- GB as a concept is limited in scope and could be used as a more positive approach to promotion of green spaces, enhancement of the environment, creation of wildlife corridors, protection of farmland and making connections with other parts of Midlothian;
- loss of GB could have an economic impact on Midlothian over time in terms of its attractiveness;
- any developments in the GB should be assessed for flood risk;
- GB policy should be amended to allow for self-catering holiday accommodation;
- alternative access to green spaces should be provided where GB is lost;
- there should be no biodiversity loss where sites are released from the GB;
- GB policy does not meet Midlothian's needs to prevent coalescence;
- new development should be focused on areas of blight and brownfield land before the GB;

- loss of GB conflicts with principles contained in Scotland's Land Use Strategy; and
- green wedges would be a more appropriate form than a continuous GB to protect against coalescence and promote biodiversity.

In answer to the question about suggested further changes to the Green Belt extent or Green Belt policy, there are a number of responses seeking further removals from the Green Belt, as follows:

- Sunnybrae Gardens/ School Green, Lasswade;
- Robert Smith Place, Lugton;
- site VR3, Lothianburn;
- rural brownfield sites; and
- other small-scale Green Belt releases.

Changes to policy are suggested in respect of enabling development for listed buildings or other significant features of the built or natural environment, and rural diversification in the Green Belt e.g. farm shops, tourist attractions, some forms of renewable energy.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar. Potential changes to the Green Belt as outlined in the MIR, in some cases related to specific development proposals such as the A701 realignment and promotion of the Straiton Commercial Hub, will be a key issue for discussion at the Seminar.

7 Green Network

7a) Midlothian Green Network

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if there is support for the suggested approach for safeguarding and expanding Midlothian's green network, including the themes of climate change, active travel, biodiversity and place-making. It also seeks agreement to the Strategic Green Network Routes as a way forward and whether there are additional or alternative green network opportunities.*

Response received: 28 respondents support the principle of the green network concept and the general approach of the MIR on green networks, including SNH, SEPA, Forestry Commission Scotland, Esk Valley Trust, Gorebridge and Eskbank & Newbattle Community Councils, City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Access Forum, RSPB Scotland, Scottish Wildlife Trust, WMEAG, Transform Scotland, various development interests and members of the public. However, a number of respondents including Damhead Community Council, Midlothian Green Party, the Scottish Wildlife Trust, Friends of Burghlee Park, WMEAG, Transform Scotland and private individuals have expressed concern that green networks should not be a substitute/compensation for the loss of countryside, Green Belt or habitat.

Some express support for encouraging more sustainable transport and connecting communities with more opportunities for walking, jogging and cycling, disabled access, and linking up with other local authorities. There are also suggestions offered as regards specific opportunities for green network development including from the City of Edinburgh and

East Lothian Councils, Midlothian Access Forum, Esk Valley Trust, Friends of Burghlee Park and various community councils. In terms of the biodiversity role for green networks, Eskbank Amenity Society and others ask that the former railway at Torsonce Road, Eskbank be designated as a Local Biodiversity Site.

Tynewater Community Council and two private individuals comment that the green network proposals in the MIR are not well connected and another questions if there is a need for a formal network. Others express concern about specific parts of the green network as shown in illustrative examples in the MIR. Several landowners ask that the Council work with them as a group, to establish how the green network will be delivered. Some respondents also ask for further community engagement on developing green networks.

SNH, SEPA and Forestry Commission Scotland are keen to assist the Council with the development of green networks in Midlothian, including through development briefs.

Specific points have been raised on detailed matters such as:

- there is a need to create attractive living places/ communities with good open spaces and green spaces within them;
- further attention is required on the biodiversity role of green networks;
- employment and economic opportunities from the green network should be promoted and realised, as well as environmental and social benefits;
- more allotments and community growing areas should be promoted;
- outdoor sport and recreation should be listed as green network objectives;
- green networks should make connections with the historic environment; and
- the 'blue' infrastructure should be incorporate within the green network.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar. The development of the detailed strategy for the Midlothian Green Network will continue beyond the preparation of the MLDP Proposed Plan which will set out the policy context and framework for developing the concept.

7b) Newbattle 'Strategic Greenspace' Safeguard

Summary of MIR position: *In recognition of the encroaching urbanisation of the South Esk communities, the MIR asks if there is support for the notion of a long-term 'strategic greenspace' safeguard centred on Newbattle.*

Response received: The concept of the Newbattle Strategic Greenspace as set out in the MIR received support from SNH, City of Edinburgh Council, Gorebridge Community Council, Newbattle Abbey Residents' Association, Transform Scotland and six private individuals. SNH ask that the strategic greenspace safeguard be extended to

include the A7 Green Belt between Bonnyrigg and Eskbank. Newbattle Abbey Residents' Association ask that Newbattle Abbey Crescent and adjoining woodland be included in the safeguard to provide robust protection to the setting of the South Esk valley.

The concept is not supported by two development interests who consider that development can and/or should be accommodated within the Strategic Greenspace area. The Church of Scotland General Trustees are promoting a 70-house development here and Persimmon Homes are seeking development on three sites on the northern edge of Newtongrange, all within the identified Strategic Greenspace area.

Next steps: The merits or otherwise of taking the concept through to the Proposed Plan will be discussed at the forthcoming Members' Seminar together with the requests for extending the safeguarded area and the development proposals which have been promoted in this context.

8 Climate Change

8a) Energy for Buildings

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if there is agreement to the preferred approach to meeting the requirements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 in terms of energy for buildings.*

Response received: The City of Edinburgh Council, SEPA, Gorebridge Community Council and two private individuals agree with the proposed approach and more detailed comments are made by them and others, including Damhead and Tynewater Community Councils, WMEAG, the Midlothian Green Party and development interests, which can be summarised as follows:

- household renewable energy should be encouraged;
- there should be stringent levels of energy efficiency in new buildings and all new buildings should be zero-carbon;
- neighbourhood plans should be linked to the Climate Change Declaration;
- work should be undertaken to help communities at risk adapt to climate change;
- there should be more urgency about climate change impacts than shown in the MIR and there is no clear plan for Midlothian to contribute to the national emissions reduction target;
- the location of new buildings should avoid car commuting and climate change should reference transport issues;
- fuel poverty needs to be addressed through retrofit and building design;
- the Building Regulations are the correct vehicle for control rather than planning policy; and
- planning applications should include climate change/ sustainability appraisals.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

8b) Wind Energy

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if there is support for the continuation of the current approach to wind energy development based on the 2007 Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Turbine Development in Midlothian. If not, the MIR asks if there is support for such projects in specified areas e.g. as set out in a spatial framework that identifies areas of search for wind farms.*

Response received: Sixteen respondents, including Damhead and District and Howgate Community Councils, City of Edinburgh Council, Friends of the Pentlands, PEPA, WMEAG, three landowners and various private individuals support the 2007 Landscape Capacity Study approach to wind energy development. Others, including Tynewater Community Council, support the approach but subject to certain caveats, such as:

- there should be a more explicit policy presumption in favour of protecting residents;
- the approach should be tougher;
- there should be encouragement for offshore wind farms;
- the approach needs to be reviewed to retain its effectiveness, in particular for development within 2km of the Midlothian boundary; and
- the approach should be taken forward in supplementary guidance with related 'high level' MLDP policies.

Five respondents, including Scottish Renewables, Wind Prospect Developments Ltd, RES UK & Ireland and two individuals, do not support the 2007 Landscape Capacity approach, claiming that:

- the approach needs to be reviewed if the Council is serious about climate change and it is no longer suitable in light of commercial and technological advances;
- the current policy is totally inadequate and more guidance is required on suitable areas;
- the approach is at odds with Scottish Planning Policy and guidance; and
- perhaps the Council should be looking at community renewables.

Scottish Government, the three developers previously listed, Rosebery Estates Partnership, Midlothian Estates Group and a private individual support the preparation of a spatial framework for wind energy development. Draft Scottish Planning Policy sets out requirements for a three stage process to be followed in preparing such frameworks. SNH has commented that the current approach to wind energy development (policy NRG1) would benefit from a more comprehensive review than proposed, taking into account the cumulative development context and alignment with Scottish Planning Policy and guidance. The view is expressed that there is a need for clearer direction on which areas are suitable for wind farms and which are not, including for the small and medium scale and innovative designs.

Various respondents have asked that key landscapes/views, woodland, biodiversity and important peatland are protected when wind energy proposals are considered; small-scale turbines and wind farms may have impacts on the water management.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

8c) **Community Renewables and Other Forms of Renewable Energy Development**

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if it is considered that the MLDP has a role in further encouraging and promoting the development of renewable energy, particularly at an individual and community level.*

Response received: Thirteen respondents, including Damhead and District Community Council, Scottish Renewables, various landowning interests and private individuals have commented that the MLDP has a role in relation to community renewables and other forms of renewable energy. Some additional respondents have suggested that the MLDP should support biomass, the use of heat from the Millerhill Zero Waste Plant, hydroelectric development on the Esk and mini-hydro; hydroelectricity generation has potential to deliver emissions savings, create jobs and innovative approaches to community ownership/control, and to enhance former mill/ industrial sites for tourism. Some indicate that the Council should encourage the use of less energy, including in its own operations and service delivery, and by encouraging businesses. The view is expressed that the Council should also encourage household renewables achieved through grants for heat source pipes, solar, etc.

Damhead and District Community Council, WMEAG, and five private individuals have suggested that support should be given to community renewables which bring community benefits. There may be potential for communities neighbouring the Pentlands to work on projects similar to Harlaw hydro at Balerno. The Midlothian Green Party, WMEAG and other suggest that opportunities need to be explored and promoted through the MLDP including solar meadow and hydro, and small solar/wind in conservation areas. SNH comments that there needs to be a policy reference to large-scale photovoltaic in relation to natural heritage.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

9 **Minerals**

9a) **Mineral Working – Areas of Search for Aggregates and Coal**

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if there is support for the preferred strategy, or 'reasonable alternative' strategy, for mineral working which comprises:*

- a) *for sand and gravel: to expand the area for extraction at Temple Quarry (Outerston) (the 'reasonable alternative' being to expand sand extraction at Upper Dalhousie as well as Temple Quarry);*

- b) for opencast coal: to incorporate the current Ancrielaw area of search into a larger Cauldhall Moor area of search (the 'reasonable alternative' being to identify a new area of search at Airfield Farm, Cousland in addition to the Cauldhall Moor area of search).*

Response received:

Sand and Gravel

Support for expanded Temple Quarry (Outerston) (preferred strategy):

Four respondents support this proposal, mainly the landowning estates, but there is no indication of how the operators might seek to expand the area of search as provided for within the preferred strategy. There is no opposition expressed to this proposal.

Support for expanded Temple Quarry (Outerston) and Upper Dalhousie expansion (reasonable alternative strategy): Gorebridge Community Council supports the reasonable alternative strategy for aggregates working in order to secure adequate sites for quarrying in Midlothian.

There is support from Midlothian Estates Group/Cranstoun Estate for a flexible policy to support smaller-scale stone or limestone extraction where strict terms of environmental protection policies can be met, beyond areas of search.

Opencast Coal

General approach to coal extraction: There are 44 respondents, including the Midlothian Green Party, WMEAG, RSPB Scotland, and the Friends of Burghlee Park, who consider that the general approach taken in the MIR to coal extraction is wrong, referring to market conditions, the collapse of Scottish Coal, problems with restoration, climate change, and health implications. Some of these points are made in connection with specific sites, and the objection is also noted against specific sites where appropriate.

Response to preferred strategy - Cauldhall Moor area of search:

SNH points out the challenges to be faced in taking forward the Cauldhall Moor opencast coal site but seems to suggest that these issues are resolvable. SEPA is generally in support of the approach taken in the MIR. Eight respondents, mostly landowning interests and professional groups and including Hargreaves Surface Mining Ltd, support this proposal, with some slight variations in the boundary of the area of search; Hargreaves want the area of search altered to match their planning application boundary to the west, suggesting that the southern part of Ancrielaw beyond Lily Burn could be omitted from the area of search. Twelve respondents oppose the identification of the site as an area of search, including Howgate Community Council, WMEAG, and the Midlothian Green Party.

Response to reasonable alternative strategy - Cauldhall Moor area of search plus Airfield Farm, Cousland area of search:

Hargreaves Surface Mining Ltd seeks the inclusion of Airfield Farm as an area of search for opencast coal. East Lothian Council opposes the

reasonable alternative i.e. the Airfield Farm area of search, doubting that it will be practicable. Tynewater Community Council expresses some concerns about the reasonable alternative strategy including a new area of search at Airfield Farm. Ormiston Community Council also opposes the Airfield Farm area of search. Three other respondents support the reasonable alternative area of search. 34 other respondents oppose it, including the Cousland Village Hall Association, Communities Against Airfield Opencast (CAAOC), Cousland Smiddy Trust, and many local residents and businesses. Reference is made in one response to a local community survey with 92% opposition found.

Two respondents (landowning estates interests) seek additional areas of search for opencast coal without being site specific or ask for the policy to allow coal extraction outwith areas of search. Hargreaves Surface Mining Ltd seeks an area of search at Dalhousie for opencast coal to be protected from sterilisation by any development at the Redheugh new community. The Crown Estate also seeks an area of search at Dalhousie for opencast coal. Arniston Estate objects to the removal of the established Halkerston area of search, considering this to be premature.

In addition to the above, 119 respondents seek assurances that an area of interest at Chesters Wood identified by the former Scottish Coal (Scottish Resources Group) for potential opencast coal working will not form part of a preferred strategy for coal. A total of 25 letters and 94 proforma letters with variations were received, including some from Cranston Country Nursery. This location is not being put forward by any of the operators or landowners.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

9b) Onshore Gas Extraction

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if the existing Resource Protection policies are adequate to handle planning applications for onshore gas and underground coal gasification facilities or whether a specific policy is required for these operations. If so, the MIR asks what matters such a policy should take into account.*

Response received: There is support for incorporating a specific policy for onshore gas extraction from Gorebridge Community Council, Friends of the Pentlands, the Midlothian Green Party and two private individuals. Observations on the content and factors to be taken into account in any policy approach have been provided by these respondents and by SNH and the RSPB. These include:

- climate change impacts;
- landscape and visual impact (including cumulative and night-time);
- cumulative wildlife impacts;
- water contamination risks and the impact on groundwater-dependent terrestrial ecosystems;
- risk of methane release;
- impact on Green Belt objectives; and

- transport impacts.

SNH suggests that the preparation of supplementary guidance on this topic should be considered. The Midlothian Estates Group supports onshore gas extraction (asking for an area of search for coal bed methane extraction) whereas the Midlothian Green Party, WMEAG, and five private individuals oppose it.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

10 **Transport, Infrastructure and Delivery**

10a) **Infrastructure**

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks for views on the transport, education, health and other community infrastructure requirements arising from new development.*

Response received:

Developer contributions:

Scottish Enterprise and several development interests comment that developer contributions should be reasonable and only for items necessary to offset the impact of development. Discounts should be allowed for brownfield development; should not affect the delivery of economic development; requirements for committed sites should be reviewed; and should not include health facilities. Bonnyrigg and Lasswade Community Council, SNH and one individual indicate that developer contributions should be used to change behaviour and/or compensate for the negative impact of development (landscaping; green networks; active travel improvements; allotments). Taylor Wimpey/Hallam Land Management comment that the Council needs to be flexible in prioritising its demands for developer contributions. Housing and economic development should contribute. If contributions are needed to deliver major infrastructure schemes, this may result in difficulty in funding schools and meeting affordable housing requirements. Developer funding for the A701 realignment may be problematic. Providing more infrastructure will attract development and will require additional maintenance.

Transport infrastructure:

The City of Edinburgh and East Lothian Councils comment that there is a need to address cumulative and cross-boundary and strategic transport issues, including developer contributions (Old Craighall junction; bus route along City Bypass). There is support from Dalkeith and District and Gorebridge Community Councils and the Midlothian Estates Group for the grade separation of Sheriffhall roundabout (including a flyover between A6106 and A7). There is also support for, and opposition to, (and a suggestion for traffic impact assessment for) the A701 realignment; and a need for public funding to enable delivery. Howgate Community Council and Pentland Estate have expressed support for the roadline. This response needs to be read in conjunction with the response to the separate question specifically on the roadline

proposal. There is concern about overload of the new road through development.

Bonnyrigg and Lasswade Community Council, Lasswade and District Civic Society, Eskbank Amenity Society and one other express concern about congestion and pollution (at Sheriffhall, Eskbank Toll, Lasswade, Wadingburn, and Bonnyrigg town centre) and some suggest a moratorium on new development.

Both Scottish Government and Gorebridge Community Council do not support a rail station at Redheugh new community

Bonnyrigg and Lasswade Community Council, Swanston Farm Ltd, Transform Scotland and one other support park and ride facilities and, for the Lothianburn park and ride proposal, ask for landscaping and/or measures to minimise light pollution; there is also a request to increase the size of the station rail car parks.

Tynewater Community Council and the Midlothian Estates Group are concerned about the proportion of heavy traffic using the east-west rural road network and request measures to address this (specifically link between the A7 and A68 (B6367 and the B6458) and Gorebridge to Penicuik). There are issues relating to rural road speeds and landowner concerns relating to road maintenance responsibilities and support for rural buses.

SNH, the Midlothian Access Forum, WMEAG, Transform Scotland and ten private individuals support improvements to cycle/active travel provision including suggestions for specific schemes, and using developer contributions to deliver these.

Scottish Government reserves its position on the proposed land allocations until transport assessment is completed and mitigation measures have been agreed.

One individual asks that consideration be given to re-opening the rail link from Eskbank to Rosewell and to Penicuik.

Sewerage Issues:

The Crown Estate and private individuals are seeking, or provide clarification on, sewerage issues, including at Damhead, Hardengreen and Rosewell.

Education Issues:

East Lothian Council, Howgate Community Council, Grange Estates, Midlothian Estates Group and two private individuals raise matters relating to the provision and timing of new education facilities. East Lothian Council indicates that further discussion is required regarding the potential for shared use of a secondary school in Shawfair. Comments were received on the need to consider the efficient use of existing facilities and Howgate Community Council is concerned about the availability of capacity for pupils from small villages. Grange Estates considers there is no need for new primary school provision in South Mayfield to cater for committed development.

Community Facilities:

Dalkeith and District Community Council, Lasswade Civic Society, The Crown Estate and the Midlothian Estates Group have expressed a variety of views on community facilities, including the pressures on existing community facilities (Dalkeith; Burghlee Park); a suggestion to renovate rather than build new community facilities; concern about seeking additional facilities when the Council is considering closing existing facilities; and Rosewell Mains Steading Hub will provide for community use.

Fire Services Provision:

Bonnyrigg and Lasswade Community Council is concerned that the current fire station may not be well placed in relation to the expansion of Bonnyrigg and suggests locating it closer to Eskbank police station.

Digital Infrastructure:

The Midlothian Estates Group points to the need for improved digital infrastructure across Midlothian and also asks why there is no mention of electricity provision.

Strategic Flood Risk Appraisal (SFRA):

The Scottish Government supports the Council's SFRA.

Shawfair New Community:

Shawfair LLP states that committed development sites at Shawfair should not be required to address additional infrastructure beyond that already committed e.g. extension to Sheriffhall park and ride site or the new secondary school at Shawfair.

Allotments:

There is a request for land to be allocated for allotments as part of any future planning agreements (specifically refers to Bonnyrigg).

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

10b) Infrastructure - Sports Provision

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks for views on the quantity, location, use and availability of sports facilities.*

Response received: Sportscotland comments about the need for the MLDP to protect existing and new sports facilities. The MLDP should be informed by any new/updated pitch and/or sports facility strategies and new requirements should be identified. Further, one individual suggests that sports facility provision must be matched with provision of public transport links.

Some, including Gorebridge and Damhead and District Community Councils, comment that the provision of sports facilities in Midlothian is deficient, as follows:

- there is a need for all-season facilities which should include covered facilities, all weather surfaces and lighting;

- community sports facilities are needed in Gorebridge, especially football pitches);
- sports facilities provision should be included at site LD1 West Straiton; and
- the land at Straiton Bing could be used for sports, if it is safe.

Walkways, cycleways, bridleways and the use of green spaces should be improved and encouraged as part of the green network improvements. In terms of rural sports provision, innovative approaches should be sought to provision of sport in villages e.g. equipment for village halls to manage; reasonable cost access to village schools. Limited development at Hillend is supported (but there is concern about traffic congestion, landscape impact and urbanisation here). Swanston Farm Ltd is promoting an outdoor activities centre at Swanston. There is concern about the possibility of further golf course development in the Green Belt due to the impact on soils and biodiversity. One individual is seeking that 10% of all allocated development land is set aside for use as parkland and playing fields.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

10c) Waste

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if there are any specific sites or proposals for waste processing facilities which should be allocated to meet Zero Waste Plan objectives.*

Response received: There is support for elements of the land-use planning approach for waste, as set out in the MIR, from SEPA, Damhead and District Community Council and a private individual. SEPA sets out detailed factors and requirements for inclusion in the policy at the Proposed Plan stage; the MLDP should:

- support the development of new waste management facilities;
- safeguard existing waste handling installations/waste management sites;
- identify clear locations appropriate for waste management facilities;
- support the provision of infrastructure facilities for the management of all types of waste;
- support the inclusion of waste prevention and management as part of all new development;
- support the use of site waste management plans as a means to reduce construction and demolition waste.

In respect of all existing waste management facilities, SEPA recommends that these should be safeguarded from inappropriate development in proximity (to avoid conflicts which could interfere with the established waste management activity). It also recommends that, where applicable, room for expansion should be protected and that the Council should ensure any proposed adjacent land uses are compatible with waste facilities (particularly from the aspect of noise and smell). Finally, SEPA welcomes the identification of the Millerhill site as a major waste treatment plant and would like to see it identified on the Proposals Map.

Bonnyrigg and Lasswade Community Council sets out an alternative approach to handling waste, with a preference for composting of food waste, rather than digestion and burning, and local high temperature composting, ideally community run. One respondent raises concerns about the lack of facilities for waste segregation, once Penicuik WRC closes.

Next steps: The MIR is not a draft Plan and many of these points will be picked up at the Proposed Plan stage.

11 Affordable Housing and Housing Amenity

11a) Affordable Housing

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks whether it is considered reasonable to continue the current Local Plan requirement for 25% affordable housing to be provided in connection with all new housing allocations, subject to a possible reduction for smaller sites. If not, the MIR asks how the requirements for affordable housing in Midlothian should otherwise be met.*

Response received: Most, but not all, of the responses received are from development interests. There is support for the preferred approach in the MIR, including continuing to pursue the benchmark of 25% affordable homes and rolling forward the approach taken in the 2012 Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing. The Scottish Government comments that draft Scottish Planning Policy proposes that the figure of 25% be treated as a maximum rather than a benchmark and that the current economic climate brings challenges in securing a 25% contribution from developers; the Chief Planner asked authorities in 2011 to consider whether contributions of 25% remain deliverable, and how far affordable housing needs can be met with little or no public subsidy.

Some respondents suggest a possible reduction in the requirements for smaller sites, with perhaps no requirement below 5 dwellings and off-site provision for fewer than 10 dwellings, potentially facilitating brownfield and rural conversion developments. Others, mainly development interests, suggest that consideration should be given as to whether a 25% benchmark is too high a requirement and whether this affects development viability and deliverability. In this context, these respondents suggest that the MLDP must be flexible in its approach to affordable housing, in terms of delivery and scale of requirements which should be determined on a site by site basis. Some respondents suggest that more affordable housing is required and it should be spread across Midlothian as there are concentrations in some communities.

Reference is also made to the needs of travelling people, the need for rural affordable homes, houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) and the private rented sector. For example, Gorebridge Community Council asks that the Council should have a policy limiting the number of HMOs taking account of levels of temporary homeless people in an area. Calister Developments and HPG suggests that a development at

Cauldcoats to the north of Shawfair would support a mixed tenure approach and are keen to work with the Council on delivery mechanisms.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

11b) Housing Amenity

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks what type and design of new housing should be provided in Midlothian. As an adjunct to this, the MIR asks for views on the type of protection that should be afforded to the amenity of residential park homes.*

Response received: A range of issues has been raised in the context of this question, summarised as follows:

- more self build houses and variety in house styles are required;
- the attractiveness of the surrounding environment has a considerable role to play;
- Council house properties, housing association properties and park homes should be subject to a tidy garden policy;
- better maintenance of roadside verges and litter collection are required;
- new development should ensure biodiversity interests are addressed;
- there is a need to create pleasant environments that allow children to play, and residents to walk or cycle to neighbouring communities;
- a community needs a point of focus, such as a village green with a community centre or sports club as a central feature;
- new housing developments should incorporate adequate communal spaces and access to areas suitable for food production;
- the Council should consider the impacts of site LD1 on park home communities living in and around the Straiton area with many elderly residents who are vulnerable in terms of health and wellbeing, and have insecure tenancies with limited alternative housing options - the Council should implement a proposal to secure the future of the park home residents;
- the Council should give consideration to eco-homes and new housing meeting zero carbon standards;
- current policies are inappropriate in small- and medium-sized rural settlements and self-build plots are more suited to such areas;
- rural housing should not need to have access to a bus route; and
- smaller properties to provide for increasing single occupancy should be provided.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

12 Employment Land

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks for views on proposed changes to the established employment land supply and use classes assigned to specified sites.*

Response received: Six respondents support the Council's approach including the City of Edinburgh Council, Scottish Enterprise, Friends of Burghlee Park, two development interests and a private individual. One development interest and a private individual oppose the Council's approach. Some respondents feel that the Council needs to be more proactive and receptive to innovative approaches to regenerating brownfield sites, supporting localised economic development, development trusts and neighbourhood planning. Five respondents consider that the approach will lead to a future accumulation of difficult to deal with sites, at the expense of losing good agricultural land and sites of environmental value now. Other views expressed are that committed economic development sites should be developed before new sites; supplementary guidance should be prepared to identify and provide clarity on the circumstances/ criteria required to justify the loss of any employment land; and the plan should be more flexible and integrated in its approach to the development and reuse of rural business premises.

Some respondents make detailed site-specific comments which can be summarised as follows:

- the expansion of site e14 (Salter's Park) is supported;
- Salter's Park should be reallocated from economic to residential use/ mixed use development;
- part of site e10 (3.8ha at Charles Letts, Thornybank) should be released for housing;
- Class 5 uses should be retained at Shawfair Park;
- there should be phasing of economic sites at Shawfair Park with site e27 first, then site E1 and finally site S4;
- site e26 (Whitehill Mains) should be marketed for mixed use development;
- additional economic allocations at Shawfair are not supported;
- site e23 (Engine Road) should be retained for small business units or a training centre for young people - a new supermarket at Redheugh would support development here;
- there should be more employment land in Gorebridge, not less;
- land at Fordel should have its employment classification removed; and
- there is support for the removal of Burghlee (site LD3) from the economic land supply and its reuse for housing.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

13 Rural Issues

13a) Housing Groups in the Countryside

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if there should be continued support for new housing in rural housing groups and, if so, whether the current policy should be retained or modified e.g. to restrict the short-term potential for further extension of housing groups which have recently been the location for new housing.*

Response received: Gorebridge and Howgate Community Councils and a private individual support a continuation of the housing groups policy in its current form with no modification; it is right to restrict additional development where it has previously been approved. Development interests have pointed out that slow take-up is due to the low profile of the policy, and the economic climate. SNH has commented that a strict approach to achieving siting/design that is in accordance with existing settlement patterns will be needed and SEPA notes that rural development is not served by mains drainage, but needs to meet its standards.

Some concern is expressed about past enforcement of the policy and its potential to deliver unsuitable/unsightly housing in the countryside. Damhead Community Council and others have suggested that Damhead is a good example of what can be achieved through the policy and the Council should seek zero-carbon/eco-homes (although support for these is not universal) and avoid sterilising good quality agricultural land. The RSPB Scotland has requested that field boundary trees and hedgerows should not be removed to accommodate new build but should be incorporated into the design/layout.

Tynewater Community Council and seven development interests support continuation of the policy, but feel that it should be relaxed.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

13b) Low Density Rural Housing

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if the low density rural housing policy should be removed as there is little evidence of need/demand or whether higher densities should be permitted (up to a maximum number of units per site) with the expectation that this would deliver new housing groups in the countryside. Further, the MIR asks whether an additional area at Auchendinny should be included within the terms of the policy.*

Response received: SNH queries the merits of the policy in the context of low demand, and wider issues of coalescence and sustainability; in the longer term, the open countryside resource will become ever more valuable. One individual also states that the policy should be removed. Howgate Community Council asks for clearer justification for the policy and adherence to the development design requirements as set out in the supplementary planning guidance. Three development interests, WMEAG and a private individual comment that

the low density rural housing policy is a useful innovative approach which should be retained, to provide some opportunity for development whilst retaining the countryside and helping to ensure the viability of rural businesses. Some suggest that the policy be consulted upon to see if new areas could come forward or the requirements could be relaxed.

As regards the Auchendinny proposal, one private individual opposes the inclusion of the area in the low density rural housing policy. SNH does not oppose it but refers to their comments on the policy as a whole, particularly on the longer-term landscape resource of Midlothian.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

13c) River Valley Policy

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if the river valley policy should be amended to be less restrictive where the policy area overlaps with urban areas.*

Response received: There is support for the current policy without amendment from the Forestry Commission Scotland, Gorebridge Community Council, Eskbank Amenity Society, Friends of Burghlee Park, WMEAG, the Midlothian Green Party and six private individuals. These respondents together with the Scottish Wildlife Trust comment on the importance of the natural and built heritage of the river valleys; however, the latter notes that existing uses/ sites may require development in which case the proposal should be treated on its merits. The policy is important to local groups and the proposed change could open the door to development along the valleys, with incremental loss of protected woodland.

SNH and others comment that river valleys host key elements of the green network, providing a crucial link between rural and urban and, as urban areas expand, there will be a greater need for river valleys to act as a buffer between developments. SEPA and others flag up that any amendment to the policy should avoid an increase to flood risk. The RSPB comments that flood prevention should adopt natural measures, and paths and other access features should be located away from watercourses to maximise the area of undisturbed riparian habitat. The Midlothian Green Party recommends considering the potential for renewable energy developments such as hydropower in the river valleys.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

13d) Hillend Country Park/ Midlothian Snowsports Centre

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if Hillend Country Park and adjacent land along the A702 should be promoted for wider active rural leisure and associated uses e.g. tourist accommodation, associated retail (outdoor leisure goods), in order to support the Midlothian Snowsports Centre but also to provide business and employment opportunities. It is also asked if supplementary guidance, including masterplanning, should be prepared to guide such development.*

Response received: The Friends of the Pentlands, Damhead and District Community Council, Roslin Heritage Society, WMEAG and seven private individuals support some development at Hillend/ Midlothian Snowsports Centre provided that it does not harm the natural resource of the Pentland Hills Regional Park but there is concern that larger scale development would do so. The enhancement of the tourism/recreational/educational capacity of the Snowsports Centre will help secure its viability over the long term, improve the economic potential/employment opportunities in the area and enhance access to the Pentland Hills and greater use of the footpath network. However, development along the A702 is not supported.

Swanston Farm Ltd, Gorebridge Community Council and a private individual are also broadly supportive of the Council's approach. However, four other individuals oppose further development. The Midlothian Green Party and two individuals comment that the over-commercialisation of Hillend should be avoided.

The City of Edinburgh Council expresses some concern regarding the retail proposal here which it indicates should be ancillary to the main use and should be thoroughly assessed and justified in the context of supporting the Snowsports Centre. The proposal should also be assessed for transport impact.

SNH recommends supplementary guidance for this area that establishes the principles of retaining and enhancing existing habitats as part of a robust landscape framework; building height/mass; use of night-time lighting; and reinstatement requirements for active leisure uses, should the site cease operation. Sportscotland asks that any development complements the existing sporting/outdoor recreation facilities and that no new land uses are allowed to conflict with these.

Other substantive points raised include:

- significant investment has been made in the Snowsports Centre recently which should be subject to post-investment review;
- hotel development would not be an appropriate scale for the area and visitors are short-stay only so smaller scale, chalet-type developments are preferable;
- people bring their own skis so there is no need for a retail element;
- while the promotion of tourism/leisure here is supported, the Council's role should be confined to facilitating infrastructure networks to support tourism destinations rather than the management/operation of them;
- public transport and local connections to the site are important;

- as part of the green network, more planting and natural regeneration should be encouraged here to encourage non-car access; and
- there is concern about urbanisation of the area with street lights, signposts, roundabouts, etc.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

14 **Built and Natural Heritage**

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks if there is support for the definition and extent of the candidate Special Landscape Areas and, if not, what amendments are suggested.*

Response received: The approach taken in the MIR to the review of Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLVs) is supported by a number of respondents including SNH, Friends of the Pentland Hills, and others. SNH, Gorebridge Community Council, City of Edinburgh Council, the Friends of the Pentland Hills, WMEAG, and some development interests and private individuals support the definition and extent of the candidate Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) as proposed in the MIR.

Other respondents consider that the review is flawed in some way and provides the wrong policy direction. They would prefer to see no areas deleted from the designated areas, or question the validity of the approach e.g. deletion of areas which have been or may be subject to opencast coal operations, as site restoration should ensure that landscape quality is returned to what it was prior to extraction.

Some respondents express concern that parts of the currently designated AGLVs are proposed as deletions and not taken forward to the proposed SLAs. Most of the comments are seeking retention of all the AGLV areas as SLAs and no dilution of the strength of the policy of protecting these important landscapes. Respondents specifically identify the following areas which they wish to see retained:

- land east of Cousland;
- land north west of Edgehead/south east of Mayfield;
- Shewington;
- Fala.

Some respondents are seeking extensions to the candidate SLAs e.g. the North Esk Valley from Auchendinny to Penicuik Estate. On the other hand, the deletion of certain areas from the designated areas, and the extent of the candidate SLA boundaries, are welcomed by some landowners/ development interests.

Sportscotland supports the redesignation of AGLVs in line with Scottish Planning Policy and highlights the role that SLAs have in safeguarding settings for outdoor recreation opportunities, and not just protection of landscape and scenery. It suggests that areas important for outdoor recreation be specifically included within the redesignated areas e.g. recreation can form a positive afteruse for opencast coal sites so the

deletion of Shewington and Edgelaw Moor from the designated area is questioned.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar. The proposed changes to the extent of the candidate SLAs, which have arisen through the consultation, will be discussed with the Council's Landscape Officer prior to the Seminar.

15 Equalities

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR asks, in terms of the equality target groups identified, for any views on whether or not any of the land use issues raised in the MIR are likely to have a positive or negative impact. It also asks if there are other matters which, if taken forward in the Proposed Plan, might have a beneficial impact on these groups.*

Response received: Four respondents raise issues with respect to transport matters and equality, including Damhead and District Community Council; a further four, including Gorebridge Community Council, raise the question of the impact of the MIR on poverty. In addition to poverty, WMEAG raise a question about environmental justice and a member of the public asks about the manner of the consultation with respect to equalities (e.g. access to online information, availability of exhibition in Moorfoot area). Some specific points raised can be summarised as:

- wheelchair users should be given equal consideration to cyclists;
- there is spatial inequality in the distribution of opportunities affecting the south of the county e.g. accessing the Midlothian Gateway from the Gorebridge/ Mayfield area;
- the financial benefits from wind energy should be spread more widely e.g. through community-owned renewables;
- the proposed A701 realignment raises issues about road safety and safe travel routes for children, families, older people and cyclists; and
- development in the MIR caters for the affluent and discriminates against the elderly, low income and unemployed.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

16 Other Matters

Summary of MIR position: *The MIR sets out an intended approach to the review of all the policies contained in the current Midlothian Local Plan 2008 (e.g. on the basis of changes to national or regional planning policy) and the requirement for supplementary guidance. It also summarises the SESplan requirements as they affect the preparation of the MLDP.*

Response received on these or other matters: The following issues were raised for consideration in preparing the Proposed Plan:

Historic Environment:

- Historic Scotland will contribute to the development of policies on the historic environment;
- any development on the Roslin Historic Battlefield site is opposed;
- Conservation Area appraisals need to be undertaken;
- enhancements to Conservation Areas should be included in the MLDP, including setting out the objectives of this designation;
- Auchendinny, Loanstone and Howgate should be included within one Conservation Area;
- Penicuik Conservation Area should be extended to include land around Uttershill Castle;
- the Council should seek more proactive management of Gardens and Designed Landscapes and consider allowing more enabling development to help support them including remote enabling development; and
- the Council should be more supportive and flexible toward conversions to help maintain historic buildings and maximise their economic potential.

Biodiversity

- the design of new development and planning designations should take account of impact on biodiversity;
- the principle of the Local Biodiversity Site System and/ or promotion of biodiversity is supported; and
- there is also concern about the implications of the presence of a Local Biodiversity Site for future development.

Next steps: More detailed summaries of these responses will be placed in the Members' library for discussion at the forthcoming Seminar.

Declaration Box

Instructions: *This box must be completed by the author of the report. The box will be copied and saved by the Council Secretariat who will delete it from the report prior to photocopying the agenda.*

Title of Report: *Midlothian Local Development Plan Update*

Meeting Presented to: *Cabinet 19 November 2013*

Author of Report: *Janice Long*

I confirm that I have undertaken the following actions before submitting this report to the Council Secretariat (Check boxes to confirm):-

- ☐ *All resource implications have been addressed. Any financial and HR implications have been approved by the Head of Finance and Human Resources.*
- ☒ *All risk implications have been addressed.*
- ☒ *All other report implications have been addressed.*
- ☐ *My Director has endorsed the report for submission to the Council Secretariat.*

Education interest