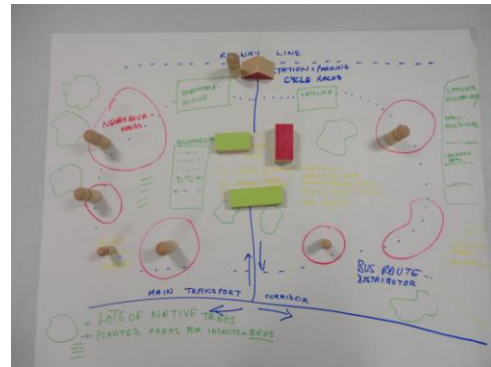
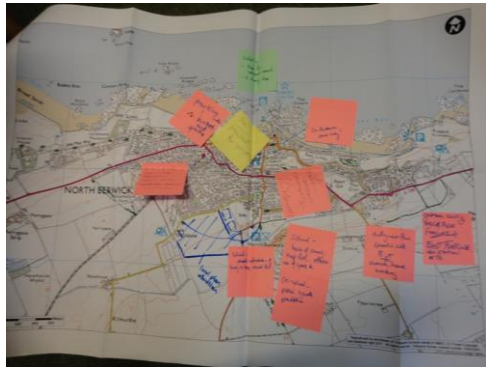
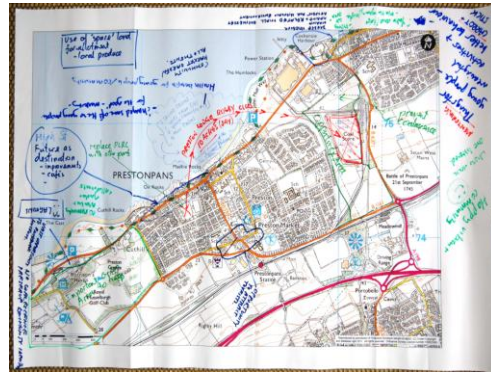
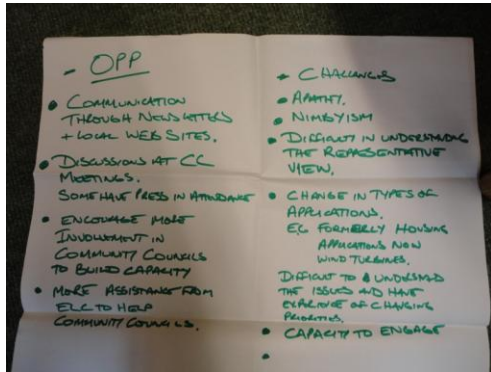


## East Lothian – Public Engagement in the Pre Main Issues Report Final Report



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## **Summary**

PAS was commissioned by East Lothian Council Planning Department in December 2011 to design and deliver ten events across the main settlements in East Lothian to support them to achieve their ambition to *'front load the Main Issues Report (MIR) consultation process through a series of structured conversations with organisation and individuals from a wide range of sectors.'*

Each event gathered a substantial contribution of opinion, suggestion and enquiry about the future plans for East Lothian from residents and stakeholders in the area. A total of 180 people attended the programme across East Lothian. Each event was facilitated by PAS staff and volunteers. Representatives from East Lothian planning department attended each event and participated in the discussions. Venue and catering arrangements were managed by East Lothian Council and participant bookings were managed by PAS.

East Lothian Council is the first local authority in Scotland to engage in conversation style events in preparation for the Main Issues Report with local people facilitated through Planning Aid for Scotland. PAS commend their initiative and innovation and will endeavour to share this good practice with other local authorities.

## **Introduction**

This report outlines the key discussion points and recommendations from each event gathered through group discussions and exercises using maps of the local areas during nine out of ten of the events. PAS facilitators used a combination of presentations about the planning process and discussion exercises to stimulate discussion and contributions.

The information highlights public commitment and interest in future developments for East Lothian and there is a genuine interest in continuing a constructive dialogue and meaningful engagement with the local authority planners.

Events were delivered at various times of the day in an attempt to encourage greater participation. Participation trends have tended to be an average of 12-16 people per event with some areas, where there are a larger number of active community groups, such as North Berwick, having the highest attendance of 29.

It is our understanding that many of the participants would like to see the summary notes from the workshops and East Lothian Council has agreed to publish our report on their website. Therefore we have provided our report in a format to enable them to do so and all visual materials have been provided on disc suitable for digital or hard copy publication.

## General recommendations

PAS has a number of general recommendations for the Council to consider. Some are for immediate action; others are longer term lessons for running similar engagement in the future.

- 1 This form of pre-MIR public engagement is new. East Lothian Council is pioneering the way in running a series of workshops like this throughout the Council area. We will certainly be trying to ensure that East Lothian is recognised for this innovative work. Whilst some of our recommendations suggest improvements for running a similar exercise again in the future, they should not undermine the good work that has been done.
- 2 A number of people contacted us after the events to say how they welcomed the opportunity to contribute and be engaged. This is good for the reputation of the Council and the planning department, and is something to build on in the future.
- 3 We believe that a strong element of the success of the workshops was due to (a) the use of independent expert facilitators and (b) creative ways for people to discuss and engage, as far as possible engaging on their terms rather than constraining discussion to conventional planning issues. We commend the Council on being so open to use of this innovative approach.
- 4 Many people, particularly at the developers' forum, asked if notes of the workshops could be circulated. The requests were particularly strong at the developers' forum, so much so that we promised that those participants who had provided email addresses would receive a summary of comments made during the workshop. At the very minimum, we would recommend that the Council circulate the developers' forum workshop note to those participants. It would be helpful if participants are notified by email when the report is published on the Council website.
- 5 Publicity should make best use of local networks like Community Councils, the Community Planning Partnership, the Council's community development workers, other Council departments and Community Planning Partners newsletters and e-bulletins, and voluntary sector organisations such as ELVON and VAEL. All of these channels are free, although they may take 2-3 weeks lead-in time. Relying on direct notification of interested parties and newspaper notices rarely gives comprehensive coverage.
- 6 Publicity needs adequate lead-in time. We would recommend a lead-in time of at least 8 weeks for a similar programme of events in the future. This should be extended over holiday periods, particularly Christmas.
- 7 Publicity and pre-MIR discussion papers should use 'normal' public friendly language, no planning jargon, simple messages, and be positive and creative in tone. In other words, think of normal advertising rather than statutory planning notices.

- 8 Suitability of venues is very important – we are thinking particularly of the two sessions at the Brunton Theatre in Musselburgh, where a security door entry system made access difficult, especially for the business drop-in session.
- 9 This pre-MIR programme should, ideally, be seen as part of a wider dialogue with the local community. Workshops are very good for getting different kinds of people together and discussion. But not all parts of the community will attend a workshop; in fact, most people attending will be those who are already engaged in or aware of the planning system in some way.

Young people, young adults, young families and more elderly people (for example) tend not to attend these kinds of workshops. Fortunately, there are easy ways of getting to these groups – through sessions with School Councils, youth groups, young parents groups, day care centres, Skill seekers and so on. In addition, some towns (like Musselburgh and Prestonpans for example) have active community sectors which have already been working on the future of their settlements, and have information which can be readily tapped into by the planning department.

Much of this contact could be organised directly through Council colleagues in education, community planning or community development. Also, it is not too late to do some of that kind of work, either in the lead-up to publication of the MIR or during the MIR consultation period itself. PAS would be delighted to help with young people's engagement through our IMBY™ primary schools and YEP!™ secondary school programmes.

- 10 Some of the community events, like North Berwick for example, attracted participants not only from the local community but also from the development industry and public sector agencies. This resulted in a richer dialogue at those events, because participants were able to understand the different perspectives that come together to make better places. This is something which might be actively promoted in the future (without giving up the idea of dedicated events for businesses, developers and Community Councils).
- 11 A greater staff presence from the planning department would be valuable, for a number of reasons
  - to understand firsthand the issues and aspirations being discussed, which would be invaluable for those drafting the MIR/LDP?
  - to be able to engage in dialogue.
  - to be seen to be taking people's input seriously (which might simply be a matter of perception).

More staff presence therefore helps build trust and good working relationships. During the developers' forum, a number of participants were disappointed that there was not a greater turnout from the planning department. Against that demand, of course, there are resource implications for the planning department.

- 12 The Blindwells workshop was a particularly challenging one to facilitate because of the huge range of views and expectations which people came with. Some were for the proposal, others against, with a huge range of concerns and aspirations in between. On reflection, we wonder if the challenging nature of the event was because the local community has had relatively little opportunity to discuss the proposals informally. Establishing some kind of regular discussion forum, with representation from the promoter of the site as well as the Council, could be a way of getting the public discussion onto a more positive and constructive basis.
  
- 13 A common theme across many of the workshops was the need for new development to be tailored for each settlement – effectively, a localised approach for each place. One way for the MIR to respond to this would be for it to include a short analysis of each settlement (including Blindwells) and the main issues facing it, based at least in part on the outputs from these pre-MIR community workshops. (Renfrewshire Council's MIR, published in late 2011, has something along these lines.)

## **Conclusion**

Finally, may we take this opportunity to say that PAS would be happy to work with the Council to explore how the information can be used meaningfully in the MIR and assist in the exploration of some of the issues and suggestions gathered from the exercises.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix i

#### DELIVERY AND ATTENDANCE RECORD NUMBERS

Date	Event	No. signed up	No. attended	PAS vols	Staff/consultant
01/02	Haddington	8	16	2	Nick Wright/Kathryn Hume
03/02	Prestonpans	10	12	3	Nick Wright
06/02	North Berwick	21	29	3	Kathryn Hume
08/02	ELC Community Councils	5	15	2	Kathryn Hume
09/02	Musselburgh	9	15	3	Nick Wright
13/02	Blindwells settlement specific	20	24	2	Nick Wright/Lynn Wilson
15/02	Business Forum surgery	6	12	3	Kathryn Hume
21/02	Tranent	6	16	2	Kathryn Hume
22/02	Developers Forum	21	20	1	Nick Wright
25/02	Dunbar	9	21	2	Kathryn Hume
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>3</b>

## Appendix ii

### East Lothian Pre-MIR Engagement

Haddington, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2012

#### Main discussion points

<b>Participant numbers</b>	16
<b>Good points:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attractive town centre – brings tourists</li><li>• Accessible to Edinburgh</li><li>• Access to the East Lothian countryside and coast</li></ul>
<b>Less satisfactory points:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not enough affordable housing – many new-builds are executive homes which aren't needed</li><li>• Transport links to other parts of the county</li><li>• Lots of derelict and empty buildings</li><li>• Insufficient parking in town centre</li><li>• Not enough tourist infrastructure</li><li>• Not enough allotments</li><li>• Buildings becoming increasingly the same – less distinctive than they used to be.</li><li>• Out-of-town supermarkets are reducing the strength of the town centre</li></ul>
<b>Changes needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More jobs needed – to reduce out-commuting and to encourage young people to stay in the area</li><li>• Improvement of the town centre – such as repairs to buildings/use of vacant sites. Also more opportunities for small businesses (new social enterprises? Reduction of rates?).</li><li>• New community facilities needed – especially for young people</li><li>• New communities/villages are needed rather than just new houses – extension of existing towns is not always the best option.</li><li>• Improvement of the bus services around the county.</li><li>• Improvement of parking facilities – Council car park in Haddington could be for public use</li><li>• More visitor bed-space required</li><li>• More community facilities required – especially for youths – they will help to reduce the social problems experienced not only in Haddington but in other parts of East Lothian.</li><li>• School capacity must increase along with housing numbers – potential to expand Knox Academy?</li><li>• More allotments should be provided</li><li>• A small business park could be accommodated to provide for small business enterprises.</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When building new housing – the infrastructure requirements need to be considered, and in place, beforehand – schools, jobs, drainage, roads etc. Also any new housing should be mixed housing tenures – most new housing built is not suitable/ affordable for the young or for older people.</li> <li>• A permanent farmers market could be accommodated in Haddington – promotion of local produce (Lodge Street?).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Things to change/stay the same in East Lothian up to 2025 (directly from post-its):</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get the powers that be to understand the limitation of population projections.</li> <li>• East Lothian has beautiful scenery with excellent access to the countryside for horse riders, walkers and cyclists. New developments should not break up the system. Do we really need lots more houses? Do not build houses up to bypasses.</li> <li>• No more executive housing in East Lothian- more than enough. More employment and business opportunities.</li> <li>• Concentrate on affordable houses to buy and rent- but not pokey flats. More support for SMES and town centre business to get incentives like public sector.</li> <li>• ELLSP is countywide, we need a town scale of planning in with the settlement can be considered. There needs to be joined up thinking.</li> <li>• Promote Haddington as “the market town”. Preserve the heritage and improved facilities for visitors. Restrict housing development.</li> <li>• Save the countryside from over development.</li> <li>• No more wind farms either commercial or residential.</li> <li>• No new builds until infrastructure stabilised!</li> <li>• Limited housing development around the town. Sound infrastructure to be in place.</li> <li>• Haddington to become more visitor-friendly.</li> <li>• A recognition that if prime agricultural land is built on it is lost forever for food production. Increasingly important with predicted global food shortages.</li> </ul>

## East Lothian Pre-MIR Engagement

Prestonpans, 3 February 2012

Participants	
<b>Good points:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong identity – strong community, “home”, industrial heritage/microcosm of the industrial revolution</li> <li>• Beautiful area – skies, sea, countryside, best agricultural land in Scotland</li> <li>• Proximity to the city</li> </ul>
<b>Less satisfactory points:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too much unemployment, no coherent policy/strategy about replacing old industries and sources of jobs</li> <li>• Access to housing market</li> <li>• Public transport is limited and expensive – especially rural areas of East Lothian</li> <li>• Education results could be better</li> </ul>
<b>Changes needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sustainable local economies – “complete communities”</li> <li>• Promote development of important local places for local community – e.g. Cockenzie Harbour – don’t just focus on housing and big developments, build local pride and heritage, conserve hearts of communities</li> <li>• Less focus on attracting big inward investments to create employment, more focus on supporting sustainable local employment, better quality employment, local shops etc</li> <li>• Town centres need to be reinvigorated, more local shops are a part of that but need other positive activities in town centres as hearts of communities</li> <li>• Policy should be optimistic and upbeat about East Lothian’s employment potential, as the authorities are west of Edinburgh (but don’t try and do the same as them)</li> <li>• Housing: need variety and supply at different cost levels, especially young families – not just “affordable housing”</li> <li>• Make more of tourism: 25,000 people walk through Prestonpans each year on the coastal path, make more industrial heritage, promote East Lothian as a county of festivals (linking up what’s already going on, supporting more), support tourist ‘infrastructure’ (focus on small-</li> </ul>

	<p>scale initiatives e.g. B+B's, restaurants, local crafts and produce), make more of the sea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Better protection of designated built/natural conservation environments</li><li>• One-size-fits-all approach to planning does not work in East Lothian – need tailored local approaches, and flexibility</li><li>• People should be a planning issue – not just buildings and spaces</li><li>• Education, childcare and youth facilities need to keep up with new housing development</li><li>• More focus on sports and recreation facilities/activities (contribution to health and wellbeing, community life) for locals, youth as well as visitors</li><li>• Council acts as a constraint on what communities want to achieve – needs to be more proactive, more flexible, more joined up working within the Council, more partnership working with others</li></ul>
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## East Lothian Pre-MIR Engagement

North Berwick, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2012

Participants	
<b>Good points:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coastal access</li> <li>• Transport links to/from Edinburgh</li> </ul>
<b>Less satisfactory points:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking is a major problem in North Berwick (and many other parts of East Lothian).</li> <li>• There is no A&amp;E facility in East Lothian and people have to travel to the Royal Infirmary for this – this is particularly a problem when there is an aging population.</li> <li>• Lots of charity shops on high street – there is nowhere for new businesses to go.</li> </ul>
<b>Changes needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Park and rides could be an option and/or car parks should be expanded.</li> <li>• The tourism industry should be expanded – particularly coastal – a waterfront walkway with cafes for example.</li> <li>• Better broadband facilities are required.</li> <li>• More local jobs are required - this would reduce the levels of commuting to Edinburgh.</li> <li>• New multi-use schools facilities – improvement of community facilities.</li> <li>• A hospital with A&amp;E facilities – this could be accommodated in Haddington.</li> <li>• Affordable housing for young people – especially students from Queen Margaret College who do not live in East Lothian at the moment.</li> <li>• A farmers market could be accommodated in North Berwick – to showcase local produce.</li> <li>• There is a need for expansion of the local schools and nurseries.</li> <li>• There is potential for the development of off-shore wind turbines.</li> <li>• A greenbelt should be designated around North Berwick (and some of the other towns in East Lothian) to resist urban sprawl.</li> <li>• Cross county transport links need to be improved – the only easily accessible route is to/from Edinburgh.</li> </ul>
<b>Things to change/stay the same in East Lothian up to 2025</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 2025, no more than 600 extra houses, and most of these affordable.</li> <li>• No more houses at present</li> <li>• The size of North Berwick should stay the same.</li> </ul>

**(directly from post-its):**

- Better parking and transport provision.
- Variety of shops in the high street
- Better quality shops, more trains, elderly well cared for
- No over development of existing towns- build new villages.
- Stop expansion in North Berwick.
- The current attraction on the town is liable to be destroyed as community size will be over-optimal.
- More local employment.
- Build smaller houses- not 5 bed.
- Northern Berwick Town centre should be vastly improved- pedestrianised?
- Develop North Berwick harbour for tourism and allow more parking in east bay.
- Cycle and pedestrian network joining coast across county through Drem etc.
- Big farms within 10 miles of North Berwick split up into small organic holdings interconnected with pathways.
- Access to specialist healthcare within East Lothian.
- Expand school into a central hub of town.
- More and faster public transport within East Lothian.
- Improve and integrate public transport links across county.
- Increase recreation facilities.

## East Lothian Pre-MIR Engagement

ELC Community Council Area Meeting, Haddington, 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012

Participants	
<p><b>Experience of engaging with the development plan in East Lothian</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was poor communication over the opportunities for involvement with the SESPlan.</li> <li>• Some community councils do not have a lot of experience or knowledge of how to engage effectively with the development plan.</li> <li>• It is felt that the planning authority mainly engage with individual developments rather than with communities.</li> <li>• There is lots of involvement with Blindwells at the moment.</li> <li>• The Scottish Government should do more to explain the process to community councils.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Main opportunities for engagement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Councils should get involved in the development planning process as early as possible – this is the chance to be involved in policy decisions.</li> <li>• There should be community workshops to try and include everyone in the community – opportunity to learn more about the needs of others.</li> <li>• It would be beneficial to work with other groups – share ideas and resources. Also liaise with the Local Authority.</li> <li>• It is important to learn from previous planning mistakes</li> <li>• Building capacity within community councils – try to encourage others to become involved – highlight past successes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Main challenges to engagement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a lot of apathy within communities. There is also a feeling that your views will not be listened to and this can prevent people from getting involved. Another issue is people not having enough time to get involved.</li> <li>• Communication with planning authorities needs to be improved. There also needs to be more feedback.</li> <li>• Community Councillors are volunteers and do not always have a lot of time. There is also an issue with a lack of finance.</li> <li>• There is a feeling that deals are done anyway, in spite of consultation.</li> <li>• It is important to make the MIR relevant to communities.</li> <li>• There is a problem with NIMBYism in many communities and there is difficulty in gathering a representative view.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Good points about East Lothian</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great environment – balance between rural and urban – also access to the coastline.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proximity to Edinburgh</li> <li>• Lack of Congestion</li> <li>• Good sport facilities and walking routes.</li> </ul>
<b>Less satisfactory points about East Lothian</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not good access to a range of housing – the cost of housing compared to incomes is high.</li> <li>• There is a lack of integrated transport across the county. Also lack of affordable transport.</li> <li>• There are limited opportunities for young people – this means that they are often forced to leave the area.</li> <li>• There are not enough job opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Changes needed in East Lothian</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities should get to decide how planning gain is used.</li> <li>• Integrated transport system.</li> <li>• More affordable housing is required and mixed housing should be developed – housing is needed in particular for young people and older people.</li> <li>• More employment opportunities are required (especially higher paid roles and a more diverse employment base) – particularly more tourist opportunities could be brought in.</li> <li>• There needs to be an improvement in the broadband service throughout the county.</li> <li>• An assessment of the cumulative impact of development on transport in Musselburgh is required.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Things to change or stay the same about East Lothian up to 2025 (directly from post-its)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The size of each of the major communities (they have reached optimum sizes)</li> <li>• Change to an emphasis on affordable housing in the East of the county.</li> <li>• More jobs given to local companies and local tradesmen. Also look into how local firms can be given grants to offer more employment.</li> <li>• Introduction of a development trust in large towns independent of the common good fund to get a share in planning gain under section 75 agreements.</li> <li>• Braking down the barriers for better communication with council officials. Allow rural villages to join the digital age with better broadband speeds.</li> <li>• Better public transport.</li> <li>• Buses and trains integrated train station at east Lothian reinstated.</li> <li>• Better leisure and entertainment as many people have to use Edinburgh.</li> <li>• Better transport links.</li> <li>• More local employment.</li> <li>• More trains and a better bus service at better prices.</li> <li>• Villages should retain their character.</li> <li>• Keep balance in small communities.</li> <li>• More Youth Employment.</li> <li>• Re-open our local stations at East Linton and</li> </ul>

	<p>Haddington to help improve local transport.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the free parking at our beaches.</li> </ul>
<b>Other points</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was disagreement amongst the group about whether community councils had been adequately informed about the 12<sup>th</sup> March deadline for submissions to the pre-MIR consultation.</li> <li>• The event in Prestonpans was not at a suitable time for local people.</li> </ul>

**East Lothian pre-MIR Engagement**

**Musselburgh, 9 February 2012**



## Main discussion points

### Issues:

- Vibrant town centre – high costs of High St rents, town has its back to the river (visually ugly), out of town retail
- Attracting new employment and businesses – lack of varied, good, creative employment opportunities – promoting local enterprise and employment, including social enterprise
- Housing – lack of developer funding means no new houses coming onstream, also land values are high
- Ageing population
- Preventing coalescence
- Flood protection
- Climate change – commuting, peak oil, local food production
- Transport infrastructure (roads, rail, public transport) within East Lothian
- Balance between localism and relying on Edinburgh

### Opportunities:

- Promote access to culture
- Local food production – link to farmers market, local cafes etc – for locals and visitors
- Greater access to outdoor recreation/villages/countryside (but compromised by poor transport)
- Make more of greenspaces, river and harbour within the town – link to Edinburgh greenspace/walking/cycling networks
- IT flexibility / home working
- Social enterprise
- Re-inventing town centres – shop local
- Tourism
- Good quality / sustainable design
- Renewables / community heat and power / infrastructure for electric vehicles
- Accommodating population increase

### Actions needed:

- Small business mentoring from larger retailers
- Increase tourism – small business opportunities
- More small scale employment land allocations for small local businesses

- Encourage takeup of employment land – redefine policy around QMU
- Planning culture change from control to encouragement
- Policies to protect countryside
- Joined up thinking between agencies and with existing strategies (e.g. Musselburgh Forum, town centre action plan)
- Better pedestrian/cycle links between QMU and rest of town

Key players:

- Council (including economic development, planning)
- communities in shaping their settlements
- developers
- voluntary sector
- QMU
- transport companies
- traders

### **More details**

Please also refer to the four accompanying plans/diagrams of how Musselburgh could be in the future – putting some of these and other ideas into action on the ground.

**East Lothian pre-MIR Engagement**

**Blindwells Settlement, Tranent, 13 February 2012**

The discussion was very wide ranging, with some people for the development, some against it and others simply wishing to find out more information about it.

The following bullet points summarise the main areas of discussion.

Issues about development of the site, both current proposals and future expansion), in no particular order:

1. Drainage – water quality and flow, impact on property to north – lack of confidence
2. Subsidence and ground stability – lack of confidence
3. Where will people work? How will local employment be secured?
4. Who will build, invest in and occupy the commercial premises? Will the proposed town centre be viable?
5. How people get to and from the site? Will the rail network have sufficient capacity? Will the station really be accessible?
6. Housing needs to be a mix, including smaller houses, to create a rounded community and so people can move within the area.
7. How will adverse impact on views and landscape be avoided?
8. Are there any energy reserves left in the ground?
9. For those in favour of the proposal, it needs a sense of identity – something positive like a high quality eco-village and/or relating to Prestonpans battle site, that will help create sense of place and attract people and jobs – it's got to be about more than in and out by car, housing numbers and financial viability
10. Need for good quality greenspace and public access to countryside – path networks etc
11. Will settlements join up anyway? Is the idea of a stand-alone settlement realistic? (concern expressed about coalescence)
12. Can the site be delivered? Will it ever happen? What is the risk of it not happening, and the impact of that on providing homes in East Lothian?
13. What would the impact be of satisfying all of East Lothian's demand in one place? What will the social and economic impacts be on other towns and villages if their growth is choked off?
14. Are this many houses needed at this location? What is the rationale?
15. Lack of collaborative working between developer, planning authority and local community – absence of information, discussion and influence
16. Concern about Council resources and transparency to address all of these issues
17. View expressed that the Council needs to show how the expansion might look in the MIR (extent of site, nature of settlement etc) and what the alternatives to that are (e.g. expanding existing towns and villages, building around QMU). Design for 4500 homes would be very different from design for 1600.

18. Important to design the initial 1600 home layout so that the proposed expansion can integrate with it
19. Phasing will be very important: what will be built first? Infrastructure or housing?

**East Lothian Pre-MIR Engagement**

**Business Forum, Musselburgh, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012**

Participants	
<b>Good points:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good schools in the area.</li> <li>• Tesco in the centre of Haddington brings people into the centre of town.</li> </ul>
<b>Less satisfactory points:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of town shopping is taking business away from the high street.</li> <li>• There are lots of rundown upper floors above shops in Dunbar.</li> <li>• The proposals at Blindwells are contrary to the SPP.</li> <li>• Lack of transport options is a problem in the rural area.</li> <li>• There are very few facilities in Humble.</li> <li>• Commuting in to Edinburgh is difficult as it takes an hour or more from many places in the county.</li> </ul>
<b>Changes needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The MIR should grade sites with applications- whether they are preferred or non-preferred option.</li> <li>• Cycle to work schemes should be promoted.</li> <li>• Dunbar town centre needs investment.</li> <li>• More integrated transport is required.</li> <li>• A train line between Haddington and Edinburgh could be useful.</li> <li>• More park and ride facilities are required in East Lothian.</li> <li>• Any strategic land release options in the MIR should be the subject of consultation with transport partnership and operators to ensure they can be served appropriately.</li> <li>• A stronger system of developer contributions is required – eg supermarket development should make a contribution towards infrastructure and services that support the traditional shopping centre. Also contributions towards local bus services are required.</li> <li>• A cinema would be beneficial to Haddington.</li> <li>• The George Hotel in Haddington should be earmarked for a regeneration project.</li> <li>• A Conservation area appraisal should be undertaken for Haddington Conservation area and included in the LDP.</li> <li>• There should be more support for small businesses.</li> <li>• The Council should assist in the maintenance and repair of historic buildings in the centre of Haddington.</li> <li>• More land should be allocated in North Berwick for Class 4 Business Use.</li> <li>• The Loretto School should be recognised in the LDP as a significant landholding in the plan area.</li> </ul>

**East Lothian Pre-MIR Engagement**

**Tranent, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2012**

Participants	
<b>Good points:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots of opportunities for tourism.</li> <li>• Recreation, walking routes, rural farming</li> <li>• Scenic landscape</li> <li>• Mix of urban and rural land uses</li> <li>• Accessibility to Edinburgh and Newcastle.</li> </ul>
<b>Less satisfactory points:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots of traffic congestion on Tranent high street and throughout the other towns in East Lothian such as Musselburgh.</li> <li>• The infrastructure is inadequate to support the current population – such as schools and the police service.</li> <li>• Settlements are starting to coalesce</li> <li>• Local shopping is being destroyed by out of town supermarkets.</li> <li>• Poor access to shopping facilities.</li> <li>• New construction design standards very low – it does not reflect the character of the area.</li> <li>• Public consultation is often seen as a box-ticking exercise.</li> </ul>
<b>Changes needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewable energy schemes should be provided but small scale, such as solar panels – not just lots of wind turbines.</li> <li>• More emphasis should be placed upon encouraging the use of public transport rather than the private car – one option to encourage this is by providing more park and ride facilities in the county.</li> <li>• Protection of the historic fabric of the towns.</li> <li>• There should be more land available for self-build housing – housing should not just be housing developer led.</li> <li>• There should be incentives available to encourage older people to move to smaller houses.</li> <li>• Employment needs to be provided along with new housing development – it is unsustainable to provide housing without jobs.</li> <li>• Improved public transport links are required – an additional rail commuter line (going alongside the existing line to accommodate more passengers?) and an integrated ticketing system would be useful.</li> <li>• A rail station should be provided at Blindwells to accommodate the increase in population.</li> <li>• Renewable energy development – supermarkets in particular should be fitted with solar panels.</li> <li>• Tranent – 1 way system, improvement of civic space, and by-pass required.</li> <li>• Encouragement of diversification of rural business and tourism is required – also more B&amp;B accommodation.</li> </ul>
<b>Things to change/stay the same in East Lothian up to 2025</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable sport and leisure and culture facilities.</li> <li>• Get rid of Cockenzie power Station</li> <li>• Greater health and wellbeing for all through greater promotion and investment.</li> </ul>

<p><b>(directly from post-its):</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening to people- more please!</li> <li>• The nature of new and proposed housing estates to more traditional layout, materials and character but including energy saving/supplying features.</li> <li>• (To be kept) Rural nature of county to be preserves including its farming traditions.</li> <li>• East Lothian council honouring their commitment to discuss and consult with the community all issues seriously affecting the residents. It is certainly the view of residents of Cockenzie and Port Seton through past experience and now that this is/has been a box ticking exercise.</li> <li>• I would like each of the local towns/communities to keep their identity and not coalesce into a mass of housing.</li> <li>• Sustainable Communities.</li> <li>• Road infrastructure improvements around Tranent, in order to potentially create a pedestrian friendly town centre/high street.</li> <li>• Relaxation, access to the country, traffic, put double yellow lines from St. Peter's Church to Musselburgh Harbour.</li> <li>• Minimum of Greenfield/prime farm land built on whether for houses, roads or any other purpose.</li> <li>• Say no to East Lothian A1 being the housing corridor.</li> <li>• I would love to see East Lothian focusing on becoming a county of transitional towns.</li> </ul>
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**East Lothian pre-MIR engagement**

**Developers' forum, 22 February 2012**

Summary of main points raised by developers and consultants in the workshop:

- 1 ***Proactive, enabling attitude towards development:*** the single most commonly expressed comment was that the LDP and the planning authority should have a more positive stance towards enabling development to happen. There were a couple of aspects to this:
  - There is a myth that East Lothian residents are against new development, which is reflected in current planning policy. Of course there are some vociferous and articulate people who are against change, but the pre MIR public workshops have shown that there are also many people who understand that new homes are required, provided that they are designed and developed appropriately for their particular settlement context (which covers design, integration with existing community, pace of completions, community facilities, character of design, availability of jobs, greenspace provision, etc).
  - The attitude of the planning authority (officers and politicians) towards development – anecdotally, East Lothian scores near the bottom of Scottish planning authorities in getting planning applications registered and through the system. There was a widespread feeling that the planning authority needs to become more positive and collaborative – and remove the culture of creating barriers to development. One of the main themes was the need for the new LDP to be an enabling plan which is positive about East Lothian and can help deliver.
- 2 ***Deliverability of existing allocated sites:*** concern that not all of these sites are deliverable, and that the planning authority's continued commitment to them might therefore be misplaced. How far can/should the planning authority rely on these sites to provide sufficient development land? Or, put another way, is the planning authority confident that all of these sites are deliverable? There is a need to look at market demand and seek assistance from developers in this respect. There is a clear developer view that there is a need to allocate more housing sites (choice / flexibility) to keep people within East Lothian. The housing mix should also reflect the ageing population – housing which the private sector can provide. There is also a link here with the bigger SESPLAN picture – with clarity needed on how this is being considered locally.
- 3 ***Development viability, planning gain and infrastructure cost:*** concerns were expressed that some sites simply can't bear the weight of infrastructure and planning gain requirements. Some sites are likely to become non-viable (which links with the previous point about whether existing allocated sites are viable). Developer contributions are currently too ad hoc – a clear local policy is needed on planning gain requirements which reflects today's economic climate. Also, if the Council is looking for high levels of planning gain and infrastructure provision, the impact on viability will also affect the house types that can be provided (i.e. focusing on higher value products) – yet we know from the public workshops that there are concerns about affordability and housing mix in new developments in East Lothian.
- 4 ***Design and placemaking:*** both national planning policy/guidance and local residents / developers (as expressed in other pre MIR workshops) aspire to create better



designed places. It was expressed that ‘avoiding the standard product’ would mean either putting up prices or leaving something else out of the planning gain equation – although the point was made that the design agenda isn’t so much about the ‘standard product’ (i.e. the homes themselves) as the neighbourhoods that are created (which includes wider issues of layout, public space, greenspace, integration with existing communities, and other uses beyond residential). There is a desire for design policies to be clearer and to reflect East Lothian’s different character areas. The current standard 30 dwellings per hectare policy does not ‘fit’ some areas.

- 5 **Infrastructure capacity constraints:** It is well known that there are infrastructure constraints affecting further residential and other development in and around many East Lothian settlements, many of which affect strategic sites. It would be useful if the Council could collate and publish clear information summarising the infrastructure capacity constraints affecting at least each major settlement, e.g. in the form a simple matrix for each settlement. This encourages a holistic approach to development and provides an evidence base which creates certainty and confidence. This should include education as well as utilities, engineering, water, drainage and schooling infrastructure. This has clear links with sustainable economic growth and deliverability.
- 6 **Location of new development:** it seemed to be generally accepted that the main towns are the ‘natural’ focuses for new development. However, there is a need for flexibility as the given settlement boundaries are tight. This flexibility should extend to the urban edge given green belt viability issues.
- 7 **Blindwells:** it was questioned whether the expansion of Blindwells beyond 1,600 homes is deliverable – in the view of those attending, it isn’t. It was also suggested that the MIR should also flesh out a Plan B to maintain a 5 year housing land supply in case Blindwells is not developed.

Also, the aspirations of what can be achieved at Blindwells should be expressed both more realistically and more clearly. There was concern that Blindwells is non-effective and so is affecting housing land supply figures negatively. There was also an impression that Blindwells currently seems to be an opportunistic way of satisfying the housing land requirement on an available bit of land without having to get into the tricky business of expanding existing settlements – despite frequently expressed concerns about the site (e.g. accessibility, ground conditions, integration with other settlements/local economy). The MIR should be clearer and more aspirational about the kind of high quality place that can be achieved at Blindwells; the current impression is that it is simply about ‘making it work’. The risk is that this ends up creating a ‘nowhere place’ rather than a place which people would actively choose to live in and invest in (e.g. an eco-community).

- 8 **Employment land:** there is near enough 100 hectares of allocated employment land in East Lothian, but very little take-up. These employment sites are overly concentrated on too few sites and many are not effective (need for effectiveness test which considers quality and flexibility). Obviously jobs are important – and the current LP strategy is not working. The MIR should recognise this as a main issue; consider

whether the current LP employment strategy is still appropriate for the future; and whether it needs to be coupled with incentivising, whether other approaches would be more appropriate, etc.

- 9 **Affordable housing:** need for flexible solutions. Remember that affordable housing can be a catalyst for private development during these difficult economic times.
- 10 **Minerals:** need for areas of search.
- 11 **Renewable energy:** need to consider potential (e.g. turbines) and unlock it to help deliver Scottish national targets.
- 12 **Circulation of these notes to participants:** It was agreed that a note of the main points should be circulated to those present to allow further clarification if required.

## East Lothian Pre-MIR Consultation

Dunbar, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2012

Participants	
<b>Good points:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local landscape and environment</li> <li>• Strong sense of community.</li> </ul>
<b>Less satisfactory points:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not enough housing of an appropriate scale for younger and older people</li> <li>• There aren't enough quality jobs for local people.</li> <li>• Insufficient parking.</li> <li>• Poor transport network across the county – lack of linkages and connectivity. Particularly bad late night services which has an impact on making it a desirable place to live for young people.</li> <li>• There is a lack of transport infrastructure.</li> <li>• Declining town centres.</li> <li>• Issues around the connectivity of new housing developments to foot/cycle paths.</li> </ul>
<b>Changes needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need more mixed-tenure housing – needed to support a growing and ageing population. Affordable housing is particularly required.</li> <li>• There could be a more flexible approach to listed building usage - conservation not preservation - to fit with changing environmental issues.</li> <li>• There are opportunities for greater development of the renewable energy sector – including offshore wind.</li> <li>• Flood prevention needs to be addressed in Haddington and elsewhere.</li> <li>• More parking is required which will not clutter up Dunbar town centre – option of multi-storey parking?</li> <li>• More activities are required for young people – community facilities are required to provide for this. A sailing centre could be developed in Dunbar.</li> <li>• The transport network needs to be improved – especially to rural areas and the links between the towns.</li> <li>• There needs to be enhancements made to the town centres.</li> <li>• Any new housing should be designed to integrate with local walking and cycling routes.</li> <li>• There are numerous brownfield sites in Dunbar which could be identified for development.</li> <li>• There was mixed feelings over the use of out of town</li> </ul>

	<p>supermarkets – some felt that no more of these should be allowed while others felt they were helpful as it is hard to park in the town centres.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There should be increased tree cover on the Lammermuir Hills.</li> <li>• There should be a road/route which connects both sides of Dunbar.</li> <li>• More could be done to capitalise on the ‘surfer day-tourist market’ – eg better changing facilities, car parking, cafes or restaurants.</li> <li>• Open spaces need to be improved – some were of the view that open strips of grass in new developments do not have any value or quality as open spaces.</li> <li>• There are opportunities to improve Dunbar town centre and Harbour.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Things to change/stay the same in East Lothian up to 2025 (directly from post-its):</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A relocalised and resilient economy.</li> <li>• Local employment</li> <li>• Great Environment: don't spoil it!</li> <li>• Poor Transport System</li> <li>• Properly Co-ordinated Public Transport.</li> <li>• Open space by the sea</li> <li>• Folk in historic Environment.</li> <li>• Better travel opportunities.</li> <li>• The town magnet but needs to be a sustainable community for the long term to remain Heimat.</li> <li>• Would like ELC to introduce design guidance to ensure that all new housing is distinctive and local, not anywhere-housing i.e. the conservation areas of the future.</li> <li>• Industry and tourism. All decisions should be made with a united and integrated long term strategic vision. Infrastructure.</li> <li>• Utilise the beach area in Dunbar. Need facilities to attract people there.</li> <li>• Protect green spaces and plant more TREES.</li> <li>• Integrated and improved transport systems including community transport.</li> <li>• One thing I would like to change: much better integrated transport network- especially for the hill foot villages.</li> <li>• N.W Quarry to be a community based water sport centre.</li> <li>• Better Rail Transportation</li> <li>• Create a green framework to shape future development.</li> <li>• Beautiful countryside, coastlines and hills lived in by a friendly and intelligent group of people.</li> </ul>

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