

Topic Paper - Employment

ELC 014

Context:

- NPF4 Spatial Strategy
- NPF4 Policies: 26. Business and industry; 9. Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings; 13. Sustainable transport; 15. Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods; 18. Infrastructure first; 19. Heat and cooling

LDP 2018 Policies: EMP1 Business and Employment Locations; EMP2 Operational Harbours; TC1 Town Centre First Principle; TC2 Town and Local Centre; DC1 Rural Diversification.

Introduction

14.1 This Topic Paper deals with all matters concerning Employment in a general sense.

LINKS TO EVIDENCE

ELC 384	Ryden East Lothian Commercial Needs Study (April 2021)
ELC 051	East Lothian Local Economy Strategy (Vision Paper and Evidence Paper), Search results East Lothian Council
ELC 386	ELC Business and Industry Land Audit
ELC 427	Vacant and Derelict Land Survey 2023
ELC 091	Local Housing Strategy 2024-2029 Approved Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2024-2029 East Lothian Council
ELC 087	East Lothian Poverty Plan 2024 -2028 East Lothian Council Poverty plan 2021-2023 East Lothian Council)

ELC 050	Regional Prosperity Framework available at Regional Prosperity Framework — The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal (esescityregiondeal.org.uk)
ELC 391	Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal https://esescityregiondeal.org.uk/rpf
ELC 392	City Region Deal Annual Report 2022-23 City Region Deal AnnualReport 202223 A4 08.pdf (squarespace.com)
ELC 393	City Region Deal Progress Report 5.1+Appendix+ESESCR+Deal+Progress+Report+-+24+August.pdf (squarespace.com)
ELC 047	ONS East Lothian Facts and Figures Home - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
ELC 395	Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation Evidence Paper (March 2022) - NSET evidence-paper.pdf (www.gov.scot)
ELC 049	Housing Land Audit 2023 East Lothian Housing Land Audit 2023 East Lothian Council
ELC 435	Energy System and Just Transition – Independent Analysis (part of supporting documents of Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan) (available at Energy system and Just Transition: independent analysis - gov.scot (www.gov.scot))

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

14.2 East Lothian has a strong and diverse economy that is performing well despite the Covid-19 pandemic and increasing costs of living. The evidence provided includes an analysis of the employment sectors including how they are performing and future opportunities, as well as the tourist economy, and how East Lothian's current and changing demographic will influence future decisions on the location and type of employment land. To inform the preparation of the next Local Development Plan, there are a number of studies and resources that will be used. These are summarised below.

14.3 East Lothian Local Economy Strategy (LES)

- East Lothian's labour market is performing strongly;
- East Lothian has a higher employment rate than Scotland as a whole, a significantly higher rate of self-employment and a comparable economic activity rate (both areas 77.4%)
- East Lothian has a disproportionately lower number of people that are of working age compared to the City Region and Scottish averages (61% East Lothian, 64.7% City Region & 63.8% Scotland)
- A large number of East Lothian's employed residents commute out of the local authority area for work (ONS job density data shows that there are 0.62 jobs in East Lothian per resident of working age which is lower than the City of Edinburgh figure of 1.08, Midlothian figure of 0.64 and Scottish Borders figure of 0.78)

- East Lothian's workforce is in many respects better qualified than the Scotland and City Region averages, but the proportion of the population educated to SVQ level 4 (undergraduate degree equivalent) or above (48.5%) is below the Scotland and City Region averages (50.0% and 56.7% respectively).
- In 2021, average Gross Value Added per worker (a common measure of labour productivity) across the East Lothian economy stood at £38,405, a figure significantly below the Scotland average of £53,357.
- The majority of East Lothian's business sector (98.4%) comprises either micro businesses (87.5% - up to 9 employees) or small businesses (10.9% - 10 to 49 employees).
- There are proportionately fewer areas of severe multiple deprivation in East Lothian than across Scotland as a whole (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 dataset)
- There is a need to identify effective employment land in East Lothian, in particular for office space. The LES reports a low vacancy rate of 2.6% and a general decline in the availability of office space in East Lothian over the past ten years.
- Compared to office space, industrial properties have a higher vacancy rate. However, 59% of the East Lothian's total employment land is currently undeveloped.
- East Lothian boasts a vibrant creative and cultural sector that significantly contributes to its local economy. In Council's Business Base Survey 2023, creative industries represented 9% of the respondents, equalling the retail sector in prominence within the survey.
- Events like Fringe by the Sea and the Lammermuir Festival underscore the sector's economic vitality. In 2024 the Lammermuir Festival generated an estimated £1.1 million in economic impact, a 23% increase from the previous year, and the 10-day Fringe by the Sea multi-arts festival in North Berwick attracted over 86,000 attendees and generated a net economic impact of approximately £9.9 million, a 36% increase from the previous year
- LES has 3 strategic goals. One of LES strategic goals seeks to increase the number of socially and environmentally responsible businesses in East Lothian, expand plural ownership of the economy, and grow community wealth.
- East Lothian is not a primary hub for aquaculture and there are currently a small number of businesses currently working within the supply chain, and in processing and marketing produce. Still, the sector presents emerging opportunities for economic diversification and job creation in the area.
- Opportunities for skilled, permanent employees in the aquaculture sector often attract a pay premium.
- For East Lothian, investing in aquaculture-related training programs and infrastructure could facilitate the integration of local businesses into the broader aquaculture supply chain, fostering economic resilience and job creation.

14.4 SIMD 2020 data shows a significant east-west divide across the East Lothian Council area, with the three ward areas to the west of East Lothian all experiencing a higher proportion of areas in the most deprived 40% of datazones than the Scotland average, and the three ward areas to the east of East Lothian all experiencing a lower proportion.

14.5 Employment land – vacancy rates & market rates (source *EL Local Economy Strategy Evidence Paper*)

	All Use	Office	Retail	Industry
East Lothian				
Vacancy Rate 1-Year Average	2.84%	2.29%	3.22%	2.83%
Vacancy Rate 10-Year Average	2.53%	2.37%	2.72%	2.48%
Market Rent per sqft 1-Year Average	£12.13	£17.47	£14.15	£8.14
Market Rent per sqft 10-Year Average	£10.76	£15.25	£13.78	£6.45
Scotland				
Vacancy Rate 1-Year Average	5.69%	6.36%	3.71%	4.98%
Market Rent per sqft 1-Year Average	£13.72	£11.24	£17.32	£5.10

14.6 East Lothian Business Survey (conducted as part of the Local Economy Strategy) indicates that:

- Businesses reported skill shortages in the manufacturing and engineering, construction, hospitality, health, care, childcare and early years sectors. Businesses also find it difficult to recruit people with strong maths and English skills
- Small businesses report issues around funding and providing staff cover for on-the job training. Participation in training and engagement with apprenticeships is also low
- Businesses reported a significant shortage of serviced office and light industrial space and of available employment land in East Lothian
- Businesses report that they can find public services disjointed, and feel ‘bounced from person to person’, they find the form filling and ‘red tape’ associated with accessing public sector services and support a deterrent. Public sector finances are under severe pressure impacting the scope and availability of services, the opportunity to simplify and rationalise services should be explored.

14.7 Ryden East Lothian Commercial Needs Study (April 2021)

- Employment in Education; Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities (10%) and Accommodation and Food Services are the sectors of East Lothian’s economy that perform above the Scottish average in terms of job numbers;
- The largest employers in East Lothian include East Lothian Council (4,500 employees) Charles River Laboratories (Pharmaceutical Research – 1,000 employees), EDF (Torness Power Station – 730 employees), QMU (Higher Education – 309 Academic and 254 Professional Services Staff) and ZOT Engineering (Engineering – 220 employees).
- Large businesses (greater than 250 employees) only account for a small proportion (0.3%) of East Lothian’s companies, with micro to small businesses (0 to 49 employees) making up 98.3% of companies in the area;
- Demand for industrial property (annual average number of transactions and size of properties);
- Demand for offices (annual average number of transactions and size of properties);
- Employment land supply (overall quantity, size, and distribution);
- Employment market scenarios

- 14.8 The Ryden Study also summarises recent demand for industrial property and offices, and assesses employment land supply and employment market scenarios.
- 14.9 **ONS data** (various datasets are available and are relatively easy to compare by using ONS tools eg Subnational indicators explorer [Subnational indicators explorer - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://subnational.statistics.gov.uk/) also statistics.gov.scot | [East Lothian](#))
- Gross median weekly pay – East Lothian £516.4 (City of Edinburgh £560.8; Midlothian £530.3; Scottish Borders £477.4).
 - Gross disposable household income per head - East Lothian £23,372 (City of Edinburgh £23,001; Midlothian £20,228; Scottish Borders £20,289).
 - Gigabit capable broadband – East Lothian 67.2 % coverage (City of Edinburgh 89.1%, Midlothian 77.6%, Scottish Borders 26.9%).
 - The 2022 Census shows that East Lothian from 2001 to 2022 has had the biggest rise in population of any local authority area in Scotland – 24.6% compared with the % increase in Scottish population of 7.4%.
- 14.10 **East Lothian Employment Land Supply (Business and Industrial Land Audit).** An audit of all employment sites within the LDP 2018 has been carried out in Q1 of 2023. There is a total of nearly 237 hectares of employment land across the local authority area, of which, 55% is currently undeveloped. The largest proportion (34.4%) of employment land (80.4 hectares) is in the wider Musselburgh area, followed by the Tranent cluster (73.6 hectares or 31.5% of the entire employment land). Both areas account for almost 66% of East Lothian's total employment land. The wider Musselburgh cluster also has the largest overall area of undeveloped employment land (51.7 hectares) in East Lothian. However, the largest proportion of undeveloped land on a settlement basis is in Dunbar (68.4% remains as undeveloped employment land or 21.6ha out of 31.6ha) and in Macmerry (51.3% remains as undeveloped employment land or 21.2ha out of 41.4ha).

Strategic Employment Sites

Blindwells

- 14.11 The site at Blindwells (PROP BW1) is allocated for circa.1600 homes and 10ha of employment land. This represents a major opportunity to support new businesses locating in East Lothian and job creation without the need to travel outside of the county.
- 14.12 The site was granted planning permission in principle under 14/00768/PPM for remediation works on the site and the creation of a new settlement comprising residential, employment, education and commercial uses with park and ride and rail halt facilities and associated works. This application included a masterplan showing each parcel of land in terms of use and phasing for development.
- 14.13 Following on from this, application 19/00620/AMM was submitted and approved for the approval of matters specified in conditions 1d, 1h, 1l and 1n (details of road, drainage and landscape infrastructure for Phase 1) of the planning permission in principle.
- 14.14 A new consent (Ref: 21/01580/PM), with a revised masterplan for the mixed use settlement, was granted in June 2022. The most recent planning consent is 23/01155/AMC which is for the approval of matters specified in conditions 1(a) to (m) and (o), 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 18, 19, 22, 23, and 27 of planning

permission in principle 21/01580/PM - Erection of local centre including 74 residential units (including 48 affordable homes), 37 employment units (Classes 4 and 6), 12 retail units (Class 1A), gym (Class 11), nursery (Class 10); wellbeing facility (Class 1A) and local supermarket (Class 1A), together with associated public realm, landscaping, access and infrastructure.

- 14.15 Construction is underway with a large number of homes already occupied, however, the employment land has not yet been developed

Cockenzie

- 14.16 The Cockenzie site comprises land formerly in use as a coal fired power station, and includes the power station building footprint itself and surrounding land. It has an area of approximately 98ha and was acquired by East Lothian Council from Scottish Power in 2018. Since then, progress has been made on the redevelopment of the site. Planning permission has been granted for an interconnector to allow offshore wind farm energy to be brought onshore to the national grid. Permission has also been granted for an electricity substation on another part of the site. These energy related developments were subject to applications to the Scottish Government as part of the energy consenting process.

- 14.17 The site was also subject to a Levelling Up bid which was successful, providing an injection of funding towards remediation works on the site. The earlier 2017 Cockenzie Masterplan provided high level community aspirations and potential development options for the site. A technical assessment of the former Cockenzie Power Station Site is underway and will inform how the development options for the site can be brought forward.

Craighall – Edinburgh Innovation Park

- 14.18 The Craighall site is the largest allocated site within the LDP 2018. It is proposed for mixed-use including circa. 1500 dwellings across different parcels of land, together with 41ha of employment land, a new local centre, community uses, and other associated infrastructure, including a new primary school, and a new junction off the A1 trunk road. The site is of regional importance representing a significant economic opportunity due to its location and transport links.

- 14.19 ELC delivered a grade separated junction in 2023. The junction provides critical infrastructure to improve accessibility and connectivity to QMU which, in partnership with East Lothian Council, is working to deliver the Edinburgh Innovation Hub adjacent to the university – phase one of a wider Edinburgh Innovation Park. The Edinburgh Innovation Hub commenced construction in January 2023 and is due for completion in September 2025. The Hub will support and grow businesses driven by innovation, knowledge exchange and technology, bringing together research, industry and academia under one roof, creating opportunities for synergies and knowledge-sharing. Tenants will be able to rent accommodation packages, for move-in ready space, that fits their size and needs. The design of the Hub will enable tenants to take up more space as and when they need to.

- 14.20 The venture is supported by £28.6 million from the UK Government, £1.4 million from the Scottish Government and £10 million from East Lothian Council as part of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal (ESES City Region Deal). The wider Edinburgh Innovation Park adjacent to the Edinburgh Innovation Hub will transform a strategic economic development site, owned by East Lothian Council, into a nationally significant cluster of knowledge exchange, innovation and high value business growth. this being delivered through a joint venture between ELC and QMU.

Other key employment issues in Area Partnerships

14.21 There are a number of other sites within East Lothian that, although their scale is not close to the Blindwells, Cockenzie or Craighall developments, remain very important for East Lothian's economic prosperity. They will also help to support and sustain existing communities in the main settlements and beyond.

CLUSTER AREA	SITE	Developed (ha)	Undeveloped (ha)	% of developed land	% of undeveloped land
MUSSELBURGH	CRAIGHALL North West Of QMU		21.5	36.8%	64.3%
	CRAIGHALL South West Of QMU		20		
	Old Craighall Junction South West		5		
	Old Craighall Junction North		5		
	Newhalls Industrial Estate	6.3	0.2		
	Fisherrow Industrial Estate	1.7			
	Inveresk Industrial Estate	9			
	Wallyford Industrial Estate	3.3			
	Wallyford Salters Rd	0.9			
	Olivebank	4.4			
	Kirk Park Inveresk	4			
Total Area		29.6ha	51.7ha		
PRESTONPANS	Mid Rd Industrial Estate	4.1		100%	100%
	Mid Rd Industrial Estate West	1			
	Whin Park/Cockenzie Business Centre	1.4	-		
Total Area		6.5ha	-		
BLINDWELLS		-	10ha		
TRANENT	Windygoul South West		8.6	53%	47%
	Elphinstone Rd	2.1	-		
	Kingslaw	0.9	4.8		
	Macmerry Business Park East		15		
	Macmerry Business Park	20.2	0.4		
	Macmerry Business Park - Greendykes	-	5.8		
	Fleets & Charles Rivers	15.8	-		
Total Area		39ha	44.6ha		
HADDINGTON	Gateside East	1		43.3%	28.3%
	Gateside West	5.3			
	Peppercraig East		7		
	Hospital Rd	2.7	1.5		
	Pure Malt Whittinghame Drive	1.9			
	Peppercraig Quarry	0.6			
	Alderston	1.8	1.5		
	Tyne Close	0.2			
	Station Yard	1.8			
Total Area		15.3ha	10ha		
NORTH BERWICK	Tantallon Rd/Mill Walk	2		50%	50%
	Tantallon Rd South		1		
	Mains Farm		1		
Total Area		2ha	2ha		
DUNBAR	Spott Rd	8		39.4%	66.5%
	Spott Rd		21.6		
	Belhaven Brewery	2			
	Beltonford West Barns	1.7			
	Dunbar Rd East Linton	1.1			
	Industrial Estate East Linton	0.6		44.7%	55.3%
	Auction Mart East Linton		1		
Total Area		13.4ha	22.6ha		
Total Area (all clusters)		105.8ha	130.9ha		
GRAND TOTAL		236.7ha			

Employment Land by Area Partnership

- 14.22 There are six Area Partnerships (APs) within East Lothian, each with distinctive characteristics and employment functions. Also, the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey 2023 showed that there is currently approximately 80ha of land within this classification. This is across 31 different sites with the distribution relatively even across the county.

Musselburgh

- 14.23 The most westerly AP within East Lothian containing its largest settlement of Musselburgh. This area benefits from close proximity to the adjoining City of Edinburgh Council, with frequent railway and bus services to/from the centre and suburbs. It also adjoins Midlothian Council area, providing further links westward. The Musselburgh AP contains Queen Margaret University (QMU) to the north of the A1, where most of the urban development is contained. To the south is more dispersed and rural with small settlements such as Whitecraig.
- 14.24 Musselburgh town centre is vibrant with the High Street providing a range of employment in the form of retail, hospitality, financial services etc.
- 14.25 The Musselburgh AP has the strategic mixed-use site of Old Craighall within it, which is the largest allocated site of the LDP 2018. The area has become known as the Edinburgh Innovation Park, with the Innovation Hub to be located adjacent to QMU. Construction started in late 2023 for the 7,200 sqm Innovation Hub that will allow a cluster of commercial innovation and tech-based enterprises to co-locate, providing research and other benefits. The site will provide serviced and fitted commercial laboratory and office space for food & drink and high growth tech and innovation-based businesses. With hundreds of new homes to be built beside the Innovation Park, significant employment opportunities will exist for the new residents.
- 14.26 Another allocated site in the Musselburgh AP is the PROP MH10/MH11 Wallyford expansion. Development of this site is progressing rapidly and once complete the PROP MH10/MH11 will provide hundreds of new homes as well as new educational establishment, and a new centre for the settlement of Wallyford.
- 14.27 Using the SIMD data, areas exist within the Musselburgh AP that are within the 20% most deprived in Scotland. These are located in the north of Musselburgh and the centre of Wallyford. The level of deprivation has worsened since the 2016 dataset was completed as these areas were not previously within the 20% most deprived decile.

Preston, Seton, Gosford

- 14.28 This AP contains a number of East Lothian's medium sized settlements, with excellent transport links to and from both the North Berwick Coastal and Musselburgh APs. The area has a strong sense of community and local identity which has allowed the area to retain much of its heritage and culture.
- 14.29 The AP contains the allocated Blindwells PROP BW1 mixed-use site which is currently being developed, with an approved masterplan. This site will provide new areas of employment primarily to the north adjacent to the railway line.

- 14.30 It also contains the former Cockenzie power station site which was acquired by East Lothian Council. A masterplan is currently being developed for the site. Some development has already been consented in the form of energy related activity to allow offshore wind energy to be brought onshore to the national grid and to store electricity in Battery Energy Storage Systems.
- 14.31 The Preston, Seton, Gosford AP is shown in the SIMD data with an area in the 10% most deprived in Scotland. This area has declined since the 2016 SID date was produced. Other areas are within the 20% most deprived, however these were already within the 20% decile in 2016 data.

Fa'side

- 14.32 This AP's largest settlement is Tranent, with some smaller but accessible settlements further south. Although there is no railway service through the AP, the A1 trunk road is easily accessible, with the settlements of Pencaitland, Ormiston and Macmerry all within a relatively short drive. The area is also served by a number of bus routes connecting to other parts of East Lothian and into the City of Edinburgh.
- 14.33 One of the main employment sites within the Fa'side AP is the Elphinstone Research Centre containing Charles River Laboratories. Allocated sites exist to the east of Tranent (PROP TT6: Kingslaw), south (PROP TT3: Windygoul), and Macmerry (PROP TT8 Macmerry Industrial Estate).
- 14.34 The Fa'side AP contains areas within both the 10% and 20% most deprived in Scotland, located within Tranent. The 2016 data showed no areas within the 10% most deprived, representing a decline in the situation.

North Berwick Coastal

- 14.35 With a large area of coastline and the highest proportion of prime agricultural land, this AP is the second largest in East Lothian geographically. It contains the heritage assets of Tantallon Castle and Dirleton Castle, and the settlement of North Berwick with the Law to the south as an important geographical feature and tourist attraction. This AP is responsible for a large tourist draw into East Lothian, facilitated by the centrally positioned railway station and frequent services to/from Edinburgh. This makes both commuting and leisure trips very easy.
- 14.36 North Berwick has a prosperous food and drink industry, with many people employed in its various cafes and restaurants. Settlements such as Gullane and Aberlady are smaller in scale, but also have good food and drink offers and small retail outlets as well as internationally recognised golf courses that attract visitors from the UK and beyond.
- 14.37 Allocated mixed-use sites with some employment provision include PROP NK1: Mains Farm and PROP NK4: Tantallon Road. The North Berwick AP mostly contains areas that are within the least deprived percentiles.

Haddington & Lammermuir

- 14.38 The largest and most central of East Lothian's APs, Haddington and Lammermuir contains the administrative and market settlement of Haddington, together with a large number of small villages and hamlets. It also contains the largest rural parts of East Lothian, with the Lammermuir Hills dominating the backdrop.

- 14.39 Haddington itself has the head office for East Lothian Council, the county's largest employer. Other large employers include East Lothian Community Hospital, Pure Malt Products Ltd, and Tesco. It also has a range of other operational employment sites with a mix of industrial land uses such as the Hospital Road site, and Whittingehame Drive (Screwfix) site. Alderston is located just north of the A1 and is within a walking distance to Haddington. It includes a purpose-built large office building that is used by an independent investment management company (Mcinroy Wood).
- 14.40 The more rural areas to the south of Haddington are predominantly farms and small-holdings, with some micro businesses in settlements such as Gifford and Humbie.
- 14.41 Allocated sites include HN5: Gateside East, HN6: Gateside West and HN8: Peppercraig East. Development has already begun or has been completed on the HN5/HN6 sites and consists of retail, light industrial units and a care home.
- 14.42 Haddington has some areas of deprivation mostly on the north east and south east of the town, although not within the 10% or 20% most deprived of the SIMD 2020 data.

Dunbar & East Linton

- 14.43 As the most easterly AP, Dunbar & East Linton contains a large area of coastline and also adjoins the neighbouring Scottish Borders Council. The settlements of Dunbar and East Linton are now connected by the railway line, with East Linton station opening in late 2023. Dunbar has a strong link with the fishing industry with its operational harbour. East Linton has a rich cultural heritage and a number of long-standing independent businesses on its high street.
- 14.44 A number of smaller villages and hamlets are dispersed around the area and include Tynninghame, Whitekirk and Innerwick, with a range of agricultural operations and small-holdings.
- 14.45 Dunbar and East Linton AP has some medium scale employers such as Asda and Belhaven Hospital. The high street provides a range of independent retail and food outlets catering for both local residents and tourists, with easy access from Dunbar train station and direct bus services to Edinburgh. Existing operational employment sites include a mix of industry at the Spott Road Industrial Estate, Belhaven Brewery, and storage facility at West Barns (Need Space).
- 14.46 The largest employment site is currently PROP DR2 which is to the east of Spott Road behind the existing Asda and Dunbar Garden Centre.

Recently developed employment units

- 14.47 Whilst some of the allocated employment sites are yet to be developed, some recent examples of consented (see full table of consented development proposals in the Background Paper), under construction or completed developments include:
- 14.48 QMU – construction of the Edinburgh Innovation Hub is nearing completion (more info available check with CM)

- 14.49 Mid Road Prestonpans ([18/01344/P](#) Part of the site has planning permission for retail (now completed) and other part granted consent at appeal to LAR housing for affordable housing now under construction.)
- 14.50 Haddington Gateside East and Gateside Commerce Park ([20/01428/P](#) Erection of a 60 bed care home building, children's nursery building and associated works | Land West of Gateside Road Haddington East Lothian; and [19/01217/PCL](#) Erection of 9 industrial units (class 4) and associated works | Land West of Arthurs Way West Road Haddington East Lothian)

Barbachlaw in Wallyford

- 14.51 [22/00803/PP](#) - Land North Of Victory Lane Barbachlaw Wallyford East Lothian - proposed industrial development comprising of class 1, 4, 5 and 6 class uses (site area 1.32ha)
- 14.52 [23/01515/PP](#) – Approved planning permission in principle for business development (Class 4) with associated landscape, engineering infrastructure including drainage along with electricity substations (site area 1.4ha)

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

14.53 Delivery of employment sites

- Role of QMU in attracting new businesses and offering premises
- ELC could incentivise the take up of employment sites by allowing some residential development on those sites
- There's the problem of hope value, whereby even the most unappealing sites are perceived to be potentially important. The benefits of land ownership are skewed towards building expensive houses and that is part of the problem.
- Lack of Public Transport also restricts access
- Better to use existing space and to look at maximising utilisation of these spaces and multi purpose uses
- We should support conversion of old farm buildings into small business spaces (IT businesses or craft workshops)? Or give un-used land for the development of small work spaces for their local communities
- Use part of the housing sites for employment

14.54 Brownfield sites for employment

- Former Cockenzie Power Station site
- Macmerry industrial estate could be expanded greatly.
- East fortune hospital site
- Old Council depot in Lime Grove, North Berwick
- There are still spare areas in and around Fenton Barns
- Torness could be converted into a sustainable tech centre, with a strong nature recovery based focus.
- Look first at underutilised existing Council owned, leased sites rather than expanding into new sites.
- Be more creative on change of uses rather than expanding onto new (greenfield) sites

14.55 Level of employment

- No background info available to answer this
- Employment in East Lothian is poor and often its jobs are low paid, meaning that many people commute to Edinburgh
- 1000 acres is needed
- Modern hub-like office spaces should be available in Blindwells
- Use empty shops

- Use an algorithm to predict this which will be a function of distance from the city (and competing areas, which are better served by transport and potential employee pool), population and a variety of other factors including rent.
- What jobs are the government trying to attract to East Lothian? Only then can you determine the land requirements

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE PROPOSED PLAN?

- 14.56 The current LDP seeks to protect existing employment land allocations and seek opportunities for new employment in sustainable locations. There are some large new employment sites in the western parts of East Lothian which are either under construction or consented, with parcels yet to be developed. These sites will provide significant employment growth, however it should be recognised that other medium sized sites can also make an important contribution.
- 14.57 Developing the approach to employment land requires a balance between ensuring the next LDP complies with a range of NPF4 requirements with the need to ensure East Lothian's ability to attract and retain a variety of businesses across different sectors. This will require a multi-dimensional approach, with key links to the Spatial Strategy and General Infrastructure section and the Housing section. Key issues to address are:
- Ensuring a wide distribution of employment land within our main settlements and across East Lothian's Area Partnerships, with sites accessible by sustainable transport modes;
 - Taking a strategic yet flexible approach to employment land to ensure East Lothian can continue to attract and retain a diverse range of businesses across sectors;
 - Contribution of all employment sites to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, the effects of climate change;
 - Contribution of all employment sites to mitigation of effects and enhancement of biodiversity to address the nature crisis;
 - Infrastructure first approach to deliverability of employment land. Greenfield sites with limited or no infrastructure are not brought forward;
 - Ensuring strategic sites are developed in the most effective way possible to maximise job creation and co-location benefits;
 - Recognition of the character of East Lothian's business sector which is primarily small and micro businesses, and ensure a strong focus on supporting their growth;
 - Recognition of East Lothian's rural employment sector not only in traditional industries such as agriculture and land management, but also in sectors like agritourism, food and drink production, renewables, and creative industries. Proposed LDP should consider how to support these through local employment opportunities, training, and skills development, as well as re-purposing unused buildings for economic functions;
 - Employment sites must support local living and reducing private car usage;
 - Allowing sufficient flexibility within policy for a range of employment uses and job creating tourist development whilst also retaining East Lothian's attractive built and natural landscape;
 - Flexibility of employment units and community hubs to accommodate and support the needs of a range of small businesses and start-ups;
 - Recognition of the changing functionality of East Lothian's population through home-working etc;
 - Implications of the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill 2025 and its requirements for Local Authorities to work with relevant public bodies to produce and implement a CWB action plan. This in particular should align to the CWB pillars, referring specifically (with reference to planning) to diversifying ownership of

land/assets by facilitating/supporting community ownership, and bringing vacant and derelict land back into use in a way that provides financial, social or environmental benefit to the community;

- Equality and fairness, and reducing barriers in relation to accessibility of jobs, training and further education;
- Focus on how to maximise opportunities for young people (East Lothian has relatively fewer young working adults than Scotland as a whole, with only 38.6% of its residents aged between 16 and 49, compared to 42.8% across Scotland);
- Supporting employment and training as a mechanism for change and the regeneration of areas, in particular those within the most deprived percentiles;
- Supporting and growing East Lothian's high quality tourism offer whilst protecting existing communities from negative effects.

14.58 In addition to the above, future employment policies will need to put more emphasis on how we utilise existing buildings, including vacant properties and buildings at risk which can be repurposed or reused in line with circular economy principles.

AREAS WHERE THERE IS AGREEMENT OR DISPUTE ON ISSUES AND POSSIBLE APPROACHES.

14.59 There is general agreement that the current allocations are not delivering the required employment land. Equally the market is not functioning effectively to bring employment sites forward. Both these elements can only be addressed at the next stage of the LDP. Scottish Enterprise did not raise any disputes on the evidence.