

**Scottish Borders Local Development Plan
Main Issues Report 2019**

**Proposed Residential Allocation
Land at West Linton**



January 2019



Scottish Borders Local Development Plan Main Issues Report - Response to Question 7

Proposed Residential Allocation Land at West Linton

1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Site and Surrounding Area.....	4
3.0	Development of Site.....	10
4.0	Site Effectiveness	12
5.0	Policy Context	14
6.0	Conclusion.....	19
	Appendix 1 – Location Plan	20
	Appendix 2 – Indicative Masterplan	22



1.0 Introduction

1.1 PPCA Ltd has been instructed by the landowners to make representation to the Scottish Borders Local Development Plan Main Issues Report in support of a proposed residential development site to the west of Medwyn Road, West Linton.

1.2 This representation responds to the publication of the Scottish Borders Main Issues Report and the invitation to submit comments to the Council in advance of the publication of the Proposed Plan. Specifically, this representation responds to Question 7 of the MIR which asks:

Q7 - Do you agree with the preferred options for additional housing sites? Do you agree with the alternative options? Do you have other alternative options?

1.3 In response to Question 7, the landowner supports and promotes a change to the settlement boundary of West Linton in order that the site, as shown on the accompanying location plan, is allocated for residential development as an additional housing site and included within the West Linton Settlement Boundary.

1.4 The site at West Linton is not identified in the Main Issues Report as a housing site and was not put forward at the previous 'call for sites' stage of the Local Development Plan process.

2.0 Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The representation site is situated on the western edge of West Linton, on the western side of Medwyn Road. The site currently lies out with the settlement boundary as shown in the current adopted LDP however it is considered that the site is suitable for low density housing. The site is identified in the plan below and in the Location Plan included as Appendix 1 of this submission.



West Linton Location Plan

- 2.2 As can be seen, the site at West Linton generally lies to the west of Medwyn Road and south of the West Linton Golf Course access road. The site is undulating and gently slopes to the south. It extends to approximately 6.8 hectares (17 acres) and is currently used as paddock land for sheep grazing.



West Linton Aerial Photograph

- 2.3 The site is well contained with the north western boundary of the site being the rear gardens of the existing housing on the golf course access road and the north eastern boundary of the site being the rear gardens of existing housing on Medwyn Road. A suitable vehicular access to the site can be taken directly from the north from Medwyn Road with additional pedestrian access provided from the golf course road to the west. This would provide an opportunity for access to wider walks to points of interest in the local area e.g. the golf course and dam.
- 2.4 The southern and western boundaries of the site are made up of a dense tree belt which forms a strong defensible boundary and its continuation along the southern boundary creates a strong and enhanced physical boundary for the village. Development would therefore be contained comfortably within the local landscape.



Photograph 1 – Centre of site looking towards Medwyn Road



Photograph 2 – Looking east across site from Golf Course Access Rd



Photograph 3 – Looking south into site from Golf Course Access Rd



Photograph 4 – Medwyn Rd potential vehicle access



Photograph 5 – Potential pedestrian access via golf course access rd

- 2.5 There is a centrally located group of trees within the site. These will be retained and will become a central design feature of any proposed development. There is also currently an 11kV overhead electricity line within the site. Negotiation is currently underway with Scottish Power to underground this line.
- 2.6 The existing residential development in the area is predominantly made up of low-density single to 1.5 storey dwellings set within large plots. It is proposed that any future development would reflect this development pattern and would be in keeping with the local characteristics of the area.



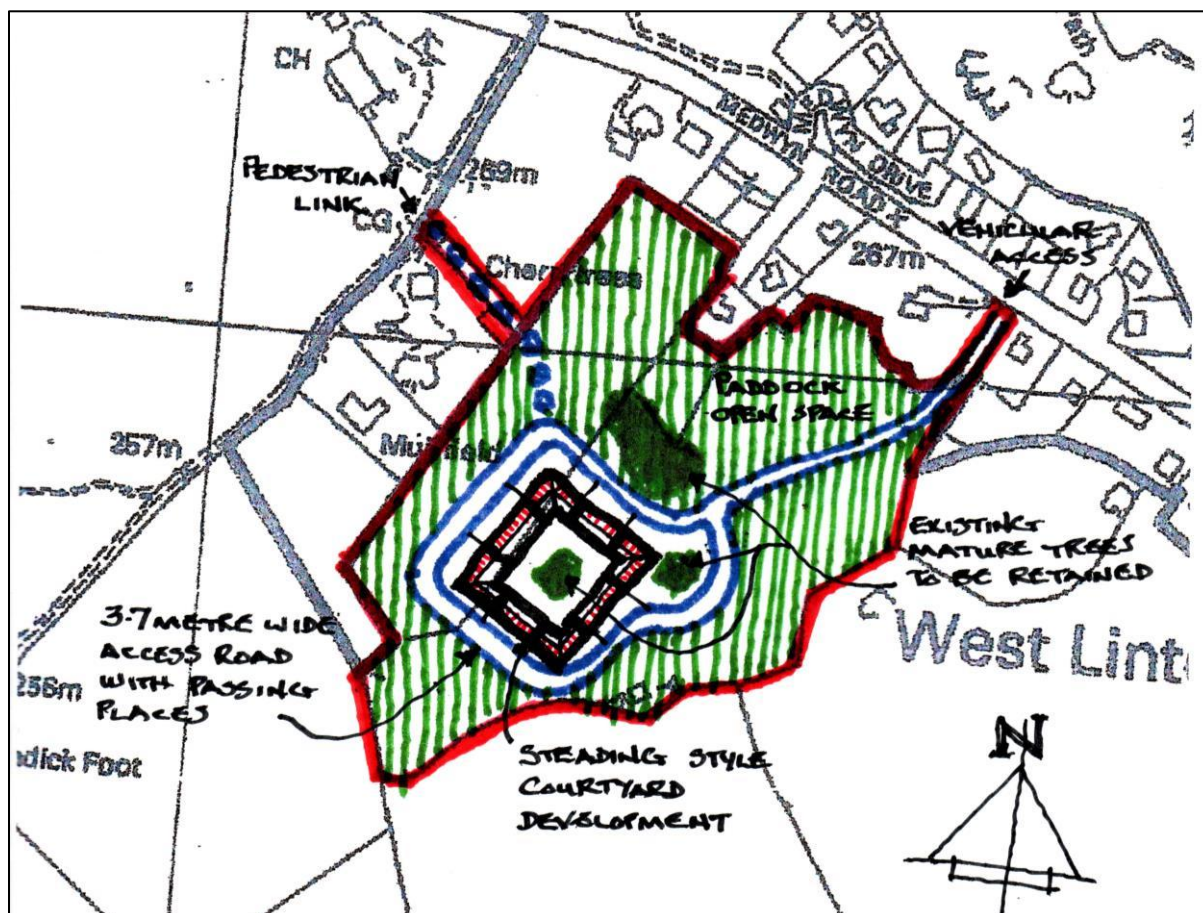
Photograph 6 – Centrally located tree group

- 2.7 The site is fully effective and has a capacity of approximately 6 to 8 one to one and a half storey bungalow style units. Its allocation would be in keeping with the village's scale and character. The site would add to the range and choice of housing available within West Linton.
- 2.8 The site is suitable for housing and is well related to the village. The site benefits from strong defensible boundaries and could deliver a small scale development in the short term. The inclusion of the site within the settlement would represent a logical boundary extension for the built up area.



3.0 Development of Site

- 3.1 The development site can accommodate approximately 6 to 8 bungalow style residential units surrounding a central green area. The site is fully self-contained within a strong mature landscape setting. Recent planning permissions for small scale housing development exist and are to be implemented e.g. to the south of the site or have been implemented e.g. the three units development to the north of the site at Medwyn Road.
- 3.2 Vehicular access would be provided to the rear of the properties as shown taken from a ten metre wide access route to the north onto Medwyn Road. This will necessitate the removal of two trees for junction creation purposes, but these would be replaced by significantly more trees to enhance the landscape setting of the site.
- 3.3 An indicative, high level concept masterplan has been prepared as part of the Local Development Plan process, this is included below and as Appendix 2 of this submission. As can be seen, small scale residential development at West Linton is compatible with the immediately adjacent residential uses and will be of a scale, density and character in keeping with the local area. The development includes proposals for residential housing, open space, landscaping and access. It is also proposed that a section of the site will be retained as a paddock area.
- 3.4 This site can be developed with no apparent physical or environmental constraints. It can also be effectively and readily serviced and there are no constraints to its immediate development. Owing to the nature of the site, it is considered that its development could be contained comfortably into the landscape, permitting a small but high quality development in terms of design, layout and landscaping.



Indicative Masterplan

- 3.5 The development of this site would not only provide a desirable location to live but would also represent a sustainable approach to development, which takes advantage of existing infrastructure and facilities. New housing would also help sustain the local community of West Linton and help extend services and facilities.
- 3.6 The location and nature of the site, including its ability to be accessed and its relationship with the existing residential development, confirm it as entirely suitable for private house building and its development would help provide for a variety and choice of locations for potential new house buyers in the Scottish Borders.
- 3.7 The following section sets out the effectiveness of the site in relation to PAN 2/2010 and demonstrates that the site can be delivered within a short term timescale.



4.0 Site Effectiveness

4.1 The tests of effectiveness for housing allocations are set out in paragraph 55 of Planning Advice Note 2/2010 – Affordable Housing and Housing Land Audits. These are as follows:

ownership: the site is in the ownership or control of a party which can be expected to develop it or to release it for development. Where a site is in the ownership of a local authority or other public body, it should be included only where it is part of a programme of land disposal;

physical: the site, or relevant part of it, is free from constraints related to slope, aspect, flood risk, ground stability or vehicular access which would preclude its development. Where there is a solid commitment to removing the constraints in time to allow development in the period under consideration, or the market is strong enough to fund the remedial work required, the site should be included in the effective land supply;

contamination: previous use has not resulted in contamination of the site or, if it has, commitments have been made which would allow it to be developed to provide marketable housing;

deficit funding: any public funding required to make residential development economically viable is committed by the public bodies concerned;

marketability: the site, or a relevant part of it, can be developed in the period under consideration;

infrastructure: the site is either free of infrastructure constraints, or any required infrastructure can be provided realistically by the developer or another party to allow development; and

land use: housing is the sole preferred use of the land in planning terms, or if housing is one of a range of possible uses other factors such as ownership and marketability point to housing being a realistic option.



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- 4.2 Addressing each of the above points in turn, with regards to ownership it is confirmed that the site is in the ownership of a party that is willing, and intends, to release the land for residential development during the period of the Local Development Plan.
- 4.3 With regards to the PAN requirements on physical constraints it is confirmed that there are no physical constraints of the nature listed in the PAN affecting the site.
- 4.4 There are no known contamination issues within the site nor is there any history of such. The site is greenfield and used as paddock land by the current landowner.
- 4.5 There are no deficit funding issues with regard to the site. It is wholly in private ownership.
- 4.6 The site is wholly marketable and the small scale development proposed would be a desirable addition to the village. Subject to a grant of planning permission, completions on the site would be delivered within the LDP period and the site is therefore considered effective in terms of paragraph 55 of the PAN.
- 4.7 It is confirmed that housing is the preferred land use of the land in planning terms. The site could accommodate approximately 6-8 low-density bungalow style dwellings.
- 4.8 With regard to wider known environmental or infrastructure constraints that may affect the suitability of the site for housing and the potential to deliver house completions over the plan period the following is provided. There are no known environmental issues that would prevent the site from delivering development over the plan period. The site comprises agricultural fields and while it is currently within the Pentland Hills Special Landscape Area, the nature and scale of the proposed development will not significantly impact the Landscape Area at this particular location. There are no other environmental designations covering the site. There are no known infrastructure constraints that would affect the development of the site for residential use. There are no off site road capacity issues that would prevent full site development.



5.0 Policy Context

National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3)

- 5.1 The third National Planning Framework (NPF3) provides the statutory framework for Scotland's long-term spatial development. It sets out the Scottish Government's spatial development priorities for the next 20 to 30 years. Planning authorities are required to take the Framework into account when preparing development plans and it is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 5.2 NPF3 confirms that the Scottish Government's central purpose is to create a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. To achieve this, the Government Economic Strategy aims to share the benefits of growth by encouraging economic activity and investment across all of Scotland's communities, whilst protecting our natural and cultural assets.
- 5.3 In terms of the vision for Scotland, NPF3 confirms that this includes a vision where Scotland is a successful, sustainable place with a growing economy which provides opportunities that are more fairly distributed between, and within, all communities. The objective is to provide high quality, vibrant and sustainable places with enough, good quality homes. Our living environments foster better health and we have reduced spatial inequalities in well-being. There is a fair distribution of opportunities in cities, towns and rural areas, reflecting the diversity and strengths of our unique people and places.
- 5.4 Section 2 of the NPF3 sets out the Government's strategy to achieve the vision of "a *successful, sustainable place*". The strategy is to ensure that all parts of Scotland make best use of their assets to build a sustainable future, and to create high quality, diverse and sustainable places that promote well-being and attract investment. The NPF notes that the financial climate has reduced the amount of new housing built in recent years, but the Scottish Government is committed to a significant increase in house building to ensure housing requirements are met across the country.
- 5.5 NPF3 encourages high quality, diverse and sustainable developments that promote well-being and attract investment. It confirms that there is a need for a significant increase in house building to ensure housing requirements are met across the country and more ambitious and imaginative planning is needed to ensure a generous and effective supply of



housing land.

- 5.6 While small scale, the allocation of the site at West Linton for residential development in the emerging Local Development Plan will meet the aims of NPF3 in the provision of housing for the Scottish Borders as the site is effective and deliverable in the short term.

Scottish Planning Policy

- 5.7 The Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) was published alongside the NPF in June 2014 and sets out the policy that will help to deliver the objectives of NPF3. The SPP is a statement of Scottish Government policy on how nationally important land use planning matters should be addressed across the country.
- 5.8 It is a material consideration that carries significant weight in the preparation of development plans, the design of development; from initial concept through to delivery; and the determination of planning applications and appeals.
- 5.9 The SPP confirms that the Scottish Government's central purpose is to focus on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. Sustainable economic growth is defined as: "Building a dynamic and growing economy that will provide prosperity and opportunities for all, while ensuring that future generations can enjoy a better quality of life too".
- 5.10 Paragraph 15 explains that by locating the right development in the right place, planning can provide opportunities for people to make sustainable choices and improve their quality of life. Well-planned places promote well-being, a sense of identity and pride, and greater opportunities for social interaction. Delivering high-quality buildings, infrastructure and spaces in the right locations helps provide choice over where to live and style of home, choice as to how to access amenities and services and choice to live more active, engaged, independent and healthy lifestyles.
- 5.11 The SPP confirms the introduction of a presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development. SPP explains that the planning system should support economically, environmentally and socially sustainable places by enabling development that balances the costs and benefits of a proposal over the longer term.



- 5.12 SPP explains that policies and decisions should be guided by a number of principles, including:
- giving due weight to net economic benefit;
 - responding to economic issues, challenges and opportunities, as outlined in local economic strategies;
 - supporting good design and the six qualities of successful places;
 - making efficient use of existing capacities of land, buildings and infrastructure including supporting town centre and regeneration priorities;
 - supporting delivery of accessible housing, business, retailing and leisure development;
- 5.13 In relation to housing development SPP sets out the Government's approach towards "Enabling Delivery of New Homes" and confirms the need to facilitate new housing development, particularly in areas within our cities network where there is continuing pressure for growth. SPP also confirms that house building makes an important contribution to the economy, and planning can help to address the challenges facing the housing sector by providing a positive and flexible approach to development.
- 5.14 SPP confirms that the planning system should: identify a generous supply of land; maintain at least a 5-year supply of effective housing land at all times; and enable provision of a range of attractive, well-designed, energy efficient, good quality housing, contributing to the creation of successful and sustainable places. In addition, SPP confirms the local development plans should indicate the number of new homes to be built over the plan period, and this figure should be increased by a margin of 10 to 20% in order to ensure that a generous supply of land for housing is provided. Local development plans should provide for a minimum of 5 years effective land supply at all times.
- 5.15 SPP explains that planning authorities and developers should work together to ensure a continuing supply of effective land and to deliver housing, taking a flexible and realistic approach. Significantly, where a shortfall in the 5-year effective housing land supply emerges, development plan policies for the supply of housing land will not be considered up-to date, and paragraphs 32-35 of the SPP will be relevant.
- 5.16 The proposals put forward for West Linton will provide an element of residential development to meet Scottish Borders housing requirement. The allocation of the site at West Linton is consistent with the Scottish Government Guidance provided through NPF3 and SPP.



SESPlan Strategic Development Plan

- 5.17 The South East Scotland Strategic Development Plan (SESPlan) was approved with modifications by Scottish Ministers in June 2013 and is supported by Supplementary Guidance on Housing Land approved in 2014. The SESPlan Foreword notes that the Plan aims to ensure that the City Region continues to be recognised as an outstanding area in which to live, work and do business. The SESPlan also supports a sustainable pattern of growth that will secure delivery of housing in the most sustainable locations and meet the needs of communities.
- 5.18 Paragraph 8 states that South East Scotland is the main growth area and the key driver of the Scottish economy, while Paragraph 10 notes that household growth over the period to 2033 is circa 200,000 households. In order for this to be achieved, it must be supported by a continuous supply of deliverable residential development.
- 5.19 While small in scale, the proposed development at West Linton presents the opportunity for residential development in a sustainable, marketable and deliverable location.
- 5.20 Paragraph 2.19 of the Main Issues Report confirms that SESPlan *“will be replaced following the adoption of the proposed SESPlan 2016. The proposed SESPlan was recently subject to Examination by the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA) and the recommendations by the DPEA have been referred to Scottish Ministers. It is expected a decision from the Scottish Ministers will be made by the end of this year although at this stage the decision and any amendments to the recommendation by Ministers have yet to be confirmed. The MIR therefore makes reference to the key parts within the proposed SESPlan and will take account of the new SESPlan as required when it is adopted.”*
- 5.21 The proposed SESPlan sets out broad policy directions in terms of:
- Economic Growth (employment land, town centres, retail and minerals)
 - Housing (housing land requirements, flexibility and affordable housing)
 - Infrastructure (transportation, infrastructure, sustainable energy technologies, green networks, green belts, waste, water and flooding)
- 5.22 The Main Issues Report acknowledges, at paragraph 3.3, that *“Given the limited take up of allocated housing sites, the high land supply within the current LDP and the limited number of new houses required for the Scottish Borders within the proposed SESPlan, it is not anticipated the LDP2 will require a significant number of new housing sites.”*



5.23 This being the case, small sites such as West Linton can make an effective contribution to the housing land supply in Scottish Borders while providing a range and choice of housing within the area. The nature of the site makes it deliverable within the short term as it is small scale in nature, and capable of early delivery without any major infrastructure requirements.

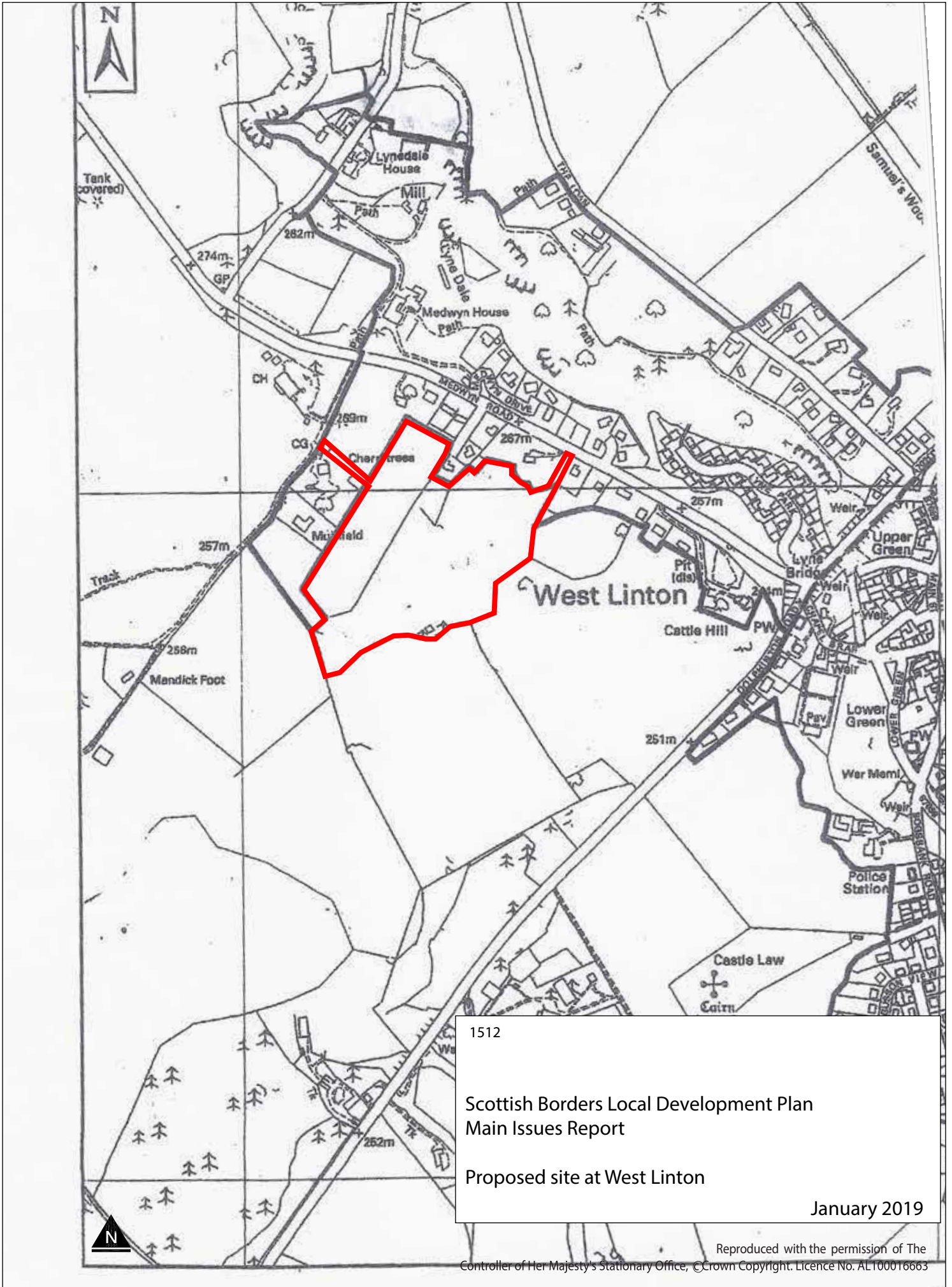


6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 In conclusion, approximately 6.8 hectares / 17 acres of land is proposed for low density residential development, approximately 6-8 bungalow style dwellings set within large landscaped plots at West Linton as part of the Scottish Borders Local Development Plan Main Issues Report.
- 6.2 The site in question is of a scale appropriate to West Linton and complements existing residential development in the local vicinity. The proposed development site is sustainable and deliverable in line with Scottish Government policy and advice and will contribute to meeting the housing requirement for the wider Council area over the next five years.
- 6.3 As such, it is respectfully requested that Scottish Borders Council allocate this site for new residential development in its emerging Local Development Plan.



Appendix 1 – Location Plan



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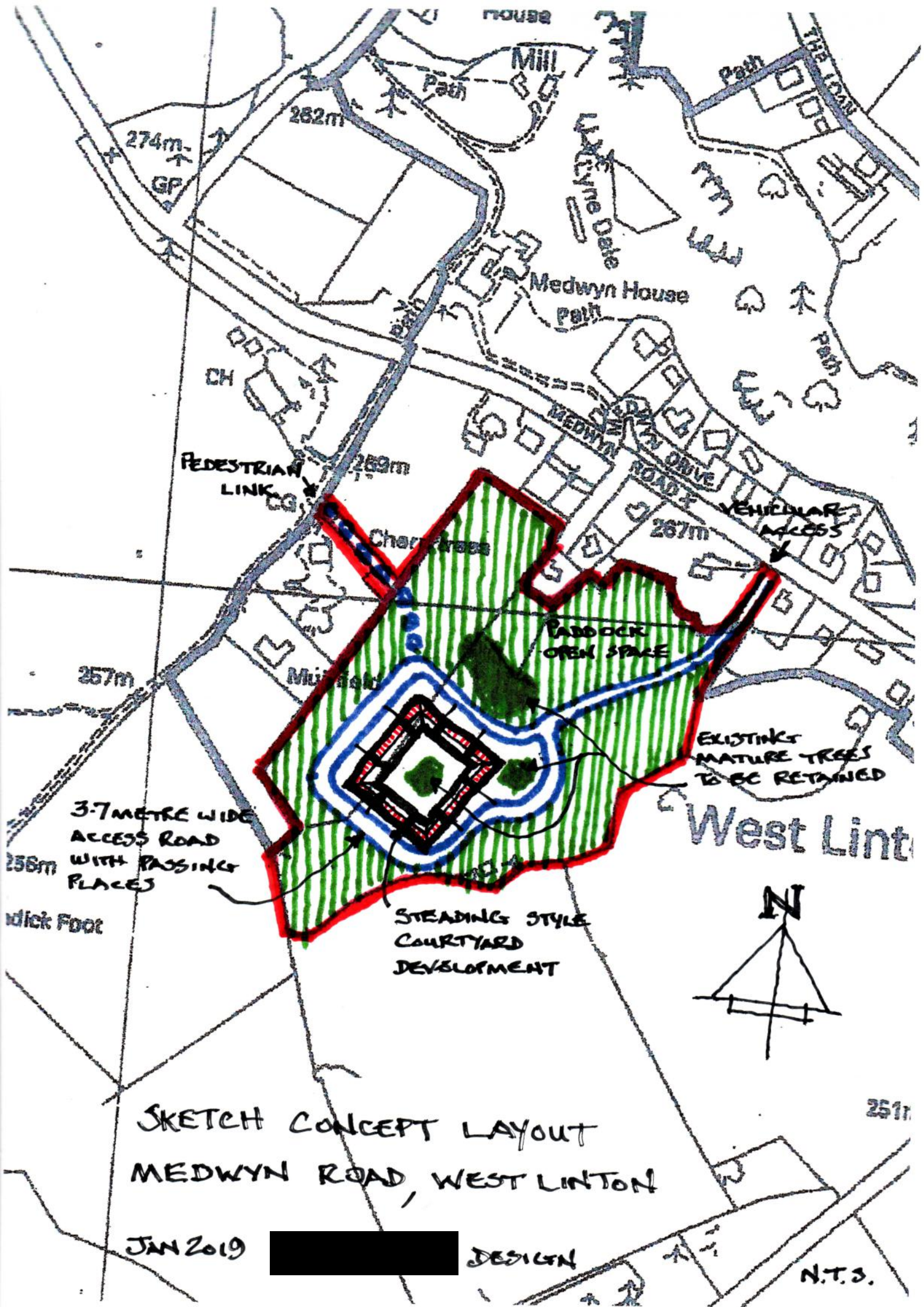
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Appendix 2 – Indicative Masterplan



SKETCH CONCEPT LAYOUT
 MEDWYN ROAD, WEST LINTON

JAN 2019



DESIGN

N.T.S.