



Action planning for *traditional town centres in West Lothian*

WHITBURN consultation

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Please complete the attached feedback form and return the form to:

**Development Planning, West Lothian Council,
County Buildings, Linlithgow, West Lothian, EH49 0BR**

For further information on the town centres project please contact:

**Laura Fleming on 01506 775 410 or
e-mail laura.fleming@westlothian.gov.uk**



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INTRODUCTION

West Lothian Council is committed to supporting the economic prosperity and vitality of its district's traditional towns. In November 2005 consultants were appointed to carry out a 'health check' of the town centres. The purpose of the health check was to identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the town. This health check process will help to identify and prioritise future actions for improvement.

Typically a good town centre will include a range of quality shops and other services, convenient car parking; a sense of security, and an inviting pedestrian environment and public realm generally.

PURPOSE OF THE CONSULTATION

The consultants report also identified opportunities and threats for Whitburn town centre. The council is now seeking your

views on the issues that were identified by the consultants. Your views are important and we would be grateful if you would complete the attached feedback form. This will allow us to draw up a comprehensive list of issues and opportunities in the town. To assist you coming to a view of what the priorities are for Whitburn we have detailed below a summary of the consultants findings. The actions suggested by the consultants may, or may not, in your view be the right solution. Please let us know what you think about these proposals and any other proposals that you think would help the vitality of the town.

This consultation exercise will inform and prioritise the selection of projects to use the capital budget already approved for town centres. The priorities will be laid out in the Whitburn Action Plan.

CONSULTANT'S FINDINGS

Retailers are mainly represented by local independent traders complimented by a small number of national supermarkets and some services such as a bank, public library and post office. The vacancy

rate is relatively low although some premises are prominent in the town centre and this is locally perceived as a problem.

Whitburn is well served by local bus services with regular services to Livingston, Broxburn, Bathgate, Armadale, Glasgow and Edinburgh. The town centre benefits from dedicated off-street parking as well as limited on-street parking.

The consultants identified a need to improve and maintain the core of the town centre and its overall attractiveness. Continuing shop front improvements and an enhanced street cleansing regime would be beneficial and action is required to address crime and vandalism.

A shopper survey was undertaken to establish the views of people who come to the town centre and use its facilities. The majority of people who took part in the survey dislike the poor quality of the shops and they would like to see more and better shops as well as improved cleanliness of the town centre environment. The town centre must gain 'kerb appeal' to attract drive through shoppers.

The creation of an attractive public realm is recognised as critical to bring new investment into the town centre.

POSSIBLE PROJECTS

To address some of the issues that have been identified a number of projects may need to be implemented. These projects could include:

- Environmental improvements such as enhanced street furniture, street lighting and planters and hanging baskets.
- Shopfront improvements schemes to assist local businesses to upgrade the appearance of their premises.
- Address crime and vandalism for example through the installation of CCTV cameras.
- Improve the provision of on-street parking.

NEXT STEPS

Your views on the main concerns for Whitburn will be used to prioritise investment from the council's town centre project budget.