

APPENDIX 6B

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER BASELINE INFORMATION

National/Regional Landscape Character Types

Landscape character descriptions are based on NatureScot (2019) Landscape Character Types and verified during the field survey (Figures 6.7 & 6.8). At the national/regional level there are 16 LCTs within the Detailed Study Area. However, ten have been scoped out due to minimal visibility of the Development, which is unlikely to result in notable effects on landscape character.

The following are included within the scope of the LVIA as detailed in Table 6.4 below. Descriptions and key characteristics are drawn directly from the Scottish Landscape Character Types Map and Descriptions¹.

Table 6.4: NatureScot Landscape Character Types (LCT)

LCT Name	LCT No.	Key characteristics which apply to the detailed study area
Lowland Plateau (Central)	151	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undulating and rolling plateau landform, dissected by numerous streams and small river courses. • Predominantly open moorland and semi-improved grassland landcover, including important designated areas of grassland and peatland, birch scrub and small wetland habitats and lochans. • Medium and large blocks of coniferous forest form prominent features across plateau. • Kippen Muir is largely free of settlement, with some isolated farmsteads scattered amongst the farmland away from minor roads. • Small former mining villages at the south of the Slamannan plateau the subject of recent expansion, with occasional remnants of open-cast mining, some screened by surrounding woodland. • Rolling plateau landscape often contains external views, including open dramatic views to the Forth carselands and neighbouring hill masses from some areas.
Plateau Farmland – Glasgow & Clyde Valley	201	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive, open, flat or gently undulating landform. • Dominance of pastoral farming, but with some mosses surviving. • Limited and declining tree cover. • Visually prominent settlements and activities such as mineral working. • Rural character of the Plateau Farmland has reduced as tree cover has declined and the visual influence of settlements, transport infrastructure and mineral working has increased.
Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow & Clyde Valley	213	<p>This is the 'host' LCT for the proposed development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landform ranges from gently undulating topography associated with the plateau farmlands to more hummocky patterns where fluvio-glacial action has created drumlins and eskers. • Primarily located along major transport routes on urban fringes. • Pockets of remnant pastoral farming, in some areas retaining a strong structure of hedges and trees, but in others suffering serious decline. • Visual influence of the urban edge, former and current industrial sites, and transport infrastructure. • Urban fringe issues including blight, management decline and anti-social behaviour such as fly-tipping.

¹ Scottish Landscape Character Types Map & Descriptions. Available online at: <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-character-assessment/scottish-landscape-character-types-map-and-descriptions>. (Last accessed 18.12.22)

Upland Fringes – Lothians	269	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadly undulating, landforms forming a series of smooth rounded hills and slopes, some steep-sided and some gently sloping, shelving gradually from the Uplands northward to merge with rolling farmlands. • Varied scale, openness and land use reflecting transitional nature between upland and lowland. • Incised watercourses have etched v-shaped valleys into the slopes, often forming deep cleughs. • Occasional larger rivers flow through similar, but larger-scale, v-shaped channels; • Remnant heather moorland and rough grassland on high ground gives way to improved grassland and then to arable land on the lowest elevations, with a parallel transition from post and wire fence and walls to beech and hawthorn hedges. • Some areas of extensive coniferous forest, but tree cover is more frequent in the form of shelterbelts. • Deciduous woodland is restricted to steeper land in river channels, though this includes some important ancient woodlands. • Dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and clusters of cottages, with occasional small villages. • Distinctive character of rural road network, dense in places, including local features such as fords and bridges. • Quarries, overhead lines and busy A roads which have localised influence in some parts of the landscape; • Clearly transitional landscape between lowland and upland characters. • Views across the lowland, and to the coast in the east, backed by the ridge lines of the hills to the south.
Lowland Hills & Ridges – Lothians	272	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hills with distinctive profiles and occasional rock outcrops. • Arable landcover giving way to pasture and some areas of rough grazing on the highest ground. • Small farm woodlands and mixed shelterbelts, with deciduous woodlands along steeper slopes and coniferous forestry on the Bathgate Hills. • Small traditional villages within the hills, characterised by local stone, with larger expanded settlements in the Mayfield/Tranent area. • Hill forts and other historical features create time depth in the landscape, with a more recent legacy of quarrying in certain areas. • Recreational access to hilltop viewpoints and landmarks. • Visual focal points from the surrounding landscapes, providing outward views over the plains, and beyond.
Lowland Plateau – Lothians	273	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadly undulating and open plateau landform, becoming more rolling to the south and east to form a series of craggy hills above Blackridge. • The principal rivers form shallow valleys, with more deeply incised tributaries. • A pastoral landscape with post and wire fences, thin hedges and windswept shelterbelts. Important wetland habitats and lowland peat bogs. • Scattered woodland consisting of small areas of coniferous, deciduous and mixed species.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of historical mining activity, leaving highly visible traces in the red shale bings. • Widespread residential and commercial development, as well as major transport corridors. • A landscape with extensive presence of modern human development and infrastructure.
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Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCA)

Landscape character descriptions are based XX and verified during the field survey (Figures 6.7 & 6.8). At the local level there are 42 LLCAs within the Detailed Study Area. However, 21 have been scoped out due to minimal visibility of the Development, which is unlikely to result in notable effects on landscape character.

The following are included within the scope of the LVIA as detailed in Table 6.5 below. Descriptions and key characteristics are drawn directly from the source text.

- North Lanarkshire - Southern Plateau Moorland LLCA 6b;
- North Lanarkshire - Plateau Moorland LLCA 7;
- Falkirk – Slamannan Plateau LLCA 3(i);
- Falkirk - Darnrig / Gardrum Plateau Moorland LLCA 3(ii);
- Falkirk - Avon Valley LLCA 4;
- Falkirk - Bo’ness Coastal Hills LLCA 5;
- South Lanarkshire – Urban Fringe Farmland LLCA 1;
- South Lanarkshire - Plateau Moorland Wind Farm LLCA 6c;
- West Lothian - Gladsmuir / Woodmuir / Gamilty Fringe LLCA 3;
- West Lothian - Harburn / Hartwood Rings LLCA 4;
- West Lothian - Bathgate Hills LLCA 5;
- West Lothian – Upper Almond Valley LLCA 6;
- West Lothian – Couston Valley LLCA 7;
- West Lothian – Polkemmet Moor LLCA 8;
- West Lothian – Armadale / Bathgate Plateau LLCA 9
- West Lothian - Livingston / Blackburn Plateau LLCA 10;
- West Lothian - Avonbridge to Armadale Plateau Edge LLCA 11; and
- West Lothian - Linlithgow Fringe LLCA 20.

Table 6.5: Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCA)

LCT Name	LCT No.	Key characteristics which apply to the detailed study area
North Lanarkshire Local Landscape Character Areas²		
Southern Plateau Moorland	6b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large scale, predominantly agricultural landscape, influenced by infrastructure and adjacent urban areas. • Some value as a setting to and division between adjacent urban areas and as a local recreational resource. • The prevalence of infrastructure and development within an otherwise agricultural landscape results in a low to medium sensitivity to development

² North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan – Modified Proposed Plan – Local Landscape Character Assessment Background Report, November 2019 (URS for North Lanarkshire Council). Available on line at: [Microsoft Word - Modified October 2018 Local Landscape Character.docx \(northlanarkshire.gov.uk\)](#)

Plateau Moorland	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large scale, open and exposed upland landscape which is generally sparsely populated, although with interspersed existing and former industrial development. • Some value as an upland landscape, contrasting with the more settled lowland landscapes of much of North Lanarkshire. • The large scale nature of this landscape and the predominance of existing and former industrial development results in a low sensitivity to certain development types.
Falkirk Local Landscape Character Areas³		
Slamannan Plateau	3 (i)	<p>Area has a very diverse landcover with a rolling plateau landform. There is sensitivity to the loss of the defining landscape elements (such as woodland cover, shelterbelts, tree groups, hedgerows, stone walls).</p> <p>In open areas where distant views are available and on the edges of settlements, there is particular sensitivity to development of very tall or large structures (wind turbines, telecommunication apparatus, power lines, large agricultural/industrial scale buildings) and to large scale poorly designed commercial forestry.</p> <p>The area is also sensitive to development on the elevated edges of Slamannan, Avonbridge, Limerigg, Standburn and California where buildings have the potential to be visible over a wider area. Derelict land on the edges of settlements has an adverse effect. Inappropriate boundary treatments / gateways on outlying dwellings and farms can be sensitive as viewed from rural roads. Black Loch is sensitive to any development, since there would be an effect on its rural setting and interruption of open views beyond the water.</p> <p>Some of the narrow lanes and tracks that run through the area are of a distinctive rural character and are sensitive to widening/engineering works that could result in loss of strong boundary features. The north western part of the area is covered by the Slammanan Plateau /Avon Valley Local Landscape Area.</p>
Darnrig / Gardrum Plateau Moorland	3 (ii)	<p>There is particular sensitivity to the loss of the defining landscape elements (such as woodland cover, shelterbelts, tree groups, hedgerows, stone walls) to development or through loss of management due to the existing open character. From the highest points and on the northern edge of the area there would be sensitivity to development of very tall or large structures (wind turbines, telecommunication apparatus, power lines, large agricultural/industrial scale buildings) and to large scale poorly designed commercial forestry (this is due to the greater visibility of these locations from the wider area and views out to the Forth carseland, Ochils, Touch Hills, along the Forth Valley and along the Avon Valley). The moorland with lochs near Gardrum Moss/Darnrig is of distinct open character and is particularly sensitive. A small section of the Slammanan Plateau/Avon Valley Local Landscape Area extends into the south west corner of the area.</p>
Avon Valley	4 (i)	<p>The area has high sensitivity to tall or large structures (such as telecommunication masts, transmission masts, wind turbines, power lines/pylons, large agricultural/equestrian buildings and industrial buildings) on the highest ground on the valley edges due to the extensive visibility (particularly from West Lothian to the east) and on lower ground where the strong enclosed rural valley character would cause such features to interrupt views and appear out of scale. The area is sensitive to the loss and lack of management of the existing</p>

³ Falkirk Council, Supplementary Planning Guidance – Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations, April 2021 (Falkirk Council). Available on line at: [SG09 Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations April 2021 \(falkirk.gov.uk\)](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/SG09-Landscape-Character-Assessment-and-Landscape-Designations-April-2021)

		defining landscape elements (such as the strong existing woodland cover, shelterbelts, tree groups, individual trees, hedgerows, stone walls); loss of these features would reduce the intimate wooded valley character and erode the enclosure pattern. The area is also sensitive to development on the edges of settlements (Avonbridge, Whitecross, Standburn, Loan/Muiravonside, Polmont) due to the potential for erosion of the integrity of the well managed, rural and intimate wooded valley character through insensitive development. The remaining features of the designed landscapes at Candie are also sensitive to loss. The majority of the area is covered by the Slammanan Plateau/Avon Valley Local Landscape Area
Bo'ness Coastal Hills	5 (ii)	<p>From much of this landscape character area, including the Bo'ness to Blackness coast, there are extensive views outwards into adjacent character areas and towards Fife, due to the elevated character. The area has a very high sensitivity to development of any tall structures or large structures with extensive mass; these could be extensively visible from within the area and from outside (examples are telecommunication masts, transmission masts, wind turbines, renewable energy projects, power lines/pylons, large agricultural/equestrian buildings and industrial buildings).</p> <p>The prominent ridge of high ground between Bo'ness and Linlithgow, in particular, is very sensitive to any development or change in land management practices due to its elevation and greater visibility from the south. The setting of the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site, Blackness Castle, the village of Blackness and the undeveloped coast with coastal path (part of John Muir Way) have valued landscape settings and would therefore be sensitive to development in the surrounding area. National Cycle Route 76 and the Bo'ness and Kinneil Railway are also tourist features and the views from these are sensitive to change.</p> <p>The Grangemouth industrial complex abuts the north west boundary of the character area and is a dominant feature in views from the highest land; any development in the west of the character area that would add to the visual effects of the Grangemouth complex or would result in the loss of any tree cover would also be sensitive.</p> <p>The character area would be particularly sensitive to the visual effects from expansion of Bo'ness onto higher ground and to poorly designed development on the edges of Bo'ness and Muirhouses. The open character of the area around Cauldcoats/Mannerston Holdings and the higher density of small buildings make this area sensitive to further development. There is a particular sensitivity to the loss and lack of management of the existing defining landscape elements (such as the strong existing woodland cover, shelterbelts, tree groups, individual trees, hedgerows, stone walls). The entire landscape character area is covered by the South Bo'ness Local Landscape Area.</p>
South Lanarkshire Local Landscape Character Areas⁴		
Urban Fringe Farmland	1	<p>The key characteristic, features and qualities of this landscape type are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gently undulating to rolling landform; • Mainly pastoral farming, often with small field patterns but also significant areas of non farming use; • Limited and generally declining tree cover often associated with field boundaries but often higher tree cover close to river valleys;

⁴ South Lanarkshire Council, South Lanarkshire Landscape Character Assessment, November 2010, (Ironsides Farrar for South Lanarkshire Council). Available online at: https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/4146/landscape_character_assessment-final_report_november_2010 (Last accessed 18.12.22)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prominence and visual influence of urban areas; • Visual influence of road and rail network, electricity pylons. • Influence of residential, industrial/commercial and leisure related development on the landscape.
Plateau Moorland Wind Farm	6c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinctive upland character created by the combination of elevation, exposure, smooth, plateau landform, moorland vegetation and, with the exception of windfarms, a comparative lack of modern development. • There areas share a sense of apparent openness and exposure which contrasts with the farmland and settled lowlands but do not feel remote; • Increasingly these areas are subject to significant landscape change resulting from extensive large scale windfarm development and associated reduction in area of commercial forestry.
West Lothian Local Landscape Character Areas⁵		
Gladsmuir / Woodmuir / Gamilty Fringe	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contrasting scale and openness due to land cover ranging from large scale, open moorland to extensive coniferous plantations at Camilty Plantation, Woodmuir Plantation and in the Gladsmuir Hills on the higher ground in the south. • Generally remote, simple, undisturbed, and unsettled with few dwellings. • Meandering, incised course of the Camilty Water/Linhouse Water cuts through the area. • Balance of scale, openness and land cover changes due to deforestation and re-planting on a large scale although naturally wooded steep sided burns with sheep grazing on the gentler grassland slopes. • This affects the extent of views, but generally extensive views northwards from A70 across open moorland and open water at Cobbinshaw Reservoir to the Bathgate Hills and southwards to the Pentlands. • Cobbinshaw Reservoir is large but relatively inconspicuous, set back from the A70 amongst surrounding plantation. • Open water of the man-made fishing lake at Morton Reservoir is well screened. • Contrasting views northwards from high points over the Almond valley to large areas of built development, roads, pylons, bings etc. • Major transport corridors of the A70 and the Edinburgh to Lanark railway follow the grain of the landscape running SW-NE; in contrast the A706 and A704 cut through the western part of the area with the A706 in particular running against the grain. • Major development in the west of the area on the Carboniferous coalfields with quarrying at Leven Seat and in the Gladsmuir Hills above Fauldhouse where spoil heaps, dismantled railway lines, associated works and infrastructure and disused quarries give a despoiled unsettled character, although surrounding woodland limits visibility in some views. • Blacklaw and Pates Hill wind farms are located within this character area from where they are generally well screened locally by forestry plantations (except during the timber harvest

⁵ West Lothian Council, Landscape Character Classification, West Lothian Local Development Plan: background paper, August 2014. Available on line at: <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/4837/West-Lothian-Landscape-Character-Classification/pdf/WL-LandscapeCharacterClassificationAugust2014.pdf?m=635458774692900000> (Last accessed 18.12.22)

		<p>cycle when they can become more exposed for a number of years) although their wider visual impact extends over many kilometres throughout West Lothian.</p>
Harburn / Hartwood Fringe	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This northern area of the wider LCT is more settled, with farms and other dwellings evenly distributed. • General SW-NE grain of the landscape is strongly reinforced by the linear pattern of burns and minor roads which criss-cross the area with extensive, wide shelterbelt planting including beech. • Regular pattern of hedges around improved grazing and occasional poor quality arable fields gives vertical relief and a smaller more enclosed and in parts intimate scale to the landscape than the wider LCT. • Manicured appearance of the golf course at Harburn and extensive designed parkland landscape at Harburn House give this part of the area an even smaller, enclosed, managed character (included in Historic Scotland's Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes). • Harwood Water, Murieston Water and Bog Burn in particular cut in part meandering incised courses through the area, with native trees on steeper slopes. The natural sinuous shapes contrast with the straight angular shelterbelts. • The Murieston Trail is an important recreational facility. • Relatively undisturbed by modern industry, noise or heavy traffic, but electricity pylons and overhead lines are an obvious intrusion. • Northern edge close to the Edinburgh to Glasgow railway and Addiewell is more unsettled with reminders of previous coal and oil shale industries, including disused mines and other infrastructure from the Addiewell Oilworks and disused quarries, opencast workings and tips at Longford. • Approved lowland crafting scheme at Nether Longford Farm will provide local softening and screening as trees and woodland matures. • Views up to the Pentlands from the local road network and the Edinburgh to Lanark railway where on embankment or where they bridge over the watercourses.
Bathgate Hills	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-open, gently rolling, farmland of the Bathgate foothills, with a distinctive west-east grain. • Complex landform of a series of ridges gently rising and falling, strongly linked to the Haugh Burn, Ecclesmachan Burn and Binny Burn running in the same direction, with distinctive igneous intrusions rising to 130m AOD at Nancy's Hill in the west and to 144m AOD to the east at Tar Hill. • Series of rocky outcrops have similar distinctive 'crag and tail' glaciated formation as in the Bathgate Hills immediately to the south. • Other craggy outcrops such as at Newbigging Craig. • 'B' roads follow the west-east grain, linked by other minor roads running north-south creating a distinctive grid pattern. • An even scatter of farm steadings with predominantly good quality arable farmland giving way to more sheep grazing on improved pasture to the east. • Bridgend is the only sizeable settlement, with significant woodland, shelterbelts and roadside avenues providing local enclosure. • Elsewhere only isolated farms and cottages.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some distinctive buildings in the landscape, including Ochiltree Castle. • Small disused quarries at Riccarton, Binny and at the eastern end where landscape character becomes more unsettled, fragmented and influenced by the nearby mining settlements of Broxburn and Winchburgh. • Long distance views southwards to the Pentland Hills.
Upper Almond Valley	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinctive west-east grain of the gently undulating landscape as a number of small burns gradually fall from the moorland into the River Almond before it continues eastwards through Livingston and beyond to the Forth. • Predominantly medium scale pastoral landscape with some arable farmland close to settlement at the edges of the unit. • Broadleaved woodland within Polkemmet Country Park provides considerable natural heritage value and significant landscape character within an uncharacteristic sheltered river valley. • Beyond the Country Park woodland is not extensive but is found predominantly to the centre and west of the area, with coniferous and mixed woodland including some in Woodland Trust ownership (e.g. East Whitburn, Cousland) • Roadside treebelts are a feature along the B7015 and at Gavieside to the east, with shelterbelts elsewhere. • Scattered scrubby birch are a landscape feature. • Scattered but frequent steadings linked by several minor roads criss-crossing the area in either an east-west or north-south direction. • The balance of tree cover is increasing as tree and woodland planting matures north of West Calder associated with several lowland crofting schemes to the east of Longridge • Rural character of open areas is diluted by features providing a legacy of the areas industrial past, most notably the Five Sisters oilshale bing at Westwood and others, disused railway lines, and modern features including quarries, sewage works, recycling centre, electricity pylons and overhead lines, etc. • Several linear settlements on the edge of the area have developed as either coal or oil shale mining towns, such as Whitburn, Fauldhouse, Stoneyburn, Addiewell, Loganlea and Seafield, some retaining the neat rows of former miners cottages • Major roads pass through or alongside the settlements along the boundaries of the area, including the M8 and A705 to the north, A71 to the south and A706 through the west of the area.
Couston Valley	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad, open, medium scale valley of the Couston Water which gradually falls north-westwards from the Bathgate Hills to the River Avon. • Almost exclusively pastoral with small areas of arable farmland. • Few isolated farms. • Generally featureless, with little tree cover and few hedges. • Roadside planting alongside the A800 and A801 is a feature in the landscape. • Small areas of semi-improved acidic and neutral grassland, for example around South Couston Farm, for sheep grazing.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West of the A801 is more of a transitional area up to the Avonbridge to Armadale Plateau Edge and the Blackridge Heights further west, which is more enclosed and diverse with textural variety of woodland and wetland including remnant raised bog. • Open water and former workings at Couston sand quarry are a major intrusion in the landscape, currently being restored. • Clear views eastwards to the steep western edge of the Bathgate Hills, and westwards to the more gradually rising Blackridge Heights.
Polkemmet Moor	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A relatively flat plateau with a central west-east ridge of moorland and extensive coniferous plantations gently falling northwards from the Fauldhouse Hills at 290m AOD to the River Almond at around 190m AOD, and falling more steeply southwards down to the Breich Water at around 210m. • Past open cast coal mining is very evident in the numerous artificial humps and hollows, coal bings, dismantled railway lines and disused mines and quarries. • Poorly drained peatland bogs with heather, cotton grass and rough unimproved tussocky grass on the higher slopes. • Open pasture on the lower slopes, with wire fencing rather than hedges. • Coal bings are becoming vegetated but are still conspicuous features in the landscape. • Great variety in views, from extensive, distant views out from open moorland southwards to the Gladsmuir Hills and the Blacklaw wind farm, to more confined and enclosed views from within the plantations. • The high plateau is almost entirely unoccupied, with very little settlement apart from isolated farms on the lower slopes and some expansion of Fauldhouse and Longridge (just outside the area) up the slope. • Only one minor road crosses the plateau, with other minor tracks and plantation rides.
Armadale / Bathgate Plateau	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A poorly drained, medium scale watershed between the Couston / Avon Valley to the north and the Almond Valley to the south. • A predominantly rural area between Armadale, Bathgate, Blackburn and Whitburn, but with significant modern intrusions. • Rolling moorland plateau becoming wild and exposed to the west and more enclosed with more urban influences to the east within the Armadale / Bathgate fringe. • Distinctive simple, exposed, plateau bog-like character of open rolling moorland with heather and gorse around the high point at Hall Torbane Farm south-east of Armadale • By way of contrast, to the east is a more enclosed landscape where mature woodland policies of the former Boghead House and extensive shelterbelts are important landscape features providing an attractive western edge to Bathgate. • Large areas of open water are features in the landscape, including to the east of the A801 (Half Loaf Pond) and to the west around Hall Torbane Farm south-east of Armadale. • A801 is a dominant major transport corridor passing mostly on embankment north-south through the area, with the A706 and new Bathgate-Airdrie railway and associated infrastructure creating major intrusions in the landscape.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overhead power lines and pylons, and an electricity sub-station also dilute the rural character of the landscape. • Telecommunications masts on high ground are features within the unit visible from many kilometres. From the west of the unit the huge radio and TV transmitter masts at Black Hill and Kirk o'Shotts within North Lanarkshire are visible approximately 6-7km away. • South of the A89 is a series of gentle lowland undulations of improved grassland, including restored mine workings. • In the north of the area the restored Easton colliery bing on the west side of Bathgate provides an elevated feature now well integrated into the landscape. • Long distance views eastwards to the Bathgate Hills and southwards to the Pates Hill wind farm.
Livingston / Blackburn Plateau	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally open or semi-open, isolated raised peatland bogs of Tailend Moss and Easter Inch Moss are important wetlands with a diverse range of wetland habitats. • Artificially drained and managed as a recreational, educational and wildlife resource of importance within an increasingly built-up area. • Mixed plantations and shelterbelt planting provides local enclosure around the wetlands and M8 at Junction 3 and Dechmont. • Wetland areas are isolated between the key road network linking business parks on the edges of Bathgate and Livingston either side of the M8 corridor. • Roadside shelterbelts, stone dykes and wire fencing around gently undulating arable farmland and grassland, with isolated farms provide a patchwork and variety of land cover types in small units within a generally medium scale landscape. • Oil shale bing at Seafield Law has been shaped and re-colonised and is a feature in the plateau landscape visible over several kilometres. • Views northwards to the Bathgate Hills and long distance views southwards to the Pates Hill wind farm. • The recently re-built Bathgate-Airdrie rail link passes through Easter Inch Moss.
Avonbridge to Armadale Plateau Edge	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gently rolling eastern edge of the higher Slamannan Plateau which covers an extensive area to the west within Falkirk district. • Distinctive west-east grain to the landscape due to drainage by a series of tributary burns, including Mad Burn, which flow eastwards off the higher plateau into the Barbauchlaw Burn which in turn flows northwards into the River Avon. • The Unit represents a transition between arable farmland on the lower ground, to pasture and up to rough hill grazing on higher ground. • Small scale, semi-enclosed pattern of rural roads, mixed farming, woodland and shelterbelts in parts of the unit, but generally with no strong pattern of field boundaries. • Former woodland policies of Bridge Castle and within the Barbauchlaw Burn valley along the eastern edge of the area, and around the top of Blackridge Heights at North Rhodens, East Rhodens and West Rhodens, are significant landscape features providing an attractive, mature, managed character

		<p>with broadleaved woodland, fine roadside beech avenues and clipped beech hedges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive mixed forest plantation at Drumtassie Burn managed by the Forestry Commission as part of the Central Scotland Forest. • Meandering form of the Barbauchlaw Burn and in places the steep sided Barbauchlaw Glen north of Armadale, with localised raised ground between the burn and the A801 at Kinnen Hill and Tantallan Hill, provides variety of landform and contrasts with the flatter Couston Valley to the east. • The northern edge of Armadale is a generally low lying, open, gently terraced pastoral landscape for sheep grazing. • Relatively unspoiled apart from overhead lines and electricity pylons, small disused quarries and an active open cast coal mine north of Armadale (Woodend Colliery). The Gowanbank gas compressor station is relatively well screened.
Linlithgow Fringe	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linlithgow urban area and Loch nestles in a basin contained by gently rising, undulating slopes of foothills to the north and south. • North of the town the south-facing slopes gradually rise to localised hills at Parkhead and Bonnytoun, culminating at 171m AOD at Airngath Hill on the district boundary, close to the Hope Monument, providing panoramic views in all directions and a striking setting to Linlithgow Loch, Palace and modern spire at St. Michael's Church. • M9 passes between the Loch and the northern foothills but is well screened and inconspicuous. • South and east of the town the north-facing foothills of the Bathgate Hills provide an important setting to the town, gradually rising in the south to 134m AOD at Williamcraigs, whilst to the east the foothills rise more steeply to a height of 144m. • Medium scale, angular arable fields with alternating ley grasslands for stock grazing creates a patchwork landscape, reinforced by many hedges. • Policy woodland and mature estate woods of Grange House and Bonnytoun to the north, Clarendon House to the east, and at Kettlestoun, Preston House and Williamcraigs to the south, add significant confinement. • Stone dykes are well maintained around many of the farm estates, in particular Bonnytoun and Preston. • Appearance of two golf clubs north and south of the town is manicured. • Disused sand quarry at Kettlestoun between the River Avon and the A706.