


WEST LOTHIAN

PROPERTYMATTERS

Commercial property news from West Lothian Council

A man in a light blue patterned shirt and dark tie is smiling and holding several architectural models of buildings. The background is a blurred office setting with a purple wall and a window showing a cityscape.

David Knight
of Taylor
Woodrow on
why his firm
moved its
Scottish HQ
to Livingston

BUILDING ON SUCCESS

WEST LOTHIAN DELIVERS PROPERTY SOLUTIONS

WINTER 2003

Welcome

Welcome to West Lothian Property Matters, our regular review of the commercial development scene in one of Scotland's most dynamic areas.

We have become accustomed over many years to welcoming people to West Lothian. In Livingston we have one of the country's fastest-growing towns. Its growth has brought hundreds of companies over the last three decades.

That is good news for the towns and villages of West Lothian. As Livingston grew and matured it provided vital jobs and - increasingly today - better housing and retail amenities to the area as a whole.

West Lothian's location at the heart of Scotland's motorway and railway

networks has helped put the area on the map when it comes to relocation and new investment. There is far greater movement of people now, commuting to and from West Lothian each day.

All of this change is reflected upon in our interview with Jim Pollock, one of the leading figures in Livingston's growth since he arrived in the town as a young surveyor more than 35 years ago.

He looks back with pride on West Lothian's modern history, and points out that this has become an increasingly attractive area for people and companies who want an affordable high quality of life.

West Lothian Council is at the forefront of the area's regeneration. We are used to change in West Lothian, as its economy continues to diversify from its traditional sources of employment.

We are backing the West Lothian Delivers campaign, created by West Lothian Economic Partnership, where the council is a key partner.

Local businesses also play their part in promoting West Lothian as a great place to live and work. And we will be doing more to encourage that in future, broadcasting the benefits of locating in West Lothian, as well as reporting our local success stories.

**Councillor Willie Dunn
Convener, Enterprise and
Development
West Lothian Council**



Work starts on the new Aldi warehouse at J4M8.

Pictures: Gary Baker

Aldi snaps up site

Construction of one of Scotland's largest distribution facilities is underway in West Lothian, highlighting the area's strategic location for the distribution industry.

Aldi, one of the world's biggest grocery retailers, is building a 419,793 sq ft distribution hub and regional headquarters at the premier J4M8 site.

Work began in the spring and completion is scheduled for the end of 2004. A further 182,986 sq ft of land is available for expansion if required.

The West Lothian site was selected by the German retailer in the face of tough competition from other parts of Scotland and the north of England.

Situated at junction 4 of the M8, J4M8 is Scotland's largest dedicated distribution park and is just 22 miles east of Glasgow and 23 miles west of Edinburgh. The masterplan for the area aims to exploit the region's location at the heart of central Scotland's road and rail network.

J4M8 is being developed by Strawsons Property, a privately owned development and investment company.

David Hodgson of Strawsons said: "Demand for distribution facilities continues to focus on the area between junctions three and 12 of the M8, showing a strong trend for centralised regional distribution centres in the central belt. For this reason, J4M8 is a highly strategic location and has proved to be particularly popular with larger operators. Not only does it meet demand for a better quality environment and flexible design, it offers easy access to the national transport infrastructure."

Last year, the park's first tenants, Scottish Courage, moved to its newly-built regional distribution centre on the flagship development. The centre is

the main distribution point for all Scottish Courage beer in Scotland.

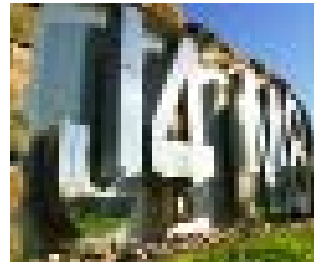
Elsewhere on the site, development continues apace with the completion of the latest phase of infrastructure works. A £0.5 million contract has completed the extensive network of roads and roundabouts within Phase 1 of the development, extending the main spine road across the site to its eastern boundary and opening up access to sites with frontage to the M8. Specifically, this road will access a site earmarked for a standalone unit of 39,826 sq ft, for which detailed planning consent already exists.

Phases 1 and 2 of the initiative comprise 85 hectares with planning consent for a total of 2 million sq ft of high quality bespoke accommodation suitable for distribution use and associated offices.

Meanwhile West Lothian Council is progressing with plans for phase 3 of J4M8, which covers 40 additional hectares on the eastern side of the

site through the redevelopment of Riddochhill bing.

The bing near Bathgate is set for a major redevelopment thanks to an innovative joint venture approach. A private sector partner will be selected through competitive tender and a short list of four companies has been drawn up. The Council's Enterprise and Development Committee has approved in principle an investment of £382,000 so that the site can be prepared for future development. It is hoped work will start next year. The redevelopment of Riddochhill Bing already has detailed planning consent. This could provide space for up to 775,000 sq ft of large storage and distribution units - as well as 172,000 sq ft of smaller scale business, industrial and storage accommodation.



Building on success in Livingston

The international housing and development company Taylor Woodrow has confirmed its confidence in West Lothian by relocating its headquarters to Livingston. Around 75 staff from Glasgow and Edinburgh have moved to modern new offices in the Kirkton Campus.

As a result, the company has enjoyed considerable cost savings compared to previous city centre rates and now has all its commercial, residential and construction staff under one roof.

Taylor Woodrow has a number of development projects underway in the region, including the well-established Almondvale Business Park, making Livingston an ideal location for the company's new HQ.

David Knight, Managing Director of Taylor Woodrow commented: "The rejuvenation of West Lothian is an accepted fact now, and its vibrancy is unquestioned. Livingston is the ideal choice for our Scottish business headquarters as it is well positioned for our national business operations across the country."

Following the relocation, there have been no staff departures and many are enjoying shorter travelling times to their new office.

As part of the move, management undertook a brief survey to compare travel to work times for employees who drove to work from various parts of central Scotland.

Although the study is not complete, the company is gathering some positive feedback, confirming West Lothian as the logical location for the company.

West Lothian Council and Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh and Lothian has also been conducting its own study into travelling times, and the initial results reinforce the area as a

West Lothian is delivering for a major construction firm.
CONNIE HENDERSON reports.

central location with excellent road and transport links for employees from many parts of Scotland.

The survey highlights the time drivers can save by travelling outwith the traditional rush hour. Overall, off-peak journey times tended to take between 16 and 45 minutes, compared to 16 minutes to one hour in peak times.

Paul Furbank of West Lothian Council said: "Our studies emphasise West Lothian's place at the centre of Scotland's road network, with more than two thirds of the Scottish population within an hour's drive. Taylor Woodrow is one of a many companies which are recognising the benefits of locating here."

Meanwhile, Taylor Woodrow's flagship Almondvale Business Park in Livingston continues to attract considerable interest.

Almondvale Business Park is situated immediately adjacent to Livingston Town Centre and is linked by the A899 dual carriageway to the M8 motorway. Already a host of prestigious companies have located there, including GE Harris, HSBC and the Inland Revenue.

The fifth phase of the business park, Denholm House, is now complete, offering 33,450 sq ft of high quality office accommodation and 118 car parking spaces.

Detailed planning consent has been granted for the next stage of the development, Dunsyre House, which will create another 32,000 sq ft of office space as part of the master plan to ultimately build a total of 330,00 sq feet of office space in the area.



"Livingston is the ideal choice for our Scottish headquarters as it is well positioned for our national business operations across the country."

DAVID KNIGHT
Taylor Woodrow

New biotech facility is Scottish first

A 3.8 acre site in Eliburn Estate on the west side of Livingston, has been earmarked for a new biotechnology facility - the first commercial plant of its kind in Scotland.

Pharma Imaging Ltd is a contract medical imaging company, providing imaging services to assist drug discovery and drug delivery research & development.

Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh and Lothian is supporting the project to establish a state of the art clinical imaging facility that will ensure new and faster scanning methods and the provision of a range of imaging methods.

A development agreement has been concluded between the company and Knight Real Estate Limited, of Aberdeen who will build the new centre.

The application expects to receive the green light soon, and, if all goes according to plan, operations should be up and running at Eliburn in late 2004.

Find out more

To find out more about commercial property solutions in West Lothian contact: Paul Furbank, Graeme Carracher or Robin Thompson at the Economic Property Development, West Lothian Council, Lammermuir House, Owen Square, Livingston EH54 6PW.

You can also call 01506 775790/56/57 or send a fax to 01506 775791.

Former Corporation chief has something to smile about . . .

MAURICE SMITH meets the former Chief Executive of the Livingston Development Corporation and finds out how West Lothian has changed - for the better.

Ask Jim Pollock about the transformation of West Lothian as a place to live and work and a broad smile comes to his face.

"We have seen so many changes, all for the better. The range of businesses in West Lothian, the massive improvement in amenities and the transport links have really put this place on the map," believes Pollock (pictured right). He is one person who should know. The young Pollock arrived in West Lothian way back in 1967 as a young surveyor with Livingston Development Corporation.

Over the following 30 years he rose through the ranks to become Chief Executive before the new town body was formally wound up.

"I think I am witnessing the sixth generation of change in terms of the type of commercial facilities being sought by businesses," reflects Pollock, now head of specialist consultancy J.A. Pollock.

"At first Livingston was like a dormitory town for people working at British Leyland in Bathgate. Then it was home to consumer goods industries, followed by micro-electronics, then software, call-centres and now a much broader mix including the medical-related companies."

Today Livingston and West Lothian are home to a far more varied spread of employers, from distribution and logistics to software developers, and major call-centre operations such as BSKyB and Intelligent Finance.

"There is a growth of Class 4 property developments, such as those at Kirkton Campus and Starlaw Park. As Edinburgh prices have risen, so areas like East Mains at Broxburn and Whitehill at Bathgate have become premium properties as companies moved out here," points out Pollock.

"Just as the rail links between Bathgate, Livingston and Edinburgh have driven commuter traffic, so there has been an increasing recognition of the advantages of the fact that we straddle the M8. The two motorway junctions have attracted significant investment, as we see with

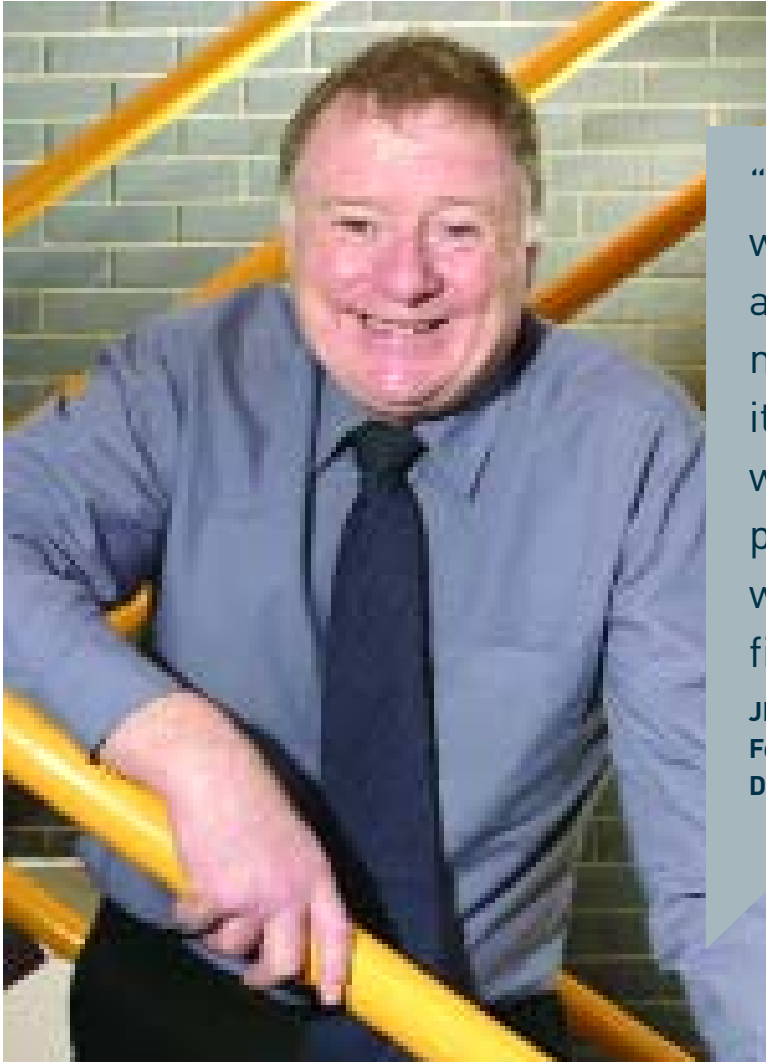


A spectacular new building is available in Livingston for lease or sale.

The Watermark has been constructed to the highest standards to provide unparalleled quality and finishing. Situated at the heart of the motorway at the gateway to the Alba Campus, the impressive development includes a fully fitted restaurant, a modern new gym and attractive break out areas.

Watermark extends to approximately 101,826 sq ft over three levels and promises to attract widespread interest.

● Further details are available from Mark Jones at DTZ Debenham Tie Leung (0131 459 2222) or Stuart Taylor at CBRE (0131 469 7666).



“In its early days Livingston was very much a new town, almost apart from its neighbouring towns. But today it is very much integrated within West Lothian, and provides thousands of jobs as well as attractive housing and first-class transport links.”

JIM POLLOCK

Former Chief Executive, Livingston Development Corporation

Scottish Courage, Aldi, Booker and so on.”

In his earlier career, Pollock helped negotiate the arrival of major investors such as NEC Semiconductor. Its closure after 20 years brought sadness for Pollock, but he believes passionately that West Lothian's commercial diversity - developed during those two decades - has made the area more able to cope with such a blow.

“First of all, plants like NEC at least provided very high quality employment for a generation of people. Secondly, where Linlithgow may have been the only recognisable high-quality place to live, the development of several other towns such as Bathgate, Uphall, Broxburn and Livingston has been rapid during the last two decades,” he points out.

“The northern rail link between Bathgate and Edinburgh played an important

part in that, and its development to the west and Glasgow will have a similar impact,” believes Pollock.

“We are seeing development in towns such as Armadale and Whitburn now, a clear sign of optimism and proof of the fact that the economic situation has improved right across West Lothian.”

He added: “One good thing in terms of property is that, as well as attracting major developers in residential and commercial areas, there are also smaller businesses around who know the area well.

“There are a lot of good quality office developments around in Livingston, for example, led by people who know the local area very well and who can respond to local needs.

“In its early days Livingston was very much a new town, almost apart from its

neighbouring towns. But today it is very much integrated within West Lothian, and provides thousands of jobs as well as attractive housing and first-class transport links.”

Pollock's professional career was dominated by his dedication to promoting Livingston while it had its New Town status. When he arrived in the town 36 years ago it consisted of a tiny shopping centre and two housing estates. Some of the preparation undertaken during those early years led to the creation of a truly diverse town, with major private house-building and a major regional shopping centre serving the whole of eastern central Scotland.

When the corporation's job was done - its assets transferred to Scottish Enterprise and West Lothian Council - Pollock turned to his stock-in-trade, advising property buyers and sellers.

He was part of the project team on the highly-praised Crown Street regeneration project in Glasgow's Gorbals, but set up his business in his beloved Livingston, a few hundred yards from his old office in Livingston Village.

“We advise buyers and sellers in residential and commercial property. It is great to see the way Livingston has grown. We have people moving house from Edinburgh now, attracted by both the prices and quality of life.

“The days of winning huge projects like NEC are gone. But in their place we have many small and growing businesses, often launched by people who worked for major companies. And we are also home to the big names like Jabil and Mitsubishi Electric. It is a cliché but people are still moving to West Lothian to live and work, so we certainly did something right.”

French bring whisky to Scotland

A French spirits company is to open a new plant in West Lothian so its whisky can be labelled: "Made in Scotland".

French spirits company La Martiniquaise is relocating its Glen Turner Distillery business from France to West Lothian. Work is progressing on the new £15 million storage, blending and distribution facility at Starlaw Business Park, in Livingston.

Construction work on the 37-acre site began last November and the development is on schedule for completion by 2004.

Paris-based La Martiniquaise said it wanted both a Scottish location and easy access to the motorway network for distribution. Starlaw Park is widely recognised as one of West Lothian's prime locations. Situated on the western side of Livingston, it has excellent motorway links.

Balfour Beatty Construction has been

awarded the building contract for the new facility, which will include three maturation warehouses, a bottling hall, tank farm, six product processing warehouses and offices. Around 200 people will be employed during the construction and another 50 when the plant is opened.

The project is being managed by Blyth & Blyth, the Edinburgh-based architects who also drew up the design for the new whisky complex.

John MacLennan, chairman of Blyth & Blyth, said that West Lothian had been chosen by La Martiniquaise for its "excellent transport links". He has been working closely with management of the company, which is run by Jean-Pierre Cayard, whose family are said to be the 93rd richest in France.

Mr MacLellan added: "There were two

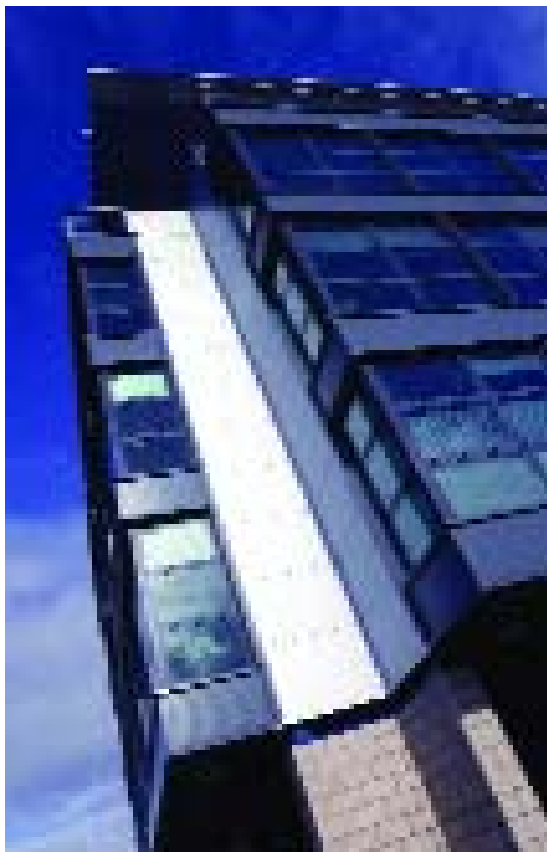
main requirements that the company needed to meet. One was a Scottish location to improve the image of its product abroad, and the other was a close proximity to the motorway for distribution. The site in Livingston has both of those and it's a very exciting project for us to be involved in."

Glen Turner is the largest selling malt in France, which is the third-largest export market for Scotch after the United States and Spain. A blended brand called Label Five will also be bottled at the new Livingston plant and transported to France for sale.

La Martiniquaise brings the number of whisky makers in the region to two, as Glenmorangie already has a base at Broxburn.

CONNIE HENDERSON

Football club scores with office and hotel development

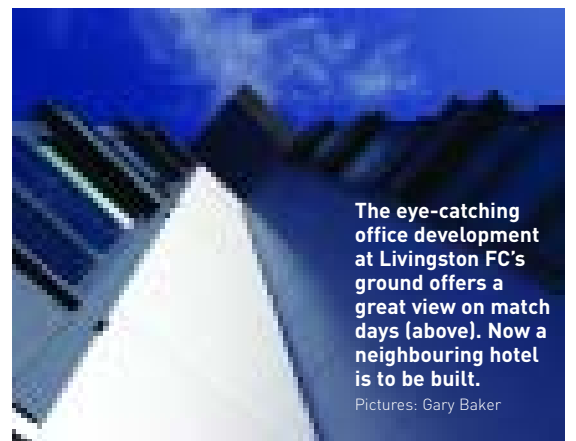


Developments off the pitch at Livingston Football Club are continuing following the completion of a £1.6 million extension to the nightclub and the creation of new fully serviced office accommodation.

Planning permission has now been granted for a new 85-bedroom hotel, incorporating leisure and conference facilities, and a second office block providing another 35,000 sq ft of workspace.

Already £8million has been invested in developments at the City Stadium and another £12 million has been earmarked for the next phase in a joint venture between Livingston FC and Stadia Investment Group.

Building work on the hotel is expected to get underway early next year and the developers are confident of attracting an anchor tenant for the new office block soon.



The eye-catching office development at Livingston FC's ground offers a great view on match days (above). Now a neighbouring hotel is to be built.

Pictures: Gary Baker

New business park offers 'first-class environment'

The first tenants of the newly-developed Pyramid Business Park have moved to the former Motorola plant in Bathgate.

The test services division of Nguage Ltd offer the ultimate in test and calibration resources, using the most modern equipment available and the best engineering know-how.

Mark Allan of Nguage, said the high specification facility at the Pyramids suited the company's requirements.

"The location, other facilities and being part of a Business Park allows us to concentrate on growing our company whilst knowing that we are working in a first class environment," he added.

A £3 million pound investment in the former Motorola factory has created a modern, flexible office and distribution location just 30 minutes from Glasgow and Edinburgh.

The building was bought by Henderson Global Investors in partnership with Scottish Capital Group in May last year.

The development offers 207,067 sq ft of office accommodation, and more than 137,941 sq ft of first class distribution space amid 93 acres of established landscaped grounds.

There is extensive on-site car parking, crèche and gymnasium facilities and excellent public transport links.

To view space at the Pyramids Business Park contact joint letting agents Ryden or Knight Frank.



Pyramids Business Park near Bathgate - praised by tenants, available to let. Pictures: Ryden



Growing firms set up home

One of the latest additions to West Lothian's long list of well-known companies includes Norwest Holst Soil Engineering, which is part of Vinci Plc, the world's largest construction and concessions group.

In their first large-scale permanent move into Scotland, Norwest Holst have leased

new offices and a laboratory on Houston Industrial Estate in Livingston.

Meanwhile Kingsthorpe Park has recently welcomed two new companies.

Telewest Broadband moved into a 25,750 sq ft unit in June. The new centre is being used as the company's regional warehouse for east central

Scotland. Telewest follow the arrival of Buildstore at Kingsthorpe.

The company offer a one-stop shop for house building projects. An additional 70,000 sq ft of land has now been earmarked for further development as high specification warehousing at Kingsthorpe Park.

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Complex is centre of attention

Results from the latest independent survey of consumers at Livingston's Almondvale Shopping Centre highlight shoppers' growing support for the complex. Of the 500 visitors questioned during May this year, 84 per cent said their main reason for visiting the town was the Almondvale Shopping Centre.

Additional motivators included the designer outlet mall (80 per cent) and Asda-Walmart (75 per cent). Further research revealed that the two main reasons behind choosing to shop at Almondvale included the choice of

shops and convenience. This year's results show an increasing satisfaction among shoppers.

The research was commissioned by Land Securities, owner and manager of the Livingston centre. Paul March, centre manager, said: "Overall the Almondvale Shopping Centre has been rated very positively, but we do not want to become complacent. There is always room for improvement and we will be looking at making the centre more appealing and to attract shoppers from a wider catchment area."



Almondvale Shopping Centre and the adjacent McArthur Glen designer outlet mall (above) in Livingston are growing in popularity with local residents, visitors and businesses.

Picture: McArthur Glen

WEST LOTHIAN

30

MINUTES DRIVE FROM EDINBURGH OR GLASGOW WITH ACCESS TO SOME 3,000,000 CONSUMERS IN LESS THAN AN HOUR

36

THE AVERAGE AGE OF WEST LOTHIAN'S POPULATION – THE YOUNGEST AND FASTEST GROWING IN SCOTLAND

73

PERCENT INCREASE IN EXECUTIVE HOMES BUILT SINCE 1991 PLUS 14 LOCAL GOLF COURSES

22

PERCENT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF JOBS OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS AND 9 UNIVERSITIES WITHIN EASY ACCESS

100%

COMMITTED TO DELIVERING BUSINESS SUCCESS

DELIVERS PROPERTY SOLUTIONS

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW WEST LOTHIAN COULD PROVIDE PROPERTY SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR BUSINESS PLEASE CONTACT: Paul Furbank, Graeme Carracher or Robin Thompson at Economic Property Development, West Lothian Council, Lammermuir House, Owen Square, Livingston, EH54 6PW

T: 01506 775790/56/57 F: 01506 775791

E: paul.furbank@westlothian.gov.uk or graeme.carracher@westlothian.gov.uk or robin.thompson@westlothian.gov.uk

