

Former housing site in Winchburgh to be sold by West Lothian Council for £1.2m

A former housing site in Winchburgh is to be sold to a developer by West Lothian Council for £1.2m

Cruden Homes plans to build new flats in Glendevon Park in the rapidly expanding village.

Officials told a meeting of the council's Executive that it had exhausted its own budget to build council housing on the site and the sale represented best value to the council.

A report the Executive said: "The land on the southern edge of the village forms a cleared site consisting of landscaping, hard-standing and parking having previously been occupied by two blocks of flats and lock up garages which were demolished approximately 10 years ago."

In September 2022, Council Executive approved the sale of the land to Almond Housing Association (AHA) for the construction of a social rented housing development, but AHA subsequently withdrew from the agreement.

The Tenants Panel has been consulted on the proposed disposal and raised no objections. The income will be invested in future social housing development.

Cruden's offer for the 1.5-acre site is based on a proposed residential development of 49 apartments arranged over three and four storey blocks.

The report added: "The precise tenure and housing mix of the scheme will be confirmed as part of the planning process. Cruden will be required to engage with the council in its capacity as the strategic housing authority to discuss and agree appropriate, statutory affordable housing provisions in relation to this proposed development."

SNP councillors Veronica Smith and Willie Boyle raised questions why the site was not being developed for council housing given the current housing crisis. Councillor Boyle asked "What's the constraints stopping this coming forward as a council developed site?"

Head of Housing Julie Whitelaw told the meeting that the council's ability to build new homes relied on grant funding from the Scottish Government, adding: "We have fully utilised that finding."

By Stuart Sommerville, Local Democracy Reporter