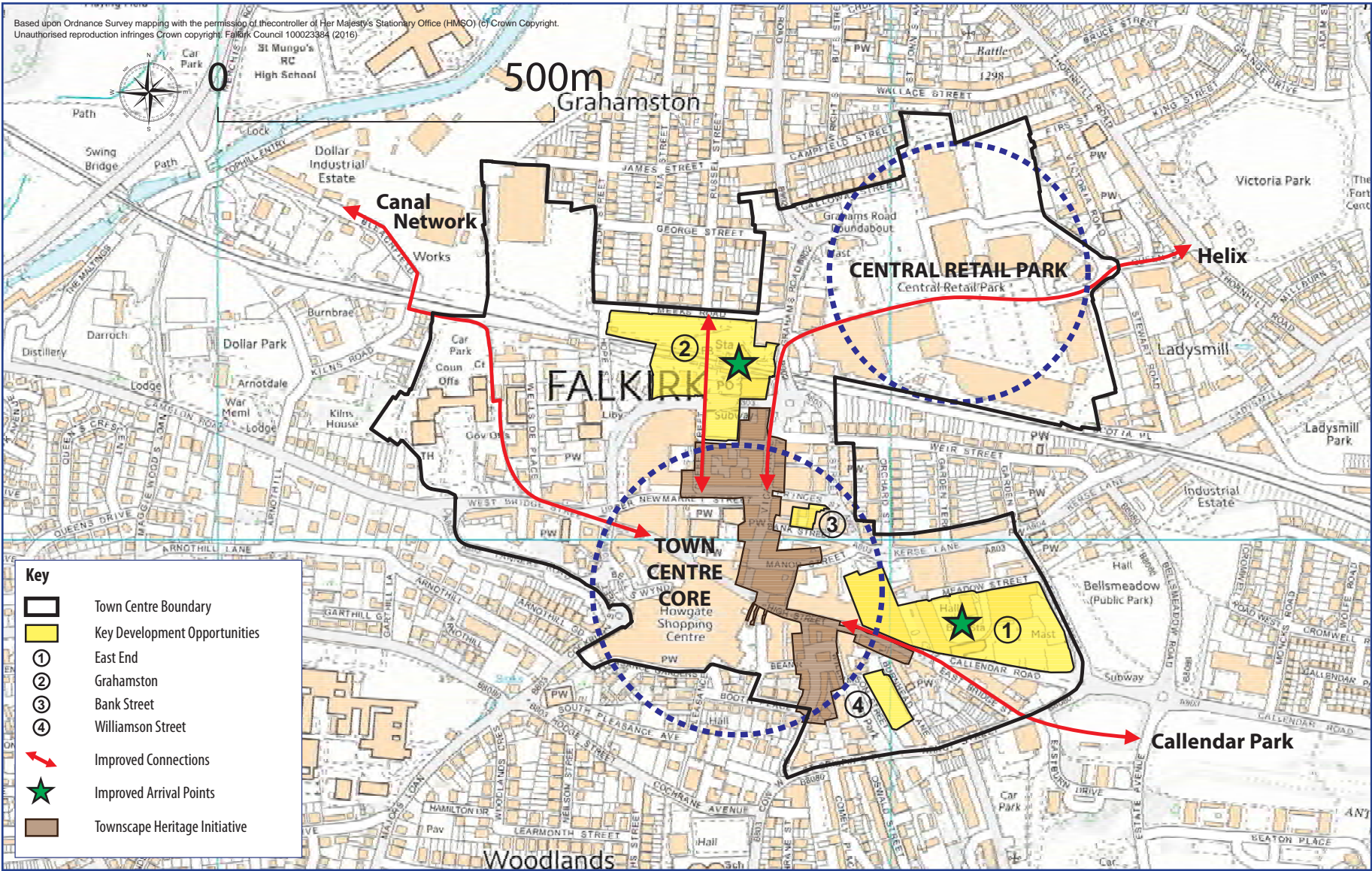


Figure 5.5 Falkirk Town Centre Opportunities



Issue 7: Town Centres

District and Local Centres

- 5.36** The four district centres of Bo'ness, Denny, Grangemouth and Stenhousemuir provide convenience shopping and services to these larger towns. They are less dependent on national retailers and have remained relatively stable over the last five years. Stenhousemuir and Bo'ness have benefited from regeneration projects, and Denny is undergoing major redevelopment. A regeneration initiative in Grangemouth failed to attract any viable bids. LDP1 highlighted the potential for enhanced food shopping in Bo'ness and Denny, where leakage of local expenditure remains an issue, but there has been limited development interest. There is unlikely to be scope for any significant new foodstores.
- 5.37** The local centres vary in size and character. Camelon has grown to a scale comparable to the smaller district centres. Newcarron has suffered by comparison and the Carron Centre needs restructuring to achieve a sustainable balance of uses. It remains an important centre, serving the growing area of North Falkirk.

5.38 Preferred Option

1. Continue to promote mixed use opportunities in the district centres, but with enhanced food shopping no longer a particular focus.
2. Identify the Carron Centre as an opportunity for redevelopment for mixed use, including retail, food and drink, community uses, and residential.

Alternative

Enhanced food shopping could be retained as a continuing aspiration in Bo'ness and Denny.

How does this differ from LDP1?

The preferred option differs from LDP1 is that it no longer specifically promotes enhanced food shopping in Bo'ness and Denny, adopting instead a more flexible, mixed use approach to development opportunities.



Issue 8: Tourism

Key Question: Are there additional opportunities to capitalise on the growth of tourism in the area?

5.39 Tourism has been a growth sector in the area over the last five years, reflected in growing visitor numbers and expenditure. The opening of the Helix and the Kelpies has provided another national attraction to complement the Falkirk Wheel. A new Tourism Strategy for the area was prepared in 2015, and seeks to build on this progress, through targeting key markets, providing enjoyable and marketable experiences, and improving the 'customer journey'.

5.40 LDP1 provides a spatial strategy for tourism based on a series of networks or themes, and associated nodes. This provides a basis for directing investment opportunities, and remains robust and relevant. A number of site specific proposals within the plan present tourism opportunities which are related to the networks, themes and nodes, and these will likewise be carried forward into LDP2. The main issue now is to consider whether there are additional opportunities which should be recognised in LDP2.

Town Centres

5.41 Falkirk and Bo'ness Town Centres are both currently identified as tourism nodes. Key opportunities exist to boost the vitality of both centres and their appeal for visitors. There is particular potential for new tourism accommodation in Falkirk.

Canal Network

5.42 The Kelpies/Helix have added a very successful new node to the canal network, complementing the Falkirk Wheel. There may be scope for some limited additional visitor facilities of high design quality at the Kelpies, but it is expected that the focus for further development at this node will be the adjacent Falkirk Gateway.

5.43 At the Falkirk Wheel, Scottish Canals have continued to improve the quality of facilities available, including space for small businesses. There remain further opportunities in the surrounding area for enhancing visitor infrastructure and lengthening visit times. The adjacent greenspace has potential for recreational use. An opportunity exists for hotel accommodation, close to the Wheel, at the underused park & ride facility on the A803 at Wester Carmuir, north of the Falkirk Wheel. This would complement hotel opportunities within Falkirk Town Centre and at the Falkirk Gateway. There will be a continuing focus on revitalising and improving the environment of the Falkirk canal corridor between the Wheel and the Kelpies, including the development proposals at Portdownie and Rosebank.

Central Scotland Green Network

5.44 The new paths and greenspaces created in the area over the past 20 years are supporting growth in tourism based on outdoor recreation. LDP1 identified several key nodes which provide local or strategic gateways to the green network, including the Helix, the Falkirk Wheel, Callendar Park, Kinneil and Muiravonside. Related greenspace opportunities are identified under Issue 2: Green Network. A specific commercial opportunity for a tourism business exists at Kinneil, within the walled garden of the estate. This would complement plans to enhance the historical and recreational potential of the estate for visitors.

Antonine Wall

5.45 The Antonine Wall World Heritage Site is a key linear asset with potential for increased access, awareness and interpretation. The management plan and local action plan include measures to enhance its profile. Identified nodes include Callendar House/Park, the Falkirk Wheel and Kinneil. A proposal for an Antonine Wall trail is included as a greenspace opportunity under Issue 2: Green Network.

Gateway Services

5.46 These are key points of access from the strategic transport network where visitors can access services including accommodation and catering. Falkirk Town Centre, the Helix/Falkirk Gateway, the Falkirk Wheel and Gilston are the principal nodes.

5.47 LDP1 contains policies for assessing any other tourism proposals which come forward, and these policies will be continued, with support given to those developments which meet the relevant criteria.

5.48 Preferred Option

Maintain the existing framework of themes and nodes as the basis for tourism development. Identify additional tourism opportunities at the Falkirk Wheel (Site 204), Wester Carmuir, Falkirk (Site 197) and Kinneil walled garden (Site 196).

Alternative

Additional sites for tourism development were proposed through 'call for sites' submissions for the whisky distillery at Beancross, and at Airth, associated with the Pineapple. These could have been given allocations. However, the distillery is under construction and does not need an allocation. The proposal at Airth is linked to a larger housing proposal which is not a preferred option.

How does this differ from LDP1?

The preferred option adds further sites to the menu of opportunities for tourism development in the area.

Issue 8: Tourism

Figure 5.6 Tourism Nodes, Themes and Opportunities

Tourism Nodes	Tourism Themes/Networks					Development Opportunities	Related Green Network Opportunities
	Town Centres	Canal Corridor	Central Scotland Green Network	Antonine Wall	Gateway Services		
Falkirk Town Centre	●				●	Grahamston (Site 70) East End (Site 71)	
Bo'ness Town Centre	●					Links Road (Site 198)	(1) John Muir Way
Callendar House/Park			●	●			(1) John Muir Way (25) Callendar Park and Wood (26) Antonine Wall Trail
Helix/Falkirk Gateway		●	●		●	Falkirk Gateway (Site 80) Falkirk Stadium (Site 81)	(6) Helix (21) Falkirk Canal Corridor
Falkirk Wheel/Portdownie		●	●	●	●	Portdownie (Site 68) Rosebank (Site 84) Wester Carmuir's P&R (Site 197) Falkirk Wheel (Site 204)	(21) Falkirk Canal Corridor
Gilston/Whitecross		●	●		●	Gilston (Site 95) Whitecross (Site 76) A801 Union Canal (Site 203)	
Kinneil			●	●		Kinneil Walled Garden (Site 196)	(9) Kinneil Estate
Muiravonside		●	●				(19) Muiravonside