

use and management of the remainder of the estate and the foundations of an agreement in principle between the Council and the FVHB on responsibility and funding for such management, as highlighted in the document.

The document also states that:

'The agricultural fields- the northern, southern and eastern pastures – forming part of an established agricultural tenancy were potentially envisaged of the overall plan for the estate **but have now passed out of the residual estate into private ownership.**'

The statement suggests that the board are unable to formalise anything over such areas, due to the landownership. The document, under point 6.7 envisages a long term development scenario that would require the purchase of the southern and eastern agricultural pastures in order to return them into the estate. If this was done, the board has aspirations of making provision for both active and informal recreational uses associated with a large urban park. It states: 'This development would include grass sports pitches, changing and parking facilities, play facilities for a variety of age groups including an adventure play facility.'

Whilst this is no longer possible, it does acknowledge that this area of the estate was planned for some form of development in future. Given the extent of the applicant's landholding (blue line application site boundary), land to the west of the application site will remain undeveloped in order to maintain the strategic green network/ Open Space Strategy as referenced at the PDH.

Crossing point – a pedestrian crossing facility will be provided on Stirling Road.

Larbert railway station car park capacity – the site is relatively close to Larbert station (approximately 1,100m) which is within ten minutes walk for the average person.

#### Section 75

It is our understanding from consultation responses received to date, that developer contributions are expected for the following, and we agree in principle to signing an agreement under section 75 to secure them;

- Education
- Transport and Roads
- Affordable Housing

#### Conclusions

We note the policy based consultation response referred to above, in which the Council conclude that - It would therefore be difficult to argue that Stirling Road is a sustainable greenfield site, given that the settlement strategy for Larbert and Stenhousemuir, and the significant heritage, landscape and infrastructure impacts and discussed above.

We note comments that the proposal is contrary to the development plan, as the site is not allocated in the adopted LDP for residential development, nor is it identified in the Main Issues Report for LDP2 as a site or area for further residential growth. It should therefore be refused unless material considerations exist which indicate otherwise.

However, as you also note, the Council does not have a five-year supply of effective housing-land. SPP is a significant material consideration, and its approach to housing land supply, development plan policies for the supply of housing land, and its approach to decision making where plans are silent or out of date, lend significant support to the proposal.

It is our submission that this development is of a modest and appropriate scale, with many sustainable credentials, that will have limited impacts on the local environment and can be accommodated within existing infrastructure (subject to stated and agreed improvements and developer contributions).

The material considerations are of sufficient weight to set-aside the development plan in this case, and there are no adverse impacts which significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal when assessed against wider policies and their intent.

We trust this is of assistance, and look forward to working towards a positive recommendation for the application.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be a stylized 'C' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

for **Gladman Scotland**  
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Encl. OPEN LVA comments

Falkirk Council Response Ref	OPEN comments
P3 para 1 Settlement Strategy	<p>It is noted the strategy is 'not to promote any further largescale growth in Larbert and Stenhousemuir'. In comparison to both the largescale sites H36 and H37, the 'infill' site H75 and 'enabling' site H39 the site at Stirling Road should not be considered large scale development.</p> <p>The site is comparable in size to site H39. Site H39 (the stables) is measured as 3.3ha to provide 58 units in the LDP. The northern part of the Stirling Road site by comparison is 4.40ha with 3.00ha identified for development or around 60units.</p> <p>Further comparison of allocated sites could be provided if required.</p>
P3 para 5 Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) Areas not assessed	<p>As described in section 2.1 of the LVA, the landscape and visual assessment is based on the indicative development framework as described and illustrated in the Design Statement.</p> <p>To clarify - the red line area to the south is proposed to contain the SUDS for the proposed development and has been assessed in the LVA. Potential landscape and visual effects as a result of the SUDS were considered and effects were identified in several sections of the LVA including for Landscape Elements – Grassland and Viewpoints 5 and 6. The LVA concludes that the SUDS would be visible in views to the south from Quintinshill Drive (viewpoint 5) but would not form a noticeable addition to the panoramic views to the south, would be barely discernible in views from viewpoint 6 and that only a small part of the southern compartment of grassland would be disturbed by the creation of the SUDS.</p> <p>The area outlined in yellow on Fig 06 of the LVA 'illustrative Plan' is not part of this application (Adopted LDP allocated housing site, ref. H75 Pretoria Road, Larbert) and has therefore not been assessed in the LVA.</p>
	<p>NOTE – Fig 06 is different than the illustrative plan finally included in the submitted DS (SUDS appear in a slightly different location). This is an error with the document links rather than the LVA assessment itself.</p>
Landscape Officer Comments on LVA P4 para 4 a) <i>'The two open fields to the east of the loch which extend to what is now Stirling Road are clearly a component of the designed landscape and an important part of one of the intended 'key' principle open views from the house and its surrounds. This is evident from the</i>	<p>The connecting view between Larbert House and Stirling Road across the two fields to the east is recognised in the LVA baseline, however, it is also recognised that this view is now partly restricted by mature trees that intervene reducing the occurrence of these views. The mature trees within the designed landscape limit the views to such an extent that during spring and summer months Stirling Road and the site area are barely visible from Larbert House and immediately surrounding area. Viewpoint 3 near Larbert House has been positioned to represent 'worst case' visibility from close to</p>

<p><i>orientation of the house, the circular woodland planted areas on field boundaries and the woodland belt alongside Stirling Road (all as shown on the historic maps), plus the presence of the 'ha-ha' which still remains between the two fields ('Ha-ha' = a ditch with a gradual slope on one side and a vertical stone wall on the other which acts as a barrier to grazing animals without the need for a fence to interrupt views, and this was designed historically to be an invisible livestock barrier in the principle views from a country house set within a designed landscape). This principle view from Larbert House and its surrounds (in addition to the view to the church) was intended to be eastwards across the loch to the open grazing meadow / parkland and then across the 'ha-ha' and tree groups to the next meadow / parkland area, and onto and beyond the original boundary shelterbelt planting alongside Stirling Road (the latter forming a distant screen and possibly delineating the boundary). Although the woodland planting alongside the route of the Stirling Road has been lost and partially replaced by housing, this view is still evident on site and is illustrated in the appraisal by viewpoint 3 (from near Larbert House) and by viewpoint 4 (from the path nearer the loch).'</i></p>	<p>Larbert House and other nearby locations would have less or no visibility of the proposed development.</p> <p>P19 of the CFC Heritage Appraisal concludes the following in relation to the setting of Larbert House and in particular the part of the estate in which the residential part of the proposed development would be located.</p> <p><i>'It is on lower lying poor-quality ground for which there has been an effort historically, to conceal through the siting of wooded copses along the line of drainage ditches and the filtering of views from the house. The part of the estate on which the residential development site is located does not appear to have been a designed feature of the landscape. The proposed development area has been located here, on the least sensitive part of the historic estate to mitigate the impact of development on the historic landscape.</i></p> <p><i>The current design layout for the proposed development will not directly affect or remove any surviving historic landscape features of the estate associated with Larbert House. The parkland setting to the south and east of the loch and the created layering of the landscape will be retained. The ditches, woodland, parkland and copses surrounding the development site will not be altered. The low-scale, density and block layout of the new housing development have been designed to respect the layering and filtering of views across to this low-lying land and responds to the parkland setting.'</i></p> <p>The landscape officer accepts that designed landscapes change over time in later comments on the proposal. Whilst it is recognised that views were perhaps more open in nature when the designed landscape originated it should also be recognised that the landscape has been changed over time and now includes further trees and tree groups within the landscape structure that intervene in potential views towards the proposed development.</p>
<p>P4 para 5 b) <i>The approaches and driveways and views from them are also important originally designed features of any designed landscape and these should also be considered (viewpoint 5 show views across the original parkland from the approximate location of the southern driveway).</i></p>	<p>'Driveways' are part of the second SG09 consideration which focusses on the protection of designed landscape features. Table 2 within section 7.3 considers the effect on these remnant features to be negligible.</p> <p>Visual effects from the southern driveway are considered in the LVA at viewpoint 5, which considers the effect to be minor concluding –<i>'The proposed development would not substantially alter the character of views from this location and the openness of the view to the south would be unaffected. The mitigation embedded in the development framework and site selection has sought to minimise the amount of view affected from Larbert</i></p>

	<p><i>House and surrounding path network by retaining the trees and tree groups around the site and locating the proposed development in the compartment of parkland landscape that lies closest to the existing settlement edge. This embedded mitigation is clearly apparent from this viewpoint limiting the amount of proposed development visible through the parkland landscape which would only be visible for a short duration to varying degree along a particular section of this road.'</i></p>
<p>Landscape Officer Comments on proposal P4 para 6</p>	<p>The heightened value of Larbert House designed landscape is recognised in the sensitivity appraisal of section 7.3 which recognises the local value of the Non-Inventory Designed Landscape identified in LDP SG09.</p> <p>Whilst the designed landscape is accessible to local residents through its network of connecting paths, access to the parkland landscape is not in itself permitted beyond these paths (including the site area).</p> <p>Whilst it is agreed that views to countryside to the south and south west have been retained it is not agreed that views to the east have similarly been retained. Whilst there are opportunities for views through larger gaps between parkland trees and small woodlands to the east, views cannot be described as retained as they are restricted even in winter months when they are heavily filtered by trees that intervene.</p>
<p>Landscape Officer Comments on proposal (continued) P5 para 1</p> <p><i>'It is accepted that designed landscapes change over time due to encroachment of development, tree / woodland growth partially blocking some views and that redesign occurs. However, in this instance, I would advise that the main views from Larbert House (as the central feature of the designed landscape) and its immediate surrounds and approaches should be maintained and protected in accordance with the original design. Although views of existing housing development alongside Stirling Road, as seen from around Larbert House and the south driveway are already present, the new proposal would result in:</i></p>	<p>The location, building scale, density and block layout of the proposed development have been designed to compliment and respect the remnant designed landscape features and remaining key views.</p> <p>As such, there would be minimal disruption to key features within the designed landscape and the effects on its setting would be relatively contained.</p> <p>It is considered that the main views from Larbert House are focussed south east towards Larbert not north east towards Stirling Road. The CFC Heritage Appraisal supports this view adding the following assessment - <i>'The part of the Estate which the residential development site is located does not appear to have been a designed feature of the landscape.'</i></p>
<p><i>a) Closer views of new development, (located within the designed landscape) as seen from the vicinity of Larbert House, the southern driveway, and the area around the loch.</i></p>	<p>It is agreed that the proposed development would result in residential development closer in views (where visible) from the designed landscape than in current views. The proposed development would however appear at the edges of the designed landscape and visibility through the parkland trees</p>

	and tree groups would be far less noticeable in spring and summer when trees are in leaf.
b) <i>Further loss of the open rural character of the land to the east of the loch as a designed feature, and to which certain views within the designed landscape were designed to be focussed towards.'</i>	<p>As described above, the CFC Heritage Appraisal has concluded differently regarding of the land to the east (in particular where the site is located) in relation to its importance as a designed feature. Stating that - <i>'It is on lower lying poor-quality ground for which there has been an effort historically, to conceal through the siting of wooded copses along the line of drainage ditches and the filtering of views from the house. The part of the Estate which the residential development site is located does not appear to have been a designed feature of the landscape.'</i></p> <p>In relation to landscape character effects within the Non-inventory designed landscape, Table 2 of section 7.3 of the LVA concludes the following – <i>'Characteristics of the designed landscape within the wider areas of designed landscape parkland would be less affected due to the degree of separation provided by parkland trees. It is considered therefore that the characterising influence of the proposed development would be relatively contained within the context of the setting of the designed landscape as a whole.'</i></p>
<p>Conclusion P5 para 5 <i>'It would therefore be difficult to argue that Stirling Road is a sustainable greenfield site, given the settlement strategy for Larbert and Stenhousemuir, and the significant heritage, landscape and infrastructure impacts and discussed above.'</i></p>	<p>In the screening opinion for this development (21/07/16) Falkirk Council determined that it did not consider there would be any significant environmental effects as a result of the proposal and therefore no requirement for a formal EIA. This was discussed with the Landscape Officer in a subsequent telephone conversation and the non-EIA LVA approach later agreed by email.</p> <p>The use of the term 'significant' is not appropriate in this instance as it is agreed that an EIA and therefore assessment of significance following EIA regulations is not warranted for this development.</p>