

RSNH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PROGRESS

The RSNH Development Framework was approved by the Council in 2004 in response to the site being selected as the location for the new Forth Valley Hospital. It sought not only to provide guidance for the new hospital, but also to outline requirements for the future use, management and maintenance of the wider estate including safeguarding and promoting new uses for the Category B listed Larbert House, stables and walled garden. The wider estate provides a major opportunity to formalise and improve public access and manage the woodland, parkland and loch habitats for biodiversity, landscape benefit and public amenity.

The hospital was granted detailed planning permission in March 2007 and construction is progressing well. The hospital will open in three phases. Phase 1 (Falkirk Services) is scheduled for completion in May 2010, Phase 2 (Mental Health) is scheduled for August 2010, and the hospital will be fully open on completion of Phase 3 in April 2011. The footprint of the hospital is more extensive than anticipated and encompasses some of the land previously allocated for ancillary business development. However in overall terms, the design, orientation and landscape fit of the hospital has followed the design principles set out in the framework.

The framework requires the preparation of a master plan and management framework for the wider estate, and there have been regular meetings to progress this. Options for the future of this historic landscape will therefore concentrate on the western woodland, the core park and around Larbert House and the loch to the east. More extensive and formalised public access is envisaged.

The restoration of Larbert House, the stables and walled garden with two small areas of enabling development is also a requirement of the framework. The Larbert House fire at the end of 2006 raised issues over the viability of its restoration, however an independent review has concluded that the house should be restored because of its rarity value in the district and its excellent site. A residential use is the most likely option.



DEVELOPMENT PLAN REGISTER		
STRUCTURE PLAN		
Plan	Approved	Contact
Falkirk Council Structure Plan	June 2002	Colin Hemfrey
First Alteration	January 2007	
LOCAL PLANS		
Plan	Approved	Contact
Falkirk Council	Finalised Draft April 2007	Alistair Shaw
Bo'ness	October 1995	Alistair Shaw
Bonnybridge and Banknock	March 1982	Danny Thallon
1st Alteration	January 1994	
Denny and District	June 1996	Colin Hemfrey
Falkirk	June 2000	Alistair Shaw
1st Alteration	August 2002	
Grangemouth	February 1985	Catherine Devlin
1st Alteration	October 1987	
2nd Alteration	February 1990	
Larbert and Stenhousemuir	August 1998	Louise Blance
1st Alteration	March 2004	
Polmont and District	December 2001	Alexandra Lewis
Rural	November 1994	Joyce Hartley (South) Colin Hemfrey (North)

CONTACT NUMBERS

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2008 HOUSING LAND AUDIT COMPLETE



The recently approved Housing Land Audit (HLA) sets out the housing land supply in the Falkirk Council area (sites of 4 or more units) each year with a base date of 30th June 2007 for the 2007/08 HLA. The HLA is available at www.falkirk.gov.uk

Information on completed houses and new construction is taken from the quarterly Building Standard returns. In addition to this a questionnaire is sent to all developers and landowners. The HLA includes adopted Local Plan sites and sites with planning permission at the base date and indicates the expected phasing of development on each site.

The housing land audit shows that there is sufficient land in the Council area to build some 5746 units of which 3326 are considered to be effective. Effective sites are those that it is considered can be developed within 5 years.

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Development Plan update

Issue 9

Spring 2008



Falkirk Council

Development Services

Abbotsford House

David's Loan

Falkirk FK2 7YZ

COUNCIL RESPONDS TO LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIONS

Falkirk Council has approved responses to the objections which were submitted to the Falkirk Council Local Plan in April to June last year.

Representations to the Local Plan were considered by the Environment & Heritage Committee at a special meeting on the 9th April and the final set of responses was ratified at the full Council meeting on 30th April. The Council also approved the accompanying set of proposed pre-inquiry modifications to the Local Plan.

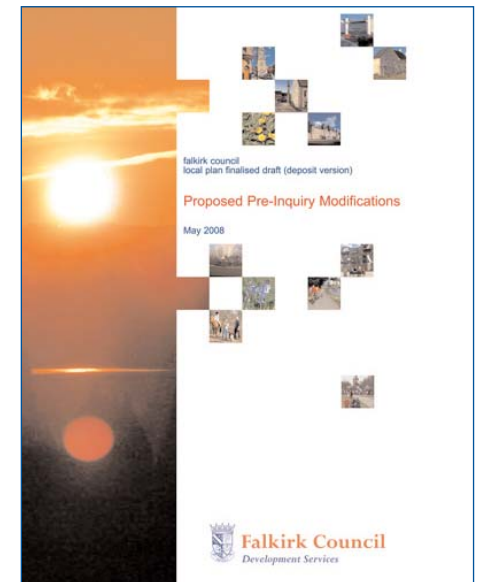
Some 431 respondents submitted a total of 698 separate representations to the Local Plan when it was placed on deposit in April 2007, of which 655 were objections, 24 expressions of support and 19 comments. The total includes 230 standard letters from residents on two local issues - congestion on Glasgow Road, Camelon, and the development of a small area of open space in Airth.

The Council has decided to accept 137 of the objections, with a further 221 partially accepted and 295 not accepted. Two objections are still under consideration. Elected members largely accepted the recommendations of officers, but agreed to depart from those recommendations on a limited number of issues.

The overall effect of the Council's responses and proposed pre-inquiry modifications to the Local Plan is that the area-wide policies remain largely the same, with only minor changes to take on board various representations.

For most parts of the Council area, proposals remain largely unchanged. However, there are some significant changes affecting several communities. The relevant amendments are summarised overleaf.

The next step is that the Council will advertise the proposed pre-inquiry modifications and provide an opportunity for further objections to these changes during a six-week period from 23rd May to 4th July. The Council will also write out to all objectors indicating its response to their representations and asking whether they wish to maintain or withdraw their objections. Objections which are not withdrawn will be considered at the Local Plan Inquiry which is expected to start around the beginning of 2009. Any further objections to the modifications will also be considered at the Local Plan Inquiry.



The modifications have been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment through an Addendum to the Environmental Report. Comments on this are also invited before 4th July 2008.

FALKIRK COUNCIL'S EMERGING LOCAL PLAN KEY MILESTONES

May 2002	Falkirk Council Local Plan commenced
Summer 2002	Local Plan Issues consultation
November 2003	Consultative Draft Local Plan published
March 2005	Finalised Draft Local Plan published
April 2007	Updated Finalised Draft Local Plan placed on deposit for objections
April 2008	Council approval of responses to objections
Jan 2009?	Local Plan Inquiry Commences
2010?	Local Plan adoption

The scope of objections to the Local Plan was very broad. Around one fifth of the representations related to the Local Plan's area-wide policies, with policies dealing with the Green Belt, countryside, developer contributions, affordable housing, waste management, retailing, renewable energy, and major hazards being a particular focus of attention. The remainder were site-specific representations, of which the majority were from landowners or developers seeking additional land to be allocated for housing or economic development purposes. Nearly all settlements have been subject to such objections.

The Council has given careful consideration to all representations. In considering whether to accept objections and modify the Local Plan, the Council has been concerned to ensure conformity with the Structure Plan, and to maintain the integrity of the Local Plan's strategy for each community.

Some of the key modifications to the Local Plan are summarised below:

AREA-WIDE POLICY MODIFICATIONS

- ❖ Local Plan period rolled forward to 2015.
- ❖ Minor changes made to a number of environmental policies to address comments from key agencies.
- ❖ Threshold for neighbourhood stores raised to 500 sqm.
- ❖ New policies on air quality, and gypsy/traveller sites included.
- ❖ Community facilities policy extended to provide criteria for new facilities.
- ❖ Open space policies updated to reflect SPP11 and progress on the Open Space Strategy.



SETTLEMENT-SPECIFIC MODIFICATIONS

Bo'ness

- ❖ No significant changes.

Bonnybridge & Banknock

- ❖ Dennyloanhead long-term housing site extended (H.B&B21) to allow additional access options and brought forward as an immediate housing allocation rather than a long term opportunity.
- ❖ Urban Limit at Milnquarter Farm extended.

Denny

- ❖ The Mydub long-term housing site (H.DEN12) deleted.
- ❖ New housing sites allocated at Duke Street and Nethermains/Castlerankine Road.

Falkirk

- ❖ Food retail development allowed as part of redevelopment of the wider Glasgow Road Industrial Area.

Grangemouth

- ❖ Western Docks changed from mixed use to port - related industrial use (ED.GRA2 & 3).
- ❖ Bo'ness Road closure (TR.GRA2) deleted as an opportunity.

Larbert/Stenhousemuir

- ❖ No significant changes.

Polmont

- ❖ Gilston site (ED.POL1) kept in the Local Plan, but to be subject to a review.

Rural North

- ❖ New housing site allocated immediately to the south of Airth Castle, whilst reducing the capacity of the Castle View site (H.AIR7).
- ❖ New housing site allocated to the west of Letham
- ❖ Housing at South Green Drive, Airth (H.AIR6) deleted and reallocated as open space.

Rural South

- ❖ New housing site allocated on the west side of Slamannan Road, Limerigg.
- ❖ Small new housing site allocated on the south side of Reddingmuirhead Road, Shieldhill.
- ❖ Housing site Church Road 2 (H.CAL4), California deleted.
- ❖ Housing site at Blinkbonnie Terrace South (H.SLA5), Slamannan deleted and site at Southfield Farm, Slamannan (H.SLA7) extended. Objections in relation to Hillend Farm are still under consideration pending negotiations over ecological impacts.
- ❖ Allandale Village Limit extended to include brickworks site.
- ❖ Greenhill Village Limit extended to include industrial yard between railway lines.
- ❖ The Whitecross SIRR boundary amended to reduce the area subject to the masterplan for the new settlement.

All representations, Council responses to representations and the proposed pre-inquiry modifications may be viewed on the Council's website at www.falkirk.gov.uk

The Council's Fifth Annual Development Plan Monitoring Report for 2007 reveals a number of key trends:

- The population of the area continues to grow, although at a slower rate than the previous two years. The most recent estimate of 149,680 for 2006, was 500 over the previous year.
- House building rates remain high, although are lower in 2007 than in the previous two years. There were almost 700 completions between 2006 - 2007.
- Although numbers in employment continue to rise, the long term improving trends in these indicators remains marginally behind the national average.
- The retail sector continues to be strong and Falkirk Town Centre continues to be ranked very highly as Scotland's 10th most popular shopping destination.
- As a national leader in the development of outdoor access networks there are 172 km of maintained access routes of which 7 km of route were upgraded in 2005/6 and a further 11 km upgraded during 2006/7.
- During 2007, a further 60.5 hectares of recreational woodland was planted.
- The Falkirk Wheel, one of Scotland's top visitor destinations attracted over 2 million visitors between 2003 and 2007.

Copies are available on the Falkirk Council website at www.falkirk.gov.uk

NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 2 - UPDATE

The Scottish Government has published a draft National Planning Framework 2 (NPF2). As well as setting out a spatial development strategy for Scotland up to 2030 the draft NPF2 identifies nine infrastructure projects as National Developments, in the fields of transport, energy and the environment. Ministers consider these to be essential elements of the strategy for Scotland's long-term development.



One of these National Developments - the Grangemouth Freight Hub - is of particular significance to Falkirk Council. It's key elements are:

- Expanded freight storage and handling facilities;
- Improved railhead access within the port;
- Electrification of the rail link through Falkirk Grahamston;
- Better connections to the M9 motorway;
- A better link to the M8 and the south via an improved A801;
- Improvements to the local road network, including separation of community and dock traffic;
- Any measures necessary to protect the area from coastal flooding.

The designation of the Grangemouth Freight Hub as a National Development has been the culmination of meetings and a tour organised by the Council for planning and transport officials of the Scottish Government during 2007, which looked particularly at the port and petrochemical plants and transport connections to the M9.

To take forward the development of the Grangemouth Freight Hub the Government will co-ordinate the preparation of an Action Plan, to which Falkirk Council as well as Transport Scotland and Forth Ports will be major contributors.

The Scottish Government recently consulted on the proposed regulations governing the new Development Planning regime. The consultation was part of the ongoing Modernising Planning agenda and follows on from provisions in the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006.

The proposed regulations provide a wholly new basis for development planning in Scotland and introduce Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) and Local Development Plans (LDPs) to replace existing Structure Plans and Local Plans. In the context of Falkirk Council area the provisions of the Act mean that the current two tier arrangement of Structure and Local Plans will be replaced by a **single tier Local Development Plan (LDP)**.

The intention of the Scottish Government is that in future Development Plans will be produced more quickly and regularly to provide a greater degree of certainty for the development industry and communities than the current system provides. A new LDP will be required every 5 years and in general terms the actual material to be included within the new style plan is unlikely to vary greatly from that already included in a Local Plan.

However it is in the detail of the new regulations that the main areas of difference from the current system are to be found. One of the most fundamental changes to the procedures will be the requirement to notify neighbours and occupiers of sites proposed for development by the LDP.

During preparation of LDPs, planning authorities will have to consult with 'key agencies' to ensure that the plan is fully co-ordinated and that infrastructure providers are signed up to the delivery of proposals in the plan. The key agencies will include such bodies as SNH, SEPA and Scottish Water as well as government departments like Transport Scotland. Crucially, key agencies, for their part, are obliged by the Act to co-operate at this stage of plan preparation.

The **5 year turnaround timetable** could well be challenging to achieve. Four stages of an LDP are likely to be required - Main Issues Report, Proposed Plan, Modified Plan, Adopted Plan. Moreover, there are a number of additional documents to be prepared, such as the Development Plan Scheme, Participation Statement and Action Programme which will have statutory status. They will require to be submitted to Ministers for approval, as will various versions of the plan proper. It would appear that the new system, with its new checks and balances introduced into the preparation stages, will have as much potential for delay as the current system.

The government is now considering its response to the views expressed by bodies such as Falkirk Council during the consultation period and it is anticipated currently that the new system of Development Plans will come into force in January 2009.