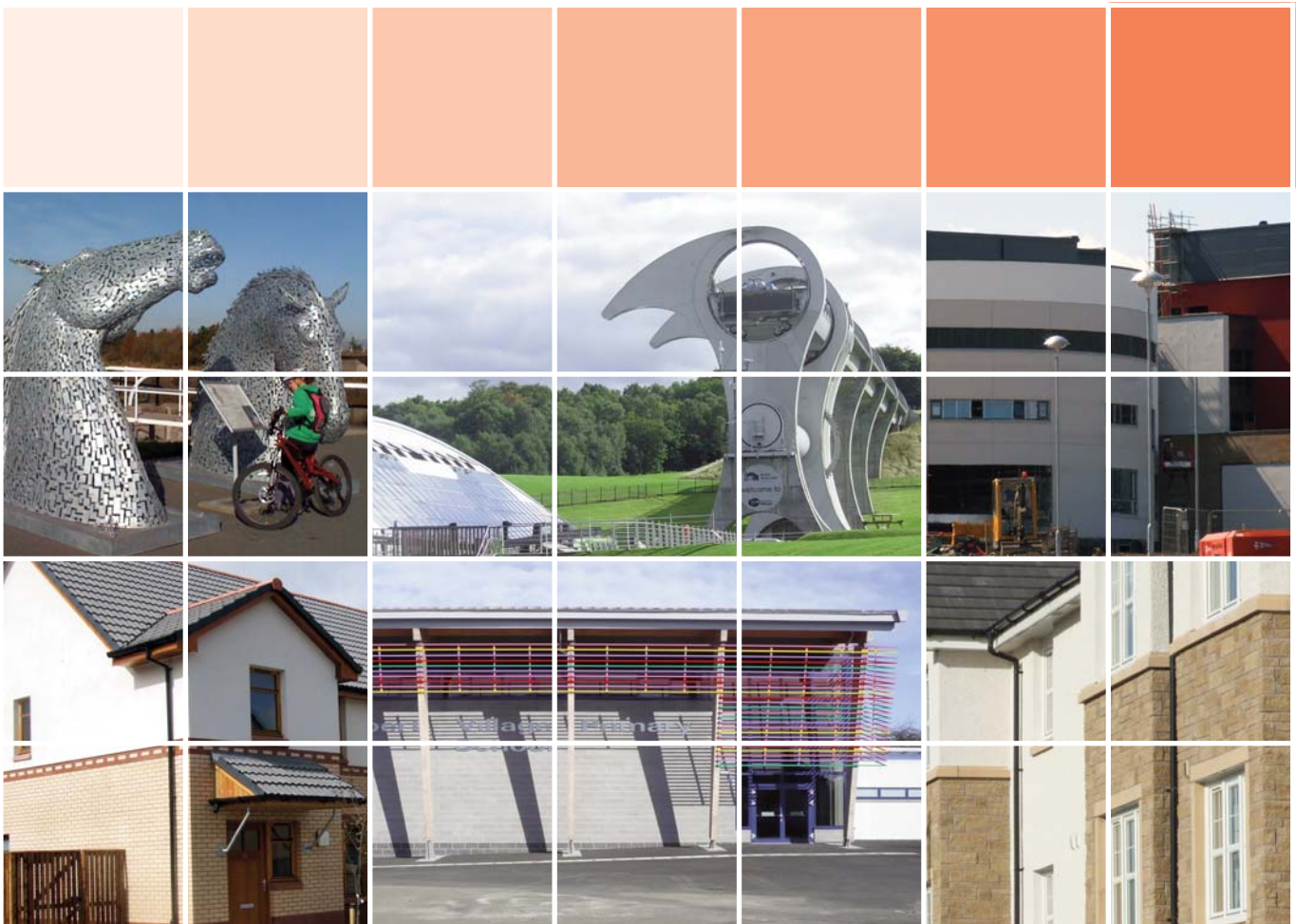


Falkirk
Local Development Plan Scheme

May 2010



Falkirk Council



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is a development plan?

Development plans are prepared by local authorities to guide the use and development of land within their areas. They contain policies and proposals which indicate where development should, and should not take place, and which provide guidance on topics such as housing, business and industry, shopping, transport and infrastructure, recreation and community facilities and built and natural heritage

Development plans highlight areas which should be protected from development, such as countryside, green belt, and nature conservation sites, and opportunities for the enhancement of the environment. They set out standards which new development should meet in terms of quality, design and how the development should contribute to social and physical infrastructure. Development plans are seen as a key mechanism for promoting sustainable development.

Development plans are statutory documents. The requirement to produce them, their broad content, and the process to be followed in preparing them are set out in legislation. They are particularly important because they are the main consideration in determining planning applications. The planning system is intended to be 'plan-led', with decisions on planning applications made in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

1.2 A new development planning system

The Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 is being implemented in stages to bring in a new planning system in Scotland, with new arrangements for the preparation of development plans.

Previously, there was a two tier system of development plan:

- structure plans, which were broad strategic plans with a longer timescale, generally covering larger areas; and
- local plans, which contained detailed site-specific policies and proposals within the general framework provided by the structure plan.

All areas had a structure plan and a local plan

Under the new system, there will also be two new types of plan:

- strategic development plans; and
- local development plans

However, only the city regions of Scotland will have a two tier system with both types of plans. Elsewhere, there will only be local development plans.

Falkirk Council will be preparing a single local development plan which will replace the current framework of structure and local plans. This should help to simplify development planning in the area.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.3 What is a development plan scheme?

As part of the new development planning system, local authorities are required to prepare a development plan scheme. This must set out the authority's programme for preparing and reviewing development plans, including when it will publish each stage of the plan. It must also explain how the authority will go about consulting people and agencies during the preparation of the plan, including when, how and with whom it will consult at each key stage (the participation statement). Development plan schemes will be updated each year.

Falkirk Council's first development plan scheme was published in May 2009. This revised version updates the first scheme, and:

- explains the current development plan framework covering the area;
- confirms the intention to prepare a single local development plan once the current Falkirk Council Local Plan is adopted;
- explains what the new local development plan will comprise;
- highlights the key stages in preparing the new local development plan;
- details the work involved in preparing the new local development plan, and the likely content;
- sets out an updated timetable for each key stage of preparing the local development plan; and
- explains how the Council will involve people and agencies at each stage of preparing the local development plan (participation statement).

The development plan scheme will be subject to further annual updates as the local development plan process goes on.

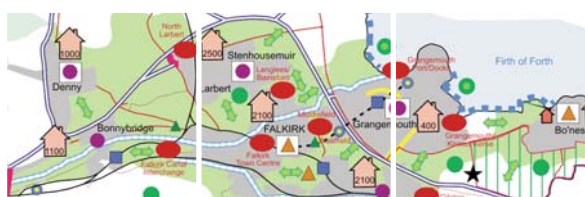


2. EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN THE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA

2.1 Falkirk Council Structure Plan

The Falkirk Council Structure Plan was approved by Scottish Ministers in January 2007. It is based on a strategy of 'sustainable growth in all our communities', and sets out a vision of how the area will develop in broad terms until 2020. It

- highlights the overall scale of population and housing growth expected in the area between 2001 and 2020, and how such housing growth will be distributed between the different settlements
- identifies four special initiatives for residential led regeneration (SIRRs)
- identifies nine strategic development opportunities for major economic development;
- sets out a network of protected areas, including a system of green belts separating the main settlements;
- sets out the hierarchy of shopping centres in the Council area which will be promoted and protected;
- highlights the priorities for environmental enhancement in the area;
- sets out broad areas where developers will be expected to contribute to physical and social infrastructure.



2.2 Local Plans

Historically, in the Falkirk Council area, there has been a local plan for each of the main settlements, a further Local Plan covering all of the rural area, and a special local plan for the Forth & Clyde Canal.

Local Plan	Adoption Date
Bo'ness Local Plan	1995
Bonnybridge & Banknock Local Plan	1982, alteration 1995
Denny & District Local Plan	1996
Falkirk Local Plan	2000
Grangemouth Local Plan	1985
Larbert & Stenhousemuir Local Plan	1998, alteration 2004
Polmont & District	2001
Rural	1994
Forth and Clyde Canal	1996

In 2002, the Council decided to commence preparation of a single local plan covering the whole of the Council area, which would replace the suite of nine local plans listed above. The Falkirk Council Local Plan is at an advanced stage. A public local inquiry into objections to the plan has been held and the plan is expected to be adopted in 2010.

2. EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN THE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA

2.3 Supplementary Guidance

In addition to the structure and local plans, the Council has produced a range of supplementary planning guidance which provides more detailed guidance on certain topics or sites. These are listed below.

Design

Housing Extensions & Alterations

Housing Layout & Design

Design Statements

Shopfronts

Sustainable Design & Construction (Draft)

Natural/Built Heritage

You and Your Trees

Trees and Development

Biodiversity & Development

Transport/Infrastructure

Waste & Development

Flooding & Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

Developer Contributions

Education & New Housing Development

Affordable Housing

Site-Specific Guidance

Rosebank Distillery Planning Brief

Bellsdyke Planning Brief

Overton Farm Development Brief

Former RSNH Site,

Larbert Development Framework

Community Schools and Associated Residential Development Sites Planning Brief

Carrongrove Mill Planning Brief

Banknock & Haggs SIRR Development Framework

Supplementary guidance has been given enhanced status within the new development planning system. The Council has an ongoing programme for the production of such guidance, which will continue to be rolled out in the years to come.

2.4 Monitoring

The Council produces an annual Development Plan Monitoring Report which assesses progress on the implementation of both the Falkirk Council Structure Plan and the Falkirk Council Local Plan against a range of indicators contained within these documents.

Future versions of this document will provide the basis for the monitoring statement which is required to be published alongside the mains issues report as part of the preparation of the local development plan.



3. THE NEW LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP)

3.1 Timescales

As indicated earlier in section 1, the new Local Development Plan (LDP) will replace the existing Structure Plan and Local Plans which cover Falkirk Council area and will bring the whole development plan into one document.

The new LDP will have a lifespan of 10 years for its policies and land use allocations and in its broad strategy it will look ahead up to 20 years from its adoption date. With an anticipated adoption date of 2014, this first new LDP will thus encompass the period up to 2034. However, while looking ahead up to 20 years the Plan will be replaced every 5 years in a rolling programme.

3.2 Content

It is the government's intention that development plans should be succinct documents which set out a long term vision for the development of the area and concentrate on key policies and proposals. The new LDP will be developed through a number of stages (see section 4 below) and is likely to have the following key versions:

Proposed Plan

Modified Plan

Adopted Plan

The principal contents of the LDP will be:

- The Vision Statement, which will spell out how the Council wishes to see the Falkirk Council area developed and what it will look like in 20 years time, and;
- The Spatial Strategy, which will articulate the settlement strategy for Falkirk and set out a detailed statement of policies and development proposals which will aim to achieve the vision.

Other key components of the LDP will be a Proposals Map, and a Schedule of Land owned by the planning authority which would be affected by proposals or policies.

Around the Plan itself a number of other supporting documents will be prepared at various stages in the plan preparation process. These include the:

- Development Plan Scheme
- Participation Statement
- Main Issues Report
- Monitoring Statement
- Environment Report
- Supplementary Guidance
- Action Programme

How all these documents fit into the various stages of preparing the LDP is explained below.



3. THE NEW LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP)

3.3 Preparing the LDP

Preparing the new LDP will involve working through a succession of main stages:

Stage 1 **Pre-Main Issues Report**

This is the current stage in the preparation process. Prior to publication of the Main Issues Report, the Council is required to engage with certain key agencies, Scottish Ministers and adjoining planning authorities. Key agencies will include Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Water, SEPA, SNH, SEStran and NHS Forth Valley. The Council will seek views on the issues to be addressed in the LDP, and also invite expressions of interest in developing sites from developers and landowners.

Information also has to be gathered to provide the evidence base for the LDP as follows:

- The Council has already completed a Household Survey, an Open Space Audit and Strategy, and a Retail Floorspace Survey.
- Work has commenced on the Housing Need and Demand Assessment, which will provide the basis for deciding how much land will be required for new housing in the future.
- A Monitoring Statement will be prepared which is intended to look at changes in the area since the last development plan i.e. the Falkirk Council Structure Plan and Falkirk Council Local Plan. As part of this, a review of all policies in the Falkirk Council Local Plan will be undertaken to see assess their continuing relevance and robustness.
- A Scoping Report as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process, which will outline the scope of the SEA.
- Technical reports will also be compiled on Community Growth Options, Retailing and Town Centres, Economy and Employment Land, Green Belt and the Green Network.

3. THE NEW LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP)

Stage 2

Main Issues Report (MIR)

The Main Issues Report will

- include general proposals for development and where they should go
- have alternative proposals
- explain differences in strategy from the previous development plan
- be informed by advice of key agencies and others.

The role of the Main Issues Report in identifying alternatives is the trigger for Strategic Environmental Assessment to start, and a draft Environmental Report will be published alongside. This process involves assessing the potential impacts on the environment of the future development strategy and policy changes and will carry on throughout the various stages of the LDP.

Alongside the Main Issues Report the Monitoring Statement and other Technical Reports will be published,

The Main Issues Report will provide the focus for the main period of public engagement in the LDP, and the Council intends to employ a range of participatory approaches to involve people and organisations (see section 5 below for more detail). The purpose of consultation is to allow the Council to resolve alternative development approaches and clarify policies prior to the preparation of the LDP proper. Organisations such as Scottish Water, SEPA, SNH, SEStran and NHS Forth Valley, designated as 'key agencies', have a duty placed on them to engage with this process and their input will be crucial in determining which of the alternative development proposals are deliverable.

Stage 3

Proposed Plan

The Proposed Plan will be informed by a review of the representations made at the Main Issues Report stage. At this stage the Council will have firmed up its views on where development proposals will go and which policies will be contained in the plan.

As the government's intention is that LDPs should be succinct documents the Council will consider at this stage which areas of planning policy advice could be more appropriately conveyed by way of Supplementary Guidance rather than directly within the plan. Supplementary Guidance will be clearly linked to policy within the plan itself or cover topics identified specifically for treatment under Supplementary Guidance. As indicated in section 2, the Council has already published Supplementary Guidance under the auspices of the current Falkirk Council Local Plan. The Proposed Plan will indicate what further policy areas or sites will be addressed through future Supplementary Guidance.

The Proposed Plan will have a main format which contains a Vision Statement and a Spatial Strategy with accompanying maps, schedules and diagrams. A new procedure introduced by the Planning Act at this stage will be for the Council to notify owners and neighbours of land which the plan proposes for development. This notification will be additional to the standard opportunity for developers, the public, environmental agencies and community groups to make representations.

3. THE NEW LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP)

Stage 4

Modifications and Proposed Action Programme

The Council may decide to make amendments to the Proposed Plan to take account of representations received, in which case it will publish Modifications. If these are 'notifiable', i.e. they add, remove or significantly alter any policy or proposal in the plan, they will be advertised for comments in exactly the same way as the original plan.

The Proposed Plan, with Modifications, once agreed, can then be submitted to Scottish Ministers for processing towards examination. The submitted plan will be accompanied by a Proposed Action Programme which will set out how the Council, in partnership with developers and key agencies, proposes to implement the LDP.

Stage 5

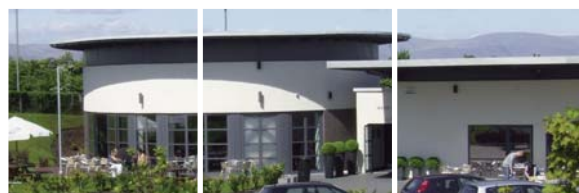
Examination

The Examination is the equivalent process to the current Local Plan Inquiry. The examination process will be held under new inquiry procedures and will rely heavily on written representations and hearings rather than formal cross-examination. The Reporter will decide on which issues need to be clarified through examination and will have the final say on how objections are dealt with. After the Examination the Reporter will prepare an Examination Report for consideration by the Council.

Stage 6

Adoption of LDP

Examination Reports will be largely binding on the Council and any modifications proposed by the Reporter should be incorporated into the plan by the Council unless they are considered to contravene a limited range of issues. The plan as modified will then be advertised and submitted to Scottish Ministers within 3 months of receipt of the Examination Report along with the final Environmental Report. The Council will be able to adopt the Plan 28 days after submission to Scottish Ministers unless otherwise directed.



4. PROGRAMMING TIMETABLE

Date	Plan Stage/Process
	Pre-Main Issues Report
April 2010 to March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consult with key agencies discuss with elected members the development strategy and vision for new plan carry out pre-Main Issues Report consultation, including inviting expressions of interest prepare Monitoring Statement carry out Housing Need and Demand Assessment prepare Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report and Environmental Report prepare Technical Reports prepare and obtain Committee approval for Main Issues Report
	Main Issues Report
April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> publish Main Issues Report for consultation publish Monitoring Statement publish Environmental Report (& Appropriate Assessment, if required)
April - June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consultation on Main Issues Report
July 2011- March 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider Representations to Main Issues Report prepare and obtain Committee approval for proposed Plan amend Environmental Report
	Proposed Plan
April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> publish Proposed Plan publish Proposed Action Programme
April - June 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> objection period for Proposed Plan
March 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> publish any Notifiable Modifications (if necessary)
March - April 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> objection period for Modifications prepare summary of unresolved issues
May 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> submission of Proposed Plan to Scottish Ministers publish revised Environment Report
	Examination
May 2013 - January 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examination of Proposed Plan
	Adoption
May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> submission of Proposed Plan as modified to Scottish Ministers
July 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adoption of Plan

5. GETTING PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

5.1 The need to be inclusive

The success of the local development plan will depend on getting a wide range of stakeholders involved in the process. A wide range of people and organisations have an interest in the future development of the area, and the plan will have an impact on everyone who lives and works here. It is important that they are given the opportunity to provide an input to plan preparation and to express their views on the draft proposals.

In the past, consultation exercises have not always been successful at getting people to participate in plan preparation. People are not sufficiently aware of development plans and their importance, and they may find it difficult to understand the process. Opportunities for involvement may have been too limited, and this may have made it difficult for particular groups to play a part. Sometimes people feel that their views will not be taken into account.

In preparing the local development plan, the Council will endeavour to improve the way people are involved in plan making. In doing so the Council will be guided by the Scottish Government's Standards for Community Engagement and by Planning Advice Note (PAN81) on Community Engagement – Planning for People, which highlights good practice.

5.2 General principles

The overall principles for involving people in the local development plan process are based on the National Standards for Community Engagement, and are as follows:

1. **INVOLVEMENT:** we will identify and involve the people and organisations who have an interest in the local development plan
2. **SUPPORT:** we will identify and overcome any barriers to people getting involved in the local development plan process
3. **PLANNING:** we will gather evidence on what people need to be involved in, and available resources, and use this evidence to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the participation process and the actions to be taken
4. **METHODS:** we will agree and use methods for getting people involved that are fit for purpose
5. **WORKING TOGETHER:** we will agree and use clear procedures that enable the participants to work with one another effectively and efficiently
6. **SHARING INFORMATION:** we will ensure that necessary information is shared between those taking part in the process
7. **WORKING WITH OTHERS:** we will work effectively with others who have an interest in the local development plan process
8. **IMPROVEMENT:** we will develop actively the skills, knowledge and confidence of everyone who wants to be involved in the plan preparation process

5. GETTING PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

9. **FEEDBACK:** we will feed back the results of the participation process to the wider community and agencies affected

10. **MONITORING AND EVALUATION:** we will monitor and evaluate whether the participation process achieves its purposes and meets the national standards for community engagement

5.3 Who we will involve?

The Council has been engaging with various groups of people and agencies in the preparation of development plans for many years, and has built up a list of organisations and individuals who have an interest in the process. We will develop and update this information to provide a comprehensive database of stakeholders as a basis for consultation on the local development plan.

The main groups which we anticipate being involved include:

Public sector

- Scottish Government (including executive agencies of the Government such as Historic Scotland and Transport Scotland)
- Key agencies (bodies specified by Scottish Ministers who have to co-operate with the Council in preparing the development plan, i.e. SNH, SEPA, Scottish Water, Scottish Enterprise, SEStran, NHSFV)
- Neighbouring local authorities (i.e. Clackmannanshire Council, Fife Council, North Lanarkshire Council, Stirling Council, West Lothian Council)
- Other public sector organisations (e.g. British Waterways, Sportscotland, Forestry Commission)



5. GETTING PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Private sector

- Landowners
- Developers and housebuilders
- Key local companies and businesses
- Housing associations
- Transport companies (e.g. Network Rail, First Bus, First Scotrail)
- Telecommunication companies
- Energy and utility companies
- Mineral operators

Other organisations

- Environmental and amenity organisations (e.g. Central Scotland Forest Trust, RSPB, Scottish Wildlife Trust, Civic Trust)
- Transport organisations (e.g. Sustrans)
- Business organisations (e.g. Falkirk Business Forum, FEAT, Chamber of Commerce, Falkirk and District Town Centre Management)

Community Organisations & Representatives

- Community councils
- Area Forums
- Schools and parent councils
- Local councillors
- Local MPs and MSPs
- Residents associations and groups
- Local amenity and interest groups
- Churches and faith groups

5.4 What will we do to get people involved?

There is a wide range of means of getting people involved in the plan making process. These have expanded greatly in recent years through the use of the internet, which offers new opportunities for communication with the wider public. However, there is a limit to the resources which the Council has available. It is important that consultation is targeted appropriately, so that the right people are involved at the right time, and generally that consultation is 'front loaded' at a point when they can influence the outcomes of the plan.

In broad terms, the following steps will be undertaken at each stage of the plan:-



5. GETTING PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Stage	Methods
Pre Main Issues Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise Development Plan Scheme by placing it on-line and in libraries and other deposit locations and distributing copies to all on consultation database • Update and develop stakeholder database • Consult on the scope and issues to be covered in plan • Consult on the scope of Strategic Environmental Assessment • Invite developers and landowners to submit development proposals for consideration • Hold topic focus groups with key stakeholders • Organise training for community councils and others on engagement in Main Issues Report stage • Carry out specific youth engagement exercise • Issue Development Plan Newsletter and review Council web site to update all stakeholders on progress
Main Issues Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advert, press release and letter to all stakeholders • Make documents and response forms available online, in libraries and other deposit locations • Minimum 12 week period for engagement • Hold area-based public workshops and exhibitions across Council area • Hold workshops with area fora, community councils and other community groups where requested • Issue Development Plan Newsletter to provide concise summary of Main Issues Report
Proposed Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advert, press release and letter to all stakeholders, including those who commented on Main Issues Report stage • Make documents and objection forms available online, in libraries and other deposit locations • Publicise summary of all comments on the Main Issues Report • Notify neighbours and owner/occupiers of proposed sites • Formal period of at least six weeks for representations • Issue Development Plan Newsletter to provide concise summary of proposed plan
Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advert, press release and letter to all stakeholders • Make documents and objection forms available online, in libraries and other deposit locations • Notify neighbours and owner/occupiers of proposed sites • Formal period of six weeks for representations • Issue Development Plan Newsletter to provide concise summary of modifications
Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise training for community objectors on participation in examination stage • Advert
Adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advert, press release and letter to all stakeholders including those who participated at Main Issues Report, Proposed Plan and examination stages • Make documents available online, in libraries and other deposit locations

6. LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

The Council would welcome comments on this development plan scheme, to help inform how we go about preparing the local development plan and how we involve people in it.

The contact details for sending comments or finding out more about the local development plan are as follows;

Planning & Environment Unit
Development Services
Falkirk Council
Abbotsford House
Davids Loan
Falkirk Council
FK2 7YZ

Telephone:
01342 504720 (Colin Hemfrey)
01324 504739 (Alistair Shaw)

E-mail: ldp@falkirk.gov.uk





If you would like a copy in community languages, braille, large print or audio tape call Development Services, Falkirk Council on 01324 504715.

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