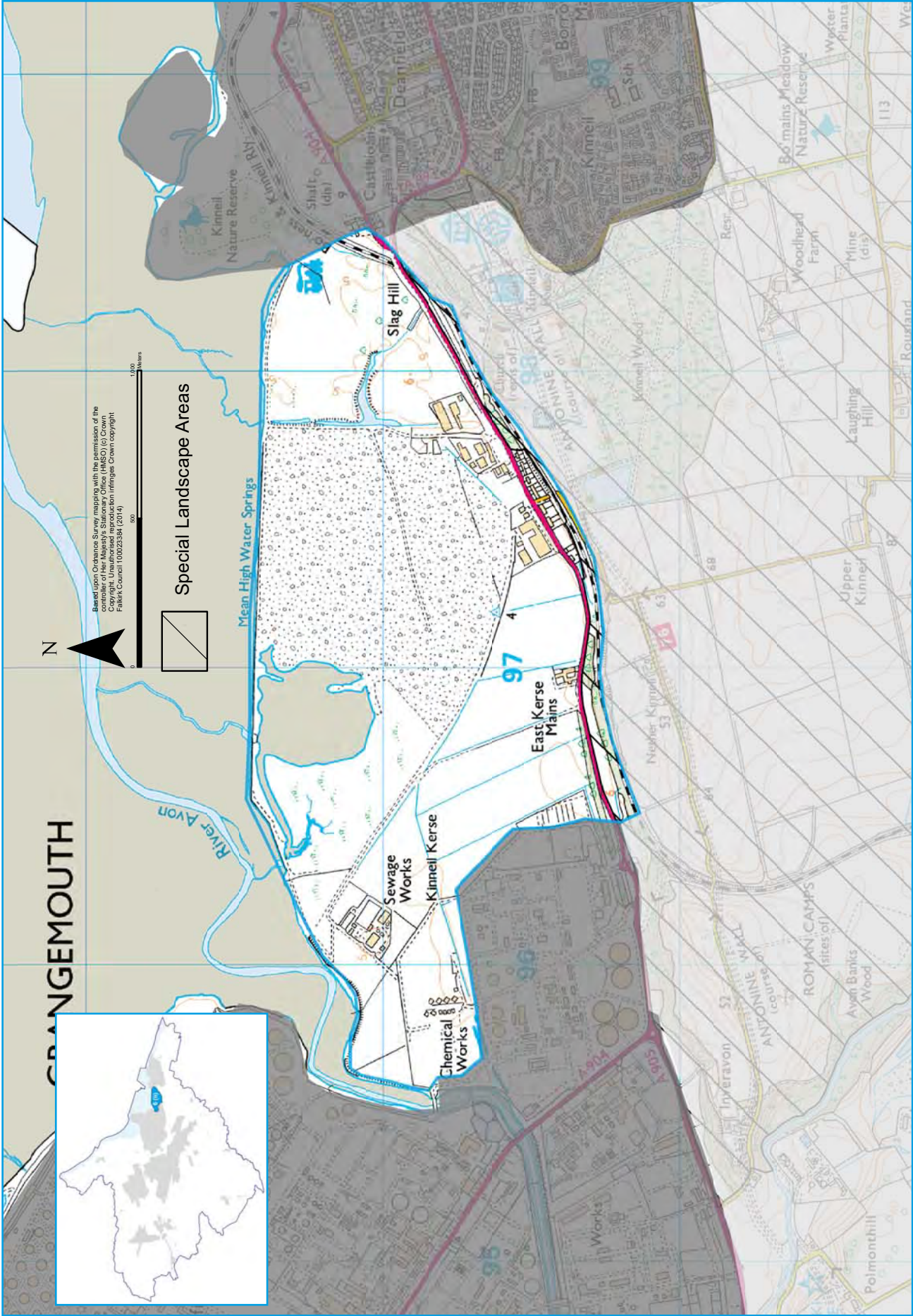


3. Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines

Local Landscape Character Area 6(ii) Grangemouth/Kinneil Flats



3.67

3. Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines

Likely future forces for change

- 3.68** Further expansion of Grangemouth eastwards. Expansion of Bo'ness westwards and building along A904 approach to Bo'ness. Loss of the few remaining tree and hedgerows. Road improvement. Expansion of waste water treatment facilities, recycling facilities and petrochemical plant. Large scale wind energy development and associated infrastructure. Solar energy.

Sensitivities within Local Landscape Character Area

- 3.69** The adjacent Forth Estuary is a designated SPA and SSSI and there is sensitivity to development on nature conservation grounds. There is landscape and visual sensitivity to the loss of the existing coastal native tree and shrub cover in the eastern part of the area, which contributes to providing some structure and screening and contributes to the setting of Bo'ness. The southern boundary (A904/A905) forming the western approach to Bo'ness incorporates residential and small industrial development and would be sensitive to any development that would extend or exaggerate the scale and extent of Bo'ness as a settlement or would lead to a coalescence of Bo'ness and Grangemouth. There is limited landscape sensitivity in the north western part of the area due to the dominating effect of the Grangemouth complex.



3. Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines

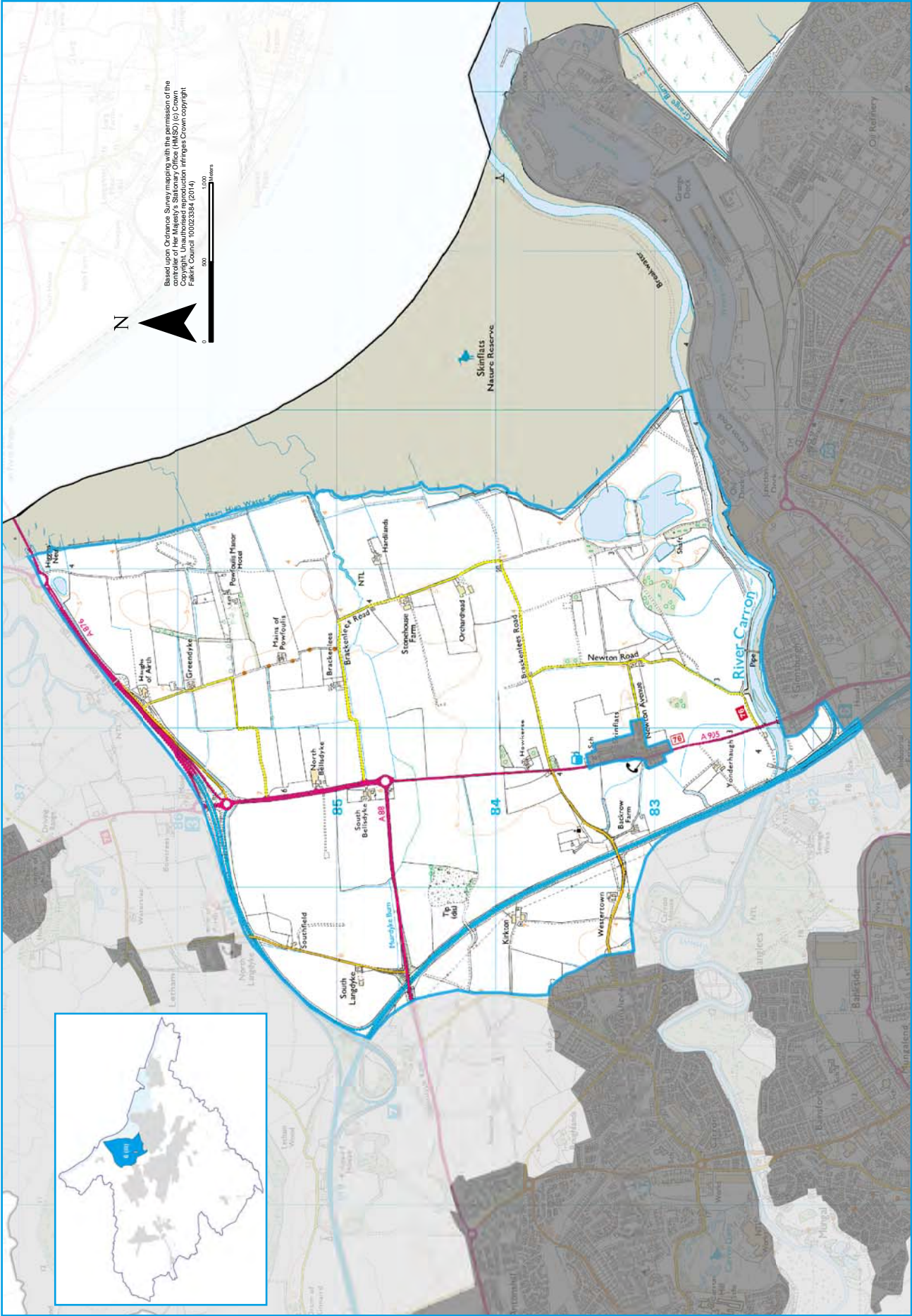
Guidelines 6(ii) Grangemouth/Kinneil Flats

- 3.70** ■ Encourage expansion of native broadleaf trees and woodland planting at Kinneil and new structure planting on western and southern boundary of character area to improve screening of Grangemouth industrial complex and to enable linkages to other woodland areas for improvement of landscape, biodiversity value, and access routes; this will contribute to Falkirk's green network.
- Encourage management of existing woodland; the remaining areas have an identified sensitivity to loss.
 - Ensure any proposals for wind energy development follow the landscape guidance in the Supplementary Guidance 'Spatial Framework and Guidance for Wind Energy Development'.
 - Ensure solar energy developments are sensitively sited and landscape and visual impact assessments support proposals.
 - Encourage new planting around existing industrial buildings where appropriate; this will contribute to mitigating the visual effects of industry.
 - Ensure proposals for all new power lines, pipelines and major industrial development are subject to landscape and visual impact assessment, including investigation of alternative routes or sites and that all developments are well designed and integrated and positively restore the landscape character and features with incorporated mitigating planting.
 - Ensure new development within area and on approaches to Bo'ness are of sympathetic design, scale, siting and materials with mitigating structural landscape treatment; the approaches are identified as being sensitive to development.
 - Ensure new native species structure / screen planting is undertaken in association with any expansion of Bo'ness and Grangemouth and with other new industrial buildings; landscape sensitivity to expansion of settlements is identified.
 - Encourage replacement and management of lost boundary trees, hedgerows and walls along field boundaries and road corridors; these are important landscape elements which are sensitive to loss.
 - Ensure compliance with Green Belt Policy (Policy CG02) of Local Development Plan for parts of character area affected.

3. Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines

Local Landscape Character Area 6(iii) Skinflats

3.71



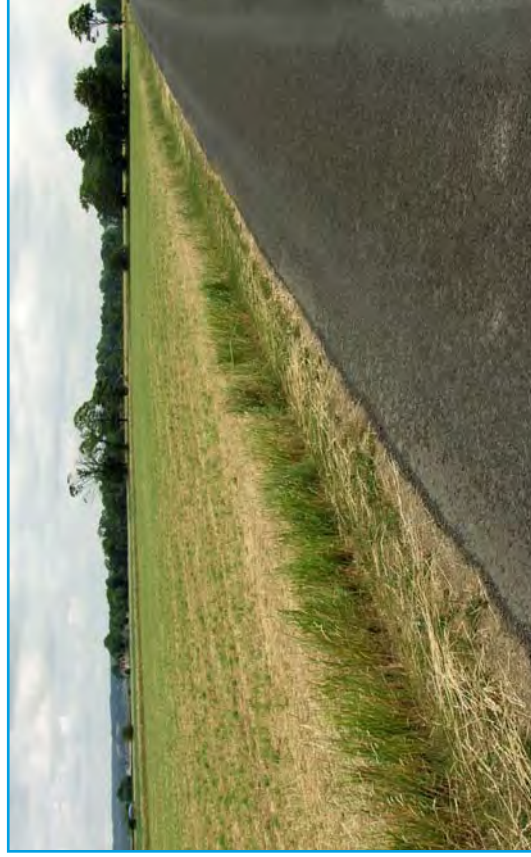
3. Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines

Likely future forces for change

- 3.72** Expansion of Carronshore and Skinflats in long term. Individual rural dwellings. Cumulative effects of householder permitted development. Unauthorised advertising. Land reclaim and coastal realignment/flood projects. Road improvements and associated engineering works and structures with increased signage and lighting creating visual clutter. Pipelines and additional transmission lines. Conversions and additions to steadings. New farm buildings. Coal bed methane extraction and ancillary structures at surface. Loss of trees/tree group cover. New woodland planting. Biomass crops. Loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees to development and road improvements. Loss of policy woodland around Powfoulis area. Wind energy development and associated infrastructure. Solar energy.

Sensitivities within Local Landscape Character Area

- 3.73** The flat, low lying and generally open character of the area along with limited hedgerow cover allows long views within this landscape character area and across it to higher ground to the north east to the Forth Estuary and Ochils and to the south and west. All development will therefore have the potential to be highly visible over a long distance and interrupt views to the higher ground beyond; the area is therefore particularly sensitive to large or vertical structures (such as telecommunication masts, telegraph poles, large road signs, lighting columns, transmission masts, wind turbines, power lines /pylons, large agricultural/equestrian buildings, industrial buildings), particularly where there is a lack of existing tree screening. The policy woodland, avenues and tree groups around Powfoulis, the old plantations near the coastal lagoons, and a small number of field boundary trees and tree groups provide the only internal screening and contribute to restricting views of the Grangemouth industries, Longannet power station, motorways and the glare from night time illumination of Grangemouth; this tree cover is valuable and highly sensitive to removal or a lack of management. However, the open flat character of the area means that a balance must be maintained between open areas and woodland; therefore, extensive woodland expansion could itself be a landscape sensitivity. The route of the National Cycle Route 76 and core paths are also sensitive visual receptors to development due to the generally open and flat character of the area.



3. Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines

Guidelines 6(iii) Skinflats

- 3.74** ■ Encourage native broadleaf trees and woodland planting in strategic locations in southern part of area to improve screening of Grangemouth complex and to enable linkages to other woodland areas and habitats for improvement of landscape, biodiversity value, and for incorporation of access routes; this will contribute to Falkirk's green network. However, retention of the balance between open ground and woodland and avoidance of blocking of key views are also sensitivities.
- Encourage sound management of woodlands and shelterbelts and ensure they create habitat linkages and meet the UK Forestry Standard Guidelines: Forests and Landscape and good biodiversity practice; woodlands are important landscape elements which are identified as being sensitive to loss through poor management.
 - Ensure principles of good landscape design practice are followed for biomass crops.
 - Encourage new tree and hedgerow planting on field boundaries and along watercourses; replant where these are removed in Powfoulis area. These are important landscape elements which are sensitive to loss.
 - Ensure all new road and other infrastructure proposals and improvements incorporate appropriate replacement tree and hedgerow planting where these features are removed; these features are identified as being sensitive to loss.
 - Ensure any proposals for wind energy development follow the landscape guidance in the Supplementary Guidance 'Spatial Framework and Guidance for Wind Energy Development'.
 - Ensure solar energy developments are sensitively sited and landscape and visual impact assessments support proposals.
 - Ensure coal bed methane extraction points and associated works are appropriately sited, utilising existing landscape features and new planting for screening; where landscape features (trees, hedgerows, stone walls) are removed they must be replaced.
 - Ensure all new proposals for high voltage overhead power lines, pipelines, major road improvements, flood prevention projects, major engineering works and all major industrial/commercial developments are subject to LVIA in accordance with good practice guidelines; examine alternative routes/sites and that they maximise opportunities to enhance landscape character.
 - Ensure all new development on edge of Carronshore, Grangemouth and Skinflats and steading conversions are of appropriate scale, design, materials and siting and include appropriate structural landscape treatment; edges of settlements are highlighted as sensitive to development.
 - Ensure all new agricultural buildings, other large new buildings and structures are sympathetically designed for the landscape setting, are associated with existing building clusters and are orientated to minimise visual effects from key viewpoints; mitigating structure/screen planting must be sensitively incorporated where appropriate.
 - New, large buildings or structures in open countryside will not be acceptable; there is a noted high sensitivity to development in open areas and where screen planting itself could also be visually inappropriate.
 - Ensure all new developments retain trees, stone walls, hedges and woodlands and replacement is undertaken where removed, in addition to incorporating appropriate new structure/screen planting; in areas where they exist, these features are sensitive to loss.

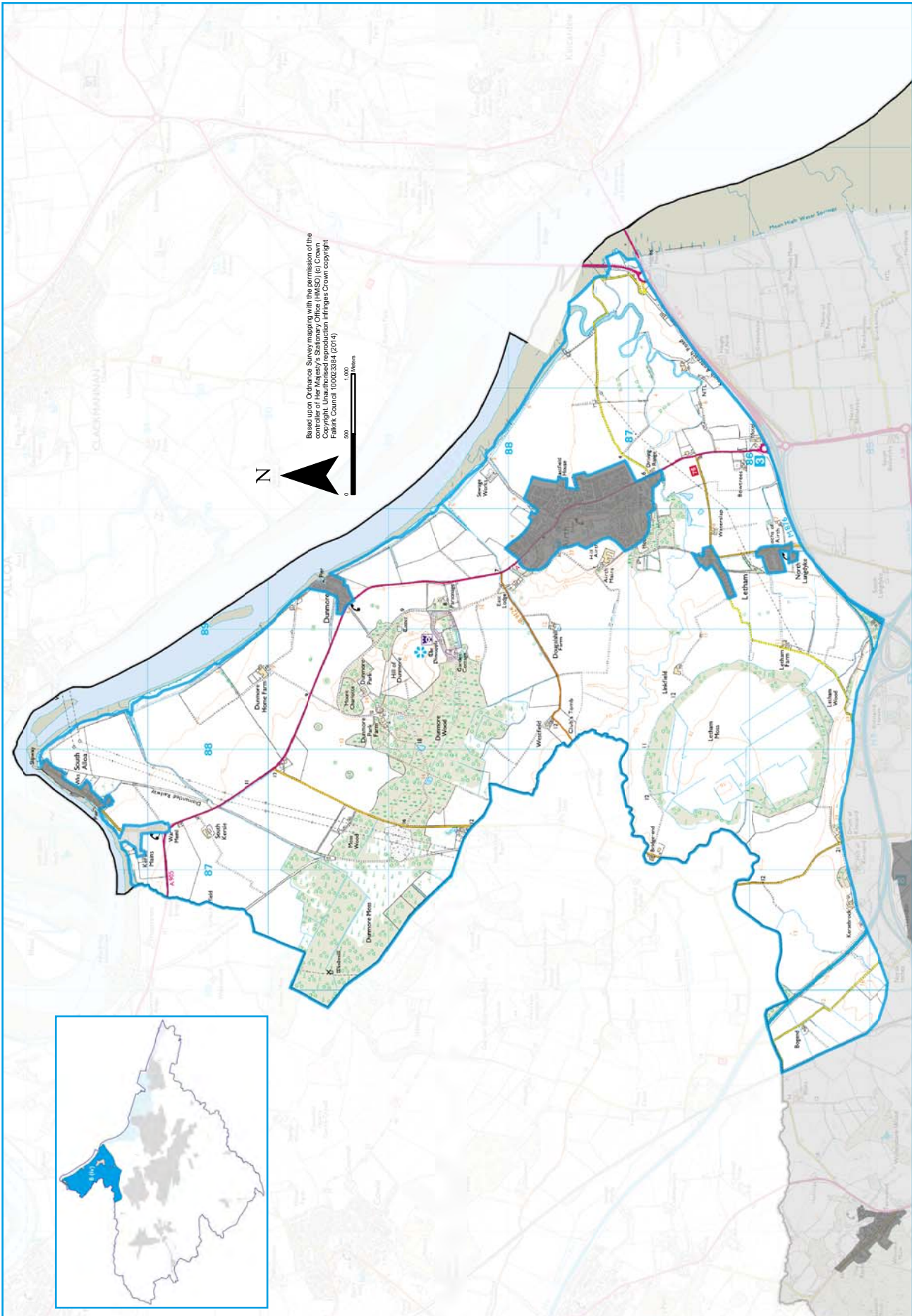
3. Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines

- Signage, vertical structures and advertising on main transport corridors and minor roads must be kept to a minimum; there is high sensitivity to such features.
- Ensure sustainable management of intertidal mudflats for landscape and biodiversity value and avoid further land claim from the Firth of Forth; these are recognised as an important element of the landscape and are sensitive to loss/change.
- Ensure retention of open agricultural character and views across farmland; this LLCA is sensitive to change from inappropriate development or inappropriate locating of woodland planting.
- Ensure compliance with Green Belt Policy (Policy CG02) of Local Development Plan.

3. Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines

Local Landscape Character Area 6(iv) Carse of Forth

3.75



Finalised SG09 Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations

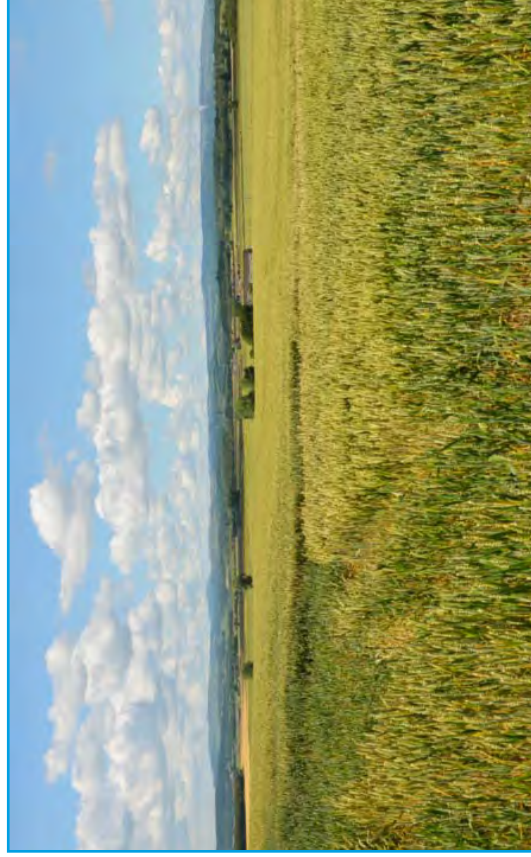
3. Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines

Likely future forces for change

- 3.76** Long term expansion of Airth and Letham. New roads/road improvements with increased signage and lighting. New agricultural buildings. Conversions and extensions of farm steadings for residential/commercial use. Rural dwellings. Additional transmission lines. New mineral workings. Coal bed methane extraction and ancillary structures at surface. Surface coal mining. New/extended waste water treatment works. Loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees to development and road improvements. Loss of woodland/policy woodland due to lack of management/development (and permitted development) pressure. New woodland. Biomass crops. Wind energy development and associated infrastructure. Solar energy. Railway improvements with introduction of overhead line equipment and associated structures.

Sensitivities within Local Landscape Character Area

- 3.77** The flat, low lying and generally open character of the area along with limited hedgerow cover allows long views within this landscape character area and across it to higher ground across the Forth estuary to the Ochils to the north and east and to the south and west. Large or vertical structures (such as telecommunication masts, telegraph poles, large road signs, lighting columns, transmission masts, wind turbines, power lines/pylons, large agricultural/equestrian buildings, industrial buildings) will be particularly sensitive in the area, since they will be highly visible over a long distance and may interrupt long views to the higher ground beyond. In the southern part of this area, there is a particular sensitivity to development of new agricultural buildings/equestrian centres and farm building conversions into residential or business uses. Policy woodland and tree groups around Dunmore and Airth Castle plus the woodland around Dunmore Moss and Letham Moss provide some screening and containment of views within the area and this woodland is sensitive to loss. Dunmore Estate and the Pineapple are listed in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland and there is sensitivity to development that would adversely affect the environs and approaches to these sites and views from them. The tree cover in this character area is valuable and highly sensitive to removal or a lack of management due to its value for screening of existing and future development and framing of views. The open flat character of the eastern part of the area means that a balance must be maintained between open areas and woodland; inappropriate extensive woodland expansion could itself be a landscape sensitivity. The effects of future development on views from the National Cycle Route 76 and from coastal paths are also a sensitivity.



3. Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines

Guidelines 6(iv) Carse of Forth

- 3.78** ■ Encourage sound management of woodlands and shelterbelts and ensure they create linkages between habitats, provide path routes and meet the UK Forestry Standard Guidelines: Forests and Landscape and meet good biodiversity practice; ensure the principles of good landscape design are followed for biomass crops. This LLCA is sensitive to woodland loss in its eastern area.
- Encourage expansion of well designed native broadleaf woodland along field boundaries and watercourses to create a woodland framework to Airth and the M876 corridor; this will provide landscape enhancement, allow integration of path routes and provision of strong linkages to other habitats, contributing to Falkirk's green network. Retention of the balance between open ground and woodland and avoidance of blocking of key views are important considerations.
- Ensure new road and other infrastructure proposals and improvements incorporate appropriate replacement tree and hedgerow planting where these features are removed; these features are important landscape elements which are sensitive to loss.
- Ensure any proposals for wind energy development follow the landscape guidance in the Supplementary Guidance 'Spatial Framework and Guidance for Wind Energy Development'.
- Ensure solar energy developments are sensitively sited and landscape and visual impact assessments support proposals.
- Ensure any proposals for surface coal mining, quarries and quarry extensions are subject to a full landscape and visual assessment. Landscape mitigation must be undertaken during the works and full landscape reinstatement undertaken following extraction; reinstatement must be undertaken to match the existing natural landform and gradients of the locality and must incorporate appropriate boundary treatments, landscape features, native woodland planting, appropriate habitat creation and habitat linkages to the surrounding area. Ensure long term maintenance and management following initial restoration through planning conditions or agreements.
- Ensure coal bed methane extraction points and associated works are appropriately sited, utilising existing landscape features and new planting for screening. Where landscape elements (trees, hedgerows, stone walls) are removed they must be replaced; these are sensitive to loss.
- Encourage restoration of remaining areas of former mineral extraction.
- Ensure new proposals for high voltage overhead power lines, pipelines, major road improvements, flood prevention projects, all major engineering works and major industrial/commercial developments are subject to LVIA in accordance with good practice guidelines; examine alternative routes/sites and ensure that they maximise opportunities to enhance landscaper character. The LLCA has an identified sensitivity to such development.
- New buildings and structures in open countryside outside villages or existing building groups where no woodland cover exists will not be acceptable due to the high potential for visual intrusion. There is an identified sensitivity in this LLCA to such development.
- Ensure areas of settlement expansion, new dwellings, new agricultural buildings, other new large buildings and structures are sympathetically designed for the landscape setting, are associated with existing building clusters and are orientated to minimise visual effects; incorporate mitigating screen planting where appropriate.
- Ensure new development and steading conversions are of appropriate scale, design, material and siting along with appropriate structural landscape treatment where appropriate.

3. Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines

- Ensure new developments retain trees, stone walls, hedges and woodlands and that these elements are replaced where removed, in addition to incorporating appropriate sensitively designed new structure / screen planting; these landscape elements are sensitive to loss.
- Encourage sensitively designed new planting around existing housing and industrial buildings where appropriate.
- Avoid excessive signage, vertical structures and advertising on main transport corridors and minor roads; a high sensitivity to these features is identified.
- Ensure retention of overall open agricultural character and views across farmland; this is an important aspect of the local character and is sensitive to loss.
- Encourage new tree planting and hedgerow reinstatement on field boundaries and along watercourses where these have been lost; these are important landscape elements which are identified as being sensitive to loss.
- Ensure appropriate detailed restoration proposals are developed from peat extraction areas.

4. Local Landscape Designations: Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)

Introduction

4.1 Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) are locally valued special landscapes with particular qualities and characteristics relative to the surrounding area that merit designation by the local authority. Local authorities in Scotland have historically adopted different names for their local landscape designations; the term 'Area of Great Landscape Value' (AGLV) has been historically used for these designations in Falkirk. However, the Scottish Government and Scottish Natural Heritage are encouraging a standardisation for the name of local landscape designations to avoid confusion. The term 'Special Landscape Area' is now being used. There are three long standing Special Landscape Areas (formerly AGLVs) in Falkirk Council area:

- Denny Hills Special Landscape Area
- Slamannan Plateau/Avon Valley Special Landscape Area
- South Bo'ness Special Landscape Area

The beginning of Section 3 of this Supplementary Guidance explains the relationship between Special Landscape Areas and Local Landscape Character Areas.

4.2 A 'Statement of Importance' for each SLA has been developed in accordance with SNH's 'Guidance on Local Landscape Designations' and is provided in Appendix 3. The 'Statement of Importance' provides an overview of the designated area, describes the key landscape characteristics along with information on other natural heritage, cultural heritage and recreational interests; it also defines the boundary of the designation and details the designation's special qualities.

4.3 The landscape quality, key landscape characteristics and boundaries of these designations have been reassessed for this landscape guidance. The locations of the SLA designations, their boundaries and the landscape quality of each were found to be broadly consistent with the original intention of the AGLV designation. Therefore no boundary changes are currently intended. However, it is recognised that landscapes are dynamic and that further reviews of this landscape supplementary guidance may highlight the need for extensions to the current SLAs or designation of new SLAs. Each SLA has been assessed for new predicted pressures for change and sensitivity to development; guidelines have been produced for each SLA based on these factors.

Structure of Information on Special Landscape Areas and Guidelines

4.4 The structure of information for each Special Landscape Area in this section is set out as follows :

1. A map showing the location and boundaries of the Special Landscape Area. Boundaries remain the same as the originally designated AGLVs for the Falkirk Council area and these are defined by visual envelopes, topography and landscape features which encompass an area of high local landscape merit. The boundaries are generally more clearly defined on the ground than the gradual transitional boundaries of Local Landscape Character Areas.

2. Likely future forces for change. These are the predicted types of future development and land management which may impact on the quality and local importance of the designated landscape. Forces for change are based on current local knowledge, recent planning applications and known national factors that could influence landscape change. The likely future forces for change listed are not exhaustive.

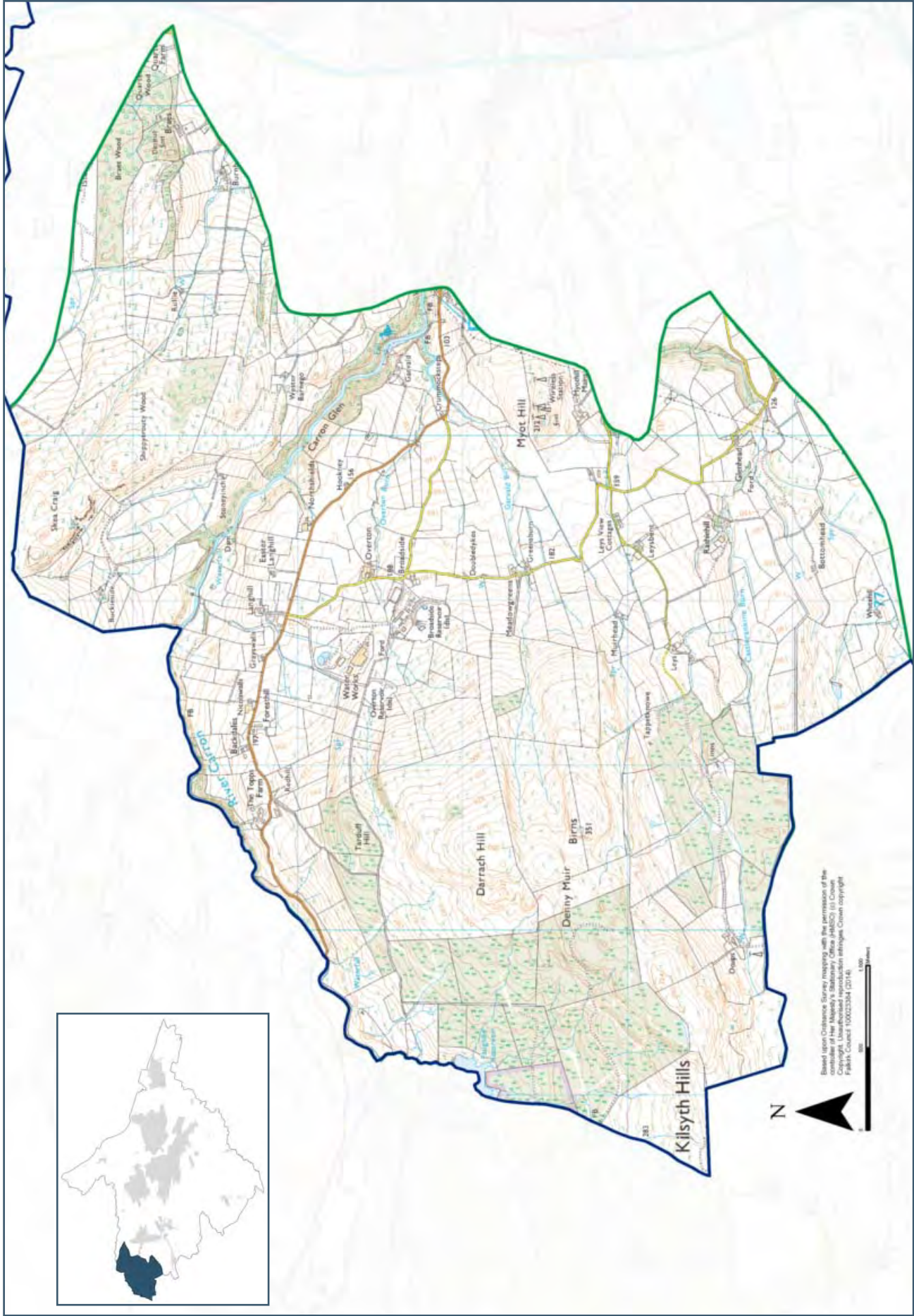
3. Sensitivities within Special Landscape Area. These are based on specific features and characteristics of the SLA identified in the statements of importance and from fieldwork.

4. Guidelines. These relate to steering new development, permitted development and land management practices to ensure landscape quality is protected; they also highlight opportunities for enhancement of the SLA designation through land management operations. The guidelines are divided into different categories of development and land management. Although the guidelines for each Special Landscape Area have been determined separately on the basis of the relevant sensitivities and forces for change specific to the SLA they have also been informed by the LLCA guidelines. SLA guidelines are frequently similar to guidelines of the component Local Landscape Character Areas that fall within the boundary of the SLA (see beginning of Section 3 for guideline terminology).

4. Local Landscape Designations: Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)

Denny Hills Special Landscape Area

4.5



4. Local Landscape Designations: Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)

Likely Future Forces for Change:

- 4.6 Wind energy, solar energy and associated infrastructure; telecommunication apparatus; power lines and pipelines; new forestry and felling/restocking of existing woodland; new agricultural buildings and equestrian centre development; conversion of farm steadings; new rural dwellings; road improvements; countryside access, tourism and recreational development; quarry expansion; water treatment works; loss of landscape features such as field boundary trees, hedgerows, stone walls and tree groups.

Sensitivities within Special Landscape Area:

- 4.7 ■ The Denny Hills, lower slopes and the Carron Valley are highly sensitive to change due to their elevated location and strong rural character with a low level of settlement.
- Large or tall structures would be highly visible on hills or slopes, may break skylines, and will reduce sense of remoteness, openness and scale; they may also interrupt or block important views.
 - Inappropriate forestry design could reduce scale, openness/wildness, and result in loss of views internally and externally as well as affect biodiversity value.
 - Linear features, such as power lines, pipeline routes, tracks, new fences, forestry edges or other edges associated with differing land management operations can be visually prominent, interrupt important views and reduce sense of remoteness and wildness.
 - Expansion of roads and tracks could compromise sense of remoteness and perception of rural character.
 - Buildings and other structures could be visually prominent due to bulk, inappropriate materials, colour, poor orientation and siting, or poor design; in open locations they can reduce sense of undeveloped character and remoteness and interrupt or block internal and external views.
 - Conversions of existing buildings could be visually prominent due to inappropriate external materials and poor design, reducing sense of remoteness in open locations.
 - Engineering works on open hill sides (for tracks and pipelines) are visually prominent and will take time to recolonise with vegetation due to exposure/conditions.
 - Removal or loss of management of existing landscape features such as trees, woodland cover or boundary hedges and walls can incrementally change the appearance of the landscape over time resulting in an adverse change to the rural character.

Denny Hills Special Landscape Area:

Guidelines for Future Development and Opportunities for Landscape Enhancement

4.8 Forestry and Woodlands

- Improve design of existing forestry plantations at next rotation, particularly at edges, along watercourses and along paths and forest roads.
- New forestry planting, felling and restocking should be in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard Guidelines: Forests and Landscape and in accordance with good biodiversity practice.
- Expand and reinstate native broadleaf trees and woodland along watercourses, lower hill slopes and in valleys to provide habitat linkages with existing woodland and to reinforce the landscape framework.
- Manage existing native broadleaf trees and woodlands and continue sensitive management of existing semi-native woodland along Carron Glen.

Roads, Agricultural Tracks, Fields Boundaries, Pipeline Routes and Boundary Features

- Retain and maintain stone walls, hedges and hedgerow trees throughout area and encourage reinstatement where these features have to be removed.
- All road and infrastructure improvement works, new pipeline routes, new tracks and new access points to public roads should involve reinstatement of stone walls, hedgerows and hedgerow trees where these features are removed.
- Road improvements, new agricultural tracks and associated structures and earthworks should be sensitively designed and located to minimise landscape and visual effects.

Telecommunication/Transmission Apparatus

- Apparatus must be avoided on prominent ridges or hill tops; elsewhere ensure locations are only acceptable where scale and design relates well to the existing landscape and where some partial screening can be achieved by landform and woodland.

Wind Energy and Other Renewable Energy

- Wind turbines must be avoided on prominent ridges or hill tops; elsewhere these features must only be located where their scale and design relates well to the existing landscape.
- Any proposals for wind energy development must follow the landscape guidance in the Supplementary Guidance 'Spatial Framework and Guidance for Wind Energy Development'.
- Other renewable developments (eg solar) must be sensitively sited and only located where their scale and design relates well to the existing landscape.

Power Lines

- All new power lines and renewal of lines must avoid prominent ridges or hill tops; elsewhere ensure routes are sensitively selected to minimise visual effects.

Agricultural Buildings and Farm Steadings

- Large new agricultural buildings must be sensitively designed and sympathetically sited and orientated to minimise visual effects from public roads, popular walking routes and areas of informal and formal public recreation; incorporate mitigating screen planting where appropriate.
- Undertake native tree and woodland planting around existing large scale agricultural buildings and new buildings where these are visually prominent features.
- Steading conversions and associated new buildings, extensions and boundary treatments should be of sympathetic design relative to the surrounding rural setting.

Finalised SG09 Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations

Industrial Buildings and Infrastructure Apparatus

- Sensitive design, sympathetic siting and orientation of new rural infrastructure apparatus and structures plus other new rural industrial buildings should be undertaken; mitigating native species screen planting should be incorporated into the design where necessary.
- New tree planting around existing infrastructure apparatus and structures (eg pumping stations/sub stations) and existing rural industrial buildings (eg water treatment works/workshops) should be undertaken where appropriate.

Housing and Settlement Expansion

- New, sympathetically designed, native tree planting around existing new rural dwellings and housing groups is encouraged where appropriate.
- Expansion of settlements must not encroach above the existing building line on lower hill sides.
- Native species screen and structure planting must be undertaken in association with any future expansion of settlements (Fankerton/Stoneywood) and other new housing.

Boundary Treatments

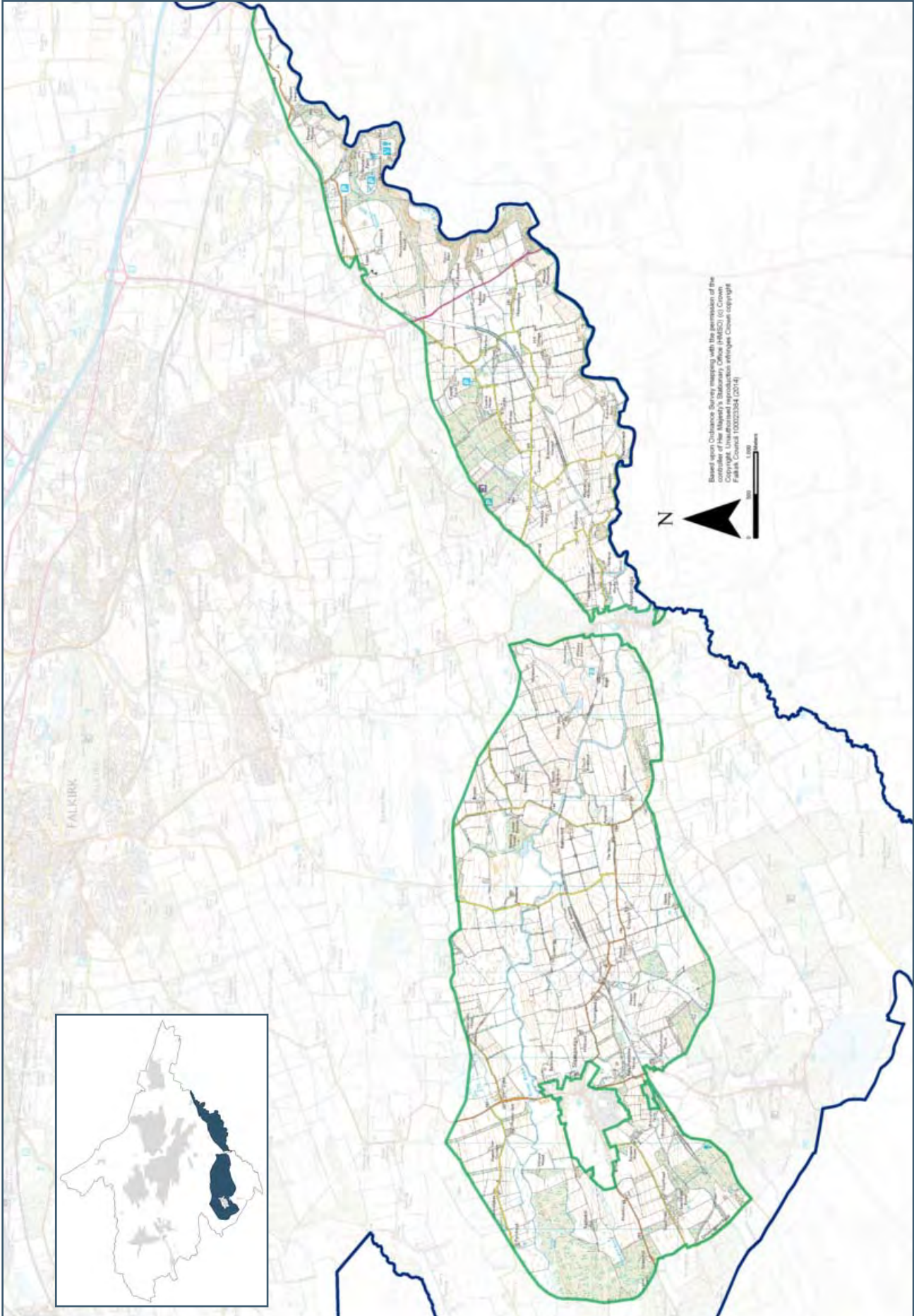
- All boundary walls, fences, gates and planting treatment on all new development (including steading conversions) should be of sympathetic design to the rural setting of the area.

General Development Mitigation in the Countryside

- All development, including expansion of settlements and associated infrastructure, must be well designed and integrated into the setting, positively restore the landscape character and local features, and incorporate native tree and woodland structure and screen planting.
- Proposals for all major developments (including new quarries and quarry extensions, power lines) must be subject to Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) including investigation of alternative sites and routes; ensure assessment is in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - Third Edition (produced by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment).
- Avoid any development that is not of sympathetic design to the small scale intimate character of the Carron Valley.
- Ensure compliance with Development Plan Policy GN03 relating to Local Wildlife Sites and the Sites of Special Scientific interest at Denny Muir and Carron Glen, within the Special Landscape Area.

4. Local Landscape Designations: Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)

Slamannan Plateau/Avon Valley Special Landscape Area



Finalised SG09 Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations

Likely Future Forces for Change:

- 4.10** Expansion of Slamannan and Avonbridge in the long term; wind energy, solar energy and associated infrastructure; overhead power lines; telecommunication apparatus; new large scale agricultural buildings; conversion of farm steadings to business and residential/industrial use; single rural dwellings; tourism development/outdoor recreation facilities; road and other infrastructure improvements resulting in loss of hedges, trees/tree groups and stone walls; general loss of field boundary trees, hedgerows and stone walls through agricultural practices; decline of smaller mixed woodland and shelterbelts due to lack of management; expansion of commercial forestry and new small woodland planting; biomass crops; reversion of some areas of improved pasture to unimproved pasture.

Sensitivities within Special Landscape Area:

- 4.11** ■ The land around the upper and middle sections of the Avon Valley is sensitive to change due to the potential for loss of the varied land cover and enclosure pattern and in particular the loss of woodland cover and other landscape features.
- Large or tall structures could be distinctly visible on ridges, slopes, or in open areas without tree cover; these may break skylines, and will reduce sense of scale as well as interrupt or block important views. They may also result in the loss of woodland cover.
- Inappropriate large scale forestry planting could reduce scale, lead to an undesirable level of enclosure, and result in loss of views internally and externally as well as affect biodiversity value.
- Linear features, such as power lines, pipeline routes, tracks, new fences, can be visually prominent on ridges or higher ground, and could result in partial loss of the characteristic hedgerow/varied woodland cover of the area and may interrupt important views.
- Other engineering works (for road improvements and other structures) can also be visually prominent; disturbed ground will take time to re-vegetate as well as boundary features and woodland cover being lost, compromising the perception of the rural character.
- Buildings and other large structures may be visually prominent due to bulk, inappropriate materials, colour, poor orientation and siting, or poor design; in open locations they can reduce sense of undeveloped rural character and interrupt or block internal and external views; in some areas they could result in the loss of characteristic woodland cover or historic policy woodland planting.
- Conversions of existing buildings could be visually prominent due to inappropriate external materials and poor design, reducing the sense of a rural location in open areas.
- Removal or loss of management of existing landscape features such as trees, woodland cover or boundary hedges and walls can incrementally change the appearance of the landscape over time resulting in an adverse change to the rural character of the area.

4. Local Landscape Designations: Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)

Slamannan Plateau/Avon Valley Special Landscape Area: Guidelines for Future Development and Opportunities for Landscape Enhancement

4.12 Forestry and Woodlands

- Improve design of existing forestry plantations at next rotation, particularly at edges, along watercourses and along paths and forest roads.
- New forestry planting, restocking / felling and biomass crops must be in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard Guidelines: Forests and Landscape and in accordance with good biodiversity practice.
- Undertake further enhancement of native woodland character through planting of appropriate woodland types and sensitive management of existing depleted woodland; encourage creation of strong habitat network linkages between other woodlands, hedges and watercourses for biodiversity enhancement and to reinforce the landscape framework.

Roads, Agricultural Tracks, Fields Boundaries, Pipeline Routes and Boundary Features

- Retain and maintain stone walls, hedges and hedgerow trees throughout area and encourage reinstatement where these features have to be removed.
- All road and infrastructure improvement works, new pipeline routes, new tracks and new access points to public roads should reinstate stone walls, hedgerows and hedgerow trees where these features are removed.
- All road improvements, new agricultural tracks and associated structures and earthworks must be sensitively designed and located to minimise landscape and visual effects.

Former Opencast/Mineral Working Sites and Derelict Land

- Undertake further restoration work on former opencast and mineral working sites where the planning authority has identified a poor level of original restoration or a failure of vegetation establishment.
- Re-use and restore unused and derelict land on the edges of settlements and elsewhere.

Telecommunication/Transmission Apparatus

- Telecommunication apparatus must be avoided on prominent ridges or hill tops and further apparatus must be concentrated at sites with existing installations or where masts can be shared; elsewhere ensure locations are only where scale and design relates well to the existing landscape and some screening can be achieved by landform and woodland.

Wind Energy and Other Renewable Energy

- Wind turbines must be avoided on prominent ridges or hill tops; elsewhere these features must only be located where their scale and design relates well to the existing landscape.
- Any proposals for wind energy development must follow the landscape guidance in the Supplementary Guidance 'Spatial Framework and Guidance for Wind Energy Development'.
- Other renewable developments (eg solar) must be sensitively sited and only located where their scale and design relates well to the existing landscape.

Power Lines

- All new power lines and renewal of existing routes must avoid prominent ridges or hill tops; elsewhere ensure routes are sensitively selected to minimise visual effects.

Agricultural Buildings and Farm Steadings

- Large new agricultural and equestrian centre buildings should be appropriately designed and sympathetically sited and orientated to minimise visual effects from public roads, popular walking routes and areas of informal and formal public recreation; incorporate mitigating screen planting where appropriate.
- Native tree and woodland planting must be encouraged around existing large scale new agricultural buildings where these are visually prominent features.
- Steading conversions and associated new buildings, extensions and boundary treatments must be of sympathetic design to the surrounding rural setting.
- Encourage removal of non-traditional farm buildings that are unused/dilapidated.

Industrial Buildings and Infrastructure Apparatus

- Sensitive design and sympathetic siting and orientation of new rural infrastructure apparatus and structures and other new rural industrial buildings must be undertaken and mitigating native species screen planting incorporated into the design.
- Native species screen tree planting should be undertaken around existing infrastructure apparatus, structures and existing rural industrial buildings where appropriate.

Housing and Settlement Expansion

- Undertake new, sensitively designed native tree planting around existing new rural dwellings and housing groups where appropriate.
- Undertake new native species screen and structure planting in association with any expansion of the settlements of Slamannan and Avonbridge (on the boundary of the designated area) and with other new housing.

Boundary Treatments

- All boundary walls, fences, gates and planting treatment on all new development (including steading conversions) must be of sympathetic design to the rural setting of the area.

General Development Mitigation in the Countryside

- All development, including expansion of settlements at the outer edges of the SLA and associated infrastructure, must be well designed and integrated and positively restore the landscape character and local features; it must incorporate native tree and woodland structure and screen planting.
- Avoid any development that is not sympathetic to the small scale intimate character of the Avon Valley.
- Proposals for all major developments (including new quarries, quarry extensions, power lines) must be subject to Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) including investigation of alternative sites and routes; ensure assessment is in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - Third Edition (produced by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment).
- Ensure compliance with Development Plan Policy GN03 relating to Local Wildlife Sites and specifically the need to protect the Bean Geese wintering area within the SLA.

4. Local Landscape Designations: Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)

South Bo'ness Special Landscape Area



Likely Future Forces for Change:

- 4.14** Expansion of Business in long term; conversion of farm steadings to residential/business use and farm diversification; new agricultural buildings and livery stables; horticultural buildings/polytunnels; single rural dwellings and extensions to dwellings; loss of field boundary trees, hedgerows and stone walls; loss of mature trees; road improvements resulting in tree/hedgerow loss and loss of rural character; poor woodland management; new woodland planting; biomass crops; expansion, extensions, conversions and commercial development in Cauldcoats Holdings area; telecommunication structures; small scale wind energy development; solar energy development.

Sensitivities within Special Landscape Area:

- 4.15**
- The area is sensitive to change due to its elevated position causing certain development and land management practices to be highly visible at close range from settlements.
 - The potential loss of the varied land cover, enclosure pattern, trees, woodland cover and other landscape features would be very prominent at close range from settlements and rural recreation participants.
 - Large or tall structures could be distinctly visible on ridges, slopes, or in open areas without tree cover; these may also break skylines, and will reduce the sense of scale as well as interrupt or block important views. They could also result in the loss of woodland cover.
 - Inappropriate woodland planting could lead to an undesirable level of enclosure, and result in a loss of views internally and externally as well as impact on biodiversity value.
 - Linear features, such as power lines, pipeline routes, tracks, new fences, can be particularly visually prominent on ridges or higher ground, and could result in partial loss of the characteristic hedgerow and varied woodland cover of the area, as well as interrupting important views.
 - Other engineering works (for road improvements and other structures) can also be visually prominent, resulting in loss of boundary features and woodland cover which can compromise the perception of the rural character.
 - Buildings and other large structures may be visually prominent due to bulk, inappropriate materials, colour, poor orientation and siting, or poor design; in open locations, they can reduce sense of undeveloped rural character and can interrupt or block internal and external views; in some areas they could result in the loss of woodland and hedgerow cover or historic policy woodland planting.
 - Conversions of existing buildings could be visually prominent due to inappropriate external materials and poor design, reducing the sense of rural location in open areas.
 - Removal or loss of management of existing landscape features such as trees, woodland cover or boundary hedges and walls can incrementally change the appearance of the landscape over time, resulting in an adverse change to the rural character of the area.

4. Local Landscape Designations: Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)

South Bo'ness Special Landscape Area:

Guidelines for Future Development and Opportunities for Landscape Enhancement

4.16 Forestry and Woodlands

- Encourage new woodland planting in appropriate locations; in particular, new planting in the western part of the Special Landscape Area should be encouraged to improve screening of the Grangemouth complex, as well as enhancing the woodland framework around Bo'ness and creating strong habitat linkages between other woodlands, hedgerows and watercourses.
- New small scale native species woodland planting should be encouraged in appropriate locations elsewhere to provide linkages between other woodlands, hedgerows, watercourses and other habitats.
- Any new forestry planting and biomass crops should be in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard Guidelines: Forests and Landscape and in accordance with good biodiversity practice.
- Encourage sensitive management of existing native broadleaf trees, woodlands and shelterbelts.

Roads, Agricultural Tracks, Fields Boundaries, Pipeline Routes and Boundary Features

- Retain and maintain stone walls, hedges and hedgerow trees throughout area and ensure reinstatement where these features have to be removed.
- All road and infrastructure improvement works, new pipeline routes, new tracks and new access points to public roads must reinstate stone walls, hedgerows and hedgerow trees where these features are removed.
- All road improvements, new agricultural tracks and associated structures and earthworks must be sensitively designed and located to minimise landscape and visual effects.

Telecommunication/Transmission Apparatus

- All telecommunication apparatus must be avoided on prominent ridges or hill tops; elsewhere ensure location is only where scale and design relates well to the existing landscape and where screening can be achieved by landform and woodland.

Wind Energy and Other Renewable Energy

- Wind turbines on prominent ridges or hill tops must be avoided; elsewhere ensure these features are only located where their scale and design relates well to the existing landscape.
- Proposals for wind energy development must follow the landscape guidance in the Supplementary Guidance 'Spatial Framework and Guidance for Wind Energy Development'.
- Other renewable developments (eg solar) must be sensitively sited and only located where their scale and design relates well to the existing landscape.

Power Lines

- New power lines and renewal of lines must be avoided on prominent ridges or hill tops; elsewhere ensure sensitive routes are selected to minimise visual effects.

Agricultural Buildings and Farm Steadings

- Large new agricultural buildings must be sensitively designed and sympathetically sited and orientated to minimise visual effects from public roads, popular walking routes and areas of informal and formal public recreation; incorporate mitigating screen planting where appropriate.
- Encourage native tree and woodland planting around existing large scale new agricultural buildings where these are visually prominent features.
- Steading conversions and associated new buildings, extensions and boundary treatments must be of sympathetic design to the surrounding rural setting.
- New and replacement buildings within Cauldcoats Holdings and Mannerston Holdings must be sympathetic design, scale, siting and materials.

Industrial Buildings and Infrastructure Apparatus

- Ensure appropriate design, siting, orientation and materials of new rural infrastructure apparatus and structures and other new rural industrial buildings within the area and on the edge of Bo'ness; ensure that mitigating native species screen planting is incorporated into the design.
- New tree planting around existing infrastructure apparatus and structures and existing rural industrial buildings should be encouraged.

Housing and Settlement Expansion

- New, sensitively designed, native tree planting around existing new rural dwellings and housing groups should be encouraged where appropriate.
- Ensure single new, rural dwellings are of appropriate design, scale and materials and that appropriate mitigating planting is undertaken where dwellings are in visually prominent locations.
- Housing expansion on the rural edge of Bo'ness and Muirhouses and within Blackness must be of sympathetic design, scale, siting, and materials.
- Ensure native broadleaf species screen and structure planting is undertaken in association with new housing expansion on the border of Bo'ness and the SLA.

Boundary Treatments

- Boundary walls, fences, gates and planting treatment on all new development (including steading conversions) must be of sympathetic design to the rural setting of the area.

General Development Mitigation in the Countryside

- All development, including expansion of settlements and associated infrastructure, must be well designed and integrated into the setting, positively restore the landscape character and local features, and incorporate native tree and woodland structure and screen planting.
- Proposals for all major developments (including new quarries, quarry extensions, power lines) must be subject to Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) including investigation of alternative sites and routes; ensure assessment is in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - Third Edition (produced by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment).
- Ensure compliance with Green Belt Policy (Policy CG02) of Local Development Plan for parts of SLA that fall within this designation.
- Ensure compliance with the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Antonine Wall) World Heritage Site (Policy D07) of Local Development Plan and the associated Supplementary Guidance, for parts of SLA that fall within the buffer zone.
- Ensure compliance with Development Plan Policy GN03 relating to Kinnell Local Wildlife Site, Muirhouses Local Wildlife Site, the Forth Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest and the Forth Special Protection Area.

5. National and Local Designed Landscapes

National Designed Landscapes: Inventory Sites

5.1 The 'Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland' is a list of nationally important designed landscapes that meet certain criteria published in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy. Historic Scotland has a statutory duty under the Historic Environment Amendment Act 2011 to compile and maintain the Inventory on behalf of Scottish Ministers. The Inventory was first compiled in 1987, with supplementary regional editions published in 2001 – 2005. Information in the inventory raises the awareness of each site's significance and assists in their protection and management for the future. The inventory is a major resource for enhancing the appreciation and enjoyment of gardens and designed landscapes, for promoting education and for stimulating further research. The inventory provides details of the garden or designed landscape, including location, setting, historical context, different components and detailed maps. A detailed indication of each site's significance measured against the criteria for determining national importance is also given. The online Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland is now the legal inventory and it supersedes the original published volumes that covered all the inventory sites in Scotland. This online national inventory includes three sites in the Falkirk Council area:

- Dunmore Park - near Airth.
- The Pineapple - a site within the wider Dunmore estate, near Airth.
- Callendar Park - surrounding Callendar House in Falkirk.

5.2 Planning authorities are required to consult Historic Scotland on development proposals that they consider may affect an Inventory Garden or Designed Landscape. Historic Scotland provides advice and support in aid of the protection, management, and interpretation of gardens and designed landscapes, including the development of a grant scheme to support the planning and management of gardens and designed landscapes. These sites are covered by **Falkirk Local Development Plan Policy D12: Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes** (see Local Policy section in Section 2 this document).

Other Designed Landscape in Falkirk Council Area: Non-Inventory sites

5.3 The Falkirk Council area, as with other parts of Scotland, has a number of historic designed gardens and landscapes that do not meet the criteria published in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy and are not, therefore, included in the national 'Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland'. These 'Non-Inventory' designed landscapes have often lost many of their original features, have become very fragmented, or may contain only remnant features of the original designed landscape (such as walls, gateways and mature trees). Many of the 'Non-Inventory' designed landscapes and their remnant features remain locally valued and make an important contribution to the local landscape and cultural heritage. The sites include remaining parts of parkland, meadow, woodland, gardens, driveways, paths, walls, water features, gatehouses and often surrounded a mansion house; others were designed specifically as public parks. Many sites with associated houses are privately owned, but some are in public ownership and managed by Falkirk Council and other organisations.

5.4 A list of the known non-inventory designed landscapes in the Falkirk area which still have some remnant features of a former designed landscape are listed in Table 1. Sites listed vary in size and have varying levels of intactness and existence of original features (buildings, structures, boundary features, driveways/paths, woodland and planting). It is intended that this list will be updated and that a detailed inventory of local designed landscapes and their historic context, extent, and key components will be undertaken in the future.

5.5 Table 1: Non - Inventory Designed Landscapes and Sites with Remnant Designed Landscape Features within Falkirk Council Area

Site Name	Site Name
Airth Castle	Southfield House
Avondale House	Summerford Park/Glenfuir
Avonhill	Vellore
Balquhatstone	Victoria Park, Bo'ness
Bellsdyke Hospital	Zetland Park, Grangemouth
Camelon Cemetery	
Candie House	
Carriden House	
Carron House	
Carronvale House	
Castlecary	
Darroch	
Denovan House	
Dollar Park/Arnotdale House	
Dunipace House	
Glenbervie/Woodside/Torwood Castle	
Glebe Park, Bo'ness	
Gleneilrig	
Haining/Parkhall	
Kinnaird House	
Kinneil House/Estate	
Larbert House	
Lathallan/Laurence Park	
Manuel House	
Millfield	
Muiravonside House	
Parkhill House/Gray-Buchanan Park	
Polmont Park/Polmont Bank	
Powfoullis	
Quarter House	
Royal Scottish National Hospital	
South Bantaskine House	

Guidelines applicable to Inventory and all Non-Inventory Designed Landscapes in Falkirk Council Area

- 5.6** To ensure protection of the three national 'Inventory' designed landscapes and all the local 'Non-Inventory' designed landscapes in the Falkirk Council area, generic guidelines are provided below. Guidelines are intended to help conserve original features and ensure development and land management practices do not have an adverse effect on the character and setting of these sites and their remaining features. More detailed guidance may be developed following a future detailed assessment of the 'Non-Inventory' sites:

General

- All development and land management operations within the boundary of an original designed landscape, on its approaches, in its environs, or adjacent to the remnant designed landscape features must:
 - ☐ Avoid an adverse effect on the character and setting of the designed landscape or its remnant features.
 - ☐ Seek to protect and retain the original remaining features of the designed landscape (buildings, structures, earthworks, art works, walls, walled gardens, gate lodges, paths, steps, boundary treatments, gates, driveways, water features, trees, policy woodland, hedgerows and planting areas).
 - ☐ Take account of key vistas in the original design (where these remain), including the visual envelope of views to and from the designed landscape.
 - ☐ Be informed by physical evidence on site and documentary evidence (such as old maps, estate records) of the original designed landscape).
 - ☐ Demonstrate how the design of any development will be effectively integrated with the designed landscape or remnant designed landscape features.

Site Survey, Supporting Assessment for Proposed New Development and Management Plans

- Prior to design for any development, a detailed survey and assessment of the site must be undertaken with respect to all existing original designed landscape features and the original layout should be determined from old Ordnance Survey maps.
- Development proposals within a non-Inventory designed landscape must be supported by an assessment (depending on the scale of the designed landscape, remaining features and development type) detailing the ways in which the character and setting of the original designed landscape will be protected without adverse effect.
- A supporting management plan or management statement (depending on the scale of the designed landscape, remaining features and development type) may be necessary to detail the long term management of the remaining features of the designed landscape and how these features will be protected, managed and maintained in conjunction with new development.

Existing Trees, Woodlands, Hedgerows and Shrub Planting

- Where any development is proposed and tree cover exists on the site, a survey of all trees likely to be affected by any development, including those adjacent to the boundary, must be undertaken in accordance with BS5837:2012 and the Council's Supplementary Guidance 'Trees and Development'; all other areas of designed planting must be mapped, including shrub areas and hedges. As with all developments affecting trees, a tree constraints plan and tree protection plan will be required.
- Where there are extensive areas of existing parkland trees, policy woodland, other woodland, hedgerows and other planting, a long term management plan should be compiled; this must be based on a detailed woodland survey and should detail ongoing maintenance for safety, felling, thinning and replacement planting.

Protection and Maintenance of Original Designed Landscape Features

- Removal of the original designed landscape layout and its features must be avoided (structures, buildings, walls, walled gardens, gate lodges, fences, gates, art works, steps, driveways, earthworks, water features, remaining tree/policy woodland, hedgerows and shrub planting); where removal is unavoidable on safety grounds, a level of reinstatement of landscape elements will be required.
- Seek to use and maintain local materials and building style traditions in repairs to the original designed landscape features (structures, walls, gates, fences).
- Where parkland trees, policy woodland, hedgerows or planting areas have been removed in the past, or where some removal is essential for safety management, replacement planting should be of a similar species, density and layout to the original planting of the designed landscape.

Design of New Development

- Where there is no adverse effect on the character and setting of the original designed landscape or its remaining features, any new development must be sensitively integrated into the designed landscape layout.
- The design and layout of new development must be in keeping with the original landscape design and setting of the remaining designed landscape features.
- Materials used for all new buildings, structures, hard landscaping, and boundary treatments should be similar to of match the original remaining features.
- Lowering and removing original boundary walls, railings and gate widening for new access points must be avoided (these are frequently the only remaining features on some sites); alternatives for access should be investigated.

Effects of Land Management on Designed Landscapes: (Agriculture and Forestry)

- Encourage protection of historic designed landscape features from farm machinery movements, stock damage and general damage from agricultural and forestry operations (for example, original walls, walled gardens, gate houses, gates, railings, earthworks, ha-has, water features, structures, steps, paths, driveways, mature parkland trees, policy woodland, hedgerows).
- Avoid large scale tree planting and planting of biomass crops over original gardens, parkland and fields which form the original designed landscape layout; avoid timber extraction over original hard landscape features.

Appendix 1 - Landscape Character Type (LCT) and Local Landscape Character Area (LLCA) Descriptions

6.1 Refer to **Figure 1** for the overall location of LCTs and LLCAs and the detailed location maps with the guidelines in **Section 3**.
The revised LCTs and LLCAs and their 'Key Characteristics' below are based on the revision of landscape character prepared as part of the Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Energy Development undertaken for Falkirk Council in 2012.

Landscape Character Type 1: Lowland Hills	Local Landscape Character Area 1(i) Kilsyth/Denny Hills
Landscape Character Type 2: Lowland Hill Fringes	Local Landscape Character Area 2(i) Denny Hills Fringe Local Landscape Character Area 2(ii) Touch Hills Fringe
Landscape Character Type 3: Lowland Plateau	Local Landscape Character Area 3(i) Slamannan Plateau Local Landscape Character Area 3(ii) Darnrig/Gardrum Plateau Moorland Local Landscape Character Area 3(iii) Castlecary/Shieldhill Plateau Farmland
Landscape Character Type 4: Lowland River Valleys	Local Landscape Character Area 4(i) Avon Valley Local Landscape Character Area 4(ii) Carron Glen Local Landscape Character Area 4(iii) Bonny Water Local Landscape Character Area 4(iv) Lower Carron/Bonny Water Local Landscape Character Area 4(v) Falkirk - Grangemouth Urban Fringe
Landscape Character Type 5: Rolling Farmlands	Local Landscape Character Area 5(i) Manuel Farmlands
Landscape Character Type 6: Coastal Margins	Local Landscape Character Area 6(i) Bo'ness Coastal Hills Local Landscape Character Area 6(ii) Grangemouth/Kinneil Flats Local Landscape Character Area 6(iii) Skinflats Local Landscape Character Area 6(iii) Carse of Forth

6.2 Local Landscape Character Type 1: Lowland Hills

Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs)

There is one LLCA in this LCT within the Falkirk Council area:

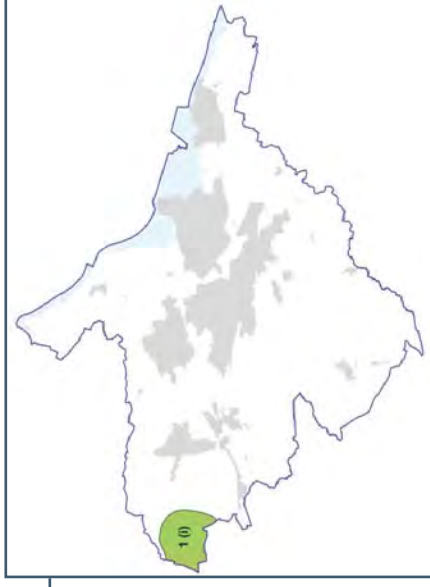
- LLCA1(i) Kilsyth/Denny Hills

Local Landscape Character Area 1(i) Kilsyth/Denny Hills

Key Characteristics of the LCT/LLCA

- A relatively small area to the west, forming the eastern extreme of the Campsie Fells/Kilsyth Hills north of Glasgow, with a common geology being underlain by basalts more resistant to glacial and fluvial erosion than surrounding rocks.
- Distinctive, open or semi-open, medium-large scale, lowland hill character created by the combination of elevation, rugged landform (limited within Falkirk), moorland vegetation and a predominant lack of modern development.
- Some sense of naturalness, remoteness and wildness (limited in Falkirk), which contrasts strongly with the farmed and developed lowland areas.
- Distinctive stepped or terrace slopes formed from lavas which cap the extrusive volcanic rocks.
- Moorland vegetation including pockets of heather and rough grassland on the more open, exposed tops and lower slopes, with extensive commercial conifer plantations in various stages of maturity/felling/re-planting in between which reduces the scale and openness of the landscape.
- Large rough grassland fields are sheep grazed, with post and wire fencing and/or dry stone dyke boundaries and characteristic lack of hedgerows or hedgerow trees.
- Sparse settlement limited to isolated properties at Doups and Linns on a middle terrace.
- Drained by a series of minor burns flowing northwards or eastwards to the River Carron.
- Faughlin Reservoir is inconspicuous being located within a dip and between conifer plantations.
- Wind farms at Craigengelt and Earlsburn are located between 3-6km distance to the northwest in the Touch Hills and are conspicuous features from some parts of the LCT/LLCA, and from many locations in the Falkirk area.
- Terraced landform provides a variety of views ranging from panoramic (e.g. from the viewpoint on the TacMaDoon road in North Lanarkshire just beyond the Falkirk boundary) to views confined by dense woodland (except during felling and replanting operations).

Part of Denny Muir 'Landscape Character Area' in original landscape character assessment.



6.3 Landscape Character Type 2: Lowland Hill Fringes

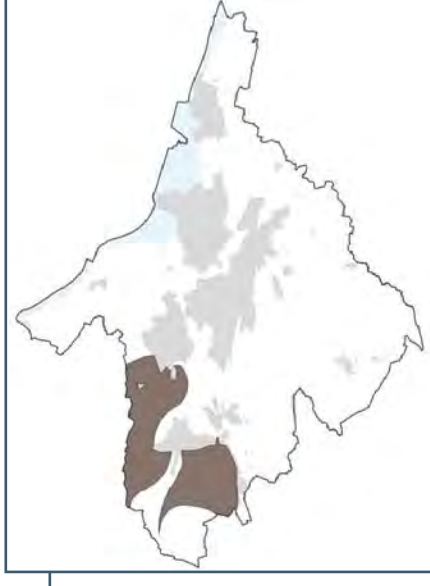
Key Characteristics of the LCT

- Transitional undulating topography rising and contrasting with the wide, flat carselands of the Forth Estuary or the lowland river valleys of central Falkirk, and the steeper and more elevated Lowland Hills to the west (which predominantly lie within North Lanarkshire or Stirling Council areas).
- Ridges and valleys, occasionally steep sided, formed by burns often cascading over rocks and fast flowing eastwards and southwards in to the River Carron which bisects the character area, or in to the Bonny Water
- Generally small-medium scale, intimate mosaic of woodland and farmland, dominated by grassland.
- Reservoirs and small lochs are local, flat features contrasting with the rolling landscape, though not widely conspicuous.
- Rough and semi-improved grassland, sheep grazed, with gorse scrub on higher ground changing to improved grazing pasture with some arable on lower ground.
- Woodland generally lies on the lower slopes, ranging from large mixed plantations, broadleaved woodlands, policy woodland, shelterbelts, avenues and dense semi-native burn-side woods.
- Mix of dry stone dykes, with post and wire fencing on higher ground, and beech or hawthorn hedgerows, generally clipped and well maintained, with occasional hedgerow trees.
- Traversed by a network of minor roads generally on low ridges above burns and linking numerous steadings, estate houses, cottages, and small settlements.
- Major transport corridors follow the flatter land through the hill fringes .
- Overhead power lines and pylons, and other large masts, are distinctive, incongruous features. Stone quarries reflect the value of the dolerite rocky outcrops.
- There are historic buildings and other features throughout the character area.
- Extensive views from high ground where there is often a feeling of height and exposure.

Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs)

There are two LLCAs in this LCT within the Falkirk Council area:

- LLCA 2(i) Denny Hills Fringe
- LLCA 2(ii) Touch Hills Fringe



6.4 Local Landscape Character Area 2(i) Denny Hills Fringe

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- Distinctive west-east grain to the gently rolling landscape, defined by the gorge of the Carron Glen to the north, the steep sided valley of the Bonny Water to the south, and sinuous, often steep sided, fast flowing burns in between.
- Dense, semi-native woodland alongside the rivers and burns accentuates the pattern of the predominantly small-medium scale landscape which otherwise is generally open and comprises rough and semi-improved grassland with little tree cover except around Drumbowie Reservoir and Little Denny Reservoir.
- Some wet, tussocky grassland, sheep grazed, throughout the area, with predominantly post and wire boundary fencing with stone dykes on high ground and hedgerows mainly limited to around the properties where they are well maintained with occasional hedgerow trees including mature ash.
- Pockets of improved grassland with horse paddocks and associated fencing.
- A network of minor lanes generally follows the west-east pattern of the landscape, linking numerous small steadings, isolated cottages and small settlements. No major roads within the area although the M80 follows the foot of the hill fringes to the east and south.
- Stone quarry at Cowden Hill to the south, two major overhead power lines through the area, numerous telegraph poles and telephone wires, a single transmitter mast at Easter Banknock, and the Myot Hill Wireless Station on more rugged, high ground at 212m AOD, are all conspicuous features in the landscape to varying extents.
- Extensive views east across the built up area and Grangemouth and to the Forth and the Ochil Hills beyond, and southwards into North Lanarkshire where two large wind turbines at Greendykeside, two large masts and other masts in the distance are recognisable features contrasting with the surrounding farmland.
- Views northwards across the Carron Glen towards the shoulders of the Touch Hills Fringe, including the rocky outcrops at Skea Craig.

Part of Denny Muir 'Landscape Character Area' in original landscape character assessment.

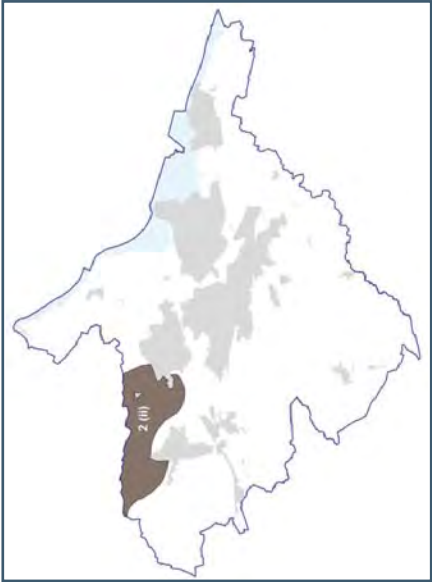


6.5 Local Landscape Character Area 2(ii) Touch Hills Fringe

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- Rugged, craggy rock outcrops of dolerite on the higher steeper fringes in the west at Skea Craig, where the hill fringes rise up to the Touch Hills.
- Distinctive conical shape of hills above Dunipace.
- Lower and less well pronounce topography in the east and southeast at the transition with the Coastal Margins and Lowland River Valleys respectively.
- Minor burns, generally inconspicuous, flow west-east into the River Carron to the south or into the Tor Burn on the Council boundary along the northern edge of the LLCA.
- The Avon Burn follows a more sinuous, steep-sided valley within a wider, flatter corridor from north to south through the centre of the LLCA, in to the River Carron.
- Small lochs at Torwood Head and north of Wells Field Farm cater for anglers.
- Extensive mixed plantation at Tor Wood above Torwood village; elsewhere numerous hillside woods ranging in size and predominantly semi-native broadleaved, policies, shelterbelts and avenues (in particular at Quarter House and Glenbervie House (hotel and golf club) give the landscape a confined, and in parts, enclosed character.
- Elsewhere predominantly small-medium scale, intimate, mixed farmland.
- M80 and A872 bisect the LLCA through the flatter central corridor of the Avon Burn, and the M876 and A9 meet on the eastern urban fringe at North Broomage where road embankments, bridging structures and telecommunications masts in the road corridor fragment the landscape and restrict many views.
- Large stone quarries at Boards Quarry and Northfield Quarry disrupt the hillside landform but are relatively well screened (for example by Braes Wood).
- Large new NHS hospital at Larbert impinges on to the lower hill slopes on the eastern edge of the LLCA.
- Numerous overhead power lines and pylons are distinctive features marching across the lower slopes in north-south and east-west directions.
- Historical evidence of more ancient settlement includes Torwood Castle (remains of) and the course of a Roman road through Tor Wood.

East Touch Fringe 'Landscape Character Area' in original landscape character assessment.



6.6 Landscape Character Type 3: Lowland Plateau

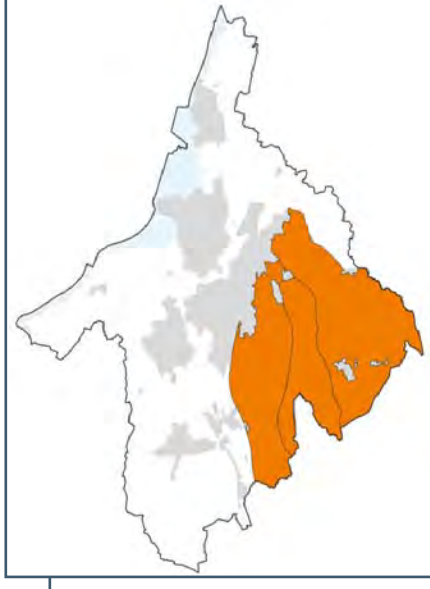
Key Characteristics of the LCT

- Large expanse of elevated, gently undulating lowland plateau, gently rising from north to south and averaging approximately 200mAOD.
- Underlain by Carboniferous coal seams, the presence of several minor dolerite intrusions creates distinctive folds and a pronounced west-east pattern to the landform.
- Between the flattened, soft contoured ridges, numerous burns, small streams and small river courses lie in shallow, visually unobtrusive valleys.
- Black Loch and Loch Ellrig are medium sized waterbodies.
- Predominantly open, often featureless landcover of heather and grass moorland and blanket, raised or intermediate bog on poorer, wetter soils, including a complex of small wetland habitats of wildlife importance.
- Large coniferous and mixed Forestry Commission plantations to the south, with other mixed woodland to the west, occasional policy woodland to the northeast, frequent gnarled wind-sculptured beech shelterbelts and estate planting, and scattered birch trees.
- Range of field boundaries include post and wire fences, stone dykes, hedges of clipped hawthorn, beech and gorse, with beech and ash hedgerow trees.
- Grid-like pattern of improved and semi-improved, neutral and lowland dry acidic grassland dominates beyond the central raised mire of Darnrig Moss.
- The plateau is crossed by a grid pattern of north-south and east-west 'B' roads and other minor lanes - the east-west routes run along the ridges of slightly higher ground whilst the north-south routes climb and dip across the shallow ridges and valleys.
- Medium-sized, former mining villages lie alongside the 'B' roads, where the traditional roadside ribbon pattern has often been added to with more modern housing, with frequent cottages and farmsteads in-between.
- Legacy of past mine working, including opencast fireclay, peat and coal workings, quarries in varying stages of operation and restoration, dismantled railways, disused works, tall chimneys and spoil heaps.
- Distinctive northern edge provides extensive views northwards and eastwards across the urban areas and the Forth Estuary, to the Ochil Hills beyond.
- Tall masts at the Westerglen Transmitting Station are conspicuous features on the north-facing ridge.
- Overhead power lines and pylons run across the north and east of the area.

Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs)

There are three LLCAs in this LCT within the Falkirk Council area:

- **LLCA 3(i) Slamannan Plateau**
- **LLCA 3(ii) Darnrig/Gardrum Plateau Moorland**
- **LLCA 3(iii) Castlecary/Shieldhill Plateau Farmland**



6.7 Local Landscape Character Area 3(i) Slamannan Plateau

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- Expansive rolling plateau covering the southern half of the wider LCT, lying south of an approximate line from the upper reaches of the River Avon northwest of Slamannan and south of Loch Ellrig, and between California and Maddiston.
- The complexity and variety in landcover and frequent though often subtle landform changes are the key characteristics of this LLCA.
- Predominantly large scale, open, largely featureless improved and semi-improved grass moorland with patches of heather, wet bog with few trees east of Slamannan and south of the River Avon.
- Areas of peatland and rough and improved grassland are of national and international important for rare overwintering flocks of Bean Geese.
- Extensive Forestry Commission coniferous plantations and mixed woodland in the south and west, and to a lesser extent to the east.
- Policy woodland and shelterbelts in a smaller-scale, more intimate, hummocky area south of Loch Ellrig.
- Visibility within the LLCA is predominantly limited by the undulating topography and landcover, but with extensive glimpses out from higher, more exposed areas, in particular south-westwards across Black Loch, and from a number of locations from minor roads on shallow ridges to the Ochil Hills and the Pentlands in the distance.
- The area drains west-east into the open, featureless, shallow River Avon via a series of small tributary burns, some fast flowing.
- Burnhead Moss lies in the south on the highest part of the plateau at around 225m AOD, and feels particularly remote and bleak.
- A largely settled, worked landscape as evidenced by the numerous opencast and other works and associated infrastructure.
- Overhead power lines and pylons run across the east of the area.
- Some distant views to tall wind turbines at Greengairs to the west.

Part of Slammanan Plateau 'Landscape Character Area' in original landscape character assessment.

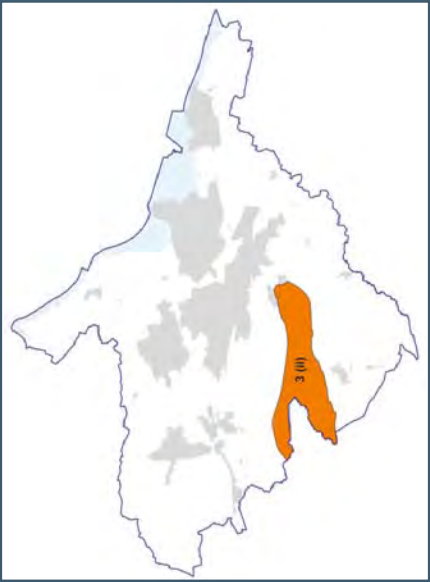


6.8 Local Landscape Character Area 3(ii) Darnrig/Gardrum Plateau Moorland

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- Occupying the generally featureless, wetter, poorer soils on the central plateau, in between the more undulating and complex Slamannan Plateau to the south and the terraced slopes of the north-facing, well wooded farmland to the north.
- Large-scale, open, featureless plateau centred on the Darnrig Moss Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and extending westwards to Garbethill Muir and Fannyside Muir (into North Lanarkshire) and eastwards to Gardrum Moss.
- A landscape well-managed to retain these important habitats, including acidic grassland management at California Wildlife Site.
- Areas of peatland and rough and improved grassland are of national and international important for rare overwintering flocks of Bean Geese.
- Generally few trees or field boundaries, and large areas of standing waterlogged ground.
- Small woodland copses, coniferous and other wind-blown shelterbelts, are uncharacteristic.
- A low knoll of slightly higher ground to the north of Wester Jaw is also uncharacteristic.
- Sparsely settled, with isolated cottages and small farmsteads.
- From the higher ground the open character allows extensive views out to the south towards the Pentland Hills, and to the southwest into North Lanarkshire where the two wind turbines at Greendykeside are visible together with the major radio and TV transmitter masts at Kirk o'Shotts (one mast) and Black Hill (two masts).

Part of Slamannan Plateau 'Landscape Character Area' in original landscape character assessment.

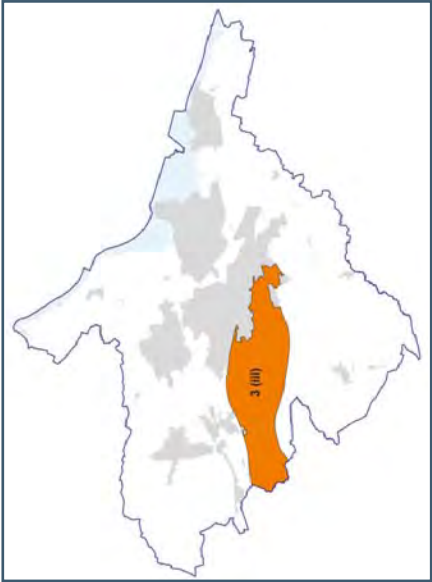


6.9 Local Landscape Character Area 3(iii) Castlecary/Shieldhill Plateau Farmland

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- Gently undulating farmland, characterised by the transitional location between the sheltered, largely urbanised lowland river valley and the exposed moorland plateau.
- Mixed farming with improved grassland for sheep and horse grazing and arable fields on the lower, more sheltered ground.
- Much less exposed or remote in character than LLCAs 3(i) and 3(ii).
- Due to this location, there are extensive views northwards and the northern plateau farmlands are very evident in views from the urban edge and are important to its setting.
- Network of Core Paths provide important outdoor recreation including circular walking and cycle routes to a large number of people living close by.
- Underlying geology of predominantly Carboniferous millstone grit with glacial tills and moderate quality soils to the west, with some Westphalia coal measures in the central and eastern parts.
- Drained by a series of mostly inconspicuous tributaries of the River Carron and River Avon; small waterbodies dot the landscape.
- Land cover is predominantly uniform, with regular rectilinear and evenly spaced fields associated with large estates including the Callendar Estate, with a maintained, well managed character including clipped hedges of beech, hawthorn and gorse, and well maintained stone dykes.
- This estate feel gradually weakens further south on the higher ground, where field boundaries are increasingly defined by post and wire fences, with some gappy stone dykes and gappy hedges.
- Well-wooded character, with an extensive coniferous plantation and numerous broadleaved or mixed woods, and roadside shelterbelts, provides a medium scale, semi-open character to the landscape.
- Sparsely settled, with a scatter of regularly spaced farmstead's and isolated cottages linked by a few minor roads running grid-like in either a north-south or east-west direction.
- Overhead power lines and pylons zigzag across the area, where the tall mast of the Westerglen Transmitting Station are also conspicuous features on the north-facing ridge.
- Some evidence of past coal mining with disused workings and associated infrastructure.

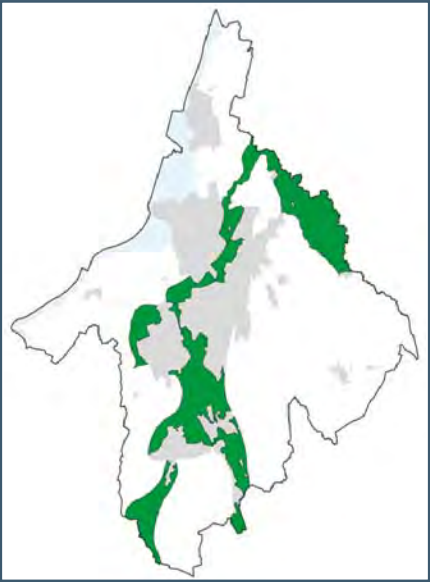
Part of Slammanan Plateau 'Landscape Character Area' in original Landscape Character Assessment.



6.10 Landscape Character Type 4: Lowland River Valleys

Key Characteristics of the LCT

- Valleys cut by rivers generally flowing west-east into the River Forth, ranging from narrow, deep, gorge-like valleys to wide, almost flat valleys through the urban fringe.
- The Carron Glen and the Avon Gorge are mostly densely wooded, enclosed, steep-sided valleys but occasionally follow wider, flatter valleys.
- These gorge-like valleys contain mostly semi-natural broadleaved woodland, and are sparsely settled with isolated steadings amongst pastoral farmland on the higher, shallower slopes.
- The River Carron, Bonny Water and tributaries flow in wider, very gently rolling, shallow valleys through the urban fringe, between the hill fringes in the west to the flat floodplain carselands of the Forth to the east.
- The main built up areas and major transport routes are found in the urban fringe valleys, including major roads, railways and canals, with almost continuous development in an east-west corridor through the centre of the Falkirk Council area.
- Although dominated by extensive development between Banknock, Dunipace/Denny, Falkirk and Polmont, there is a mixture of pasture and arable fields, occasional mature deciduous or mixed woodland and fragmented lines of trees, open recreational areas and typical urban fringe areas of scrub and waste ground.



- Beyond the built up areas, much of the river valley landscape through the urban fringe is covered by Green Belt policy to protected its open character.
- Network of Core Paths and a wide range of other routes provide valuable recreational amenity and commuting links for the local community and non-motorised visitors.

Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs)

There are five LLCAs in this LCT within the Falkirk Council area:

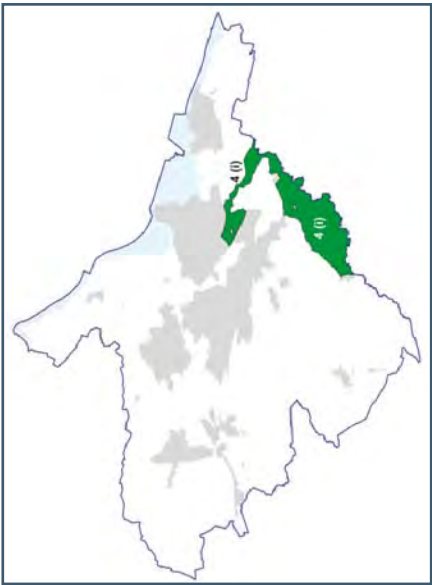
- LLCA 4(i) Avon Valley
- LLCA 4(ii) Carron Glen
- LLCA 4(iii) Bonny Water
- LLCA 4(iv) Lower Carron/Bonny Water
- LLCA 4(v) Falkirk - Grangemouth Urban Fringe

6.11 Local Landscape Character Area 4(i) Avon Valley

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- Deep, gorge-like, narrow, incised river valley in two distinct areas:
 - (i) Along the south-eastern Falkirk Council boundary from Kaemuir Farm to Whitecross.
 - (ii) From the Falkirk Council boundary with West Lothian Council at Linlithgow to the Polmont/Grangemouth urban edge, running between the rolling farmlands and the coastal hills.
- Beyond the deep, narrow valley along the Falkirk Council boundary, the valley widens out to the west of Kaemuir Farm and between Whitecross and Linlithgow, into a gently rolling, well-treed landscape of good quality arable farmland interspersed with a small scale field pattern of permanent pasture close to the river, designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV).
- Intimate, small-scale, enclosed valley, with dense mixed and ancient semi-natural woodland in the gorge, with woodland policies and avenues of trees at Candie House, roadside hedges and shelterbelts, overgrown hedgerows and individual trees elsewhere adding to the well-wooded character of the area.
- The River Avon Heritage Trail between Avonbridge and Linlithgow is a significant recreational resource following the river bank, with features of interest including weirs, waterfalls, the Westfield Viaduct, Avon Viaduct (taking the Edinburgh to Glasgow railway across the River Avon) and the Avon Aqueduct (the second longest in Britain, taking the Union Canal over the River Avon) and the Muiravonside Country Park.
- Millhall Reservoir and Grangemouth Golf Course lie to the north of the M9, north of Polmont.
- Several small, narrow, sinuous burns flow southwards or eastwards into the River Avon, and are attractive features in the landscape, especially where they also cut deeper, wooded valleys as at North Glen and South Glen.
- A801 bisects the area from north to south, with a number of minor roads running east-west, linking the larger settlements of Avonbridge, Standburn, Muiravonside and Whitecross along the northern boundary of the LLCA and numerous regularly spaced farmsteads throughout the area.
- Two large overhead power lines and pylons cut north-south through the area.
- Enclosed river valley limits views but elsewhere on the rolling ridges there are extensive distant views to the south towards the Pentland Hills and northwards across the Firth of Forth to the Ochil Hills.

Avon Valley 'Landscape Character Area' in original Landscape Character Assessment.

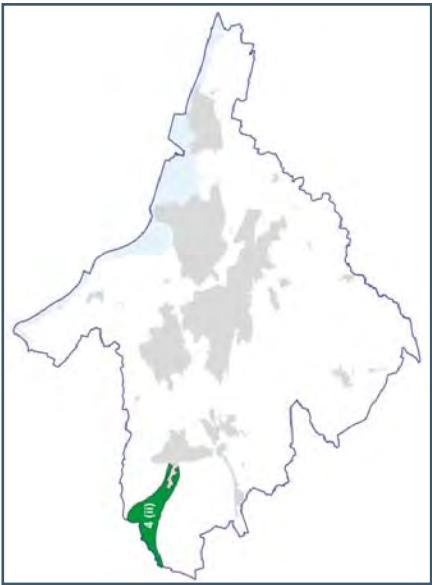


6.12 Local Landscape Character Area 4(ii) Carron Glen

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- The middle course of the River Carron bisects the Lowland Hill Fringes as it winds its way from the upper Lowland Hills in North Lanarkshire in the west, through the urban fringe and coastal margins to the north of Grangemouth, and out into the River Forth.
- Formed by glacial and fluvial erosion, it cuts a shallow course through a narrow, steep sided valley between the more resistant surrounding igneous, intrusive rocks of the Touch Hills and Kilsyth Hills, opening out into a wider valley defined by the extent of views up the shoulders of the Lowland Hill Fringes, including the rocky outcrops at Skea Craig.
- Within the wider valley the river cuts through the narrow, steep sided Carron Glen, with ancient semi-native oak and beech/ash woodland.
- The Buckie Burn flows into the River Carron from the Touch Hills in a distinctive, steep sided 'V' shaped wooded valley.
- More diverse landscape of pasture, scrub, bracken and rough grassland on the upper valley sides and shoulders.
- A series of weirs, waterfalls and spouts, and small footbridges add features of interest to the valley landscape.
- B818 follows the valley from Stoneywood in the east to Carron bridge and beyond to the west, with a number of small farmsteads in the valley accessed from narrow tracks either side of the 'B' road.
- Views are generally enclosed, confined to the valley sides, although the intimate, small scale, natural character of the valley is somewhat compromised by views of wind turbines at the Craigengelt and Earlsburn wind farms in the Touch Hills, and of the old reservoir building and modern water works building on the south side of the valley.

Middle Carron 'Landscape Character Area' in original Landscape Character Assessment.



6.13 Local Landscape Character Area 4(iii) Bonny Water

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- Open, medium-large scale valley of the Bonny Water closely follows the southern edge of the urban conurbation comprising Banknock, Haggs, Longcroft, Parkfoot and Dennyloanhead, including the roadside settlement of Allandale, and extends eastwards to Bonnybrideg/Greenhill.
- Underlain by a variety of rocks, principally millstone grits and limestones, proving less resistant to erosion than the surrounding harder basalts.
- South of Banknock, the Bonny Water follows the same narrow course through a steep sided, tree lined valley as the Forth & Clyde Canal, before separating and opening out in to the wider, flatter, larger scale valley.
- Historically an important route for communication, with roads, railway lines and associated infrastructure, the canal and locks, river and the Antonine Wall, with Roman forts and camps, all within the river valley.
- Urban influences, including warehousing and an industrial estate south of Dennyloanhead, have a significant influence on the character of the landscape - however there are small areas of pasture and arable fields on the floodplain, with small clumps of riverside deciduous woodland, and there is an important area of wooded open space between Dennyloanhead and Bonnyfield.



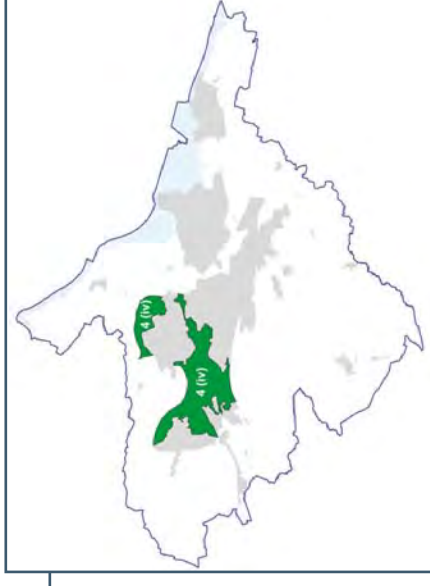
Part of Denny Muir 'Landscape Character Area' & part of Falkirk / Denny Urban Fringe 'Landscape Character Area' in original Landscape Character Assessment.

6.14 Local Landscape Character Area 4(iv) Lower Carron/Bonny Water

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- A wide swathe of low, very gently rolling land where the Bonny Water meets the lower stretches of the River Carron between Denny, Bonnybridge, Larbert and Falkirk, and continues eastwards in a narrow, shallow valley between Carron and Bainsford/Langlees.
- The LLCA lies between the rising ground of the Lowland Hill Fringes to the north and the elevated Lowland Plateau to the south.
- An area of raised ground beyond a ridgeline lies above the floodplain carselands to the north and east of Stenhousemuir/Antonhill, representing an area of 'raised beach' landscape characterised by its relatively level, raised platform historically used for settlement (Kinnaid House is located here) and communication (the M9 including Junctions 7 & 8, and the A88 pass through the area) which have a considerable influence on the urban edge, transitional area.
- Urban influences have a significant influence on the character of the area, with major transport routes, associated structures and other infrastructure and development impacting on the openness of the valley.
- Numerous power lines and pylons branch out from the electricity sub-station, with other land uses within the densely settled, industrialised valley including housing, business parks, factories and other industrial buildings, hospitals and a sewage works, although golf courses maintain some openness.
- The expansion of development creates an inharmonious landscape, with much fertile farmland being lost and the setting of the Antonine Wall and Roman Fort remains at Rough Castle being compromised.
- The Falkirk Wheel is now a major tourist attraction, with panoramic views to the north, east and west.
- Urban influences have less of an impact on the character of the River Carron valley east of Denny where mixed farming, riverside and roadside tree belts and deciduous woodland (for example at Headswood House) provide an attractive, more intimate valley landscape with views northwards into the wooded hill fringes.
- Tree belts, avenues and policy woodland at Kinnaid House, with boundary stone dykes, give a designed-landscape feel to this part of the LLCA.
- To the east the well-wooded meanders of the River Carron, and the Carron Dams SSSI, are features of landscape interest in contrast to the surrounding residential development.
- Maintaining the open, undeveloped nature of these parts of the LLCA is recognised by the Local Plan Green Belt designation.
- Grangemouth petrochemical developments and the Ochil Hills form important backdrops in many views.

Part of Falkirk/Denny Urban Fringe 'Landscape Character Area' in original Landscape Character Assessment.

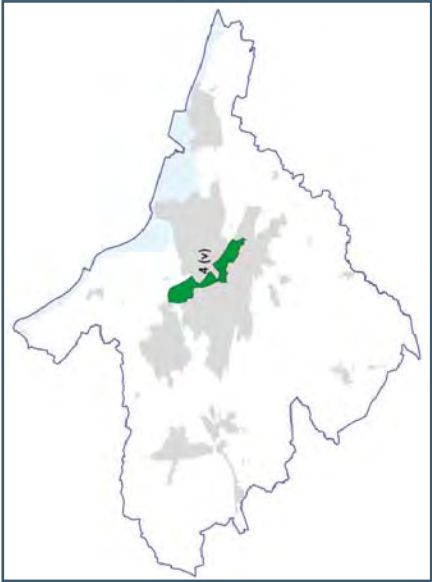


6.15 Local Landscape Character Area 4(v) Falkirk - Grangemouth Urban Fringe

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- A relatively narrow, flat valley between Falkirk and Grangemouth, its character heavily influenced by nearby industrialisation and other development including the petrochemical works, large warehousing, the West Mains Industrial Estate, sewage works, Falkirk Football Stadium and other urban fringe uses.
- M8 motorway and trunk roads including the A9 pass through or alongside the character area, with roadside facilities including a Travelodge and Premier Inn.
- At the northern end the River Carron meets the Forth & Clyde Canal where a series of locks provide landscape interest (the location of the major visitor attraction of 'The Helix', an imaginative project to provide a sustainable new gateway to Falkirk and Grangemouth, including a new canal hub with boating facilities to improve access to and from the Forth Estuary and Scotland's canal network, within an attractive greenspace parkland setting linked by paths and cycleways).
- Areas of woodland and grassland are important in maintaining separation between Falkirk and Grangemouth, including woodland at Langlees and the designed garden at Carron House in the north of the LLCA either side of the River Carron, recognised by its designation as Green Belt.
- The southern edge of the valley at Laurieston rises up to a ridge of higher ground above the A9, the sloping fields and in parts wooded edge providing relief from the surrounding development.
- An area opens out between Laurieston and Polmont and includes remnants of the Antonine Wall and Roman Fort at Mumrills.
- Several burns wind their way through this predominantly open, undulating part of the LLCA.

Part of Falkirk/Denny Urban Fringe 'Landscape Character Area' in original Landscape Character Assessment.



6.16 Landscape Character Type 5: Rolling Farmlands

Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs)

There is one LLCA in this LCT within the Falkirk Council area:

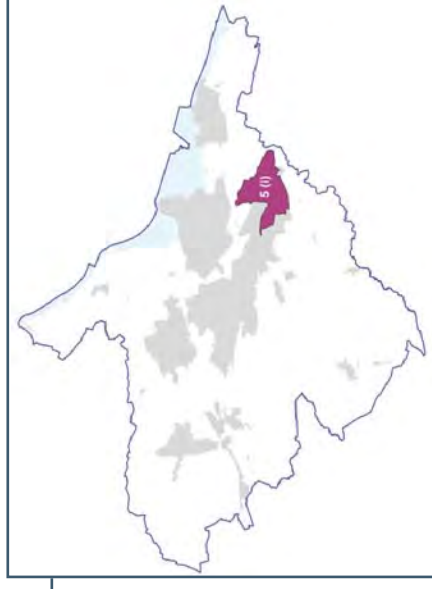
- **LLCA 5(i) Manuel Farmlands**

Local Landscape Character Area 5(i) Manuel Farmlands

Key Characteristics of the LCT/LLCA

- The Rolling Farmlands lies to the east of the Falkirk Council area, east of Polmont and between two areas of the Avon Valley which envelopes the LLCA to the north, east and south.
- Underlying geology is Carboniferous millstone grit with glacial till and generally good quality soil.
- The Rolling Farmlands LLCA is distinguished from the Castlecary/Shieldhill Plateau Farmland by its lower altitude and more undulating landform as a result of glacial and fluvio-glacial action.
- The ground rises from the Avon Valley, from the north and east, westwards, at first in a series of minor, smooth hummocks and wet hollows at between 50-60m AOD, then more gradually and uniformly towards the urban edge at Polmont at around 100m AOD, creating a small-medium scale, smoothly rolling landscape.
- The character of the area is largely derived from its location and its underlying geology; due to its location it is heavily influenced by the major transport routes of the M9, A801 and A803, and the Edinburgh to Glasgow railway and the Union Canal which also pass through the area.
- Due to its underlying geology, this is a disturbed, previously worked landscape, with the former Manuel brick works at the centre of the LLCA, served by a now dismantled railway, and a former fireclay mine is now a major landfill site in various stages of operation and restoration, to the north of the LLCA.
- Surrounding the former brick works, the mixed use farmland is generally unsettled with only a few farmsteads, and large estate houses at Lathallan, Avondale House and The Haining, providing evidence of the good quality soils.
- Policy woodland and avenues around the estates are features in the landscape, whilst broadleaved woodland at Haining Wood and coniferous plantations help to screen the Whitecross Industry Park and reduce the visual impact of the former brick works.
- Narrow burn-side tree belts provide areas of nature conservation importance which are generally lacking due to the extensive agricultural and developed landuse of the Rolling Farmlands.
- The ruinous Almond Castle provides archaeological heritage interest and is a feature in the landscape in views from the railway and canal.

Part of Bo'ness Coastal Hills 'Landscape Character Area' in original Landscape Character Assessment.



6.17 Landscape Character Type 6: Coastal Margins

Key Characteristics of the LCT

- A broad swathe of land alongside the Firth of Forth and influenced by it, ranging from inter-tidal mudflats, to flat, low-lying and largely unsettled carselands, designed landscapes and mansion houses, areas dominated by built development and industrial infrastructure, to rolling coastal hills.
- The low-lying carseland in the northeast and east are the main arable and mixed farming areas of the Falkirk Council area.
- Complex inter-relationships between coastal processes, including flooding, erosion and sea level rise, pollution, internationally important habitats, and development and recreational pressures, gives the coastal zone a distinctive character more specifically distinguished as either developed or un-developed coast.

Local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)

There are four LLCAs in this LCT within the Falkirk Council area:

- LLCA 6(i) Bo’ness Coastal Hills
- LLCA 6(ii) Grangemouth/Kinneil Flats
- LLCA 6(iii) Skinflats
- LLCA 6(iv) Carse of Forth



6.18 Local Landscape Character Area 6(i) Bo'ness Coastal Hills

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- A series of east-west aligned rolling coastal hills extending from the edge of Grangemouth, around Bo'ness to Blackness, approximately between 100-150m AOD with a general down slope to the north to Bo'ness and to the south to the River Avon.
- Mudflats at Blackness Bay between the mean low and high water tides of the Firth of Forth, designated SPA and SSSI, and Bo'ness Foreshore wildlife site and Nature Reserve provide estuarine habitat supporting various plants and animals.
- Flat coastal margin at Bo'ness is developed with industrial units and the disused dock, with the Bo'ness steam railway line running from the former docks southwards.
- A series of minor burns drain the area either northwards to the Forth or south to the steep, well-wooded gorge of the River Avon which marks the southern boundary of the LLCA.



- A network of 'B' roads and other minor lanes generally run east-west along slightly raised ridges, providing extensive views in all directions, whilst two 'A' roads roll north-south through the LLCA providing extensive views from high ground northwards across the Forth to the Ochil Hills and southwards to the Pentlands Hills.
- In contrast, views are limited from lower-lying areas, providing a more enclosed, small-scale, strong rural character.
- Network of Core Paths, including a circular path around Blackness Castle, foreshore path from Blackness past the fishery near Stacks Farm to Kinneil Nature Reserve, Sustrans National Cycle Network Route 76 and path to the steam railway and Birkhill Clay Mine, provide valuable recreational and commuting routes for the local community and non-motorised visitors.
- Airngath Hill just over the boundary in West Lothian is a localised high point at 171m AOD, where the West Lothian Golf Clubhouse is conspicuous, and the folly tower at the House of the Binns is another landmark feature just beyond the Falkirk Council area, on Binns Hill at 113m AOD.
- Predominantly medium-large scale, open or semi-open farmland mostly ley grassland but with arable cultivation reflecting the fertile nature of the well-drained soils.
- Large fields where hedges have been removed, elsewhere a mix of post and wire fences, dry stone dykes and hawthorn and beech hedges which provide a mostly well maintained, well managed appearance to the landscape which is designated as AGLV.
- Woodlands are rare but there are frequent lines of roadside trees and narrow shelterbelts.
- A steep escarpment with mature broadleaved woodland and a conifer plantation lies between the River Avon and the designed grounds and wood at Kinneil House, providing a strong, well defined edge to the LLCA.
- Similarly a steep escarpment runs between Carriden Brae and Blackness Bay, and includes the mature broadleaved woodland at Shore Woods.
- Many historical and archaeological features, including the course of the Antonine Wall and Roman Camp remains, Blackness Castle, Carriden House and Roman Fort.
- In the extreme eastern corner of the LLCA is a smaller scale landscape divided into small rectilinear fields with a grid pattern of minor roads and numerous regularly-spaced single storey small-holdings alongside the roads, with large farm estates of the Champney Holdings, Cauldcrofts Holdings, and the Mannerston Holdings in-between, and other landuses including a garden centre, reflecting the fertile nature of the soils.

Part of Bo'ness Coastal Hills 'Landscape Character Area' in original Landscape Character Assessment.

6.19 Local Landscape Character Area 6(ii) Grangemouth/Kinneil Flats

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- A unique, developed character due to the presence of the huge petrochemical works, docks and other industrial installations on the wide, extensive, large scale coastal flats alongside the Firth of Forth.
- Flat land at Kinneil between Grangemouth and Bo'ness lies on land reclaimed from the Forth saltmarsh and comprises a sewage works, industrial units and an extensive area of land-raise, with horticultural land uses and wet grassland in-between.
- Mudflats between the mean low and high water tides of the Firth of Forth are designated SPA and SSSI, and together with Kinneil saline lagoon provide important estuarine habitat supporting various plants and animals.
- Kinneil Nature Reserve to the east provides an important feeding and roosting area for birds and is a former landfill site.

Part of Grangemouth to Bo'ness Flats 'Landscape Character Area' in original Landscape Character Assessment.



6.20 Local Landscape Character Area 6(iii) Skinflats

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- Extending from the M876/A876 to Grangemouth, and bounded by the M9 and the urban edge of Carronshore to the west.
- Very low lying, flat coastal margin at between 4-8m AOD, and including the internationally important Skinflats Nature Reserve on the mudflats between the mean low and high water springs of the Firth of Forth, designated SPA and SSSI.
- Predominant land use is arable farmland in large scale, rectilinear fields with few hedges and mostly post and wire fences as boundaries.
- Small woodland copses are conspicuous within the flat landscape.
- A905 cuts a very straight course through the LLCA, with a roundabout junction to the A88 link road to Stenhousemuir, otherwise minor roads and tracks link to small isolated farmsteads with Skinflats, a narrow ribbon village alongside the A905 being the only settlement of any size.
- The Muirdyke Burn is inconspicuous and follows a shallow, narrow course through the area to the Forth, with the River Carron marking the northern edge of Grangemouth.
- Brackish/saline lagoons at Bothkennar Pools are a priority estuarine habitat supporting various plants and animals.
- Usually unnoticeable features such as lamp columns and telegraph poles are conspicuous in the open landscape.
- Northern views of the Ochil Hills provide a dramatic contrast to the flat landscape, whilst the Longannet Power Station (in particular the tall chimney) and similar structures at Grangemouth also provide contrasting views.
- Network of Core Paths, including route alongside the River Carron and past Bothkennar Pools, and links to SUSTRANS National Cycle Network Route 76, provide valuable recreational and commuting routes for the local community and non-motorised visitors.

Part of Grangemouth to Bo'ness Flats 'Landscape Character Area' & part of Falkirk / Denny Urban Fringe 'Landscape Character Area' in original Landscape Character Assessment.

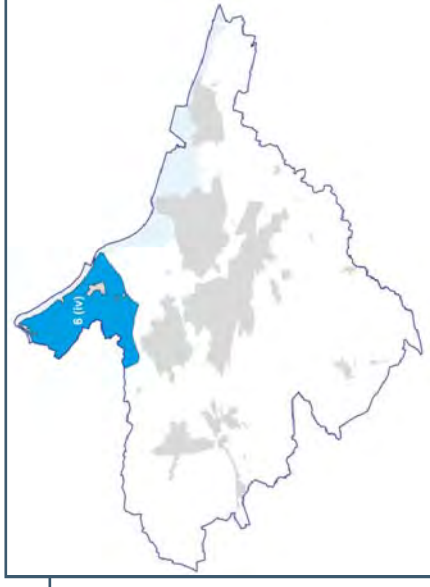


6.21 Local Landscape Character Area 6(iv) Carse of Forth

Key Characteristics of the LLCA

- Extends from the Falkirk Council northern boundary to the M876/A876/Kincardine Bridge.
- Generally flat, expansive, large scale, horizontal carseland with a gradual transition to the Lowland Hill Fringes and Lowland River Valleys to the west and south, to a maximum height of 15m AOD.
- Hill of Dunmore and Hill of Airth are conspicuous features above the carseland, rising to around 30m AOD and 38m AOD respectively.
- Predominantly arable cultivation of good quality soils, with permanent improved pasture for sheep grazing on poorer soils.
- Extensive wooded peatlands at Dunmore Moss and Letham Moss, including in part artificial drainage in unnatural, long straight lines.
- Very large scale fields with few hedges or hedgerow trees and predominantly post and wire boundary fencing.
- Occasional shelterbelts and policy woodland associated with the designed landscape at Dunmore and around Airth Castle.
- Includes the northern end of the internationally important Skinflats Nature Reserve on the mudflats between the mean low and high water springs of the Firth of Forth, designated SPA and SSSI.
- Occasional shelterbelts and policy woodland associated with the designed landscape at Dunmore and around Airth Castle.
- Includes the northern end of the internationally important Skinflats Nature Reserve on the mudflats between the mean low and high water springs of the Firth of Forth, designated SPA and SSSI.
- Settlement is concentrated on the high ground at Airth but with smaller settlement inland at Letham and on the coastline at Dunmore and South Alloa where there are piers and slipways in to the Forth.
- Elsewhere a small number of isolated farmsteads accessed off the A905 or one of the small number of minor roads.
- Network of Core Paths, including routes alongside the River Forth, through woodlands, farmland and past historic buildings of The Pineapple and Airth Castle, and links to Sustrans National Cycle Network Route 76, provide valuable recreational and commuting routes for the local community and non-motorised visitors.
- A number of small burns meander across the carseland in shallow, narrow courses and into the Forth.
- Extensive views from the flat carselands across the Forth to the Ochil Hills which provide a dramatic contrast in landform and a backcloth to the coastline.
- Occasionally views are foreshortened by woodland.
- Overhead power lines and pylons, including two close parallel lines and two huge pylons at either side of the Forth with continuously flashing lights on the top are significant, conspicuous features across the flat landscape.
- The Clackmannanshire Bridge and Kincardine Bridge are obvious built features although their low, horizontal form is in-keeping with the flat carseland landscape.

Part of Carse of Forth (East Stirling) 'Landscape Character Area' in original Landscape Character Assessment.



Background to Falkirk Landscape Character Assessment and National Landscape Character Assessment

7.1 The 1990's landscape character assessments for the whole of Scotland involved identifying, describing and mapping the variety of landscapes and the production of guidelines for future development and land management. Two Landscape Character Assessments cover the Falkirk Council area: **The Central Region Landscape Character Assessment Supplement - Stirling to Grangemouth (1998)** (produced for SNH by David Tydesley and Associates) and the **Central Region Landscape Character Assessment (1999)** (produced for SNH by ASH Consulting Group). Both documents detail the physical features and processes that have shaped the landscape and they identify and describe the different landscape units ('Landscape Character Areas') within generic Landscape Character Types: they also identify the factors that influence landscape change. These documents detail the positive and negative attributes of each landscape unit and provide guidelines for future development and land management. The background historical, geological and geographical information on the local landscape and the broad general descriptions detailed in these two documents remains valid and accurate. However, new development pressures and changes in land use and land management since the late 1990's have highlighted the need to accurately refine the landscape units and provide new guidelines associated with each.

7.2 In 2013, landscape consultants employed by Falkirk Council undertook a 'Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Energy Development in the Falkirk Area' to inform its 'Spatial Framework and Guidance for Wind Energy Development'. As part of the brief for this landscape capacity study, the consultants were required to revise and refine the landscape character classifications further due to the nature of wind turbine development and the need to ensure more robust guidance was available for wind energy in each landscape. This refining of the landscape character classifications has resulted in the division of some of the original landscape character units to form new ones and changes to the landscape character boundaries identified in the original assessments. The term 'Local Landscape Character Area' has been used in the study to distinguish the new areas from the original landscape units (termed 'Landscape Character Areas' in the original landscape character assessments). Classification and descriptions of the key characteristics of each new 'Local Landscape Character Area' used in the wind energy capacity study have enabled the landscapes of Falkirk to be considered at a finer grain of detail to assist in development of turbine siting guidance. These new 'Local Landscape Character Areas' can also be used to develop a more locally specific detailed assessment of landscape sensitivities and to develop detailed local guidance for managing landscape change. The 16 new 'Local Landscape Character Areas', which fall into six nationally recognised generic Landscape Character Types, are used for this revision of the Falkirk Landscape Character Assessment. The two original assessments covering Falkirk Council area identified nine landscape units within four Landscape Character Types. The relationships of the original 1999 Landscape Character Types and associated landscape units to the new Landscape Character Types and Local Landscape Character Areas developed for the revised assessment classification are set out in the figure below:

Original Landscape Character Assessment (1999)			Revised Landscape Character Assessment (2013)	
Landscape Character Types	Landscape Units		Landscape Character Types	Local Landscape Character Areas
Lowland Hill Fringes			(1) Lowland Hills	1(i) Kilsyth/Denny Hills
	Denny Muir		(2) Lowland Hill Fringes	2(i) Denny Hills Fringe
	East Touch Fringe			2(ii) Touch Hills Fringe
Lowland Plateau	Slamannan Plateau		(3) Lowland Plateau	3(i) Slamannan Plateau
				3(ii) Darnrig/Gardrum Plateau Moorland
				3(iii) Castlecary/Shieldhill Plateau Farmland
Lowland River Valleys	Avon Valley		(4) Lowland River Valleys	4(i) Avon Valley
	Middle Carron			4(ii) Carron Glen
	Falkirk - Denny Fringe			4(iii) Bonny Water
				4(iv) Lower Carron/Bonny Water
				4(v) Falkirk - Grangemouth Urban Fringe
Coastal Margins	Carse of Forth		(5) Rolling Farmlands	
	Bo'ness Coastal Hills			5(i) Manuel Farmlands
		Grangemouth - Bo'ness Flats		(6) Coastal Margins
				6(ii) Grangemouth/Kinneil Flats
				6(iii) Skinflats
				6(iv) Carse of Forth

Updated Falkirk Council Area Landscape Character Classification

8.1 The Denny Hills Special Landscape Area: Statement of Importance

Overview:

Highly visually prominent area of lowland hills and hill fringes, forming the eastern edge of the Campsie/Kilsyth Hills range. This high ground together with the enclosed character of the Carron Valley and the relatively low level of development form a landscape of distinct character that is unique within Falkirk Council area. The area forms a strong contrast to the highly settled area on lower ground to the east and south.

Landscape Description:

- Local Landscape Character Areas falling within/partially within SLA: 1 (i) Kilsyth/Denny Hills (entire area), 2(i) Denny Hills Fringe (western part), 2(ii) Touch Hills Fringe (western part), 4 (ii) Carron Glen (main section west of Fankerton).
- Locally distinctive area of lowland hills, hill fringes and incised valley of River Carron to the west of Denny containing the highest land within Falkirk Council area which forms a strong western backdrop to the main settlements.
- Highest ground (rising to 357m) is open, of medium to large scale upland character, with land cover of moorland, commercial forestry plantations and unimproved rough grazing land and a lack of development. Hills include some craggy rock outcrops. Middle hill slopes with large improved and unimproved grazing fields enclosed with fencing or stone dykes, shelterbelts. Lower hill ground of small to medium scale, rolling landform, open character, with rough/semi-improved/improved grassland and arable fields, including some hedges and hedgerow trees, small blocks of broadleaf and mixed woodland.
- River Carron forms a steep sided glen, developing into a distinctive broadleaf wooded gorge as it flows east, with semi-natural woodland, forming a distinctive feature in the lower eastern part of the area; a diverse vegetation cover is located on the valley sides of the Carron Valley includes pasture, native shrub cover and woodland as well as rough grassland. Minor burns flow into river.
- Farms, equestrian centres and outlying dwellings form main development; some dwellings are steading conversions. Telecommunication masts on Myot Hill and the transmission line on the eastern lower ground on the edge of the SLA are visually prominent; also large buildings associated with the water works on the edge of the Carron Valley and a quarry on the north-east boundary. Some boundary treatments of dwellings not in keeping with rural location.
- Roads limited to B818 along Carron Valley and minor roads on lower slopes on eastern side of SLA.
- Strong sense of relative wildness, naturalness and remoteness of 'upland' character, experienced particularly from highest ground and the upper Carron Valley. Area is unique within the Council area, forming strong contrast to the developed lowland to the east.
- Highest land is visually prominent from outside SLA over an extensive area of lower ground to the east, including Falkirk, surrounding settlements, roads, railways, canals and notably from the Falkirk Wheel which is a nationally important visitor attraction.
- Extensive panoramic views are obtained from minor roads and higher ground within and across this SLA over the Forth Valley and to the Pentlands to east, southwards, northwards and eastwards to where Craigengelt and Earlsburn windfarms are prominent.
- Enclosed internal views along the lower Carron Glen and to the open upper valley sides and woodland along the river are locally distinctive and unique within the Falkirk Council area.
- Area covers approximately 21km².

The Denny Hills Special Landscape Area: Statement of Importance

Other Natural Heritage, Cultural Heritage and Recreational Interests:

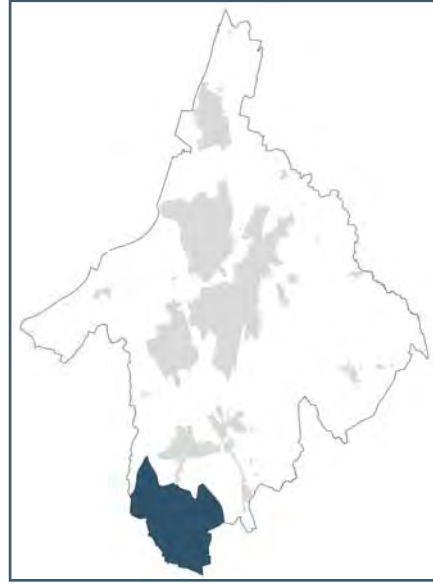
- B818 is important scenic route to Fintry and the Carron Reservoir with associated forest recreational activities (eg mountain biking sites); it is also the most direct route from Denny and Falkirk to the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park.
- SSSIs at Denny Muir and Carron Glen, Scottish Wildlife Trust Reserve at Carron Glen, three Falkirk Wildlife Sites.
- Hill forts at Myot Hill and Braes.

Boundary:

Continuous to Council border to north and linking with Southern Hills Local Landscape Area of Stirling Council and the Regional Scenic Area of North Lanarkshire Council to the west and south. Southern and eastern boundaries generally defined by visual horizon and ridges as viewed from lower ground and approaches, following the 150m contour, but excluding the settlement of Fankerton and quarry to the north. Boundary extends from Council border north of Cowden Hill quarry, eastwards to the north side of Drumbowie reservoir, then northwards around the east side of Myot Hill, crossing the Carron Glen on the west side of Fankerton towards Middle Barnago; boundary then takes in upper hill slopes and woodland north east to Braes and the M80, then extends north west around the quarry to the Falkirk/Stirling border.

Special Qualities:

- Includes area of highest ground in Council area with locally distinct and diverse 'upland' and hill fringe character forming important western backdrop and setting to main settlements and a prominent area of hill land seen from majority of the lowland area of Falkirk Council area.
- Limited development, forming strong contrast with developed lowland to south and east.
- Extensive panoramic views from minor roads and paths within area.
- River Carron, with steep wooded slopes and gorge like character in eastern part of area and diverse vegetation cover along valley sides.
- Carron Valley, with B818 (Denny-Fintry) providing a scenic route through valley with views from it of distinct 'upland' character, unique within Falkirk.
- Enclosed views along lower Carron Valley to valley sides with more open views from upper valley.



8.2 Slamannan Plateau/Avon Valley Special Landscape Area : Statement of Importance

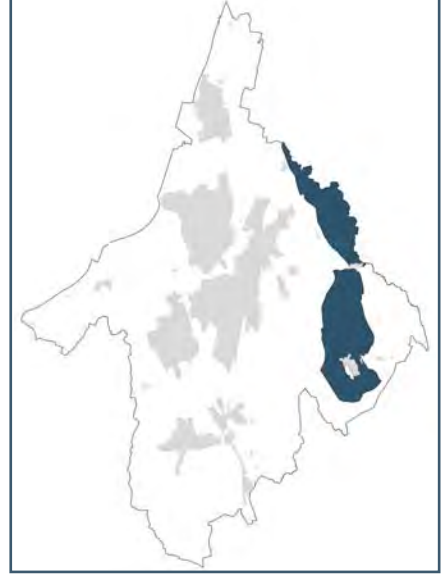
Overview:

Combines two distinct areas separated by Avonbridge. Area of varied land cover and landform to west comprising of worked agricultural land and forestry contrasting with a more intimate and wooded agricultural valley landscape to the east. Settled, but incorporating the most intact and representative areas of landscape in the southern part of the Falkirk Council area.

Landscape Description:

Area West of Avonbridge

- Local Landscape Character Areas: 3(i) Slamannan Plateau (western part of LLCA), 3 (ii) Damrig/Gardrum Plateau Moorland (small southern area of LLCA directly north of Slamannan).
- Excludes settlements of Slamannan and Avonbridge and associated areas allocated for future development.
- Generally rolling plateau with very varied landcover and frequent changes in landform; large-medium scale and open with improved and semi-improved grassland and areas of arable land; includes part of area of rough and improved grassland which is nationally important for overwintering flocks of bean geese.
- Settled, agriculturally worked landscape, with evidence of former opencast area and associated infrastructure in surrounding area.
- Generally covers area of improved land and lower more fertile valley area of plateau.
- Coniferous plantation and mixed woodland in the western part of area; policy woodland and shelterbelts in the smaller scale, intimate and hummocky area south of Loch Elrig, in northern part of area; elsewhere, blocks of broadleaf woodland, policy woodland, tree groups, shelterbelts, tree avenues; overgrown hedges with individual trees, broadleaf woodland along field edges and watercourses.
- Area to west is more open and of moorland character with conifer plantation.
- Central and eastern part of area of small to medium fields, with hedgerow enclosure.
- Wind turbines evident within area.
- Area drains west to east into River Avon via tributary burns.



Slamannan Plateau/Avon Valley Special Landscape Area : Statement of Importance

Landscape Description:

Area East of Avonbridge

- Local Landscape Character Areas: 4 (i) Avon Valley (main part of LLCA, excluding small northern section).
- Rolling landform in north and east with gradual transition southwards to south facing valley side of river Avon; deep, narrow, gorge-like river valley of River Avon marks southern boundary and Council boundary with West Lothian.
- Generally small fields of grassland and arable, but some areas of rough pasture and poor drainage and well maintained boundaries.
- Valley widens westwards near Kaemuir and east of Whitecross into gently rolling wooded landscape with arable farmland interspersed with small scale fields of permanent pasture close to the river.
- Strongly wooded character; many small areas of broadleaf woodland, particularly along watercourses, road and field boundaries; tree avenues and policy woodlands; overgrown hedgerows with individual trees frequently forming field boundaries; limited stone boundary walls.
- River valley is intimate, small scale and enclosed with dense mixed and ancient semi-natural woodland beside the river, with woodland policies and tree at Candie.
- Small burns from area flow west and south into river Avon and form important attractive landscape features where they cut deeply into wooded valleys.
- A801 is only main road cutting through the area, but a number of minor roads run through the area which link Avonbridge, Standburn, Muiravonside, Whitecross and numerous farm steadings.
- Settled with numerous farm steadings and outlying dwellings.
- Two major overhead power lines cross area running north - south.

Generally:

- Very varied landcover and landform in western part provides differing sense of tranquility and naturalness depending on location. Area east of Avonbridge has strong intimate wooded character with sense of enclosure and naturalness.
- Eastern section of SLA is unique within the Council area due to intimate character, whereas western area locally unique due to its very varied and changing character within a relatively small area.
- Visibility within the area is limited by undulating topography and landcover (particularly in the east), although extensive views are obtained out of area towards the Denny Hills, the Ochils and the Pentlands from higher exposed areas and minor roads on ridges.
- Higher points within AGLV are visible from the surrounding outside area and from high points in adjacent authority areas (eg from Cockleroy and Cairnpapple Hill and environs in West Lothian Council area).
- Overall area of SLA covers 27km².

Slamannan Plateau/Avon Valley Special Landscape Area : Statement of Importance

Other Natural Heritage, Cultural Heritage and Recreational Interests:

- Muiravonside Country Park in east of SLA.
- The River Avon Heritage Trail (between Avonbridge and Linlithgow) is an important recreational feature following the river with a range of features along the route (weirs, waterfalls, Avon Viaduct, Avon Aqueduct).
- Falkirk Wildlife Sites throughout area.
- Bean geese have high fidelity to the fields around Slamannan and Avonbridge.
- Battlefield site near extreme east of SLA.

Boundary:

Western section: The AGLV boundary generally follows the ridge lines and area of improved land that surrounds the valley of the upper tributary of the River Avon. The north boundary follows ridgeline north of Wester Jaw and westwards following the minor road between Strathavon and Broom and across a ridge to Hareburn. The boundary then follows B8028 south to the western edge of Avonbridge and then west along the B825 to the junction with the B8022. The boundary runs west along the watercourse flowing from Arnloss and along the ridge through woodland to Binniehill. From Binniehill the boundary follows the minor road as far as Lodge Farm and returns north on the minor road running to Greenhill and then north to include an area of forestry, running to Parkhead before linking with the ridgeline north of Wester Jaw. The area excludes the settlement of Slamannan and the areas allocated for future development on the western and northern sides of the village.

Eastern Section: The northern boundary generally follows the route of the B825 and the ridgeline that visually apparent from this road, before following the River Avon on its southern boundary. The southern boundary forms the boundary of West Lothian Council and this is also continuous with The Bathgate Hills and River Avon Valley SLA designation within that Council area. The western boundary runs along the eastern side of Avonbridge, then extends eastwards forming the northern boundary along the B825 to just south of Standburn. From here, the boundary extends along the ridge south of Standburn, (also forming the boundary of a commercial forestry plantation), along the edge of a shelterbelt to cross the A801 and then follow the northern side of the A825 after Muiravonside; it crosses the Union Canal, generally following the B825 and sections of the visual envelope from this road as far as the railway viaduct over the B825 and the River Avon.

Special Qualities:

- Incorporates the most intact and least developed sections of countryside to the south side of Falkirk.
- In west, generally rolling plateau with localised variations and very varied land use, with changing landcover, enclosure size and pattern.
- In east, transition from rolling landform to shallow south facing valley side of River Avon which flows eastwards into distinctive narrow, gorge-like river valley.
- Farmed and populated rural lowland surrounded by plateau river catchment area and extending to lower ground down river valley eastwards.
- Eastern area has strongly wooded character and is distinctively more intimate in character with small fields and limited extensive views out.
- Wide range of woodland and tree cover overall: conifer plantation, small broadleaf blocks, woodland along watercourses, policy woodland, tree avenues, overgrown hedge and field boundary trees and tree groups and small areas of recent woodland.
- Provides an important contribution to setting of Avonbridge, Slamannan, Standburn and Muiravonside.

8.3 South Bo'ness Special Landscape Area: Statement of Importance

Overview:

Locally distinctive area of rolling hills comprising of agricultural land, forming a strong backdrop and setting to the settlements of Bo'ness and Linlithgow and providing a physical separation between them. Includes sites and features of historic and recreational importance, undeveloped coastline and minor roads. The area forms a strong contrast to the adjacent industrial complex at Grangemouth and the settlement of Bo'ness. The area has a high recreational value due to its juxtaposition with Bo'ness.

Landscape Description:

- Local Landscape Character Areas: 6(i) Bo'ness Coastal Hills (entire area), 4 (i) Avon Valley (north eastern edge of river corridor).
- Gently rolling coastal hills extending from east of Grangemouth to Blackness, and from immediate south of Bo'ness to border with West Lothian. Rising to 150m above sea level and sloping northwards to Bo'ness and southwards to Linlithgow with minor watercourses to Forth and River Avon. Internally, landform includes small shallow valley on higher ground above Bo'ness.
- Extends to Forth Estuary coast with mudflats at Blackness (SPA and SSSI designation); predominant aspect is to north.
- Steep, wooded, narrow, incised River Avon valley on south western boundary.
- Farmland mostly ley grassland and arable land comprising medium to large scale fields, open or semi-open farmland. Field boundaries comprise a mix of post and wire fences, well maintained hedges with individual trees and tree groups; few dry stone walls.
- Champany, Cauldcrofts and Mannerston Holdings in eastern part of AGLV have distinct small scale rectilinear field pattern with small holdings dwellings and buildings extending along minor roads.
- Areas of woodland cover at Kinneil, small to medium shelterbelts and broadleaf woodland groups elsewhere; field boundary/roadside broadleaf trees frequent. Coastline east of Muirhouses on wooded escarpment; includes some untypical areas with limited woodland/tree cover.
- Steep wooded escarpment on northern boundary between Grangemouth and Kinneil, providing a distinct boundary; also steep wooded escarpment along northern coastal boundary between Carriden and Blackness.
- Roads generally west to east through area on ridges at different elevations, providing extensive views outwards.
- Limited sense of remoteness due to proximity of settlements, but locations on minor roads and paths on higher ground have a strong rural and managed agricultural character with distant views out.
- Rural internal part of area and coastline near Blackness and Avon Valley area contrast strongly with adjacent settlements of Bo'ness, Grangemouth and Linlithgow.
- Extensive panoramic views out from internal minor roads/paths and high points in all directions, across settlements of Bo'ness, Grangemouth and Linlithgow to open countryside beyond; highest point on border at West Lothian Golf Club (170m) provides distinct panoramic views in all directions. Views north across Forth to Ochils are dominant from the highest points and northern slopes; internally, views within the SLA are limited by landform and tree cover.
- In west of area, views to the Grangemouth complex from the high minor road between Nether Kinneil and the A905 are a very dominant feature in the middle ground and form a strong contrast with the more distant views to hills in the west.
- Views of the upper part of the SLA from outside are prominent from the south, where the area forms a backdrop to Linlithgow; the northern slopes of the SLA are also a prominent feature forming a backdrop to Bo'ness when viewed from the Fife coastline on the north side of the Forth. Approaching Bo'ness from the west, the wooded escarpment alongside the A904/A905 is visually prominent, forming the northern boundary of the AGLV; the higher ground is also visible from the eastern end of Falkirk/Grangemouth.
- Area covers approximately 18km².

South Bo'ness Special Landscape Area: Statement of Importance

Other Natural Heritage, Cultural Heritage and Recreational Interests:

- Recreational features include: a network of core paths, John Muir Way, National Cycle Network Route 76, part of the Bo'ness and Kinneil Railway, and a golf course.
- Historical and archaeological features, including a section of the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site, Roman camps, Blackness Castle and Carriden House.
- Landmark features also include Airgath Hill at 171m, the tower at House of Binns on Binns Hill (just in West Lothian).
- Adjoins Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Protection Area on Forth coast.
- Local Wildlife Site at Kinneil and east of Carriden.
- Bommains Meadows SSSI (south of Bo'ness) and Avon Gorge SSSI (in west of area).
- Greenbelt to south and west of Bo'ness.

Boundary:

Contiguous with the River Avon on south west boundary and the Falkirk/West Lothian boundary to the south and east. Eastern boundary is contiguous with the Forth Shore SLA in West Lothian. Northern boundary is marked by the distinct steep wooded escarpment running down to the A 904/A905, by the outer western and northern limit of built development of Bo'ness and Muirhouses and by the Forth coast between Carriden and Blackness.

Special Qualities:

- Area of small rolling hills comprising well tended farmland and some woodland blocks / shelterbelts forming an important rural backdrop to Bo'ness and to Linlithgow and providing a strong boundary between these settlements.
- Area forms the landward setting of Bo'ness and uniquely extends to the settlement boundary; incorporates an important stretch of undeveloped coast to north.
- Elevated location near coast enables notable long panoramic views out from high points to the Forth, Ochils and Pentlands and ensures much of the area is visible from the surrounding countryside.
- Includes steep wooded escarpments on northern side and wooded valley and gorge of River Avon to south.
- High recreational usage, framing countryside surrounding Bo'ness.



9.1 Further Guidance and Sources of Information for Developers

In addition to this Supplementary Guidance on landscape character and landscape designations, the following are a selection of local and national documents that are related to landscape issues and provide further information and guidance:

- Falkirk Council Supplementary Guidance SG01: Development in the Countryside
- Falkirk Council Supplementary Guidance SG05: Biodiversity and Development
- Falkirk Council Supplementary Guidance SG06: Trees and Development
- Falkirk Council Supplementary Guidance SG07: Local Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites
- Falkirk Council Supplementary Guidance SG14: Spatial Framework and Guidance for Wind Energy Development
- Falkirk Council Supplementary Guidance SG07: Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Antonine Wall) World Heritage Site
- **Scottish Planning Policy (2014 Revision)**
- **New Housing, Settlement Expansion and the Natural Heritage (SNH)** gives guidance on working with the planning system to ensure positive outcomes for landscape and natural heritage.
- **PAN 44 - Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape** considers design principles for larger developments on the edge of built up areas and provides suggestions to achieve residential developments which are in harmony with their landscape setting and make a positive contribution to existing character.
- **PAN 72 - Housing in the Countryside** sets out key design principles, with the purpose of creating opportunities for good quality rural housing which respects Scottish landscapes and building traditions.
- **PAN 65 - Planning and Open Space** provides advice on the role of the planning system in protecting and enhancing existing open spaces and providing high quality new spaces.
- **PAN 39 - Farm and Forestry Buildings**
- **PAN 60 - Planning for Natural Heritage**
- **Scottish Government: Guide to Farm Diversification & Planning Permission in Scotland**
- **SNH: Central Region Landscape Character Assessment:** <http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/review/123.pdf>
- **SNH: Stirling to Grangemouth Landscape Character Assessment:** <http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/review/124.pdf>
- **SNH: A range of guidance on landscape, planning and development can be found at:** <http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/looking-after-landscapes/landscape-policy-and-guidance/landscape-planning-and-development/>
- **Forestry Commission: Forests and Landscape: UK Forestry Standard Guidelines**
- **Forestry Commission Guideline Note: Short Rotation Coppice in the Landscape**
- **Forestry Commission: Conserving and Managing Trees and Woodlands in Scotland's Designed Landscapes**
- **Forestry Commission: Forest Design Planning - A Guide to Good Practice**

Finalised Supplementary Guidance SG09

August 2014



Falkirk Council
Development Services

Special Economic Sectors**POLICY ECON.6****OUT-OF-CENTRE RETAIL AND LEISURE DEVELOPMENT**

Proposals for significant retail or commercial leisure development not within Falkirk Town Centre, or the District Centres, or not provided for within a Strategic Development Opportunity as specified in Schedule ECON 1, will be assessed in relation to the following:

- 1 the impact on the vitality and viability of Falkirk Town Centre, the District Centres, and any other Strategic Development Opportunity;
- 2 the need for the development;
- 3 the proposal's ability to meet the sequential approach;
- 4 the accessibility of the proposal by a choice of means of transport ;
- 5 the impact on the number and length of car trips; and
- 6 whether the proposal lies within the existing or proposed urban area as defined in the Local Plan.

A Retail/Leisure Impact Assessment addressing these factors will be required for all retail developments of 2,500 sq. m. gross floorspace or more, and for major commercial leisure developments. Assessment of smaller retail developments (between 1,000 and 2,500 sq.m. gross) may also be required in certain circumstances.

- 3.26 Policy ECON.6 sets out criteria against which out-of-centre retail or leisure proposals will be judged. These reflect national policy guidance and are intended to ensure that the roles of Falkirk Town Centre and the District Centres continue to be secured and that such developments, which are major trip generators, are located so that they comply with the Structure Plan's aim of minimising travel by private car. The sequential approach will ensure that developers have first given preference to town centre sites, followed by edge-of-centre sites, and only then by out-of-centre sites in locations that are, or can be easily accessible by a choice of means of transport. The judgement of whether a development is 'significant' will depend on its scale, nature and location. Depending on the scale of the proposal, formal assessment of these factors will be required to accompany planning applications.

POLICY ECON.7:**TOURISM**

The Council will support the development of sustainable tourism in the Council area, through the provision of an improved range and quality of attractions and supporting infrastructure. Accordingly:

- 1 the key locations for development will be the Millennium Canals, Falkirk Town Centre/Callendar Park and Bo'ness;
- 2 development which supports and expands the main target markets of day trips, short breaks, visiting friends and family and business tourism will be particularly encouraged; and
- 3 tourism development must be environmentally sustainable, in terms of its location and design. In particular, any development outwith the urban areas must demonstrate that a countryside location is essential.

- 3.27 Tourism is seen as a key sector for economic growth. Development must focus on the area's strengths such as its central location, its accessibility and its under-exploited heritage. Creation of new attractions must be accompanied by a marked improvement in infrastructure, notably the range and quality of accommodation and effective marketing. Promotion and development will be directed towards the specified target markets.

- 3.28 The **Millennium Canal Link** appears to offer the greatest potential for encouraging the development of tourism over the period of the Structure Plan. The Council area is at the hub of this exciting project which has reopened Scotland's lowland canals to navigation and re-established the city-to-city and coast-to-coast connection. The project fits well with the Structure Plan strategy in that a number of communities within the Council area will benefit from the project. Moreover, the linear nature of the canals means it will allow the area's wider tourism assets to be linked and packaged as a unified visitor attraction. A variety of development opportunities have been identified at key nodes along the canal corridor, the most important of which will be the Falkirk Canal Interchange.

Countryside & Green Belt

The Countryside

3.18 Although perceived to be mainly urban in character, the Falkirk area has an extensive and varied countryside, whose open and relatively undeveloped nature contributes to its character and identity. It is also a place where people live and work, which has to adapt to economic change. The SPP encourages development plans to support more opportunities for small scale housing developments in rural areas. However, high accessibility to the main employment centres of the central belt creates pressure for commuter housing in the countryside which will not necessarily benefit the rural economy.

3.19 The countryside will continue to be defined by reference to a system of Urban and Village Limits. The strategy of the Local Development Plan will be to direct new housing development in the rural areas to the existing villages, in order to sustain their vitality and take advantage of village services and infrastructure. However, there will be circumstances where development in the countryside will be appropriate.

3.20

Policy CG01 Countryside

The Urban and Village Limits defined on the Proposals Map represent the limit to the expansion of settlements. Land outwith these boundaries is designated as countryside, within which development will be assessed in the terms of the relevant supporting countryside policies (Policies CG03 and CG04), and Supplementary Guidance SG01 'Development in the Countryside'.

Green Belt

3.21 Green belt forms an important part of the spatial strategy for the area, its primary purpose in the Falkirk area, being to safeguard the identity of communities by preventing development which would reduce their visual separation. It provides a stronger presumption against development than the 'countryside' designation, and a more long term indication of the future shape of settlements than the Urban Limits. It forms a series of connected wedges or corridors between the main settlements. The protection of landscape setting and greenspace around towns are important related objectives.

3.22

Policy CG02 Green Belt

1. The following areas, as indicated generally on Map 3.1 and detailed on the Proposals Map, are designated as Green Belt:

- Falkirk/Stenhousemuir/Grangemouth/Laurieston Corridor
- Polmont/Grangemouth/Bo'ness/Linlithgow Corridor
- Falkirk/Larbert/Denny/Bonnybridge Corridor
- Callendar Park/Woods

2. The purpose of the Green Belt is:

- To maintain the separate identity and visual separation of settlements
- To protect the landscape setting of settlements; and
- To protect and give access to greenspace for recreation

3. Within the Green Belt, development will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal satisfies the relevant countryside policies, and it can be demonstrated that it will not undermine any of the strategic purposes of the Green Belt as set out in sub section (2) above.

