

quality and distribution to meet the needs of local biodiversity and the needs and aspirations of local communities.

How objectives have been taken into account

Habitats, Species Biodiversity & Protected Sites

6.2.14 New development sites have generally been identified through the Falkirk Local Development Plan. Where this has taken place sites have been subject to a process of strategic environmental assessment and where negative environmental effects have been identified, mitigation has been proposed to ensure no significant effect on habitats, species or protected sites.

6.2.15 Where new development sites come forward as infill or windfall development their development will be regulated by policies within the LDP which protect habitats, species and protected sites. Sites will also be required to conform to the Council's SG on Biodiversity and Development which provides practical advice on appropriate surveys to undertake and how to design sites to avoid adverse impact on habitats, species and protected sites and enhance the biodiversity potential of the site.

Habitat Networks

6.2.16 The Open Space and New Development SG encourages new open space to connect to the wider green network where appropriate and to incorporate existing on site features of biodiversity value into on site open space.

Woodland

6.2.17 The SG promotes woodland creation through allowing structure planting of sufficient value to biodiversity and which connects to wider habitat networks to count towards meeting a site's open space requirement.

6.2.18 The SG also promotes woodland creation through allowing contributions in lieu of on site provision of open space to go towards woodland planting opportunities elsewhere in the green network.

Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Value of Open Spaces

6.2.19 The SG encourages developers to put forward open space proposals for their site which responds to the opportunities of the site including the identification of opportunities to link the development to the existing green network.

6.2.20 The SG allows for financial contributions to be made by new developments towards the improvement of off site open space's biodiversity and nature conservation value as an alternative to on site open space provision.

6.3 Population and Human Health

Environmental protection objectives

Quality of Accessibility within Open Space

6.3.1 Scottish Planning Policy (2010) indicates that supplementary guidance should set out specific requirements for the provision of open space as part of new development and make clear how much, of what type and quality and what the accessibility requirements are. It further sets out that new open space and other facilities should be accessible on foot and bicycle and located where they can be served by public transport. Authorities are encouraged to improve access to existing areas of open space via green networks and paths.

6.3.2 The SPP also states that wherever possible, planning authorities should identify opportunities to create and enhance networks between open spaces and avoid fragmentation.

6.3.3 National Planning Framework 2 identifies the Central Scotland Green Network as a development of national importance. It states that the CSGN will comprise a strategic network of woodland and other habitats, active travel routes, greenspace links, watercourses and waterways, providing an enhanced setting for development and other land uses and improved opportunities for outdoor recreation and cultural activity.

6.3.4 One of the strategic objectives of the Falkirk Open Space Strategy is to ensure that Falkirk's parks and open spaces are of a sufficient diversity, quality and distribution to meet the needs of local biodiversity and the needs and aspirations of local communities.

6.3.5 Another strategic objective of the Falkirk Open Space Strategy is to maximise access to a parks and open space resource that serves all sections of the population, and all user groups, without unacceptable adverse impacts.

6.3.6 The Falkirk Open Space Strategy sets an aspirational standard of all development having access to 5 hectares per 1000 people of different types of open space.

6.3.7 The Falkirk Open Space Strategy sets a number of accessibility standards for provision of open space relating to maximum walking distance to open space which is fit for purpose and maximum walking distances to public parks, playspaces, sports areas and natural/semi natural greenspace or green corridors.

Accessibility to Open Space

6.3.8 Scottish Planning Policy states that open spaces should be: *"accessible, safe, welcoming, appealing, distinctive and well connected."*

Within settlements there should be spaces that can be used by everyone regardless of age, gender or disability. Statutory equal opportunities obligations should be taken into account when planning for open space and physical activity. There are two main constraints on accessibility - physical constraints such as distance, degree of personal mobility and severance by roads, railways or other barriers, and social and cultural constraints such as fear of crime and other concerns over personal safety. These issues should be considered in the siting and design of open space. New open space and other facilities should be accessible on foot and bicycle and located where they can be served by public transport. Authorities are encouraged to improve access to existing areas of open space via green networks and paths."

Health and Wellbeing Quality of Open Space

6.3.8 The Scottish Government has set out 15 National Outcomes that it wants to work towards over the next 10 years, including to "live longer healthier lives"

6.3.9 One of the 12 strategic objectives of the Falkirk Open Space Strategy is to strengthen and promote the contribution of Falkirk's parks and open spaces to people's health and well being.

How objectives have been taken into account

Quality of Accessibility within Open Space

6.3.10 The SG allows for financial contributions to be made by new developments towards the improvement of off site open space's quality of accessibility as an alternative to on site open space provision.

Accessibility to Open Space

6.3.11 The SG sets out a mechanism for assessing whether new development conforms to the accessibility standards set out in the Falkirk Open Space Strategy.

6.3.12 The SG encourages open space coming forward as part of new development to link into the wider greenspace network where appropriate, this will contribute towards the enhancement of the Central Scotland Green Network.

6.3.13 The SG allows for financial contributions to be made by new developments towards the improvement of the greenspace network in the vicinity of the site as an alternative to on site open space provision.

6.3.14 The SG allows for financial contributions to be made by new development towards the improvement of access networks connecting open spaces as an alternative to on site open space provision.

Health and Wellbeing Quality of Open Space

6.3.15 The SG allows for financial contributions to be made by new developments towards the improvement of off site open space's contribution to peoples' health and wellbeing as an alternative to on site open space provision.

6.4 Material Assets

Environmental protection objectives

Active travel links

6.4.1 One of the Scottish Government's national indicators is to increase the proportion of journeys to work made by public or active transport.

Participation in outdoor recreation

6.4.2 One of the Scottish Government's national indicators is to increase people's use of Scotland's outdoors.

Green Infrastructure in Open Space

6.4.3 Green Infrastructure: Design and Placemaking encourages the consideration of green spaces and connections as infrastructure because simple things like trees, greenspaces and watercourses can provide valuable services in an ecological way.

Townscape Quality

6.4.4 Through Scottish Planning Policy and Designing Places, the planning system defines the five qualities of successful places: Identity, safe and pleasant, ease of movement, a sense of welcome, adaptability and good use of resources.

How objectives have been taken into account

Active travel links

6.4.5 The SG encourages open space proposals which maximise opportunities to link into the Central Scotland Green Network and the Core Path Network.

Participation in outdoor recreation

6.4.6 The SG encourages the provision of new functional open space and directs contributions in lieu of on site provision towards the improvement of existing open spaces. Provision of new open space and improvement of existing open space will both encourage participation in outdoor recreation.

6.4.7 Improvements to the existing active travel network are encouraged by the SG. The SG also encourages open space proposals to maximise opportunities to link into the active travel network. Both of these things will encourage participation in outdoor recreation.

Green Infrastructure in Open Space

6.4.8 The SG encourages the location of SUDS within on site open space where it has high amenity or biodiversity value. The SG also encourages open space proposals which maximise opportunities to link into the Central Scotland Green Network and to the Core Path Network. The SG should therefore encourage new open space to perform a role as green infrastructure.

Townscape Quality

6.4.9 Where there is a quantitative deficiency in open space provision in a particular locality the SG gives priority to the provision of new on site open space on site as part of new development.

6.5 Landscape

Environmental protection objectives

Quantity of Open Space

6.5.1 Scottish Planning Policy indicates that Local Development Plans or supplementary guidance should set out specific requirements for the provision of open space as part of new development and make clear how much, of what type and quality and what the accessibility requirements are. On and off site provision should be considered, depending on the specific site circumstances.

6.5.2 The Falkirk Open Space Strategy sets an aspirational standard of all development having access to 5 hectares per 1000 people of different types of open space.

Design and Aesthetic Quality of Open Space

6.5.3 Scottish Planning Policy indicates that open spaces should be well designed, built to a high standard and capable of adaptation to reflect changes in the needs and requirements of users and that they should also be accessible, safe, welcoming, appealing, distinctive and well connected.

Fitness for Purpose of Open Space

6.5.4 Scottish Planning Policy (2010) sets out that Planning authorities and developers should aim to create new open spaces which are fit for purpose, maintained and sustainable over the long term.

6.5.5 The overarching vision of the Falkirk Open Space Strategy is to secure long-term improvement to the quality of Falkirk's open spaces, so that they can provide a modern, sustainable and diverse resource for the benefit of the communities they serve. The Strategy sets a priority action of achieving good quality in open spaces that fall below the threshold.

How objectives have been taken into account

Quantity of Open Space

6.5.6 The SG translates the 5ha/ 1000 people standard of the Open Space Strategy into a requirement per new house in applications for new development. The balance promoted by the SG between on site open space provision and off site open space and green network improvement, will contribute towards the long-term improvement to the quality of Falkirk's open spaces, so that they can provide a modern, sustainable and diverse resource for the benefit of the communities they serve.

Design and Aesthetic Quality of Open Space

6.5.7 Policy INF04 indicates that new open space should be well designed; appropriately located; functionally sized and suitably diverse to meet different recreational needs. The SG encourages the provision of both active and passive open space and provides guidance on a minimal functional size for different types of open space.

Fitness for Purpose of Open Space

6.5.8 The SG sets out specific requirements for the provision of open space as part of new development and makes clear how much, of what type and quality and what the accessibility requirements are. The SG also considers the circumstances where on and off site provision is appropriate depending on specific site circumstances.

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE SG

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The purpose of the SEA assessment is to highlight any aspect of the elements which make up the plan which have the potential for environmental effects (both positive and negative).

7.2 Assessment Methodology

7.1.2 The assessment of the SG is based on a matrix approach assessing the alternative approaches the SG could recommend against the SEA topics which have been 'scoped in' to the assessment. The assessment matrix is presented in Section 7.3 below.

7.3 SEA Objectives

SEA Objective	Assessment Questions
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	
Improve the biodiversity and nature conservation value of existing open spaces within the Council area	Will the alternative improve the biodiversity and nature conservation value of existing open spaces within the Council area?
Help to implement the aspirational projects set out in the Falkirk Area Biodiversity Action Plan	Will the alternative help to implement the aspirational projects set out in the Falkirk Area Biodiversity Action Plan?
Increase the rate of woodland planting across the Council area	Will the alternative increase the rate of woodland planting across the Council area?
Help to secure the appropriate management of sites protected for their nature conservation value	Will the alternative help to secure the appropriate management of sites protected for their nature conservation value?
Ensure open spaces are of a sufficient diversity, quality and distribution to meet the needs of local biodiversity.	Does the alternative encourage the needs of local biodiversity to be taken into account in the location and design of new open space?
Enable new open space to contribute towards the wider Falkirk Integrated Habitat Network.	Does the alternative promote the integration of new open space into the wider habitat network? Does the alternative help to expand and connect the integrated habitat network?
Population and Human Health	
Improve access to different types of open space	Will the alternative promote access to open space of different types? Will the alternative assist in meeting the accessibility standards to different

SEA Objective	Assessment Questions
	types of open space set out in the Open Space Strategy?
Improve quality of accessibility within existing open spaces	Will the alternative improve the quality of accessibility within existing open spaces?
Ensure open space is appropriately located within new development	Will the alternative assist in meeting the accessibility standards to different types of open space set out in the Open Space Strategy?
Maximise the contribution that new and existing open space makes towards peoples' health and wellbeing	Will the alternative improve the health and wellbeing quality of existing and new open space?
Material Assets	
Increase opportunities for walking and cycling.	Will the alternatives increase the opportunities to walk and cycle?
Promote access for all	Will the alternatives improve access for all ages and abilities?
Promote the use of green infrastructure in developing and enhancing open spaces.	Will the alternatives promote green infrastructure? Will the alternative help promote place-making?
Landscape	
Enhance the overall fitness for purpose of existing open spaces.	Will the alternative enhance the overall fitness for purpose of existing open spaces?
Ensure new open spaces are fit for purpose.	Will the alternative ensure new open spaces are fit for purpose?
Ensure each community has access to 5ha/1000 people of open space.	Will the alternative help to ensure each community has access to 5ha/1000 people of open space?
Enhance the design and aesthetic quality of open spaces	Will the alternative improve the design and aesthetic quality of existing and new open spaces?
Ensure appropriate public open space maintenance	Will the alternative help to ensure the appropriate maintenance of open space?

Table 21: SEA Objectives and Assessment Questions

Significant positive effect	Positive effect	Neutral effect	Unknown effect	Negative effect	Significant negative effect
++	+	N	?	-	--

Table 22: SEA Assessment Matrix Key

7.4 SEA Assessment Matrix

Alternative	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Material Assets	Landscape	Assessment Commentary	Proposed changes to the PPS or proposed mitigation
Quantity Option 1A: New development to provide open space at a rate of 70m ² / dwelling.	+	+	+	+	As all new residential development will be required to provide either on-site open space or contributions to improvements of off-site open space there is a potential for: positive effects on biodiversity (through the creation of new spaces with biodiversity value; the improvement of existing spaces of biodiversity value; the creation of new habitat which extends the integrated habitat network), population and human health (through the improvement of overall access to different types of open space; the creation of new open spaces which improve people's health and well being; and the improvement of the health and wellbeing value of existing open spaces.) material assets (through increasing the number of open spaces in close proximity to the core path network; and extending the core path network; the provision of new fit for purpose open spaces which enhances townscape value) and landscape (through increasing the amount of open space in the Council area; and the creation of new fit for purpose open space of high design and aesthetic quality)	Increasing the rate which new development is required to provide open space will increase the magnitude of all of these positive environmental effects
Quantity Option 1B: New development only to provide open space where settlement has less than 5ha/1000 people	--	--	--	--	Of the major settlements in the Council area, only Grangemouth has less than 5ha/1000 people of open space. This option would result in the majority of new development not being required to provide on or off site open space. Where new development was allowed without the provision of new open space or the improvement of existing open space this would lead to increased	Do not choose this option

Alternative	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Material Assets	Landscape	Assessment Commentary	Proposed changes to the PPS or proposed mitigation
					pressure on existing open spaces which would need to serve an ever increasing population. This in turn would have a cumulatively significant negative effect on biodiversity (through increasing demand for natural/semi natural open space to be converted to meet demand for more formal open space provision) and landscape (through gradually eroding the fitness for purpose of existing open spaces). It could also lead to the creation of new residential neighbourhoods with no on site open space this could cause cumulatively significant negative effects on material assets (through the reduction of overall townscape value). If the majority of new development is not required to provide new open space then access to open spaces of different types within an acceptable walking distance is likely to reduce over time, this will have a cumulatively significant negative effect on population and human health . The requirement for new development to offer appropriate links to existing walking and cycling networks in surrounding areas is established through policy INF07 of the LDP and this will remain regardless of which alternative is chosen, this will have a neutral effect on material assets .	
Quantity Option 1C: New residential development to provide open space at a rate of 112m ²	++	++	++	++	The same environmental effects as option 1A above are predicted however they will all be of a greater magnitude.	
Quantity Option 2A:	++	--	--	++	The smallest amount of open space a 20 unit development would	Consider applying a different

Alternative	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Material Assets	Landscape	Assessment Commentary	Proposed changes to the PPS or proposed mitigation
Developments of 20 housing unit equivalents or less will be expected to provide a financial contribution towards upgrading of off site open space rather than on site provision					be required to provide would be 420m ² of active open space and 980m ² of passive open space. 420m ² is above the minimum functional size of an equipped play space and 980m ² is only 20m ² short of the minimum functional size of an informal play/recreation space. This requirement would be likely to generate only new open space which was functional, fit for purpose and of real value to biodiversity. Consequently significant positive effects on biodiversity and landscape are predicted. This option is likely to mean that the creation of less new open space in rural areas (where housing developments tend to be of a smaller size) this may gradually erode the number of people with access to different types of open space within an accessible walking distance and cause cumulatively significant negative effects on population and human health . It could also lead to the creation of new residential neighbourhoods in rural areas with no on site open space this could cause cumulatively significant negative effects on material assets (through the reduction of overall townscape value)	threshold for communities where there is a lack of existing open space.
Quantity Option 2B: Developments of 10 housing unit equivalents or less will be expected to provide a financial contribution towards upgrading of off site open space rather than on site	N	-	-	-	The smallest amount of open space a 10 unit development would be required to provide would be 210m ² of active open space and 490m ² of passive open space. 210m ² is well below the minimum functional size of an equipped play space and 490m ² is below the minimum functional size of the majority of passive open spaces. The only exception would be civic space, semi natural open space and green corridors. This requirement could lead to proposals for new, non-functional open space which was neither fit for purpose nor of any particular value to biodiversity, consequential neutral	

Alternative	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Material Assets	Landscape	Assessment Commentary	Proposed changes to the PPS or proposed mitigation
provision					effects on biodiversity and negative effects on landscape are predicted. This option is likely to mean that the creation of less new open space in rural areas (where housing developments tend to be of a smaller size) this may gradually erode the number of people with access to different types of open space within an accessible walking distance and cause negative effects on population and human health but of a lesser magnitude than option 2A. It could also lead to the creation of new residential neighbourhoods in rural areas with no on site open space this could cause negative effects on material assets of a lesser magnitude than option 2A (through the reduction of overall townscape value)	
Quantity Option 2C: There is no threshold below which only financial contribution towards upgrading of off site open space will be sought	N	+	+	-	Having no threshold could lead to developers proposing the creation of inappropriate, non functional open spaces as part of their development which were neither fit for purpose nor of any benefit to biodiversity. Consequential neutral effects on biodiversity and cumulatively significant negative effects on landscape are predicted. This option would however ensure that open space was provided in association with new development in rural areas with consequential positive effects on population and human health (through improving access to different types of open space) and material assets (through improving townscape quality)	
Quantity Option 2D: Developments of 20	++	++	+	++	The smallest amount of open space a 20 unit development would be required to provide would be 420m ² of active open space and	

Alternative	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Material Assets	Landscape	Assessment Commentary	Proposed changes to the PPS or proposed mitigation
housing unit equivalents or less will be expected to provide a financial contribution towards upgrading of off site open space rather than on site provision except where housing is proposed in a community which is already deficient in open space					980m ² of passive open space. 420m ² is above the minimum functional size of an equipped play space and 980m ² is only 20m ² short of the minimum functional size of an informal play/recreation space. This requirement would be likely to generate only new open space which was functional, fit for purpose and of real value to biodiversity. Consequently significant positive effects on biodiversity and landscape are predicted. This option is likely lead to the creation of new open space in areas where the standard for open space provision is not currently met, cumulatively this could have significant positive effects on population and human health (through increasing recreational opportunity). It could also promote the creation of new areas of open space in communities where the standard for open space provision is not currently met this could have positive effects on material assets (through the improvement of overall townscape value)	
Quantity Option 3A: Open space requirement must be met on site in full	+	+	++	+	This option is likely to have a positive effect biodiversity (through increasing the amount of open space of value to biodiversity), population and human health (through improving accessibility to open space) and landscape (through increasing the amount of open space) and cumulatively significant positive effects on material assets (through improving townscape quality) For this option however in situations where a contribution towards the improvement of an off-site open space would be of greater benefit to the community than provision of a new one (there is a local abundance of open space but it is not fit for purpose), positive environmental benefits will not be able to be maximised.	Allow a mix of on and off site contributions to meet overall open space requirement

Alternative	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Material Assets	Landscape	Assessment Commentary	Proposed changes to the PPS or proposed mitigation
Quantity Option 3B: Entire open space requirement to be met through improvements to existing sites	+	+	+	+	Any investment into the improvement of existing open space is likely to have positive effects on biodiversity (through increasing the biodiversity value of existing open space) population and human health (through improving access to fit for purpose open space) material assets (through creation of missing links in the access network and improvement of path networks) and landscape (through improving the quality of open space which is not currently fit for purpose) However, by prohibiting the creation of new open space as part of new development there could be cumulatively significant negative effects on population and human health (through inadequate access to open space of different types within new development) material assets (through reduction in townscape quality in new development) and landscape (through the reduction in the rates of open space provision within the Council area)	Allow a mix of on and off site contributions to meet overall open space requirement
Quantity Option 3C: Open space requirement can be met by a mixture of on site provision and off site improvement	++	++	++	++	This option is likely to have cumulatively significant positive effects biodiversity (through increasing the amount of open space of value to biodiversity and increasing the biodiversity value of existing open space); population and human health (through improving accessibility to fit for purpose open space of different types); material assets (through improving both existing townscape quality and that in new developments); and landscape (through increasing the amount of open space and the fitness for purpose of existing open space)	
Quantity Option 4A: Open Space	?	?	?	?	It is unknown whether this option will yield more or less open space than option 3B or 3C as data relating to the building of house types	

Alternative	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Material Assets	Landscape	Assessment Commentary	Proposed changes to the PPS or proposed mitigation
requirement a flat rate regardless of house size or type					and sizes is not routinely collected or analysed	
Quantity Option 4B: Open Space requirement a scaled rate based on house type	?	?	?	?	It is unknown whether this option will yield more or less open space than option 3A or 3C as data relating to the building of house types and sizes is not routinely collected or analysed	
Quantity Option 4C: Open Space requirement a scaled rate based on house size (number of bedrooms)	?	?	?	?	It is unknown whether this option will yield more or less open space than option 3A or 3B as data relating to the building of house types and sizes is not routinely collected or analysed	
Quantity Option 5A: All open space can contribute towards a development's overall requirement.	-?	-?	-?	-?	Non functional open spaces tend to be less expensive to provide than functional open space. This option would be likely to see an increase in the proportion of non functional open space provided as part of development and a consequential decrease in functional open space. This would be likely to produce negative effects on biodiversity (through a reduction in the biodiversity value of open space in new development); population and human health (through reduction in access to fit for purpose open space); material assets (through reduced townscape value in new development); and landscape (through a reduction in the overall proportion of fitness for purpose open space) These effects may or may not become cumulatively significant over time.	

Alternative	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Material Assets	Landscape	Assessment Commentary	Proposed changes to the PPS or proposed mitigation
Quantity Option 5B: Only functional open space can contribute towards a development's overall requirement	+	+	+	+	This option would be likely to produce a reduction in the proportion of small areas of landscaping and structure planting which come forward as part of development. This has the potential to have a negative effect material assets (through reducing the townscape value of new development) and landscape (through reducing the amount of visual screening of new development). If only functional open space can come forward as part of development then this is likely to have a significant positive effect on population and human health (through increasing the health and wellbeing value of new open spaces) and landscape (through increasing the fitness for purpose of new open spaces) . Functional open space also includes semi natural spaces and green corridors so a positive effect on biodiversity is recorded.	Modify policy to accept: structure planting and landscape features as contributing towards the open space requirement if they have high biodiversity value or contribute towards the enhancement of the integrated habitat network; on site path infrastructure which links the development site into the core path network
Quantity Option 5C: Both functional open space and non functional open space which has a high biodiversity value; contributes towards the enhancement of the integrated habitat network; or links the development to the core path network.	++	++	+	++	This option differs from 5B above in that it encourages: the provision of small areas of landscaping and structure planting which are designed to be of benefit to biodiversity; the provision of path networks which link into the wider core path network . This will reduce the negative effects on material assets (though improving townscape quality) and landscape (through increasing the amount of landscaping and structure planting coming forward as part of new development) to a point where they are negligible. It will also maximise the positive effects on biodiversity to a point where they are significant and have a positive effect on material assets (through expanding the core path network).	
Quantity Option 6A:	+	-	N	N	Passive open space is generally less expensive to install and	

Alternative	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Material Assets	Landscape	Assessment Commentary	Proposed changes to the PPS or proposed mitigation
Open space requirement relates to any kind of functional open space					maintain therefore this option is likely to see an increase in the proportion of passive open space provided as part of new development and a corresponding decrease in the proportion of active open space provided. This will have a negative effect on population and human health which could become cumulatively significant. Passive open space is however, generally better for biodiversity so an increase in its provision would have positive effects	
Quantity Option 6B: Open Space requirement comprises both active and passive open space	N	N	N	N	No environmental effects predicted.	
Network Option 1A: Developers do not need to consider how their on site open space links to the green network or the active travel network.	N	N	N	N	No environmental effects predicted.	
Network Option 1B: Developers need to explore opportunities to link on site open space into the green network	++	++	N	N	Potential for cumulatively significant positive effects on biodiversity (the expanding and link up habitat networks) and population and human health (through expanding opportunity to access recreation)	

Alternative	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Material Assets	Landscape	Assessment Commentary	Proposed changes to the PPS or proposed mitigation
Network Option 1C: Developers need to explore opportunities to link on site open space into the core path network	N	++	++	N	Potential for cumulatively significant positive effects on population and human health (through expanding opportunity to access recreation) and material assets (through increasing the proportion of open spaces connected to the core path network)	
Network Option 1D: Developers need to explore opportunities to link on site open space into both the green and core path networks	++	++	++	N	The benefits of both options 1B and 1C will both be realised.	
Financial Contribution Option 1A: Financial Contribution can be invested anywhere within the Council Area.	++	++	++	++	Any financial contribution towards the improvement of open space could potentially have positive effects on biodiversity, population and human health, material assets and landscape . In this option, financial contributions can be directed to where they are most needed within the entire Council area, so the potential for positive effects is significant. These significant positive effects will not necessarily benefit the residents of the development which provided the financial contribution in the first place. It is arguable, therefore, whether this option would meet the tests of reasonableness set out in Planning Circular on developer contributions. This may not be a reasonable alternative.	
Financial Contribution Option 1B: Financial	+	+	+	+	Any financial contribution towards the improvement of open space could potentially have positive effects on biodiversity, population	

Alternative	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Material Assets	Landscape	Assessment Commentary	Proposed changes to the PPS or proposed mitigation
Contribution to be put towards improving the area's performance against the standards set out in the open space strategy as closely as is feasible to the donor development site.					and human health, material assets and landscape. Whilst the financial contributions will not necessarily be able to be directed towards where they could be of most benefit and therefore positive effects will be of a lesser magnitude, the effects will benefit the residents of the development which supplied the financial contribution.	
Ownership and Maintenance Option 1A: Ownership of the Open Space is left with the residents and maintenance takes place through a factoring agreement.	?-	?-	?-	?-	Factoring arrangements can often break down leading to new open space not being maintained or managed, this could have a consequential negative effect on biodiversity, population and human health, material assets and landscape.	Mechanisms should be put in place to allow the Council to assess the robustness of the proposed factoring arrangement.
Ownership and Maintenance Option 1B: Ownership of the Open Space is passed to the Council who will carry out maintenance	+	+	+	+	Appropriate management and maintenance of open space throughout its lifetime will lead to positive effects on biodiversity, population and human health, material assets and landscape	
Ownership and Maintenance Option 2A: No financial	--	--	--	--	This option would encourage more open spaces to be passed to the Council for adoption, however, without suitable funding of the enhanced maintenance cost, the revenue budgets of the Council	A proportion of any increased revenue the Council receives from the increase in population

Alternative	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Material Assets	Landscape	Assessment Commentary	Proposed changes to the PPS or proposed mitigation
contribution is required to go towards the maintenance cost of new open space to be passed to the Council for adoption					are likely to come under increased pressure which could lead to cumulatively significant negative effects on biodiversity, population and human health, material assets and landscape	caused by the new development should be ring fenced for open space maintenance.
Ownership and Maintenance Option 2B: A financial contribution equivalent to 10 times the annual maintenance cost of the open space to be passed to the Council for adoption is required.	-	-	-	-	This option would be likely to encourage developers to provide new open space which was passed to residents and managed through a factoring agreement rather than passing it to the Council for adoption as the up front costs would be less. 10 times the annual maintenance cost of the open space seems an arbitrary figure. There will be revenue implications for the Council starting 10 years after adoption of the open space with subsequent negative effects on biodiversity, population and human health, material assets and landscape	The number of times the value of the annual maintenance cost could be increased to cover any likely shortfall in funding, however the more money required the more likely developers are to chose a private factoring arrangement with its associated negative environmental effects
Ownership and Maintenance Option 2C: A financial contribution equivalent to the lifetime annual maintenance cost of the open space to be passed to the Council for adoption is required.	-?	-?	-?	-?	This option would be even more likely to encourage developers to provide new open space which was passed to residents and managed through a factoring agreement rather than passing it to the Council for adoption, as the up front costs would be less.	This option would only work if developers were compelled to pass new open space to the Council for adoption as well as paying a financial contribution equivalent to the lifetime annual maintenance cost of the open space

8.0 MITIGATION

8.1 Biodiversity - Flora and Fauna

8.1.1 The implementation of this SG is not likely to have any significant negative environmental effects on biodiversity.

8.2 Population and Human Health

8.2.1 The implementation of this SG is not likely to have any significant negative environmental effects on population and human health.

8.3 Material Assets

8.3.1 The implementation of this SG is not likely to have any significant negative environmental effects on material assets.

8.4 Landscape

8.3.1 The implementation of this SG is not likely to have any significant negative environmental effects on landscape.

9.0 ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATIVES

9.1 Reasons for Selecting the Alternatives

9.1.1 Although the SEA process has enabled the identification of the alternatives which have the greatest environmental benefits, the selected alternative is not always the most environmentally beneficial alternative, social and economic factors have also influenced decision.

9.2 How the assessment was undertaken

9.2.1 The approach to assessment was assess each option against the SEA Objectives (see Section 7.3) then to consider how each will be likely to perform and how they can be altered to enhance performance.

9.3 Possible Alternatives

Quantity Option

9.3.1 For quantity option 1, alternative C was assessed as having the greatest environmental benefit, however it was considered that the higher open space requirement set by alternative C did not take account of the proportion of Open Space across the Council area which was non functional and was also economically unsustainable so alternative A which had a lower open space requirement, and better reflects the pattern of open space provision across the Council area was selected.

9.3.2 For quantity option 2, alternative D was assessed as having a greater potential environmental benefit than alternatives A, B or C and was selected as the preferred alternative.

9.3.3 For quantity option 3, alternative C was selected as it had the greatest potential environmental benefit

9.3.4 For quantity option 4 alternative B was selected. It was not possible to predict the environmental effect of these alternatives so environmental considerations did not influence the selection procedure.

9.3.5 For quantity option 5, alternative C was assessed as having a greater environmental benefit than alternatives A or B and was selected as the preferred alternative.

9.3.6 For quantity option 6, alternative B was assessed as having a lesser adverse environmental effect than alternative A and was therefore selected as the preferred alternative.

Network Options

9.3.7 For network option 1, alternative D was assessed as having a greater environmental benefit than alternatives A, B or C and was selected as the preferred alternative.

Financial Contribution Options

9.3.8 For financial contribution option 1, although alternative A was assessed as having the greatest potential environmental benefit, alternative B was selected for reasons of environmental justice and because it more closely reflected the tests of reasonableness set out in the Planning Circular on developer contributions.

Ownership and Maintenance Options

9.3.9 For ownership and maintenance option 1, alternative B was assessed as having a greater environmental benefit than alternative A, however due to problems of legal enforcement neither of the alternatives were selected as preferred.

9.3.10 For ownership and maintenance option 2, alternative B was assessed as having the least potential for negative environmental effects and was therefore selected as preferred.

10. MONITORING

10.1 Legislative Requirement

6.1.1 Monitoring of the environmental performance of the Plan during its life is a key requirement of SEA. The SEA Act schedule 3 para 9 requires 'a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with section 19'. The monitoring measures proposed are based on the different environmental issues identified as potentially being subject to significant environmental effects from the Local Development Plan.

10.2 Monitoring Proposals

10.2.1 Table 23 overleaf sets out the details of the proposed monitoring to monitor the achievement of the SEA objectives, the rationale for the selection and the methods and measures of monitoring. Monitoring will be conducted by the Council, in their capacity as the Responsible Authority for this SEA. Periodic monitoring reports will be produced to monitor progress with at least one timetabled for production before the 5 year periodical review of this SG.

Table 23: Monitoring Proposals

SEA Objective	Monitoring Proposed	Rationale	Methods & Measures
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna			
Improve the biodiversity and nature conservation value of existing open spaces within the Council area	Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Value of existing open spaces which have received financial contributions from developments approved since the adoption of the SG.	The SG can improve the biodiversity and nature conservation value of existing open spaces through leveraging financial contributions from new development in lieu of on site open space provision. By monitoring whether the biodiversity and nature conservation value of sites which have received investment via an SG contribution has improved since that investment we will be able to tell if this SEA objective is effectively being met.	Through analysing data collected in the qualitative assessment of open space which is undertaken to inform the Falkirk Open Space Strategy
Help to implement the aspirational projects set out in the Falkirk Area Biodiversity Action Plan (FABAP)	Projects set out in the FABAP which have been brought about via contributions secured through this SG	If this SG enables projects set out in the FABAP then this SEA objective will be met.	Through liaison with the Council's biodiversity officer.
Increase the rate of woodland planting across the Council area	The rate of woodland planting across the Council area	If the rate of woodland planting increased then this could, in part be attributable to monies received through this SG	This data is currently collected by the Central Scotland Forest Trust

SEA Objective	Monitoring Proposed	Rationale	Methods & Measures
	Projects involving woodland planting which have been brought about via contributions secured through this SG	If this SG enables projects which increase the rate of woodland planting then this SEA objective will be met.	Through liaison with the Council's developer contributions implementation group
Help to secure the appropriate management of sites protected for their nature conservation value	Number of sites protected for their nature conservation value which have active management plans	If the number of sites protected for their nature conservation value with active management plans increased then this could, in part be attributable to monies received through this SG	Through liaison with the Council's biodiversity officer
	Financial contributions secured which have been put towards: the development of management plans for sites protected for their nature conservation value; or the ongoing management of sites protected for their nature conservation value then this SEA objective will be met.	If this SG enables the development of management plans or the ongoing management of sites protected for their nature conservation value then this SEA objective will be met.	Through liaison with the Council's developer contributions implementation group and biodiversity officer.
Ensure open spaces are of a sufficient diversity, quality and distribution to meet the needs of local biodiversity.	No baseline currently exists to quantify whether the existing open space resource is of a sufficient diversity, quality and distribution to meet the	Without suitable baseline information monitoring cannot be carried out.	None proposed.

SEA Objective	Monitoring Proposed	Rationale	Methods & Measures
	needs of local biodiversity. No monitoring is therefore proposed.		
Enable new open space to contribute towards the wider Falkirk Integrated Habitat Network.	Size of the integrated habitat network and percentage of network which is of favourable status	If new open space coming forward as part of new development expands the size of the integrated habitat network, or financial contributions in lieu of on site provision are used to expand the size of the integrated habitat network then this SEA objective will be being met.	Falkirk Council does not currently plan to update the data it holds on the integrated habitat network in the short to medium term. It may be that the data is updated as part of the research being undertaken to underpin the Central Scotland Green Network. In the absence of any new data we will keep a record of where improvements have taken place which were intended to expand the size of the IHN either on new development sites or through financial contributions received in lieu of on site provision.
	Use of integrated habitat network data	If IHN data is being regularly used to inform the design of open space proposals for new development then this will ensure that this SEA objective is being met	Through liaison with the Council's biodiversity officer and development management officers.
Population and Human Health			
Improve access to different	Percentage of households	If performance against this	Through undertaking spatial analysis

SEA Objective	Monitoring Proposed	Rationale	Methods & Measures
types of open space	with access to different types of open space within an acceptable walking distance as defined by the Open Space Strategy	indicator improves then this SEA objective will be being met.	of data collected to inform the Falkirk Open Space Strategy.
Improve quality of accessibility within existing open spaces	The quality of accessibility in existing open spaces which have received a financial contribution from developments approved since the adoption of the SG	The SG can improve the quality of accessibility of existing open spaces through leveraging financial contributions from new development in lieu of on site open space provision. By monitoring whether the accessibility quality of sites which have received investment via an SG contribution has improved since that investment we will be able to tell if this SEA objective is effectively being met.	Through analysing data collected in the qualitative assessment of open space which is undertaken to inform the Falkirk Open Space Strategy
Ensure open space is appropriately located within new development	The percentage of households within new developments approved since the adoption of the SG which meet the standards for acceptable walking distance to different types of open space as defined by the	If a high proportion of households within new developments meet the standards for accessibility to different types of open space set out in the Falkirk Open Space Strategy then this SEA objective will be being met.	Through undertaking spatial analysis of data collected to inform the Falkirk Open Space Strategy.

SEA Objective	Monitoring Proposed	Rationale	Methods & Measures
	Falkirk Open Space Strategy		
Maximise the contribution that existing open space makes towards peoples' health and wellbeing	The health and wellbeing quality of open space in new developments which have been approved since the adoption of the SG	If new open space scores well in future quality assessments for health and wellbeing then this SEA objective will be being met.	Through analysing data collected in the qualitative assessment of open space which is undertaken to inform the Falkirk Open Space Strategy
	The health and wellbeing quality of existing open spaces which have received a financial contribution from developments approved since the adoption of the SG	The SG can improve the health and wellbeing quality of existing open spaces through leveraging financial contributions from new development in lieu of on site open space provision. By monitoring whether the health and wellbeing quality of sites which have received investment via an SG contribution has improved since that investment we will be able to tell if this SEA objective is effectively being met.	
Material Assets			
Increase opportunities for walking and cycling.	Number of open spaces connected to the core path network	If this number increases then this SEA objective is being met.	Through GIS analysis and liaison with the Council's outdoor access team.
Promote access for all	The quality of accessibility in existing open spaces which have received a financial	The SG can improve the quality of accessibility of existing open spaces through leveraging financial	Through analysing data collected in the qualitative assessment of open space which is undertaken to inform

SEA Objective	Monitoring Proposed	Rationale	Methods & Measures
	contribution from developments approved since the adoption of the SG	contributions from new development in lieu of on site open space provision. By monitoring whether the accessibility quality of sites which have received investment via an SPG contribution has improved since that investment we will be able to tell if this SEA objective is effectively being met.	the Falkirk Open Space Strategy
Promote the use of green infrastructure in developing and enhancing open spaces.	No monitoring propose. Suggestions from consultation authorities and other consultees would be welcomed		
Landscape			
Enhance the overall fitness for purpose of existing open spaces.	Quality and fitness for purpose of existing open spaces which have received financial contributions from development approved since the adoption of the SG	The SG can improve the quality and fitness for purpose of existing open spaces through leveraging financial contributions from new development in lieu of on site open space provision. By monitoring whether the quality and fitness for purpose of sites which have received investment via an SPG contribution has improved since that investment	Through analysing data collected in the qualitative assessment of open space which is undertaken to inform the Falkirk Open Space Strategy

SEA Objective	Monitoring Proposed	Rationale	Methods & Measures
		we will be able to tell if this SEA objective is effectively being met.	
Ensure new open spaces are fit for purpose.	Quality and fitness for purpose of new open spaces created since the adoption of the SG		Through analysing data collected in the qualitative assessment of open space which is undertaken to inform the Falkirk Open Space Strategy
Ensure each community has access to 5ha/1000 people of open space.	The ratio of open space provision within each settlement	The SG has translated the 5ha/1000 people standard into an open space requirement for new developments. The SG also encourages on site provision in areas where current provision is below the 5ha standard. Through monitoring the respective ratios of open space provision within each settlement we will be able to understand whether standards are being improved in areas of existing deficiency and whether this SEA objective is being met.	Through analysing data collected in the quantitative audit of open space which is undertaken to inform the Falkirk Open Space Strategy
Enhance the design and aesthetic quality of open spaces	The design and aesthetic quality of existing open spaces which have received financial contributions from development approved since	The SG can improve the design and aesthetic quality of existing open spaces through leveraging financial contributions from new development in lieu of on site	Through analysing data collected in the qualitative assessment of open space which is undertaken to inform the Falkirk Open Space Strategy.

SEA Objective	Monitoring Proposed	Rationale	Methods & Measures
	the adoption of the SG	open space provision. By monitoring whether the design and aesthetic quality of sites which have received investment via an SPG contribution has improved since that investment we will be able to tell if these SEA objectives are effectively being met.	
	The design and aesthetic quality of new open space created since the adoption of the SG		Through analysing data collected in the qualitative assessment of open space which is undertaken to inform the Falkirk Open Space Strategy
Ensure appropriate public open space maintenance	The management and maintenance quality of existing open spaces which have received financial contributions from development approved since the adoption of the SG	The SG can improve the management and maintenance quality of existing open spaces through leveraging financial contributions from new development in lieu of on site open space provision. By monitoring whether the cleanliness and maintenance quality and management quality of sites which have received investment via an SPG contribution has improved since that investment we will be able to	Through analysing data collected in the qualitative assessment of open space which is undertaken to inform the Falkirk Open Space Strategy

SEA Objective	Monitoring Proposed	Rationale	Methods & Measures
		tell if these SEA objectives are effectively being met.	
	The management and maintenance quality of new open space created since the adoption of the SG	New open spaces provided as part of new development are required to either have robust and certain factoring agreements in place to ensure satisfactory maintenance and upkeep or be passed over to the Council for adoption, maintenance and in some circumstances ownership. By monitoring the cleanliness and maintenance quality and management quality of new open spaces provided since the adoption of this SG we will be able to tell if this SEA objective is being met.	Through analysing data collected in the qualitative assessment of open space which is undertaken to inform the Falkirk Open Space Strategy

11.0 NEXT STEPS

11.1 Consultation

11.1.1 The consultative draft SG along with this Environmental Report has been made available to the public as well as the Consultation Authorities (Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage and Historic Scotland) for comment, in accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act, 2005.

11.1.2 The public consultation and Statutory Consultation will run for a period of 6 weeks. Comments and responses to this Environmental Report will be considered following these consultation periods, so that any revisions can be made before the SPG is finalised and adopted.

11.2 Adoption of SPG

11.2.1 Following the consultation and any necessary modifications, a finalised SG will be presented to Falkirk Council's Executive committee for endorsement. The SG will then be passed to Scottish Ministers along with the LDP for formal approval.

11.3 SEA Post-Adoption Statement

11.3.1 Shortly after approval, the SEA Post-adoption Statement will be produced. The Statement sets out how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Framework, how the findings of the Environmental Report have been taken into account, and how the consultation responses have been addressed.

11.3.2 The SEA Post-adoption Statement will also finalise the framework for monitoring the environmental effects of the SG's implementation and the responsibilities for monitoring.

Appendix 1 – Record of Scoping Comments

Consultation Authority	Comment	Response
Historic Scotland (HS)	As you will be aware, in our response to the scoping consultation (dated 17 June 2013) we noted that the guidance would in itself be unlikely to have a significant effect on the historic environment. I therefore note that the historic environment has been scoped out of the assessment and I am content to agree with this view.	Comment noted.
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	We are of the opinion that the SG may have some positive effects in relation to soil and climatic factors (climate change adaptation- i.e. flood risk). We would therefore advise the Falkirk Council to take a precautionary approach in relation to flood risk and consider including this as part of the assessment as the SG could play a positive role in the management of flood risk in the Falkirk area.	The protection of open space is dictated by policy INF03 of the LDP rather than this SG. The Scoping report indicated that the SG might provide advice on how to incorporate areas of flood risk into on site open space. The consultative draft SG does not do this. We are therefore of the view that this SG will have no effect on the water environment, soil or climatic factors (through mitigation of flooding).
Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)	We don't think Material Assets should be scoped out and suggest it is scoped in so the following factors can be assessed: 1. active travel links; 2. access for all ages and abilities; 3. increased participation in outdoor recreation; 4. the use of green infrastructure in developing and enhancing open spaces and the role it can play in place-making.	Material Assets has been scoped into the Environmental Report.

Consultation Authority	Comment	Response
SNH	It would be useful if the supplementary guidance could provide more guidance on the different types of greenspace infrastructure that can be used to enhance open spaces and biodiversity. We recommend that you look at the Scottish Government's 'Green Infrastructure & Place-making', 'part one' of which provides some useful graphics that you may want to incorporate into your document.	The SG encourages the location of green infrastructure within open spaces through: allowing SUDS to contribute towards meeting a sites open space requirement if it has high amenity or biodiversity value; and encouraging developers to put together an open space proposal which maximises opportunities to link the development into the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) and the Core Path network.
SNH	Relationship with other plans and strategies We recommend you make reference to the following: - Falkirk's Single Outcome Agreement (there is a strong link between open space, health, quality of life, access and biodiversity). - Falkirk's Core Path Plan and the Local Transport Strategy (providing adequate walking and cycling links to open spaces and key facilities will help achieve the aims of the CSGN, Falkirk's SOA and this supplementary guidance). - CSGN (the CSGN will help areas such as Falkirk to enhance and develop their open spaces).	Comment noted. Reference has been made in the Environmental Report to these documents
SNH	Existing environmental problems - We suggest you include a heading for Material Assets and include the following text: <i>"In some areas there are still inadequate walking and cycling links to good quality, usable open space and this will need to be addressed. Ensuring good</i>	Comment noted. This text has been included in the existing environmental problems section of the Environmental Report (see paragraph 5.3.1)

Consultation Authority	Comment	Response										
	<i>walking and cycling links to open space, and in particular open space near where people live, can make a significant contribution towards targets to, (1) get more people participating in outdoor recreation, and (2) get more people travelling by active modes. ”</i>											
SNH	Environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected by the supplementary guidance - We suggest you include the following under a heading titled Material Assets: • Information on the extent and distribution of footpaths and cycle-paths in and around settlements. • Information on the number of people who access the outdoors. Alternatives, mitigation and enhancement - We welcome the proposal that the supplementary guidance will present a number of different options as to how an individual site’s open space requirement is calculated, and that each option will be environmentally assessed.	Comment noted. This information has been included in the Environmental Report (see section 4.4)										
SNH	Alternatives, mitigation and enhancement - We welcome the proposal that the supplementary guidance will present a number of different options as to how an individual site’s open space requirement is calculated, and that each option will be environmentally assessed.	Support welcomed.										
SNH	Environmental objectives and assessment questions - we suggest you add the objectives and assessment questions detailed below: <table><tr><th>Objective</th><th>Assessment Question</th></tr><tr><td>Avoid damage or disturbance to designated wildlife sites and protected species?</td><td>Will the alternatives avoid damage to designated wildlife sites? Will the alternatives avoid damage to protected species?</td></tr><tr><td>Increase opportunities for walking and cycling.</td><td>Will the alternatives increase the opportunities to walk and cycle?</td></tr><tr><td>Access for all</td><td>Will the alternatives improve access for all ages and abilities?</td></tr><tr><td>Promote the use of green</td><td>Will the alternatives promote green</td></tr></table>	Objective	Assessment Question	Avoid damage or disturbance to designated wildlife sites and protected species?	Will the alternatives avoid damage to designated wildlife sites? Will the alternatives avoid damage to protected species?	Increase opportunities for walking and cycling.	Will the alternatives increase the opportunities to walk and cycle?	Access for all	Will the alternatives improve access for all ages and abilities?	Promote the use of green	Will the alternatives promote green	Comment noted. With the exception of avoiding damage or disturbance to designated sites and protected species, these SEA objectives and assessment questions have been added to the Environmental Report. Development affecting designated sites is controlled through policy GN03 Biodiversity and Geodiversity of the LDP and SG08 Local Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites. It is not considered that the provision of
Objective	Assessment Question											
Avoid damage or disturbance to designated wildlife sites and protected species?	Will the alternatives avoid damage to designated wildlife sites? Will the alternatives avoid damage to protected species?											
Increase opportunities for walking and cycling.	Will the alternatives increase the opportunities to walk and cycle?											
Access for all	Will the alternatives improve access for all ages and abilities?											
Promote the use of green	Will the alternatives promote green											

Consultation Authority	Comment	Response
	infrastructure in developing and enhancing open spaces. infrastructure? Will the alternative help promote place-making?	open space as part of new development or the improvement of existing open space has any significant potential to damage or disturb designated sites or protected species.

5. SUPPORTING POLICIES

Housing

Affordable Housing

- 5.1 Housing affordability emerged as an issue in the area following the significant house price rises in the early 2000s. The 2011 Housing Need and Demand Assessment has confirmed the broad pattern of affordability and need across the area, highlighting an overall annual need of 233 units and a spatial distribution of need focused on the Larbert/Stenhousemuir, Polmont, Rural South and Rural North areas.
- 5.2 There has been increasing activity in recent years by social housing providers, including housing associations and the Council itself. However, availability of funding remains a critical constraint, and there is an increasing emphasis from the Government on finding ways of delivering affordable housing at lower cost.
- 5.3 In order to contribute to meeting housing need, and ensure mixed communities, the Council will continue to seek the provision of a proportion of affordable housing from private housing sites in accordance with Policy HSG02.

5.4

Policy HSG02 Affordable Housing

New housing developments of 20 units and over will be required to provide a proportion of the units as affordable or special needs housing as set out in Figure 5.1. The approach to provision should comply with Supplementary Guidance SG12 'Affordable Housing'.

5.5 Figure 5.1 Affordable Housing Requirements in Settlement Areas

Settlement Area	Proportion of total site units required to be affordable
Larbert/Stenhousemuir Polmont Area Rural North Rural South	25%
Bo'ness Bonnybridge & Banknock Denny Falkirk Grangemouth	15%

Windfall Housing

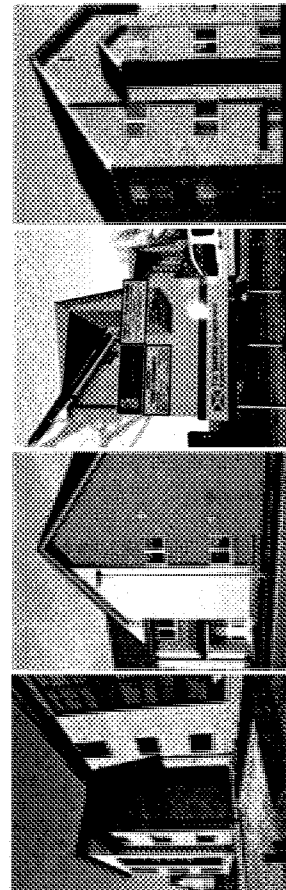
- 5.6 Appropriate opportunities for housing development in addition to those sites specifically identified in the LDP may arise within urban and village limits over the period of the plan. Historically, such windfall sites have made a significant contribution to housing supply in the area, and although the incidence of vacant and brownfield sites has generally been reducing in the area, they will continue to provide additional flexibility over and above the allocations set out in the spatial strategy. The criteria for assessing proposals for windfall housing development are set out in Policy HSG03.

5.7

Policy HSG03 Windfall Housing

Housing development within the Urban and Village Limits, in addition to proposals identified within the LDP, will be supported where:

1. The site is brownfield, or is open space whose loss can be justified in terms of Policy INF03;
2. The proposed housing use is compatible with neighbouring uses and a satisfactory level of residential amenity can be achieved;
3. The site enjoys good accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling to shopping, recreational and other community facilities;
4. Existing physical infrastructure, such as roads and drainage, sewage capacity, and community facilities, such as education and healthcare, have the capacity to accommodate the increase in use associated with the proposed development, or can be upgraded through appropriate developer contributions as required by Policy INF02;
5. The site is not at significant risk of flooding in the terms of Policy RW06;
6. In the case of small gap sites and sub-divided plots, Policy HSG05 is satisfied; and
7. It complies with other LDP policies.



Supporting Policies

Housing Design and Residential Amenity

5.8 The scale of residential growth planned for the area over the period of the plan will have a significant impact on how communities look and feel. It is important that new housing is well designed so that this impact is a positive one. Smaller scale change in residential neighbourhoods, whether through small infill developments, proposals for non-residential uses or simple extensions or alterations to properties, must also be managed so as to maintain residential amenity.

5.9

Policy HSG04: Housing Design

The layout, design and density of the new housing development should conform with any relevant site-specific design guidance, Supplementary Guidance SG02 'Neighbourhood Design' and the Scottish Government's policy on 'Designing Streets'. Indicative site capacities in the site schedules may be exceeded where a detailed layout demonstrates that a high quality design solution, which delivers the requisite level of residential amenity, has been achieved.

5.10

Policy HSG05: Infill Development and Subdivision of Plots

Proposals for the erection of additional houses within the curtilage of existing properties or on small gap sites will be permitted where:

1. The scale, density, disposition and design of the proposed houses respect the townscape character of the area;
2. Adequate garden ground can be provided to serve the proposed houses without an unacceptable impact upon the size or functioning of existing gardens;
3. Adequate privacy will be afforded to both the proposed houses and neighbouring properties;
4. The proposal would not result in the loss of features such as trees, vegetation or walls, such that the character or amenity of the area would be adversely affected;
5. The proposed vehicular access, parking and other infrastructure is of an adequate standard for both proposed and existing houses; and
6. The proposal complies with other LDP policies.

5.11

Policy HSG06: Non-Residential Uses in Residential Areas

Within established residential areas, the introduction of uses which would be incompatible with the residential character and amenity of the area will generally not be permitted. Proposals for appropriate community services (e.g. surgeries, day nurseries and neighbourhood shops), homeworking or other compatible business uses (e.g. guest houses) will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the quality of the residential environment would be safeguarded, the type and location of the property is suitable, and satisfactory access and parking can be provided.

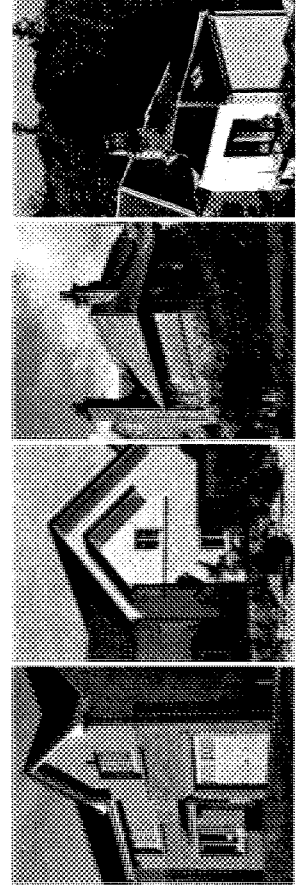
5.12

Policy HSG07: Residential Extensions and Alterations

Extensions and alterations to residential properties will be permitted where:

1. The scale, design and materials are sympathetic to the existing building;
2. The location and scale of the extension or alterations will not significantly affect the degree of amenity, daylight or privacy enjoyed by neighbouring properties; and
3. It will not result in overdevelopment of the plot, thereby giving rise to adverse impacts on the functioning of garden ground, unacceptable loss of off-street parking, or road safety issues.

Proposals should comply with the detailed guidance on these criteria set out in the Supplementary Guidance SG03 'Residential Extensions and Alterations'.



5.20 Figure 5.2 Examples of Developer Contribution Requirements

Type of Provision	Circumstances Where Provision May Be Required
Environmental Infrastructure	
Woodland Planting & Management	Sites relating to Green Network locations, where opportunities exist to enhance/reinforce the network, to integrate a site into its landscape setting, or otherwise to mitigate its visual impact.
Habitat Creation & Management	Sites relating to existing wildlife sites or corridors, especially loss of habitat requiring mitigation/compensation or enhancement.
Sustainable Water Management	Sites where opportunities exist to provide sustainable flood management or water management enhancement measures as identified through either flood risk assessments or the River Basin Management Plan and Forth Area Management Plan.
Outdoor Access Provision	Sites relating to Green Network locations and where opportunities exist to enhance the local access network.
Archaeological Investigation/Interpretation	Sites containing archaeological remains.
Historic Building Repair/Conservation	Sites containing buildings of historic or townscape importance.
Physical Infrastructure	
Road Improvements	Sites where improvements will be necessary as demonstrated by Transport Assessment in order to ensure mitigation of impact, including cumulative impact, of the proposed development.
Public Transport Facilities & Services	Larger sites where access by public transport needs to be secured to meet sustainability objectives.
Pedestrian/Cycling Facilities	Sites where pedestrian/cycle links into the wider network and to key community/public transport nodes need to be established.
Sewerage Improvements	Sites where additional sewerage infrastructure must be provided in order to serve the development.
Community Infrastructure	
Open Space Provision/Maintenance	All housing sites must provide for, or contribute to, open space on- or off-site, as well as maintenance.
Play Area Provision/Maintenance	All housing sites must provide for, or contribute to, play facilities on- or off-site, as well as maintenance.
School Capacity	Sites where school capacity/facilities are inadequate to cope with the proposed development.
Community/Sports Halls	Sites in areas where there is a recognised deficiency in the quantity or quality of provision.
Health Care Facilities	Sites in areas where there is a recognised deficiency in the quantity or quality of provision.

5.21

Policy INF02 Developer Contributions to Community Infrastructure

Developers will be required to contribute towards the provision, upgrading and maintenance of community infrastructure where development will create or exacerbate deficiencies in, or impose significantly increased burdens on, existing infrastructure. The nature and scale of developer contributions will be determined by the following factors:

1. Specific requirements identified against proposals in the LDP or in development briefs;
2. In respect of open space, recreational, education and healthcare provision, the general requirements set out in Policies INF04, INF05 and INF06;
3. In respect of physical infrastructure any requirements to ensure that the development meets sustainability criteria;
4. In respect of other community facilities, any relevant standards operated by the Council or other public agency; and
5. Where a planning obligation is the intended mechanism for securing contributions, the principles contained in Circular 3/2012.

In applying the policy, consideration of the overall viability of the development will be taken into account in setting the timing and phasing of payments.



5.27 New developments must contribute meaningfully to the provision of open space and play facilities in the local area, taking account of the various quantitative, qualitative and accessibility standards set out in the Council's Open Space Strategy. Traditionally, the requirement has been met through on-site provision, and this will continue to be the case with most larger developments. However, in certain circumstances, financial contributions to off-site provision or upgrading may be a more appropriate alternative.

5.28

Policy INF04 Open Space and New Residential Development

Proposals for residential development of greater than 3 units will be required to contribute to open space and play provision. Provision should be informed by the Council's open space audit, and accord with the Open Space Strategy and the Supplementary Guidance SG13 on 'Open Space and New Development', based on the following principles:

1. New open space should be well designed, appropriately located, functionally sized and suitably diverse to meet different recreational needs in accordance with criteria set out in Supplementary Guidance SG13 'Open Space and New Development'.
2. Where appropriate, financial contributions to off-site provision, upgrading, and maintenance may be sought as a full or partial alternative to direct on-site provision. The circumstances under which financial contributions will be sought and the mechanism for determining the required financial contribution is set out in Supplementary Guidance SG13 'Open Space and New Development'.
3. Arrangements must be made for the appropriate management and maintenance of new open space.

Education Capacity

5.29 Notwithstanding improvements to the school estate over recent years, housing growth in certain locations will require further new or extended schools. In allocating sites for development the Council has taken account of the capacities of schools in the same catchment. Where school capacity is an issue improvements will be facilitated through development phasing and appropriate developer contributions, as highlighted against relevant sites in the Site Schedule.

5.30

Windfall sites may also raise issues concerning school capacity. Such proposals will be assessed against Policy INF05 and the accompanying Supplementary Guidance SG10 'Education and New Housing Development', as set out below. Where capacity problems exist, contributions will be sought unless increases in capacity are not possible or will prejudice the Council's education policies. In cases where no further capacity enhancements are possible and there are no other management solutions the proposed development will not be supported.

5.31

In recent years demand for nursery places has increased significantly and in certain localities nursery capacity is under pressure and enhancements will be required. Shortfalls in nursery capacity will also be addressed through appropriate developer contributions also set out in Supplementary Guidance SG10 'Education and New Housing Development'.

5.32

Policy INF05 Education and New Housing Development

Where there is insufficient capacity within the catchment school(s) to accommodate children from new housing developments, developer contributions will be sought in cases where improvements to the school are capable of being carried out and do not prejudice the Council's education policies. The contribution will be a proportionate one, the basis of which is set out in Supplementary Guidance SG10 'Education and New Housing Development'. Where proposed development impacts adversely on Council nursery provision, the resourcing of improvements is also addressed through the Supplementary Guidance.

In circumstances where a school cannot be improved physically and in a manner consistent with the Council's education policies, the development will not be permitted.

Urban Design

5.94 Key urban design principles to be followed in site planning are set out in Policy D03. The emphasis is on respecting context, and creating places for people which are attractive, legible, well-structured, safe and easy to move about in.

5.95

Policy D03 Urban Design

New development should create attractive and safe places for people to live, work and visit. Accordingly:

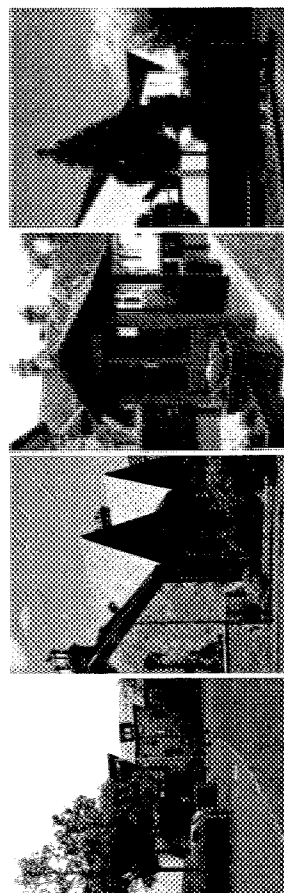
1. Development proposals should conform with any relevant development framework, brief or masterplan covering the site. Residential proposals should conform with Supplementary Guidance SG02 'Neighbourhood Design'.
2. The siting, density and design of new development should create a coherent structure of streets, public spaces and buildings which respects and complements the site's context, and creates a sense of identity within the development.
3. Street layout and design should generally conform with the Scottish Government's policy document 'Designing Streets'.
4. Streets and public spaces should have buildings fronting them or where this is not possible, a high quality architectural or landscape treatment.
5. Development proposals should include landscaping and green infrastructure which enhances, structures and unifies the development, assists integration with its surroundings, and contributes, where appropriate, to the wider green network.
6. Development proposals should create a safe and secure environment for all users through the provision of high levels of natural surveillance for access routes and public spaces, and
7. Major development proposals should make provision for public art in the design of buildings and the public realm.

Low and Zero Carbon Development

5.96 Reducing the energy requirements of buildings is a key part of reducing carbon emissions associated with development, and tackling climate change. This is being driven forward primarily by the new Building Standards regime. Whilst the priority is more energy efficient design, embedded renewable technologies also have a role to play.

5.97 Section 72 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 requires planning authorities to include policies in their Local Development Plans to ensure that all new buildings avoid a specified and rising proportion of the projected greenhouse gas emissions from their use through the installation and operation of low and zero carbon generating technologies (LZCGT). Scottish Building Standards set mandatory minimum carbon reduction standards for new buildings and a 30% improvement over 2007 standards was applied from October 2010. Scottish Ministers subsequently reviewed the standards in 2013, and the changes were set out in Section 6 (Energy) of the 2015 Building Standards Handbook. The 2015 revision identifies a 21% improvement in carbon dioxide emissions over 2010 levels for domestic projects, and a 43% improvement for non-domestic developments. These changes will come into force in October 2015 and will be subject to regular review.

5.98 Policy D04 specifies a minimum 10% of the mandatory carbon reduction standard as set out in the Building Regulations to be met by the installation and operation of LZCGT. This would allow development to achieve the Bronze Star level in the 2010 Building Standards. The policy sets out a number of exemptions in relation to the integration of LZCGT. This policy is to be implemented in conjunction with the Building Standards: Section 6 requirements and will be further reviewed in line with Building Standards thresholds.



Supporting Policies

Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

5.86 Woodland cover, and the proportion of woodland brought under management, has increased in the Falkirk area over recent years, contributing significantly to the green network and bringing multiple benefits. As well as being of commercial value, trees contribute to landscape, placemaking, biodiversity, recreation, carbon fixing, and flood management. The Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy includes a presumption in favour of protecting woodland resources. Control is exercised over felling by the Forestry Commission Scotland. A number of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are in force across the Council area, as shown on the Proposals Map.

5.87

Policy GN04 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

The Council recognises the ecological, landscape, economic and recreational importance of trees, woodland and hedgerows. Accordingly:

1. Felling detrimental to landscape, amenity, nature conservation or recreational interests will be discouraged. In particular ancient, long-established and semi-natural woodlands will be protected as a habitat resource of irreplaceable value;
2. In an area covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or a Conservation Area, development will not be permitted unless it can be proven that the proposal will not adversely affect the longevity, stability or appearance of the trees. Where necessary, endangered trees and woodlands will be protected through the designation of further TPOs;
3. Development which is likely to affect trees should comply with Supplementary Guidance SG06 'Trees and Development', including the preparation where appropriate of a Tree Survey. Constraints Plan, and Tree Protection Plan. Where development is permitted which will involve the loss of trees or hedgerows of amenity value, the Council will normally require replacement planting appropriate in terms of number, size, species and position;
4. The enhancement and management of existing woodland and hedgerows will be encouraged. Where the retention of a woodland area is integral to a development proposal, developers will normally be required to prepare and implement an appropriate Management Plan; and
5. There will be a preference for the use of appropriate local native species in new and replacement planting schemes, or non-native species which are integral to the historic landscape character.

Outdoor Access

5.88 The Council is committed to promoting outdoor access through the provision of strategic and local path networks, and has prepared a Core Paths Plan identifying a network of key routes. In considering new development, the protection of established paths and rights of way, and the securing of appropriate new access opportunities to enhance the network, will be given priority.

5.89

Policy GN05 Outdoor Access

The Council will seek to safeguard, improve and extend the network of outdoor access routes, with particular emphasis on the core path network, and routes which support the development of the Green Network. When considering development proposals, the Council will:

1. Safeguard the line of any existing or proposed access route affected by the development, and require its incorporation into the development unless a satisfactory alternative route can be agreed;
2. Seek to secure any additional outdoor access opportunities which may be achievable as a result of the development; and
3. Where an access route is to be temporarily disrupted, require the provision of an alternative route for the duration of construction work and the satisfactory reinstatement of the route on completion of the development.

