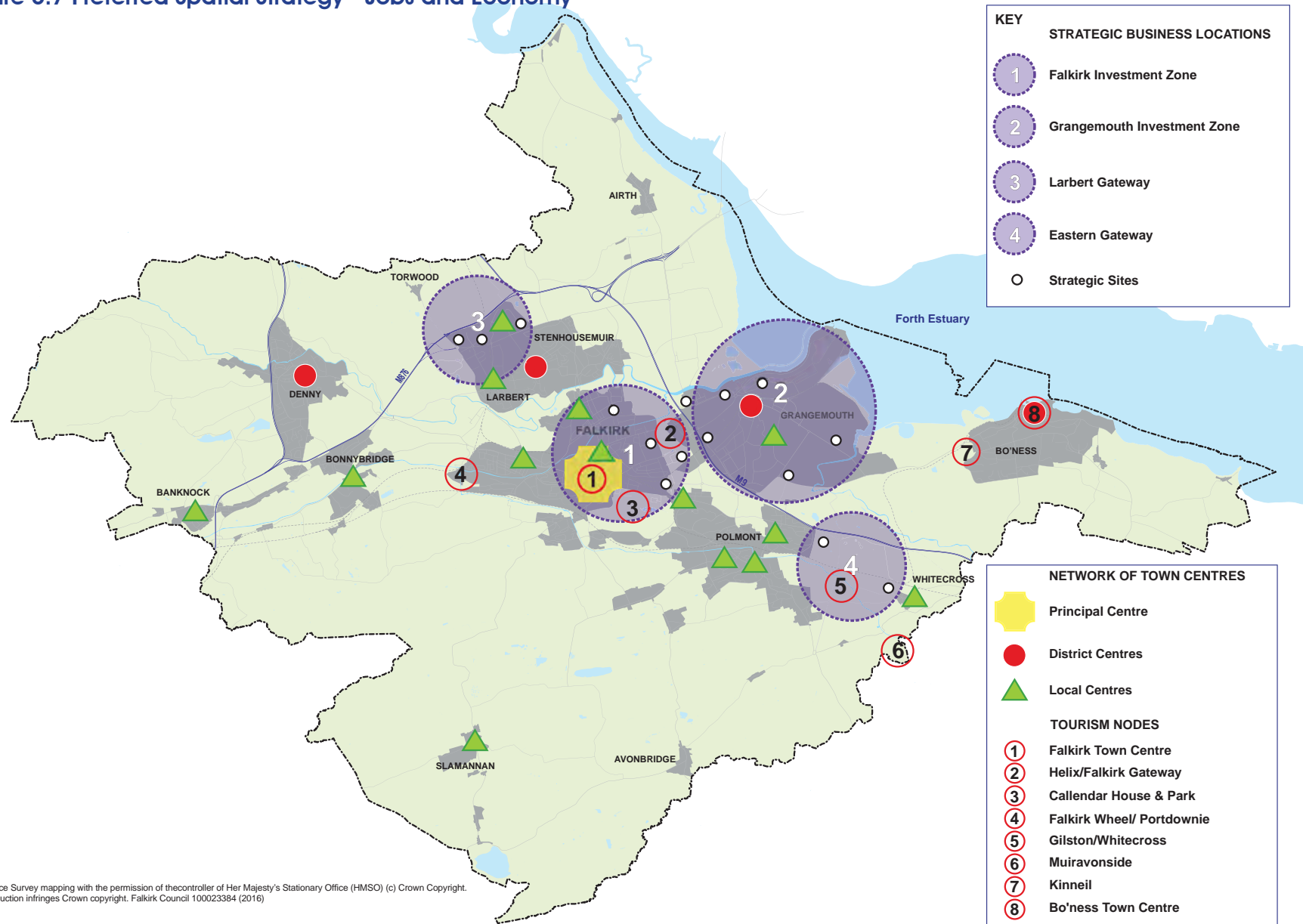


Figure 5.7 Preferred Spatial Strategy - Jobs and Economy



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Issue 9: Infrastructure

Key Question: What infrastructure is needed to support growth and how can we deliver it?

- 6.01** The delivery of infrastructure to support economic growth has been a major challenge for Falkirk over recent years, and will continue to be so over the period of LDP2. Investment has continued to take place in education, transport, and drainage over the past five years, but a significant number of projects remain to be delivered and further needs have arisen in the meantime.
- 6.02** Against this background, the Council is cautious about promoting additional large scale growth areas, where additional major infrastructure is required, especially where the extent and timing of new infrastructure may well render development unviable. The preferred community growth options are based on making maximum use of existing infrastructure and planned upgrades.

Transport

- 6.03** Whilst accessibility to the motorway network is generally good and has been improved at certain key junctions since 2010, there are remaining junctions on the M9 and M80 where capacity needs to be enhanced to accommodate committed development. The A801 upgrade also remains outstanding.
- 6.04** On the local road network, growth will continue to put pressure on the main access routes in and around Falkirk. Corridor improvements along the A904 and A803 on the eastern and western sides of the town will be critical to unlocking development potential. The former are being progressed through the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Initiative, in conjunction with the Falkirk Gateway. In Denny, progress is now being made to address congestion issues at Denny Cross with the construction of Phase 2 of the Denny Eastern Access Road. The completion of the remainder of the road may extend beyond 2020.

- 6.05** The major strategic improvements to the existing rail network, through the EGIP electrification project, will be completed before 2020. Rail station car parking has been increased over the years to address increasing rail patronage. Although there are continuing pressures, scope for further facilities is now limited by lack of available sites. LDP1 also safeguards sites for possible new railway stations at Grangemouth and Bonnybridge. The feasibility of these may be affected by changes to services post-electrification. The Council will continue to support improvement of Falkirk Bus Station, facilitated if possible by wider redevelopment at the East End of the Town Centre. The Council will continue to explore opportunities for introducing or extending bus lanes on the arterial routes into Falkirk as development proposals come forward.
- 6.06** Active travel opportunities continue to be identified to add to the extensive network of paths and cycleways already established across the area. Several additions to the existing network have been prioritised for delivery through the next plan period which will also contribute to the development of the Central Scotland Green Network. At the Falkirk Gateway, Stadium and the Helix, the A904 corridor improvements are likely to incorporate new cycle/pedestrian facilities to improve movement within this key area.
- 6.07** In overall terms, the net amount of additional growth proposed through the Main Issues Report is unlikely to require any significant upgrades to the strategic transport network over and above those already identified. The need for new sites to contribute to the local transport network will be assessed on a site by site basis.



Issue 9: Infrastructure

Drainage and Flooding

- 6.08** The upgrading of several Waste Water Treatment Works was identified in LDP1 to accommodate new development. Airth has been completed and Torwood will be completed by 2020. Other projects will be carried over into LDP2, with programming linked to the progress of development proposals.
- 6.09** In 2016, Local Flood Risk Management Plans covering the Falkirk area were published, identifying key actions and how they will be delivered. The major project is the flood protection scheme for Grangemouth, which is already identified in LDP1 and on which preparatory studies are well underway. Surface water flooding issues across parts of the Council area, which are related to drainage network capacity, have been investigated through an integrated catchment study. This will inform the preparation of surface water management plans. The existing policy on flooding in LDP1 will be continued, implementing Scottish Planning Policy's flood risk framework at the local level.

Education and Healthcare

- 6.10** Education capacity remains an issue, notwithstanding improvements to the school estate over recent years. At secondary level, plans to extend capacity at Larbert High School are in hand, whilst some other high schools are subject to longer term capacity risks. LDP1 highlighted a number of primary school extensions required to accommodate growth at Banknock, Head of Muir, Denny, Bantaskin and Maddiston. In addition, a permanent extension at Kinnaid will be required, and additional preferred sites in this Main Issues Report may necessitate enhanced capacity at Victoria Primary School. The new Forth Valley College campus is expected to be completed by 2019.
- 6.11** In terms of healthcare, issues exist at a localised level with some local GP practices coming under pressure currently in the Denny and Bonnybridge/Banknock settlement areas. The policy approach established in LDP1 will continue, that in those areas identified by NHS Forth Valley where capacity is pressured the cost of new provision will be supplemented by appropriate developer contributions.

Cemeteries

- 6.12** Over the last five years, future cemetery capacity has become an issue. An extension to Polmont cemetery has been created, and some additional capacity has been achieved through internal reordering at other facilities. However, there remains a need for further provision, with investigations focusing on potential extensions at Camelon, Hills of Dunipace, Grandsable (Weedingshall) and Muiravonside. Options are currently being assessed against stringent SEPA requirements. Ground conditions will present challenges, and the use of some areas may be limited. Depending on the final outcome of assessments, further work may be needed on how burial needs may be met in the future.

Outdoor Sports Facilities

- 6.13** The Council and Falkirk Community Trust are encouraging the development of a network of strategic sports pitch sites, each one with at least one floodlit 'third generation' (3G) artificial pitch, designed primarily for football, plus at least one floodlit 5 or 7-a-side 3G pitch and possibly one or more grass pitches, complemented by good quality changing and other ancillary accommodation, including social facilities. This has the potential to provide teams with much better facilities for weekend matches; to allow more teams to take part in mid-week training and therefore raise standards of play; and to support the development of mid-week leagues, potentially reducing the need for pitches at the weekend. 3G pitch provision already exists at Ochilview in Stenhousemuir, at the Falkirk Stadium and at LK Galaxy in Grangemouth and the Council and Community Trust are working towards the development of additional 3G pitch hubs.



Issue 9: Infrastructure

Delivery and Funding

- 6.14** Given the likely continuing financial pressures on public and private sectors, the funding and delivery of infrastructure will continue to be challenging. Indeed, delivery of infrastructure has been a particular focus of the current review of the planning system, with the independent panel report advocating ‘an infrastructure first approach to planning and development’, identifying problems with the current approach, and recommending that alternative mechanisms such as an infrastructure levy be examined.
- 6.15** In the meantime, the Council and other public sector partners will use limited capital budgets as effectively as possible, augmented by external funding sources where available. The Council's Tax Increment Finance (TIF) initiative will assist with the funding of a number of schemes, where they will assist in unlocking sites for business development. M9 Junction 5, the Falkirk A904 Corridor, the A801 Corridor and the Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme are all included in the TIF programme.
- 6.16** However, particularly in respect of infrastructure needed to serve new housing development, developer contributions will continue to play an important role. The Council will continue to set out contribution requirements for certain types of infrastructure (e.g. education, healthcare and open space/green infrastructure), and intends to consolidate this generic guidance into a single supplementary guidance note. Bespoke guidance for specific sites or items of infrastructure will be promoted where appropriate. The guidance in Circular 3/2012 will continue to be adhered to. At the same time, the problems and limitations of developer contributions are recognised, particularly where land values are low. Development viability will continue to be a material consideration in applying contribution rates, and the Council recognises the need to phase contributions appropriately. Contribution rates and any applicable thresholds will be reviewed.

- 6.17** Updated guidance on developer contributions will also clarify an issue with regard to the sub division of sites allocated in the LDP into separate planning applications for parts of the site. Where sites are subject to sub division, it will be the capacity of the whole site which will determine whether a particular threshold for the payment of contributions has been exceeded.

6.18 Preferred Option

1. The infrastructure projects listed in Figure 6.1 and shown in Figure 6.2 will be promoted in LDP2 to support the sustainable growth of the area.
2. Delivery of the infrastructure will be through the capital programmes of the Council and relevant infrastructure providers, the TIF programme, other external funding sources where available, and developer contributions.
3. The nature and level of developer contributions will be set out in policy and consolidated supplementary guidance, and will be related and proportionate to the impacts of individual developments on local infrastructure.

Alternative

An alternative approach to developer contributions might involve a more global infrastructure levy on development, based on total infrastructure costs across the area or a particular settlement. It is recognised that funding and delivery mechanisms will be looked at nationally through the review of the planning system, and other options may emerge in time.

How does this differ from LDP1?

The range of infrastructure proposals has been amended to reflect progress on implementation and additional projects. The preferred policy approach to delivery is similar to that of LDP1.

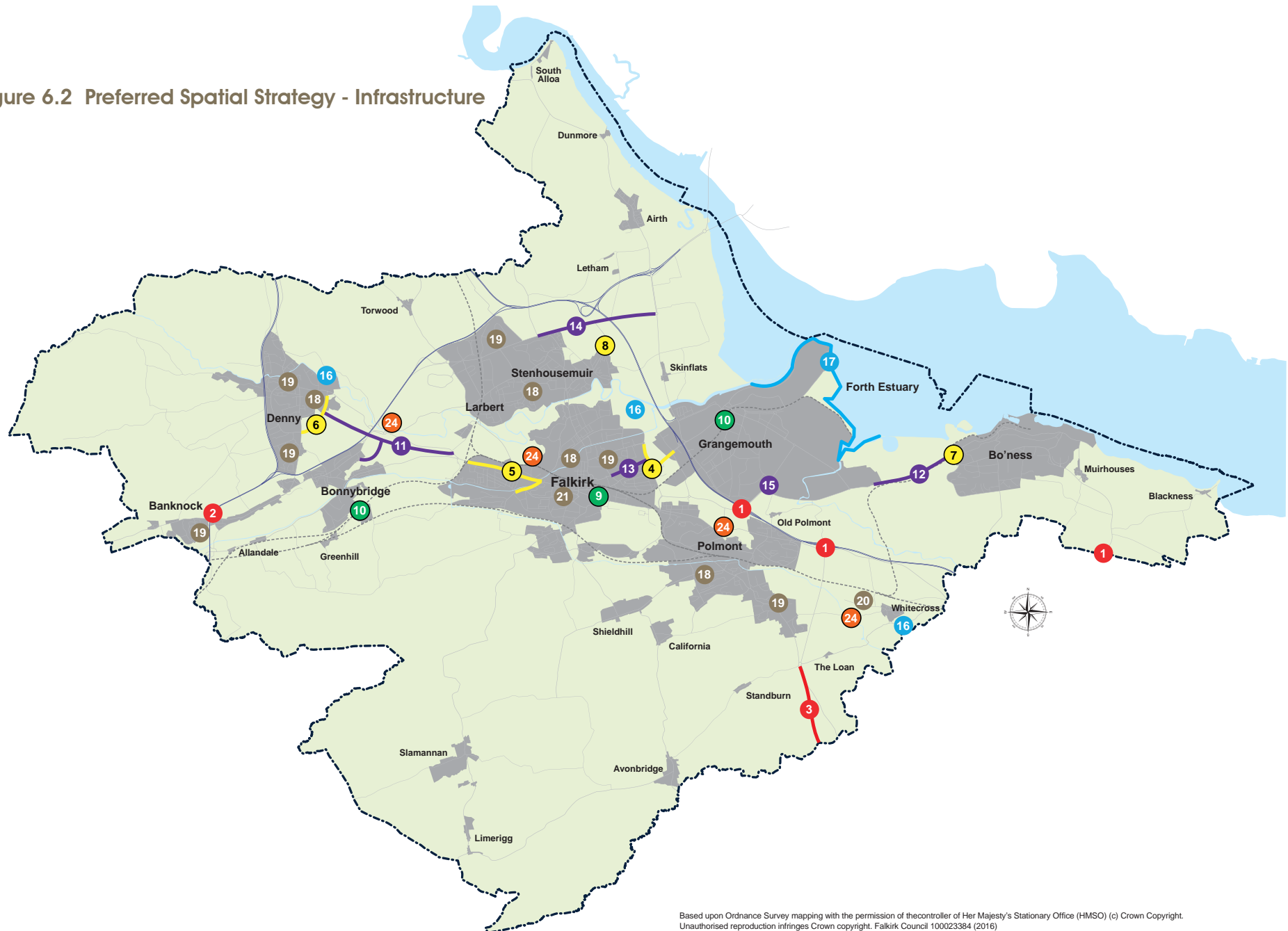


Issue 9: Infrastructure

Figure 6.1 Infrastructure Proposals

Type		Proposals
Strategic Transport	1	M9 Junctions 3, 4 and 5 Improvements
	2	M80 Junction 7 Improvement
	3	A801 Corridor (Avon Gorge)
Local Transport	4	Falkirk A904 Corridor Improvements
	5	Falkirk A803 Corridor Improvements
	6	Denny Eastern Access Road (Phases 2/3) and Denny Cross Upgrade
	7	A904/A993 Junction Improvement, Bo'ness
	8	C116 Waterslap Road Improvement, Carronshore
Public Transport	9	Falkirk Bus Station Improvement
	10	Rail station site safeguarding at Bonnybridge and Grangemouth
Active Travel	11	Falkirk - Denny/Bonnybridge Path
	12	Bo'ness - Grangemouth path and A904 Road Realignment
	13	Helix - Falkirk Town Centre Path
	14	A88 (Antonshill to A905) Path, Stenhousemuir
	15	B9143 Inchyra Road Path, Grangemouth
Drainage and Flood Management	16	Upgrades to support development at Whitecross, Denny and Dalderse WWTWs
	17	Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme
Education, Healthcare and Community Facilities	18	Secondary School Capacity Enhancement (Larbert, St Mungo's, Braes, and Denny)
	19	Primary School Capacity Enhancement (Kinnaird, Denny, Maddiston, Bankier, Victoria, Head of Muir)
	20	New Whitecross Primary School
	21	Falkirk Community Hospital
	22	Capacity Enhancements at GP Surgeries in Denny and Bonnybridge/Banknock areas (Locations still to be determined)
	23	3G Pitches (Locations still to be determined)
Cemeteries	24	Cemetery Extensions (Camelon, Muiravonside, Hills of Dunipace, Weedingshall)

Figure 6.2 Preferred Spatial Strategy - Infrastructure



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Issue 10: Energy

Key Question: How can we meet energy needs and move towards a low carbon economy?

Low Carbon Energy Generation

- 6.19** The need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the energy sector remains a key Scottish Government priority. Ambitious targets have been set for the proportion of electricity and heat demand which should be met from renewable sources, and planning has an important role in promoting energy generation technologies which will move us to a low carbon economy.
- 6.20** In the Council area, onshore wind remains the most significant renewable technology and several commercial schemes are now in operation. However, future growth in wind and other technologies is highly dependent on subsidy levels, which are currently reducing. Grangemouth has the potential to become a centre for low carbon energy, evidenced by the extant consent for a large scale biomass plant in the docks, the NPF3 National Development for thermal energy generation with carbon capture and storage (CCS), and considerable interest in the development of energy from waste proposals on vacant industrial sites in the town.
- 6.21** At present, LDP1 has a criteria based policy dealing with renewable energy, together with two supplementary guidance documents: SG14, which provides a spatial framework and guidance on wind energy developments; and SG17 which provides advice on other forms of renewable technology. In line with Scottish Planning Policy, LDP2 will introduce a new policy which embraces all energy developments, providing guidance on the considerations to be taken into account, including environmental, economic and social impacts, and how proposals fit with national policies on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The spatial framework for wind energy will be incorporated into LDP2, and detailed guidance on renewable energy technologies will be consolidated into a single supplementary guidance document.

6.22 Preferred Option

1. Introduce a policy on energy developments, incorporate the wind energy spatial framework into LDP2 (as currently expressed in SG14) and consolidate guidance on renewable technologies into a single supplementary guidance document.
2. Allocate a site in Grangemouth Docks (sites 128, 162 and 163) for a power station with carbon capture and storage in accordance with NPF3.

Alternative

No alternative sites for the CCS plant have been proposed or assessed, although it is possible that it could be accommodated within vacant land at Ineos.

How does this differ from LDP1?

The preferred option differs from LDP1 by introducing a more broadly based policy on energy developments, rather than purely focusing on renewables. The wind energy framework is transferred to the LDP from supplementary guidance to give it more prominence. The CCS project is now identified as a site-specific proposal, rather than as a broad location as in LDP1.

