5.16 (d) Farm Steadings

Due to the diversity of Falkirk's countryside, the siting of farm steadings within the Council area varies according to landscape character. Siting can range from nestling against hill slopes to straddling hill tops and sitting prominently on wide plains. In general terms, farm steadings comprise a tight grouping of small to medium scale ancillary buildings, sheds and barns arranged around a farmhouse to form a courtyard.

5.17 Some of the older farmhouses dating back to the late 17th and early 18th century have been listed for their architectural and historic character.

5.18 Traditionally farm steadings comprised a mix of one and two storey buildings with regular fenestration patterns, generally with a low window to wall ratio and short gables in keeping with lowland farm building traditions. Horse driven engine houses known as horse "gangs" feature on some older steadings, consisting of a separate circular unit with conical roof; they are generally attached to cart bays and barns.

Typical Farm Steading :
Simple arrangement of compact buildings set around a courtyard

Letham Conservation Village

Typical Farmhouse :
Mix of one and two storey buildings with regular fenestration pattern

5.19 External finishes consist of unpainted natural sandstone to walls, with random rubble to barns and other outbuildings and coursed ashlar to the main elevation of the farm house. Although not a dominant feature of the area, some farm buildings also have harling or render with a lime wash finish. Roof coverings range from natural slate and pantiles to pre-formed industrial metals on more modern outbuildings.

Cart bays with sandstone detailing to front elevation

Typical dormer detail

5.20 (e) Buildings and Country Estates

The area was once peppered with country estates, the remnants of which are still in evidence. Typically, the components of the estate would be a large house set in the midst of a wooded estate with designed elements such as parkland, ornamental loch and ha-ha ditches. Lodge houses sit at driveway entrances. Stables and walled gardens are further common built elements. Many country houses in rural Falkirk have been designated as listed buildings by Historic Scotland on the basis of their architectural or historic interest. Some examples are described below.

5.21 Avondale House is a 16th century mansion with an 18th century 'gothic' symmetrical plan and elevation with pinnacled turrets and battlements. It is surrounded by expansive grounds containing a sizeable stable block designed to complement the main building at the main entry point.

5.22 Larbert House, built in 1822 and designed by David Hamilton was a grand Georgian mansion with "ornate" tower, curved linking loggia and portecochere" . It was extended by later Victorian additions and was set within designed landscaped grounds which included a pond, walled garden and stable block.

Avondale House a Category "B" Listed Building

Door Detail : Avondale House

5.23 Dunmore Park is included in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes owing to the significance of the surviving historic landscaped setting; while the grand mansion of Dunmore Park, 1820 - 1822 is now ruinous, the surviving Pineapple is an outstanding, idiosyncratic architectural folly linked with the walled garden and pavilion.

5.24 Lathallan House, designed in the Tudor style by Thomas Hamilton, was constructed 1826 - 1828 with a late 19th century wing; the policies of the estate include a Walled Garden, Ivy Cottage and Power House .

The Pineapple in Dunmore Park a Category "A" Listed Building

Window Detail : Lathallan House

Lathallan House a Category "B" Listed Building

5.25 (f) Traditional Industrial Buildings and Structures

Traditional Industrial and commercial buildings and structures in the countryside include mills, canal side inns, viaducts and aquaducts for water bourne and rail transport networks.

5.26 (g) Modern Buildings in the Rural Landscape

The diversity of contemporary buildings in Falkirk's countryside reflects the prevailing mix of land uses and settlement patterns. Individual houses vary in scale and massing from single storey bungalows to large modern villas; riding stables, chalets, holiday homes, agricultural buildings and premises for light industry are scattered across the landscape.

5.27 Design issues arising from contemporary development include inappropriate scale, massing, urban layout patterns, over-prominent locations and urban architectural style, all of which fail to reflect the rural context. The application of ubiquitous finishes such as concrete roof tiles, metal cladding to large sheds for agricultural buildings and light industry and artificial stone, render, upvc windows and other ancillary fittings to housing has a negative impact by failing to reflect local distinctiveness and rural character. Traditionally, rural buildings were finished in stone, slate, timber, lime wash and lime harling, all naturally sourced materials which help to connect built forms to the landscape.

5.28 More successful modern landmark buildings in the countryside include The Falkirk Wheel, 2001, a groundbreaking feat of engineering designed as the eye catching centrepiece of a major infrastructure project linking the Forth and Clyde and Union Canals. The Helix, is a major infrastructure project to create a new canal link, a lagoon for sport and leisure use and a large recreational parkland featuring the Kelpies, a distinctive public art sculpture of two horses heads straddling the new canal link.

Inappropriate scale

Inappropriate architectural style, scale and location on hilltop setting

Inappropriate urban architectural style and materials

Design Principles for New Development

5.29 (a) Location

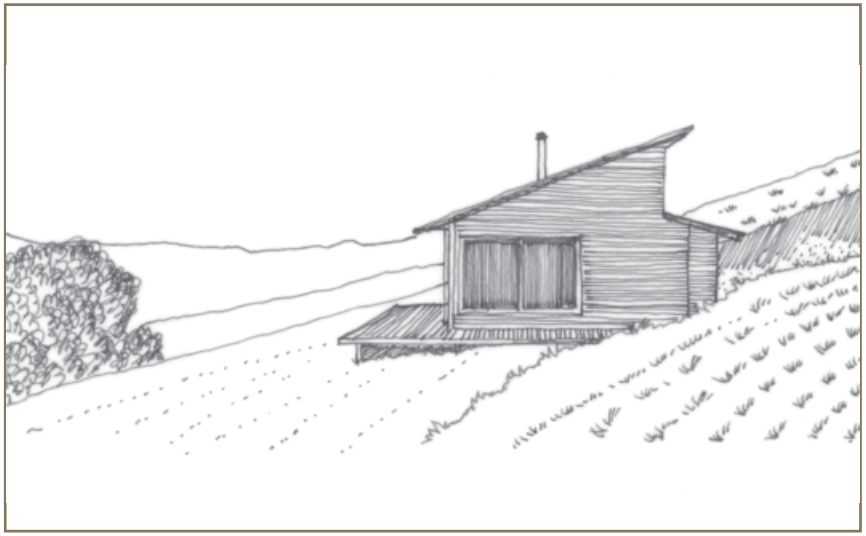
National planning policy and guidance emphasises the importance of fit and design of new development in the landscape. These considerations are key to making development acceptable. The general parameters as set out below are aimed at encouraging high quality, individual design that is sensitive both to its immediate setting but also defines the characteristics of the wider local area.

5.30 Large new buildings, including those associated with agriculture and leisure should be sited to minimise visibility from public roads, popular walking routes and areas of informal and formal public recreation.

5.31 Wooded sites and trees can provide a pleasing backdrop to new developments in the countryside whilst effecting a level of amalgamation into the landscape at the same time.

5.32 New development should integrate with and take advantage of existing features of the landscape or the site including topography, trees, woodlands, water features, existing buildings and boundary treatments. New development should 'nestle' within the landscape.

Housing integrating into the existing landscape



Contemporary single storey house recessed into the hillside

5.33 (b) Layout

Layout is a critical consideration which if handled effectively, can contribute to a successful design solution. The key factors to be considered are:

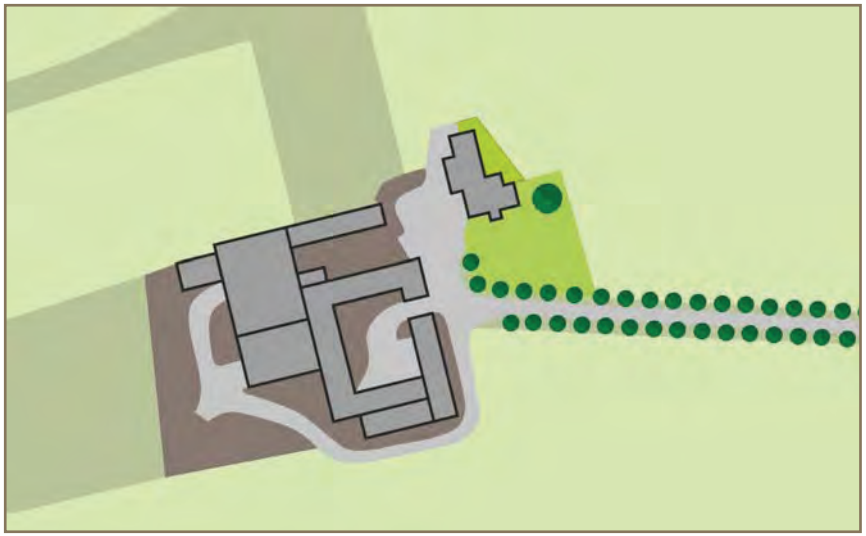
Topography - development should take advantage of prevailing contours. For example split level designs suit sloping sites and create the effect of 'nestling' buildings into the topography.

Existing features - traditional boundaries, stone walls, hedging and field fences should be retained where possible. Woodland and tree cover should be retained and maximised if available and views should be taken advantage of without compromising privacy.

Established patterns of development - extensions to existing buildings or outbuildings should mirror established arrangements. For example, extensions to converted farm steadings or stables in country estates should reflect existing building footprints, plot patterns and should maintain spatial relationships between existing buildings in the group.

Existing man made or natural features - care should be taken in relation to positioning of new buildings with respect to proximity to established and protected features in the landscape - For example rivers, streams, canals, panoramic views, listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments. Particular care is required in relation to location of enabling development and its impact on the setting of places of special architectural or historic significance.

Orientation - buildings should be positioned to maximise solar gain and natural shelter.



Arrangement of buildings in typical farm steading - farmhouse, barns and associated sheds are arranged to form inner courtyards. New development should respect established patterns.

Regular Urban Arrangement is inappropriate in a Rural Setting

5.34 (c) Design

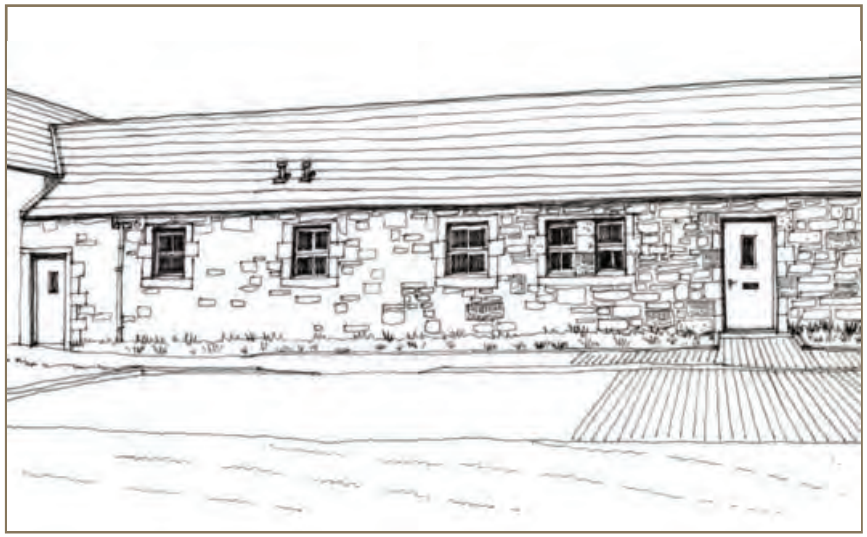
Local traditions, skills, materials and climatic conditions have influenced the design of buildings in the countryside in the past; for example natural stone and timber tended to be locally sourced. New development should respect key aspects of Falkirk's indigenous architecture and landscape in a contemporary manner to maintain a unique sense of place and to avoid 'anywhere' development. Originally designed, innovative and carefully sited buildings to fit the landscape using local materials will be encouraged.

5.35 Key design considerations for new development are :

5.36 Scale - New development in the countryside should be of a scale and density to fit with the surroundings. In the Falkirk Council area, traditional rural buildings are generally of compact scale and proportions. Storey heights rarely rise above two storeys and there is a low window to wall ratio with narrower gables and longer frontages. Farm steadings are generally of moderate scale and simple form in keeping with lowland farm traditions. Country estates are made up of assorted outbuildings, stables, walled gardens, lodge houses and follies, subservient in scale, style and complexity to the main house. Modern business and leisure developments including stables, holiday homes and agricultural buildings tend to be of moderate height with long elevations and shorter gables to accommodate functional requirements. Historic buildings and structures such as viaducts, doocots, castles and acquaducts are prominent in the landscape by virtue of their grand scale, location, quality of materials and unique design.

5.37 New development should reflect vernacular tradition with respect to simplicity of form and moderate height and width. Where large scale development is proposed, overall design, location and materials will be required to be highly sensitive to the context.

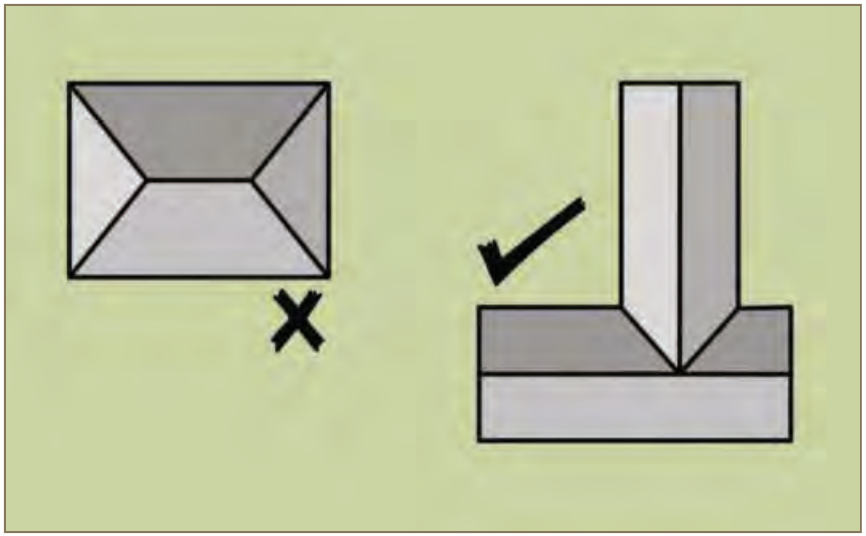
Traditional building carefully sited for natural shelter



Low window to wall ratio is a common feature of traditional dwellings in the countryside

5.38 **Detailed Design -** In the Falkirk countryside, typical local detailing of buildings can be identified - see Section 5.19 of this Design guidance for examples of indigenous windows, rooflights, chimneys, roof verges and dormers.

5.39 New development will be required to demonstrate contemporary interpretation of established local detailing in an imaginative and creative manner to maintain visible links to the area to create individual designs and to avoid standardised 'anywhere' solutions.

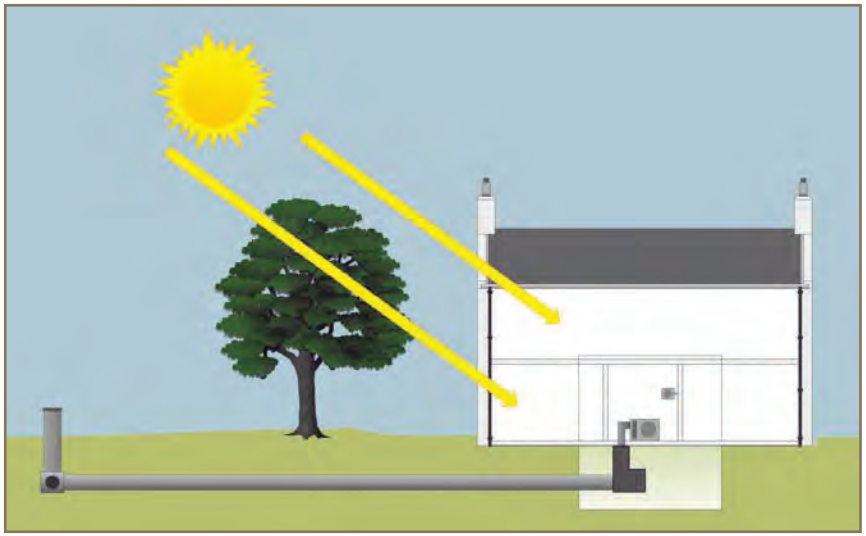


Traditional proportions such as linked rectangular plan forms as shown above are preferable to non-traditional deep plan/square plan forms. Pitched roofs are often incorporated creating symmetrical gables

Contemporary Interpretation of Traditionally Proportioned Dwellings
Copyright and Credits : Quercus Ltd., Pat and Andy law

5.40 **External Finishes -** Traditionally, rural buildings were finished in stone, slate, timber, lime wash and lime harling. Locally sourced, natural materials should be applied to external walls and roofs of new development as much as is financially and practically possible to reflect local architectural traditions and to anchor the building into the landscape. The use of vividly coloured cladding systems and the application of artificial finishes such as render, plastic or upvc, metal and reconstituted stone should be avoided. The use of slate, natural stone and timber is encouraged.

5.41 **Sustainable Design -** It is environmentally beneficial and sustainable to source materials locally; their use also helps to blend new buildings with the older more established buildings in the countryside. All development should be designed to be resilient to climate change through careful exterior detailing and choice of materials. Buildings should be positioned to maximise solar gain and to gain natural shelter from topographical features to reduce energy demands. Building design should aim for minimal carbon footprint from initial construction through to low energy use on a day to day basis. Re-use of existing buildings minimising loss of existing building components and materials is encouraged in cases of conversion and refurbishment. High performance, energy efficient glazing and innovative heating systems should be incorporated into new buildings.



Buildings should be designed and orientated to take advantage of solar gain. High performance, energy efficient systems should be incorporated at initial design stages.

Windows to living spaces should be orientated to take advantage of solar gain and buildings should generally be situated to benefit from shelter from prevailing wind. Innovative low carbon heating systems such as ground source heat pumps as illustrated should be considered where conditions allow.

Grangewood Autonomous House
Copyright and Credits : Quercus Ltd.

5.42 **Boundary Treatments, Access and Parking -** The design of boundary treatments, access roadways, hard standings for cars, gates and fences to new developments in the countryside should take into account the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape and should reflect the design of any indigenous detailing. Access roads should be positioned to allow the retention of existing boundaries such as stone field boundary walls, fences hedges and trees. The retention of existing features helps to integrate the building with its setting. In most cases simple low key designs using as few materials are preferable to complex and over sized grand designs. Urban solutions for walls and fencing using concrete and brick should be avoided. Access roads and parking areas should be designed to be as simple and informal as possible to integrate with existing roads using natural materials where possible. Safety standards should be accommodated without compromising rural character.

Simple, informal design reflects rural character

Inappropriate boundary treatments out of keeping with rural traditions

Sensitive choice of materials and crisp, simple detailing

5.43 **Landscaping -** Alterations to established landscape features and proposals for new landscaping associated with new development can have a major impact on both the immediate setting and the wider countryside area. Where a development site includes existing trees, hedgerows and other significant landscape features, they should be retained to restore and reinforce established rural character and appearance. Where existing landscape features are agreed to be removed, replacement with appropriate local species as advised by Falkirk Council's Landscape Officers should be agreed.

5.44 New planting including hedgerows and trees can provide effective screening as well as shelter from the elements on exposed sites. Where larger buildings are proposed, mitigating screen planting will be encouraged to reduce visual impact on the landscape. Screening and hedges planted with quick growing conifer species such as Cypress. Leylandii should be avoided in favour of appropriate native species.

5.45 Site analysis should include assessment of vantage points in the surrounding area from which new development will be visible. New landscaping features should be designed accordingly to create a natural fit between new buildings and rural setting.

Rural character is reinforced by simple treatments for hard and soft landscaping.

5.46 (d) Conversion of Existing Buildings

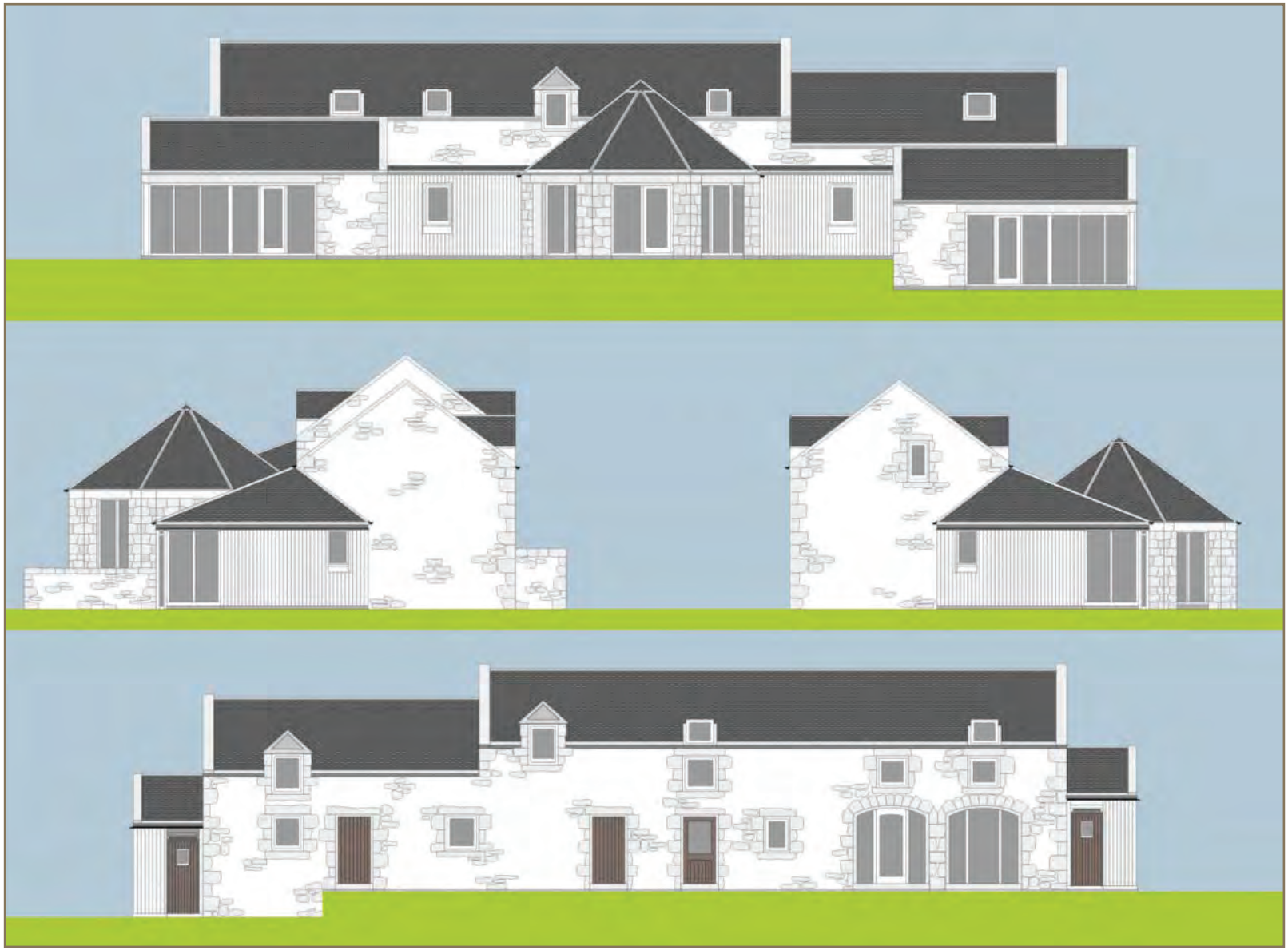
Due to industrial change, many buildings in the countryside of Falkirk are no longer suitable for their original purpose including mills, brickworks, farm steadings and buildings associated with water and transport systems. These buildings contribute to local distinctiveness and character. Older buildings can be successfully remodelled into contemporary living spaces without sacrificing traditional character. It is important that these buildings are not demolished unnecessarily or altered to such an extent that their significant features are lost. The total or substantial demolition of existing vernacular buildings will be discouraged unless supporting information is submitted to demonstrate :-

1). the existing building is incapable of repair and re-use as demonstrated by structural/engineering reports.

2). the costs of repair and re-use are such that it is not economically viable as demonstrated by full economic appraisal.

Vernacular buildings can be successfully remodelled and extended to provide contemporary living spaces without sacrificing traditional character

5.47



Case Study : North Mains, Beecraigs, by Linlithgow
Copyright and Credits : The Pollock Hammond Partnership Architects and Conservation Consultants

5.48 (e) Infill Development

Infill development will only be acceptable where existing clusters of buildings are deemed to have capacity to accommodate new development without detriment to established patterns of development, character of the group and spatial relationships.

5.49 The introduction of modest development to small clusters of houses, and existing groups of buildings such as country estates and farm steadings must reflect the key characteristics of the existing group including building lines, scale, massing, orientation and existing access arrangements.

5.50 (iii) Enabling Development

Where enabling development is proposed to secure the long term future of a place of significant cultural or natural heritage, the resulting development should be of a high design quality. It should serve to protect the setting and special cultural or natural interest of the place and should represent the minimum level of development to enable the conservation of the place. Where new housing is proposed, great care should be applied to its location and design. If original elements of a designed landscape setting have survived, these should be integrated into proposals.

5.51 Enabling development will support the restoration of the main house in the Lathallan Estate converting it to 9 flats : other works include the demolition of the laundry, restoration and conversion of stables to form 3 houses and erection of 36 new houses. The new buildings will be unobstrusively sited in terms of views into the site from the surrounding roads owing to the heavily landscaped setting.

Lathallan House: Part elevation

5.52

Lathallan Estate Site Plan showing enabling development within the estate

5.53 The best examples of enabling development respond to the unique architectural and historic character of buildings and their settings by mitigating visual and physical impact on existing buildings and their setting and by enhancing special character. Enabling development at the Walled Garden of Tyninghame House took the form of small pavilions built up from the garden wall behind a 19th century greenhouse. The traditional design and materials preserve the character and appearance of the walled garden.

New Pavilions adjoining existing garden wall at Tyninghame House

Aerial View: Walled Garden at Tyninghame House

5.54 Design Principles Checklist

Location	The impact of larger buildings should be minimised through siting, landscaping, massing and use of colour and all new development should take advantage of existing features and topography to effect an "nestling effect" within the rural landscape.
Layout	New development should be orientated to take advantage of natural shelter and solar gain and should respect and retain existing site features such as boundaries, walls, woodland and trees. Where extensions to existing groups of buildings are proposed, interventions should mirror established development patterns including footprints, plot patterns and spatial relationships between buildings.
Design	Originally designed, innovative buildings that fit the local landscape using local, natural materials will be encouraged.
Scale	New development should be of a scale and density to fit with the surroundings. Reference should be taken from local vernacular building tradition of simple forms and moderate height and width.
Detailed Design	Contemporary interpretation of the architectural detailing of local vernacular buildings will be encouraged - take reference from traditional windows, rooflights, doors, chimneys, roof verges etc.
External Finishes	The use of natural building materials will be encouraged - e.g. stone, slate, timber, harling.
Sustainable Design	Use locally sourced and recycled / salvaged building materials wherever possible and design new development to maximise energy efficient and to withstand the impacts of climate change. Position new buildings to take advantage of solar gain and natural shelter.
Boundary Treatments, Access and Parking	The design of boundary treatments, access and parking should reflect local character and materials; simple low key designs using natural materials are preferable to complex, over - size solutions more suited to an urban setting.
Landscaping	Existing landscape features should be retained; new planting can provide shelter and can mitigate the visual impact of larger buildings.
Conversion of Existing Buildings	Traditional rural buildings should be retained and remodelled as required to provide contemporary uses and to maintain local distinctiveness and character. Total or substantial demolition will be discouraged.
Infill Development	Limited development - up to 3 houses - will only be acceptable where it has no impact on the character of established clusters of buildings.
Enabling Development	Enabling development will only be encouraged where it secures the long term future of a significant place via development of high design quality which protects the setting and special cultural or natural interest of the place.

Please Refer to pages 33 - 45 for Detailed Guidance

Appendix 1 - List of relevant Local Development Plan Policies

6.1 List of relevant Local Development Plan Policies (found within Supporting Policies Chapter)

Policy	Topic
Policy INF02	Developer Contributions to Community Infrastructure
Policy INF07	Walking and Cycling
Policy INF10	Transport Assessments
Policy INF12	Water and Drainage Infrastructure
Policy BUS01	Business and Tourism
Policy BUS05	Major Hazards and Pipelines
Policy GN02	Landscape
Policy GN03	Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Policy GN04	Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
Policy GN05	Outdoor Access
Policy D02	Sustainable Design Principles
Policy D04	Low and Zero Carbon Development
Policy D07	Antonine Wall
Policy D08	Sites of Archaeological Interest
Policy D09	Listed Buildings
Policy D12	Historic Gardens and Design Landscapes
Policy D13	Battlefield Sites
Policy RW04	Agricultural Land, Carbon Rich Soils and Rare Soils
Policy RW06	Flooding
Policy RW07	Air Quality
Policy RW09	Waste Reduction in New Development
Policy RW10	Vacant Derelict and Contaminated Land
Policy HSG05	Infill Development and Subdivision of Plots
Policy HSG07	House Extensions and Alterations
Policy HSG08	Gypsy/Traveller Sites

6.2 Information on Planning Permission, Permitted Development, Listed Building and Conservation Area control can be obtained from:

Development Management
Development Services
Falkirk Council
Abbotsford House
David's Loan
Falkirk FK2 7YZ
Tel: 01324 504748
Email: dc@falkirk.gov.uk

Building Warrant information can be obtained from:

Building Standards
Development Services
Falkirk Council
Abbotsford House
David's Loan
Falkirk
FK2 7YZ
Tel. 01324 504985
Email: buildingcontrol@falkirk.gov.uk

Information on Roads Construction Consent can be obtained from:

Roads and Development
Development Services
Falkirk Council
Abbotsford House
David's Loan
Falkirk
FK2 7YZ
Tel. 01324 504950
Email: roads@falkirk.gov.uk

A list of architects and advice on employing a Chartered Architect can be obtained from:

The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS)
15 Rutland Square
Edinburgh
EH1 2BE
Tel. 0131 229 7545
Email: info@rias.org.uk
Helpful information also available on the RIAS website: www.rias.org.uk

Information on protected species can be obtained from:

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)
Forth Region
Silvan House
3rd Floor East
231 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh
EH12 7AT
Tel. 0131 316 2600
Email: forth@snh.gov.uk