

Design, Placemaking & the Historic Environment

Design and Placemaking

5.90 Improving design quality and creating attractive, distinctive places through new development is a key aim of the LDP. A hierarchy of policies, guidance and design tools will be used including:

- ❖ An overarching sustainable design principles policy;
- ❖ Detailed design policies;
- ❖ Topic based supplementary guidance;
- ❖ Development briefs and development frameworks generally prepared by the Council;
- ❖ Masterplans generally prepared by developers; and
- ❖ Design statements prepared by developers to accompany planning applications.

Sustainable Design Principles

5.91 Overarching design principles are set out in Policy D02. These pinpoint the overall themes which should be addressed at an early stage in the formulation of development proposals. In larger developments, masterplans will be required to ensure that these themes have been properly integrated in a co-ordinated and comprehensive manner. Figure 5.3 highlights the relevant policies in the LDP, supplementary guidance, and other guidance produced by the Council and others which amplify these principles.



5.92

Policy D02 Sustainable Design Principles

New development will be required to achieve a high standard of design quality and compliance with principles of sustainable development. Proposals should accord with the following principles:

1. Natural and Built Heritage.

Existing natural, built or cultural heritage features should be identified, conserved, enhanced and integrated sensitively into development;

2. Urban and Landscape Design.

The scale, siting and design of new development should respond positively and sympathetically to the site's surroundings, and create buildings and spaces that are attractive, distinctive, welcoming, adaptable, safe and easy to use;

3. Accessibility.

Development should be designed to encourage the use of sustainable, integrated transport and to provide safe access for all users;

4. Climate Change & Resource Use.

Development should promote the efficient use of natural resources and the minimisation of greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficient design, choice and sourcing of materials, reduction of waste, recycling of materials and exploitation of renewable energy;

5. Infrastructure.

Infrastructure needs and their impacts should be identified and addressed by sustainable mitigation techniques, with particular regard to drainage, surface water management, flooding, traffic, road safety and noise; and

6. Maintenance.

Proposals should demonstrate that provision will be made for the satisfactory future management and maintenance of all public areas, landscaping and infrastructure.

Masterplans will be required for significant development proposals requiring a co-ordinated approach to design and infrastructure, and should demonstrate how the above principles have been incorporated into the proposals. Masterplans should be informed by a development framework or brief where relevant.

5.93 Figure 5.3 Sustainable Design Principles – Supporting Policies/Guidance (indicative only)

	Supporting Policies	Supporting Guidance	Examples of Information Required
Natural and Built Heritage	GN01 Falkirk Green Network GN02 Landscape GN03 Biodiversity & Geodiversity GN04 Trees Woodland & Hedgerows D07 Antonine Wall D08 Sites of Archaeological Interest D09 Listed Buildings D10 Conservation Areas D11 Areas of Townscape Value D12 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes D13 Battlefield Sites D14 Canals RW05 Waterbodies	Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans SG05 Biodiversity and Development SG06 Trees and Development SG07 Antonine Wall SG08 Local Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites SG09 Landscape Character and Assessment	EIAs Landscape and Visual Assessments Environmental Surveys/Audits Management Plans for Habitats and Species Tree Surveys Habitats Regulations Appraisal
Urban and Landscape Design	D01 Placemaking D03 Urban Design HSG04 Housing Design HSG05 Infill Development and Subdivision of Plots HSG07 House Extensions and Alterations INF04 Open Space and New Residential Development	Designing Streets Green Infrastructure: Design and Placemaking PAN44: Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape PAN67: Housing Quality PAN68: Design Statements PAN72: Housing in the Countryside PAN77: Designing Safer Places PAN78: Inclusive Design SG01 Development in the Countryside SG02 Housing Layout and Design SG03 House Extensions and Alterations SG16 Design Guidance for Listed Buildings and Non-Listed Buildings in Conservation Areas SPG Design Statements	Masterplans Design Statements Landscape Plans Public Art Strategies
Accessibility	GN05 Outdoor Access INF07 Walking & Cycling INF08 Bus Travel and New Development	Transport Assessment and Implementation: A Guide SPG Travel Plans	Transport Assessments Travel Plans Safety Audits
Climate Change & Resource Use	D04 Low Carbon Development RW01 Renewable Energy RW09 Waste Reduction in New Development	SG14 Spatial Framework for Wind Energy Development SG15 Low & Zero Carbon Development Managing Waste in Housing and Commercial Developments	Site Waste Management Plans
Infrastructure	INF10 Transport Assessments INF12 Water and Drainage Infrastructure RW05 The Water Environment RW06 Flooding	Transport Assessment and Implementation: a Guide SPG Flooding and SUDs	Transport Assessments Drainage Strategies SUDs Design Flood Risk Assessments
Maintenance	Reference in Various Policies		Maintenance Agreements and Schedules

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.



5.99

Policy D04 Low and Zero Carbon Development

1. All new buildings should incorporate on-site low and zero carbon-generating technologies (LZCGT) to meet a proportion of the overall energy requirements. Applicants must demonstrate that 10% of the overall reduction in CO2 emissions as required by Building Standards has been achieved via on-site LZCGT. This proportion will be increased as part of subsequent reviews of the LDP. All proposals must be accompanied by an Energy Statement which demonstrates compliance with this policy. Should proposals not include LZCGT, the Energy Statement must set out the technical or practical constraints which limit the application of LZCGT. Further guidance will be contained in Supplementary Guidance SG15 'Low and Zero Carbon Development'. Exclusions from the requirements of this policy are:

- Proposals for change of use or conversion of buildings;
- Alterations and extensions to buildings;
- Stand-alone buildings that are ancillary and have an area less than 50 square metres;
- Buildings which will not be heated or cooled other than by heating provided solely for the purpose of frost protection;
- Temporary buildings with consent for 2 years or less; and
- Where implementation of the requirement would have an adverse impact on the historic environment as detailed in the Energy Statement or accompanying Design Statement.

2. The design and layout of development should, as far as possible, seek to minimise energy requirements through harnessing solar gain and shelter;

3. Decentralised energy generation with heat recycling schemes (combined heat and power and district heating) will be encouraged in major new developments, subject to the satisfactory location and design of associated plant. Energy Statements for major developments should include an assessment of the potential for such schemes.

Advertisements and Shopfronts

5.100 Advertisements are a highly visible component of the environment which have the potential to detract from visual amenity, and to pose a threat to road safety, if they are poorly designed or located. Particular attention will be paid to their impact on the environment in locations such as town centres or transport corridors which have been identified as placemaking priorities. Likewise, the design and quality of shopfronts has a major effect on the environment of town and village centres.

5.101

Policy D05 Advertisements

Proposals for advertisements will not be permitted where they would have an adverse effect on the visual amenity of the property or the wider area, or would create a road safety hazard. In particular:

1. The prevention of advertising clutter through a proliferation of signs on a property or in a locality will be a priority;
2. Advertising should be sensitive to the property on which it is mounted in terms of scale, design and positioning, and should be seen as part of the overall design of the property, rather than an add-on;
3. Illumination of adverts will be controlled in the interests of amenity and road safety, and will generally be prohibited outwith the Urban Limit;
4. Advance directional signs will not generally be permitted unless the display is considered to be in the public interest; and
5. Advertising hoardings and rotating/moving advertisements will not be permitted where
 - they will prejudice the placemaking priorities set out in Policy D01 by virtue of visual intrusion;
 - they will compromise residential amenity; or
 - they are likely to cause driver distraction, or interfere with visibility at potential conflict points such as junctions, pedestrian crossings, hazard warning signs, low bridges and sections of road with poor forward visibility.

5.102

Policy D06 Shopfronts

The design of new or altered shopfronts should be well-proportioned and sympathetic to the character of the building of which they are part, as specified within Supplementary Guidance SG04 'Shopfronts'.

Countryside & Green Belt

The Countryside

- 3.18** Although perceived to be mainly urban in character, the Falkirk area has an extensive and varied countryside, whose open and relatively undeveloped nature contributes to its character and identity. It is also a place where people live and work, which has to adapt to economic change. High accessibility to the main employment centres of the central belt creates pressure for commuter housing in the countryside which will not necessarily benefit the rural economy.
- 3.19** The countryside will continue to be defined by reference to a system of Urban and Village Limits. The strategy of the Local Development Plan will be to direct new housing development in the rural areas to the existing villages, in order to sustain their vitality and take advantage of village services and infrastructure. However, there will be circumstances where development in the countryside will be appropriate.

3.20

Policy CG01 Countryside

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

Green Belt

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

3.22

Policy CG02 Green Belt

1. The following areas, as indicated generally on Map 3.1 and detailed on the Proposals Map, are designated as Green Belt:
 - Falkirk/Stenhousemuir/Grangemouth/Laurieston Corridor
 - Polmont/Grangemouth/Bo'ness/Linlithgow Corridor
 - Falkirk/Larbert/Denny/Bonnybridge Corridor
 - Callendar Park/Woods
2. The purpose of the Green Belt is:
 - To maintain the separate identity and visual separation of settlements
 - To protect the landscape setting of settlements; and
 - To protect and give access to greenspace for recreation
3. Within the Green Belt, development will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal satisfies the relevant countryside policies, and it can be demonstrated that it will not undermine any of the strategic purposes of the Green Belt as set out in sub section (2) above.



Countryside

Development in the Countryside

5.62 The countryside is defined as those areas outwith the Urban and Villages Limits, as set out in Policy CG01 of the Spatial Strategy. The criteria for assessing housing and business proposals in the countryside are set out in Policies CG03 and CG04. Detailed guidance on the interpretation and application of these policies is contained within Supplementary Guidance SG01 Development in the Countryside. It should be noted that proposals that lie in the Green Belt will additionally have to meet the terms of Policy CG02 contained within in the Spatial Strategy.

5.63

Policy CG03 Housing in the Countryside

Proposals for housing development in the countryside of a scale, layout and design suitable for its intended location will be supported in the following circumstances:

1. Housing required for the pursuance of agriculture, horticulture, or forestry, or the management of a business for which a countryside location is essential;
2. Restoration or replacement of houses which are still substantially intact, provided the restored/replacement house is of a comparable size to the original;
3. Conversion or restoration of non-domestic farm buildings to residential use, including the sensitive redevelopment of redundant farm steadings;
4. Appropriate infill development;
5. Limited enabling development to secure the restoration of historic buildings or structures; or
6. Small, privately owned gypsy/traveller sites which comply with Policy HSG08.

Detailed guidance on the application of these criteria will be contained in Supplementary Guidance SG01 'Development in the Countryside'. Proposals will be subject to a rigorous assessment of their impact on the rural environment, having particular regard to policies protecting natural heritage and the historic environment.

5.64

Policy CG04 Business Development in the Countryside

Proposals for business development in the countryside of a scale, layout and design suitable for its intended location will be supported in the following circumstances:

1. Areas specifically identified for business development on the Proposals Map;
2. Business development, including appropriate leisure and tourism uses, where a need for a countryside location is demonstrated, or the development constitutes an appropriate form of farm diversification;
3. Proposals involving the re-use of industrial, commercial or institutional land or premises, or the conversion of farm buildings for business use; or
4. Limited extensions to existing established business in the countryside;

Detailed guidance on the application of these criteria will be contained in Supplementary Guidance SG01 'Development in the Countryside'. Proposals will be subject to a rigorous assessment of their impact on the rural environment, having particular regard to policies protecting natural heritage and the historic environment.



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'.

