

The background of the slide features the Falkirk Council Coat of Arms. It is a shield divided into four quarters. The top-left quarter shows a castle tower. The top-right quarter shows a stag's head with antlers. The bottom-left quarter shows a sailing ship on water. The bottom-right quarter shows a bird with spread wings. Above the shield is a crown with four fleurs-de-lis. Below the shield is a ribbon with the motto 'A'NE FOR A'.

## **Agenda Item 10**

### **Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 – Proposed Plan**

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**Title:** Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 – Proposed Plan  
**Meeting:** Falkirk Council  
**Date:** 27 June 2018  
**Author:** Director of Development Services

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval for the Proposed Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) and the associated Proposed Action Programme.

**2. Recommendation**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Council:**

- (a) approves the attached Proposed Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 and Proposed Action Programme; and**
- (b) agrees that consultation on the Proposed Plan is undertaken in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance.**

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The Council is currently preparing a review of the Falkirk Local Development Plan (LDP2), which will replace the existing Falkirk Local Development Plan (LDP1), adopted in July 2015. LDP2 will set out both the broad vision and strategy for the area for a 20 year period (2020-2040), and detailed, site-specific policies and proposals which will guide development for the first 10 years. LDP2 is intended to build on the principles established in the first LDP and update its suite of policies, as well as identify new proposals where appropriate.
- 3.2 The first major stage in the preparation of the plan was the Main Issues Report (MIR) which was published in February 2017. This contained a proposed vision for LDP2, the Council's proposed approach to key issues where decisions need to be made on the future development of the area, and the Council's preferred sites for future development together with alternatives.
- 3.3 The MIR was subject to a 12 week consultation exercise from February to May 2017. During this process around 500 people were engaged through the LDP roadshows, stakeholder workshops and Community Council briefings. Some 260 people made written representations, with over 860 different comments submitted for consideration. There were also 7700 views of promoted social media posts, and 4010 views of the LDP2 page on the

Council website. A summary of the consultation exercise and the responses received is a background paper to this report.

- 3.4 The next stage in the process is the publication of the Proposed Plan, which is the point at which the Council reaches a firm view on the LDP2's vision, strategy, policies and proposals. This report presents the Proposed Plan for Council consideration (see Appendix 1). The document has been informed by the wide range of responses received during the MIR consultation, as well as further engagement with key agencies such as Transport Scotland, SNH, SEPA and Historic Environment Scotland over recent months.

## 4. Considerations

- 4.1 The Proposed Plan is divided into the following sections:

**Vision** - a statement of the future we aspire to in 2040 and how LDP2 will help deliver the outcomes set out in the Strategic Outcomes and Local Delivery Plan (SOLD) for the area.

**Spatial Strategy** – sections setting out the overall priorities for placemaking, the shape of the green network we hope to develop over the plan period, the scale and location of new housing and business development, the strategic infrastructure needed to support such growth, our network of town centres, and the general strategy for energy and minerals development.

**Policies** - the detailed policies which will be used to guide and assess development proposals on a day-to-day basis.

**Settlement Statements** - the implications of the spatial strategy for each settlement area, including a description of how it is expected to change over the plan period, the key proposals affecting it and illustrated development guidance for major areas of change.

**Appendices** – these include a proposals and opportunities schedule which provides detail on each of the proposals included in the plan, a list of proposed supplementary guidance, and a schedule of Council-owned land within sites proposed for development.

**Proposals Map** – a set of six maps covering the Council area showing proposals and policy designations.

### Vision

- 4.1 The vision which is proposed for the area is:

“The place to be: a **dynamic and distinctive area** at the heart of Central Scotland, characterised by a network of **thriving communities set** within high quality greenspaces, and a vibrant and **growing economy** which is of strategic significance within the national context, providing an **attractive, inclusive, sustainable place** in which to live, work and invest.”

- 4.2 This reflects the vision at the heart of the SOLD, the Economic Strategy for Falkirk 2015-2025, and other corporate strategies, and represents a re-commitment to a future shaped by growth and investment, underpinned by a commitment to sustainable development.

## Spatial Strategy

- 4.4 Enhancing the area as a **place** is set at the heart of the Spatial Strategy. The key opportunities and priorities for placemaking over the plan period are set out. These include town and local centres, major areas of change, the green and blue network, the historic environment, areas of disadvantage and transport corridors.
- 4.5 A **green and blue network** is mapped as a series of interlinked greenspace components and corridors within which biodiversity, landscape, recreation, active travel and climate change mitigation will be prioritised. This will be the local expression of the Central Scotland Green Network within the Falkirk area. Specific priority opportunities are identified.
- 4.6 The Spatial Strategy sets a **housing** supply target of 4,800 houses for the area over the initial 10 year period of the plan, which confirms the preferred option in the MIR. This has been informed by a Housing Needs and Demand Assessment, and represents a lower target than currently identified in LDP1, reflecting the anticipated reduction in the rate of household and population growth in the area over the plan period. Scottish Planning Policy requires a flexibility allowance, and this has been set at 20%, giving an overall housing land requirement of 5,760 houses. A re-evaluation of the capacity and effectiveness of the existing land supply suggests that this can contribute around 70% of the requirement. The shortfall of around 1,700 is proposed to be met through new allocations (around 1,200 units) and an allowance for windfall sites (500 units). Housing is distributed across the Council area, with the 12 of the most significant locations for growth being identified as Strategic Growth Areas.
- 4.7 Provision for **business** development is focused on four Strategic Business Locations, comprising existing strategic sites at the Falkirk Investment Zone, Grangemouth Investment Zone, the Eastern Gateway, and Larbert Gateway, with additional local sites providing further scope for employment. The focus and mix of uses at some of the strategic sites has been revised. **Tourism** development will continue to be focused around a defined set of themes, networks and strategic nodes. A network of **town centres** is identified, with defined roles for each type of centre, providing the focus for major retail, leisure, cultural and community uses in the area. Town and local centres are complemented by defined commercial centres which have a more retail/leisure park format.
- 4.8 Strategic **infrastructure** identified for delivery during the plan period includes strategic road and rail network improvements, local transport network upgrading, waste water treatment works upgrades, enhancement of education and community facilities, and cemetery extensions. Although the Council's capital programme and mechanisms such as Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) will have a role in funding new infrastructure, developer contributions will continue to be vital where infrastructure is needed to support new development.

- 4.9 The Spatial Strategy for **energy** and **minerals** includes a spatial framework for wind farm development, areas of search for surface coal mining, and Grangemouth is identified as a priority area for heat network development.

#### Policies

- 4.10 A comprehensive set of detailed policies support the Spatial Strategy and provide the detailed basis for assessing development proposals through the development management system. These have been updated and augmented from LDP1 to ensure that they accord with Scottish Planning Policy. They cover four main themes: place and environment; homes and communities; jobs and economy; and infrastructure and resources.

#### Settlement Statements

- 4.11 The settlement statements set out the implications of the spatial strategy for each community in the Council area, identifying the detailed proposals and opportunities for housing, infrastructure, business, town centres and the green network. The location and extent of the proposals and opportunities are shown on the Proposals Map and detailed information on them is contained in the Proposals and Opportunities Schedule. LDP2 introduces enhanced guidance for major areas of change, which includes more detailed maps illustrating key development principles and requirements for major development sites. The most significant proposals for each settlement area are summarised below.
- 4.12 In **Bo'ness**, a major new housing proposal is identified at Crawfield Road, to the south-west of the town, which would involve the release of land currently within the green belt. This would augment existing committed sites at Drum and Kinglass Farms. The Drum Farm South site is no longer promoted as a strategic business site, but would be predominantly housing with a small neighbourhood centre. The current proposal at Bo'ness Foreshore would be removed from the plan, given serious issues over viability and deliverability, although this would not necessarily preclude its future reinstatement should economic conditions change significantly. More flexibility of use is proposed for the vacant site at Bo'mains industrial estate to encourage re-development.
- 4.13 In **Bonnybridge and Banknock**, growth will be focused on existing committed sites, notably the large scale Strategic Growth Areas at Banknock and Dennyloanhead, in conjunction with new transport and education infrastructure. No new housing sites are proposed. A site identified for housing at East Bonnybridge in LDP1 is proposed for removal owing to physical constraints which are likely to render it ineffective. The Urban Limit at High Bonnybridge would be extended to include industrial areas to the south of the Edinburgh-Glasgow railway, and flexibility extended for re-development of this land should opportunities arise.
- 4.14 In **Braes and Rural South**, the Strategic Growth Area at Maddiston East is proposed to be carried forward but rationalised, and to include a further

allocation for care/amenity housing. A mixed use site at Maddiston Fire Station within the core of Maddiston village has also been identified. The Gilston site, currently exclusively for business use, is now proposed as a mixed use proposal incorporating significant housing growth of up to 500 houses, whilst still retaining a substantial employment component. The current major proposals for a new settlement at Whitecross are proposed to be revised and scaled down in the light of infrastructure and delivery issues. More modest housing growth of up to 200 homes is proposed adjacent to the village, whilst the Manuel Works site would be allocated for business and industrial development. Likewise, in Slamannan, the current large scale housing proposal at Hillend Farm would be scaled down to reflect a more realistic view of market conditions in the village. Several other smaller sites in the Rural South villages are proposed for removal due to marketability issues.

- 4.15 In **Denny**, housing growth will be focused on the existing sites within the Denny South East Strategic Growth Area, including currently allocated land at Mydub Farm, Broad Street and the former Denny High School, and at Carrongrove Mill and Rosebank, Dunipace. No new housing sites are proposed. Growth will need to be supported by new transport infrastructure, notably Denny Eastern Access Road (DEAR), and school capacity enhancements. The remaining phases of the Town Centre redevelopment would also be reflected in the plan.
- 4.16 In **Falkirk**, the substantial existing housing land supply will be augmented by a new greenfield housing proposal at Woodend Farm, Hallglen, and by a housing component to the Falkirk Gateway site. The latter change reflects a revised approach to the Falkirk Gateway, with less emphasis on large scale household retail and more focus on a mix of uses which will create a vibrant and diverse new urban quarter, complementing the Helix and the new Forth Valley College campus. Falkirk Town Centre remains an important focus for regeneration, in line with the 'town centres first' approach, with opportunities continuing to be identified at the East End and Grahamston. Among the Local Centres, Newcarron is proposed for redevelopment and restructuring. Central Retail Park and Glasgow Road, Camelon are identified as Commercial Centres. A range of transport infrastructure projects will be carried forward into LDP2 including the A9/A904 corridor improvements which are an important part of the Council's TIF programme, and A803 corridor improvements.
- 4.17 In **Grangemouth**, housing growth will continue to be limited to smaller infill opportunities due to a variety of constraints. Grangemouth's economic importance is emphasised by its prominence within the National Planning Framework (NPF3). Business sites contributing to the Grangemouth Investment Zone are identified, including the major opportunities emerging at Ineos, complemented by upgrading to both the strategic and local transport network. Although acknowledged as an important investment in the plan, the Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme is not yet at a sufficiently advanced stage to be specifically defined as a proposal. Continued support is given to future regeneration opportunities in Grangemouth Town Centre, and to the emerging enhancement proposals for Zetland Park.

- 4.18 In **Larbert and Stenhousemuir**, housing growth will remain focused on the remaining sites at Hill of Kinnaird which will continue into the early part of the plan period. For the final phase, land currently identified for business is proposed for mixed use, which includes some limited housing, as well as business and community uses. No further housing sites are proposed, given education capacity constraints facing the settlement. Established business sites at Glenbervie are retained.
- 4.19 In the **Rural North area**, housing growth will be limited to existing sites at Airth and Torwood. A possible new site identified in the MIR at Skinflats has not been taken forward due to potential future flood risk issues.

#### Proposed Action Programme

- 4.20 The Council must prepare an Action Programme to accompany LDP2. This sets out actions required to deliver the plan's policies and proposals, along with timescales and responsible agencies. A proposed Action Programme is attached to this report as Appendix 2.

### **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 As noted above, the Proposed Plan has been informed by the extensive consultation carried out in conjunction with the MIR. If approved, the Proposed Plan will be subject to a further period of consultation, during which representations can be submitted. The statutory minimum period for consultation is 6 weeks, although this is proposed to be extended to 8 weeks given that consultation will run partly over the summer holiday period. This is expected to commence in early August when the Proposed Plan would be formally published. In line with the Council's Development Plan Scheme, publicity and consultation will comprise:
- Advert, press release and letter to all stakeholders, including those who commented at the MIR stage plus updates on social media;
  - Documents and representation forms made available online, in libraries and other deposit locations;
  - Neighbours and owner/occupiers of proposed sites notified in accordance with legislative requirements; and
  - Development Plan Newsletter produced to provide a concise summary of Proposed Plan and details of how to make representations.
- 5.2 Following the consultation period, representations would be considered, and the Council may make modifications to the Proposed Plan as result of these. However, any 'notifiable' modifications (i.e. changes which add, remove or significantly alter any policy or proposal) will require the re-publication of the plan for further consultation, which is likely to entail significant delay to the plan process. The Council then submits the plan to Scottish Ministers, and an examination will be held to consider any unresolved issues. Following the examination, the Council will make final modifications in accordance with Reporters' recommendations and adopt the plan. Adoption is expected in 2020.

## **6. Implications**

### Financial

6.1 None.

### Resources

6.2 None.

### Legal

6.3 The requirements and procedures for the preparation of LDPs are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006) and the Town and Country Planning (Development Planning)(Scotland) Regulations 2008.

### Risk

6.4 None.

### Equalities

6.5 An Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment has been undertaken for LDP2 to ensure that the plan is robust, and that there is no potential for discrimination to groups protected under the Equality Act 2010. This has concluded there is no adverse impact on protected groups.

### Sustainability/Environmental Impact

6.6 LDP2 has been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Environmental Report which was prepared for the MIR has been revised to reflect the content of the Proposed Plan. The Technical Reports produced for the MIR have been revised where appropriate and contribute to the evidence base for the plan.

## **7. Conclusions**

7.1 Following publication and consultation on the Main Issues Report in 2017, the Proposed Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 has been prepared as the next stage of the plan process. The Proposed Plan contains a revised and updated vision, spatial strategy, policies and proposals for the area for the period 2020-2040 which, if approved, would be subject to a period for representations prior to submission to Scottish Ministers for examination.



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Director of Development Services

Date: 14 June 2018

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## **APPENDICES**

Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 - Proposed Plan.

Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 - Proposed Plan Action Programme.

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 - Report of Consultation on Main Issues Report.

Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 - Revised Environmental Report.

Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 - Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment.

Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 - Technical Reports.

Any person wishing to inspect the above background papers should contact Alistair Shaw on 01324 504739