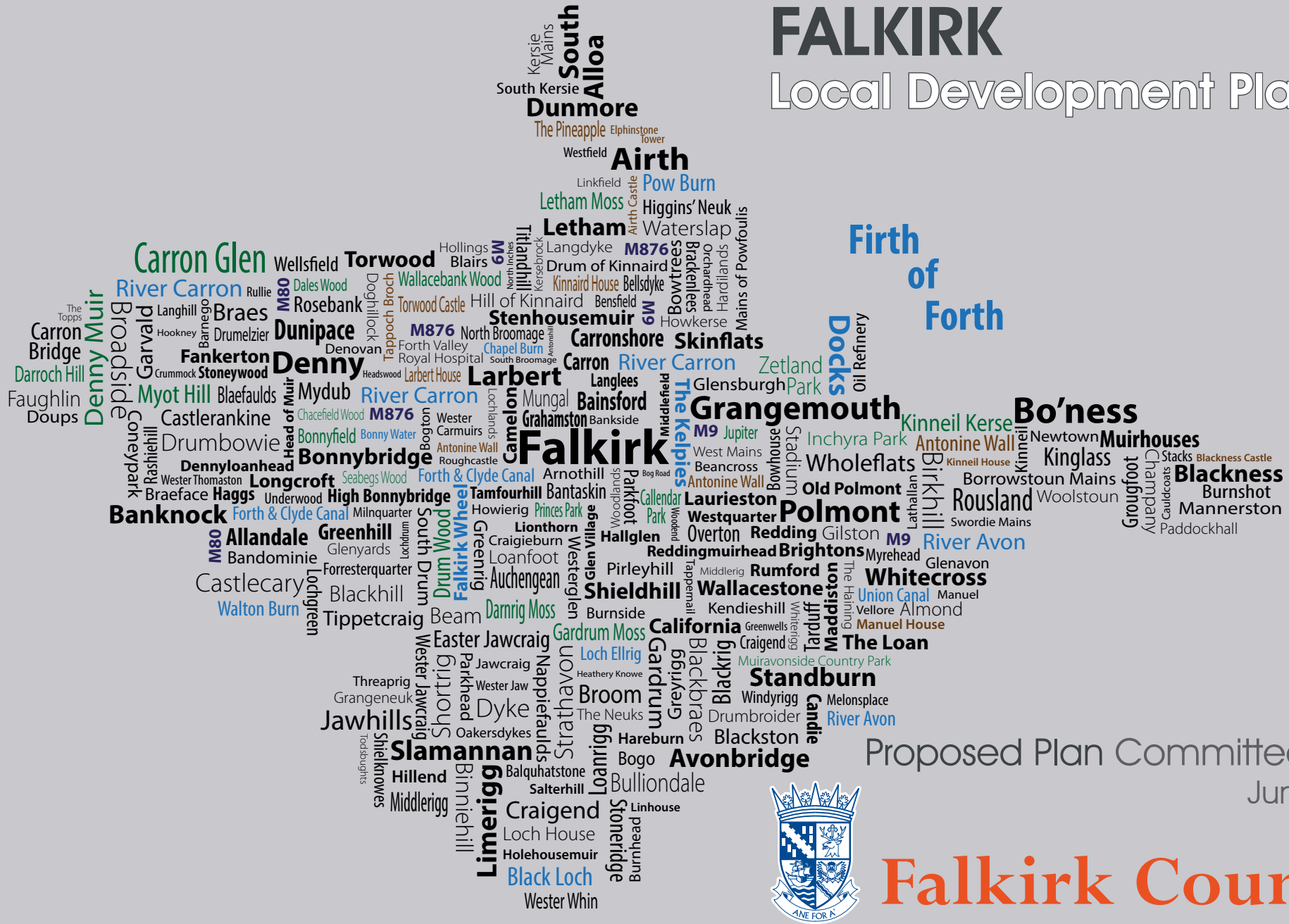
# FALKIRK

## Local Development Plan 2




Proposed Plan Committee Draft

June 2018

# Falkirk Council

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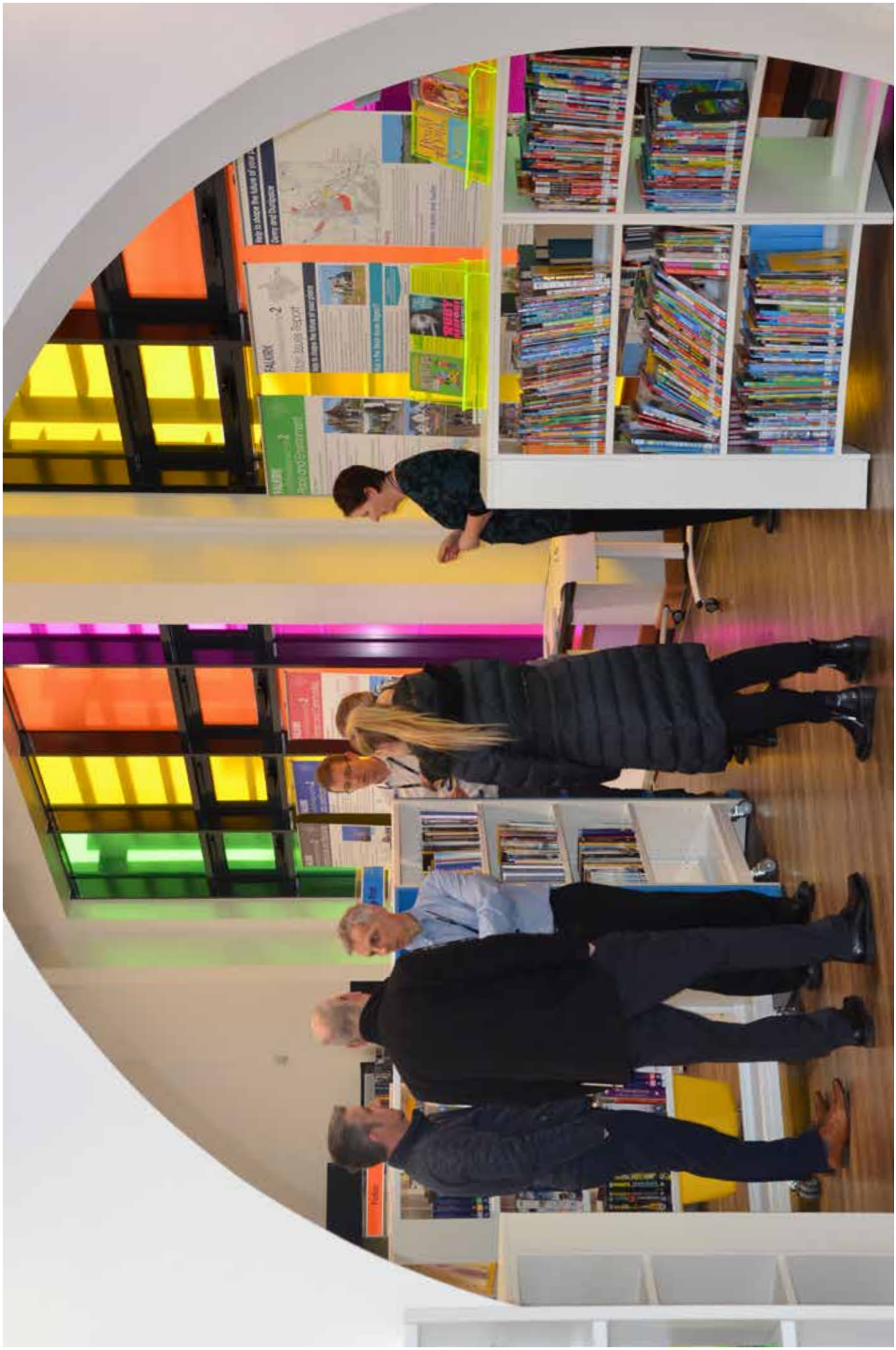


# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Falkirk Local Development Plan 2

**1.01** Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) has been prepared to guide the future use and development of land within the Falkirk Council area. It contains policies and proposals indicating where development should, or should not take place and provides guidance on the future provision of housing, business, transport and infrastructure, recreation and community facilities. It indicates how our town centres and greenspaces should develop, and how out natural and historic environment should be protected.

**1.02** LDP2 provides a broad vision and strategy for the area for the 20 year period from 2020-2040, with a focus on specific proposals for the initial 10 year period of 2020-2030.

## How the Plan is Prepared

**1.03** The process for preparing LDP2 is as follows:

**MAIN ISSUES REPORT**
**The Council identifies and consults on the main issues facing the area and its preferred proposals for future development.**

**PROPOSED PLAN**
**The Council sets out its firm view as to the vision and spatial strategy to be followed in the area. Representations are invited.**

**SUBMISSION TO SCOTTISH MINISTERS**
**Representations to the proposed plan are considered by the Council and any appropriate modifications made prior to submitting to Scottish Ministers.**

**EXAMINATION**
**Unresolved issues raised through representation are considered by an independent reporter who makes recommendations to the Council.**

**PLAN ADOPTION (2020)**
**The Council adopts the LDP incorporating changes arising from the reporter's recommendations.**

**1.04** This document is the Proposed Plan which the Council is now publishing for representations. Its content has been informed by extensive consultation on the Main Issues Report which took place from February to May 2017.

## How to Use the Plan

**1.05** If you want to

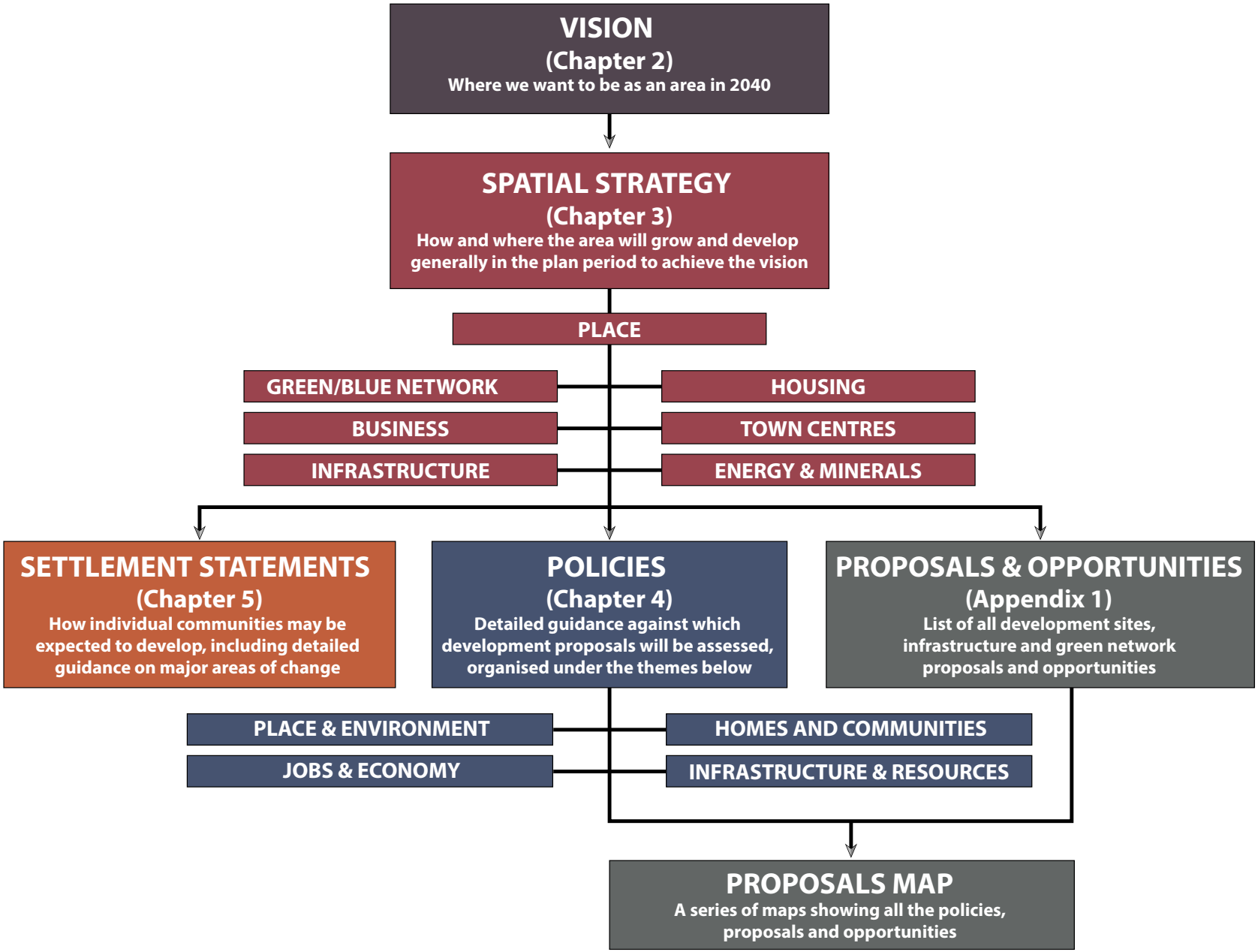
- Find out about the **general intentions for future development in the area as a whole**, you should refer to the **Vision and Spatial Strategy**;
- Find out **about the general intentions for your own community**, you should refer to the **Settlement Statements**, backed up with the **Proposals Map** for more detail;
- Find out how the **plan's attitude to a particular site or location**, you should refer to a combination of the **Policies, Proposals Map, and Proposals and Opportunities Schedule**.

**1.06** The structure of LDP2 is indicated in the diagram opposite.

## Supporting Documents

**1.06** The following documents have been published in support of LDP2:

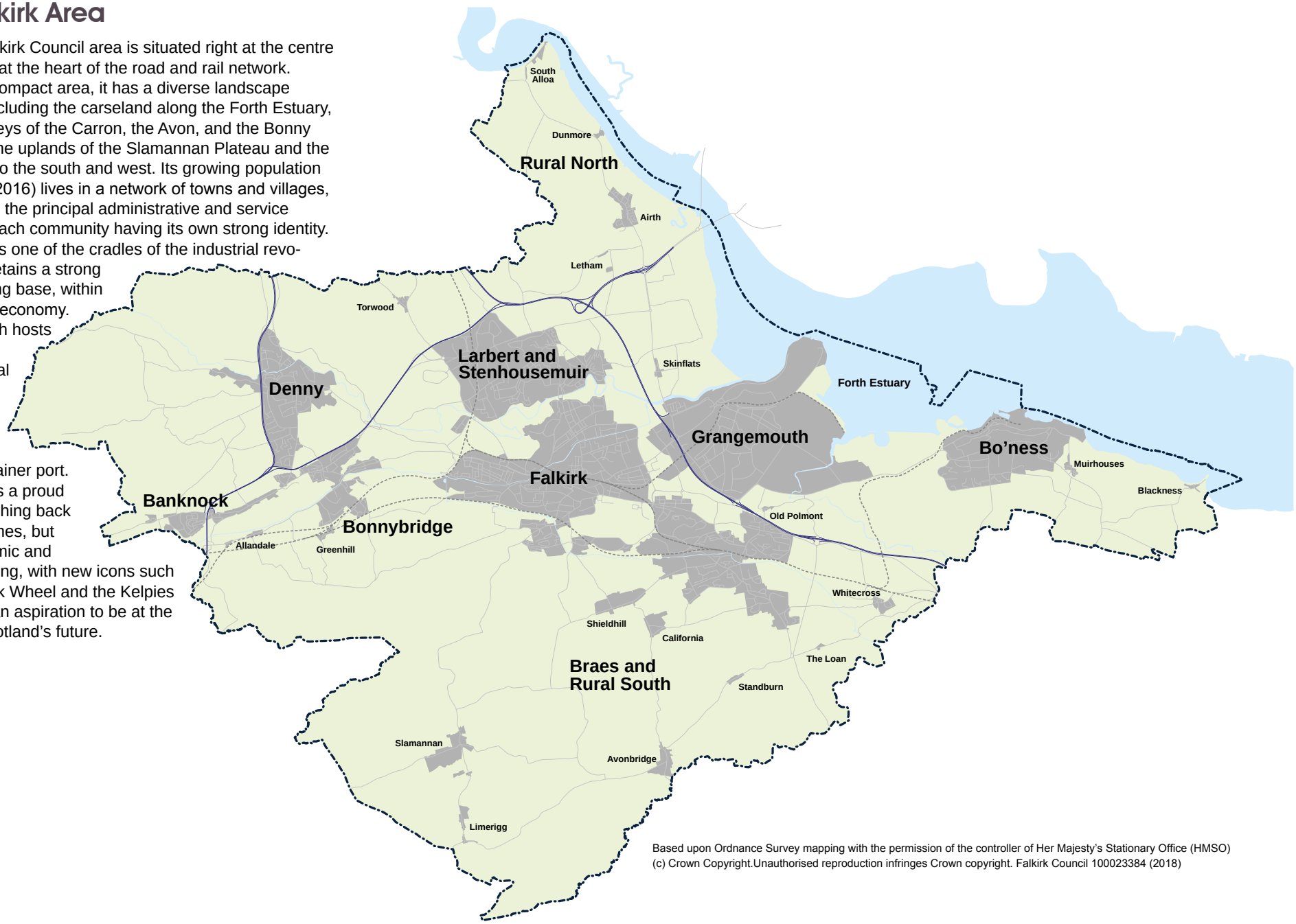
- A **Revised Environmental Report** identifies the environmental effects of the plan, including mitigation to address significant negative effects, as part of the process of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA);
- A **Habitats Regulations Appraisal** (HRA) determines if LDP2 will have any adverse effects on European protected nature conservation sites;
- An **Action Programme** identifies the actions required to deliver the plan's policies and proposals, including timescales and responsible agencies;
- **Technical Reports** present the evidence base for the plan, providing more detailed information and justification on topics such as housing, employment land and town centres.


VISION
(Chapter 2)
Where we want to be as an area in 2040
SPATIAL STRATEGY
(Chapter 3)
How and where the area will grow and develop generally in the plan period to achieve the vision
PLACE
GREEN/BLUE NETWORK
HOUSING
BUSINESS
TOWN CENTRES
INFRASTRUCTURE
ENERGY & MINERALS
SETTLEMENT STATEMENTS
(Chapter 5)
How individual communities may be expected to develop, including detailed guidance on major areas of change
POLICIES
(Chapter 4)
Detailed guidance against which development proposals will be assessed, organised under the themes below
PROPOSALS & OPPORTUNITIES
(Appendix 1)
List of all development sites, infrastructure and green network proposals and opportunities
PLACE & ENVIRONMENT
HOMES AND COMMUNITIES
JOBS & ECONOMY
INFRASTRUCTURE & RESOURCES
PROPOSALS MAP
A series of maps showing all the policies, proposals and opportunities

# 2. VISION

## The Falkirk Area

**2.01** The Falkirk Council area is situated right at the centre of Scotland, at the heart of the road and rail network. Although a compact area, it has a diverse landscape character, including the carseland along the Forth Estuary, the river valleys of the Carron, the Avon, and the Bonny Water, and the uplands of the Slamannan Plateau and the Denny Hills to the south and west. Its growing population (159,380 in 2016) lives in a network of towns and villages, Falkirk being the principal administrative and service centre, but each community having its own strong identity. The area was one of the cradles of the industrial revolution, and retains a strong manufacturing base, within a diversified economy. Grangemouth hosts the largest petrochemical complex in Scotland and is also the country's busiest container port. The area has a proud history stretching back to Roman times, but is also dynamic and forward looking, with new icons such as the Falkirk Wheel and the Kelpies expressing an aspiration to be at the centre of Scotland's future.

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# Developing a Vision: Challenges and Opportunities

**2.02 Place.** Falkirk has some great places to live, work and visit, as evidenced by the increasing desire of people to come to the area. The area has been physically transformed over the last forty years, through regeneration of many of our towns and villages, new residential neighbourhoods, and the growth of a fine network of greenspaces in and around them, exemplified by the Helix. The value of our historic environment has been increasingly acknowledged, and our canal corridor is coming back to life. The Falkirk Wheel and the Kelpies are internationally recognised icons, and symbolise this renewed sense of identity. But the process of regeneration is far from complete. Our town centres in particular need ongoing investment to help them adapt to economic change and remain attractive places and focal points for our communities. Placemaking must be at the heart of any future vision for the area, to build on and reinforce the positive changes achieved in recent years.

**2.03 Housing.** Our population is growing, and is projected to continue to increase over the plan period, albeit at a slower rate than before. Delivering new housing of the necessary scale in the right place is not easy. New housing frequently raises local environmental concerns. Local infrastructure is at or near capacity in many locations, whilst in others the housing market may not be strong enough to make development viable. A number of our major residential proposals have stalled as a result. However, we must plan positively to create significant new housing to meet the needs of local people and incomers alike. We have to ensure that infrastructure is available or can be provided, that sites can be delivered and, above all, that they will be sustainable places that function well.

**2.04 Economy.** The area's manufacturing and logistics sectors are of national significance, focused on Grangemouth's petrochemical complex and port, both of which have seen major investment. Grangemouth is also attracting interest from the energy sector. There are opportunities for further large scale investment and job creation, but the future success of the Grangemouth Investment Zone will depend on innovation, new technology, diversification and improved infrastructure. Other sectors, such as business services, are under-represented and there remains a need to diversify the business base. Tourism is a significant recent growth area. Falkirk is now a popular visitor destination, and there is a need to further develop visitor infrastructure to maximise the benefit to the local economy. In support of these growth and diversification aspirations, there is a good portfolio of sites available to accommodate new development, but these are affected by a variety of infrastructure constraints. Some were allocated in very different market conditions and their vision and rationale needs to be reappraised.

**2.05 Infrastructure.** Although our area enjoys a central location in Scotland and has excellent accessibility, further investment in infrastructure is needed to support our growth aspirations, not least to address outstanding constraints in the strategic and local road network, and to deliver a new flood defence system for Grangemouth. Our Tax Increment Finance (TIF) programme will help to secure some of these improvements, but additional resources are needed to allow the full potential of the area to realised, and to unlock some of our major residential sites, through investment in the transport network, drainage infrastructure, schools, and site preparation. At a time of reducing public finance, there is a need for the public sector to utilise its land and buildings more effectively to deliver services.

**2.06 Energy and Climate Change.** Climate change continues to drive the need to move towards a low carbon economy. This has implications for the location and design of future development and transport, and the use of natural resources. Our area has a role to play in promoting further opportunities for low carbon energy and heat, within a more decentralised energy network, but the impact of the environment and communities must be carefully considered in developing the necessary infrastructure.

## Policy Context

**2.07** The **National Planning Framework (NPF3)** and **Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)** set the national planning priorities which LDP2 has to take into account. They promote a vision of Scotland as:

- A successful sustainable place;
- A low carbon place;
- A natural resilient place;
- A connected place.

For our area, NPF has a particular focus on the role of Grangemouth in the national economy, and on the Central Scotland Green Network, which the Falkirk area is at the heart of. SPP sets out a range of policies on topics such sustainability, placemaking, town centres, new homes, energy, waste, transport and green infrastructure. The Falkirk area lies adjacent to the upper Forth Estuary, and so the **National Marine Plan** is relevant. Co-operation between terrestrial and marine planning processes is necessary along the coast and particularly in the intertidal zone.

**2.08** Local priorities are set out in the **Strategic Outcomes and Local Delivery Plan** 2016-2020 (SOLD) which promotes a vision of the area as **'the place to be'**. It identifies an agenda for action for the Community Planning Partnership, and lists the following desired outcomes:

- Our area will be a fairer and more equal place to live;
- We will grow our local economy to secure successful business, investment and employment;
- Our children will develop into resilient, confident and successful adults;
- Our population will be healthier;
- People will live full, independent and positive lives within supportive communities; and
- Our area will be a safer place to live.

LDP2 will have a key role to play in delivering the spatial planning aspects of these outcomes.

**2.09 The Economic Strategy for Falkirk** 2015-2025 aims to promote:

- **Growth** in the local economy, boosting business formation and growth, fostering innovation, and ensuring a skilled workforce;
- **Investment** to enhance the area's infrastructure, attract business and realise in full the area's economic potential, with the Grangemouth Investment Zone being a key focus for action;
- **Inclusion** such that all communities can access opportunities and make a full contribution to the area's economy.

There are numerous other plans and strategies which are of relevance to LDP2. These are referred to as appropriate throughout the document.

## The Vision

**2.10**

**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 growing economy which is of strategic importance in the national context, providing an attractive, inclusive and sustainable place in which to live, work, visit and invest.**

**2.11** The vision reflects the strength of the existing communities which make up our area, and the desire to maintain and improve their identity, vitality and quality of life. It reflects an aspiration to continue the process of transformation and regeneration, through growth, investment, new homes and new jobs. It reflects our desire for an environmentally sustainable future, where our assets and resources are carefully managed for generations to come.

**2.12** The vision can be broken down into nine objectives which are illustrated in the table below.

## Thriving Communities

| LDP2 OBJECTIVES | WHERE WE WILL BE IN 2040? | WHAT COMMUNITY PLANNING OUTCOMES WILL THIS DELIVER? | WHAT PARTS OF THE PLAN WILL DELIVER THIS? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Enable continued **population and household growth**, and the delivery of housing to meet the full range of housing needs. | Our population will have increased to 170,870 by 2039.<br>A wide choice of new market and affordable housing will be available to meet the needs of local people and incomers, across all of our communities. New homes will have provided the stimulus for regeneration of major brownfield sites. | Our area will be a fairer and more equal place to live.<br>People will live full independent and positive lives within supportive communities.<br>We will grow our local economy to secure successful business, investment and employment. | **Spatial Strategy: Place**<br>**Spatial Strategy: Housing**<br>**Policies: Homes and Communities** |
| Build **sustainable attractive communities** which are distinctive, safe and pleasant, welcoming, adaptable, resource efficient and easy to move around in. | Communities will have grown in a way that is sensitive to their identity and setting. Through careful masterplanning we will have created sustainable new residential neighbourhoods that are great places to live. | People will live full independent and positive lives within supportive communities.<br>Our population will be healthier.<br>Our area will be a safer place to live. | **Spatial Strategy: Place**<br>**Spatial Strategy: Housing**<br>**Policies: Place & Environment**<br>**Policies: Homes and Communities**<br>**Policies: Infrastructure and Resources** |
| Provide **infrastructure** to meet the needs of an increasing population and further improve the area's **connectivity**. | Strategic transport and flood defence infrastructure will have been delivered to unlock the growth potential of the area, particularly the Falkirk and Grangemouth Investment Zones.<br>A co-ordinated approach will have ensured that investment in local community infrastructure has kept pace with growth. | Our area will be a fairer and more equal place to live.<br>We will grow our local economy to secure successful business, investment and employment.<br>Our population will be healthier.<br>Our children will develop into resilient, confident and successful adults.<br>Our area will be a safer place to live. | **Spatial Strategy: Place**<br>**Spatial Strategy: Infrastructure**<br>**Policies: Infrastructure and Resources** |

## Growing Economy

| LDP2 OBJECTIVES | WHERE WE WILL BE IN 2040? | WHAT COMMUNITY PLANNING OUTCOMES WILL THIS DELIVER? | WHAT PARTS OF THE PLAN WILL DELIVER THIS? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Foster **economic growth, investment and inclusion**, reinforcing the area as a strategic component of the Scottish economy. | The area will have a dynamic, diverse, and resilient low carbon economy. The success of the Falkirk and Grangemouth Investment Zones will have grown the area as a national hub for manufacturing excellence and innovation, and port and logistics activity, complemented by a broader business base and a thriving visitor economy. | Our area will be a fairer and more equal place to live.<br>We will grow our local economy to secure successful business, investment and employment. | **Spatial Strategy: Place**<br>**Spatial Strategy: Business**<br>**Policies: Jobs and Economy** |
| Make our **town centres** vibrant and viable focal points within our communities. | Falkirk Town Centre will be the best town centre of its kind in Scotland, its regeneration opportunities having delivered new cultural, residential and office uses to complement its established retail function. District and local centres will provide residents with access to quality convenience shopping and services within a high quality environment. | We will grow our local economy to secure successful business, investment and employment.<br>People will live full independent and positive lives within supportive communities. | **Spatial Strategy: Place**<br>**Spatial Strategy: Town Centres**<br>**Policies: Jobs and Economy** |
| Capitalise on the area's **tourism potential** and build a strong visitor economy. | The Falkirk area will be one of the top visitor destinations in Scotland, with a fully integrated network of attractions, activities and supporting infrastructure. A regenerated canal corridor will sit at its heart. | We will grow our local economy to secure successful business, investment and employment. | **Spatial Strategy: Place**<br>**Spatial Strategy: Business**<br>**Policies: Jobs and Economy** |

| Sustainable Place | LDP2 OBJECTIVES | WHERE WE WILL BE IN 2040? | WHAT COMMUNITY PLANNING OUTCOMES WILL THIS DELIVER? | WHAT PARTS OF THE PLAN WILL DELIVER THIS? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Support a **low carbon, circular economy** and build resilience to **climate change**. | Renewable energy and heat will be embedded within new developments and a full range of sustainable transport choices will be available for all communities. A network of appropriately located waste management facilities will deal with waste sustainably. Investment in flood mitigation, especially at Grangemouth, and appropriate location of new development, will have strengthened our resilience to heightened flood risk. | Our area will be a fairer and more equal place to live<br>We will grow our local economy to secure successful business, investment and employment<br>Our area will be a safer place to live. | **Spatial Strategy: Place**<br>**Spatial Strategy: Energy**<br>**Policies: Infrastructure and Resources** |
| | Extend and improve **the green network** and protect the area's natural environment and resources. | We will have a high quality, well maintained and fully connected network of multifunctional greenspaces which has conserved and enhanced our biodiversity, offers local people exceptional recreational opportunities, and increases our resilience to climate change. Our air and water quality will have improved. Mineral extraction will have been managed carefully to avoid damage to the environment of communities. | Our area will be a fairer and more equal place to live.<br>We will grow our local economy to secure successful business, investment and employment.<br>Our population will be healthier.<br>People will live full, independent and positive lives within supportive communities.<br>Our area will be as safer place to live. | **Spatial Strategy: Place**<br>**Spatial Strategy: Green Network**<br>**Spatial Strategy: Minerals**<br>**Policies: Place and Environment**<br>**Policies: Infrastructure and Resources** |
| | Protect, enhance and promote our **historic environment**. | All our historic environment assets will be valued, protected and promoted as a vital contributor to placemaking and economic growth. The Antonine Wall World Heritage Site will be sensitively managed and more widely appreciated as a heritage asset of international importance. Our buildings at risk will have been restored and given new life and new uses. | We will grow our local economy to secure successful business, investment and employment. | **Spatial Strategy: Place**<br>**Policies: Place and Environment** |

# 3. SPATIAL STRATEGY

## Place

**3.01** Developing the Falkirk area as a good place to live and work is central to the Spatial Strategy of the LDP. While the principles of good placemaking set out in Policy PE01 will apply to all new development and all areas, there are some locations where investment will be particularly focused on creating good places. These are the areas of the greatest need or opportunity, where the economic and social impact of placemaking will be greatest. These 'place priorities' are highlighted below and illustrated in Map 3.1.

**3.02 Town and Local Centres.** Our town and village centres are at the heart of our communities yet face significant economic and environmental challenges. Renewal and regeneration will be a priority through new development and investment in the existing fabric of our centres, particularly public realm enhancement, as resources and funding opportunities permit. More information is provided within the 'Town Centres' section of the Spatial Strategy.

**3.03 Major Areas of Change.** The Strategic Growth Areas and Strategic Business Locations are where the most significant change will be seen in our communities, with major new residential and business neighbourhoods being created. These present unique opportunities to plan good places comprehensively through masterplanning.

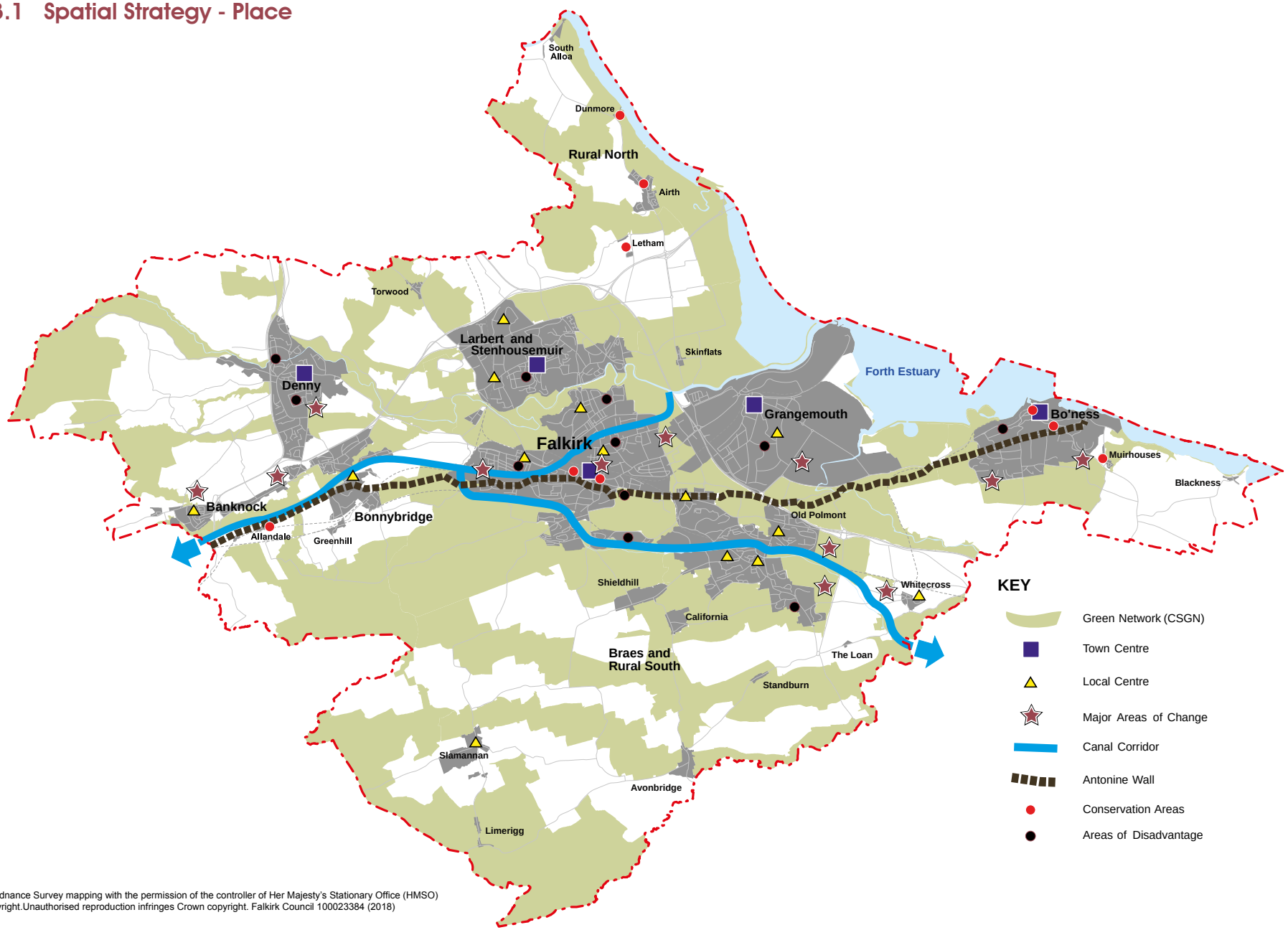
**3.04 Green and Blue Network.** Sustained investment over a number of years has created a network of green and blue spaces around and within our communities, which contribute hugely to quality of life and sense of place. These include parks, woodland, river and canal corridors, countryside, the coast and the path network. During the life of the LDP, this will be a continuing focus for investment through the Falkirk Greenspace Strategy, and related strategies. More information is provided within the 'Green and Blue Network' section of the Spatial Strategy.

**3.05 Historic Environment.** Much of the area's sense of place derives from its historic environment and rich heritage. The protection, enhancement, management of these key place assets will be a priority as set out in 'Our Future in the Past: The Historic Environment Strategy for Falkirk'. Of particular strategic importance are the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site, the Lowland Canals and the nine Conservation Areas.

**3.06 Areas of Disadvantage.** Raising quality of place is known to have positive outcomes in terms of the health and well-being of residents. As part of the Council's commitment to tackling inequality, investment in the physical environment of places which suffer social and economic disadvantage will therefore be important. The locations identified on Map 3.1 are those falling within the bottom 15% in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

**3.07 Transport Corridors.** Our transport corridors provide the 'window' on the area and the gateway to our settlements. Their quality is therefore central to how our area is perceived and understood as a place. High quality development along these corridors will therefore be a priority.

## Map 3.1 Spatial Strategy - Place

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## Green and Blue Network

**3.08** The **Central Scotland Green Network** (CSGN) is a key national development within the National Planning Framework (NPF3). It seeks to transform the landscape of Central Scotland through environmental improvement, creating woodland and other habitats, restoring vacant and derelict land, and developing path networks. The objective is to create green networks which make the area a more attractive place to live in, do business and visit; to help tackle climate change; to enhance biodiversity; and to promote active travel and healthy lifestyles. The 'blue' network refers to the various elements of the water environment, e.g. our canals, rivers, lochs and the Forth Estuary, which are an integral part of this.

**3.09** In the Falkirk area, CSGN is being delivered through **Falkirk Greenspace**, which has developed over many years and is driven by its own Strategy, with the following themes: economic development and place making; tackling vacant and derelict land; outdoor access; community growing initiatives; outdoor learning; woodland; water environment; biodiversity; and landscape. Other strategies that are vital to the delivery of the green network are the Open Space Strategy and the Falkirk Forestry and Woodland Strategy.

**3.10** The development of the green and blue network is integral to LDP2's vision and growth strategy, and is supported by Policy PE12. It is envisaged as a series of **14 interconnected green network components** which are linked by corridors, as shown in Map 3.2. It will be multi functional, with each component delivering on a range of the themes listed in the Falkirk Greenspace Strategy.

**3.11** LDP2 identifies specific opportunities for enhancement within each green network component. These are listed in Table 3.1. More information on these opportunities is provided in the Proposals and Opportunities Schedule (Appendix 1). In addition to these opportunities, development will be expected to contribute to the green and blue network through the provision of new green infrastructure, particularly in the Major Areas of Change. SG05 'Green Infrastructure and New Development' provides guidance on how this can be done.

### Table 3.1 Green/Blue Network Opportunities

| Green Network Components | Opportunities | | Key Green Network Priorities | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Biodiversity | Active Travel | Landscape | Climate Change | Placemaking | Disadvantaged Communities |
| Council Wide | GN01 | John Muir Way | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ | ■ |
| | GN02 | Antonine Wall Trail | | ■ | ■ | | ■ | ■ |
| Forth Estuary | GN03 | Kinneil Kerse | ■ | | ■ | | | |
| | GN04 | Bothkennar/Skinflats | ■ | | | ■ | | |
| Carse | GN05 | Carse Peatland Restoration | ■ | | ■ | ■ | | |
| Upper/Lower Carron | GN06 | River Carron Corridor Improvements | ■ | ■ | | | ■ | ■ |
| Falkirk- Grangemouth | GN07 | Helix | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ | ■ |
| | GN08 | Helix/Falkirk Town Centre Green Corridor | | ■ | ■ | | ■ | |
| | GN09 | Zetland Park | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ | ■ |
| South Falkirk | GN10 | Lionthorn Policy Bing | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ | ■ |
| | GN11 | Callendar Park and Wood | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ | ■ |
| South Bo'ness | GN12 | Kinneil Estate | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ | ■ |
| | GN13 | Bo'ness Open Space Corridors | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ | ■ |
| Lower Braes | GN14 | Braes Open Space Corridors | ■ | ■ | | | ■ | ■ |
| Mid/Upper Braes | GN15 | Braes Wetland and Peatland Restoration | ■ | | | ■ | | |
| Upper Braes | GN16 | Black Loch Access | | ■ | | | | |
| North Larbert | GN17 | Larbert Open Space Corridors | ■ | ■ | | | ■ | |
| | GN18 | Glenbervie to Denny | | ■ | | | | |
| Avon | GN19 | River Avon Corridor | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | |
| | GN20 | Muiravonside | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ | |
| Bonny Water | GN21 | Bonnyfield Expansion | ■ | ■ | | | ■ | |
| Canals | GN22 | Falkirk Canal Corridor | | ■ | ■ | | ■ | ■ |
| | GN23 | Bantaskine Park | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ | |
| Various | GN24 | Community Growing Sites | ■ | | | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| | GN25 | Outdoor Learning Sites | ■ | ■ | | | ■ | ■ |