

## 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
<b>Natural and Built Heritage</b>	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
<b>Urban and Landscape Design</b>	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
<b>Accessibility</b>	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
<b>Climate Change &amp; Resource Use</b>	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
<b>Infrastructure</b>	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
<b>Maintenance</b>	Reference in Various Policies		Maintenance Agreements and Schedules

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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'.

# 5. SUPPORTING POLICIES

## Housing

### Affordable Housing

- 5.1 Housing affordability emerged as an issue in the area following the significant house price rises in the early 2000s. The 2011 Housing Need and Demand Assessment has confirmed the broad pattern of affordability and need across the area, highlighting an overall annual need of 233 units and a spatial distribution of need focused on the Larbert/Stenhousemuir, Polmont, Rural South and Rural North areas.
- 5.2 There has been increasing activity in recent years by social housing providers, including housing associations and the Council itself. However, availability of funding remains a critical constraint, and there is an increasing emphasis from the Government on finding ways of delivering affordable housing at lower cost.
- 5.3 In order to contribute to meeting housing need, and ensure mixed communities, the Council will continue to seek the provision of a proportion of affordable housing from private housing sites in accordance with Policy HSG02.

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### Policy HSG02 Affordable Housing

New housing developments of 20 units and over will be required to provide a proportion of the units as affordable or special needs housing as set out in Figure 5.1. The approach to provision should comply with Supplementary Guidance SG12 'Affordable Housing'.

5.5 Figure 5.1 Affordable Housing Requirements in Settlement Areas

Settlement Area	Proportion of total site units required to be affordable
Larbert/Stenhousemuir Polmont Area Rural North Rural South	25%
Bo'ness Bonnybridge & Banknock Denny Falkirk Grangemouth	15%

### Windfall Housing

- 5.6 Appropriate opportunities for housing development in addition to those sites specifically identified in the LDP may arise within urban and village limits over the period of the plan. Historically, such windfall sites have made a significant contribution to housing supply in the area, and although the incidence of vacant and brownfield sites has generally been reducing in the area, they will continue to provide additional flexibility over and above the allocations set out in the spatial strategy. The criteria for assessing proposals for windfall housing development are set out in Policy HSG03.

5.7

### Policy HSG03 Windfall Housing

Housing development within the Urban and Village Limits, in addition to proposals identified within the LDP, will be supported where:

1. The site is brownfield, or is open space whose loss can be justified in terms of Policy INF03;
2. The proposed housing use is compatible with neighbouring uses and a satisfactory level of residential amenity can be achieved;
3. The site enjoys good accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling to shopping, recreational and other community facilities;
4. Existing physical infrastructure, such as roads and drainage, sewage capacity, and community facilities, such as education and healthcare, have the capacity to accommodate the increase in use associated with the proposed development, or can be upgraded through appropriate developer contributions as required by Policy INF02;
5. The site is not at significant risk of flooding in the terms of Policy RW06;
6. In the case of small gap sites and sub-divided plots, Policy HSG05 is satisfied; and
7. It complies with other LDP policies.





## Open Space

- 5.22** Open space is vital to the quality of the urban environment, providing areas for active and passive recreation and contributing to the landscape structure of settlements. Where linked into networks they provide routes for safe walking and cycling and corridors for wildlife.
- 5.23** In accordance with the SPP, the Council has undertaken an open space audit, and has formulated an open space strategy to allow a more strategic approach to planning for open space in the area. This sets out appropriate standards, assesses provision in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility, and identifies priorities for improving the open space resource.
- 5.24** Whilst the overall quantity of open space and range of recreation facilities within the Council area is generally good, there are problems of quality, management and accessibility, as well as localised deficiencies in the quantity and distribution of facilities.
- 5.25** Policy INF03 provides detailed criteria for assessing proposals involving the loss of open space. The principal open spaces and playing fields within communities are shown on the Proposals Map. However, the policy will apply to other smaller, incidental areas of open space as well.



**5.26**

### Policy INF03 Protection of Open Space

The Council will protect all urban open space, including parks, playing fields and other areas of urban greenspace, which is considered to have landscape, amenity, recreational or ecological value. Accordingly:

1. Development involving the loss of urban open space will only be permitted where:
  - There is no adverse effect on the character or appearance of the area, particularly through the loss of amenity space planned as an integral part of a development;
  - There will be no significant adverse effect on the overall recreational amenity of the local area, taking account of the Council's open space standards (defined within the Open Space Strategy) and its release for development will be compensated for by qualitative improvements to other parts of the green network in the local area;
  - The area is not of significant ecological value (this can include areas that are not specifically designated for ecological features, but which are important in supporting the qualifying features of Natura 2000 sites); and
  - Connectivity within, and functionality of, the wider green network is not threatened and public access routes in or adjacent to the open space will be safeguarded.
2. Where development would also involve the loss of playing fields or sports pitches, it must additionally be demonstrated that:
  - The proposed development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as a playing field; or
  - The proposed development involves a minor part of the playing field which would not affect its use and potential for sport and training; or
  - The playing field which would be lost would be replaced by a new playing field of comparable or greater benefit for sport and in a location which is convenient for its users, or by the upgrading of an existing playing field to provide a better quality facility either within the same site or at another location which is convenient for its users and which maintains or improves the overall playing capacity in the area; or
  - The Council's pitch strategy has shown that there is a clear excess of sports pitches to meet current and anticipated future demand in the area, and that the site could be developed without detriment to the overall quality of provision.

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## Policy INF11 Parking

The Council will manage parking provision as an integral part of wider transport planning policy to ensure that road traffic reduction, public transport, walking, cycling and safety objectives are met.

1. The scale of public parking provision in Falkirk Town Centre will be maintained broadly at its current level and any proposed change to parking provision will be assessed against its effect on the vitality and viability of the centre.
2. The feasibility of promoting Park and Ride facilities on the road corridors into Falkirk Town Centre will continue to be investigated.
3. Parking in District and Local Centres will be managed to promote sustainable travel and the role of the centres.
4. New parking will be provided to support the strategic role of railway stations, with priority given to new provision at Falkirk High. Where possible, the provision of new off street parking facilities will be associated with traffic management and other measures to reduce uncontrolled on-street parking.
5. The maximum parking standards set out in the SPP will be applied to new development, where relevant, in tandem with the Council's minimum standards. Where the minimum standards cannot be met, developer contributions to enhance travel plan resources may be required in compensation.

## Water and Drainage Infrastructure

- 5.55 Scottish Water is responsible for the provision of water supplies, waste water treatment works and the sewerage network. In the Falkirk Council area, water supply can be managed to provide for growth. However the adequacy of capacity at waste water treatment works is more varied, with several of the rural works currently unable to accommodate all planned growth. While two are programmed for growth before 2015, the reminder will continue to be a potential brake on development in their catchments. In addition, there are capacity issues with the sewer network in some localities which have experienced sustained housing growth in recent years.
- 5.56 Falkirk Council continues to engage with Scottish Water is addressing these pinch points but it remains the case that proposals for development in the constrained localities will have to be considered cautiously by the Council. The Council's approach is set out in Policy INF12 below.
- 5.57 The use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) is now a requirement for the majority of development types, the only exceptions to this are single house developments and where the discharge is to coastal waters.

5.58

## Policy INF12 Water and Drainage Infrastructure

1. New development will only be permitted if necessary sewerage infrastructure is adopted by Scottish Water or alternative maintenance arrangements are acceptable to SEPA.
2. Surface water management for new development should comply with current best practice on sustainable urban drainage systems, including opportunities for promoting biodiversity through habitat creation.
3. A drainage strategy, as set out in PAN61, should be submitted with planning applications and must include flood attenuation measures, details for the long term maintenance of any necessary features and a risk assessment.