

4. POLICIES



Place and Environment - Placemaking

PE01 Placemaking

Development proposals should promote the six qualities of successful places as defined in Scottish Planning Policy by addressing the following principles:

1. Distinctive

- Existing natural and historic environment features should be identified, conserved, enhanced and integrated sensitively into development. Further guidance is set out in Policies PE05-PE27, and accompanying Supplementary Guidance SG07- SG12;
- The scale, siting and design of new development should respond positively and sympathetically to the site's surroundings, and create a coherent structure of buildings, streets and public spaces that are attractive, distinctive and create a sense of identity within the development. Further guidance is set out in SG02 'Neighbourhood Design';
- Development should include landscaping and green infrastructure which enhances, structures and unifies the development, assists integration with its surroundings, manages surface water sustainably, and contributes, where appropriate, to the wider green network. Further guidance is set out in SG05 'Green Infrastructure and New Development';
- Developments of a significant scale should contribute to public art either through a contribution to an existing local project, or through provision of public art within the development, guided by a strategy prepared by the developer in consultation with the Council and Falkirk Community Trust. Further guidance is set out within SG13 'Developer Contributions' and the public art procurement guide produced by Falkirk Community Trust.

2. Safe and pleasant

- Development 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 provision of safe access for all. Further guidance is set out in SG02 'Neighbourhood Design';
- Development should not exacerbate existing air quality issues or introduce new sources of pollution which impact on local air quality without appropriate mitigation.

3. Easy to move around and beyond

- Development should be designed to encourage the use of active travel and sustainable, integrated transport. Further guidance is set out in Policies IR05-IR07;
- Development should build on the existing network of paths, edges, nodes, districts and landmarks to create places that people can navigate easily around.

4. Welcoming

- Streets and public spaces should have buildings fronting them or, where this is not possible, a high quality hard or soft landscape treatment. Further guidance is set out in SG02 'Neighbourhood Design'.

5. Adaptable

- Development should be designed to consider how people use places differently, for example depending on age or degree of personal mobility;
- Where appropriate, development should provide a mix of building densities, tenures and typologies where a variety of diverse but compatible uses can be integrated.

6. Resource efficient

- In support of climate change mitigation, 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 incorporating space to separate materials at source; incorporation of low and zero carbon generating technologies and integration into neighbourhood and district heating networks. Further guidance is set out in Policies IR12-IR14;
- In support of climate change adaptation, 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;
- Provision should be made for the satisfactory future management and maintenance of all public areas, landscaping and infrastructure.

4.01 Placemaking is the art of creating good places. Scottish Planning Policy identifies six qualities of successful places which should form the basis of placemaking and the design, development, renewal and regeneration of our urban and rural built environments. Policy PE01 expands these six qualities into a number of principles which will apply to all new development. This overarching design policy is supported by a number of other topic LDP policies and Supplementary Guidance notes to which cross-references are made as appropriate. Of particular importance is SG02 'Neighbourhood Design' which interprets the principles of the Scottish Government's document 'Designing Streets' for the Falkirk area.

Place and Environment - Placemaking

PE02 Placemaking Tools

The use of design and placemaking tools will be required to raise the standard of design and embed the six qualities of successful place in new development:

1. Development frameworks will generally be required for large, multi phased developments, where the co-ordination of a series of sites within a growth area is necessary;
2. Masterplans should be prepared for all development sites where a co-ordinated approach to design is necessary. Masterplans should conform to any relevant development framework, or other planning brief, and should be accompanied, where appropriate, by a design statement which demonstrates how the six qualities of successful places and the principles in Policy PE01 have been achieved;
3. Where major development is proposed, developers will be expected to engage constructively with local communities and utilise local knowledge and feedback in the design of proposals. The use of the Place Standard and interactive design workshops will be encouraged.

4.02 There are various tools which may be used to promote good placemaking in new development, by ensuring that a co-ordinated, holistic, design-led approach is followed. Policy PE02 highlights the role which development frameworks, masterplans and design statements play in the design process. The scope and content of these documents will vary according to the scale and complexity of the site or sites. Designers will be expected to harness the knowledge of communities and encourage active participation to deliver good places that meet the needs of local people. Innovative engagement techniques should be used, such as the Place Standard which is a tool for assessing the quality of a place and how it can be improved in partnership with local communities.

PE04 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, according with Supplementary Guidance SG04 'Shopfronts'.

4.03 Policy PE04, and its associated Supplementary Guidance SG04, is intended to support the improvement of shopfront design, which is important to the quality of our town and village centres.



Place and Environment - Historic Environment

4.04 Much of the Falkirk area's sense of place derives from its historic environment, including a rich diversity of architectural, cultural, historic and archaeological assets. Government policy and guidance is set out in SPP and the Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement, together with other specific guidance notes on managing change. The Council's overall approach to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment is set out in the Historic Environment Strategy, which sets out the Council's vision for protecting and enhancing Falkirk's historic environment. The document also sets out a programme of priority actions, some of which are reflected in LDP proposals. The key assets which will be given policy protection in the LDP are indicated below.

PE05 Antonine Wall

The Council will seek to retain, protect, preserve and enhance the Antonine Wall, its associated archaeology, character and setting. Accordingly:

1. There will be a presumption against development which would have an adverse impact on the 'Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Antonine Wall) World Heritage Site' as defined on the Proposals Map;
2. There will be a presumption against development within the 'Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Antonine Wall) World Heritage Site' buffer zones, as defined on the Proposals Map, which would have an adverse impact on the Site and its setting, unless mitigating action to the satisfaction of the Council in consultation with Historic Environment Scotland can be taken to redress the adverse impact, and there is no conflict with other LDP policies; and
3. Supplementary Guidance SG11 'Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Antonine Wall) World Heritage Site' will be applied in assessing development proposals along the line, or affecting the setting, of the Antonine Wall.

4.05 The Antonine Wall was inscribed as part of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site in 2008. A common policy and Supplementary Guidance has been adopted by the five planning authorities who cover the route of the Wall. A Management Plan has also been prepared.

PE06 Archaeological Sites

1. Scheduled Monuments and other identified nationally important archaeological resources will be preserved in situ, and within an appropriate setting. Developments which have an adverse effect on scheduled monuments or the integrity of their setting will not be permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances;
2. All other archaeological resources will be preserved in situ wherever feasible. The Council will weigh the significance of any impacts on archaeological resources and their settings against other economic, social and environmental merits of the development proposals in the determination of planning applications; and
3. Developers may be requested to supply a report of an archaeological evaluation prior to determination of the planning application. Where the case for preservation does not prevail, the developer shall be required to make appropriate and satisfactory provision for archaeological excavation, recording, analysis and publication, in advance of development.

4.06 There are around 100 Scheduled Monuments within the Council area. In addition, other sites of regional or local importance are recorded in the Sites and Monuments Record maintained by the Council's archaeologist. Any works directly affecting a designated Scheduled Monument require Scheduled Monument Consent, which is obtained from Historic Environment Scotland.



PE07 Listed Buildings

The Council supports the sustainable re-use and management of the historic built environment. Accordingly:

1. The sensitive restoration and re-use of listed buildings will be supported;
2. Proposals to alter or extend a listed building should not adversely affect the character, appearance, or special architectural or historic interest of the building;
3. Development proposals within the curtilage or affecting the setting of a listed building should not adversely affect the character, appearance, special architectural or historic interest of the building, or its setting;
4. Proposals for the total or substantial demolition of a listed building will only be supported in exceptional circumstances where it is demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that:
 - The existing building is no longer of special interest;
 - The existing building is incapable of physical repair and re-use, as shown by the submission and verification of a thorough structural condition report;
 - The costs of repair and re-use are such that it is not economically viable; or
 - The demolition of the building is essential for the delivery of significant economic benefits for the local or wider community.
5. Proposals affecting listed buildings or their setting should conform with SG12 'Listed Buildings and Unlisted Properties in Conservation Areas'.

4.07 There are over 300 listed buildings and structures in the Council areas, the largest concentrations being in Falkirk, Bo'ness and Airth/Dunmore.

Place and Environment - Historic Environment

PE08 Conservation Areas

The Council will protect the historic character and visual amenity of each Conservation Area. Accordingly:

1. New development in Conservation Areas should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
2. Proposals affecting unlisted buildings in a Conservation Area should respect the character and appearance of the original building;
3. Demolition of unlisted buildings within Conservation Areas which make a positive contribution to the special character and appearance of the area will only be supported where:
 - The existing building is incapable of physical repair and re-use, as shown by the submission and verification of a thorough structural condition report; or
 - The costs of repair and re-use are such that it is not economically viable, as shown by the submission and verification of relevant supporting evidence; or
 - The demolition of the building is essential for the delivery of significant economic benefits for the local or wider community; and
 - Proposals for redevelopment of the site contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Existing buildings shall be retained on site until the redevelopment commences;
4. Proposals affecting buildings in Conservation Areas or their setting should conform with SG12 'Listed Buildings and Unlisted Properties in Conservation Areas'.

4.08 There are currently nine Conservation Areas within the Council area including two Town Centres (Falkirk and Bo'ness); two Victorian suburbs (Arnothill and Dollar Park in Falkirk and Grange in Bo'ness) and five estate/industrial villages (Airth, Allandale, Dunmore, Letham and Muirhouses). Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans have been prepared and will be relevant to the consideration of proposals.

PE09 Areas of Townscape Value

The Council recognises the architectural and historic merit and potential of the additional areas of townscape value identified on the Proposals Map, which do not currently have Conservation Area status. Within these areas:

1. The Council will undertake Character Appraisals to determine whether the areas merit designation as Conservation Areas, either as new Conservation Areas, or as extensions to existing ones; and
2. Development proposals will be required to fit with the distinctive character of the area with particular reference to the historic pattern and density of development; its setting; the architectural style, massing and materials of buildings; landscape treatments; and boundary features.

4.9 These represent other townscapes of historic or architectural interest which, although not designated as Conservation Areas, merit recognition and will be assessed for possible future Conservation Area status.



PE10 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes

1. There will be a presumption against development which would adversely affect the character, condition, integrity or setting of sites identified in the 'Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland', as identified on the Proposals Map;
2. The value of other historic gardens and designed landscapes not listed in the Inventory will be given due weight in the planning process, having regard to their historical significance, integrity and condition, and relationship to other associated historic buildings or structures. Non-inventory sites will be identified within Supplementary Guidance SG09 'Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations';
3. Where development is within or adjacent to any historic garden or designed landscape, developers will be required to provide an assessment of the effects of their proposals on the character and setting of these sites and demonstrate how they will be protected and managed in conjunction with the development; and
4. The Council will seek to encourage sensitive restoration and management of historic gardens and designed landscapes.

4.10 There are three sites within the Council area listed in the 'Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland'. Guidance on these, and identification of locally important non-inventory sites, is provided in SG09 'Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations'.

Place and Environment - Historic Environment

PE11 Battlefield Sites

There will be a presumption against development outwith the Urban or Village Limits which would destroy, erode, or adversely affect battlefield sites listed in the Inventory of Historic Battlefields, as identified on the Proposals Map. In assessing impacts, guidance provided in the relevant Historic Environment Scotland 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment' guidance note will be followed. Proposals for the sensitive management and interpretation of battlefield sites will be supported.

4.11 Three sites within the 'Inventory of Historic Battlefields' lie partly or wholly within the Council area. The second Battle of Falkirk site covers a substantial area to the south of the town, while parts of the Battles of Linlithgow Bridge and Kilsyth lie at the eastern and western end, respectively, of the Council area.



PE12 Canals

The Council, in conjunction with Scottish Canals and other key partners, will seek to promote the sustainable development of the Forth & Clyde and Union Canals as a major recreational, tourism and heritage asset. Accordingly, the Council will support:

1. The protection and enhancement of the ecology, archaeology, built heritage, visual amenity and quality of the water environment of the canals and their immediate environs, having regard to the detailed policies on these matters contained in the LDP;
2. The protection and enhancement of the operational capacity of the canals for recreational use, including the maintenance and improvement of navigation and the provision of moorings and other infrastructure for a wide range of canal users;
3. The improvement of access, signage and interpretation associated with the canals, with particular emphasis on linkages to and from adjacent communities, tourist attractions, public transport facilities and the wider active travel network, whilst generally continuing to restrict access to the off-side bank (except for approved mooring areas, where access already exists, and in urban areas) and to the Firth of Forth SPA for nature conservation reasons;
4. Residential moorings where an appropriate level of natural surveillance, amenity and access to community facilities can be achieved; and
5. Appropriate canal-side development which
 - Complies with other LDP policies;
 - Is compatible with the operational requirements of the canals and contributes to their recreational amenity through the provision, where appropriate, of public access, amenity areas, moorings and slipways, together with any appropriate commuted sums for maintenance;

- Achieves high design standards, particular attention being paid to the relationship of layout and form to the canal and to the sympathetic use of materials and detailing in buildings and canal-side landscaping;
 - Incorporates measures to ensure that there is no detriment to the canal water environment; and
 - Ensures there is no detriment to the structural stability of the canal; and
6. The use of the canals, where appropriate, as part of surface water management strategies.

4.12 Scotland's Lowland Canals, restored through the Millennium Link in 2002, form an important corridor of opportunity through the Council area, with the Falkirk Wheel forming the hub of the network. The Spatial Strategy identifies the continuing regeneration of the canal corridor as a priority for both placemaking and tourism development, to which a number of specific opportunities will contribute. The Council's objective is to work with Scottish Canals to increase the level of use of the canals, thereby enhancing their vitality and realising their economic potential, whilst safeguarding their unique natural and cultural heritage.



Place and Environment - Natural Environment

PE13 Green and Blue Network

1. The Council will support the delivery of the Central Scotland Green Network in the Falkirk area, and Falkirk Greenspace: A Strategy for Our Green Network, through the development and enhancement of a multi-functional network of green and blue components and corridors as set out in the Spatial Strategy;
2. Within the green and blue network the key priorities of biodiversity, outdoor access, landscape character enhancement, climate change, placemaking and serving disadvantaged communities will be promoted, with particular reference to the opportunities detailed in the Proposals and Opportunities Schedule; and
3. New development should contribute to the green and blue network, where appropriate, through the integration of green infrastructure into masterplans or through enabling opportunities for green and blue network improvement on adjacent land, in accordance with SG05 'Green Infrastructure and New Development'.
4. The seven community growing sites identified at Appendix 1 (Proposal GN24) shall be safeguarded from development unless proposals can demonstrate, on a case-by-case basis, that there is no longer a proven demand for allotment space.

4.13 The Spatial Strategy sets out in broad terms how the Central Scotland Green Network, a national development within NPF3, will be implemented in the Falkirk area. The spatial focus will be on a series of green and blue network components and corridors which are illustrated in Map 3.2. The thematic priorities are set out in the Falkirk Greenspace Strategy. Policy PE13 supports the implementation of the Spatial Strategy, which will be through specific projects promoted by the Council and other partners, but also through the inclusion of green infrastructure such as landscaping, open space, habitats, active travel and sustainable water management in new development.

PE14 Countryside

1. 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. Development in the countryside will be assessed in terms of the relevant countryside policies for specific uses (HC05 and JE05);
2. Development proposals in the countryside for uses not covered by policies for specific uses will only be permitted where:
 - It can be demonstrated that they require a countryside location;
 - They constitute infill development; or
 - They utilise appropriate existing buildings.

Detailed guidance on the application of these criteria will be contained in Supplementary Guidance SG01 Development in the Countryside;
3. Development proposals in the countryside should additionally demonstrate that their scale, siting and design is such that there will be no significant adverse impact on the rural environment, having regard to other policies on the natural and historic environment, and design guidance in Supplementary Guidance SG01 'Development in the Countryside'.

4.14 The countryside is defined by the area outwith the urban and village limits. The strategy of the LDP is to direct new development in the rural area to existing villages in order to sustain their vitality and support existing village services and infrastructure. In so doing it seeks to prevent sporadic and intrusive development which could have a detrimental impact on the character of the countryside. However, there will be circumstances where development in the countryside will be appropriate.

PE15 Green Belt

1. The following areas are designated as Green Belt:
 - Falkirk/Stenhousemuir/Grangemouth/Laurieston Corridor;
 - Polmont/Grangemouth/Bo'ness/Linlithgow Corridor;
 - Falkirk/Larbert/Denny/Bonnybridge Corridor;
 - Callendar Park and Woods.
2. The purpose of the Green Belt is:
 - To direct development to the most appropriate locations and support regeneration;
 - To protect and enhance the character, landscape setting and identity of the settlement, including maintaining their visual separation;
 - To protect and provide access to open space.
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 purposes of the Green Belt as set out in (2) above.

4.15 The Green Belt forms an important part of the Spatial Strategy for the area. The primary purpose in the Falkirk area is 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. It forms a series of connected wedges between the main settlements. The protection of landscape setting and recreational greenspace around towns are important related objectives.

Place and Environment - Natural Environment

PE16 Protection of Open Space

1. Development which will result in the loss of 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 provision in the local area, taking account of the Council's open space standards (as defined within the Open Space Strategy), or the loss will be compensated for by qualitative improvements to other open space in the local area commensurate with its recreational value. Guidance on how loss of open space should be compensated is set out in Supplementary Guidance SG05 'Green Infrastructure and New Development';
 - The area is not of significant ecological value; 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 outdoor sports facilities, it must additionally be demonstrated that:
 - The proposed development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as an outdoor sports facility; or
 - The proposed development involves a minor part of the outdoor sports facility which would not affect its use and potential for sport and training; or

- The outdoor sports facility which would be lost would be replaced by a new facility of comparable or greater benefit for sport and in a location which is convenient for its users, or by the upgrading of an existing outdoor sports facility 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 and consultation with SportsScotland has shown that there is a clear excess of provision to meet current and anticipated demand in the area, and that the site could be developed without detriment to the overall quality of provision.

4.16 Open space is vital to the quality of places, and fulfils a range of purposes including recreational, landscape, ecological, surface water management and active travel. The Council has prepared an Open Space Strategy, which is based on a detailed audit of its parks and open spaces, and sets out a vision, standards and priority actions for improving the open space resource. The Open Space Strategy recognises that there is an abundance of open space across the Council area, and that the main issue is of quality rather than quantity. Not all open space performs a useful function. There may be opportunities to release open space which is of little or no value for alternative uses, including community growing, as part of beneficial development. Policy PE16 provides criteria for assessing potential losses of open space, and ensuring that open space of value continues to be protected or that, if there would be a loss of recreational amenity, this will be compensated by qualitative improvements to other open space in the vicinity. The policy will apply to all audited open spaces, as shown on the Proposals Map, but also to other smaller, incidental areas of open space. There are additional specific criteria for outdoor sports facilities, which are taken from Scottish Planning Policy. Outdoor sports facilities include playing fields, athletics tracks, golf courses, tennis courts and bowling greens.



Place and Environment - Natural Environment

PE17 Open Space and New Development

New development should contribute positively to the provision of open space in the area and support the objectives of the Open Space Strategy. Accordingly:

1. Where appropriate, proposals for new development should include public open space to create a sense of place, integrate the site with the wider green network, promote physical activity, sport and active travel, enhance biodiversity, and manage water within the site; and
2. Where the quantity, quality or accessibility of recreational and sport open space and play facilities in the locality is insufficient to meet the recreational needs of proposed new residential development, as informed by the standards in the Open Space Strategy, the proposal should address the identified deficiencies through either the provision of new on-site recreational and sport open space, or contributions to the improvement of off-site open space.

The detailed planning and design of new open space within new developments, including the methodology for determining and addressing recreational open space deficiencies, should accord with SG05 'Green Infrastructure and New Development'.

4.17 New development should generally incorporate open space. The provision of open space should be guided by a design-led approach which captures the specific character and opportunities presented by the site, and looks at how open space can contribute to sustainability and placemaking in the development. The recreational needs of residents should also be addressed with reference to the standards set out in the Open Space Strategy. Where there are local deficiencies in provision these can be met either through new open space on the site, or financial contributions to upgrade existing off-site open space. SG05 'Green Infrastructure and New Development' provides more detailed guidance on the methodology for determining the provision of open space within developments.

PE18 Landscape

1. The Council will seek to protect and enhance landscape character and enhance landscape quality throughout the Council area in accordance with Supplementary Guidance SG09 'Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations';
2. Development within Local Landscape Areas should be designed to minimise any adverse effects on the landscape character and scenic interest for which the area is designated ; and
3. Development proposals which are likely to have significant landscape and visual effects must be accompanied by a landscape and visual assessment demonstrating that, with appropriate mitigation, a satisfactory landscape fit will be achieved.

4.18 The Falkirk area has a varied landscape, whose quality and character is important to the setting of settlements, and the area's image and identity. Local Landscape Areas (LLAs) identify the most important local landscapes (Denny Hills, Slamannan Plateau/Avon Valley and South Bo'ness). However, in line with the European Landscape Convention, there is a need to recognise the value of all landscapes within the area, and to take account of this in assessing development proposals. Supplementary Guidance SG09 'Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations' therefore provides information on forces for change, sensitivities and development guidance for all Landscape Character Areas.



Place and Environment - Natural Environment

PE19 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

The Council will protect and enhance habitats and species of importance, and will promote biodiversity and geodiversity through the planning process. Accordingly:

1. Development likely to have a significant effect on Natura 2000 sites (including Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, and Ramsar Sites) will be subject to an appropriate assessment. Qualifying interests of a Natura 2000 site may not be confined to the boundary of a designated site. Where an assessment is unable to conclude that a development will not adversely affect the integrity of the site, development will only be permitted where there are no alternative solutions, there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including of a social or economic nature and compensatory measures are provided to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura network is protected. Where the site has been designated for a European priority habitat or species, consent can only be issued in such cases where the reasons for overriding public interest relate to human health, public safety, beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or for other reasons subject to the opinion of the European Commission (via Scottish Ministers);
2. Development affecting Sites of Special Scientific Interest will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the overall objectives of the designation and the overall integrity of the designated area would not be compromised, or any significant adverse effects are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance;
3. Development likely to have an adverse effect on European protected species; a species listed in Schedules 5, 5A, and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); or badgers as per section 10 of the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, will only be permitted where the applicant can demonstrate that a species licence is likely to be granted;

4. Development affecting Local Nature Reserves, Wildlife Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites (as identified on the Proposals Map and in Supplementary Guidance SG08 'Local Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites'), and national and local priority habitats and species (as identified in the Falkirk Local Biodiversity Action Plan) will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the overall integrity of the site, local habitat or local species population will not be compromised, or any adverse effects are clearly outweighed by social or economic benefits of substantial local importance;
5. Where development is to be approved which could adversely affect any site, habitat or species of significant local nature conservation value, the Council will require appropriate mitigating measures to conserve and secure future management of the relevant natural heritage interest. Where habitat loss or fragmentation is unavoidable, the creation of replacement habitat to compensate for any negative impacts will be required, along with provision for its future management. Where adverse impacts on locally important species are unavoidable, measures to protect and enhance the wider local population of that species will be required; and
6. All development proposals should conform to Supplementary Guidance SG07 'Biodiversity and Development'.

4.19 Biodiversity is the variety of life that exists on earth. Public bodies have a duty under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 to further the conservation of biodiversity. An important part of this is the safeguarding of identified sites, habitats and species which are protected under national legislation, and international obligations such as the Habitats and Bird Directives. In addition, the Falkirk area has a system of non-statutory local nature conservation sites (Wildlife Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites) and a Local Biodiversity Action Plan which identifies a number of priority species and habitats.

4.20 Policy PE19 provides general support for biodiversity as a consideration within the planning process, and sets out the level of protection which will be afforded to the hierarchy of sites, species and habitats. Supplementary Guidance SG07 'Biodiversity and Development' provides guidance on how biodiversity should be safeguarded and promoted through development, including the control of non-native invasive species on development sites. Supplementary Guidance SG08 'Local Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites' provides further information on the non-statutory local sites which have been reviewed through LDP2.



Place and Environment - Natural Environment

PE20 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

1. There will be a presumption against the removal of safe and healthy trees, non-commercial woodlands or hedgerows, where such removal would be detrimental to landscape, local amenity, nature conservation, recreation or historic environment interests, or erosion and natural flood management. Criteria in the Scottish Government's policy on Control of Woodland Removal will be used to determine the acceptability of woodland removal;
2. Ancient, long-established and semi-natural woodland, including sites identified in the Scottish Ancient Woodland Inventory will be protected as a resource of irreplaceable value;
3. In areas covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or Conservation Area, development will not be permitted unless it can be proven that the proposal will not adversely affect the longevity, health or stability of trees, or their landscape, biodiversity or historic value. Where appropriate, other endangered trees or woodlands which have amenity, cultural or historic importance will be protected through the designation of further TPOs;
4. Development which is likely to affect trees should comply with Supplementary Guidance SG06 'Trees and Development'. A Tree Survey and Tree Constraints Plan will be required to inform the design, together with a Tree Protection Plan. Where development is permitted which will involve the loss of trees or hedgerows of amenity value, the Council will normally require replacement planting on site comprising similar species and numbers to the trees and hedgerows removed;
5. The enhancement and management of existing woodland and hedgerows will be encouraged. Where the retention of a tree group or woodland area is integral to a development proposal, developers will be required to prepare and implement an appropriate Management Plan;

6. The provision of new trees and woodland in association with new development will be encouraged in accordance with Supplementary Guidance SG05 'Green Infrastructure and New Development'; and
7. There will be a preference for the use of locally native species in new and replacement planting schemes, or other species where these are integral to an historic landscape.

4.21 Trees and woodlands have many benefits, including timber production, placemaking, landscape enhancement, screening, shelter, biodiversity value, carbon fixing, air quality improvement, natural flood management, recreation and opportunities to interact with nature. Hedgerows similarly have important benefits for landscape enhancement, screening, biodiversity, and air quality improvement. Protection of existing trees and woodland will be a priority, and the principles of the Scottish Governments Policy on 'Control of Woodland Removal' will be followed where woodland is affected. In addition, a number of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are in force across the Council area, as shown on the Proposals Map. New development will be expected to contribute to woodland and green network objectives through management and new planting as appropriate.

PE21 Promotion of Forestry and Woodland

1. The Council will promote the Falkirk Forestry and Woodland Strategy by:
 - Encouraging sustainable forestry that delivers a range of economic, social and environmental benefits, including climate change mitigation and adaptation, in accordance with the Strategy; and
 - Taking the Strategy into account in responding to consultations on proposals for felling, planting and restocking; in making planning decisions on woodland removal or creation; and making decisions on the Council's woodland projects.

4.22 Woodland cover, and the proportion of woodland brought under management, has increased in the Falkirk area over recent years, contributing significantly to the green network and bringing multiple benefits. The Falkirk Forestry and Woodland Strategy 2015-2055 provides a long term vision for the management and expansion of our woodland resource, including opportunities and constraints for new planting.



Place and Environment - Natural Environment

PE22 The Water Environment

The Council recognises the importance of the water environment within the Council area in terms of its landscape, ecological, recreational and land drainage functions. Accordingly:

1. The Council will support the development of measures identified within the Forth Area River Basin Management Plan designed to improve the ecological status of the water environment;
2. Opportunities to improve the water environment by: opening out previously culverted watercourses; removing redundant water engineering installations; and restoring the natural course of watercourses should be exploited where possible;
3. There will be a general presumption against development which would have a detrimental effect on the integrity and water quality of aquatic and riparian ecosystems, or the recreational amenity of the water environment, or which would lead to deterioration of the ecological status of any element of the water environment. Development proposals adjacent to a waterbody should provide for an appropriate undeveloped and suitably landscaped riparian corridor to avoid such impacts;
4. There will be a general presumption against any unnecessary engineering works in the water environment including new culverts, bridges, watercourse diversions, bank modifications or dams; and
5. The water environment will be promoted as a recreational resource, (subject to the requirements of Policy PE19 (1) for Natura 2000 Sites), with existing riparian access safeguarded and additional opportunities for ecological enhancement, access and recreation encouraged where compatible with nature conservation objectives.

4.23 The EU Water Framework Directive establishes a legal framework for the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment, which includes rivers, canals, estuaries, (transitional waters), lochs, groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands, coastal waters and groundwater. Objectives include preventing deterioration of aquatic ecosystems and, where possible, restoring surface waters and groundwater to 'good status'. River Basin Management Plans have been prepared to support this process. Policy PE22 aims to ensure that water quality, habitat/species integrity and quality, and the recreational amenity of the water environment is safeguarded by development proposals. Where possible, proposals should also exploit opportunities to improve the ecological status of the water environment, for example restoring watercourses which have been culverted or modified.



PE23 Marine Planning and the Coastal Zone

In assessing proposals affecting the coastal zone, the Council will seek to:

1. Support the policies of the National Marine Plan and the Regional Marine Plan, when prepared;
2. Protect designated nature conservation sites in accordance with Policy PE19;
3. Protect and enhance the water environment and promote its recreational potential in accordance with Policy PE22; and
4. Take account of flood risk in accordance with Policy PE24.

4.24 The Forth Estuary is a key part of the geography of the Council area. It is subject to a range of inter-related issues including protection of internationally important estuarine habitats; flood risk and coastal erosion; pollution; and development and recreational pressures. Under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, a new statutory framework for marine planning was established, which overlaps with terrestrial planning within the inter-tidal area. Co-ordination between terrestrial and marine planning is important. Policy PE23 therefore references the National Marine Plan, which was published in 2015, and Regional Marine Plans, which will be prepared following the establishment of Regional Marine Partnerships. The policy also cross-refers to other LDP policies which will be of particular importance in assessing proposals affecting the coastal zone.

Place and Environment - Natural Environment

PE24 Flood Management

1. The Council will support the delivery of the objectives and actions set out in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategies and Local Flood Risk Management Plans covering the area. There will be a presumption against development which would prejudice the implementation of the relevant actions.
2. Development proposals will be assessed against the Flood Risk Framework set out in Scottish Planning Policy, with development being avoided in locations at medium to high flood risk, unless it accords with the criteria set out in the Framework. There will be a presumption against new development which would:
 - Be likely to be at risk of flooding;
 - Increase the level of risk of flooding for existing development;
 - Result in a use more vulnerable to flooding or with a larger footprint than any previous development on site; or
 - Lead to an increase in the probability of flooding elsewhere.
3. Development proposals on land identified as being at medium to high risk from any source of flooding, and low to medium risk areas as identified by the Flood Risk Framework, or where other available information suggests there may be a risk, including proposals to restore the natural course of watercourses, will be required to provide a flood risk assessment in accordance with SEPA's Technical Flood Risk Guidance for Stakeholders that demonstrates that:
 - Any flood risks can be adequately managed both within and outwith the site;
 - An adequate allowance for climate change and freeboard has been built into the flood risk assessment;
 - Access and egress can be provided to the site which is free of flood risk; and

- Water resistant materials and forms of construction will be utilised where appropriate (including any development permitted in medium to high risk areas (that accords with the exceptions in the Flood Risk Framework) or is located in adjacent low to medium risk areas).
4. Development proposals on previously developed land which is at risk of flooding will be limited to uses which are of equal or less vulnerability as defined by SEPA's Land Use Vulnerability Guidance.
 5. Where suitably robust evidence suggests that land contributes or has the potential to contribute towards sustainable flood management measures development will only be permitted where the land's sustainable flood management function can be safeguarded.

4.25 The Falkirk area faces issues of fluvial, coastal and surface water flooding, as identified on SEPA Flood Maps. For the purposes of flood risk management planning, it falls mostly within the Forth Estuary Local Plan District, with a part of Rural North falling within the Forth Local Plan District. Flood Risk Management Strategies and Plans have been prepared for both Local Plan Districts and have identified a number of key actions to address flooding issues in the area. The highest priority action within the Council area is the Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme. Details of the various schemes will emerge over time, and the LDP will need to ensure that no development takes place which would impede or unduly constrain options for the necessary works.

4.26 Policy PE24 also sets out the approach to development in areas which may be risk of flooding, which is based on the Flood Risk Framework in Scottish Planning Policy. Flood Risk Assessments will be required where flooding is an issue, to demonstrate that any flood risks can be adequately managed and mitigated.

PE25 Soils and Agricultural Land

1. Any proposal for development that would involve the loss of prime quality agricultural land (Classes 1, 2 and 3.1), will not be permitted unless it is essential because it would be:
 - On a site specifically allocated for development in the LDP; or
 - For development that would meet an overriding local or national need and where no other suitable site is available; or
 - For small-scale development directly linked to a rural business; or
 - For the generation of energy from a renewable source, or for the extraction of minerals, where this would accord with other policy objectives and secure provision could be made for restoration to return the land to its former status.
2. Proposals for development that would be likely to disturb or cause significant irreversible damage to areas of carbon rich soils (basin peat, blanket bog, peat alluvium complex, peaty podzols, peaty gleys and salt marshes) or rare soils (podzols, humus iron podzols and saltings) will be required to submit a soil or peat management plan which demonstrates that:
 - The areas of highest quality soil or deepest peat have been avoided;
 - Any disturbance, degradation or erosion has been minimised through mitigation; and
 - Any likely release of greenhouse gas emissions caused by disturbance is offset.
3. Development should ensure the sustainable use of soils during construction and operation and commit to minimise soil sealing, erosion and compaction.

Place and Environment - Natural Environment

4.27 Prime quality agricultural land is defined as land falling within Classes 1, 2, and 3.1 in the Macaulay Institute 'Land Capability for Agriculture' classification, and occupies about 17% of the Council area. It is an important finite resource which Scottish Planning Policy indicates should be protected except where its development is an essential component of the settlement strategy or necessary to meet an established need. Policy PE25 also provides protection to carbon rich soils, whose disturbance would contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. Classes 1, 2 and 5 soils from the Scottish Natural Heritage Carbon Rich Soil and Peatland Map can be taken to indicate the presence of carbon rich soils.

PE26 Air Quality

Development should not exacerbate existing air quality issues or introduce new sources of pollution which impact on local air quality without appropriate mitigation. Impacts on air quality will be taken into account in assessing development proposals, particularly within Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). An Air Quality Assessment may be required for developments that are within an AQMA or where the proposed development may cause or significantly contribute towards a breach of National Air Quality Standards. Development proposals that result in either a breach of National Air Quality Standards or a significant increase in concentrations within an existing AQMA will not be permitted unless there are overriding issues of national or local importance.

4.28 Good air quality is an important element of sustainable place making which contributes towards health and well-being as set out in the Cleaner Air for Scotland Framework. Planning has an important part to play in improving air quality, which can be affected by new development, and air quality can be a material consideration in determining planning applications. In areas with significant potential for further industrial development such as Grangemouth proposals may require an air quality assessment even where no breach of air quality standards is anticipated. The Council has put in place a network of monitoring equipment to measure whether it is meeting National Air Quality Standards, and Air Quality Management Areas have been established at Banknock, Grangemouth, Falkirk Town Centre and Haggs related to breaches in various air quality objectives. The Scottish Government has also committed to introducing Low Emission Zones (LEZ) to all AQMA areas by 2023.

PE27 Vacant, Derelict and Contaminated Land

Proposals that reduce the incidence of vacant, derelict, unstable and contaminated land will be supported, subject to compliance with other LDP policies, particularly those related to development in the countryside. Where proposals involve the development of unstable or contaminated land, they will only be permitted where appropriate remediation or mitigation measures have been undertaken, and proposals are consistent with the requirements of PAN 33.

4.29 Previously developed land can offer potential opportunities for new development and reduce the need to use greenfield land, as well as improving the environment. SPP supports proposals to bring vacant and derelict land back into productive use or to enhance its value as part of the green network. For potentially or statutorily identified contaminated land, the requirements of PAN 33 'Development of Contaminated Land' should be met, ensuring that the site is suitable for the intended use post development and will not cause unacceptable risk to the wider environment.



Homes and Communities - Housing

HC01 Housing Land

1. The housing supply target is 6,894 homes for the period 2017–2030. To meet this target, the Council will support residential development as indicated generally in the Spatial Strategy and as detailed in the Proposals and Opportunities Schedule and Settlement Statements, and on suitable windfall sites which satisfy Policy HC02.
2. The Council will maintain at least 5 years' supply of effective housing land to ensure that the Housing Supply Target is met in full over the development plan period. The Housing Land Audit is the primary source of evidence for monitoring the availability of effective housing land.
If, during the period of the plan, a shortfall in the 5 year supply of effective land emerges, additional sites for housing will be supported where the proposal would constitute sustainable development, having regard to the relevant criteria in Scottish Planning Policy and other LDP policies. In such circumstances, the scale of the proposed development relative to the scale of the shortfall will be a material consideration. The Council may also impose specific time limits on any planning permissions granted, to ensure that housing is delivered to a timescale that will address the identified shortfall.

4.30 The approach to housing land provision is set out in the Spatial Strategy, including the overall housing supply target, the housing land requirement which includes a flexibility allowance, and how this requirement is expected to be met through sites carried forward from LDP1, new sites, and windfall sites. In addition, Scottish Planning Policy requires that the Council maintains a 5 year effective land supply. Should a shortfall in the supply occur during the plan period, additional sites may be considered where they meet the criteria set out in Policy HC01.



HC02 Windfall Housing

Housing development on sites within the Urban and Village Limits, which are not identified as LDP proposals, will be supported where:

1. The site is brownfield or, if greenfield, will meet the terms of the Policy PE16 on protection of open space;
2. Housing 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 infrastructure, such as transport, drainage, education and healthcare has the capacity to accommodate the proposed development, or can be upgraded through appropriate developer contributions, as required by Policy IR02;
5. The site is not at risk of flooding in terms of Policy PE24; and
6. The proposed development complies with other LDP policies.

4.31 Appropriate opportunities for housing development in addition to those specifically identified in the LDP may arise within the urban area over the period of the plan. These 'unplanned' sites will typically be on brownfield sites, and continue to make a significant contribution to housing supply in the area. The LDP assumes that such sites will yield a contribution of around 650 homes over the period 2017-2030 on the basis of historic trends, and an allowance for this has been built into the Spatial Strategy. Policy HC02 sets out criteria for assessing the suitability of windfall sites for residential development.

Homes and Communities - Housing

HC03 Affordable Housing

Housing developments of 20 units and over will provide affordable housing as set out below. The approach to provision should comply with Supplementary Guidance SG06 'Affordable Housing'.

Settlement Areas	Percentage of affordable housing on site
Larbert/Stenhousemuir Rural North Braes and Rural South	25%
Bo'ness Bonnybridge and Banknock Denny Falkirk Grangemouth	15%

4.32 Affordable housing is housing of a reasonable quality that is affordable to people on modest incomes. The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment demonstrates the continuing need for new affordable housing in the area. Out of the 6,894 homes required by the Housing Supply Target between 2017-2030, 3171 of these are anticipated to be affordable. A proportion of this affordable housing may be delivered by other mechanisms such as buybacks. While a substantial amount of social housing is being delivered by the Council and housing associations, private housing development also needs to contribute through the provision of a proportion of affordable units as set out in Policy HC03. SG06 'Affordable Housing' sets out in detail the types of housing which will be considered as affordable, and the options and mechanisms for complying with this requirement.



HC04 Housing Density and Site Capacity

1. The density and overall capacity of housing sites should be determined by a site planning process, based on the placemaking principles set out in Policy PE01, and in particular prior consideration of:

- The context of the site and the character of the surrounding area;
- Existing natural and built features which require to be retained within an appropriate setting;
- Open space, flooding and surface water management, and other green infrastructure requirements;
- Landscape impacts and associated mitigation requirements;
- Other site constraints; and
- Residential amenity, with particular regard to privacy, daylighting and suitable provision of private garden ground.

2. Where housing capacity figures set out in the Proposals and Opportunities Schedule have yet to be informed by an approved detailed masterplan, they will be regarded as indicative, pending the preparation of such a masterplan. However, where a proposed site capacity exceeds that set out in the Schedule, this will need to be fully justified through a design statement, which addresses Policy PE01 and the factors listed in sub section (1) above.

4.33 The appropriate capacity for housing sites needs to be determined through a detailed masterplan which is informed by the relevant design and placemaking principles. Where a site has been allocated in the LDP, but has not yet been fully masterplanned, the capacity stated in the Proposals and Opportunities Schedule will be an indicative estimate, based on a brief appraisal of the site location and constraints, and typical housing densities. It will need to be confirmed by a detailed masterplan, which could result in an amended figure.

HC05 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 that the restored/replacement house is of a suitable size and design;
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 HC09.

Detailed guidance on the application of these criteria will be contained in Supplementary Guidance SG01 Development in the Countryside.

4.34 Given Falkirk's high accessibility to the whole of the Central belt there is pressure for new housing in the countryside. In pressurised areas such as Falkirk, SPP warns that it is important to protect against unsustainable growth in car-based commuting and the suburbanisation of the countryside. Policy HC05 recognises that there are various circumstances that housing in the countryside may be appropriate.

Homes and Communities - Housing

HC06 Infill Development and Plot Sub Division

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 house(s) respect the townscape or countryside character of the area;
2. Adequate garden ground can be provided to serve the proposed house(s) without an unacceptable impact on the size or functioning of the existing garden;
3. Adequate privacy and daylighting will be afforded to both the proposed house(s) and neighbouring properties;
4. The proposal would not result in the loss of features such as trees 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.

4.35 Proposals for infill development need to be carefully considered to ensure that the character and amenity of the surrounding area is safeguarded. Consideration will be given to the overall character of the area and the current layout, density and size of surrounding plots to which the proposal relates.



HC07 Established 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. neighbourhood shops, surgeries and nurseries) or other compatible business uses (e.g. home business and 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.

4.36 Non-residential uses in residential areas can provide important community services, however it is important that existing residential amenity is not adversely affected or impacted upon when new proposals come forward.

HC08 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 impact on the functioning of garden ground, unacceptable loss of off-street parking or road safety issues.

Detailed guidance on the application of these criteria is set out in Supplementary Guidance SG03 'Residential Extensions and Alterations'.

4.37 Small scale changes in residential neighbourhoods must be managed to maintain residential amenity. Extensions and alterations that are well designed contribute to the overall attractiveness of the built environment.

HC09 Gypsy/Traveller Sites

Proposals for privately owned sites for Gypsy/Travellers will be permitted where:

1. There is no adverse impact on the character, appearance and amenity of the area;
2. The proposal complies with other LDP policies relating to the historic and natural environment (PE05 - PE27);
3. There is reasonable access to community facilities and an appropriate level of residential amenity; and
4. The site can be accessed and serviced satisfactorily and the site is not at significant risk from flooding in terms of Policy PE24.

4.38 There is one Council run site and four privately owned sites for Gypsy/Travellers in the area, with a relatively low number of unauthorised encampments over recent years. The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment does not indicate the need to identify further sites, but Policy HC09 continues to provide guidance for dealing with applications for privately owned sites which may arise.

HC10 Residential Care Homes

Proposals for residential care homes will generally be permitted where:

1. The location provides an appropriate residential environment;
2. There is good access to public transport;
3. The development is of a scale and character appropriate to the site;
4. Sufficient amenity open space can be provided for the enjoyment of residents; and
5. The proposal complies with other LDP policies.

4.39 Policy HC10 sets out criteria for considering proposals for residential care homes, ensuring that sites are able to provide a good quality environment for residents. These criteria are likely to be met on allocated residential sites, or on suitable windfall sites within the urban area.

Jobs and Economy - Business

JE01 Business and Tourism

1. The Council will promote the following Strategic Business Locations as outlined in the Spatial Strategy:

- Falkirk Investment Zone
- Grangemouth Investment Zone
- Larbert Gateway
- Eastern Gateway

Strategic sites which form part of the Strategic Business Locations, and other local business sites within communities, (as identified in the Proposals and Opportunities Schedule) will be safeguarded for the uses specified.

2. The Council will support tourism development which supports the tourism networks, themes and nodes identified in the Spatial Strategy, is of a quality which enhances the image and tourism infrastructure of the area, and complies with other LDP policies.

4.40 The Spatial Strategy identifies four Strategic Business Locations where new development and supporting infrastructure will be focused. The Grangemouth Investment Zone reflects the equivalent National Development in NPF3. The employment land supply will be further augmented by local sites providing opportunities for business growth in local communities. The Spatial Strategy also sets out a framework of tourism themes, networks and nodes around which the development of the area's growing visitor economy will be focused and to which new development should contribute.

JE02 Core Business Areas

The core business areas identified on the Proposals Map will be safeguarded primarily for business and industrial use. Class 4, 5 and 6 uses will be supported in principle within these areas, apart from Callendar Business Park, Falkirk, and Gateway Business Park, Grangemouth where only Class 4 uses will be appropriate. Other employment uses will be permitted where they will not prejudice the primary business function of the area, are compatible with the business/industrial character of the area, and comply with other LDP policies.

4.41 Core business areas comprise existing industrial estates and business parks which the Council wishes to retain in business use because of their contribution to the local economy. They are typically well located, have a reasonable level of amenity, and collectively support a large number of jobs. Whilst the emphasis in these areas will be on Class 4, 5 and 6 (business, general industry and distribution), Policy JE02 allows flexibility for other employment uses which would be appropriate within an industrial estate or business park environment.



JE03 Business Areas with Potential for Redevelopment

Within the business areas with potential for redevelopment, as identified on the Proposals Map, and any other non-core business land or premises within the Urban or Village Limit, redevelopment for alternative uses will be permitted provided such uses are compatible with the character of the surrounding area, and comply with other LDP policies. Pending any such redevelopment, proposals for business development within these areas will continue to be supported.

4.42 It will not always be appropriate to retain industrial areas in employment use. The location and character of some areas may be such that regeneration and placemaking would be better served by allowing redevelopment for other purposes. Policy JE03 therefore allows change to be considered in such areas.

JE04 Business Development outwith Designated Business Areas

Proposals for business development within the Urban/Village Limits, but outwith designated business areas, will be permitted where the nature and scale of the activity will be compatible with the surrounding area, there will be no adverse impact on neighbouring uses or residential amenity, and the proposal is satisfactory in terms of access, parking and traffic generation.

4.43 Proposals for business and industrial development will be directed to designated business areas, i.e. identified business and industry proposals, core business areas, and the business areas with potential for redevelopment. Outwith these areas, the introduction of new business uses may be appropriate but will have to be assessed carefully in terms of their potential environmental, amenity and access impacts.

Jobs and Economy - Business

JE05 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. Proposals involving the re-use of industrial, commercial or institutional land or premises, or the conversion of farm buildings for business use;
3. Limited extensions to existing established business in the countryside; or
4. Business development where a need for a countryside location is demonstrated or the development constitutes an appropriate form of farm diversification.

Detailed guidance on the application of these criteria will be contained in Supplementary Guidance SG01 'Development in the Countryside'.

4.44 A cautious approach to proposals for business development in the countryside is taken to ensure that the character of the countryside in terms of landscape and ecological impacts is safeguarded. Policy JE05 recognises that there are various circumstances where rural sites may be appropriate and offer opportunities for economic growth.



JE06 Major Hazards

1. Proposals within Major Hazard and Pipeline Consultation Zones and not themselves major hazard developments will be assessed against the following factors:
 - Any increase in the number of people exposed to risk in the area;
 - The existing permitted use of the site or buildings;
 - The extent to which the proposal may achieve regeneration benefits, which cannot be secured by any other means; and
 - The potential impact on chemical and petro-chemical sites and pipelines.
2. Applications for hazardous substance consent (HSC) that would extend major hazard consultation distances within the urban area will be assessed against their impact on allocated development plan sites and any increase in the number of people exposed to risk in the area while taking into account the need to safeguard nationally important clusters of industry handling hazardous substances.
3. Applications for HSC should demonstrate that off-site impacts have been minimised as far as possible through the optimum location and method of storage and by ensuring that the quantity/type of materials applied for is specifically related to operational needs.
4. The revocation of HSC consents will be pursued where the use on the site has ceased. Redevelopment of existing major hazard sites for other non-hazardous uses should also include a review of the HSC's associated with the site.
5. The preferred location for new pipelines will be in existing Pipeline Consultation Zones.

4.45 The Falkirk Council area has a number of industrial sites which are classified as major hazard sites and a number of major hazard pipelines. The majority of sites are associated with the chemical and petrochemical industries in Grangemouth and some of the pipelines are also for gas transmission. The sites and pipelines are involved in the manufacture, processing, storage or transmission of dangerous chemicals and substances in quantities or at pressures that could pose a risk to workers, local people and the environment in the event of a major accident.

4.46 In recognition of the potential risk the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) issues a consultation distance (CD) for each site or pipeline which is made up of 3 zones. The HSE uses an established methodology to define CDs taking into account hazardous events, consequences, risk and weather conditions. The closer to the site or pipeline the greater the potential risk and all planning applications within consultation distances are assessed by the HSE through the Planning Advice Web App. This is operated by the Planning Authority to generate the HSE advice. As a general rule the HSE tries to balance the principle of stabilising and not increasing the population at risk with the need for development.

4.47 Where a planning application falls within a consultation distance Falkirk Council will consider the HSE's advice, as well as taking into account site specific information in relation to the hazard, existing uses and regeneration benefits. The Council may also take into account advice from the major hazard installation owner or operator.



Jobs and Economy - Town Centres

JE07 Town and Local Centres

1. The Council will promote the vitality and viability of town and local centres, and their role as defined in the Spatial Strategy, through:

- Applying the town centre first principle;
 - Promoting a diverse range of uses, and encouraging residential development through the waiving of education and open space contributions for residential use in certain circumstances within town centre boundaries, as set out in Policy IR02;
 - Promoting opportunities for development, regeneration and enhancement, with priority given to those identified in the Proposals and Opportunities Schedule; and
 - Improving their accessibility
2. Development or changes of use for retail, business, food and drink, leisure and tourism, cultural and community uses, residential or other appropriate town centres uses within town and local centres will be supported provided that:
- They support the vitality and viability of the centre;
 - They are consistent in type and scale with the centre's role within the network of centres as set out in the Spatial Strategy, and will not undermine the role of any other centre;
 - Within ground floor premises on established shopping streets, an active frontage is maintained; and
 - They are of a high design quality, are compatible with adjacent uses and able to integrate successfully with the centre.

4.48 Within the network of centres defined in the Spatial Strategy, town centres comprise the principal centre of Falkirk, and the four district centres of Bo'ness, Denny, Grangemouth and Stenhousemuir. Local centres serve the smaller towns and suburbs. Policy JE07 sets out a supportive policy approach to town and local centres which is based on the Scottish Government's town centre first principle, the general need to diversify the mix of uses, and the continuing need for regeneration. Specifically, the viability of new residential development in town centres will be assisted through the removal of the requirement to pay education and open space contributions, in certain circumstances as specified in Policy IR02. Policy JE07 also provides criteria for assessing proposals within town and local centres. In recognition of the challenges facing centres, it offers considerable flexibility on changes of use, although there is a continuing requirement to maintain 'active frontages' on shopping streets, with a window display that expresses the goods or services on offer.



JE08 Commercial Centres

Within commercial centres, the use of existing units will be controlled in accordance with the relevant planning permissions and Section 75 obligations. Applications for new development, to vary the scope of existing planning permissions, or to modify or discharge any Section 75 obligations, will be assessed against the criteria in Policy JE09, and their ability to meet the sequential town centre approach. Improved linkages between the commercial centres, and town and local centres will be encouraged.

4.49 Two commercial centres are identified as part of the network of centres - Central Retail Park and Glasgow Road, Camelon. Both of these have edge of town/local centre locations, but their separate character as retail/leisure parks with large format buildings makes it appropriate that they are identified and treated separately. Phase 2 of Central Retail Park is covered by a Section 75 obligation restricting the range of goods that can be sold. Any relaxation of this, or other development proposals within the commercial centres, will need to be carefully assessed to ensure that there is no adverse impact on town and local centres. The commercial centres are capable of contributing to the adjacent town/local centres, through linked trips, but improved integration and pedestrian links are needed to maximise such benefits.



Jobs and Economy - Town Centres

JE09 Town Centre First

1. Retail development proposals in excess of 1,000 sq.m. gross floorspace, significant commercial leisure development, offices, and other significant cultural, civic and community uses should be located within town and local centres. Where such proposals are located outwith town and local centres, they will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that:
 - They accord with the sequential town centre first approach in which locations are considered in the following order of preference:
 - Town and local centres;
 - Edge of centre;
 - Commercial centres;
 - Out of centre locations that are, or can be made accessible by a choice of transport modes;
 - There is no adverse impact on the vitality and viability of town and local centres; and
 - In the case of out of centre locations, there is a need for the development.
2. Retail development proposals of less than 1,000 sq.m gross floorspace and serving a demonstrated neighbourhood need, will be permitted more generally within the urban area, subject to other LDP policies.
3. Motor vehicle showrooms will be permitted generally within allocated business and industrial sites, or other existing business areas, providing that access, servicing and any associated activities can be accommodated without detriment to residential amenity, the functioning of the road network, or the operation of adjacent businesses.

4.50 The town centre first principle means that town and local centres are the preferred location for significant retail and commercial leisure, major community and cultural uses and other uses generating significant footfall. The threshold for significant development will be 1,000 sq.m. gross floorspace, below which proposals that are shown to be serving neighbourhood needs will be supported in appropriate locations generally within the urban area. Outwith town and local centres, retail and/or leisure impact assessments and a sequential assessment will be required for development proposals in excess of 1,000 sq.m. gross floorspace but, in certain circumstances, may also be required for smaller proposals. These circumstances will vary from case-to-case but will generally occur in situations where the likely impact of a proposal would be disproportionate to its scale. Examples of disproportionate impacts include where: 1) the sale of a particular type of goods is proposed on which a nearby centre is particularly reliant; 2) the location of the proposal is such that there will be a particularly high diversion of trade, or 3) where a local centre is in a particularly vulnerable state.



JE10 Food and Drink

1. Proposals for Class 3 uses, hot food takeaways and public houses will be encouraged to locate within town, local and commercial centres, in association with other neighbourhood shops or services, or at tourism nodes.
2. Proposals must demonstrate that there will be no adverse impact on the amenity of adjacent residential properties, or the surrounding area generally, by virtue of noise or odours, and that parking and access requirements are satisfied.
3. Temporary consent for mobile snack bar vans may be granted where a specific need is demonstrated, and there is no adverse impact on local amenity or the visual quality of the locality.

4.51 Pubs, restaurants, hot food takeaways and cafes form an important component of the local economy, and contribute to tourism and the vitality and viability of centres. However, they can pose amenity issues when located adjacent to residential properties.



Infrastructure and Resources - Infrastructure

IR01 Strategic Infrastructure

The Council will support, and safeguard land for the provision of the infrastructure listed in the Spatial Strategy and detailed in the Proposals and Opportunities Schedule.

4.52 The Spatial Strategy sets out the key infrastructure projects which are needed to address existing deficiencies and support future growth over the period of LDP2. The necessary land will be safeguarded to implement these schemes. These will be delivered by a range of public and private agencies. Other major items of infrastructure may emerge over the life of the plan. In particular, the scoping and design of projects arising from Local Flood Risk Management Plans is still evolving.



IR02 Developer Contributions

Developers will be required to contribute to the provision, upgrading and, where appropriate, the maintenance of infrastructure where development will create or exacerbate deficiencies in, or impose significantly increased burdens on, existing infrastructure. The types of infrastructure where contributions may be required are set out in Table 4.1. The nature, scale and phasing of developer contributions will be determined by:

1. Guidance and contribution rates set out in SG13 'Developer Contributions';
2. Site specific requirements set out in the LDP or relevant development brief; and
3. The principles contained in Circular 3/2012 'Planning Obligations and Good Neighbour Agreements'.

In assessing applications where developer contributions are required, the economic viability of proposals will be taken into account as a material consideration where supported by a Development Viability Statement. In rare circumstances developer contributions for education and open space will be waived for flatted residential development, or conversions of buildings for residential use, of up to 50 units within town centre boundaries.

4.53 New infrastructure will be funded through a variety of mechanisms. The Council and other public sector bodies will continue to fund some projects through their capital budgets, augmented by external funding where available. The Council's Tax Increment Finance (TIF) initiative will assist in the funding of a number of schemes to unlock business development, particularly in the Grangemouth and Falkirk Investment Zones. However, developer contributions will continue to play an important role in delivering infrastructure which is required specifically to mitigate impacts of new development. The types of infrastructure to which developers may be asked to contribute are highlighted in Table 4.1 and include green infrastructure; transport and drainage infrastructure; and community infrastructure. The Council's approach to contributions will be guided by the provisions of Circular 3/2012, and set out in detail within SG13 'Developer Contributions'. The Council recognises the impact which developer contributions may have on viability of development, and will consider this as a material consideration where properly evidenced.



Infrastructure and Resources - Infrastructure

Table 4.1 Potential Areas for Developer Contributions

Green Infrastructure	
Open Space and Play Areas	Where open space requirements are to be met through off-site provision, informed by the Open Space Strategy
Habitat Creation and Management	Where mitigation/compensation of ecological impacts is required, or opportunities exist to reinforce the green network, informed by Habitat Surveys and Ecological Impact Assessments
Sustainable Water and Flood Management	Where opportunities exist to provide sustainable flood management or water environment enhancement measures, informed by Flood Risk Management Plans or the River Basin Management Plan
Transport Infrastructure	
Active Travel	Where routes or infrastructure are needed to promote sustainable transport options, informed by Transport Assessments and Travel Plans, or opportunities exist to enhance the green network
Public Transport Facilities and Services	Where access to public transport needs to be secured to promote sustainable transport options, informed by Transport Assessments and Travel Plans
Road Network Improvements	Where improvements to the road network are required to mitigate the impacts of development, informed by Transport Assessments
Community Infrastructure	
Schools and Nurseries	Where school/nursery capacity needs to be enhanced to mitigate the impact of children generated by new development
Community Space	Where there are deficiencies in the quantity or quality of local provision
Healthcare Facilities	Where the physical capacity of healthcare facilities needs to be enhanced to mitigate the impact of additional patients generated by new development
Placemaking and Historic Environment	
Environmental Improvements and Public Art	Where opportunities exist to improve the environment and place quality of communities
Archaeological Investigation and Interpretation	Where archaeological sites or remains are affected by development
Historic Building Conservation	Where mitigation of impacts on historic buildings or conservation area is required, informed by a Heritage Impact Assessment

Infrastructure and Resources - Infrastructure

IR03 Education and New Housing Development

Where there will be insufficient capacity within catchment schools to accommodate children from proposed new housing development, or where Council nursery provision will be adversely affected, developer contributions will be sought in line with Policy IR02 to mitigate these impacts. In the rare circumstances where such mitigation cannot be achieved in a manner which is consistent with the Council's education policies, the proposed development will not be supported.

4.55 The Council has invested substantially in the school estate over recent years, and further investment will need to take place over the period of the plan, the key elements of which are outlined in the Spatial Strategy. School capacity remains an issue in many areas and Policy IR03 will be applied to ensure that pupils generated by development can be accommodated. Developer contributions will be sought to fund capacity enhancement where appropriate, but this may not always be possible. The Council also has a responsibility to provide an increasing number of nursery places. Again developer contributions will be sought to mitigate the cost of meeting the requirement for nursery provision arising from new development.



IR04 Community Facilities

- Proposals involving the loss of existing community facilities will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that:
 - There is no longer a need for the facility;
 - The facility is no longer financially viable; or
 - The services offered by the facility will be delivered satisfactorily in alternative ways.
- Proposals for new community facilities will be supported where:
 - In the case of proposals generating significant footfall, the sequential town centre first approach is met;
 - In other cases, there is good access by public transport, walking and cycling;
 - The proposal is compatible with the surrounding area in terms of scale, character and design; and
 - The proposal complies with other LDP policies.
- Proposals for major new public buildings, major community facilities or major commercial developments which are publically accessible, should incorporate a Changing Places toilet.

4.56 Communities benefit from a range of community buildings including those from which the Council or Falkirk Community Trust delivers services, as well as the many buildings owned and managed by private organisations for a variety of beneficial community activities. While these community assets are very important, rationalisation may sometimes be necessary due to issues of financial viability or to achieve more cost efficient ways of delivering services. Policy IR04 sets out a framework for considering applications which involve loss of community facilities. The policy also provides criteria for considering proposals for new community facilities, ensuring that they are located in appropriate and accessible places. The provision of Changing Places toilets will be a requirement in all major new public buildings, major community facilities and large commercial developments which are visited by large numbers of members of the public, for example leisure and arts centres, hospitals and large enclosed shopping centres. Changing Places toilets are toilets with the equipment, space and environment to cater for people with profound and multiple learning difficulties and more complex physical disabilities. Criteria for the design of Changing Places toilets are set out in BS8300.



Infrastructure and Resources - Infrastructure

IR05 Travel Hierarchy and Transport Assessment

1. Development proposals should support a hierarchy of travel which maximises the extent to which its travel demands are met first through walking, then cycling, then public transport and finally through use of private cars.
2. Transport assessments will be required for development proposals where the impact of the development on the transport network is likely to result in an increase in the number of trips, such that there will be significant impact on the operation of the transport network, requiring mitigation. Assessments will focus on the hierarchy of travel and should include, where appropriate:
 - Travel plans;
 - Safety audits of proposed mitigation measures; and
 - Air quality impact assessments.
3. The Council will only support development proposals where the transport assessment and travel plan have been appropriately scoped, the network impacts properly defined, and suitable mitigation measures identified.

4.57 Transport assessments are vital to ensuring that the transport network can accommodate new development, and in ensuring that sustainable modes of transport (active travel and public transport) are prioritised. Transport Assessments must be prepared in line with the current Transport Assessment Guidance published by Transport Scotland (current version published 2012). Travel Plans should accord with the Council's SPG on Travel Plans. The scoping of Transport Assessments and Travel Plans should be agreed with Falkirk Council prior to the submission of planning applications.

IR06 Active Travel

1. The Council will safeguard, improve and extend the network of active travel routes, with particular emphasis on the core path network. Development proposals should contribute to active travel infrastructure, either through direct provision or developer contributions, and should address the following requirements, as appropriate:
 - Support objectives set out in Travel Plans;
 - Support the Falkirk Greenspace Strategy by improving the extent and connectivity of routes within the green network;
 - Safeguard and improve existing active travel routes affected by the development, including the provision of temporary alternative routes where routes are disrupted by construction;
 - Provide linkages to the existing active travel network in the vicinity of the site and to schools, community facilities, local amenities and public transport; and
 - Provide appropriate additional infrastructure such as cycle parking, seating and signage.
2. The design of routes, including line, construction, surfacing, and, where appropriate, lighting should be specified within proposals and should:
 - Be appropriate to the location and intended use of the routes;
 - Promote safe use of the routes;
 - Facilitate, where appropriate, access to a wide range of users including pedestrians, cyclists and the mobility impaired;
 - Promote ease of maintenance; and
 - Meet relevant standards where routes are to be adopted by the Council.

4.58 Active travel includes walking and cycling, for both functional and recreational purposes, and brings multiple environmental and health benefits. The Council's Core Paths Plan identifies an integrated system of top-tier routes, both urban and rural, extending to some 250 miles, in addition to which there is an expanding network of local routes which are connecting our communities to places they want to go. It is essential that active travel options are available for new development and that development contributes to the network of routes where opportunities arise. New routes should be appropriately designed and specified. Proposals should accord with the detailed guidance on active travel routes within SG05 'Green Infrastructure and New Development'.

IR07 Bus Travel

Development should benefit from good access to bus services, taking account of the 400 metre maximum walking distance required by Scottish Planning Policy. Measures to secure this should be assessed and agreed through Travel Plans and may include:

1. Links to existing bus stops, or the provision of new bus stops
2. In the case of larger developments, inclusion of routes suitable for provision of bus services through the development; and
3. Provision of financial contributions to support the delivery of bus services serving the development.

4.59 Buses are a vital element in the sustainable transport network. They are flexible and adaptable, and require relatively little specialist infrastructure when compared to rail transport. It is therefore important that new development has good access to bus services. Travel plans will specify requirements, which may include providing appropriate pedestrian routes to new or existing bus stops or, in the case of larger developments, making provision for new bus routes within the development, or providing contributions to support the delivery of bus services.

Infrastructure and Resources - Infrastructure

IR08 Freight Transport

1. The Council will support the role of the Grangemouth Investment Zone as a freight hub. Freight intensive development will be directed to the Grangemouth Investment Zone and other business locations where sites can be accessed without significant impact on local communities, or on the strategic or local road network.
2. Development which will encourage the transfer of freight from road to rail, including the development of freight handling facilities, will be supported subject to other LDP policies.

4.60 The Council area is at the hub of Central Scotland's transport network and has been a focus for freight and logistics activity for many years. In particular, Grangemouth is Scotland's largest container port by traffic volume and hosts a cluster of intermodal freight terminals. This role is recognised within NPF3. There is potential for further growth through improved freight handling facilities, improved rail freight infrastructure and additional warehousing. There is also scope for transfer of freight from road to rail, and the Council will work in partnership with the Scottish Government and Network Rail to deliver improvements to rail freight infrastructure that will facilitate this. Proposals must take account of, and mitigate, impacts on the local road network and local communities.



IR09 Parking

1. The parking standards in the National Roads Development Guide will be applied to new development, subject to the local variations approved by the Council.
2. Parking in town and local centres will be managed to support the role of the centres whilst promoting sustainable travel. Proposed changes to parking provision in centres will be assessed against the effect on their vitality and viability.
3. New car parking provided as part of significant new commercial or community uses should incorporate electric vehicle charging points.

4.61 The provision and design of parking in new development is critical to managing the impact of cars on places, and promoting sustainable travel. The Council has adopted the National Roads Development Guide (NRDG) and its parking standards. At present one local variation to the parking standards in the NRDG is promoted whereby garages and car ports do not count towards required parking provision. Managing parking in town centres remains a key strategic issue, with a balance having to be struck between accessibility by car, which remains important for viability in most of our centres, and the longer term need to promote more sustainable access by active travel or public transport means. The provision of parking areas for larger commercial or community developments provides the opportunity to support positive changes in transport technologies through the requirement to provide charging points for electric vehicles.

4.62 A sustainable and effective drainage strategy is fundamental to new development. This is required to incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) for surface water which can manage runoff rates, improve water quality and offers environmental and habitat benefits for the site. Policy IR10 references important guidance on the design of SUDS.

IR10 Drainage Infrastructure

1. Necessary sewerage infrastructure associated with new development should either be adopted by Scottish Water or have alternative maintenance arrangements which are acceptable to SEPA. Connection to the public sewer is the most sustainable option and will ensure that any pollution risk to the environment is minimised.
2. Surface water management for new development should comply with current best practice on Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), where appropriate forming an integral part of the development's landscape structure as set out within Supplementary Guidance SG05 'Green Infrastructure and New Development'. SUDS will be required to meet the specifications as detailed in the most recent version of Sewers for Scotland should the developer wish the surface water system to vest in Scottish Water.
3. For developments that involve a change of use and/or redevelopment, wherever possible, opportunities should be taken to retrofit SUDS.
4. 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. The strategy should follow the latest version of the SUDS Manual.

4.63 Scottish Planning Policy highlights the role of the planning system in supporting investment in digital infrastructure so as to strengthen digital communications capacity and coverage. The emphasis is on facilitating necessary infrastructure while ensuring that the impact of apparatus is minimised through greater attention to siting and design. Policy IR11 sets out what information and justification should accompany applications to ensure the optimum environmental solution is chosen consistent with meeting operational requirements.

Infrastructure and Resources - Energy

IR11 Digital Infrastructure

Proposals for new communications equipment should minimise impact on the environment and communities. Planning applications should be accompanied by supporting information demonstrating that:

1. All siting and design options have been fully considered, including options for site and mast sharing, installation on buildings or other existing structures, or use of ground-based masts. Of the options which meet operational requirements, the chosen site and design should be shown to have the least impacts;
2. The visual impact of the equipment has been minimised or eliminated through design, landscaping and screening, including the use of concealment or camouflage techniques where appropriate. Full details of the design, including height, materials and all components of the proposal should be provided, and normally the smallest suitable equipment should be utilised where it would be visible;
3. Where siting of the equipment is proposed in locations which are designated for their ecological or historic environment importance, or provide the setting or supporting habitat for designations, all other options have been exhausted and, for Natura 2000 sites, that the terms of Policy PE19 have been met; and
4. Where applicable, the cumulative effects of the proposed development in combination with existing equipment in the area has been assessed. Applications should be accompanied by an explanation of how the proposed equipment fits into the wider network;
5. The equipment and installation is designed to be in full compliance with the appropriate ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure to radio frequency radiation provided by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP).

Developers should consider the provision of digital infrastructure to houses and businesses where new development is proposed, in consultation with service providers.

IR12 Energy Generation Development

1. Energy infrastructure developments will be assessed in relation to the following factors:

- Net economic impacts, including local and community socio - economic benefits;
- The scale of contribution to renewable energy generation targets and the effect on greenhouse gas emissions;
- Landscape and visual impacts, having regard to Policy PE18;
- Impacts on forestry, having regard to Policy PE20;
- Ecological impacts; having regard to Policy PE19;
- Impact on green belt objectives, having regard to Policy PE15;
- Impact on carbon rich and rare soils, having regard to Policy PE25;
- Impact on the water environment, having regard to Policy PE22;
- The extent to which waste would be minimised during construction and operation, having regard to Policy IR18
- Impacts on the historic environment; having regard to Policies PE05-PE12;
- Impacts on aviation and digital infrastructure;
- Impacts on communities, whether settlements or individual residential properties, including issues of noise, shadow flicker and air quality;
- Cumulative impacts in relation to the above factors, arising from the combined effect of the proposal with other existing or approved energy developments; and
- Tourism and recreation impacts, including for public access and for long distance walking, cycling and scenic routes.

Detailed guidance on the above factors as they apply to different energy technologies is set out in Supplementary Guidance SG14 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy.

2. Proposals for onshore wind energy proposals of 50m to tip and above will additionally be assessed in relation to the Spatial Framework set out in Map 3.7 of the Spatial Strategy, as follows:

- Within areas of significant protection (Group 2), wind farms may be appropriate in some circumstances. Further consideration will be required to demonstrate that any significant effect on the qualities of these areas can be substantially overcome by siting, design or other mitigation; and
- Within areas with potential for wind farm development (Group 3), wind farms are likely to be acceptable, subject to detailed consideration against the criteria set out in sub section (1).

4.64 Policy IR12 sets out criteria for assessment of all proposals for energy development. As well as a range of economic, environmental and community factors, the Scottish Government's targets for meeting an increasing proportion of electricity and heat demand from renewable sources will be a key consideration. In relation to wind energy, Scottish Planning Policy requires the Council to produce a spatial framework for onshore wind farm development in accordance with a defined methodology to identify areas of strategic capacity. The Spatial Framework is contained in Map 3.7 within the Spatial Strategy and identifies areas of significant protection (Group 2 - national and international designations; other nationally important mapped environmental interests; and community separation areas); and areas with potential for wind farm development (Group 3).

Infrastructure and Resources - Energy

IR13 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 12% 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 is contained in Supplementary Guidance SG14 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy. 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 the other sustainability aspects of the current Sections 6 and 7 of the current Building Standards Technical Handbook.

4.65 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 and low-carbon technologies also have a role to play in terms of reducing the need for fossil fuel consumption. The Council is legally obliged through the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 to include a policy in the LDP that requires all new development to be designed to ensure new buildings 'avoid a specified and rising proportion of the projected greenhouse gas emissions' through use of low and zero- carbon generating technologies (LZCGT).

4.66 Scottish Planning Policy states that LDP policies should accord with the standards, guidance and methodologies of the building regulations. Scottish Building Standards set mandatory minimum carbon reduction standards, set out in Section 6 (Energy) of the 2017 Building Standards Handbook. The 2017 revision identifies a 21% improvement in carbon dioxide emissions over 2010 levels for domestic projects, and a 42.8% improvement for non-domestic developments. These changes came into force in October 2017 and will be subject to regular review.

4.67 An 'active' sustainability label as set out in Section 7 of the current Building Standards Handbook is a starting point to demonstrate that schemes include LZCGT. Proposals must show that a 'specified proportion' of emissions are avoided through use of LZCGT. Overall, a proportional and holistic approach is required to ensure that the energy efficiency of the fabric of the buildings is balanced with the requirement for LZCGT. The approach is set out in SG14 'Renewable and Low Carbon Energy'.



Infrastructure and Resources - Minerals

IR14 Heat Networks

1. Decentralised energy generation with heat recovery, and district heating systems, 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 viability for such schemes. Scotland's Heat Map and applicable local Council strategies should inform this assessment.
2. Where the provision of a local energy centre or district heating system is not feasible, developers should futureproof their sites where possible for connection to future heat networks. The installation of pipework to the curtilage of development and safeguarding of piperuns within developments to allow future connection will be required unless the submitted Energy Statement, informed by Scotland's Heat Map and local Council strategies, demonstrates that there are financial or technical barriers to installation.

SG14 'Renewable and Low-Carbon Development', sets out guidance on heat networks and the matters Energy Statements are expected to address.

4.68 Heat networks allow recovered heat to be distributed via pipe networks to provide heating or hot water to development. Scottish Planning Policy requires LDPs to support the development of such networks, with heat mapping used as a tool to identify opportunities for co-location of heat sources and heat demand. The Council has also been working with the Heat Network Partnership to prepare a heat strategy for the area, as well as focusing on the delivery of the Grangemouth Energy Project, where there is high potential for co-location. In the meantime, Policy IR14 requires new developments to consider the potential for heat networks, including futureproofing of sites for future connection to such networks, within their Energy Statements. Further guidance on this rapidly-evolving area of work will be reflected in SG14 'Renewable and Low Carbon Energy'. This will include guidance on further areas of opportunity for heat networks, and set out what Energy Statements are expected to address.

IR15 Mineral Resources

1. The preferred area of search for surface coal mining is identified on Map 3.8 in the Spatial Strategy. Proposals must comply with Policy IR16 and other LDP policies.
2. No new quarries, or extensions to existing workings, will be permitted for the extraction of construction aggregates unless evidence is available that a 10 year landbank of permitted reserves is no longer in place. Proposals must comply with Policy IR16 and other LDP policies. Proposals for the extraction of non-aggregate construction materials, such as dimension stone, will be considered having regard to the overall scale of development proposed, as well as compliance with the requirements of Policy IR16.
3. Other extractive processes including unconventional oil and gas must comply with Policy IR16 and other LDP policies.
4. The sterilisation through development of mineral resources which are likely to be capable of environmentally acceptable extraction will not be permitted.

4.69 The Falkirk area contains several minerals of economic importance including coal, fireclay, coal bed methane (CBM) and aggregates (sand, gravel and hard rock). The British Geological Survey (BGS) Mineral Resource Map identifies the mineral resource in the area. The boundaries of the Petroleum Exploration and Development Licences (PEDL 133 and 162) as issued by the Department of Energy and Climate Change as at September 2014 are illustrated on Map 3.8.

4.70 There are three broad areas of shallow coal resources in the area: on the Slamannan Plateau; around Airth; and north of Banknock. An Area of Search for Surface Coal Mining is identified south of Falkirk and on the Slamannan Plateau as shown on Map 3.8. In landscape terms the Slamannan Plateau is less constrained and has more opportunities for restoration of abandoned/derelict works than the other areas of shallow coal. One site is consented in the Slamannan Plateau, however lack of developer interest suggests that working is not viable at the present time. Hard rock quarries are located to the north of Denny. These quarries and those in adjacent areas are considered to provide an adequate aggregates land bank for the local market area.



Infrastructure and Resources - Minerals

IR16 Assessment of Mineral Proposals

1. Proposals for mineral workings and oil and gas extraction will only be permitted where there is no significant adverse impact on the environment or the local community. Proposals will be assessed against Scottish Planning Policy, other relevant LDP policies and the following factors:
 - Impact on local communities, individual houses, and sensitive receptors, including cumulative effects on settlements within 5 km where there are existing mineral operations or unimplemented consents;
 - Impact in terms of disturbance, disruption and noise, blasting and vibration;
 - Landscape and visual impact, with reference to Policy PE18;
 - Impact on nature conservation and biodiversity, with reference to Policy PE19;
 - Impact on the historic environment, with reference to Policies PE05-PE12;
 - Impact on all land, and in particular for prime agricultural land and carbon rich and rare soils with reference to Policy PE25;
 - Impact on the water environment, with reference to Policy PE22;
 - Impact on air quality, with reference to Policy PE26;
 - Impact on the local and strategic road network, with a preference, for onshore oil and gas, for the use of pipelines, rail or water for the transportation of the end product, with reference to Policy IR05; and
 - Any positive economic or environmental benefits accruing from the proposal including restoration of abandoned/derelict minerals sites and local employment opportunities.
2. Proposals should be accompanied by the following information:
 - Information sufficient to allow assessment of the impacts outlined above;
 - For onshore oil and gas proposals, a risk assessment of the proposal and details of an appropriate buffer zone to protect all sensitive receptors from unacceptable risks;
 - Details of an adequate buffer zone between other mineral sites and settlements;
 - Information on need, estimates of annual production, levels of employment, timescale for extraction and the total resource on the site including other minerals present;
 - Information on onshore oil and gas extraction should include the extent of operations for each relevant phase of development including exploration, appraisal and production;
 - A fully developed method statement including information on drainage and water treatment, phasing, topsoil/overburden stripping and storage, access and maximisation of sustainable transport and working hours;
 - A Waste Management Plan under the terms of the Management of Extractive Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2010 where required; and
 - A fully costed, appropriately phased scheme for restoration and aftercare, which secures benefits for the green network in terms of Policy PE13, and will be secured through appropriate financial guarantees.
3. For onshore oil and gas development, applicants should engage with the local community and other relevant stakeholders in advance of any application and at each stage of operations on site, from exploration through to production.
4. The Council will liaise with adjacent local authorities where proposals for extraction cross local authority boundaries, to ensure a consistent approach.



Infrastructure and Resources - Waste

IR17 Waste Management Facilities

1. Development which supports the waste hierarchy principles of waste prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery, in that order, will take priority. The preferred location for waste management facilities for all types of waste will be within or adjacent to existing waste management facilities or on land identified for employment or industrial uses. Mineral sites may also be acceptable locations for waste management facilities.
2. Proposals will be assessed against Scottish Planning Policy, other relevant LDP policies and the following factors:
 - Whether the proposal complies with the Zero Waste Plan and contributes to national Scottish capacity requirements;
 - The impact on local amenity, and particularly on sensitive receptors nearby;
 - The need for a buffer zone between the site and sensitive receptors;
 - For energy from waste facilities, co-location with other heat users should be sought and sites should be designed to enable links to be made to potential heat and/or power users and the Thermal Treatment of Waste Guidelines (SEPA) apply;
 - The promotion of sustainable transport; and
 - The appropriate decommissioning, restoration and aftercare of sites including landfill sites with appropriate financial guarantees as required.
3. All existing waste management facilities will be safeguarded for sustainable waste management use. Development on adjacent sites should have no adverse impact on existing waste management operations.

IR18 Waste Management in New Development

All development should minimise waste during construction and operation, particularly through site waste management. The layout and design of development should provide for the collection and storage of waste and recyclable materials, including composting facilities and the vehicular collection of waste.

4.71 The Zero Waste Plan (ZWP) requires planning authorities to support the delivery of its targets to 2025 to recycle at least 70% of Scotland's total annual waste arisings, treat unsorted waste materials prior to incineration or landfill and landfill a maximum of 5% of Scotland's annual waste arisings. The Regional Capacity Table identifies additional operational waste management infrastructure required for the Forth Valley area. This is updated annually by SEPA. Capacity requirements for source segregated recyclables and unsorted waste as well as landfill are identified.

4.72 The area has a significant number of metal recyclers and waste transfer stations and landfill sites at Avondale and West Carron. In addition, two energy from waste sites have been granted permission in Grangemouth and a dirty Materials Recycling Facility has also been consented at Avondale which has operated intermittently. Landfill capacity at December 2015 exceeded the 2015 regional capacity requirement. Policy IR17 supports the development of waste management facilities to meet the requirements of the Zero Waste Plan and Scottish Planning Policy.



