

Building Form & Elevational Composition

Examples of poor design improved through planning advice

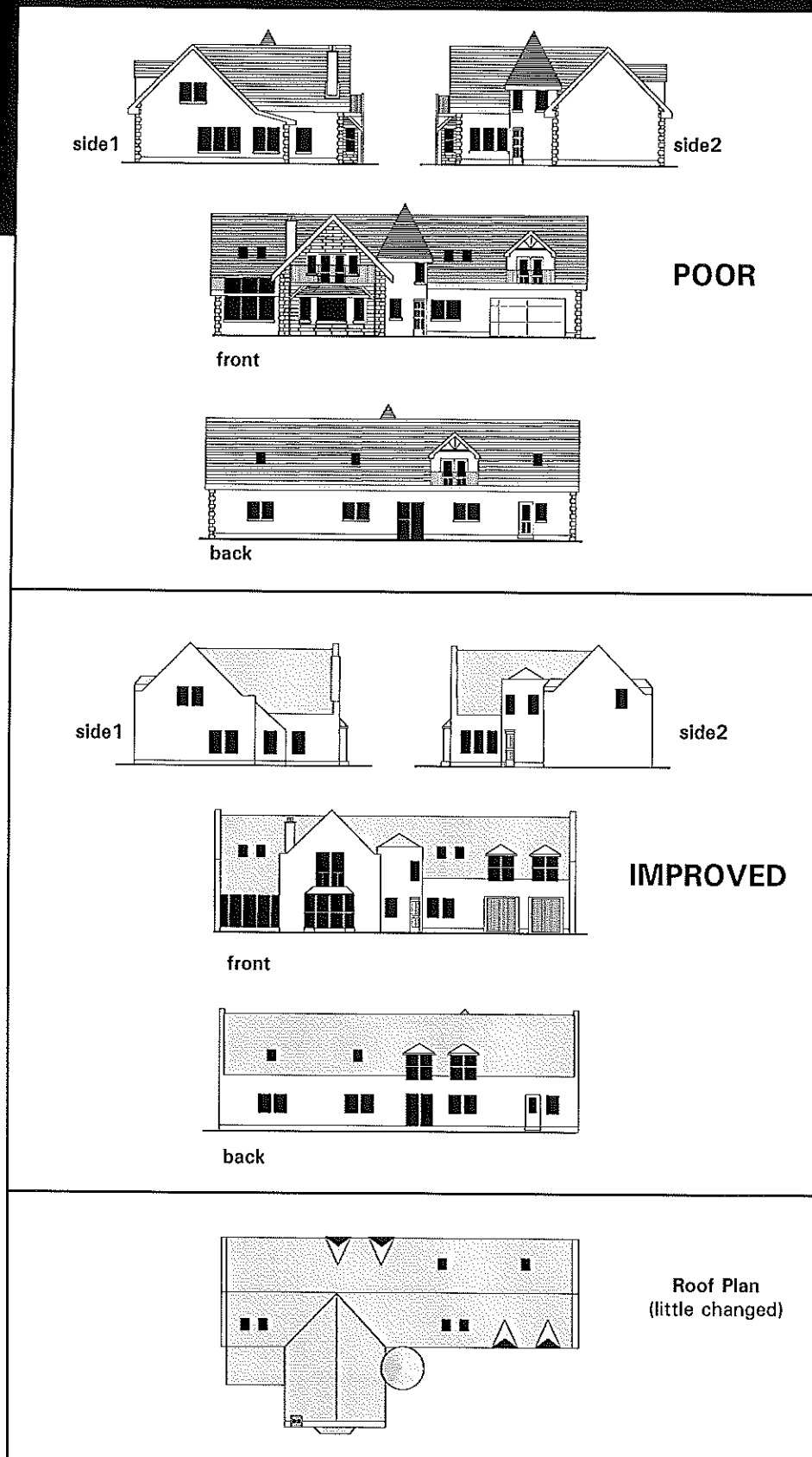


Figure 24 : HOUSE DESIGN MODIFICATION B : OVER FEATURED ORIGINAL

"Features" simplified, integrated and understated, consistent emphasis applied.

Further Information

Useful Contacts and Checklist

4.1 Useful Contacts

Information on Planning Permission, Building Warrants, Permitted Development, Listed Buildings and Conservation Area control, Tree Preservation Orders, Road Design/Warrants and Neighbour Notification can be obtained from:

Falkirk Council Development Services
Development Management Unit
Abbotsford House
David's Loan
Falkirk FK2 7YZ
Tel: 01324 504950

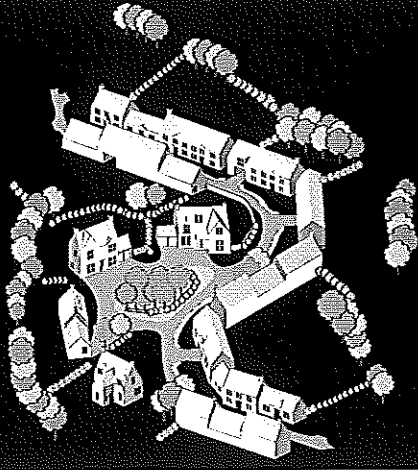
A list of architects can be obtained from:

RIAS
(Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland)
15 Rutland Square
Edinburgh EH1 2BE
Tel: 0131 229 7205
www.rias.org.uk

The RIAS offers a Client Advisory Service and maintains a list of Conservation Accredited Architects.

4.2 Checklist

- Does the proposal retain, locate and enhance the best elements of built and landscape heritage within the site?
- Does the new development reflect the unique character of the buildings, public spaces and landscaping found in the adjoining areas?
- Will the proposed pattern of routes and open spaces be adequately supervised and accessed from the housing edges within the site and be well connected to adjacent areas and to public transport and community facilities?
- Has special attention been paid to the design of the main edges, entrances, and focal points which form the development?
- Have the benefits of mixing community uses with the housing in a larger development been considered?
- Does the configuration of the housing density allow for a well composed streetscape pattern of terrace and semi terrace houses and, if required, widely spaced detached houses?
- Does the development contain appropriate public open space in meaningful civic locations?
- Are screen fences and side gables either designed out of public areas or, where occurring occasionally, are they given special design treatment?
- Are the enclosed public spaces designed to integrate the housing and roads layout in tidy formation?
- Is priority given to high quality and unique building architecture which respects traditional models but is sustainable and contemporary, avoiding fussy affectation?



هذه الوثيقة متاحة عند الطلب
في اللغات الأخرى في المجتمع.

ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੀਆਂ ਹੋਰ
ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਿਛਣ ਤੇ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ।

此文件設有其他
語文，請向有關
方面索取。

یہ دستاویز دوسری کمیونٹی زبانوں میں مطالبے پر دستیاب ہے۔

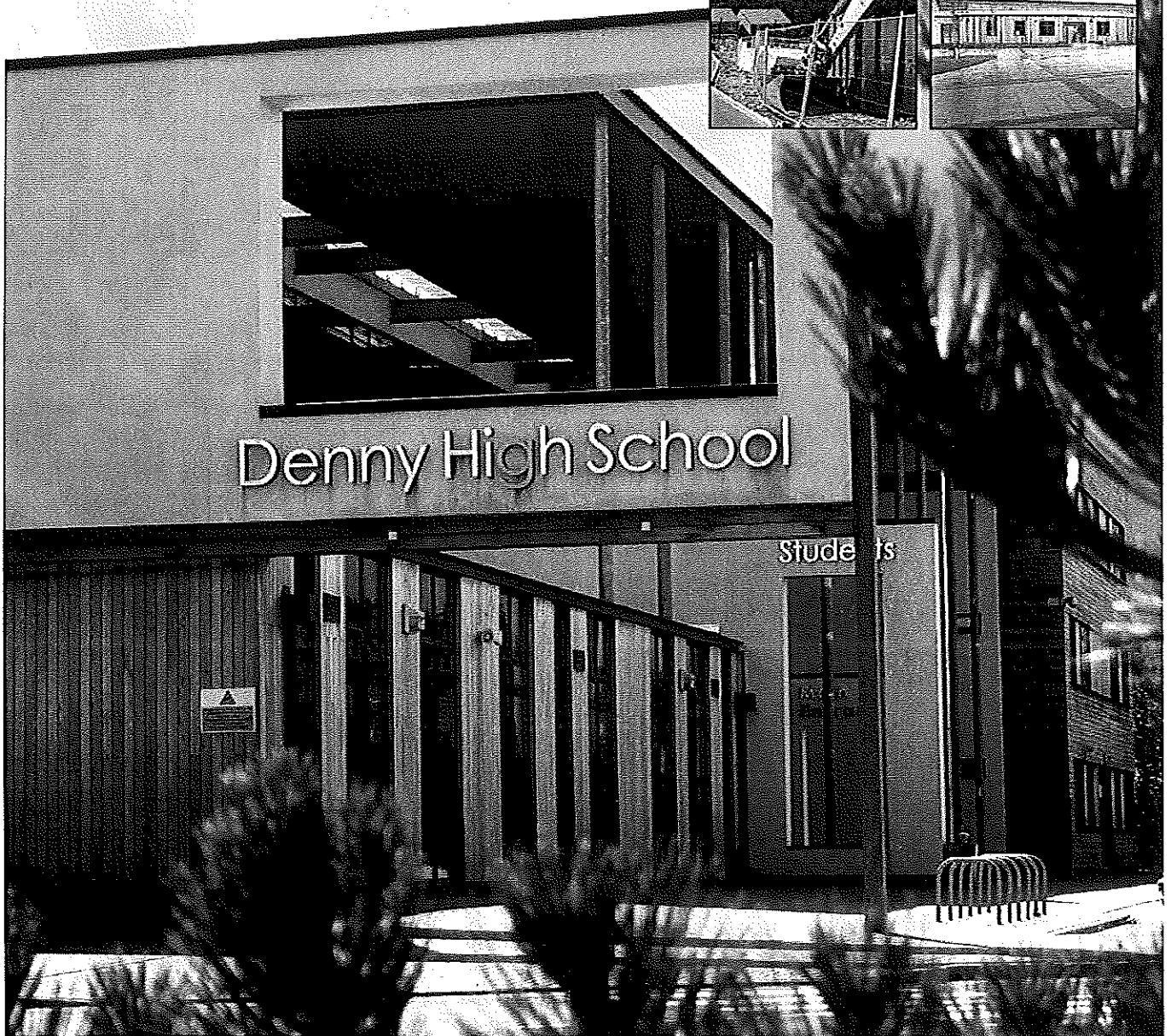
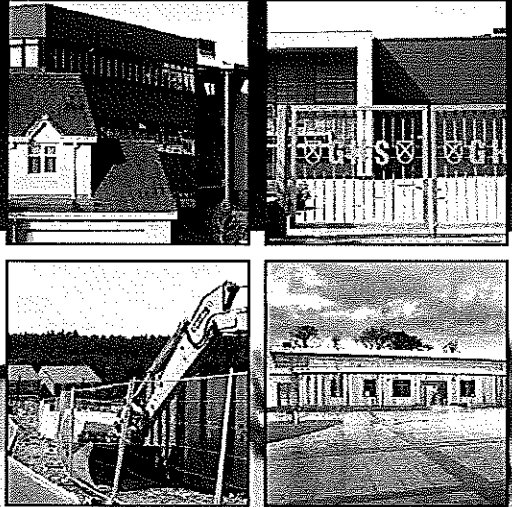
If you would like a copy in community languages, braille, large print or audio tape
call Development Services, Falkirk Council on 01324 504715.



Falkirk Council
Development Services

Education and New Housing Development

Supplementary Planning Guidance Note
August 2011



Falkirk Council
Development Services



Content

August 2011

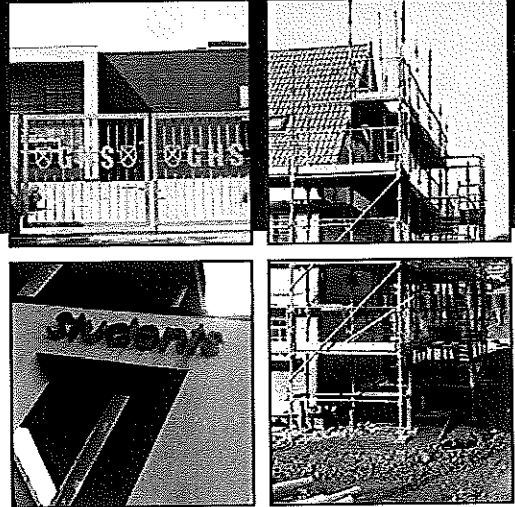
General Introduction

1. General Principles
2. Planning policy context

Education and New Housing Development

3. Objective
4. Policy Context
5. Key Principles
6. Rates and procedures
7. Justification
8. Further Information
9. Contacts

Appendix



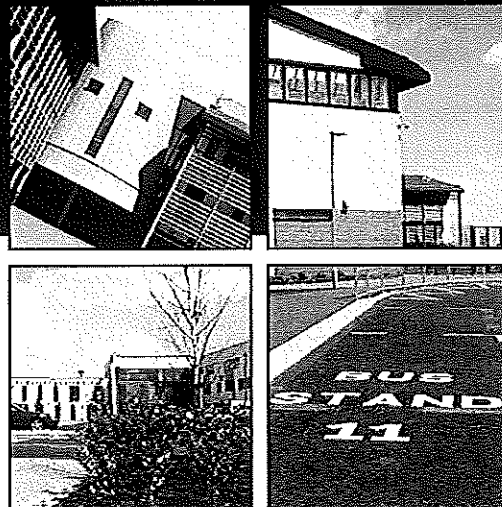


General Introduction

General Principles

1. General Principles

- 1.1 The development strategy of the Falkirk Council Structure Plan is one of Promoting Sustainable Growth in all our Communities and a target population of 152,000 has been set for 2020. To support this strategy the Structure Plan makes provision for 11,000 new houses distributed across the Council area and up to 2,800 in four key regeneration locations. The development strategy takes into account the physical and environmental capacity and social and economic needs of each community, in order to ensure their future viability and a healthy level of self-containment.
- 1.2 The Council is firmly committed to ensuring that developers provide for the physical, environmental and community infrastructure which is required to serve new development and make it sustainable. This is particularly important in the context of a strategy of growth, where the impact of new households may place a serious burden on existing infrastructure in some areas. Such provision will normally be secured either through conditions or legal agreements.
- 1.3 This guidance note is one of a suite of SPGs on Developer Contributions which the Council is in the process of preparing. SPGs are principally intended to elaborate on key policies contained in the Development Plan, as discussed below, and to provide advice to developers and others on issues to take into account when approaching the Council with proposals for development.



General Principles

Planning Policy Context

2. Planning policy context

2.1 The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, Section 75, as amended by the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006, sets out powers for planning authorities to enter into agreements with developers. This can include agreements for the developer to make financial contributions. Scottish Government Circular 1/2010 sets out government policy with regard to the use of such agreements. Benefits should be sought only when required to make a development proposal acceptable in land use planning terms i.e. to overcome obstacles which would justify refusal by eliminating or compensating for potentially negative impacts. Planning authorities may request a financial contribution, to be used towards the provision of infrastructure which they would not otherwise have had to provide. Any payments must be consistent with the scale of development proposed.

2.2 Scottish Government advice also encourages planning authorities to make their requirements known at an early stage in the planning process, so that these may be reflected in land values prior to planning permission being granted. Provisions in the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 require that planning agreements are publicised by Planning Authorities and that there is greater transparency in negotiating developer contributions. These guidance notes should assist with these objectives.

2.3 The Falkirk Council Structure Plan was approved by Scottish Ministers in June 2002. Policy COM.5 sets out the strategic rationale for seeking developer contributions in appropriate circumstances. The accompanying Schedule COM.5 lists the circumstances where developer contributions may be sought and this is reproduced here for guidance.

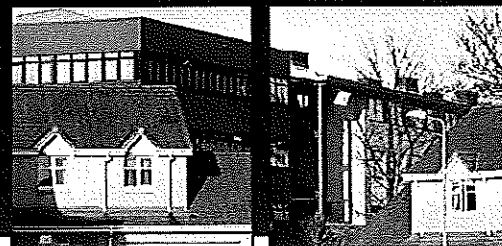
2.4 The Council has consolidated the area Local Plans into a single council-wide Local Plan, the Falkirk Council Local Plan, which was adopted in December 2010. The Falkirk Council Local Plan sets out the detailed housing land allocations up to 2015 and also indicates some longer term development opportunities. It contains general policy SC11, Developer Contributions to Community Infrastructure, which states:

'Developers will be required to contribute towards the provision, upgrading and maintenance of community and recreational facilities where development will create or exacerbate deficiencies in, or impose significantly increased burdens on, existing infrastructure. The nature and scale of developer contributions will be determined by the following factors:

- (1) Specific requirements identified against proposals in the Local Plan or in development briefs;*
- (2) In respect of open space, recreational, and education provision, the general requirements set out in Policies SC13 and SC14;*
- (3) In respect of other community facilities, any relevant standards operated by the Council or other public agency; and*
- (4) Where a planning agreement is the intended mechanism for securing contributions, the principles contained in Circular 1/2010.'*

General Principles

Planning Policy Context



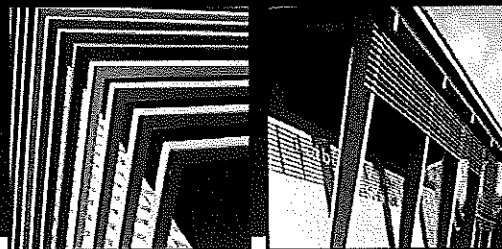
Schedule COM.5 : Examples of Developer Contributions

Type of Provision	Circumstances Where Provision May Be Required
Environmental Enhancement	
Woodland Planting & Management/ Landscape Renewal & Enhancement	Sites relating to Greenspace and urban fringe locations, planting/management to reinforce existing or adjacent woodland, to integrate site into landscape setting or impact on designed and historic landscapes.
Habitat Creation & Management	Sites relating to existing wildlife sites or corridors, especially loss of habitat requires mitigation/compensation.
Countryside Access Provision	Sites relating to Greenspace or urban fringe locations and where opportunities exist to enhance the local access network.
Archaeological Investigation/Interpretation	Sites containing archaeological remains.
Historic Building Repair/Conservation	Sites containing buildings of historic or townscape importance.
Physical Infrastructure	
Road Improvements	Sites where improvements will be necessary as demonstrated by TIA in order to ensure safe vehicular access for the proposed development.
Public Transport Facilities & Services	Larger sites where access by public transport needs to be secured to meet sustainability objectives.
Pedestrian/Cycling Facilities	Sites where pedestrian/cycle links into the wider network and to key community/public transport nodes need to be established.
Sewerage Improvements	Sites where additional sewerage infrastructure must be provided in order to serve the development.
Community Facilities	
Open Space Provision/Maintenance	All housing sites must provide for, or contribute to, open space on- or off-site, as well as maintenance.
Play Area Provision/Maintenance	All housing sites must provide for, or contribute to, play facilities on- or off-site, as well as maintenance.
Schools	Sites where school capacity/facilities are inadequate to cope with the proposed development.
Community/Sports Halls	Sites in areas where there is a recognised deficiency in the quantity or quality of provision.
Health Care Facilities	Sites in areas where there is a recognised deficiency in the quantity or quality of provision.
Shopping Centre Enhancement	Major housing developments in areas where the environment of the local centre requires upgrading. Out-of-centre retail developments where impact on an existing centre requires mitigation.

General Principles

Planning Policy Context

- 2.5 Advice on developer contributions on the Education policy area is contained in the succeeding sections of this SPG.



3. Objective

3.1 Falkirk Council, in its Structure Plan, has set a population growth target of 152,000 by 2020. In general it is anticipated that there will be adequate school provision. However, in particular locations increases in school capacity may be necessary and it is Falkirk Council's policy that where this is directly related to new residential development, the developer should make a financial contribution.

3.2 The objectives of this Supplementary Planning Guidance Note (SPG) are:

- ◆ To provide detailed guidance on the implementation of development plan policies relating to developer contribution to education provision; and thereby
- ◆ To assist in the delivery of the Council's growth strategy
- ◆ To set out the Council's approach so that it is applied in a consistent and transparent manner, and
- ◆ To explain the reasoning and the technical basis upon which impacts on schools are judged.

Education and New Housing Development

Policy Context

4. Policy Context

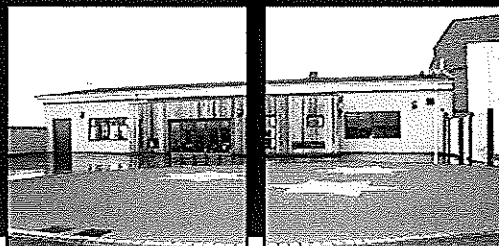
4.1 The general policy context for the consideration of developer contributions is set out in the introductory section. Specific policy on education provision related to new housing is contained in both the Falkirk Council Structure Plan and the Falkirk Council Local Plan.

4.2 Structure plan Policy COM.7, School Provision, states that:

'New housing development will not be permitted unless adequate school capacity is available or will be made available.'

4.3 The Council has consolidated the area Local Plans into a single council-wide Local Plan, the Falkirk Council Local Plan, which was adopted in December 2010. This contains policy SC14, Education and New Housing Development, which states:

'Where there is insufficient capacity within the catchment school to accommodate children from new housing development, developer contributions will be sought in cases where improvements to the school are capable of being carried out and do not prejudice the Council's education policies. The contribution will be a proportionate one, the basis of which will be set out in the SPG Note 'Education and New Housing Development'. In cases where the school cannot be improved in a manner consistent with the Council's education policies, the development will not be permitted.'



5. Key Principles

- 5.1 Falkirk Council will seek financial contributions from developers when new housing is proposed in the catchment areas of schools which will have inadequate or no capacity for additional pupils likely to be generated by such housing. In some situations it may be technically impossible to provide extra capacity and in these circumstances the Council will resolve the issue through the use of suspensive conditions to control the phasing of development or, in extremis, may refuse planning permission (see also para 5.3 below).
- 5.2 There are three situations when developer contributions are likely to apply; a) sites allocated for housing development in the Falkirk Council Local Plan where capacity problems may already be indicated in the Local Plan b) windfall infill proposals that come forward in the catchment areas of schools at or near capacity and c) sites allocated in Falkirk Council Local Plan where capacity issues in the school catchment have emerged since the Plan's adoption.
- 5.3 Proposals outwith the defined urban limits of a settlement and not allocated for development in the Local Plan are unlikely to be supported irrespective of proposals put forward by developers to address school constraints.
- 5.4 The provisions of this SPG will not apply to the following types of development;
- ◆ sites proposing only one-bedroom flatted developments
 - ◆ sites of under 4 houses or 10 flats
 - ◆ sites of proposals for housing exclusively for the elderly.
- These types of development are exempt from making developer contributions as they would have no, or a negligible, impact on school capacity.
- 5.5 Large scale housing proposals may require specific education infrastructure provision and in such circumstances the scale of contribution will be calculated on an individual basis. Normally however, impacts will be cumulative, and no one development will cause the difficulty. In these circumstances a financial contribution based on the provision of temporary or permanent classrooms (whichever is appropriate) and applied on a per housing unit basis, would be required.
- 5.6 There may be school specific factors, e.g. space, quality of ancillary accommodation, etc that mean that increasing capacity is not a practical proposition. In such circumstances suspensive conditions or phasing of the development will be necessary.
- 5.7 The impact of development will be judged based on the available capacity at the schools affected, the school roll projections, and the ratio of pupils per housing unit from new housing developments that are applicable at the time of the planning application. This process is further elaborated in section 6 below. The pupil product ratios currently applied by the Council are shown in table B in the appendix. These ratios have been derived from studies of the number of children enrolling at schools from different types of new build housing developments and are reviewed regularly.
- 5.8 In the light of growing pressure on nursery provision within Falkirk Council area it has been agreed that a small, flat rate contribution should be made by all non exempt developments in the Council area. A flat rate rather than pro rata contribution is justified because nurseries have no catchment area and parents are able to choose to use nurseries in any part of the district, often near the workplace rather than the home. The rate of contribution is set out in Table C of the appendix.

6. Rates and procedures

- 6.1 The level of contributions will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. The contributions are calculated from a combination of pupil product and classroom extension costs. The current build costs are as shown in table A of the appendix. Translating these pupil cost figures into a cost per house, results in the contribution rates shown in table C of the appendix for each type of school. These costs are reviewed in line with the BCIS index or equivalent.
- 6.2 Where necessary, further (or separate) contributions towards ancillary accommodation may be applied on a case by case basis. Any planning agreement will specify how and where moneys should be spent. Provision shall be made for payment in stages and to specify payback periods for moneys to be returned should the Council not make use of them.
- 6.3 The Council has a procedure for handling developer contributions which involves Development, Law and Administration and Finance Services working closely to monitor the receipt of contributions' monies and its transfer to the Service which is to benefit, in this case the Education Service. Planning agreement details are recorded, with each service inputting information at the relevant time. All payments are to be made to Law and Administration Services and Development Services is responsible for monitoring the trigger points for staged payments.

Education and New Housing Development

Justification



7 Justification

- 7.1** The general trend that emerges from an analysis of all school roll projections is that the expected national trend of a reduction in birth rates will reduce school rolls in areas that are not subject to new house building. In some cases moderate levels of new housing development negate the trend in reductions in birth rates and the roll remains fairly static. In areas where new house building has or will be concentrated there is generally a projected increase in the school roll commensurate to the number and type of development expected.
- 7.2** Each year Falkirk Council produces a school roll projection for the next 10 years for every school. This takes into account actual school enrolment figures, future Primary 1 intakes based on birth data, and new housing. The new housing component is made up of sites with planning consent, sites allocated in the Local Plan and sites where there is reasonable certainty of development coming forward in the medium term.
- 7.3** New housing sites allocated in the Falkirk Council Local Plan will either already have been taken into account in the projections or the allocation is conditional on addressing school capacity constraints. Any planning application for new development over and above existing commitments will therefore be tested by re-running the school roll projections for the relevant school. If these reveal capacity issues which can be technically overcome a financial contribution is likely to be sought.
- 7.4** For small to medium scale development this will normally be related to the rates referred to in section 5 above. Some very large scale development may require specific measures and these will be costed on an individual basis.
- 7.5** It should be noted that school roll projections are based on a number of averages and trend based statistical techniques. Whilst the assumptions have proved generally reliable, the nature of the exercise means that they cannot be regarded as a prediction. They will therefore be subject to annual review.
- 7.6** Where developer contributions are sought, or refusal is recommended, the background information and assumptions used will be made available by Education Services.
- 7.7** Developers are advised to have early discussions with Development Services prior to the submission of planning applications to resolve any difficulties before design work has reached an advanced stage.
- 7.8** Developers should also be aware that there may be other issues affecting particular sites that will require development contributions for community infrastructure in addition to education provision, as described in the introductory section.
- 7.9** It will be for the developer to demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction that other requirements, abnormal development costs and/or the prevailing economic circumstances in conjunction with the required developer contribution will render the development unviable. These should be set out through a Development Viability Statement. The terms of the Development Viability Statement will be taken into account as a material consideration in determining the planning application.

8 Further Information

8.1 Advice on the use of planning agreements to secure developer contributions is provided by the Scottish Government in the following publications:

- ◆ SPP, paragraph 27
- ◆ Scottish Government Circular 1/2010

9 Contacts

9.1 For matters of planning policy in relation to education provision or to discuss the principle of development proposals contact:

Development Plans Team
Planning and Environment
Falkirk Council
Abbotsford House
David's Loan
Falkirk
FK2 7YZ
Tel: 01324 504720
Email : planenv@falkirk.gov.uk

For issues relating to specific planning applications contact:

Development Management Unit
Falkirk Council
Abbotsford House
David's Loan
Falkirk
FK2 7YZ
Tel: 01324 504748
Email : dc@falkirk.gov.uk

Education and New Housing Development

Appendix



Appendix

Table A Construction costs per pupil

Cost per pupil	Primary	Secondary
Permanent extension	£10,664	£16,068
Temporary extension	£ 2,500	N/A

Table B Pupil product ratios by type of school and housing development

Ratios	ND Primary	RC Primary	ND Secondary	RC Secondary
House	0.25	0.09	0.14	0.06
Flat	0.10	0.05	0.07	0.06

Table C Developer contribution rates per dwelling (2010 prices)

Rates per dwelling		ND Primary	RC Primary	ND Secondary	RC Secondary	Nursery
House	Permanent Extension	£2,600	£850	£2,100	£900	£350
	Temporary Extension	£600	£200	N/A	N/A	N/A
Flat	Permanent Extension	£1,000	£500	£1,050	£900	£150
	Temporary Extension	£250	£100	N/A	N/A	N/A

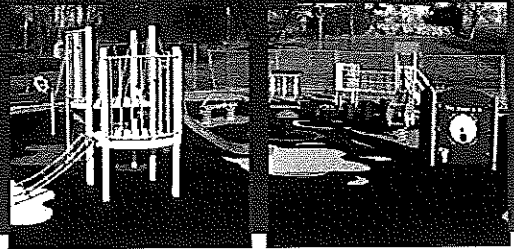
August 2011



Falkirk Council
Development Services

Public Open Space, Falkirk Greenspace and New Development

Supplementary Planning Guidance



Falkirk Council
Development Services



Welcome to this Supplementary Planning Guidance on 'Public Open Space, Falkirk Greenspace and New Development'. It is one of a suite of such guides promoting development quality in the built environment and takes forward the Council's commitment to sustainable development as set out in the Development Plan.

The Council's vision as outlined in the Falkirk Open Space Strategy is to secure the long-term improvement to the quality of Falkirk's open spaces, so that they can provide a truly sustainable and diverse resource for the benefit of the communities they serve.

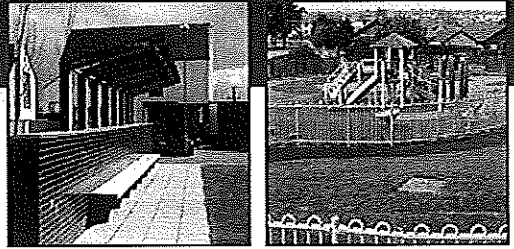
The Falkirk Council area has experienced significant growth over the last few years, with the number of households growing by nearly 13% between 1997 and 2008. As the construction of new development brings people into the area, it adds to the pressure on existing open spaces and creates the need for new ones. It is Falkirk Council's objective to encourage provision, through the planning system, of new open space and play areas, and to protect and enhance existing areas wherever possible to ensure that its vision as set out in the Open Space Strategy can still be met in the face of a growing population.

This guidance builds on policies contained within the recently adopted Falkirk Council Local Plan and provides guidance on the Council's requirement for provision of open space in conjunction with new development.

I commend this guidance to you and look forward to it helping us all make Falkirk and District a healthier and more pleasant place to live in.

June 2011

Content



1. Introduction
2. Guidance on Provision of Open Space & Play Facilities
3. Public Open Space, Installation, Maintenance and Adoption Procedures
4. Worked Examples
5. Public Open Space Design Guidelines

Appendix 1 : Calculating the Open Space Requirement

Introduction

1.1 Planning Strategy

- 1.1.1** The development strategy of the Falkirk Council Structure Plan is one of Promoting Sustainable Growth in all our Communities. To support this strategy the Structure Plan makes provision for 11,000 new houses distributed across the Council area and up to 2,800 in four key regeneration locations up to 2020. The development strategy takes into account the physical and environmental capacity and social and economic needs of each community, in order to ensure their future viability and a healthy level of self-containment.
- 1.1.2** The Council is firmly committed to ensuring that developers provide for the physical, environmental and community infrastructure which is required to serve new development and make it sustainable. This is particularly important in the context of a strategy of growth, where the impact of new households may place a serious burden on existing infrastructure in some areas. Such provision will normally be secured either through conditions or legal agreements.

1.2 The Value of Open Space

- 1.2.1** Play is a vital element of the physical and mental development of all children and being able to play in a safe and stimulating environment is a fundamental need. Play helps children learn, develop physical and social skills and is, of course, fun. However, open space and play areas are not solely for children. Open space is vital to the quality of the urban environment, providing areas for active and passive recreation and contributing to the landscape structure of settlements. Open space also has great educational value as an outdoor classroom and is vital for the development of outdoor learning opportunities. Where linked into networks they provide routes for safe walking and cycling and corridors for wildlife. Physical exercise has an important role in the prevention of coronary heart disease and stroke, and its protection value against other chronic diseases such as osteoporosis is well recognised. In terms of mental health, exercise relieves anxiety, contributes to improved self confidence and self-esteem and, more generally, enhances well being.
- 1.2.2** It is the Scottish Government's and Falkirk Council's objective to encourage provision, through the planning system, of new open space and play areas, and to protect and enhance existing areas wherever possible. Construction of new development brings people into an area adding to the pressure on existing open spaces and creating the need for new ones. Developers will therefore be expected to contribute to enhanced provision.

1.3 Purpose of the Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 1.3.1** This document provides the Council's guidance on the provision of open space in conjunction with new development. Specifically it advises on:
- The overall standards for provision of open space within new development;
 - How the requirements for open space for new development will be calculated;
 - What types of open space should be provided;
 - Whether the open space should be provided on-site or a financial contribution towards off-site provision will be sought;
 - How financial contributions towards open space will be calculated;
 - The process for the delivery and subsequent maintenance of new open space;
 - The design requirements for each type of open space;
 - The nature and level of contributions that will be required for the Greenspace Initiative as a whole and for the Helix project.
- 1.3.2** The guidance is intended to be used in tandem with the Council's open space audit and Open Space Strategy, which will be used to identify whether on-site or off-site open space provision is more appropriate and the areas where financial contributions towards off-site provision will be invested.
- 1.3.3** The document is structured as a step by step guide to provide developers with easy to follow advice on how to prepare their planning proposals for submission.
- 1.3.4** Falkirk Council currently intends to adopt a new Local Development Plan (LDP) by 2014. It is currently too early to say whether policy on Public Open Space and Play Provision within New Residential Development or on Falkirk Greenspace will be likely to change as part of this process, however, if the policy does not substantively change then it is our intention that this SPG will become statutory guidance as part of the LDP.

1.4 Planning Policy Context

National Policy Guidance

- 1.4.1** National policy guidance on open space and recreational facilities is contained in Planning Advice Note (PAN) 65: Planning and Open Space and Scottish Planning Policy (SPP). PAN 65 introduces a typology of open space, highlights the need for open space audits and suggests different approaches to assessing future requirements depending on the type of open space. SPP reinforces the need to carry out open space audits and produce open space strategies which should be used to inform standards for open space provision in all new developments. Greenspace Scotland has also been set up to promote the creation of greenspace in and around communities. National guidance has supported the Central Scotland Forest Trust which has adopted the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative as its local expression.
- 1.4.2** SPP indicates that linking greenspaces in and around settlements through green networks can deliver benefits for people and nature. By encouraging connectivity between habitats, green networks can improve the viability of species and the health and viability of previously isolated habitats and ecosystems, supporting adaptation to climate change. Wherever possible, planning authorities and developers should identify opportunities to create and enhance networks between open spaces and avoid fragmentation.
- 1.4.3** National Planning Framework 2 identifies a Central Scotland Green Network as a national development with wide ranging environmental objectives. These include a well-planned increase in woodland cover to substantially improve the landscape settings of our towns and cities, bringing vacant and derelict land into beneficial use, improving biodiversity and amenity, and helping to absorb carbon dioxide. Enhancements are encouraged to networks of other habitats, including wetlands, to counter fragmentation and assist species migration. The development of footpath and cycleway networks and other facilities and attractions to create a more sustainable transport network and expand the range of recreational opportunities close to major centres of population, helping to encourage active travel and healthier lifestyles are also envisaged.
- 1.4.4** Scottish Government Policy on Control of Woodland Removal (2009) supports the Scottish Forestry Strategy (2006) and the associated ambition to see Scotland's woodland resource increase to 25% of our land area. The policy, as part of the response to climate change mitigation, places a strong presumption against deforestation. Woodland removal should be allowed only where it would achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits and in appropriate cases a proposal for compensatory planting may form part of this balance.

Introduction

1.4 Planning Policy Context

Falkirk Council Structure Plan

- 1.4.5** Policy COM.5 of the Falkirk Council Structure Plan (2007) sets out the strategic rationale for seeking developer contributions in appropriate circumstances. The accompanying Schedule COM.5 lists the circumstances where developer contributions may be sought:

Schedule COM.5 : Examples of Developer Contributions	
Type of Provision	Circumstances Where Provision May Be Required
Environmental Enhancement	
Woodland Planting & Management/Landscape Renewal & Enhancement	Sites relating to Greenspace and urban fringe locations, planting/management to reinforce existing or adjacent woodland, to integrate site into landscape setting or impact on designed and historic landscapes.
Habitat Creation & Management	Sites relating to existing wildlife sites or corridors, especially loss of habitat requires mitigation/compensation.
Countryside Access Provision	Sites relating to Greenspace or urban fringe locations and where opportunities exist to enhance the local access network.
Physical Infrastructure	
Pedestrian/Cycling Facilities	Sites where pedestrian/cycle links into the wider network and to key community/public transport nodes need to be established.
Community Facilities	
Open Space Provision/Maintenance	All housing sites must provide for, or contribute to, open space on- or off-site, as well as maintenance.
Play Area Provision/Maintenance	All housing sites must provide for, or contribute to, play facilities on- or off-site, as well as maintenance.

- 1.4.6** Policy COM.6, seeks to prevent the loss of open space and recreational facilities unless it is proved that such a loss will not have an adverse impact on visual or recreational amenity, considered as part of a community-wide assessment of provision, and will release resources for wider qualitative improvements to facilities. The open space audit which was undertaken to inform the Open Space Strategy provides the basis for such assessments.
- 1.4.7** Policy ENV.6 of the Structure Plan indicates that priority will be attached to a programme of enhancement measures identified in schedule ENV.6 including the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative.
- 1.4.8** Schedule ENV.6 describes actions in relation to the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative as follows:
"In partnership with Central Scotland Forest Trust (CSFT) and other agencies, continue to develop existing programmes of action to enhance the countryside around towns/ villages identified within the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative through tree planting, habitat enhancement and measures to improve access to the countryside."
- 1.4.9** The extent of the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative is shown in the Structure Plan Key Diagram and includes land surrounding the main urban areas around the Council area. It does not cover the villages of Airth, Avonbridge, Blackness, Dunmore, Limerigg, Slamannan, South Alloa, Standburn or Whitecross.

1.4 Planning Policy Context

Falkirk Council Local Plan

1.4.10 The Falkirk Council Local Plan (2010) sets out a general policy on developer contributions to community infrastructure. Policy SC11 indicates that developers will be required to contribute towards the provision, upgrading and maintenance of community and recreational facilities where development will create or exacerbate deficiencies in, or impose significantly increased burdens on, existing infrastructure. The nature and scale of developer contributions in respect of open space will be determined by the general requirements set out in Policy SC13.

1.4.11 The policy contained within the Local Plan on provision of open space in conjunction with new developments is Policy SC13. The policy states:

SC13 OPEN SPACE AND PLAY PROVISION IN NEW DEVELOPMENT

New development will be required to contribute to open space and play provision. Provision should be informed by the Council's open space audit, and accord with the Open Space Strategy and the SPG Note on Open Space and New Development, based on the following principles:

- (1) Open space and facilities for play and outdoor sport should be provided based upon quantitative, qualitative and accessibility standards, and the priorities for improvement, set out in the Open Space Strategy.
- (2) Financial contributions to off-site provision, upgrading, and maintenance, as a full or partial alternative to direct on-site provision, will be sought where:
 - existing open space or play facilities are located nearby and are able to serve the development through suitable upgrading;
 - in residential developments, the size of the development falls below the threshold of 10 houses, or where it is otherwise not practical, reasonable or desirable to provide facilities on-site;
 - as part of a co-ordinated approach, a centralised facility is the optimum solution to serving a number of different developments in an area; or
 - the Open Space Strategy indicates that there is a sufficient amount of open space in the area, and that priority should be given to qualitative improvements to existing open space.

The required financial contribution per house will be set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance;

- (3) The location and design of open space should be such that it:
 - forms an integral part of the development layout, contributing to its character and identity;
 - is accessible and otherwise fit for its designated purpose;
 - links into the wider network of open space and pedestrian/cycle routes in the area;
 - sensitively incorporates existing biodiversity and natural features within the site;
 - promotes biodiversity through appropriate landscape design and maintenance regimes; and
 - enjoys good natural surveillance;
- (4) Developers must demonstrate to the Council that arrangements are in place for the management and maintenance of open space, including any trees, paths, walls, structures, and play areas which form part of it.

1.4.12 The policy which deals with the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative is policy EQ21:

EQ21 FALKIRK GREENSPACE

Through the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative, the Council will work with its partners to improve the landscape, habitat quality and recreational potential of the network of urban fringe and urban open space around and within settlements. Priority will be given to:

- (1) Appropriate woodland creation and management, where landscape quality, access, biodiversity, and connectivity across the Greenspace can be promoted;
- (2) The creation of an interlinked network of paths within the Greenspace. With particular emphasis on a principal circular route, as a key part of the core path network, complemented by secondary routes where appropriate; and
- (3) Requiring developers in urban fringe locations to contribute to landscape and/or access improvements in association with new developments.

1.4 Planning Policy Context

Falkirk Open Space Strategy

- 1.4.13** The Open Space Strategy recognises that the Council area is generally well endowed with open space (approximately 9.6 Ha/1000 people). Accordingly, the general thrust of the strategy is to seek to improve the quality of existing open spaces so that they can be considered to be fit for purpose and to ensure that communities have access to different types of open space within acceptable walking distances.
- 1.4.14** The strategy provides a robust basis for guiding investment into open space and is a key document in deciding what kind of open space is appropriate within new developments. It sets a standard of all development having access to 5 hectares per 1000 people of different types of open space.
- 1.4.15** The strategy includes an audit of the open space resource providing a snapshot of the quantity and quality of provision. The strategy indicates the priorities for investment in open space, setting out where there is a need to form new open spaces and where there is a need to upgrade the quality of existing open spaces. The strategy was formed through careful analysis of a quantitative audit and qualitative assessment of open spaces together with an analysis of their distribution throughout the Council area and an understanding of the needs and aspirations of the communities for their open spaces.

Guidance on Provision of Open Space & Play Facilities

2.1 Which developments have to contribute to open space provision?

- 2.1.1** All residential developments will be required to provide new open space or contribute financially towards existing open space. In all cases, where the development forms part of a larger scheme within which open space provision has been already been assessed and conditioned at the planning permission in principle stage, there will be a requirement to comply with the terms of any agreement or condition.
- 2.1.2** All forms of development in urban fringe locations will be required to incorporate or contribute financially towards landscape and/or access improvement projects in the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative area as defined in the Structure Plan (shown in figure 1 below). The Falkirk Greenspace Initiative area covers the following Local Plan settlement areas: Bo'ness; Bonnybridge & Banknock; Denny & Dunipace; Falkirk; Grangemouth; Larbert & Stenhousemuir; Polmont; California; Muirhouses; Shieldhill; Skinflats and Torwood.
- 2.1.3** Sites within urban fringe locations are defined as those which are within 400m walking distance of the urban/village limits and the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative area.

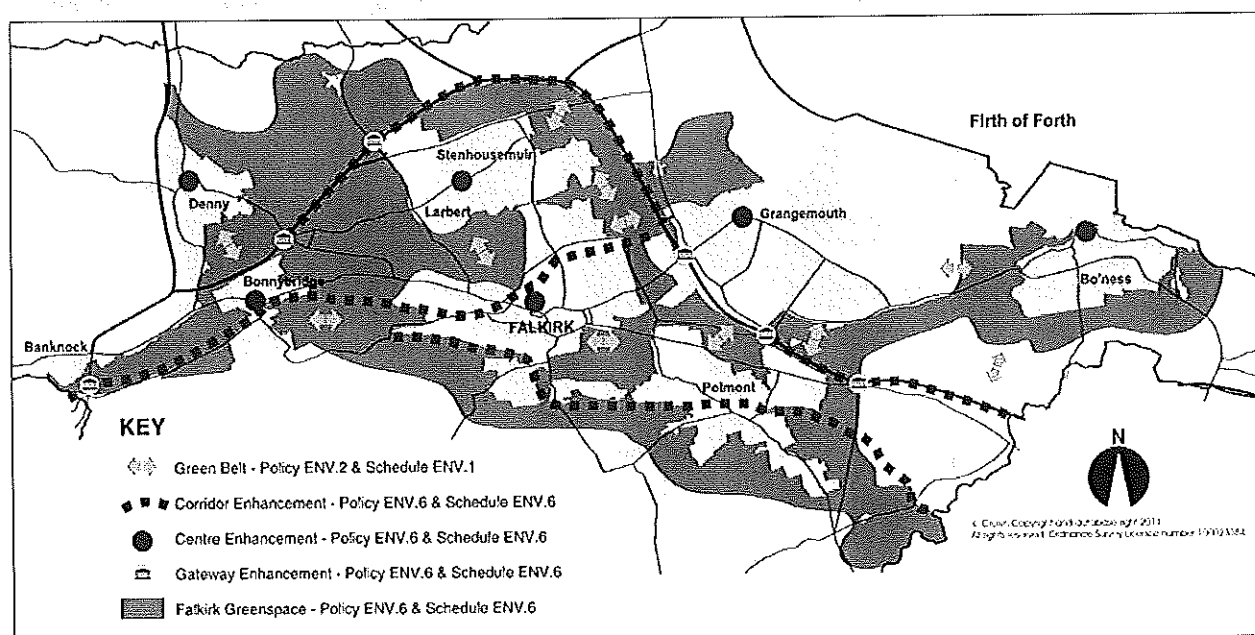


Figure 1 : Falkirk Greenspace Initiative Area

Guidance on Provision of Open Space & Play Facilities

2.2 How much open space has to be provided?

Residential Development

2.2.1 The Open Space Strategy has set an aspirational standard of all development having access to 5ha of different types of open space/1000 people. The Council is considering options on how to translate this aspirational standard into a specific open space requirement for new development.

2.2.2 Following an analysis of existing levels of public open space within settlements and a recognition that not all open space is functional open space, it is proposed that a reasonable translation of the aspirational standard within the Open Space Strategy would be to require new housing developments to provide open space at a rate of 70m²/dwelling. Of this 70m², 30% should be active open space and 70% should be passive open space. A detailed explanation of the rationale for this open space requirement is contained within Appendix 1.

2.2.3 For planning permission in principle applications where the number or exact size of dwellings is not yet known, assumptions will have to be made in order to formulate an appropriate open space requirement. This may involve estimating the number of dwellings to be delivered on-site based on overall site area and an appropriate open space requirement per dwelling. In such circumstances the amount and type of open space to be provided on-site will be set out in a condition together with a requirement for a planning agreement setting out an appropriate 10 year maintenance charge for the on-site open space and/or an appropriate financial contribution per dwelling to off-site open space upgrading.

2.2.4 For all planning applications there will be a different open space requirement for houses and for flats, this is set out in table 1 below:

Type of Dwelling	Flat	House
Active Open Space	10.5m ²	21m ²
Passive Open Space	24.5m ²	49m ²
Total Open Space Requirement	35.0m ²	70m ²

Table 1: Residential Open Space Requirement

Non-Residential Development

2.2.5 Non-residential development in urban fringe locations is required to contribute towards landscape or access improvements within the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative. For non residential development a financial contribution equivalent to developing 17.5% of the total application-site as open space will be required to go towards landscape or access improvements within the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative.