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# Abbreviations Used in This Report

The following lists most of the abbreviations used in this report:

Consultation Authorities - Historic Environment Scotland, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, NatureScot

CSGN – Central Scotland Green Network

EIA - Environmental Impact Assessment

HES - Historic Environment Scotland

HRA - Habitats Regulations Appraisal

LDP - Local Development Plan

LDP1 - Local Development Plan 1

LDP2 - Falkirk Local Development Plan 2

LDP3 - Falkirk Local Development Plan 3

LPP - Local Place Plan

NPF - National Planning Framework

NPF4 - National Planning Framework 4

RSS - Regional Spatial Strategy

SIMD - Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

SEA - Strategic Environmental Assessment

SEPA - Scottish Environment Protection Agency

The 2005 Act - The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005

The 2019 Act - Planning (Scotland) Act 2019

The Continuity Act - The UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021

# Non-Technical Summary of Scoping Report

This is a non-technical summary of the Scoping Report for the strategic environment assessment of the Falkirk Local Development Plan 3.

## What is the Falkirk Local Development Plan 3 (LDP3)?

LDP3 is an important document which will set out a spatial strategy, policies and site-specific proposals guiding where and how future development such as new homes, shops, community facilities and factories should and should not take place in the Council area. It will identify sites for development and designate areas such as open spaces and wildlife sites that should be protected from development. LDP3 will become part of the statutory development plan for the area on its adoption and will be used alongside the National Planning Framework to decide future planning applications for development. The plan will replace the current Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 and cover the 10-year period from 2027 to 2037.

The Council’s programme for preparing and consulting on LDP3 is detailed in the Development Plan Scheme, which is updated regularly.

## What is a Strategic Environmental Assessment?

A strategic environment assessment (SEA) is a legal requirement for preparing the plan, and its main job is to consider how the plan would affect the environment. The SEA will help Falkirk Council identify and compare the environmental impacts of different options, such as different sites for housing development, and reach a decision as to which options would achieve the best outcomes for the environment. It will also help the Council consider measures to lessen or avoid the negative environment impacts of the plan and achieve further positive enhancement of the environment. The results of the SEA will be published in the Environmental Report which will be consulted together with the Proposed Plan for the Falkirk Local Development Plan 3.

The Scoping Report is in the first stage in the SEA of LDP3, and this report sets out the information that is proposed to be included in the Environmental Report.

## What are the main environmental problems facing the area and the Falkirk Local Development Plan 3?

The Scoping Report states various environmental problems that are relevant to preparing LDP3. The problems were identified from a review of environmental information (such as statistics and mapped data) and other relevant plans and programmes like the Falkirk Plan, the Council’s Local Transport Strategy and National Planning Framework 4. The identified problems include:

* Areas of vacant and derelict land, which blight communities and the environment. As of 2022, the Falkirk Council area has a total of 301 hectares of derelict and urban vacant land equating to 180 full size football pitches;
* Many areas in the Falkirk Council area are at risk from river, coastal and/or surface water flooding, and more areas will be at risk in the future because of climate change;
* Biodiversity has declined in Scotland and across the world to the point that it is recognised as a crisis for nature and humanity. The area’s rich and diverse biodiversity is under threat from pollution, development, invasive species, habitat fragmentation and climate change;
* Levels of deprivation, health inequality and ill-health in the area;
* Human emissions of carbon dioxide. These need to be substantially and quickly reduced here and across the planet to limit global warming and the impacts of climate change including damage to local infrastructure and buildings, coastal erosion, biodiversity loss, more health risks and the increased risk and severity of flooding. Transport, industry, and domestic properties are the area’s biggest contributors to emissions, and Falkirk is a relatively high emitter of carbon dioxide when compared to Scotland’s other 31 local authority areas;
* High car dependency with many residents preferring to use the private car for most types of trips instead of walking, cycling, wheeling or taking public transport;
* Poor air quality in parts of the Council area including in Falkirk Town Centre and in Grangemouth;
* Several waterbodies in the area that are not of good status;
* Various pressures on the area’s historic environment such as development, lack of investment, climate change and changing land-use; and
* Even though open space is generally well provided for across the Falkirk Council area in terms of quantity and accessibility, quality is variable with disparities between settlement areas and between the quality of strategic parks and that of more local facilities.

## How will the SEA be carried out?

Options for the Falkirk Local Development Plan 3 such as the spatial strategy, site-specific proposals and policies will be assessed against the SEA Assessment Framework. This will involve the Council asking a series of questions to determine the likely impacts of an option (such as a proposed housing site or policy) on the environmental objectives for each of the following issues taken from Schedule 3, paragraph 6 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005:

* Biodiversity, fauna and flora;
* Population and human health;
* Soil;
* Water;
* Air;
* Climatic factors;
* Material assets;
* Cultural heritage; and
* Landscape

Scores will be assigned to each option before, and after, mitigation/enhancement is applied and to allow comparisons to be made between different options. The scores are set out in the below table and will range from significant adverse effect to significant positive effect. Some effects might not be known or are so small that they will have minor environmental impacts. The scores will be presented and explained in an assessment matrix.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Effect | Symbol for Effect |
| Significant negative effect | -- |
| Adverse effect | - |
| Neutral or negligible effect | N |
| Unknown effect | ? |
| Positive effect | + |
| Significant positive effect | ++ |

Falkirk Council needs to think about whether the impacts of the options will be short term, long term, temporary or permanent. It will also need to consider the combined environmental impacts of different options, for example what would be the combined impact of proposed housing sites on flooding, air quality and the wider landscape.

## Next Steps

The public will have an opportunity to comment on the Environmental Report when it is published alongside the Proposed Plan for LDP3 for consultation. The consultation period will run for a minimum of 12 weeks and could happen as early as Spring 2026/27. The Environmental Report will be updated at later stages of the plan-making process and provide a written record of comments received and how they have been taken into account within the SEA.

# Introduction

## Purpose of the Scoping Report

* + 1. The Scoping Report is the first reporting stage in the strategic environment assessment (SEA) of the Falkirk Local Development Plan 3 (LDP3). Its purpose is to set out sufficient information to enable the consultation authorities to form a view on the consultation period, and scope and level of detail, which will be appropriate for the Environmental Report. The report is accompanying evidence to LDP3, and its associated Evidence Report, providing baseline information to identify the key environmental characteristics of the area as well as the environmental problems and objectives that frame the SEA and LDP3.
    2. The Scoping Report has been prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

## Falkirk Local Development Plan 3

* + 1. The preparation of Local Development Plans (LDPs) is a statutory duty for all planning authorities under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended. The Falkirk Local Development Plan is an important, legal document which sets out how the Falkirk Council area will develop and grow in the future, for example, where new housing, business, and infrastructure will be located. It contains a high-level vision and spatial strategy for the area that are supplemented by detailed policies and proposals guiding Falkirk Council’s assessment and decisions on applications for planning permission and other types of development consent. The Council adopted its second and current Local Development Plan (LDP2) in August 2020, and this covers a twenty-year period from 2020-2040 with a focus on specific proposals over the initial 10-year period 2020-2030.
    2. Plans must be kept under review, and, because of their complex and protracted preparation process, Falkirk Council started work on LDP3 in early 2023 to ensure LDP2 is replaced timeously with an up-to-date development plan framework for the Council area. LDP3 will be prepared within the context of major reforms to Scotland’s planning system, and new policy agendas including the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss; the drive to net zero carbon; the importance of place, localism and 20-minute neighbourhoods; health and well-being; a more circular economy; green infrastructure and nature-based solutions; and promoting inclusive economies.
    3. The new LDP3 will be the first plan prepared by Falkirk Council under the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, which introduces a new statutory process for producing LDPs in Scotland. It will look to address the area’s development needs sustainably over the period 2027 to 2037 while balancing competing interests for where and how development should, and should, not happen.

## Key Facts

* + 1. The key facts for LDP3 are:

**Full name of the plan**: Falkirk Local Development Plan 3

**Name of the responsible authority for the plan:** Falkirk Council

**What prompted the plan**: The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended requires Falkirk Council, as the local planning authority for the area, to prepare a local development plan and keep it under review.

**Subject of the plan:** Various matters will be covered by LDP3 including, among others, local places, placemaking, climate change; business land, housing, town centres, retailing, the green and blue network, open space, sustainable flood risk management, rural development, infrastructure, mineral resources and the natural and historic environment**.**

**Period of the plan**: 2027 to 2037.

**Geographic area covered by the plan**: The area of the LDP3 will be the entirety of the Falkirk Council administrative area which extends to approximately 300km². This [map](https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/map/2020/11/local-authority-maps-of-scotland/documents/falkirk-council-area-map/falkirk-council-area-map/govscot%3Adocument/Falkirk.pdf) shows the location of the area in Central Scotland.

**Frequency of updates:** The plan will be modified as and when necessary but is expected to be replaced in no more than a 10-year interval.

**Purpose and objectives of the plan:** The main purpose of the plan is to guide the future development and use of all land in the Falkirk Council area. The objectives of the plan will be similar in scope to the LDP2’s own objectives, which have been reproduced in page 13, Figure 2 of the Scoping Report. They will reflect the new or evolved policy agendas for sustainable development and the environment that have emerged since LDP2 was adopted in 2020.

**Contact details for the plan:**

By post:

Planning and Greenspace

Place Services

Suite 1b, Falkirk Stadium

4 Stadium Way

Falkirk FK2 9EE

By telephone: 01324 504950

By email: [ldp@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:ldp@falkirk.gov.uk)

**Viewing locations of the plan**: The plan will be made available for public inspection in all local libraries and advice and support hubs in the Council area, and online at [www.falkirk.gov.uk/ldp/](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/ldp/) .

## What is a Strategic Environmental Assessment?

* + 1. A strategic environment assessment (SEA) is a process for identifying, evaluating, mitigating, reporting, monitoring and consulting on the likely environmental impacts of a plan or programme. It helps ensure these impacts are appropriately addressed at the earliest, appropriate stage of decision-making in the plan’s or programme’s preparation. The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 (‘The 2005 Act’) requires Falkirk Council to carry out a SEA when a preparing a qualifying plan and programme if it is likely to have significant environmental effects. LDP3 meets the definition of a qualifying plan and programme under section 5 of the 2005 Act and needs to be subject to a SEA.
    2. The 2005 Act identifies the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage (now NatureScot) and Historic Environment Scotland as the consultation authorities to the SEA. Their role is to offer their expertise at the key stages in the SEA process to help enhance the assessment.
    3. Some of the benefits of SEA include:
* **Better environmental protection:** The SEA will identify likely environmental effects of LDP3 early and help the Council avoid future problems by identifying solutions.
* **Enhanced communication and transparency**: The SEA will help enhance the public’s understanding of the plan’s effects on the environment so they are better informed. Its reporting requirements will improve the transparency of decision making, enabling greater appreciation of the reasoning behind the decisions taken for the plan.
* **Providing insights**: The SEA offers a different perspective on the plan by ensuring that the Council looks at it from an environmental viewpoint.

## The SEA Process for LDP3

* + 1. The SEA will run in parallel with the preparation of LDP3 and involve the stages described in Table 1. The stated timescales are taken from the Council’s [Development Plan Scheme](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-plan-3/) which was revised in February 2024 and included the current programme for LDP3 at the time of writing. Changes to the timescales will be communicated via subsequent editions of the Development Plan Scheme.

Table 1 – Key Stages in LDP3 and SEA preparation

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| LDP3 Stage | Timescales | Events | Corresponding SEA Stage |
| Preparation of Development Plan Scheme | September 2022 -January 2023 | Consultation on the future participation of the plan (September to November 2022)  Council approval of Development Plan Scheme (January 2023) | **Programming the SEA**: Council officers determined that the LDP3 falls under the scope of section 5(3) of the 2005 Act and thus requires a SEA. The timescales for the SEA process are based on the timetabling of LDP3 preparation set out in the Development Plan Scheme, which is regularly updated.. |
| Evidence Report | June 2023 -August 2024 | Plan launch (February 2023)  Invitation to prepare Local Place Plans (March 2023)  Early consultation to gather evidence (February 2023 - June 2023)  Consult on Topic Papers  Submit the Scoping Report to the SEA Gateway  Evidence Report published (Q2 2023/2024) | **Scoping:** The scope and level of detail to be included in the Environmental Report is set out in the Scoping Report. The latter document was submitted to the consultation authorities via the SEA Gateway on 22 March 2024. Agreement is to be reached at the time of writing with the consultation authorities on the timescales specified in the Scoping Report for the consultation of the Environmental Report. The Scoping Report is one of the second batch of topic papers and was published for public consultation beginning in April 2024. The topic papers provide the basis for the Evidence Report and to help establish the areas of agreement/disagreement with the evidence among stakeholders. |
| Gatecheck | September 2024 - March 2025 | Submission of Evidence Report to Scottish Ministers  Appointment of Reporter for Gate Check  Gate Check assessment complete | **Reviewing**: Council Officers will consider the feedback on the Scoping Report, and also from the Gate Check assessment. The baseline environmental information, environmental assessment methodology and so on for the SEA may be revised for the preparation of the Environmental Report. |
| Proposed Plan | April 2025 - March 2027 | Call for Ideas consultation  Proposed Plan and Delivery Programme published (Q2 2026/27)  Consultation on Proposed Plan and Environmental Report for a minimum of 12 weeks.  Approve Modifications to Proposed Plan  Submission of Proposed Plan to Scottish Ministers (Q4 2026/27) | **Environmental Report:** At the same time as the Proposed Plan, Falkirk Council will publish and consult on the Environmental Report. This report will set out the likely significant environmental effects of the plan and its reasonable alternatives. Proposed mitigation measures will be stated in the report that will enhance the likely positive effects, or address the likely negative effects, identified. The Environmental Report may need amended to account for modifications made to the Proposed Plan prior to the submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers for an independent examination by a Reporter. |
| Examination | April 2027 - October 2027 | Appointment of Reporter  Publication of Examination Report | **Further revision:** The Environmental Report may be amended to account for modifications made to the Proposed Plan post examination. A copy of the Environmental Report will be submitted to Scottish Ministers along with a copy of the Proposed Plan to be adopted by Falkirk Council. |
| Adoption and delivery | November 2027+ | Adoption of Local Development Plan 3 (Q4 2027/28)  Publication of the Post Adoption Statement  Publication of final Delivery Programme | **Post Adoption Statement and monitoring**: This statement will explain how environmental considerations were integrated into LDP3 and why the plan was adopted in light of the reasonable alternatives considered. It will also refer to Falkirk Council’s proposals for monitoring the likely, significant environmental effects of LDP3 during its delivery 2027 onwards. These proposals will include various measures and methods to enable unforeseen adverse effects to be identified, and appropriate remedial action to be undertaken, while the new plan is being implemented. |

## Structure of the Scoping Report

* + 1. The remaining sections of the Scoping Report have been structured as follows to incorporate the content required by the 2005 Act:
* An outline of the contents and main objectives of LDP3 and this plan’s relationship with other qualifying plans and programmes (Chapter 2 - LDP3 and Its Context);
* The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan (Chapter 3 - Environmental Baseline);
* The environmental characteristics of areas that are likely to be significantly affected (Chapter 3 - Environmental Baseline);
* The existing environmental problems that are relevant to LDP3 (Chapter 3 - Environmental Baseline);
* The environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level, which are relevant to LDP3 (Chapter 2 - LDP3 and Its Context);
* The way those objectives, and any environmental considerations, will inform the plan’s preparation (Chapters 2, 3 and 4);
* The description of how the environmental assessment is to be undertaken (Chapter 4 - Scope and Methodology for Environmental Assessment);
* The proposed reporting of the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects during the implementation of LDP3 (Chapter 4 - Scope and Methodology for Environmental Assessment);
* The proposed template for describing the measures to monitor the implementation of the plan in accordance with section 19 of the 2005 Act (Chapter 5 - Monitoring); and
* The consultation period that Falkirk Council intends to specify for the Environmental Report under section 16(1)(b) of the 2005 Act and notify the consultation authorities under section 16(2)(a)(iv) of the 2005 Act (Chapter 6 - Consultation of the Environmental Report).

# LDP3 and Its Context

## An Outline of the Contents and Main Objectives of LDP3

* + 1. The 2005 Act requires the Environmental Report to include “an outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programmes”. The purpose of this section is to explain the nature, contents, objectives and lifespan of LDP3.
    2. LDP3 will set a new long-term spatial strategy, compromising Falkirk Council’s polices and proposals as to the development and use of land in the area. The strategy will provide guidance on the future provision of housing, business, transport, infrastructure and recreation. It will indicate how our town centres and greenspace should develop, and how our natural and historic environment should be protected enhanced. Maps will be included to articulate the spatial strategy and to show where particular policies and proposals will apply and will not apply. LDP3, however, will have a different look to previous development plans prepared by Falkirk Council. Fewer policies will feature to avoid duplication with National Planning Framework 4, and there will be a greater focus on places and the delivery of development. Furthermore, LDP3 will have a 10-year lifespan, as opposed to LDP2 which has five years under previous legislation.
    3. The new plan will set out the Council’s objectives for development and use of land based on evidence gathering and engagement carried out at the initial stages of the plan-making process. Stated in Figure 1, the LDP2’s nine objectives give an idea of the matters that will likely be covered by LDP3’s own objectives. Some existing objectives will be refined, or new ones will be introduced, to reflect new or evolved priorities that have come to the fore, nationally or locally, in recent years.

Figure 1 – LDP2's objectives

Thriving Communities:

* Enable continued population and household growth, and the delivery of housing to meet the full range of housing needs.
* Build sustainable attractive communities which are distinctive, safe and pleasant, welcoming, adaptable, resource efficient and easy to move around in.
* Provide infrastructure to meet the needs of an increasing population and further improve the area’s connectivity.

Growing Economy:

* Foster economic growth, investment and inclusion, reinforcing the area as a strategic component of the Scottish economy.
* Make our town centres vibrant and viable focal points within our communities.
* Capitalise on the area’s tourism potential and build a strong visitor economy.

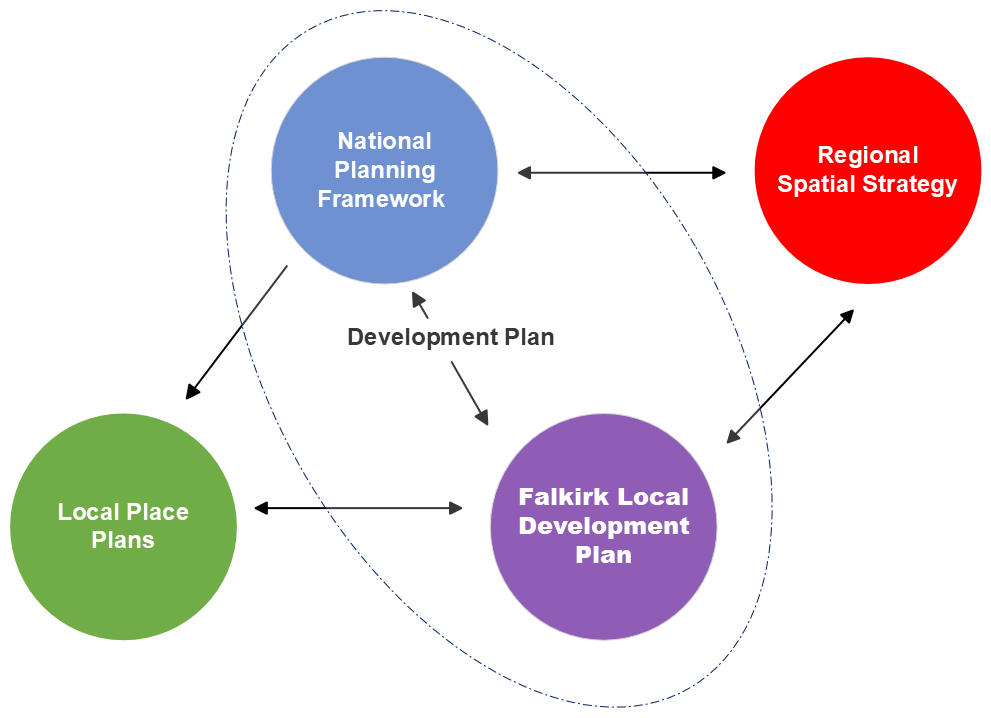
Sustainable Place:

* Support a low carbon, circular economy and build resilience to climate change.
* Extend and improve the green network and protect the area’s natural environment and resources.
* Protect, enhance and promote our historic environment.

## Relationship with Other Qualifying Plans and Programmes, and Environment Protection Objectives

* + 1. The 2005 Act requires the Environmental Report to include an outline of LDP3’s relationship with other qualifying plans and programmes and how environmental protection objectives have been taken into account the preparation of LDP3. This section covers these matters, briefly describing the policy context within which the LDP3 will operate and the constraints and targets that this context imposes on the plan.
    2. The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 (the 2019 Act) introduced a reformed spatial plan hierarchy in Scotland, creating a new tier in the form of local place plans, replacing strategic development plans with regional spatial strategies and giving the National Planning Framework a stronger influence in spatial planning at all levels. Figure 3 summarises the Falkirk Local Development Plan’s place and relationship in this hierarchy.

Figure 2 – Falkirk’s spatial plan hierarchy (adapted from the [Local development planning guidance](https://www.gov.scot/publications/local-development-planning-guidance/))



* + 1. National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) was adopted by Scottish Ministers in February 2023 following approval by the Scottish Parliament. This nationally important document sits at the top of the hierarchy, setting out a long-term strategy for Scotland up to 2045 that contains national planning policies, designates national developments and highlights regional spatial priorities. NPF4 has a greater status compared to previous NPFs by incorporating national developments and planning policies into one document for the first time. It is also the first ever NPF to become part of the statutory development plan meaning planning applications in the Council area need to be determined against the relevant provisions of both NPF and the Falkirk Local Development Plan (LDP). However, the 2019 Act states in the event of any incompatibility between a provision of the NPF and a provision of the LDP, whichever of them is the later in date is to prevail. Lastly, legislation requires the planning authority to have regard to the National Planning Framework in the preparation of its LDP.
    2. Regional planning is changing in Scotland. The 2019 Act establishes a new duty for a planning authority, or authorities acting jointly, to prepare and adopt a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The legislation defines this as a long-term strategy, identifying, in relation to the region, the need, outcomes, locations and priorities for the delivery of proposed strategic development. RSSs were introduced to replace the strategic development plan in each of Scotland’s five city regions, and to provide more flexible and bespoke arrangements for regional planning across all areas of Scotland including the Falkirk Council area which is not in a city region. In 2020/2021, Falkirk, Clackmannanshire and Stirling Councils prepared the indicative Forth RSS, which informed the regional spatial priorities for Central Scotland in NPF4. A formal RSS will be prepared once the duty to produce a RSS has come into force and the statutory guidance has been published. Scottish Ministers will have to have regard to the formal RSS in the future preparation, revision or amendment of the National Planning Framework. Falkirk Council will need to have regard to the formal RSS in the preparation of its LDP.
    3. Local Place Plans (LPPs) are a new approach to participation in planning, empowering communities to come together and agree priorities for how their neighbourhood, village or town should develop and change in the future. LPPs are prepared by community bodies which are either community councils or local community groups that meet the definition of a community control body under the Community Empowerment Act. Plans may vary in scope dealing with a range of planning issues or sites, or just focus on one issue or site. A key characteristic of LPPs is that they set out the community body’s proposals for the development and use of land in their own defined, and the proposals in question are shown on a map. Legislation requires the community body in preparing the LPP to have regard to the National Planning Framework and the Local Development Plan for any part of the land to which the LPP relates. Like RSSs, LPPs, are not part of the development plan but have a statutory footing to influence LDPs. The preparation of LDP3 needs to ‘take into account’ the validated LPP(s) which fall within the area of the plan. LPPs prepared and consulted in accordance with the legislation will be validated and registered by Falkirk Council and placed in a public register on the Council’s website. At the time of drafting the Scoping Report, there were no registered LPPs in the Falkirk Council area although several communities have expressed a keen interest in preparing one. Communities bodies can prepare a LPP at any time but, if their purpose in preparing one is to influence LDP3, they should submit it the Falkirk Council by the date of Tuesday 1 April 2025 as stated in the Council’s [Invitation to Prepare](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/local-place-plans.aspx).
    4. The following lists the main qualifying plans and programmes, which are known to fall in the scope of the 2005 Act and which will influence the preparation of LDP3 in some way:

National level:

* [National Planning Framework 4](https://www.transformingplanning.scot/national-planning-framework/)
* [Scotland’s National Marine Plan](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-national-marine-plan/documents/)
* [Historic Environment Policy for Scotland](C://Users/AndrewMcNair/Downloads/historic-environment-policy-for-scotland.pdf)
* [The River Basin Management Plans for Scotland](https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/river-basin-management-planning/)
* [Biodiversity strategy to 2045: tacking the nature emergency](https://www.gov.scot/policies/biodiversity/scottish-biodiversity-strategy/) and Delivery Plan
* [Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 – Towards a Better Place for Everyone](https://www.gov.scot/publications/cleaner-air-scotland-2-towards-better-place-everyone/)
* [Making Things Last: a circular economy strategy for Scotland](https://www.gov.scot/publications/making-things-last-circular-economy-strategy-scotland/)

Regional level:

* [The Flood Risk Management Plan for Forth Estuary Local Plan District](https://www2.sepa.org.uk/frmplans/documents/lpd10-forth-estuary-frmp-2021.pdf)
* [The Flood Risk Management Plan for the Forth Local Plan District](https://www2.sepa.org.uk/frmplans/documents/lpd9-forth-frmp-2021.pdf)
* [The Local Forth Estuary Flood Risk Management Plan](https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/flooding/local-flood-risk-management-plan)
* [The Local Forth Flood Risk Management Plan](https://www.stirling.gov.uk/emergencies-and-emergency-planning/flooding/flood-risk-management-plan/)
* [SEStran Regional Transport Strategy](https://sestran.gov.uk/)

Local level:

* [Falkirk Greenspace – A Strategy for our Green Network](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/environment/environmental-policy/green-network.aspx)
* [Falkirk Council Plan 2022-2027](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/council-democracy/policies-strategies/council-plan.aspx)
* [The Falkirk Plan 2021-2030](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/people-communities/community-planning/falkirk-plan.aspx)
* [Falkirk Council An Economic Strategy for Falkirk 2015-2025](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/business-investment/policies-strategies/docs/Falkirk%20Economic%20Strategy%202015-2025.pdf?v=201906271131)
* [Falkirk Council Open Space Strategy](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/environment/environmental-policy/open-space-strategy.aspx)
* [Falkirk Council Historic Environment Strategy for Falkirk 2018](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/environment/environmental-policy/docs/historic-environment-strategy/Historic%20Environment%20Strategy%20for%20Falkirk%202018.pdf?v=201906271131)
* [Falkirk Council Local Transport Strategy](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/coins/submissiondocuments.asp?submissionid=20290)
* [Falkirk Council Active Travel Strategy](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/coins/submissiondocuments.asp?submissionid=20290)
* [Falkirk Council Core Paths Plan](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/environment/environmental-management/core-paths-plan.aspx)
* [Falkirk Forestry and Woodland Strategy](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/coins/viewDoc.asp?c=e%97%9Db%91k%80%88)
* [Draft Falkirk Council Local Housing Strategy](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/homes-property/policies-strategies/local-housing-strategy-2023-28.aspx)
* [Falkirk Council Local Development Plan 2](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-plan/)
* [Falkirk Council Dig In Community Food Growing Strategy 2019 – 2024](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/people-communities/docs/growing/Dig%20In%20-%20Community%20Food%20Growing%20Strategy.pdf?v=202104061104)
* [Second Nature: A Biodiversity Action Plan for the Falkirk Council area](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/environment/environmental-management/docs/biodiversity/Second%20Nature%20-%20A%20Biodiversity%20Action%20Plan%20for%20the%20Falkirk%20Council%20Area.pdf?v=201907081334)
* [Falkirk Council Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/environment/environmental-policy/climate-change/docs/climate-change-strategy/2023/Climate%20Change%20Strategy.pdf?v=202311151233)
* [Falkirk Council: Draft Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/environment/environmental-policy/climate-change/)
* [Falkirk Council: Draft Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Delivery Plan](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/environment/environmental-policy/climate-change/)
* [Falkirk Council: Air Quality Action Plans](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/environment/environmental-policy/air-quality/)
* [The Antonine Wall Management Plan 2014-2019](https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=f477ec1e-8366-4295-ac10-a5c900aab488) (under review)
  + 1. Paragraph 2.1.9 and Appendix 1, which is a more expansive and detailed list, will be kept under review and updated in the Environmental Report to include other relevant qualifying plans and programmes that have been missed, or have emerged since submission of the Scoping Report to the [SEA Gateway](https://www.strategicenvironmentalassessment.gov.scot/).
    2. Appendix 1 also summarises the environmental protection objectives at international, national or local levels that are relevant to LDP3. The analysis of relevant plans, programmes, legislation and environment protection objectives identified the following matters requiring consideration through the preparation of LDP3 and the SEA:
* reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and help achieve net zero of these emissions in Scotland by 2045;
* protect, conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity including international, national or local designated sites, the supporting habitat of designated sites, protected species, Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats or species, nature networks, ancient and semi natural woodland and so on;
* reduce demand for energy from new and existing development, and encourage appropriate renewable or low carbon forms of energy in the right places;
* mitigate and adapt to the current and future impacts of climate change, for example through guiding development away from vulnerable areas and enabling places to become more resilient to climate change
* protect and enhance the marine environment;
* support the development of a more circular economy in the LDP area;
* extend and improve Falkirk’s green network coverage and connectivity and secure related ecosystem benefits for the area’s economy, environment and communities;
* protect carbon-rich soils, restore peatlands and minimise disturbance to soils from development;
* protect, promote and enhance valued historic assets and places including listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site and Buffer Zone, designed landscapes, battlefields, areas of townscape value, and non-designated assets such as other archaeological sites and non-listed buildings which have heritage significance;
* mitigate and improve air quality such as within the Falkirk Town Centre and Grangemouth Air Quality Management Areas;
* protect, encourage and facilitate the expansion and enhancement of woodland and forestry to help increase woodland and forestry cover to 25% of Falkirk’s total land surface area by 2055;
* promote and facilitate high quality, sustainable and affordable homes in the right locations;
* support sustainable futures for town and local centres in the area
* encourage, promote and facilitate the reuse of brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings;
* promote compact urban growth in the area and thereby reduce the need for greenfield development;
* encourage walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for everyday travel and reduce the need to travel unsustainably;
* safeguard access rights, core paths and active travel routes and encourage new and enhanced opportunities for access linked to the active travel and core path network;
* strengthen resilience to flood risk by promoting avoidance as a first principle and by reducing the vulnerability of existing and future development to flooding;
* protect people and places from environmental harm including major hazards;
* promote and facilitate development that improves health and wellbeing
* encourage, promote and facilitate developments in locations that support local living including, where feasible, 20-minute neighbourhoods;
* support the objectives and actions of the Falkirk Open Space Strategy to enhance the area’s open space resource;
* support the creation, protection and enhancement of community food growing;
* recognise the varied landscapes across the area; their different landscape characteristics and different sensitives to change or development; and
* protect and restore water bodies in the area to reach ‘good status’.

# Environmental Baseline

* + 1. The 2005 Act requires the Environmental Report to include a description of:
* the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of LDP3;
* the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected; and
* the existing environmental problems which are relevant to LDP3.
  + 1. This baseline information provides the basis for predicting and monitoring the environmental effects of LDP3; and to identify the key environmental characteristics and problems to frame both the SEA and the plan. The collection of the baseline information has been undertaken as part of the evidence gathering as required by the plan making process. The following section describes the area’s environment.

## Current State of Falkirk’s Environment

### Landscape

* + 1. The Falkirk Council area extends to some 300 km² and is located in the middle of Scotland’s Central Belt between the cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh. It shares its boundaries with Stirling Council to the north, North Lanarkshire Council to west and West Lothian Council to the east and south. Despite its relatively small and compact geographical extent, the area exhibits a considerable variety of landscape and topographical features. This is influenced by the underlying geology, comprising mainly sedimentary rocks from the Carboniferous period, and the effects of glaciation which deposited a range of drift materials and created a characteristic landscape of mounds, ridges, terraces and raised beaches.
    2. A more detailed overview on landscape character is provided in [SG09 Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/supplementary-guidance/docs/ldp2/09%20SG09%20Landscape%20Character%20Assessment%20and%20Landscape%20Designations.pdf?v=202107191627) but essentially the area is covered by six landscape types:
* Lowland Hills
* Lowland Hill Fringes
* Lowland Plateaux
* Lowland River Valley
* Coastal Farmlands; and
* Carselands.
  + 1. In summary, the northern part of the area is characterised by the relatively flat and fertile carseland adjoining the Forth Estuary, supporting arable farming and some improved pasture. The adjacent estuarine mudflats and salt marsh form part of the Firth of Forth Special Protection Area, which is of international importance for wintering birds. To the east a rolling landscape of good quality agricultural land is bisected by the scenic Avon Valley. The centre of the area, which is dominated by the river valleys of the Carron and the Bonny Water, is the most urbanised, and is traversed by the Forth and Clyde and Union Canals. To the south and west, the land rises up to the more remote and less populous Slamannan Plateau and the Denny Hills where rough grazing predominates with some commercial forestry.
    2. The area’s three long standing Local Landscape Areas (LLAs) are mapped and recognised by LDP2 as locally valued special landscapes with particular qualities and characteristics. The first is the Denny Hills which are a highly visually prominent area of lowland hills and hill fringes, forming the eastern edge of the Campsie and Kilsyth Hills range. This high ground, which together with the enclosed character of the Carron Valley and the relatively low level of development, form a landscape of distinct character that is unique to the area. Slamannan Plateau and Avon Valley is the second LLA, and this combines two distinct areas separated by Avonbridge. Described as settled and incorporating the most intact and representative of areas of landscape in the southern part of the Council area, Slamannan Plateau and Avon Valley is an area of varied land cover and landform to the west compromising of worked agricultural land and forestry contrasting with a more intimate and wooded agricultural valley landscape to the east. South Bo’ness is the last of three LLAs. It is a locally distinctive area of rolling hills comprising of agricultural land, forming a strong backdrop and setting to the settlements of Bo’ness and Linlithgow and providing a physical separation between them. It includes sites and features of historic and recreational importance, undeveloped coastline and minor roads. It also forms a strong contrast to the adjacent industrial complex at Grangemouth and the settlement of Bo’ness while having high recreation value due to its juxtaposition with Bo’ness. The area of each LLA is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – Areas covered by Local Landscape Areas

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of Local Landscape Area | Area of Local Landscape Area |
| Denny Hills | 21km² |
| Slamannan Plateau and Avon | 27km² |
| South Bo’ness | 18km² |

* + 1. Mention should be made of the Green Belt, which is used in Falkirk as a spatial planning tool to manage urban growth and protect and enhance the landscape setting around towns and villages. The Green Belt (approximately 40.3km² in area) generally takes the form of four wedges of countryside:
* Falkirk, Stenhousemuir, Grangemouth and Laurieston Corridor;
* Polmont, Grangemouth, Bon’ess and Linlithgow Corridor;
* Falkirk, Larbert, Denny, Bonnybridge Corridor; and
* Callendar Park and Woods
  + 1. The Green Belt has evolved and changed over the 50 years since it was first designated in 1962 through a modification to the County Development Plan. From then through to the 2000s, its scope and extent grew from the original Falkirk and Grangemouth nucleus to provide restraint to the growth other settlements in the area. Successive development plans have undertaken reviews of the boundaries of the Green Belt and releases have been promoted to allow for long term development were deemed necessary. The main releases of land by recent development plans include:
* Removal of the Green Belt at the stadium site, Westfield, Falkirk and minor adjustment at Glensburgh, Grangemouth (Falkirk Local Plan 2010);
* Removal of the Green Belt east of the A905 Skinflats, East Bonnybridge and South Bo’ness (LDP1 2014); and
* Removal of the Green Belt at Crawfield Road and North Bank Farm at South Bo’ness (LDP2 2020).
  + 1. This [map](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/7f85233ffe414a01804b620310ca4f67?item=10) shows the current extents of the Green Belt and Urban and Village Limit as defined by LDP2, and you can find more information the evolution, character and development pressures of the Green Belt from [the Green Belt Topic Paper](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-plan-3/evidence-report.aspx).

### Soils

* + 1. Soils are a vital and finite resource on which life depends. They provide many important services to the area including food production, forestry, sustainable water management and support for biodiversity. As a large store of carbon, soils are valuable in reducing carbon emissions and tackling climate change. This [map](https://map.environment.gov.scot/Soil_maps/?layer=6&extent=272009,678744,288600,686744) shows the capability of land to grow certain types of crops and grass in the area. Classes 1, 2 and 3.1 are the best and most versatile agricultural land and are referred to as prime quality agricultural land. Approximately 17% of agricultural land in the Falkirk area is of prime quality. This is concentrated in two distinct areas: in the western part of the area, between Larbert, Bonnybridge and Denny; and in the eastern part of the area to the east of the Braes Villages and to the south of Bo’ness. Areas of prime agricultural land in Falkirk have been lost to development and infrastructure over recent decades and there will be continued pressure to develop this land in near settlement locations.
    2. There are a range of soil types of potential national interest within the Falkirk area. For example, there are soil types found which are defined as carbon rich soils including basin peat, blanket bog, peat alluvium complex, peaty podzols, peaty gleys, podzols and humus iron podzols. In addition, there are rare soils such as saltings along part of the shoreline. Carbon rich soils occur mainly in the upper braes and Slamannan Plateau. Areas in the vicinity of Banknock, Slamannan, Limerigg and Standburn all contain some carbon rich soils. Saltings occur along the bank of the Forth Estuary and the tidal extent of the River Carron from the North of Grangemouth to South Alloa. On this [map,](https://map.environment.gov.scot/Soil_maps/?layer=10) you can view the areas of carbon rich soils and peatland.

### People

* + 1. Falkirk‘s estimated population of 160,560 is focused within a network of small to medium sized towns. The principal town of Falkirk, with a population of around 39,000, is centrally located and serves as the main shopping, service and employment centre for the area. Larbert, Stenhousemuir, Polmont and Grangemouth are separated from Falkirk by the Green Belt. The former three communities are residential in character while Grangemouth is home to Scotland’s sole refinery, largest petrochemical complex and largest container port. In the western reaches of the area lie the settlements of Denny, Dunipace, Bonnybridge and Banknock, while to the east, overlooking the Forth, sits the town of Bo’ness. Some 18 smaller communities are scattered across the rural part of the area. The Council’s [website](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/council-democracy/statistics-census/area-settlement-profiles.aspx) provides mid-year estimate populations for each ward, town and village in the area.

Table 3 – Falkirk Population Profile Based on Mid-year Population Estimates for 2020

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Age Group | Population | % of Total | Male | Female |
| 0 to 15 | 27,886 | 17.37 | 14,402 | 13,484 |
| 16 to 49 | 66,965 | 41.71 | 33,164 | 33,801 |
| 50 to 64 | 35,054 | 21.83 | 17,216 | 17,838 |
| 65 to 74 | 17,320 | 10.79 | 82,45 | 9,075 |
| 75+ | 13,335 | 8.31 | 56,18 | 7,717 |
| Total | 160,560 | 100 | 78,645 | 81,915 |

* + 1. Population projections suggest the area is growing and aging (Tables 3 and 4). It is estimated that the population of the Falkirk Council area has increased by +5.3% from 152,480 in 2009 to 160,560 in 2019. By 2043, this population is projected to reach 169,962. Table 4 below shows the projected population change by age group in the area. Most age groups between 0-59 years will see a decline with the biggest fall projected to be in the 5-11 age group at -14%. In stark contrast, the population is projected to see an increase in the 75-84 and 85+ age groups at +76%+ and +92% respectively.

Table 4 – 2018 Population by Age Group and 2043 Projected Population by Age Group

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Age Group | 2018 | 2043 | Difference No. | Difference (%) |
| 0-4 | 8,175 | 7,932 | -243 | -3 |
| 5-11 | 13,111 | 11,280 | -1,831 | -14 |
| 12-15 | 6,944 | 6,464 | -480 | -7 |
| 16-19 | 6,777 | 6,422 | -355 | -5 |
| 20-24 | 8,926 | 7,960 | -966 | -11 |
| 25-44 | 40,050 | 40,580 | 530 | 1 |
| 45-59 | 36,624 | 34,406 | -2,218 | -6 |
| 60-64 | 9,727 | 10,852 | 1,125 | 12 |
| 65-74 | 17,049 | 20,699 | 3,650 | 21 |
| 75-84 | 9,683 | 17,083 | 7,400 | 76 |
| 85+ | 3,274 | 6,284 | 3,010 | 92 |
| All | 160,340 | 169,962 | 9,622 | 6.0 |

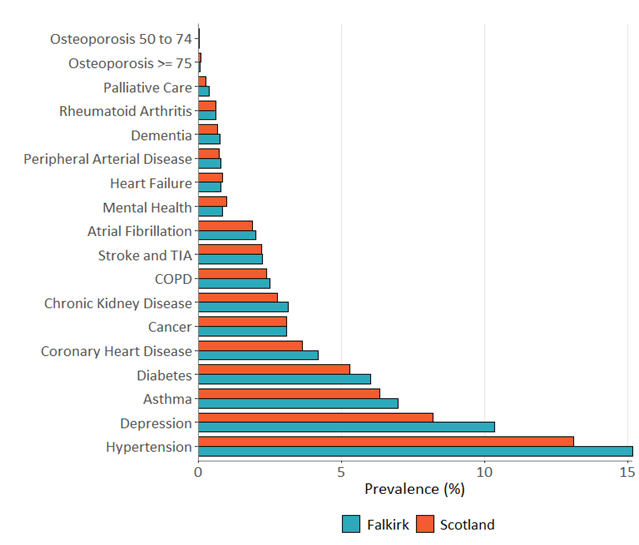
* + 1. Household projections estimate the future numbers of households taking into previous demographic trends in population growth and household formation. The National Records of Scotland has produced a range of projections as shown in Table 5. The principal projection estimates a +13.2% percentage increase in households between 2018 and 2043. This compares with +11.6% for the low migration variant and +14.5% for the high migration variant over the same period.

Table 5 – Household Projections for Falkirk by variant

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Projections | 2018 | 2028 | 2043 | Change (%) 2018 to 2028 | Change (%) 2018 to 2043 |
| Low Migration | 72,267 | 76,470 | 80,685 | 5.8% | 11.6% |
| Principal Projection | 72,267 | 76,692 | 81,790 | 6.1% | 13.2% |
| High Migration | 72,267 | 76,917 | 82,774 | 6.4% | 14.5% |

* + 1. The [National Records of Scotland](https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/), [Public Health Scotland](https://publichealthscotland.scot/) and [ScotPHO](https://www.scotpho.org.uk/) publish health statistics that are useful to understand the overall health of the area. The leading cause of death for males in Falkirk in 2022 was ischaemic heart diseases (15.4% of all male deaths) followed by lung cancer (7.0%). The leading cause of death for females in 2022 is dementia and Alzheimer’s disease (15.1% of female deaths) followed by ischaemic heart diseases (9.5%). Figure 2 shows the prevalence of various health conditions in the Falkirk area, compared to the national average. In summary, Falkirk has a higher percentage prevalence of hypertension, depression, asthma, diabetes and coronary heart disease compared with the Scotland average.
    2. In Falkirk, life expectancy at birth was higher for females (80.1 years) than for males (76.2 years) in 2019-21. Life expectancy is a similar picture for females (80.3 years) and males (76.5 years) at a Scotland level over the same period.

Figure 2 – Disease prevalence in Falkirk and Scotland, 2021/22. Source: Public Health Scotland



* + 1. We also know that communities vary significantly on a range of indicators for health and wellbeing, and that spatial differences in health are strongly linked to levels of deprivation. For example, Denny, Nethermains, which is within 20% of the most deprived areas in Scotland, has a much higher rate for asthma patient hospitalisations (123.84 per 100,000 people) compared to less deprived and neighbouring communities such as Head of Muir and Dennyloanhead (26.88 per 100,000 people). Table 6 provides selected health and wellbeing indicators for four intermediate zones (which are combined SIMD datazones) and the Falkirk Council area showing disparities in crime, income, ill-health, life expectancies and children’s health. Comparisons can be made with the area’s other intermediate zones by using the [online ScotPHO Profiles Tool](https://www.scotpho.org.uk/comparative-health/profiles/online-profiles-tool/).

Table 6 – Selected health and wellbeing indicators for four intermediate datazones and the Council area (source: ScotPHO Profiles Tool)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicator | Denny Nethermains | Larbert North Broomage & Village | Maddison and Rumford | Grangemouth Town Centre | Falkirk Council area |
| Crime rate per 1,000 people (2017 calendar year) | 18.94 | 20.77 | 11.74 | 28.23 | 31.12 |
| Children in low-income families (2016 August snapshot) | 21.84% | 4.73% | 15.6% | 16.66% | 15.04% |
| Population income deprived | 13.99% | 4.59% | 9.99% | 13.26% | 11.27% |
| People living in 15% most ‘access deprived areas’ (2017 calendar year) | 0% | 0% | 10.11% | 0% | 11.58% |
| Population within 500 metres of a derelict site (2022 calendar year) | 0.97% | 0% | 19.8% | 60.67% | 22.89% |
| Asthma patient hospitalisations per 100,000 (3-year aggregate between 2019/20 to 2021/22 financial years) | 123.84 | 54.1 | 54.61 | 85.53 | 64.75 |
| Life expectancy females (5-year aggregate between 2017 to 2021) | 80.92 years | 78.85 years | 80.11 years | 78.34 years | 79.9 years |
| Life expectancy males (5-year aggregate between 2017 to 2021) | 75.57 years | 79.7 years | 78.15 years | 75.01 years | 76.17 years |
| Child health weight in primary (2021/22 school year) | 90.09% | 91.3% | 82.43% | 84.21% | 84.14% |

* + 1. Produced by the Scottish Government, the [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation](https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/) (SIMD) measures the levels of deprivation in Falkirk taking into account various factors including income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime and housing. According to [the Council’s SIMD Report 2020](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/council-democracy/statistics-census/simd.aspx), Falkirk has:
* 35 datazones in the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland, which is an increase of 2 from 2016
* 15% (or 24,575) of Falkirk residents live in the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland
* 5 datazones are in the worst 5%, which is one more than 2016.
* 9 datazones in the worst 6-10% - one less than 2016
* 11 datazones in the worst 16-20% - two more than 2016
  + 1. The [Population, Health and Inequalities Topic Paper](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-plan-3/evidence-report.aspx) provides additional information on the area’s spatial disparities in health and deprivation.

### Climate Change and Carbon Emissions

* + 1. One of the biggest challenges to Falkirk’s environment is climate change. In the future, it is predicted the east of Scotland will experience rising sea levels, warmer wetter winters, hotter drier summers and more extreme weather events such as heat waves and storms. These changes will have adverse impacts including, among others, damage to local infrastructure and buildings, coastal erosion, loss of biodiversity, more health risks, inequality and the increased risk and severity of coastal, river and surface water flooding. In its [sixth assessment report](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/factsheets/IPCC_AR6_WGI_Regional_Fact_Sheet_Europe.pdf), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stated that emissions of greenhouse gases from human activities are responsible for approximately 1.1°C of warming since 1850 to 1900, and that the global temperature is expected to reach or exceed 1.5°C of warming in the next twenty years. Limiting warming to close to 1.5°C or even 2°C will be beyond reach unless emissions across the planet are reduced drastically and immediately. Tables 7 to 10 provide UK climate projections for East Scotland based on five emissions scenarios: SRES A1B, RCP2.6, RCP4.5, RCP6.0 and RCP8.5 (which represents the highest emissions scenario). Table 11 provides selected climate projections for sea level rise in East Scotland in years 2020, 2040, 2060, 2080 and 2100. Please refer to [UKCP18 Guidance: Representative Concentration Pathways](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries/content/assets/metofficegovuk/pdf/research/ukcp/ukcp18-guidance---representative-concentration-pathways.pdf) as this gives a useful and brief explanation of most scenarios.

Table 7 – UK Climate Projections for mean summer precipitation in East Scotland in 2080 to 2090 relative to 1981 to 2000 (2022 version)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Emissions Scenario | 5th percentile change (%) | 10th percentile change (%) | 50th percentile change (%) | 90th percentile change (%) | 95th percentile change (%) |
| SRES A1B | -40 | -35 | -15 | 6 | 11 |
| RCP2.6 | -29 | -25 | -10 | 5 | 9 |
| RCP4.5 | -37 | -33 | -16 | 1 | 6 |
| RCP6.0 | -43 | -37 | -18 | 1 | 6 |
| RCP8.5 | -52 | -46 | -25 | 0 | 6 |

Table 8 – UK Climate Projections for mean summer temperature in East Scotland in 2080 to 2090 relative to 1981 to 2000 (2022 version)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Emissions Scenario | 5th percentile change (°C) | 10th percentile change (°C) | 50th percentile change (°C) | 90th percentile change (°C) | 95th percentile change (°C) |
| SRES A1B | 0.6 | 1 | 2.7 | 4.5 | 5.1 |
| RCP2.6 | -0.2 | 0.1 | 1.3 | 2.4 | 2.8 |
| RCP4.5 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 2.5 | 4.3 | 4.8 |
| RCP6.0 | 0.6 | 1.1 | 2.9 | 5 | 5.5 |
| RCP8.5 | 1 | 1.7 | 4.1 | 6.6 | 7.4 |

Table 9 – UK Climate Projections for mean winter precipitation in East Scotland in 2080 to 2090 relative to 1981 to 2000 (2022 version)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Emissions Scenario | 5th percentile change (%) | 10th percentile change (%) | 50th percentile change (%) | 90th percentile change (%) | 95th percentile change (%) |
| SRES A1B | -5 | 0 | 18 | 40 | 47 |
| RCP2.6 | -8 | -4 | 9 | 23 | 28 |
| RCP4.5 | -5 | -1 | 15 | 33 | 39 |
| RCP6.0 | -5 | -1 | 17 | 37 | 44 |
| RCP8.5 | -4 | 1 | 24 | 51 | 60 |

Table 10 – UK Climate Projections for mean winter temperature in East Scotland in 2080 to 2090 relative to 1981 to 2000 (2022 version)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Emissions Scenario | 5th percentile change (°C) | 10th percentile change (°C) | 50th percentile change (°C) | 90th percentile change (°C) | 95th percentile change (°C) |
| SRES A1B | -0.4 | 0.1 | 1.8 | 3.7 | 4.2 |
| RCP2.6 | -0.6 | -0.3 | 0.9 | 2 | 2.4 |
| RCP4.5 | -0.3 | 0.1 | 1.6 | 3 | 3.5 |
| RCP6.0 | -0.2 | 0.2 | 1.8 | 3.5 | 3.9 |
| RCP8.5 | -0.1 | 0.5 | 2.6 | 4.8 | 5.5 |

Table 11 – Selected UK Climate Projections for sea level rise in Edinburgh with respect to the 1981 to 2000 average (UKCP18 results).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Emissions Scenario | 2020 95th Percentile (m) | 2040 95th Percentile (m) | 2060 95th Percentile (m) | 2080 95th Percentile (m) | 2100 95th Percentile (m) |
| RCP2.6 | 0.07 | 0.16 | 0.06 | 0.37 | 0.49 |
| RCP4.5 | 0.07 | 0.17 | 0.3 | 0.45 | 0.61 |
| RCP8.5 | 0.08 | 0.2 | 0.38 | 0.62 | 0.9 |

* + 1. Carbon emissions are the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to climate change. In 2021, Scottish greenhouse gas emissions were estimated to be 41.6 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO2e). This is 1 MtCO2e less than 2020 (a -2.4 % decrease), and 40.3 MtCO2e less than 1990 (a -49.2% reduction). From Table 1.2 of the [UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2021](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2021), it is estimated that carbon emissions in the Falkirk Council area have fallen from 3,711 ktCO2e in 2005 to 2,123 ktCO2e in 2021. This equates to a -42.8% reduction in 16 years. The breakdown of 2021 carbon emissions by sector in the area is shown in Table 12 with industry (1,421.5 ktCO2e) being by far the largest source of emissions followed by transport (323.1 ktCO2e) and domestic (235.7 ktCO2e). Falkirk has the highest industrial emissions in Scotland with Grangemouth’s industrial cluster, comprising Scotland’s largest container port, sole refinery and largest petro-chemical works, accounting for 27% of all Scotland’s industrial emissions and 6% of all Scotland’s emissions.

Table 12 – 2021 Carbon emissions estimates by sector for the Falkirk Council area

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sector | Carbon emissions estimates (ktCO2e) | Percentage of Total (%) |
| Industry | 1,421.5 | 66.9 |
| Commercial | 29.4 | 1.4 |
| Public Sector | 33.8 | 1.6 |
| Domestic | 235.7 | 11.1 |
| Transport | 323.1 | 15.3 |
| Agricultural | 12.5 | 0.6 |
| Waste Management | 0.2 | 0.01 |
| Land use, land-change and forestry (LULUCF) Net Emissions | 66.8 | 3.1 |
| Total | 2,123 | 100% (after rounding down) |

* + 1. Scotland’s land-use, land-change forestry sector (LULUCF) encompasses the management of cropland, grassland, wetlands, forests and settlements and includes land use change such as afforestation, deforestation or drainage, extraction or restoration of peatland. For many years now, the sector has been a net carbon sink by removing more emissions than it emits in Scotland. Conversely, Falkirk’s LULUCF sector is a net source of carbon. In 2021, human activities associated with cropland, grassland, wetlands and settlements emitted 97.3 ktCO2e, and resulted in a net overall increase of +66.8ktC02e even after discounting the removal of -30.5ktCO2e by the area’s forest land. The yearly estimated net emissions from forest land remained static, but consistently negative averaging -30.5ktCO2e per year over the period 2005 to 2021.
    2. Per capita emissions estimate the carbon emissions (tCO2e) of an average person in a defined area (such as a local authority area or country). It is calculated as the total estimate emissions of an area divided by the population of that area. Falkirk per capita emissions were more than double the equivalent Scotland figure in every year over the period 2005 to 2021 (Table 13). However, Falkirk and Scotland per capital emissions declined respectively by -35.4% and -44.4%. over the same period despite both areas increasing in population. It should be noted too that Falkirk was consistently one of the highest local authority areas for per capital emissions in Scotland, and in the UK, over the period 2005 to 2021.

Table 13 – Per capita emissions (tCO2e) in Falkirk and Scotland over the period 2005 to 2021

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Falkirk per capital emissions ((tCO2e) | Falkirk Population ('000s, mid-year estimate) | Scotland per capita emissions (tCO2e) | Scotland Population (‘000s mid-year estimate) |
| 2005 | 24.7 | 150.1 | 9.0 | 5,110.2 |
| 2006 | 23.0 | 151.1 | 8.9 | 5,133.1 |
| 2007 | 22.0 | 152.3 | 8.8 | 5,170.0 |
| 2008 | 20.4 | 153.3 | 8.5 | 5,202.9 |
| 2009 | 21.3 | 154.2 | 7.6 | 5,231.9 |
| 2010 | 19.4 | 155.1 | 7.9 | 5,262.2 |
| 2011 | 19.6 | 156.3 | 7.1 | 5,299.9 |
| 2012 | 18.5 | 156.7 | 7.3 | 5,312.0 |
| 2013 | 18.4 | 156.9 | 7.1 | 5,324.4 |
| 2014 | 15.1 | 157.4 | 6.3 | 5,342.6 |
| 2015 | 14.7 | 158.0 | 6.2 | 5,366.2 |
| 2016 | 14.3 | 158.8 | 5.8 | 5,396.1 |
| 2017 | 15.0 | 159.5 | 5.6 | 5,414.4 |
| 2018 | 15.0 | 159.6 | 5.5 | 5,425.9 |
| 2019 | 14.1 | 160.0 | 5.4 | 5,449.2 |
| 2020 | 13.6 | 159.6 | 4.6 | 5,450.1 |
| 2021 | 13.2 | 160.7 | 5.1 | 5,479.9 |

* + 1. Scotland has statutory targets to reach net zero of greenhouse gas emissions by 2045, with interim targets of 75% by 2030 and 90% by 2040 against the 1990 baseline levels. Net zero means cutting emissions to close to zero as possible with any remaining emissions removed from the atmosphere through sequestration such as the storage of carbon in soils, water bodies, trees and other vegetation. At the local level, Falkirk Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 recognising the urgent need to tackle climate change and increase efforts to reduce emissions. The Council has set its own organisational, carbon reduction targets (Table 14) with the ambition of being net zero by 2030.

Table 14 – Falkirk Council’s organisational annual, carbon emission reduction targets.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Year | % reduction |
| 2023/23 | 10% |
| 2024/25 | 15% |
| 2025/26 | 20% |
| 2026/27 | 25% |
| 2028/29 | 20% |
| 2029/30 | 15% |

* + 1. More on the current environmental baseline for climate change and carbon emissions can be found in the [Energy, Climate Change and Resources Topic Paper](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-plan-3/evidence-report.aspx) and also in the Council’s [Local Climate Impacts Profile](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/environment/environmental-policy/climate-change/docs/adaptation-framework/01%20Local%20Climate%20Impacts%20Profile%20(2020).odt?v=202205261518), published 2020.

### Water and Flooding

* + 1. The area has a rich diversity of waterbodies including the Firth of Forth estuary, long and meandering rivers such as the River Carron and River Avon, tributary burns, reservoirs, lochs, ponds, wetlands, and the Union, and Forth and Clyde Canals. Waterbodies provide many important benefits, or ecosystem services, to the area including among others fresh drinking water, natural and built heritage, transportation, recreation and sustainable flood risk management. However, waterbodies have multiple pressures that include diffuse and point source pollution, alterations to beds, banks and shores, alterations to water levels and flows and the presence of invasive non-native species. SEPA produces the annual Water Framework Directive (WFD) classification which provides useful information for monitoring the condition of waterbodies in Scotland over time. Table 15 presents the overall condition for each of the area’s 25 monitored surface waterbodies in 2010 and 2020. In 2020, 10 had achieved the overall status of ‘good’, 12 were ‘moderate’ and 3 were ‘poor’. The area has 19 monitored groundwaters of which 9 were ‘good’ and 10 were ‘poor’ in 2020. SEPA’s [Water Classification Hub](https://www.sepa.org.uk/data-visualisation/water-classification-hub/) has further information on the status of each waterbody.

Table 15 – Overall condition of the area’s 25 monitored surface water bodies

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Surface Water | ID Number | Length or Area | Catchment | Category | Overall Status 2010 | Overall Status 2020 |
| Forth and Clyde Canal (from Grahamston to confluence with River Carron | 1 | 3.3km | Forth Estuary (South) Coastal catchment | River | Good | Good |
| Forth and Clyde Canal (Rough Castle to Grahamston) | 2 | 3.2km | River Carron | River | Good | Good |
| Forth and Clyde Canal (Wynford to Rough Castle) | 3 | 9.5km | River Carron | River | Good | Good |
| Union canal (Falkirk Wheel to Greenbank) | 4 | 2.3km | River Carron | River | Moderate | Good |
| Union canal (Kirk Bridge to Park Farm | 6 | 8.2km | River Carron | River | Good | Good |
| Logie Water/Barbauchlaw Burn | 3106 | 18.5km | Riven Avon | River | Poor | Poor |
| Drumtassie Burn | 3109 | 7.7km | River Avon | River | Moderate | Good |
| Pow Burn / Tor Burn from source to confluence with Sauchinford Burn | 3206 | 7.6km | Forth Estuary (South) Coastal | River | Good | Good |
| River Carron (Carron Valley Reservoir to Avon Burn Confluence) | 4202 | 11.7km | River Carron | River | Poor | Good |
| Island Farm Lagoon – Skinflats, Firth of Forth | 200324 | 0.1km² | Scotland river basin district | Transitional water body | Good | Good |
| Lower Forth Estuary | 200435 | 38.6km² | Scotland river basin district | Transitional water body | Good | Good |
| Union Canal (Greenbank to Kirk Bridge) | 5 | 9.7km | Forth Estuary (South) Coastal | River | Good | Moderate |
| River Avon (Logie Water confluence to Estuary) | 3100 | 15.5km | River Avon | River | Poor | Moderate |
| River Avon (South to Jawhills) | 3102 | 16.8km | River Avon | River | Good | Moderate |
| Mains Burn | 3103 | 5.5km | River Avon | River | Moderate | Moderate |
| Pow Burn from Bridge-end to Forth Estuary | 3205 | 6.5km | Forth Estuary (South) Coastal | River | Moderate | Moderate |
| Grange Burn/Westquarter Burn | 3300 | 16.3km | Forth Estuary (South) Coastal | River | Poor | Moderate |
| River Caron (Avon Burn to Bonny Water Confluences | 4201 | 4.4km | River Carron | River | Moderate | Moderate |
| Bonny Water/Red Burn | 4205 | 13.9km | River Carron | River | Poor | Moderate |
| Auchenbowie Burn (Loch Coulter to River Carron | 4210 | 10.2km | River Carron | River | Moderate | Moderate |
| Middle Forth Estuary | 200436 | 38.2km² | Scotland river basin district | Transitional water body | Moderate | Moderate |
| Upper Forth Estuary | 200437 | 9.7 km² | Scotland river basin district | Transitional water body | Poor | Moderate |
| Logie Water/Barbauchlaw Burn | 3016 | 18.5km | River Avon | River | Poor | Poor |
| River Carron (Bonny Water confluence to Carron Estuary) | 4200 | 6.8km | River Carron | River | Moderate | Poor |
| North Calder Water (u/s Hillend Reservoir) | 10063 | 6.5km | River Clyde | River | Poor | Poor |

* + 1. Many parts of the Falkirk Council area are at risk of coastal and/or river flooding having a hydrology dominated by the Forth Estuary and the two catchments of the Rivers Avon and Carron that flow into it. Surface water flooding is another source of flooding, affecting a substantial proportion of the area. The [SEPA Flood Maps](https://beta.sepa.scot/flooding/flood-maps/) show the indicative extents of coastal, river and surface water flooding. According to version 2.0 of the maps (which was very recently superseded by version 2.1), 1,438 hectares (4.9%) of land in the area falls within the medium likelihood (or 1 in 200 year) fluvial flood extent. Approximately 33 hectares (0.1%) of land is in the medium likelihood coastal flood extent. Climate change will increase flood risk in the area by rising sea levels and storm surge heights, and inland through increasing the intensity and frequency of rainfall events. SEPA’s Future Flood Maps, which are part of the Flood Maps, predict larger flood extents in the area assuming limited or no global action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by the 2080s. Falkirk Council has produced the [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-plan-3/evidence-report.aspx), bringing together various sources of information to overview the area’s current and future flood risk, and flood risk management plan actions.

### Transport

* + 1. The area has good accessibility to the major towns and cities in Scotland’s Central Belt and beyond, benefiting from excellent road, rail, active travel, canal and sea links including the M80, M876 and M9 motorways, the Edinburgh to Glasgow via Falkirk Line, the Edinburgh to Dunblane Line, the Union and Forth and Clyde Canals and the Firth of Forth. It is at the hub of the motorway and railway network while Grangemouth is Scotland’s largest container port, handling 9 million tonnes of cargo each year through specialist container, liquid and general cargo terminals. This cargo flow represents as much as 30% of Scotland’s gross domestic product (GDP).
    2. Current infrastructure for active travel in the area is extensive. There are over 1,700km of footways, footpaths and cycleways. The core path network, as identified in the Council’s Core Paths Plan and shown in this [map](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/7f85233ffe414a01804b620310ca4f67?item=4), extends to nearly 600km, much of it off-road. Key strategic routes which pass through the area include:
* NCN Route 76 – connecting Stirling, Larbert, Grangemouth and Bo’ness around the southern edge of the Forth Estuary
* NCN Route 754 - connecting Linlithgow, Polmont, Falkirk and Bonnybridge along the Forth & Clyde and Union Canals
* John Muir Way – including sections of NCN 76 and NCN 754
  + 1. There, however, remain gaps in the network and scope for improvements in the linkages between and within communities, and better integration with other travel modes. The Council’s new Active Travel Strategy identifies a strategic network of primary and secondary routes connecting communities, and rural connections linking into villages to the north and south of the area, with a commitment to deliver the primary network by 2038.
    2. Numerous statistics highlight that travel by car is the dominant transport mode in the area. The Council’s ‘Take the Right Route’ survey (Table 16) shows the modal split for various types of trips with travel by car being the highest percentage in all of trip categories. Time series data from previous surveys shows that use of the car has either increased or stayed similar since 2019.

Table 16 – Modal split for various types of trips

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Trip | Car (%) | Cycle (%) | Walk (%) | Public Transport (%) |
| Taking kids to school | 62 | 0 | 35 | 2 |
| Work | 78 | 4 | 6 | 12 |
| Full time education | 24 | 13 | 14 | 49 |
| Local shops and services | 49 | 2 | 45 | 4 |
| City and town centre | 62 | 2 | 11 | 24 |
| Supermarkets | 81 | 2 | 10 | 8 |
| Kids activities | 83 | 0 | 12 | 4 |
| Leisure | 65 | 4 | 19 | 12 |
| Visiting family/friends | 75 | 2 | 11 | 11 |
| Health services | 74 | 2 | 7 | 16 |

* + 1. In terms of travel to work, the 2011 census indicated the level of car commuting is Falkirk as 72%, significant significantly higher than the Scottish figure (62%). Public transport is 10.8% and walking 6.5%. 8% worked at or from home, a figure which will undoubtedly have increased due to the change is working patterns since the Covid 19 pandemic. In terms of destination, most work trips for residents are within the Falkirk Council area, with 14% working in Stirling, 10% in Edinburgh, 5.7% in West Lothian, and 5.1% in Glasgow. The most significant inflows of commuters are from the neighbouring Forth Valley authority areas.
    2. Travel to school is a significant trip generator. The ‘Hands Up’ surveys carried out by Sustrans show the modal split for pupils travelling to Falkirk schools from 2008 to 2022. There has been a slight decline in the proportion of children travelling by car, and an increase in bus travel. Disappointingly, the percentage of children walking to school has declined from 49.4% to 40.7%, and the proportion cycling has remained static.
    3. Regular, good quality bus transport is essential for residents, helping them access local facilities, education, work and their favourite activities. The location of bus stops are shown on this [map](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/7f85233ffe414a01804b620310ca4f67?item=4), and Traveline Scotland’s [website](https://www.travelinescotland.com/) provides information on available bus services including their routes and timetables. Bus patronage has been decreasing in Falkirk, a trend which was exacerbated by the Covid 19 pandemic. Over the period 2003-2017, the share of the population using bus services four or more days a week has decreased by an average of 0.5% annually. Factors causing this decline include congestion, long journey times, frequency and timing of services, connectivity, cost, and personal security. Congestion is a particular issue on the bus routes into Falkirk.
    4. The area is served by rail services providing direct links to towns and cities such as Glasgow, Edinburgh, Stirling, Cumbernauld, Inverness and London. This [map](https://www.projectmapping.co.uk/Reviews/Resources/sr410_c1_our_routes_dec_2022.pdf) shows the rail passenger network in Central Scotland along with the locations of the area’s five railway stations. Falkirk High is the most used station in the area followed by Larbert, Polmont, Falkirk Grahamston and then Camelon. Total passenger numbers at the stations declined by -31% over the period 2018/2019 to 2022/23 (Table 17). Most of this decline is attributed to the sharp drop in passenger numbers during the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. Rail travel, however, is recovering year by year since then as evident by a 292% rise in total passenger numbers in 2021/2022 and a 44% increase in 2022/2023.

Table 17 – Passenger entries and exits at Falkirk’s stations. Source: Office of Rail and Road

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Railway Station | Passenger entries and exits 2018/2019 | Passenger entries and exits  2019/2020 | Passenger entries and exits 2020/2021 | Passenger entries and exits  2021/2022 | Passenger entries and exits  2022/2023 | Percentage change between 2018/2019 to 2022/2023 |
| Falkirk High | 909,868 | 895,962 | 116,720 | 431,898 | 617,444 | -32% |
| Larbert | 858,388 | 889,872 | 113,242 | 424,396 | 601,565 | -30% |
| Polmont | 793,658 | 744,658 | 69,402 | 340,318 | 521,122 | -34% |
| Falkirk Grahamston | 720,008 | 709, 004 | 92,364 | 341,774 | 488,604 | -32% |
| Camelon | 142,044 | 162,874 | 24,596 | 94,790 | 124,872 | -12% |
| Total | 3,423,966 | 3,402,370 | 416,324 | 1,633,176 | 2,353,607 | -31% |

* + 1. Further information on the current state of Falkirk’s transport network can be found in the [Transport Topic Paper](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-plan-3/evidence-report.aspx), and also Transport Scotland’s [review of the Forth Valley region](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/75e1d75ab6ba49a89e68868b24e1152b) for the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2.

### Air Quality

* + 1. Poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK as long-term exposure to air pollution can cause chronic conditions, such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases as well as lung cancer, leading to poorer quality of life and reduced life expectancy. In 2020, the area’s quality on the whole was rated ‘good’ and there were no reported exceedances of the National Air Quality Strategy objectives. However, there are hotspots of poor air quality in parts of the area.
    2. Under section 83(1) of the Environment Act 1995, Falkirk Council has a responsibility to comply with relevant regulations when managing local air quality. The Council completes its Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) duties by managing an extensive air quality monitoring network, assessing results and reporting on areas of existing or anticipated poor air quality declared via Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). The area currently has 2 active AQMAs:
* [Falkirk Town Centre](https://www.scottishairquality.scot/laqm/aqma/1521), encompassing a large area of the town centre. This AQMA was declared 31 January 2013 for nitrogen dioxide (NO2) – annual mean
* [Grangemouth](https://www.scottishairquality.scot/laqm/aqma/418) encompassing Grangemouth petrochemical complex and adjacent areas. This AQMA was declared 1 November 2005 for sulphur dioxide (SO2) – 15-minute mean.
  + 1. The aforementioned AQMAs are accompanied by air quality action plans and progress reports, all of which can be viewed on the Council’s [website](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/environment/environmental-policy/air-quality/).
    2. Falkirk Council currently (as of November 2023) has 3 revoked AQMAs so far. These are:
* [Falkirk Town Centre](https://www.scottishairquality.scot/laqm/aqma/1521) which was declared 25 January 2013 for particulate matter (PM10) – 24 hour and annual mean but revoked on 3 March 2023
* [Haggs](https://www.scottishairquality.scot/laqm/aqma/630) which was declared 18 March 2010 for nitrogen dioxide (NO2) – annual mean but revoked on 5 October 2021
* [Banknock](https://www.scottishairquality.scot/laqm/aqma/630) which was declared 18 August 2011 for particulate matter (PM10) – 24 hour and annual mean but revoked on 7 January 2021
  + 1. Falkirk Council has roadside air quality monitoring stations around the council area and the two monitors which recorded highest concentrations of particulate matter (PM10 & PM2.5) were Main street, Bainsford and the area near to the M80 motorway junction in Haggs.
    2. The [Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory](https://informatics.sepa.org.uk/SPRI/) (SPRI) provides information on officially reported annual releases of specified pollutants to air and water from SEPA-regulated industrial facilities. It also publishes information on off-site transfers of waste and wastewater from these facilities. In 2022, the SPRI recorded a total of 30 sites in the area. Most of these sites are in Grangemouth and are associated with the town’s refinery or petrochemical complex.

### Waste Management

* + 1. Sustainable waste management is key to achieving a net-zero circular economy which is a model of production and consumption that involves the minimisation of waste and associated emissions and pollution through the sharing, leasing, re-using, repairing, refurbishing and recycling of existing materials and products for as long as possible. In Falkirk, the percentage of household waste recycled has remained relatively static until 2021 when it fell to 47.8% in part due to the impacts of Covid-19. (Table 18). The Scottish Government previously set a 60% household recycling target by 2020 which wasn’t achieved in Falkirk during the monitoring period although only a few local authority areas in Scotland have actually met the target. Nevertheless, the Council area has been consistently well above the Scotland percentage household waste recycled for many years now.

Table 18 – Falkirk household waste generated and recycled. Source: SEPA

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Falkirk household waste generated (tonnes) | Falkirk household waste recycled (tonnes) | Falkirk household waste percentage recycled (%) | Scotland  Household waste percentage recycled (%) | Falkirk business waste generated (tonnes) |
| 2014 | 73,620 | 39,980 | 54.3 | 42.8 | 88,278 |
| 2015 | 72,329 | 39,011 | 53.9 | 44.2 | 101,139 |
| 2016 | 71,783 | 36,832 | 51.3 | 45.2 | 110,548 |
| 2017 | 74,651 | 41,728 | 55.9 | 45.8 | 86,839 |
| 2018 | 68,571 | 34,800 | 50.8 | 44.7 | 91,118 |
| 2019 | 70,032 | 37,134 | 53.0 | 44.9 | No published data |
| 2020 | No published data | No published data | No published data | No published data | No published data |
| 2021 | 75,818 | 36,258 | 47.8 | 42.9 | 75,821 |
| 2022 | 64,308 | 33,060 | 51.4 | 43.9 | No published data |

* + 1. SEPA’s waste sites and capacity tool lists licenced waste management facilities in the Council area which include landfill sites, transfer stations and waste recycling facilities. The number of facilities is shown in Table 19 for Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling Council areas as required capacity is calculated by SEPA for the Forth Valley area. Most facilities are in the Falkirk Council area.

Table 19- SEPA Waste Sites (2022)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Forth Valley | Operational Waste Sites | Non-operational waste sites | Total for Local Authority |
| Falkirk | 25 | 22 | 47 |
| Clackmannanshire | 5 | 4 | 9 |
| Stirling | 10 | 8 | 18 |
| Total | 40 | 34 | 74 |

* + 1. SEPA lists all licenced sites which are operational or non-operational. Of the 25 operational sites in the Falkirk Council area there are 11 transfer stations, 6 metal recycling sites, 4 landfill sites, 2 civic amenity sites and 2 other treatment types. Transfer stations are the largest category of sites across the Forth Valley area with 17 operational and 10 non-operational sites. They facilitate the collection and sorting of waste before transfer to another destination such as a landfill site or recycling facility. The Earls Gate Energy from Waste Facility in Grangemouth has a capacity of 265,500 tonnes per year and is included as one of Falkirk’s non-operational sites in Table 19. It was a non-operational site in 2022 but it is now operational.
    2. Table 20 lists all four operational landfill sites in Forth Valley in 2022, although the Broadside Landfill site is now non-operational. Two sites are for non-hazardous waste and one site at Avondale is for hazardous waste. The estimated date of closure for the Avondale landfill sites is shown as 1/12/23 but both sites are still operation.

Table 20 – Land capacity operational sites. Source: SEPA Waste Sites and Capacity Tool

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Operation Landfill Sites | Remaining capacity at 31/12/22 for year (tonnes) | Estimated date for closure |
| Avondale Landfill, Polmont (non-hazardous) | 36,981 | 1/12/2023 |
| Avondale Landfill, Polmont (hazardous) | 17,225 | 1/12/2023 |
| West Carron Landfill, Falkirk | 239,881 | 1/12/2027 |
| Broadside Landfill | 208,502 | 1/01/2024 |

* + 1. Scotland’s current targets for waste and resource management are set out in Making Things Last: a circular economy for Scotland (Scottish Government 2016). They are:
* reduce total waste arising in Scotland by 15% against 2011 levels;
* reduce food waste by 33% against 2013 levels;
* recycle 70% of remaining waste; and
* send no more than 5% of remaining waste to landfill by 2025
  + 1. SEPA has produced an estimate of the national shortfall in waste management infrastructure capacity required to meet the current targets. Tables 21 and 22 show the capacity requirements for Clackmannanshire, Stirling and Falkirk Local Authorities which are grouped together. The last available capacity estimates are based on 2018 data and were published in December 2020.

Table 21 – Additional operational waste management infrastructure capacity required to meet the Making Things Last targets (tonnes) (2018 data)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Forth Valley | Stirling, Falkirk, Clackmannanshire |
| Total additional diversion capacity needed | 105,000 |
| Additional capacity needed to manage source segregated recyclables\* | 45,000 |
| Additional capacity needed to manage unsorted waste† | 60,000 |

Reported to nearest 5,000 tonnes.

\* clean MRF, AD, composting, and other e.g. baling, shredding and cleaning source segregated recyclables

† dirty MRF, MBT, MHT, EfW

Table 22 – Ten year rolling landfill capacity required (tonnes) (2018 data)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Forth Valley | Stirling, Falkirk, Clackmannanshire |
| 10-year capacity of existing landfill infrastructure | 2,050,000 |
| 10-year landfill required capacity | 800,000 |

Reported to nearest 10,000 tonnes

* + 1. The Avondale MRF near Polmont and the Energy from Waste Facility in Grangemouth will exceed the Table 21 capacity requirements for managing unsorted waste. There is scope for additional facilities to address capacity requirements for source segregated recyclables.
    2. Operational landfill capacity at December 2022 is now less than the 10-year landfill required capacity in Table 22, but this is based on 2018 data. In addition, Avondale Landfill site has a minded to grant application for a hazardous waste cell with an assumed capacity of around 78,000 tomes based on the site volume provided.

### Minerals and Aggregates

* + 1. The Falkirk Council area has remaining coal reserves with one extant planning consent for opencast coal to the south of Avonbridge. The area has also had several sand and gravel extraction quarries although there are no longer any active quarries in the area and one peat extraction site operates near Letham. Two crushed rock quarries operated to the north-west of Denny until recently although these are now understood to be under the same operator. One small dimension stone quarry also has an active consent to the north-east of Denny. The area has been the subject of Petroleum, Exploration and Development Licences (PEDL) for onshore unconventional oil and gas and PEDL 133 remains in place. Oil and gas licencing powers were devolved to Scotland in 2018 and the licences are mapped on the Marine Scotland [website](https://marine.gov.scot/maps/nmpi).
    2. The extent of the landbank of permitted reserves for construction aggregates in the Falkirk area is unknown. The small number of quarries in the area mean that information is omitted for the Forth Valley area from the most recent 2019 Aggregates Survey for confidentiality reasons. The Council’s [Energy, Climate Change and Resources Topic Paper](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-plan-3/evidence-report.aspx) provides additional background to minerals and aggregates in the context of the area.
    3. Peat extraction takes place at one site in Council area, near Letham.

### Biodiversity, Trees and Woodland

* + 1. Biodiversity is a wide term for all the variety of life on our planet, including plants, animals and their habitats. Globally and nationally, biodiversity is declining to the extent that it is a major crisis for both humanity and the natural environment. Adopted by the UN’s Convention of Biological Diversity, [the Living Planet Index](https://www.livingplanetindex.org/) is a measure of the state of the world’s biodiversity based on the population trends of vertebrate species from terrestrial, freshwater and marine habitats. The index tracks thousands of species and reported in 2022 an average 69% decrease across monitored wildlife populations over the period 1970 to 2018 (source [Living Report Planet 2022](https://wwfint.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/embargo_13_10_2022_lpr_2022_full_report_single_page_1.pdf)). Around 1 million species across the planet are facing extinction, more than ever recorded in human history. The [Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045: Tackling the Nature Emergency](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-biodiversity-strategy-2045-tackling-nature-emergency-scotland/documents/) acknowledges that Scotland is presently in a biodiversity crisis, reporting:
* Nearly half of Scotland’s species have decreased in abundance and 11% are under the threat of extinction
* a 24% decline in average abundance of 352 terrestrial and freshwater species between 1986 and 2016
* there was a 38% decline in the Scottish breeding seabird indicator between 1986 and 2016
  + 1. The major threats to biodiversity are linked to human activity and include climate change, habitat fragmentation, invasive non-native species, development pressure, pollution and the over exploitation of natural resources.
    2. Falkirk is home to a rich variety of wildlife including fascinating habitats, plants and animals. Some of them are nationally important or threatened. At least 45 of the area’s plants and animals are UK priorities for conservation, and a further 19 are Scottish priorities. Bats, great crested newts and otters are the European Protected Species known to occur within the area. Other legally protected species known to be in the area include:
* Adder
* Atlantic Salmon
* Badger
* Barn Owl
* Common Tern
* Kingfisher
* Red Squirrel
* Short-eared Owl
* Slow Worm
* Water Vole
  + 1. The area has 20 priority habitats which have deemed to be of principle importance for the purpose of conservation. These habitats have been grouped into similar types for the purposes of producing the action plans in the Falkirk Local Biodiversity Action Plan (Table 23).

Table 23 – Extent of priority habitat types in the Falkirk Council area

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Priority Habitat Type | Area of Priority Habitat Type |
| Estuary | 14.4 km² |
| Farmland and Grassland | 171.2 km² |
| Health and Bog | 1.5 km² |
| Inland Water and Wetland | 2.2 km² |
| Urban | 65 km² |

* + 1. About 20% (or 6,000ha) of the area’s total land surface is a nature designation of international, national, or local importance (Table 24). International designations include the Special Protection Areas (SPA) at the Firth of Forth and Slamannan Plateau; a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) at Black Loch; and a Ramsar Site at the Firth of Forth. National designations include 10 Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSI). Carron Dams, Bonnyfield and Kinneil comprise the area’s three Local Nature Reserves. The network of local designated sites includes Wildlife Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and Geodiversity Sites. Wildlife Sites are designated for their local ecological importance while the SINC designation takes account community, amenity and/or educational value. A geodiversity site is a site identified and demonstrated to be of local geological or geomorphological importance. On this [map](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/7f85233ffe414a01804b620310ca4f67?item=5), you can see the extent and locations of the nature designations except the Firth of Forth Ramsar site which extends to, and has statutorily protection as, the Firth of Forth SPA. Please note the Ramsar site is also protected by the Firth of Forth SSSI which covers the SPA plus a wider area (see NatureScot’s [SiteLink map](https://sitelink.nature.scot/map)).

Table 24 – Summary of nature designations

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Designation | Tier | Number of Sites | Area |
| Special Areas for Conservation (SAC) | International | 1 | Black Loch Moss SAC (c. 2.5ha in the Council area but overall area is 108ha) |
| Special Protection Areas (SPA) | International | 2 | Firth of Forth SPA (c. 1440ha in the Council area but overall area is 6314ha)  Slamannan Plateau SPA (c. 10.3ha in the Council area but overall area is 616ha) |
| Ramsar Sites | International | 1 | Firth of Forth SPA (c. 1440ha in the Council area but overall area is 6314ha) |
| Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) | National | 10 | The total approximate area of SSSIs in the Council area is 2012ha |
| Local Nature Reserve (LNR) | Local | 3 | Bonnyfield LNR (c. 28ha), Kinneil Foreshore LNR (55ha) and Carron Dams LNR (18ha) |
| Wildlife Site | Local | 63 plus 9 potential | Approximately 2,220ha |
| Geodiversity Sites | Local | 3 | The total area is unknown as the extent of geodiversity sites is not fully known. |
| Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) | Local | 25 and 2 potential | Approximately 360ha |

* + 1. Table 25 provides the summary condition of the features of each statutorily protected nature site in the area. In most cases, the features are categorised as ‘favourable’, ‘recovering’ or ‘unfavourable’. More information can be accessed from NatureScot’s [SiteLink](https://sitelink.nature.scot/site/8499).

Table 25 – Summary condition of statutorily protected nature sites in Falkirk

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Designation | Summary condition |
| Black Loch Moss SAC | The site has one feature, and this has been categorised as 100% in ‘recovering’. |
| Firth of Forth SPA | Of the site’s 28 features, 19 (67.9%) are ‘favourable’ and 9 (32.1%) are ‘unfavourable’. |
| Firth of Forth Ramsar Site | As above. |
| Slamannan Plateau SPA | The site has one feature, and this has been categorised as 100% in ‘recovering’. |
| Avon Gorge (SSSI) | The site has one feature, and this has been categorised as 100% ‘unfavourable’. |
| Bo’mains Meadow (SSSI) | The site has one feature, and this has been categorised as 100% in ‘favourable’. |
| Carriber Glen SSSI | The site has one feature, and this has been categorised as 100% ‘unfavourable’. |
| Carron Dams (SSSI) | As above. |
| Carron Glen (SSSI) | Of the site’s three features, 1(33.3%) is ‘favourable’ and 2 (66.7%) are ‘unfavourable’. |
| Darnrig Moss (SSSI) | The site has one feature, and this has been categorised as 100% ‘favourable’. |
| Denny Muir (SSSI) | Of the site’s three features, 1(33.3%) is ‘favourable’ and 2 (66.7%) are ‘unfavourable’. |
| Howierig Muir (SSSI) | The site has one feature, and this has been categorised as 100% ‘unfavourable’. |
| Firth of Forth SSSI | Of the site’s 49 features, 32 are ‘favourable’, 15 are ‘unfavourable’, 1 is not assessed and 1 is to be denotified. |
| Slamannan Plateau SSSI | The site has one feature, and this has been categorised as 100% in ‘favourable’. |
| Black Loch Moss SSSI | As above |

* + 1. [SG08 Local Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/supplementary-guidance/docs/ldp2/08%20SG08%20Local%20Nature%20Conservation%20and%20Geodiversity%20Sites.pdf?v=202107191626) (published November 2020) provides information on the definition and conservation value of the Council’s suite of Wildlife Sites, Geodiversity Sites and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. The SG contains statements for each site, which provide details of site location and size; highlight the key features of importance at each site; provide a brief site description and summary of the site’s nature conservation interest; and indicate conservation and enhancement opportunities for each site such as control of invasive species, maintenance, sustainable grass management, grazing control, bog restoration etc. Only a proportion of local sites are under active management and, while they have some protection through the planning system, they are vulnerable to operations that do not need require planning permission. Since 2000, two SINCs (Baltic Quay, Grangemouth and Hall Wood, High Bonnybridge) have been fully lost to development There has also been a partial loss of Torwood Mire wildlife site due to an energy related development, and a partial loss of a SINC at Rodel Drive in Polmont due to housing development. Falkirk Council intends to review all local sites as part of the plan-making process. The review may propose additional sites, boundary changes to existing sites and/or deletion of some sites.
    2. Falkirk Council and other partners have been involved in a variety of programmes to enhance biodiversity over recent years, latter assisted by funding from the Nature Restoration Fund. Notable amongst these are the tidal exchange project managed by RSPB at Skinflats on the Forth; the Falkirk Bogs project involving peatland restoration on the Slamannan Plateau; the ongoing implementation of the Forest Estate Plan; and the recent pilot sustainable grass management project across Council parks and greenspaces. More information on the Council’s efforts to conserve and enhance biodiversity can be found in the [Biodiversity Duty Reports](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/environment/environmental-management/biodiversity.aspx).
    3. A nature network is a joined-up system of places on land and in water that allows plants, seeds, animals, nutrients and water to move from place to place through a series of suitable habitats, habitat corridors and stepping-stones. Connectivity is necessary for a functioning and healthy ecosystem, genetic diversity, and the adaptation and survival of species to pressures such as climate change. Several information sources form the environmental baseline for nature networks in Falkirk. An exercise in mapping nature networks in the Council area was undertaken in 2008 through the Integrated Habitat Network (IHN) Study. This involved mapping certain habitat types along with species dispersal buffers indicating the maximum distance species would have to travel within that network to find another concentration of favoured habitat. The IHN work helped to inform the Falkirk Greenspace network mapping undertaken for the LDP. The Central Scotland Green Network’s [2021 Habitat Connectivity Map](https://www.nature.scot/doc/central-scotland-green-network-csgn-habitat-connectivity-map-guides) uses more recent data and includes the feature of identifying opportunity areas for connecting habitats. The Inner Forth Habitat Network was a pilot mapping project undertaken by the Inner Forth Futures partnership to identify local and regional priority areas for investment in key habitat areas within the Inner Forth, encompassing parts of Stirling, Falkirk, Clackmannanshire and Fife. Based on outputs from co-design workshops in 2018, concept maps were built up which are accompanied by a user guide and action plans for the key habitat types (river and wetland, peatland and heathland, intertidal, grassland and open mosaic habitat, urban and woodland).
    4. Most recently, Falkirk Council has commissioned consultants to develop a Spaces for Nature Action Plan to guide nature restoration and sustainable management across Council parks and greenspaces. This has involved mapping existing datasets from which a heat map is produced, indicating suitable areas for enhancement and nature networks.
    5. Tree and woodlands make a positive contribution to the landscape, character and biodiversity of the area, as well as sequestering carbon. They help create distinctive and attractive places including the urban green spaces of the Helix, the historic designed landscape of Callendar Park and the native woodlands in the Carron and Avon Valleys. Figure 3 is a reproduced map from the Falkirk Forestry and Woodland Strategy showing the extent of woodland cover by type in circa 2015.

Figure 3 – Reproduced woodland cover map (circa 2015) from the Falkirk Forestry and Woodland Strategy

A map that shows the b areas of each type of woodland in the Falkirk Council area 



* + 1. Currently, woodland cover of all types accounts for around 17% of Falkirk’s total land area which is just below the Scottish national average of 18%. Around a third of woodland cover is formed by commercial softwood plantations on the Slamannan Plateau to the south of the area with a further third being broadleaved woodland and some 7% being mixed. The Falkirk Forestry and Woodland Strategy guides the management and expansion of woodland in the area. It sets a target of 850ha of new woodland over the period 2015 to 2055 or 21.25ha per year, and maps broad areas of opportunity for new softwood forests, mixed woodland, native woodland, energy woodland and urban woodland. The Environmental Report for LDP2 reported an annual rate of woodland creation of 47.03ha between 1997 to 2008. This reflects the major emphasis on tree planting in the early years of Falkirk Greenspace, as part of the Central Scotland Forest Strategy, as supported by successive phases of WIAT (Woodland In and Around Towns) funding. The annual rate slowed to 4.64ha per year between 2009 to 2013 perhaps reflecting the reduction in opportunities for large scale planting on public land. More recently, the Council’s focus has been on management and improvement of the urban woodland resource in its own ownership through its Forest Estate Plan and Urban Woodland Management Plans for different sincluding Bo’ness, Bonnybridge, Denny, Polmont and Falkirk North and South. In addition, Falkirk Council is a partner of [Forth Climate Forest](https://www.stir.ac.uk/about/scotlands-international-environment-centre/forth-climate-forest/) which is an ambitious initiative that aims to increase woodland cover across Forth Valley by 3% by 2032, amounting to some 16.4 million new trees across 8,300 hectares.
    2. Table 26 estimates the number of trees planted through new woodland creation in Falkirk over the years 2016 to 2020. There was zero recorded planting in years 2019 and 2020, and woodland creation in 2020 to 2021 was estimated to be 2ha according to figures published by Scottish Forestry.

Table 26 – Estimate of the number of trees planted in Falkirk. Source: Scottish Forestry

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Year | Estimated of the number of trees planted (millions) (calculation = hectares planted multiplied by 2000 tees) |
| 2016 | 0.03 |
| 2017 | 0.05 |
| 2018 | 0.19 |
| 2019 | 0.00 |
| 2020 | 0.00 |
| Total | 0.28 |

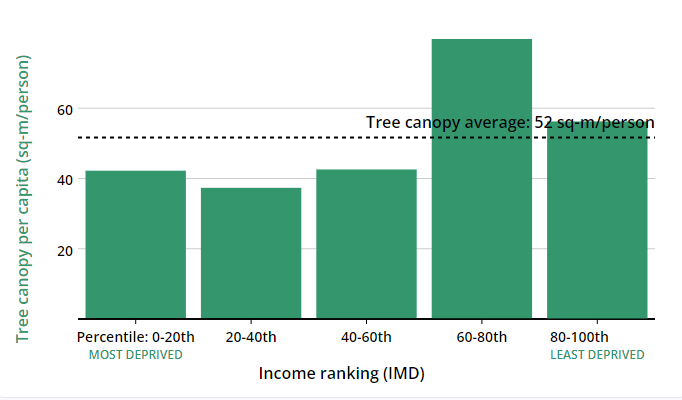
* + 1. The Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS) identified and mapped the location, extent, and type and condition of all of Scotland’s native woodlands. Launched in 2014, it was the first authoritative inventory of our native woodland and created a useful baseline for monitoring change. The total area of native wood surveyed in the area was approximately 1,920 hectares which equates to 6.4% of Falkirk’s total land area. The locations of surveyed native woodlands are shown in this [map](https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/aa6b4ff901294dea84dcff3205d48fab?data_id=dataSource_11-17c32120a8f-layer-9%3A1528).
    2. Ancient, semi natural woodland is land in the area that has been continually wooded to present day since 1750 or 1860. Its age means that is especially important for local biodiversity and heritage. It is estimated that the area has 303ha of ancient woodland, and 1137ha long established woodland of plantation origins.
    3. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are made by Falkirk Council to protect trees and woodlands that have a particular amenity value. The area has 59 TPOs in force equating to 507ha in total. This [map](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/7f85233ffe414a01804b620310ca4f67?item=7) shows the locations and extents of TPOs and ancient semi, natural woodland in the area.
    4. Tree equity is about ensuring all communities have equitable access to the environmental benefits of trees. The Woodland Trust has partnered with American Forests and the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare to produce a [tree equity tool](https://uk.treeequityscore.org/map#12.15/56.02757/-3.76033) showing the spatial inequalities in tree cover in some areas of the UK. The tool calculates an overall tree equity score out of 100 for urban neighbourhoods. The lower the score, the greater the need for trees; and a score of 100 means tree equity has been achieved. The Falkirk Council area has been broken down into 194 datazones, of which 38 (19.5%) have a low score between 0-69 and only 14 (7.2%) have reached the tree equity score of 100 (Table 27). The vast majority of datazones (71 or 36.6%) have a score between 80 to 89. The tool estimates 1.12km² of canopy expansion (or about 20,000 medium trees) would be needed to bring the average score across all datazones up to 75.

Table 27 – Distribution of tree equity scores in the Falkirk area

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Tree equity score | Number of data zones | Percentage of total data zone |
| 0 to 69 | 38 | 19.5% |
| 70-79 | 44 | 22.7% |
| 80-89 | 71 | 36.6% |
| 90-99 | 27 | 13.9% |
| 100 | 14 | 7.2% |
| Total | 194 | 100% (after rounding) |

* + 1. The tree equity tool calculated the area’s tree canopy average as 52 sqm per person. It shows a correlation between income domain and tree canopy. The tree canopy average per person is, on average, lower in datazones within the income percentiles of 0-20th, 20-40th or 40th-60th and higher in less deprived areas within the 60-80th or 80-100th income percentiles (Figure 4). However, the data should be treated with a word of caution. The delineation of a datazone’s boundaries means that a datazone could be given a low score even though a large public woodland, which is just beyond the datazone, is accessible and nearby. Some datazones will be more constrained than others for tree planting for example due to limited land availability and growing conditions.

Figure 4 – Tree canopy versus income ranking in Falkirk (source the Tree Equity Score UK)



* + 1. Non-native species are plants or animals which are not native to the area and which have been introduced by the actions of people. A small proportion of these are ‘invasive’, causing damage to Falkirk’s environment. The Council records the sighting of invasive non-native species on GIS although the geographic coverage of the data is limited. The Native Woodland Survey of Scotland provides information on invasive non-native species recorded in Falkirk’s native woodlands. Invasive non-native species known or likely to occur in the area include:
* Bullhead
* Canadian Pondweed
* Chalara Fraxinea (Ash dieback fungus)
* Giant Hogweed
* Himalayan Balsam
* Japanese Knotweed
* Minnow
* New Zealand Flatworm
* New Zealand Pygmyweed
* North American Mink
* North American Skunk Cabbage
* Parrot’s Feather
* Rainbow Trout
* Rhododendron Ponticum
* Ruffe
* Sea Buckthorn
* Water Fern
* Zebra Mussel

### Vacant and Derelict Land

* + 1. Falkirk Council records the extent and state of vacant and derelict land in Falkirk through the annual Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey. It also produces the [Register of Vacant and Derelict Land](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/monitoring-and-information/register-vacant-derelict-land.aspx) to provide more detailed information on individual sites with a view to encouraging their re-use or development in accordance with the development plan.
    2. The amount of vacant and derelict land tends to fluctuate between surveys. In the last twenty years the most significant reduction occurred between 2002 and 2009 when Falkirk recorded a decrease of 52%, the second highest reduction in Scotland. This was a time when many large former industrial sites were re-developed for other uses, principally housing. Since then, there was a significant increase between 2015 and 2016 which can be attributed to the identification of vacant and derelict land within the petrochemical operations at Grangemouth, and the identification of a large paper mill in Denny. Between 2019-2021 the amount of vacant and derelict land in Falkirk has been fairly constant with little reduction. There has been a rise in 2022 due a further site being identified within the Grangemouth complex (Table 28).
    3. Currently, aside from Grangemouth, the two largest derelict sites are at Whitecross (67.39ha) and Cannerton in Banknock (17.29ha). Both sites are former brickworks, with Cannerton being identified for mixed use development, and Whitecross allocated business and industry, in LDP2.
    4. There are significant areas of vacant land in Grangemouth associated with the docks and petrochemical operations. However, because of the nature of the petrochemical companies’ operations, information on vacant land (particularly site boundaries), is very limited, and so some sites are not recorded within the survey. Further fluctuations in Grangemouth are inevitable in the coming years as operational decisions are made about land. Sites that currently look vacant or derelict may be temporarily in use for open storage or may be identified for future use or to accommodate infrastructure for the wider site. There are also isolated pockets of derelict land throughout the rural area, largely associated with former mineral workings.
    5. Table 28 disaggregates the total areas of derelict and vacant land by year since 2015. As of 2022, the Falkirk Council area has a total of 301 hectares of derelict and urban vacant land equating to 180 full size football pitches. This distribution of this land can be viewed on this [map](https://falkirk.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/interactivelegend/index.html?appid=50d6cb60c3864c77922ab57e4a4ebc7b).

Table 28 – Total derelict and vacant land from 2015 to 2022

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Total Derelict Land (ha) | Total  Urban Vacant Land (ha) | Total Derelict and Urban Vacant Land (ha) |
| 2015 | 108 | 91 | 200 |
| 2016 | 163 | 83 | 246 |
| 2017 | 210 | 75 | 285 |
| 2018 | 208 | 69 | 277 |
| 2019 | 194 | 64 | 258 |
| 2020 | 185 | 70 | 255 |
| 2021 | 190 | 67 | 257 |
| 2022 | 246 | 54.9 | 301 |

* + 1. Table 29 estimates the percentage of Falkirk’s population living within 500m of any derelict land in the area the between 2015 to 2021. The percentage nearly doubled between 2015 and 2016 but since then has remained relatively static. No data is available for 2020 and 2022.

Table 29 – Percentage of Falkirk’s population living within 500m of derelict land

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Year | Percentage of the population living within 500m of derelict land (%) |
| 2015 | 13 |
| 2016 | 24.3 |
| 2017 | 25.1 |
| 2018 | 27.1 |
| 2019 | 26.0 |
| 2020 | No published data available |
| 2021 | 23.4 |
| 2022 | No published data available |

### Contaminated and Unstable Land

* + 1. The Council is required by law to keep a public register of contaminated land. While there are currently no entries on this register, many sites in the area are suspected of being potentially contaminated. Table 30, below, reports the number of sites recorded at potential risk of contamination at the time of the SEA for LDP2. More up-to-date data, if available, will be sourced for the Environmental Report.

Table 30 – Number of potentially contaminated sites

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Total number of potentially contaminated sites | Number at High and medium risk | Number at Medium risk | Number at Medium and low risk | Number at Low risk |
| 2,721 | 140 | 862 | 1602 | 117 |

* + 1. The SEA for LDP2 states approximately 9.5 km² of the Council area is affected by quarries or landscape alterations. There are 946 individual quarries and landscape alterations, and this figure can be roughly broken down into 503 historic quarries, 297 mining and quarrying and 146 heaps. 505 of the 946 individual features are indicated to have been in-filled to some degree. Some sites have been successfully restored using bond money and grants from, for example the Woodland Trust (at Roughcastle) for countryside access. Far more sites remain, however, un-restored.
    2. Most of the Council area is in a development at risk area because of past coal mining activity. The Coal Authority has produced a [detailed interactive map](https://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/coalauthority/home.html) showing the range of coal related hazards in the area.

### Major Hazards and Pipeline Consultation Zones

* + 1. Grangemouth is home to the largest concentration of COMAH (Control of

Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015) “Top Tier” establishments in

Scotland. Regulation of the chemicals manufactured at the various plants in

the town is tightly controlled under health and safety legislation and a series

of hazard consultation zones defined by HSE operate around each hazard

source, which restricts the scale and nature of new development.

* + 1. There are some hazard consultation zones in other communities around the

area, albeit smaller in scale than in Grangemouth; these occur west of

Bonnybridge, in Larbert, and at Kinnaird House.

* + 1. With the presence of the petro-chemical complex at Grangemouth, it is clear

that the area will be transected by pipelines supplying oil and petroleum

products. The strategic location of the Council area in central Scotland means that the area is also criss-crossed by strategic pipelines for other energy providers, notably National Gird Gas and Scottish Gas Networks. The combination of these pipelines means that some locations are ‘hot-spots’.

for corridor routes. The width of the consultation zones in these corridors

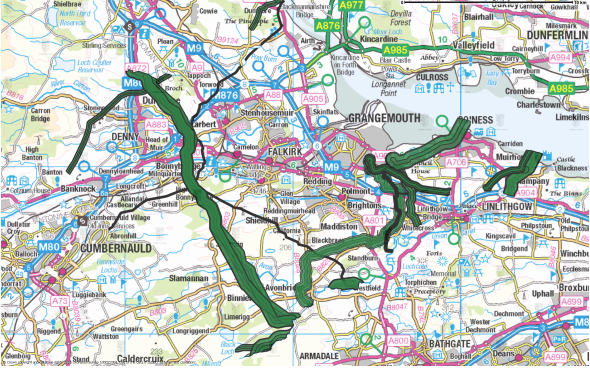
varies depending on the fuel being transported; typically, they range from

150m for National Grid’s trunk pipeline traversing the west of the district, to

870m for the BP/Shell pipelines meandering around the Bo’ness, Avondale and south-eastern rural areas of the district. Some pipelines have no hazard consultation zones attached to them but do potentially pose a hazard to development.

* + 1. Figure 5 is a map showing the pipeline corridors traversing the Council area:

Figure 5 – Map of pipeline corridors [source: Technical Report 4 (Revised): Strategic Constraints – September 2018]



* + 1. As a general guide the following areas have significant concentrations of

pipeline corridors:

* **Grangemouth and Bo’ness:** Wholeflats, Inveravon, Polmonthill, Avondale, Avonbank, Kinneil, Bo’ness Foreshore west, Birkhill
* **Rural South:** Myrehead, The Loan, Whitecross, Bowhouse, Standburn North, Avonbridge West, East Bonhard (by Champany), Greenrigg, Auchengean, Darnrigg Moss, Holehouse
* **Rural North:** Dunmore, Glenbervie House
* **Denny**: Wellsfield and Quarter (north of Dunipace)
* **Bonnybridge and Banknock**: Hills of Dunipace, East Bonnybridge, Roughcastle, East of High Bonnybridge
  + 1. Some locations in the Council area are transversed by a Scottish Water mains pipe which operates are at a significant internal pressure and, therefore, has potential to damage properties nearby. Scottish Water aims to minimise this risk by ensuring an adequate distance is maintained between Scottish Water assets and proposed developments.

### Historic Environment

* + 1. Falkirk has a wealth of built and cultural assets reflecting its interesting and varied history, and its key location in relation to key events such as the Roman occupation of Scotland, the Jacobite rebellions of the 18th century and the Industrial Revolution. Many assets benefit from statutory designation which protect the area’s historic environment through legislation and the planning process. Table 31, below, provides a summary of Falkirk’s statutorily designated historic environment sites or areas.

Table 31 – Summary of Falkirk’s statutorily designated historic environment sites or areas (updated from Historic Environment Strategy for Falkirk 2018)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Designation | Tier | Number | Summary |
| World Heritage Site | International | 1 | The Antonine Wall, is part of the transnational Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site. The Wall extends across Scotland for 37 miles, from Old Kilpatrick in West Dunbartonshire to Carriden in Bo’ness; it provides the largest and most important concentration of archaeological interest in the council area including sections of the wall itself, forts and camp. |
| Scheduled Monuments | National | 82 | These range from constituent and ancillary parts of the Antonine Wall such as ramparts, forts, fortlets and camps to domestic and defensive prehistoric sites, ecclesiastical sites, castles, dovecots and canals. After the Antonine Wall, the next most important archaeological sites are the Roman forts at Camelon and the associated temporary camps (one of the largest such concentrations in the world). The Forth and Clyde and Union Canals are important legacies of the area’s industrial past. These were restored to navigation under the Millennium Link project. |
| Listed buildings | National | 352 | These include a rich mix of type and scale of structure including tenements, town and country villas, churches, bespoke public buildings, bridges, viaducts, aqueducts, farmhouses and steadings, industrial workshops and harbours. There are 26 Category A Listed Buildings including landmark buildings such as the Pineapple, Dunmore, Blackness Castle, Callendar House and the Steeple. The area also has 196 Category B listed buildings and 130 Category C listed buildings. |
| Conservation areas |  | 9 | These consist of 2 town centres (Bo’ness and Falkirk); 2 Victorian town suburbs (Arnothill and Grange) and 5 estate and industrial villages (Airth, Allandale, Dunmore, Letham and Muirhouses) |
| Inventory of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes | National | 3 | These include Dunmore Park, The Pineapple and Callendar Park. |
| Historic Marine Protected  Areas | National | 0 | There are no designated Historic Marine Protected Areas within the Falkirk Council area. |
| Inventory of Historic Battlefields | National | 3 | These include the Battle of Kilsyth, Battle of Falkirk II and Battle of Linlithgow Bridge |

* + 1. The area has three sites (Battle of Kilsyth, Battle of Falkirk II and Battle of Linlithgow Bridge) that are included in the Inventory of Historic Battlefields. However, the historically significant site of the first Battle of Falkirk is not included; and the exact location of the battlefield is not known. The 1820 Battle of Bonnymuir is another battle of historical importance which is not in the national inventory.
    2. There are various other areas of architectural, historic or townscape merit across the Council area which do not have conservation area status. These areas form coherent and interesting groups of buildings and spaces and include the mid-20th century garden city style settlement at Westquarter as well as the Victorian and Edwardian districts in Falkirk, Grangemouth, Larbert Polmont and Denny. In recognition of their significance, the Council has designated the following places as Areas of Townscape Value:
* The Woodlands area of Falkirk
* Terraced Cottages in the Grahamston area
* Grahams Road frontages, Falkirk
* Sandstone properties south of the Town Centre in Bo’ness.
* Parts of Bridgeness, Bo’ness
* Parts of Bo’ness Road, Grangemouth
* Westquarter Village, “model” village
* Old Polmont
* Parts of Station Road, Polmont
* Parts of South Broomage, Larbert
* Parts of Stirling Street/Glasgow Road, Denny
  + 1. You can find the locations of all statutory protected historic environment sites and areas on [Past Map](https://www.pastmap.org.uk/map). The Areas of Townscape Value can be viewed on this [map](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/7f85233ffe414a01804b620310ca4f67?item=9).
    2. Historic Environment Scotland’s [Buildings at Risk Register](https://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/) brings together potential restorers and developers with buildings sites that are considered at risk or under threat. As of 12 December 2023, 33 buildings were identified at risk on the register with only one of those (the Category B listed Rosebank Distillery) noted as restoration in progress.
    3. Sites of regional or local archaeological importance are sites which are not as important as national monuments or listed buildings but are still significant and can be found in the Council’s Sites and Monuments Record. They range from doocots to canals (such as the Carron canal, the Bo’ness Canal, the Stirling Canal). They also include the find spots of such things as Bronze Age arrowheads, Roman coins etc. Our most interesting maritime archaeology is in connection with the harbour and port facilities. The most important is that at Airth where the whole dock and part of the pow were lined with oak planks in the 17th and 18th centuries. The site now lies inland, under a playing field and arable field. At Bo’ness the old harbour is also inland – under roads and recreational areas. The facilities at Grangemouth are industrial in scale and date from 1770 onwards. The River Carron was a major point of access, and the lower reaches have numerous wharfs. Saltpans are associated with Blackness, Bonhard pans, Kinglass Pans, Grangepans, Bo’ness, Kinneil, Grangemouth and Dunmore.

### Green and Blue Network

* + 1. The value of green and blue spaces can be greatly enhanced by linking them together into a green and blue network, giving communities convenient and attractive access to residential areas, workplaces, community facilities, public transport and nearby amenities. Falkirk Greenspace has provided the conceptual and policy framework for the green and blue network in the Council area for some 30 years. It was first conceived in 1993 as a means of providing a strategic focus for investment in environmental enhancement in the green belt and peri-urban areas of the district. It was progressively integrated into successive development plans and linked into the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) when it was introduced in 2009.
    2. In overall terms, Falkirk Greenspace is a series of corridors and wedges providing separation and setting for the closely spaced network of towns and villages which make up the settlement pattern of the Council area. These corridors penetrate into the urban areas via fingers of open space, and extend out into the rural hinterland following identifiable habitat/access corridors. The network is strongly influenced by the river and canal corridors and by topography which has tended to make links stronger in a west-east direction than north-south. There are important links into adjacent local authority areas. Each of Falkirk Greenspace’s 14 spatial components are described in the [Green/Blue Infrastructure and Networks Topic Paper](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-plan-3/evidence-report.aspx) along with their character/function, recent investment (since the LDP2 review in 2018) and future priorities, and opportunities.

### Open Space

* + 1. Open space performs a wide range of functions in the Council area including recreation, play, access, health and wellbeing, placemaking, landscape, biodiversity, climate mitigation and flood management. The current Open Space Strategy, approved in 2015, assigns the area’s open spaces to one or more functions drawn from Planning Advice Note (PAN) 65, depending on how they are used. They are also classified according to their position in the hierarchy: international/national, regional, settlement or neighbourhood.
    2. The strategy sets out a quantity standard of 5 hectares per 1,000 people, a quality standard in terms of a fitness for purpose score of 3 or better, and accessibility standard stating that people should be no more than:
* 400m from a surveyed open space scoring 3 or more;
* 400m from a public park, garden or amenity space of more than 2,000m²;
* 800m from an open space containing a play space;
* 1,200m from an open space containing a sports area; and
* 1,200m from a natural/semi natural open space.
  + 1. An updated Open Space Audit was carried out in 2023 as a basis for the next review of the Open Space Strategy and to provide input to the LDP3 Evidence Report. The audited sites are shown on this [map](https://falkirk.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/portfolio/index.html?appid=e7eb0f1004a54cf7809d2ef2edfa4847). Overall statistics on quantity, quality and accessibility for the different settlement areas are shown in Tables 32 to 34.

Table 32 – Quantity of open space by settlement area (source: Open Space Audit 2023)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| LDP settlement area | Number of Open Spaces Surveyed | Area of Open space (ha) | Hectares of open space per 1000 population |
| Bo’ness | 46 | 237.93 | 16.6 |
| Bonnybridge and Banknock | 60 | 148.02 | 11.2 |
| Denny | 50 | 156.12 | 11.9 |
| Falkirk | 120 | 767.08 | 19.4 |
| Grangemouth | 31 | 93.64 | 5.8 |
| Larbert and Stenhousemuir | 82 | 282.39 | 10.7 |
| Braes Urban Area | 98 | 327.88 | 13.3 |
| Rural North | 15 | 70.04 | 23.0 |
| Rural South | 51 | 453.53 | 63.0 |
| Falkirk Council Area | 553 | 2536.64 | 15.3 |

Table 33 – Quality and accessibility of open space by settlement area (source: Open Space Audit 2023)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| LDP settlement area | % of open space by area with 3+ quality score | % of households within 400m of an open space scoring 3+ | % of households within 400m of a park or amenity open space >0.2 ha |
| Bo’ness | 73.9 | 68.9 | 98.6 |
| Bonnybridge and Banknock | 54.3 | 59.6 | 96.1 |
| Denny | 48.4 | 75.2 | 97.7 |
| Falkirk | 73.4 | 75.5 | 88.9 |
| Grangemouth | 74.8 | 70.1 | 86.1 |
| Larbert and Stenhousemuir | 58.9 | 55.4 | 95.5 |
| Braes Urban Area | 75.4 | 81.1 | 90.4 |
| Rural North | 4.4 | 37.5 | 52.6 |
| Rural South | 85.0 | 53.3 | 76.8 |
| Falkirk Council Area | 69.7 | 68.5 | 90.5 |

Table 34 – Accessibility to playspaces, sports areas and natural greenspace

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| LDP settlement area | % of households within 800m of a play space | % of households within 1200m of a sports area | % of households within 1200m of a Sports Area |
| Bo’ness | 96.6 | 78.2 | 95.7 |
| Bonnybridge and Banknock | 96.8 | 64.3 | 83.4 |
| Denny | 99.6 | 92.1 | 98.2 |
| Falkirk | 97.1 | 82.9 | 95.6 |
| Grangemouth | 96.7 | 90.3 | 98.6 |
| Larbert and Stenhousemuir | 98.6 | 84.2 | 96.7 |
| Braes Urban Area | 97.2 | 73.6 | 92.4 |
| Rural North | 63.5 | 38.2 | 64.1 |
| Rural South | 84.7 | 77.0 | 83.2 |
| Falkirk Council Area | 95.9 | 80.4 | 93.6 |

* + 1. The general conclusion that can be drawn from the audit is that there is a generous quantity of open space across the Council area, with all settlement areas meeting the quantitative standard (i.e. 5 hectares per 1,000 people). Quality is generally good for the larger national, regional or settlement level open spaces which have tended to be the focus for investment over recent years. However, quality can more of an issue for local parks and amenity spaces, many of which lack variety, facilities, any clear function and/or are in private ownership. The audit also found that the quality of open spaces varies from settlement area to settlement area. Bonnybridge and Banknock; Denny; Larbert and Stenhousemuir; and Rural North scored significantly lower than the Council area average and other settlements in terms of % of open space by area with 3+ quality score (Table 33). Accessibility to the various types of open space, using the Council’s standards, is generally good in all settlement areas, although the figures for playspaces and sports areas do not take into quality. Access to natural greenspace in the area is particularly good, not least because of the long-term impacts of Falkirk Greenspace.

## Environmental Problems

* + 1. The 2005 Act requires the Environmental Report to describe any existing environmental problems which are relevant to LDP3 including in particular those relating to any areas of particular environmental importance. The environmental problems affecting the plan were identified through: a review of relevant plans and programmes and the SEA of LDP2; informal consultation with Council Officers; and the analysis of the environmental baseline data. In summary, the main environment problems for LDP3 are:

Landscape

* Pressure on the landscape from insensitive development, development pressure in the urban fringe and Green Belt and the visual effects from large developments and tall structures;

Soils

* Loss, degradation or sealing of soil and the corresponding negative impacts on ecosystem services (such as carbon sequestration, natural surface water management, biodiversity, and agriculture);

People

* Pressures on the environment driven by population and household growth and associated urban development, which can have adverse environmental impacts including biodiversity loss, increased risk of flooding, loss of landscape setting, reduced air quality and so on;
* The prevalence of ill health in the general population although this is a complex picture which is influenced by many factors including social-economic (such as income), education, the physical environment, health services, social support networks, and a person’s individual characteristics and behaviours;
* Levels of deprivation and health inequality in the area (which, like the prevalence of ill-health, are attributed to multiple factors);

Climate Change and Carbon Emissions

* Rising sea levels, warmer wetter winters, hotter drier summers and more extreme weather events. The impacts of the changing climate include damage to local infrastructure and buildings, coastal erosion, biodiversity loss, more health risks, inequality and the increased risk and severity of coastal, river and surface water flooding;
* Human emissions of carbon dioxide, which are the primary driver of global climate change. Major sources of emissions in the area include transport, industry, and the high energy consumption and poor efficiency of buildings such as domestic properties. Furthermore, Falkirk is a relatively high emitter of carbon emissions when compared to Scotland’s other 31 local authority areas;

Water and Flooding

* Multiple pressures on Falkirk’s water environment including diffuse and point source pollution, alterations to beds, banks and shores, alterations to water levels and flows and the presence of invasive non-native species. Many waterbodies in the area do not have an overall condition of ‘good’;
* Many areas at current and/or future risk of flooding from coastal, fluvial and/or surface water flooding;
* The limited capacity of waste water and drainage infrastructure (such as water treatment treat works) to accommodate further growth in some areas;

Transport

* High car dependency with high proportions of residents using the car for most types of trips instead of walking, wheeling, cycling and/or public transport. Car dependency is a contributor to poor air quality, greenhouse gas emissions and adverse health outcomes;
* There are gaps in public transport and active travel connectivity within and between communities. Improved provision is needed to encourage a modal shift away from the private car and help secure benefits including improved air quality, increased physical activity and reduced carbon emissions;
* Many areas on arterial routes are affected by traffic congestion and high traffic volumes;

Air Quality

* Hotspots of poor air quality in particular within the Falkirk Town Centre and Grangemouth Air Quality Management Areas;

Waste Management

* Various environmental issues arising from waste and waste management operations (such as potential co-location impacts and the risk of contamination from former landfill sites);

Mineral and Aggregates

* Various impacts associated with mineral and aggregate extraction;

Biodiversity, Trees and Woodland

* Biodiversity loss including decline or extinction of native species, reduced genetic and species diversity and the loss, isolation and degradation of habitats. Biodiversity has declined in Scotland and across the world to the point that it is recognised as a crisis for nature and humanity. The major threats to biodiversity are climate change, habitat fragmentation, invasive non-native species, development pressure, pollution and the over exploitation of natural resources;
* The low rate of woodland creation and expansion in recent decades. The rate needs increased to meet the Falkirk Forestry and Woodland Strategy’s target of 850ha of new woodland between 2015 and 2055;
* Several communities have a low tree equity score, and are below the area’s average tree canopy coverage of 52 sqm per person as calculated by the [Tree Equity Score](https://uk.treeequityscore.org/map#12.15/56.02757/-3.76033);

Vacant and Derelict Land

* Areas of derelict and vacant land which blight local communities and the area’s environment. As of 2022, the Falkirk Council area has a total of 301 hectares of derelict and urban vacant land equating to 180 full size football pitches;

Contaminated and Unstable Land

* The legacy of contaminated and unstable land in the Council area as a consequence of past coal mining activities and previous industrial or landfill use;

Major Hazards and Pipeline Consultation Zones

* Many locations lie near Grangemouth’s concentration of COMAH (Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015) “Top Tier” and/or a pipeline hazard. The hazards pose potential risks of major accidents;

Historic Environment

* Various pressures including development, lack of investment and maintenance, climate change and changing land use;

Green and Blue Network

* Most of the environment problems already listed such as derelict and vacant land, contaminated and unstable land, climate change, flooding, biodiversity loss, low rate of woodland creation in recent decades, the prevalence of ill health and inequality etc.;

Open Space

* While open space is well provided for across the Council area in terms of quantity and accessibility, quality is variable with disparities between settlement areas and between the quality of strategic parks and that of more local facilities;
* Development pressure on open space. Although very little open space has been lost through development over the last 10 years, there will be continuing pressure to develop open space for other potentially beneficial uses such as housing, community allotments and renewable energy generation;
* The twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. The parks estate offers opportunities for carbon sequestration, flood management and renewable energy as well as nature restoration as demonstrated by the sustainable grass management project; and
* Resource pressures. Falkirk Council has been creative in securing capital funds for parks but tightening capital and revenue budgets will make it more challenging to deliver environmental enhancements, and meet community aspirations for investment, on the Council parks estate.

## Likely Evolution of the Environment Without LDP3

* + 1. This section of the Scoping Report briefly considers the likely evolution of the environmental baseline if LDP3 was not implemented. It is difficult to predict with any degree of certainty as to how the environment baseline would change without the implementation of the plan. Development after all is highly variable in nature comprising different uses and occurring at different locations, densities, scales and time with individual and cumulative impacts. Without the implementation of the plan, development may undermine environmental protection objectives at international, national and/or local levels and also exacerbate environment problems such as those listed under paragraph 3.2.1. Opportunities may be missed to secure positive environmental benefits from development including improved quality of local open space provision, active travel enhancements, placemaking, woodland creation, climate change adaptation and mitigation, improved health and wellbeing and so on.
    2. In the absence of LDP3, the area will more likely experience:
* Sporadic development in the Green Belt and countryside with corresponding loss of character, landscape setting and identity of settlements
* Unplanned development of greenfield land beyond the urban and village limit. This development could come at the expense of redeveloping more constrained brownfield land in communities as well as potentially undermining local regeneration efforts and continuing the blight of dereliction
* New development in locations that are not easily accessible by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. Some consequences of this could be car dependency, adverse health outcomes; and increased traffic pollution, carbon emissions and congestion
* Poor integration of new development with existing development, active travel routes, local facilities and services etc.
* Insensitive development in or near sensitive areas (such as designated sites) to detriment of the environment
* Further additional pressure on local infrastructure such as roads, healthcare, water, waste water and drainage infrastructure etc.
  + 1. Furthermore, LDP2 and NPF4 would continue to be the statutory development plan for the area against which applications for planning permission and other types of development consent would be considered. However, LDP2 needs replaced to align with NPF4 and to ensure the area has an up-to-date, and more responsive, development framework for the protection and enhancement of the environment.

# Scope and Methodology for the Environmental Assessment

* + 1. The purpose of this chapter is to explain which of the SEA issues (listed in Schedule 3, paragraph 6 of the 2005 Act) are proposed to be scoped in or out for the environmental assessment of the plan’s spatial strategy, policies, proposals and reasonable alternatives. The chapter also overviews Falkirk Council’s proposed methodology to the environmental assessment including details of the SEA Assessment Framework. This information is intended to help the consultation authorities reach a view on whether the proposed scope and methodology are sufficient or not. It must be stressed the methodology is not finalised at this early stage in the SEA process. The methodology will likely be further refined as the content of the Proposed Plan develops, and with feedback from the consultation authorities and other stakeholders.

### Scope of the Environmental Assessment

* + 1. Developing the scope of the environment assessment has involved the following steps:
* Reviewing the policy context for LDP3 to establish the relevant plans, programme, legislation and environmental projection objectives for framing the environmental assessment;
* Establishing the environmental baseline for the SEA to understand the current and future situation without LDP3 and to help identify the plan’s likely environmental impacts;
* Identifying the main environmental problems and SEA issues that should be the focus for the environmental assessment; and
* Integrating the above information into the proposed SEA Assessment Framework (see paragraph 4.1.4) which will steer the environmental assessment and allow likely environmental effects to be identified, analysed and compared
  + 1. The Council proposes to ‘scope in’ all the SEA issues listed in Schedule 3, paragraph 6 of the 2005 Act for the environmental assessment. The spatial strategy, policies and proposals of LDP3 will set a statutory framework for future development which will have environmental effects for some or all of the SEA issues (Table 35). Similar SEA issues have been merged into a single issue to avoid duplication in the environment assessment. Biodiversity is grouped together with fauna and flora while population is combined with human health.

Table 35 – Proposed scoping of SEA issues

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SEA Issue | ‘Scoped In’ for the Environmental Assessment |
| Biodiversity, fauna and flora | Yes |
| Population and human health | Yes |
| Soil | Yes |
| Water | Yes |
| Air | Yes |
| Climatic Factors | Yes |
| Material assets | Yes |
| Cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage | Yes |
| Landscape | Yes |

### Framework for Assessing Environmental Effects

* + 1. The environmental assessment will involve Council Officers assessing the components of the plan, and their reasonable alternatives, against the proposed SEA Assessment Framework (Tables 36 to 44) which consists of SEA objectives and assessment questions grouped under the relevant SEA issue taken from Table 35. The questions refer to ‘the option’ which is:
* A spatial strategy in the plan;
* A planning policy in the plan;
* A site-specific proposal for housing, mixed use, business, infrastructure or the green and blue network in the plan; or
* A reasonable alternative, if this is identified, to any of the above.
  + 1. All options will be assessed against the proposed SEA Assessment Framework to ensure consistency and to allow meaningful comparisons of the environmental implications of each option to be made. Council Officers will draw on information sources such as national and local GIS data sets, consultee and public consultation feedback, site visits, site submissions etc. to carry out the environmental assessment.

Table 36 – Assessment framework for the SEA issue of biodiversity, flora and fauna

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sub-topic of SEA Issue | SEA objectives | SEA assessment questions |
| Habitats | * Increase and enhance biodiversity in the wider environment. * Safeguard and enhance priority habitats (as defined in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan) * Safeguard ancient and long-established woodland as a habitat resource of irreplaceable value * Increase the rate of new woodland planting to help achieve the aims of the Falkirk Forestry and Woodland Strategy * Improve tree equity in communities | * To what extent will the option conserve, enhance or degrade biodiversity? * Does the option safeguard and enhance Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats? * Will the option safeguard ancient and long-established woodland? * Will the option lead to tree planting or the creation of new woodland? |
| Habitat Networks | * Prevent the further fragmentation of key habitat networks and contribute to improved habitat connectivity | * Does the option enhance the wider Falkirk Integrated Habitat Network? |
| Species | * Maintain and enhance the populations of European Protected Species and other legally protected species, including protection of their resting places. * Safeguard and enhance priority species (as defined in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan) * Contain the spread and reduce the impact of invasive non-native species | * Does the option maintain and enhance populations and resting places of European Protected Species? * Does the option safeguard and enhance Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority species? * Does the option reduce the impact of invasive non-native species? |
| Protected Sites | * Avoid adverse effects on the integrity of European sites. * Protect and enhance sites which have been designated due to their biodiversity and nature conservation value * Designate any unprotected sites which have particular biodiversity and nature conservation value. | * Will the option have a likely significant effect on any European site? * Does the option protect and enhance sites designated for their biodiversity and nature conservation value? |

Table 37 – Assessment framework for the SEA issue of population and human health

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sub-topic of SEA Issue | SEA objectives | SEA assessment questions |
| Population | * Ensure that new housing to accommodate projected population growth is located sustainably | * Is the new housing proposal in a sustainable location? |
| Degraded environment | * Increase the amount of land on the vacant and derelict land register which is brought back into beneficial use. * Increase the amount of potentially contaminated sites which are decontaminated through new development. | * Does the option bring land on the vacant and derelict land register back into beneficial use? * Does the option enable the decontamination of polluted land? |
| Waste management and disposal | * Ensure that there is a network of modern waste handling facilities available across the Council area to support the staged targets within the Zero Waste Plan. * Reduce waste through maximising the reuse, recycling and recovery of resources | * Does the option safeguard and/ or improve the network of modern recycling facilities available across the Council area? * Does the option maximise the reuse, recycling and recovery of resources? |
| Access to open space, recreation and countryside | * Increase access to Open Space, Recreation and the Countryside * Encourage the promotion and connectivity of the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) within and linking beyond Falkirk. | * Does the option increase access to open space, recreation or the countryside? * Does the option encourage the promotion and connectivity of the CSGN? |
| Open space quantity, quality and accessibility | * Ensure that all settlements 5ha/1000 people of open space. * Improve the quality of open space * Ensure that households are within an acceptable walking distance to different types of open space with reference to the standards set out in the Open Space Strategy. | * Does the option result in a loss of open space in a settlement which doesn’t have 5ha/1000 people of open space? * Does the option result in a loss of open space which would mean that the settlement no longer has an acceptable amount of open space? * Does the option improve accessibility to open space? * Does the option improve the quality of open space provision in a settlement? |
| Noise | * Reduce the proportion of the population affected by nuisance noise issues. | * Does the option reduce the proportion of the population affected by nuisance noise? |
| Odour | * Reduce the proportion of the population affected by nuisance odour issues. | * Does the option reduce the proportion of the population affected by nuisance odour? |
| Co-location issues | * Ensure sensitive uses are located, sited and designed to avoid, or acceptably minimise, the negative environmental impacts of nearby SEPA regulated sites and processes. | * Does the option avoid, or acceptably minimise, the negative environmental impacts of a sensitive use being located close to SEPA regulated sites and processes? Negative impacts can include, for example, on air, noise, odour and the water environment. |
| Exposure to risk of accidents from major hazards | * Reduce the amount of new development sites which are impacted by HSE consultation zones or other hazards. | * Is the option impacted by HSE consultation zones? * Is the option likely to increase the proportion of the population impacted by HSE consultation zones? * Is the option impacted by other hazards such as a Scottish Water mains pipe? |

Table 38 – Assessment framework for the SEA issue of soil

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sub-topic of SEA Issue | SEA objectives | SEA assessment questions |
| Contaminated Land | * Reduce contamination and safeguard soil quality | * Does the option reduce contamination? * Does the option safeguard soil quality? |
| Abandoned Mineral Workings | * Increase the amount of abandoned mineral workings rehabilitated through the development process | * Does the option rehabilitate abandoned mineral workings? |
| Unstable Land | * Increase the amount of unstable land remediated through the development process | * Does the option remediate unstable land through the development process? |
| Agricultural Land | * Reduce the amount of prime quality agricultural land which is allocated for development. * Protect prime quality agricultural land | * Does the option protect prime agricultural land (class 1, 2 & 3.1)? |
| Carbon Rich and Rare Soils | * Protect carbon rich and rare soils | * Does the option protect carbon rich soils and other rare soils (basin peat, blanket bog, peat alluvium complex, peaty podzols, peaty gleys, podzols, humus iron podzols and saltings)? |
| Geodiversity | * Ensure that Local Geodiversity Sites are afforded a protected status * Improve the opportunities for education and interpretation at Local Geodiversity Sites | * Does the option impact upon Local Geodiversity Sites? * Does the option improve access to and/or improve opportunities for education and interpretation at Local Geodiversity Sites? |

Table 39 – Assessment framework for the SEA issue of water

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sub-topic of SEA Issue | SEA objectives | SEA assessment questions |
| Ecological Status of Waterbodies | * Protect the water environment * Prevent deterioration and enhance the ecological status of waterbodies * Prevent deterioration and enhance the status of groundwater bodies * Achieve good ecological status * Promote sustainable water use | * Does the option protect the water environment? * Does the option Does the option prevent the deterioration of the ecological status of waterbodies? * Does the option enhance the status of waterbodies, through for example, removal of barrier to fish migration, deculverting a watercourse, remeandering, wetland creation etc.? * Does the option prevent the deterioration of the status of groundwater bodies * Does the option enhance the status of groundwater bodies? * Does the option promote sustainable water use? |
| Flooding | * Reduce overall flood risk * Ensure that new development avoids areas of flood risk and safeguards the functional flood plain | * Does the option reduce overall flood risk? * Does the option avoid areas of flood risk? |

Table 40 – Assessment framework for the SEA issue of air

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sub-topic of SEA Issue | SEA objectives | SEA assessment questions |
| Air Quality | * Keep air pollution below Local Air Quality Management thresholds | * Will the option lead to Local Air Quality Management thresholds to be breached? |
| Exposure to Reduced Air Quality | * Reduce the proportion of the population affected by reduced air quality. * Avoid the designation of new AQMA * Avoid breaches of National Air Quality standards | * Does the option reduce the proportion of the population affected by reduced air quality? * Does the option avoid the designation of new AQMA? * Does the option significantly contribute towards a breach in National Air Quality Standards? |
| Emissions from Motorised Transport | * Minimise the need to travel by private car and promote sustainable transport modes | * Does the option minimise the need to travel by private car? * Does the option promote the use of sustainable transport modes? |

Table 41 – Assessment framework for the SEA issue of climatic factors

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sub-topic of SEA Issue | SEA objectives | SEA assessment questions |
| Climate Change Mitigation | * Avoid, reduce and minimise greenhouse gas emissions | * Does the option promote the sustainable location of development, and the use of sustainable transport (i.e. walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport)? * Does the option increase overall energy efficiency in the built environment? * Does the option minimise the carbon footprint of new development? * Does the option promote the generation of energy from renewable sources? * Does the option safeguard against the increased use of fossil fuels? |
| Climate Change Adaption | * Improve Falkirk’s resilience to the current and future impacts of climate change * Reduce overall flood risk in a sustainable way | * Does the option increase Falkirk’s resilience to current and future impacts of climate change? * Does the option reduce overall flood risk in a sustainable way? |

Table 42 – Assessment framework for the SEA issue of material assets

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sub-topic of SEA Issue | SEA objectives | SEA assessment questions |
| Transport Network | * Reduce levels of traffic congestion within the Council area * Slow down the rate of traffic growth on the road network | * Will the option reduce levels of traffic congestion within the Council area? * Will the option slow down the rate of traffic growth on the road network? |
| Active Travel and Core Path Network | * Protect against the destruction/obstruction of the active travel and core path network * Improve the quality of the active travel and core path network | * Will the option protect against the destruction/ obstruction of the active travel and core path network? * Will the option improve the quality of the active travel and core path network? |
| Recreation Facilities | * Improve the provision and distribution of recreation facilities throughout the Council Area | * Will the option improve the provision and distribution of recreation facilities across the Council area? |
| Low and Zero Carbon Energy Generation Capacity | * Enable the development of low carbon and renewable energy technologies within the Council area. * Enable the development of low carbon heat networks within the Council area | * Will the option enable the development of low carbon and renewable energy technologies within the Council Area? * Will the option enable the development of low carbon heat networks within the Council area? |
| Primary Resources | * Safeguard valuable mineral deposits from sterilisation through inappropriate development. * Reduce the use of primary resources within the construction process | * Will the option safeguard against the sterilisation of valuable mineral resources? * Will the option reduce the use of primary resources within the construction process? |
| Water and Drainage Infrastructure | * Avoid the need to increase capacity at existing waste water treatment plants * Alleviate sewer network capacity constraints | * Will the option avoid the need to increase capacity at existing waste water treatment plants? * Will the option contribute towards alleviate sewer network capacity constraints? |

Table 43 – Assessment framework for the SEA issue of cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sub-topic of SEA Issue | SEA objectives | SEA assessment questions |
| Conservation Areas | * Promote the enhancement of Conservation Areas in line with the associated Conservation Area Management Plan * Protect the historic character of Conservation Areas | * Will a Conservation Area and its setting be adversely impacted? |
| Listed Buildings | * Protect the special interest and setting of listed buildings | * Will the special interest or setting of any listed building be adversely impacted? |
| Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes | * Protect the character and setting of sites identified in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland * Protect the historical significance, integrity and condition of other historic gardens and designed landscapes | * Will a non-Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape or its setting be adversely impacted? |
| World Heritage Sites | * Retain, protect, preserve and enhance the Antonine Wall and its associated archaeology, character and setting | * Does the option retain protect, preserve and enhance the Antonine Wall and its associated archaeology, character and setting? |
| Scheduled Monuments | * Preserve scheduled monuments and other identified nationally important archaeological resources in situ and protect the integrity of their setting | * Does the option preserve scheduled and other identified nationally important archaeological resources in situ and protect the integrity of their setting? |
| Historic Battlefields | * Promote the sensitive management and interpretation of battlefield sites * Preserve the integrity of sites listed on the Inventory of Historic Battlefield and their setting | * Does the option promote the sensitive management and interpretation of battlefield sites? * Does the option preserve the integrity of sites listed on the Inventory of Historic Battlefields? * Does the option adversely affect the setting of sites listed on the Inventory of Historic Battlefields? |
| Areas of Townscape Value | * Protect and enhance the character and setting of Areas of Townscape Value | * Will an Area of Townscape Value and its setting be adversely impacted? |
| Non-designated historic environment assets | * Protect and enhance the character and setting of non-designated historic environment assets such as buildings, monuments, locally important archaeological sites etc. that have a degree of heritage of significance but are not formally designated. | * Will a non-designated historic environment asset and its setting be adversely impacted? |

Table 44 – Assessment framework for the SEA issue of landscape

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sub-topic of SEA Issue | SEA objectives | SEA assessment questions |
| Green Belt | * Ensure Green Belts continue to: maintain the separate identity and visual separation of settlements; protect the landscape setting of settlements; and protect and give access to greenspace for recreation. | * Does the option maintain the separate identity and visual separation of settlements? * Does the option protect the landscape setting of settlements? * Does the option protect the greenbelts recreational value and maintain access to it? |
| Greenfield Land | * Reduce the proportion of new development which takes place on greenfield land | * Does the option involve the development of greenfield land? |
| Landscape Character and Quality | * Protect and enhance the distinctive character of the landscape and ensure new development does not exceed the capacity of the landscape to accommodate it. * Protect and enhance Local Landscape Areas | * Does the option protect and enhance the distinctive character of the landscape? * Does the option ensure that new development does not exceed the capacity of the landscape to accommodate it? * Does the option protect and enhance Local Landscape Areas? * Would the option, if a site specifical proposal, represent a natural extension to the existing urban and village limit? |

### Recording of Likely Individual Effects

* + 1. The likely individual effects of each option on the environment before mitigation/enhancement is applied will be recorded in an assessment matrix (under the relevant SEA issue and with the use of the relevant symbol) as either significant negative effect; negative effect; neutral or negligible; unknown effect; positive effect or significant positive effect. The reasoning for the effects will also be reported in the matrix. Similarly, the likely individual effects of each option on the environment after mitigation/enhancement is applied will be recorded in the matrix with an explanation given. Table 45 shows proposed scoring system to record the effects.

Table 45 – Proposed scoring system for the assessment matrix

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Effect | Symbol to be used in the assessment matrix |
| Significant negative effect | -- |
| Adverse effect | - |
| Neutral or negligible effect | N |
| Unknown effect | ? |
| Positive effect | + |
| Significant positive effect | ++ |

* + 1. Where an option has different likely effects for the same SEA issue, the effects will be recorded within the appropriate column in the assessment matrix with the use of the word ‘and’ to distinguish both effects. For example, an adverse effect and unknown effect for say the SEA issue of landscape would be shown as ‘- and ?’. In addition, the likely effects of each option will be further evaluated to establish their likely duration (permanent, temporary, long-term, short-term and medium term) and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects. However, the duration of the impacts of development (such as the loss of greenfield land to housing) is likely to be permanent in most cases given development is generally long term in nature.
    2. Table 46 shows the assessment matrix that will be used to report the likely individual effects of an option in the Environmental Report. As stated in paragraph 4.1.4, an option is defined as:
* A spatial strategy in the plan;
* A planning policy in the plan;
* A site-specific proposal for housing, mixed use, business, or infrastructure or the green and blue network in the plan; or
* A reasonable alternative, if one is identified, to any of the above.

Table 46 – The assessment matrix for the individual effects of a spatial strategy, planning policy, site-specific proposal or reasonable alternative

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SEA Issue | Comments | Scoring pre-mitigation/enhancement | State mitigation/enhancement if appropriate | Scoring post-mitigation/enhancement |
| Biodiversity, fauna and flora |  |  |  |  |
| Population and human health |  |  |  |  |
| Soil |  |  |  |  |
| Water |  |  |  |  |
| Air |  |  |  |  |
| Climatic factors |  |  |  |  |
| Material assets |  |  |  |  |
| Cultural Heritage |  |  |  |  |
| Landscape |  |  |  |  |

* + 1. The Environmental Report will group completed matrices under the relevant chapters, headings and/or settlement areas used in the LDP3 so as to help readers cross reference the report with LDP3 and vice versa. A brief description will be provided with each matrix to outline the option that is being assessed. Matrices for reasonable alternatives, if any, will be presented in the Environmental Report along with its corresponding option in the plan. It will be explained in the Environmental Report if a particular spatial strategy, planning policy or a site-specific proposal does not have a reasonable alternative. In some cases, there will be simply ‘no alternative’ to implement a spatial strategy, planning policy or site-specific proposal in LDP3.

### Recording of Likely Cumulative and Synergistic Effects

* + 1. The likely cumulative and synergistic effects of options on the environment before, and after, mitigation/enhancement is applied will be assessed against the proposed SEA Assessment Framework using the same scoring system in Table 45. The spatial strategy of the plan will be assessed in combination, and separately in combination with its reasonable alternative(s) provided one is identified. Policies, site-specific proposals and their alternatives will be assessed in an equivalent way. The likely cumulative and synergistic effects will be reported in an assessment matrix (Table 47) in the Environmental Report.

Table 47 – The assessment matrix for the cumulative and synergistic effects of a spatial strategy, planning policy, site-specific proposal or reasonable alternative.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SEA Issue | Comments | Scoring pre-mitigation/enhancement | State mitigation/enhancement if appropriate | Scoring post-mitigation/enhancement |
| Biodiversity, fauna and flora |  |  |  |  |
| Population and human health |  |  |  |  |
| Soil |  |  |  |  |
| Water |  |  |  |  |
| Air |  |  |  |  |
| Climatic factors |  |  |  |  |
| Material assets |  |  |  |  |
| Cultural Heritage |  |  |  |  |
| Landscape |  |  |  |  |

### Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

* + 1. Schedule 3, paragraph 7 of the 2005 Act requires the Environmental Report to include the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant effects on the environment of implementing LDP3. It is also useful to set out how the plan’s positive environmental effects could be enhanced. The mitigation and enhancement measures of the plan will be considered through the environmental assessment and summarised by the relevant SEA issue in the proposed mitigation framework (Table 48).

Table 48 – Proposed Mitigation Framework

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| SEA issue | Impact of LDP3 | Mitigation or enhancement measure |
| Biodiversity, fauna and flora |  |  |
| Population and human health |  |  |
| Soil |  |  |
| Water |  |  |
| Air |  |  |
| Climatic factors |  |  |
| Material assets |  |  |
| Cultural Heritage |  |  |
| Landscape |  |  |

* + 1. Measures for mitigation or enhancement could include one or a combination of:
* References to planning policies in LDP3 or the National Planning Framework 4 that would require adverse impacts to be acceptably mitigated, or positive effects enhanced, through the design and planning application process;
* References to national or local planning guidance that give detailed guidance on how particular planning policies should be applied in practice;
* Specifying buffer zones, habitat enhancement/creation, path links, design principles or other requirements for a site-specific proposal;
* Identifying requirements for off-site developer contributions; and/or
* Identifying matters (such as heritage, flooding, noise, landscape impacts) that require further examination for mitigation and/or enhancement through a technical assessment to be prepared at a later stage

# Monitoring

* + 1. Section 19 of the 2005 Act requires Falkirk Council, as the responsible authority for the SEA, to monitor the significant environmental effects arising from LDP3’s implementation. A monitoring plan will be incorporated into the Environmental Report to enable the Council to identify any unforeseen adverse effects at any early stage and to undertake appropriate remedial action. Comments are invited on the proposed template for the monitoring plan at Table 49 which includes a rough example to illustrate how the plan could look. The information in the monitoring plan will develop as the SEA of LDP3 progresses to the Environmental Report and Post-Adoption Statement stages.

Table 49 – Proposed template for the monitoring plan (which is to be populated)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SEA Issue | What effect(s) is to be monitored? | Data source(s) for monitoring the effect | Frequency of monitoring the effect | Who is responsible for monitoring the effect? | Summary of proposed remedial action for effect |
| Cultural Heritage | The impact of development on listed buildings | EIAs or Heritage Impact Assessments submitted with planning applications  Liaison with the Development Management unit and Historic Environment Scotland | As and when | Falkirk Council | Review Falkirk’s suite of planning policies, guidance and proposals  Review Falkirk’s Historic Environment Strategy. |
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# Consultation of the Environmental Report

## Consultation Process

* + 1. This part of the Scoping Report sets out the consultation period that the Council intends to consult the consultation authorities under section16(1)(b) of the 2005 Act, and the general public under section 16(2)(a)(iv) of the 2005 Act, on the Environmental Report and the Proposed Plan. The Environmental Report will be publicly consulted alongside the Proposed Plan for a minimum consultation period of 12 weeks. The start date of consultation period will be confirmed nearer the time but could happen at the earliest in Q2 2026/27 based on the current programming for LDP3 at the time of drafting the Scoping Report. At the start of the consultation period, the Council will send electronic copies of the Environmental Report and Proposed Plan to the three consultation authorities (SEPA, Historic Environment Scotland and NatureScot) and invite each consultation authority via the SEA gateway to express its opinion on the documents. In addition, the Council will make copies available for public inspection and comment in public libraries, the Council’s website ([www.falkirk.gov.uk/ldp](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/ldp)) and other deposit locations. The consultation period will be well-publicised using a combination of methods including social media, the Council’s website, the local press and a mailing to individuals and organisations on the development plan customer database.

## Analysis and Reporting of Consultation Feedback

* + 1. Council Officers will analyse the comments received on the Scoping Report and Environmental Report, and populate Table 50 within the latter report with details as to how the comments have been taken into account by the SEA.

Table 50 – Analysis of consultation feedback (which is to be populated)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of organisation or individual | Issue | Comments | How the comments have been addressed by the SEA |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

# Appendix 1 - Review of Relevant Plans, Programmes, Legislation and Their Environmental Protection Objectives

Appendix 1 summarises how LDP3 is affected by relevant plans, programmes, legislation and their environmental protection objectives. Both Appendix 1 and paragraph 2.19 will be kept under review and will be updated in the Environmental Report to include relevant plans, programmes and legislation that have been missed, or have emerged since submission of the Scoping Report to the SEA Gateway.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Relevant plan, programme or legislation | Level | Summary and environmental protection objectives | How the relevant qualifying plan, programme or legislation affects LDP3 in terms of the SEA issues at Schedule 3, paragraph 6 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 |
| UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021 (“the Continuity Act”) | Scotland | Summary: The Continuity Act allows Scottish Ministers to maintain alignment with European law on non-reserved matters through secondary legislation. Section 15 introduces a new duty on the Council to have “due regard” to the guiding principles on the environment when doing anything in respect of which the duty to undertake environmental assessment under section 1 of the 2005 Act applies. The guiding principles are listed in section 13(1) of the Continuity Act, and are the:   1. principle that protecting the environment should be integrated into the making of policies 2. precautionary principle as it relates to the environment; 3. principle that preventative action should be taken to avert environmental damage 4. principle that environmental damage should as a priority be rectified at source; and 5. principle that the polluter should pay.   The first principle (i) derives from EU law requiring environmental protection to be integrated into policy-making and activities with a view to promoting sustainable development. The remaining four principles (ii to v) reflect EU environmental principles.  Section 17 of the Continuity Act requires the Council to have regard to [the statutory guidance](file://\\s-fk-fs18\DevData\Planning-Environment\LDP3\SEA\v.scot\binaries\content\documents\govscot\publications\advice-and-guidance\2023\08\scotlands-guiding-principles-environment-statutory-guidance\documents\scotlands-guiding-principles-environment-statutory-guidance\scotlands-guiding-principles-environment-statutory-guidance\govscot:document\scotlands-guiding-principles-environment-statutory-guidance.pdf) when doing anything of which the new duty applies.  Objectives: When carrying out the environment assessment, the Council must have due regard to the guiding principles with a view to protecting and improving the environment and contributing to sustainable development. It must have regard to the statutory guidance. | The legislation requires the Council to have due regard to the guiding principles, and have regard to the statutory guidance, when carrying out the environmental assessment. This will in turn inform the Council’s decisions as to how the plan mitigates potential adverse impacts on a SEA issue(s). The SEA is a means for evidencing compliance with the new duty. |
| The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC | International | Summary: The Habitats Directive led to the setting up the network of Special Areas of Conservation and setting out they should be protected. It also lists species of plants and animals (or European Protected Species) that require strict protection.  Objectives: The Habitats Directive aims to protect over a thousand species, including mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish invertebrates, and plants, and 230 characteristic habitat types. The overall objective is to ensure the species and habitat types are maintained, or restored, to a favourable conservation status. | The Habitat Directive affects LDP3 with respect to the SEA issues of biodiversity, fauna and flora.  Under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, the Council must consider whether the plan (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) could affect a European site(s) before it can be authorised or carried out. This includes considering whether the plan will have a ‘likely significant effect’ on a European site, and if so, the Council must carry out an ‘appropriate assessment’. This process is known as Habitats Regulations Appraisal. The term European site refers to Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation.  Through its spatial strategy, policies and proposals, LDP3 should seek to protect and enhance international, national or local designated sites, the supporting habitat of designated sites, protected species, Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats or species, nature networks, ancient and semi natural woodland etc. |
| Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance | International | Summary: The Convention on Wetlands is the intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands (Ramsar sites) and their resources. While there is no dedicated legislation for the protection of Ramsar sites in the UK. Scottish Ramsar sites are either protected as Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conversation or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and are protected under the relevant statutory regimes.  Objectives: The mission of the Convention is “the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world”. Objectives relating to this mission are:  - work towards the wise use of all their wetlands;  - designate suitable wetlands for the list of Wetlands of International Importance (the “Ramsar List”) and ensure their effective management; and  -cooperate internationally on transboundary wetlands, shared wetland systems and shared species. | As above. |
| The Wild Birds Directive  79/409/EEC | International | Summary: The Wild Birds Directive 79/409/ led to establishing Special Protection Areas in Scotland.  Objectives: The Wild Birds Directive aims to protect all naturally occurring wild bird species and their habitats and allow bird species to recover and thrive. | As above. |
| Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) | UK and Scotland | Summary: This much modified legislation was enacted primarily to implement the Wild Birds Directive 79/409/EEC and the Bern Convention. Schedules 5 and 8 of the Act detail lists of legally protected animals and plants respectively.  Objectives: The Act aims to protect certain species and control invasive species. | As above. |
| Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 | Scotland | Summary: The legislation places a duty on all public bodies in Scotland to further the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their responsibilities. In complying with the duty, the public body must have to the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and the United Nations Environmental Programme Convention on Biological Diversity of 5 June 1992 as amended from time to time (or any United Nations Convention replacing that Convention).  Objectives: The overall aim is for public bodies, including Falkirk Council, to further the conservation of biodiversity in exercising their responsibilities. | As above. |
| Tackling the Nature Emergency – Scottish biodiversity strategy to 2045 and delivery plan (draft) | Scotland | Summary: This draft strategy, published December 2022, sets out a vision, outcomes and 33 priority actions designed to halt and reverse biodiversity loss.  Objectives: The key objectives include: 1) accelerate restoration and regeneration: 2) protect nature on and at sea, across and beyond protected areas; 3) protect and support the recovery of vulnerable and important species and habitats; 4) invest in nature; and 5) take action on the indirect drivers of biodiversity loss. | As above. |
| Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) | UK | Summary: The legislation makes provision for implementing the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and the Wild Birds Directive 79/409/EEC  Objectives: The aims are to protect internationally important sites (i.e. European sites) for threatened habitats and species, and also to set a legal framework for protecting species (i.e. European protected species) that require strict protection. | As above. |
| Marine (Scotland) Act 2010) | Scotland | Summary: The legislation established a legal and management framework for the Scottish marine area. It introduces: a marine planning system; marine licensing for a wide range of development; and licensable activities in the marine environment.  Objectives: The aims are to protect and enhance the marine environment; and also adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change on the marine environment. | The legislation affects the LDP3 with regard to all the SEA issues. The preparation of the LDP3 needs to consider the protection and enhancement of the marine environment as well as the mitigation and adaptation of the marine environment to the effects of climate change. |
| National Planning Framework 4 | Scotland | Summary: This sets the national spatial strategy for Scotland. It sets the spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments and national planning policy.  Objectives:  Each national planning policy is accompanied by policy principles which, in most incidences, are environmental protection objectives. There are too many objectives to note here. In brief, NPF4 aims to support the delivery of:   * - sustainable places, where we reduce emissions, restore and better connect biodiversity; * - liveable places, where we can all live better, healthier lives; * - productive places, where we have a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy; * - the Industrial Green Transition Zones, which is a national development and includes the Scottish Cluster. The cluster designation relates to projects for industrial decarbonisation, carbon capture and storage and hydrogen deployment at Grangemouth Investment Zone through the coordination activities of the Scottish Government’s Grangemouth Future Industry Board. Major developments contributing to the regeneration of Grangemouth Town Centre or Grangemouth flood protection scheme are classified as national developments by NPF4; and * - the Central Scotland Green Network of which the Council area is part. Major developments contributing to the Central Scotland Green Network are described as national developments in NPF4. | NPF4 affects LDP3 with regard to all the SEA issues. The preparation of LDP3 is required to take into account NPF4 by the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended. |
| Scotland’s National Marine Plan | Scotland | Summary: The plan covers the management of both Scottish inshore waters (out to 12 nautical miles) and offshore waters (12 to 200 nautical miles).  Objectives: The aims are to protect and enhance the marine environment; and also adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change on the marine environment. | Scotland’s National Marine Plan affects the LDP3 with regard to all the SEA issues. The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 requires the preparation of LDP3 is to have regard to the national marine plan insofar as relating to the LDP area. It is essential LDP3 considers the protection and enhancement of the marine environment as well as the mitigation and adaptation of the marine environment to the effects of climate change. |
| Historic Environment Policy for Scotland | Scotland | Summary: The policy sets a framework for the management of Scotland’s historic environment.  Objectives: The policy sets a number of environment objectives including plans, programmes and policies and strategies should be approached in a way that protects and promotes the historic environment. | The policy affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issue of cultural heritage. In support of the policy, LDP3 should aim to protect and enhance the area’s historic environment and places including listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site and Buffer Zone, designed landscapes, battlefields, areas of townscape value, and non-designated assets such as other archaeological sites and non-listed buildings which have heritage significance. |
| River Basin Management Plans for Scotland 2021 – 2027 | Scotland | Summary: The plans summarise: the state of the water environment, pressures affecting the quality of the water where it is in less than good condition; actions to protect and improve the water environment; and a summary of outcomes following implementation.  Objectives: The overall aim is to protect and improve the water environment. | The plans affect LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of biodiversity, fauna, flora, water, material assets and human health. The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 requires the preparation of LDP3 is to have regard to any river basin management plan insofar far as relating to the LDP area. It is essential LDP3 considers the protection and improvement of the water environment. |
| The Flood Risk Management Plan for Forth Estuary Local Plan District | Regional | Summary: This plan describes the high-level priorities for action to inform the Local Forth Estuary Flood Risk Management Plan.  Objectives: The objectives are to reduce overall flood risk and avoid an increase in flood risk. | The plan affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of population and human health, water, climatic factors and material assets. The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 requires the preparation of LDP3 is to have regard to any flood risk management plan and local flood risk management plan insofar far as relating to the LDP area. The preparation of LDP3 should consider existing and future flood risk and avoid development in areas at flood risk as a first principle. |
| The Flood Risk Management Plan for the Forth Local Plan District | Regional | Summary: This describes the high-level priorities for action to inform the Local Forth Flood Risk Management Plan.  Objectives: These are to reduce overall flood risk and avoid an increase in flood risk. | As above |
| The Local Forth Estuary Flood Risk Management Plan | Regional | Summary: The plan sets out the current understanding of flood risk in the Forth Estuary’s target areas along with local objectives and actions to reduce that flood risk.  Objectives: Each target area has specific and general objectives. The most common objectives are to avoid flood risk and reduce flood risk. | As above |
| The Local Forth Flood Risk Management Plan | Regional | Summary: The plan sets out the current understanding of flood risk in the Forth’s target areas along with local objectives and actions to reduce that flood risk.  Objectives: Each target area has specific and general objectives. The common objectives are to avoid flood risk and reduce flood risk. | As above |
| SEStran Regional Transport Strategy | Regional | Summary: The strategy provides the framework and a direction for transport in the south-east of Scotland area up to 2030:  Objectives: These include transitioning to a sustainable, post carbon transport system, facilitating healthier travel options, transforming public transport connectivity and access across the region and supporting safe, sustainable and efficient movement of people and freight across the region. | The strategy affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of population and human health, air, climatic factors and material assets. The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 requires the preparation of LDP3 is to have regard to the strategy.  To support the objectives, the LDP3 should encourage, promote and facilitate developments that prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for everyday travel and reduce the need to travel unsustainably. Development should be directed to locations that support local living, including, where feasible, 20-minute neighbourhoods. LDP3 should also support improved connectivity and access for sustainable transport within the area and across the region. |
| Falkirk Greenspace – A Strategy for our Green Network | Local | Summary: Falkirk Greenspace is an initiative implementing the CSGN across the Council area. It has developed over many years and is driven by its own strategy with the following themes: economic development and place making; tackling vacant and derelict land; outdoor access; woodland; water environment; biodiversity and landscape.  Objectives: The high-level aim is to develop a high quality, multi-functional green network with benefits for people, businesses and wildlife in the area. | The strategy affects the LDP3 in relation to all the SEA issues. Through its spatial strategy, policies and proposals, LDP3 should seek to extend and improve the green network and achieve positive outcomes for Falkirk’s economy and environment and the health and wellbeing of our communities. |
| Falkirk Council Plan 2022-2027 | Local | Summary: The plan Falkirk Council’s corporate plan setting out what it wants to achieve in the five-year period 2022-2027.  Objectives: Under the priority of supporting a thriving economy and green transition, there are Council aims to be net-zero by 2030, develop more sustainable transport infrastructure and deliver sustainable growth. | The plan affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of material assets, climatic factors, population and human health.  LDP3 will be the spatial expression of various elements of Falkirk Council Plan. To support the achievement of net zero, LDP3 should encourage improved energy efficiency, support the reduction of greenhouse emissions and support walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for everyday travel. |
| Making Things Last: a circular economy for Scotland | Scotland | Summary: This strategy sets the Scottish Government’s priorities for moving towards a more circular economy  Objectives: The general thrust of the strategy is to support the transition to a circular economy, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible. The reduction of waste, and landfilling, is another key goal. | The strategy affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of material assets and climatic factors. The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 requires the preparation of LDP3 is to have regard to the national waste management strategy of which Making Things Last List is part.  The circular economy requires land-use planning. There are several ways the LDP3 can support the national waste management strategy and the transition to a circular economy, for example, through:   * -identifying appropriate locations for circular economy infrastructure; * - encouraging, promoting and productive re-use of vacant and derelict land, buildings and infrastructure; and * - having policies that require re-use of secondary materials in new development. |
| The Falkirk Plan 2021-2030 | Local | Summary: The plan is the Local Outcome Improvement Plan for the area, identifying the greatest inequalities for local residents and how the Falkirk Community Planning Partnership plans to tackle them.  Objectives: Under Theme 6: Economic Recovery, there is an aim for the partnership to lead Falkirk’s contribution to Scotland’s target to be net-zero by 2045 through a focus on green recovery. | The plan affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of material assets, population, human health and climatic factors. The preparation of LDP3 is required by Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended to take into account the Falkirk Plan as the Local Outcomes Plan for the LDP area.  The LDP3 will be the spatial expression of various elements of Falkirk Plan. To support the objectives for net-zero, LDP3 should encourage improved energy efficiency, support the reduction of greenhouse emissions and support walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for everyday travel. Development should be directed to locations that support local living, including, where feasible, 20-minute neighbourhoods. LDP3 should help address inequalities in the area through, for example, supporting community regeneration and improved provision of good quality, affordable homes in the right places. |
| Falkirk Council An Economic Strategy for Falkirk 2015-2025 | Local | Summary: The purpose of the strategy is to identify priorities and opportunities for achieving inclusive and sustainable growth in the area.  Objectives: The strategy has ambitions for a green, smarter and more sustainable Falkirk, for example through the development of new renewable energy generation, sustainable transport and the circular economy. | The strategy affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of material assets, population and human health, and climatic factors.  The LDP3 is a key corporate document that will be the spatial expression of numerous other corporate strategies including the Council’s economic strategy. To support the objectives, LDP3 should encourage improved energy efficiency, support the reduction of greenhouse emissions, facilitate walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for everyday travel and facilitate a more circular economy. |
| Falkirk Council Open Space Strategy | Local | Summary: This provides the strategic direction for the management and enhancement of the Council area’s open space resource. It is based on a detailed audit and sets a shared vision, and priority actions for improving our parks and open spaces. The Council’s quantity, quality and accessibility standards for open space are also stated.  Objectives: Specific objectives are stated for each community. The aim generally is to enhance the Council area’s open space resource. | The Open Space Strategy affects the LDP3 with regard to all the SEA issues. LDP3 should have regard to the Open Space Strategy and support the objectives to enhance the Council area’s open space resource through the spatial strategy, polices and proposals. |
| Falkirk Council Historic Environmental Strategy | Local | Summary: This strategy provides an updated vision  for the historic environment of the Falkirk Council area,  supported by a framework of themes and priority actions for the promotion, management, appreciation, protection and better understanding of our historic sites and assets throughout the period 2018-2023 and beyond.  Objectives: The key objective for LDP3 is effective management and protection of Falkirk’s historic environment. | The strategy affects LDP3 in relation to the SEA issue of cultural heritage. In support of the policy, LDP3 should aim to protect and enhance the area’s historic environment and places and enable positive change as a catalyst for the regeneration of places. The area’s historic environment assets and places include listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site and Buffer Zone, designed landscapes, battlefields, areas of townscape value, and non-designated assets such as other archaeological sites and non-listed buildings which have a degree of heritage significance. |
| Falkirk Council Local Transport Strategy | Local | Summary: The strategy sets out the Council’s vision and actions for improving Falkirk’s transport system over the next ten years, until 2033.  Objectives: The strategy seeks to develop an accessible, inclusive and sustainable transport network that contributes to the delivery of climate change targets | The strategy affects LDP3 in relation to the SEA issues of material assets, air, population and human health and climatic factors.  The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 requires the preparation of LDP3 is to have regard to the local transport strategy. In support of the objectives, LDP3 should encourage, promote and facilitate developments that prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for everyday travel and reduce the need to travel unsustainably. In addition, the plan should encourage decarbonised transport infrastructure and direct development to locations that support local living, including, where feasible, 20-minute neighbourhoods. |
| Falkirk Council Active Travel Strategy | Local | Summary: The strategy sets a vision, guiding principles and actions to improve Falkirk’s active travel network. Actions include integration between different modes of transport, investment in cycling infrastructure and, completion of the area’s ‘primary’ strategic active travel network by 2038,  Objectives: The goal is to develop suitable conditions for most people to easily undertake their local journeys by walking, wheeling or cycling, | The strategy affects LDP3 in relation to the SEA issues of material assets, air, population and human health and climatic factors.  The active travel strategy is a Council corporate plan that will influence the preparation of LDP3. In support of the objectives, LDP3 should encourage, promote and facilitate developments that prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for everyday travel and reduce the need to travel unsustainably. In addition, the plan should aim to safeguard, improve, and extend the network of active travel routes, and direct development to locations that support local living, including, where feasible, 20-minute neighbourhoods. |
| Falkirk Council Core Paths Plan | Local | Summary: This identifies an integrated network of core  paths linking communities with the places that they want to go. First published in 2010, the Core Paths Plan fulfils section 17 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and is in the process of being replaced by an updated version.  Objectives: The Council has prepared the plan to plan for a system of paths sufficient for the purpose of giving the public reasonable (non-motorised) access through the area. | The plan affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of material assets, air, population and human health and climatic factors.  The plan is a statutory document that will influence the preparation of LDP3. In support of the objectives, the plan should aim to safeguard, improve, and extend the network of core paths in the Council area. |
| Falkirk Forestry and Woodland Strategy | Local | Summary: This strategy seeks to achieve an  expanded and better-connected network of high  quality woodland by 2055, which will achieve positive outcomes for Falkirk’ s economy and environment and  the health and wellbeing of our communities. It sets out priorities along with descriptions of the opportunities and constraints that should be taken into account within future woodland planning. To support this strategy, the Council has prepared six urban woodland management plans, one each for Bo’ness, Bonnybridge, Denny, Polmont, Falkirk North and Falkirk South. The plans are intended to help secure funding for woodland creation or improvement works.  Objectives: The high-level aim is to optimise the contribution of woodland and forestry to the people, environment and economy in the area. There’s an objective to increase woodland and forestry cover from 18% to 25% of Falkirk’s total land surface area by 2055. This equates to 850ha of new woodland between 2015 to 2055. | The strategy affects the LDP3 with regard to all the SEA Issues.  In support of the objectives, the LDP3’s spatial strategy should identify and set out proposals for forestry, woodlands and trees in the area, including their development, protection and enhancement, resilience to climate change, and the expansion of woodlands of a range of types to provide multiple benefits for Falkirk’s environment, people and economy. NPF4 requires the spatial strategy to be supported and informed by an up-to-date forestry and woodland strategy. |
| Draft Falkirk Council Local Housing Strategy | Local | Summary: The strategy outlines the Council’s plans and priorities for housing and related services over the five-year period 2023-2028.  Objectives: The strategy has several related environmental priorities including promoting sustainable communities, promoting a sustainable private housing sector, enhancing housing quality and energy efficiency, and ensuring housing meets the needs of local people | The strategy affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of material assets, population and human health and climatic factors.  The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 requires the preparation of LDP3 is to have regard to the local housing strategy. LDP3 will support the objectives of the strategy in a number of ways, for example through the provision of land in the right locations to accommodate the future need and demand for new energy efficient homes. |
| Falkirk Council Local Development Plan 2 | Local | Summary: The Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) is current local development plan which guides future development in the Council area for the period 2020-2040. It was adopted on 7 August 2020.  LDP2 contains a vision for the area, an overall strategy, and detailed policies and proposals indicating where development should, or should not take place. It provides criteria which the Council uses in assessing planning applications.  Objectives: The plan has environmental protection objectives embedded in policy for placemaking, historic environment, natural environment, housing, business, town and local centres, infrastructure, energy and minerals. | The strategy affects the LDP3 with regard to all the SEA issues.  Many elements of LDP2 (such as environmental objectives, policies and proposals) will be incorporated into LDP3 as they are still relevant to the future use and development of land in the Council area. Some elements will be replaced or updated to ensure LDP3 is contemporary and addresses legislation, issues and strategies (such as the national planning framework) that have emerged or evolved since work first stated on LDP2. The preparation of LDP3 will look to maintain or strengthen the environmental objectives of LDP2 as appropriate. |
| European Landscape Convention | International | Summary: The European Landscape Convention is an  initiative from the Council of Europe that highlight the importance of all landscapes and encourages further attention to their protection, management and  planning. In 2006, the UK signed up to the convention;  this now provides the framework for NatureScot’s work on Scotland’s landscapes.  Objectives: The Convention aims to encourage public authorities to adopt policies and measures at local, regional, national and international level for protecting, managing and planning landscapes throughout Europe. It covers all landscapes, both outstanding and ordinary, that determine the quality of people’s living environment. | The European Landscape Convention affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issue of landscape. In support of the objectives, LDP3 should recognise the value of all landscapes within the area and the need to take account of this when assessing development proposals. |
| Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended | Scotland | Summary: This legislation consolidates enactments relating to special controls in respects of buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest.  Objectives: The Act requires the planning authority when exercising its planning functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. In considering any application for listed building consent, and also any application for planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the planning authority is required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it may  possess. | The Act affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issue of cultural heritage by setting the legislative context for listed buildings and conservation areas. In support of the objectives, the preparation of the LDP3 should consider the protection and enhancement of conservation areas, listed buildings and their settings. |
| Ancient Monuments  and Archaeological Areas  Act 1979 as amended | Scotland | Summary The Act sets the legal framework for the protection of scheduled monuments in Scotland. It also introduced the requirements for Historic Environment Scotland to compile and maintain the inventories of gardens and designed landscapes and of battlefields.  Objectives: The aim of scheduling is to preserve Scotland’s most significant sites and monuments as far as possible in the form in which they have been passed down to us today. The inventories are intended to protect nationally significant gardens and designed landscapes and sites of battlefields from adverse development. | The Act concerns the SEA issue of cultural heritage and sets the legislative context for LDP3 preparation with regard to scheduled monuments and sites listed in the Inventory of Historic Battlefields or the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscape.  In support of the objectives, the preparation of the plan should consider the protection and preservation of scheduled monuments, sites listed in the Inventory of Historic Battlefields or the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscape and their settings. |
| The Antonine Wall Management Plan 2014-2019 | Regional | Summary: This document maps out a five-year plan for the management and conservation for the Antonine Wall, part of the Frontier of the Rome Empire World Heritage.  Objectives: There are too many objectives to list here, but the main ones relevant to LDP3 include:   * + The boundary of the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site and its Buffer Zone will be kept under review to ensure that its outstanding universal significance is adequately protected   + Include the Antonine Wall WHS in all relevant planning, regulatory and policy documents prepared by central and local government   + Monitor the effectiveness of the SPG in planning and protection decision making across all partners’ organisations   + Implement key recommendations in the approved interpretation plan and access strategy; improving signage, interpretation, visitor information, access routes and visitor facilities at individual sites along the Wall   + Promote and enhance the use of the Antonine Wall WHS as a long-distance route and visitor facility that links communities across Central Scotland   + Develop a sustainable and holistic approach to the inclusion of natural heritage issues within policies, plans and checklists for the Antonine Wall   + Develop guidance for the maintenance and enhancement of woodland on, and adjacent, to the line of the Antonine Wall WHS | The Antonine Wall Management Plan affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of cultural heritage, biodiversity, flora and fauna, and population and human health.  Through its spatial strategy, policies and proposals, LDP3 should seek to protect the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site and its Buffer Zone to ensure that the Wall‘s outstanding universal significance is adequately protected. In addition, the plan should promote the use of the Wall as a long-distance route, visitor facility and natural habitat as and where appropriate. |
| Falkirk Council Dig in Community Food Growing Strategy 2019 – 2024 | Local | Summary: The strategy explains how Falkirk Council,  partner organisations, business and communities can work together to support community growing across the Council area. It identifies land that could be used for allotments or more informal community growing.  Objectives: The aims are to support current community growing provision and develop more sites for community use. | The strategy affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of material assets, population and human health.  The strategy sets the local policy context for LDP3 preparation regarding community food growing. In support of the objectives, LDP3 should support the creation, protection and enhancement of community food growing through polices and proposals. |
| Second Nature: A Biodiversity Action Plan for the Falkirk Council area | Local | Summary: This plan identifies local projects for protecting and enhancing ecosystems, habitats and species in the Falkirk Council area. It lists most of the partnership organisations that have a key role in delivering the local projects.  Objectives: The main aims of the plan are to outline the action plans detailing the local project that will benefit priority species, priority habitats and/or wildlife sites in the area. There is an action plan covering each of the following themes:  Forth Estuary  Farmland and grassland  Health and bog  Water and wetland  Woodland  Urban  Bean geese  Connecting people and wildlife  Invasive non-native species | The plan affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of biodiversity, fauna and flora. Through its spatial strategy, policies and proposals, LDP3 should seek to protect and enhance international, national or local designated sites, the supporting habitat of designated sites, protected species, Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats or species, nature networks, ancient and semi natural woodland etc. |
| Falkirk Council Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan | Local | Summary: The strategy and action plan set out how the Council will significantly reduce its carbon footprint and become a greener local authority over the period 2023-2030 to meet its organisational, national and legal carbon emission targets.  Objectives: The strategy’s key aims are to reduce carbon emissions locally while supporting global efforts to tackle climate change. It seeks to:   * - reducing emissions in operational Council buildings and support residents in the Falkirk area to reduce their energy related emissions; * - decarbonise the Council fleet and encourage residents to choose more sustainable travel choices; * - support the reduction in waste sent to landfill in line with national policy; * - reduce the climate impact of products and services purchased by Falkirk Council; and * - support the business, industrial and agricultural sectors to reduce emissions and explore carbon sequestration to further reduce the impact of emissions in the Falkirk area. | The strategy and action plan affect LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of material assets, climatic factors, population and human health.  The LDP3 is a key corporate document that will be the spatial expression of numerous other corporate strategies including Falkirk Council Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. To support the objectives, LDP3 should encourage improved energy efficiency, support the reduction of greenhouse emissions, facilitate walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for everyday travel, support a more circular economy and encourage renewable energy in the right places. In addition, the plan should encourage decarbonised transport infrastructure and direct development to locations that support local living, including, where feasible, 20-minute neighbourhoods. |
| Falkirk Council: Draft Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Delivery Plan | Local | Summary: The strategy will underpin an area-based approach to heat and energy efficiency planning and delivery and sets out the long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving energy efficiency across the Falkirk local authority area. LHEES is primarily driven by Scotland’s statutory targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction and fuel poverty:   * - net zero emissions by 2045 and 75% reduction by 2030. * - In 2040, as far as reasonably possible, no household in Scotland is in fuel poverty.   The strategy is accompanied by the Delivery Plan, outlining current and future projects that will assist the Council in decarbonising heat and reaching crucial carbon emissions.  Objectives: This strategy sets out how each segment of the building stock needs to change to meet national and local objectives, including achieving zero greenhouse gas emissions, and reducing poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty. | The strategy and delivery plan affect LDP3 in relation to the SEA issues of material assets, climatic factors, population and human health.  The LDP3 is a key corporate document that will be the spatial expression of numerous other corporate strategies including Draft Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Delivery Plan,  In support of the objectives, LDP3 should encourage improved energy efficiency in the built environment, support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and support the decarbonisation of heat through, for example, polices and proposals requiring development to connect to a heat network. |
| Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended. | Scotland | Summary: This much modified legislation consolidates the laws relating to development planning in Scotland.  Objectives: The Act defines the purpose of planning is to manage the development and use of land in the long-term public interest. This can include anything which contributes to sustainable development or achieves the Scottish Government’s national outcomes such as “we value, protect and enhance our environment”. The Act states a local development plan must include policies requiring all developments in the area of plan to be designed so that “all new buildings avoid a specified and rising proportion greenhouse gas emissions from their use, calculated on the basis of the approved designed and plans for the specific development, through the installation and operation of low and zero-carbon generating technologies”. | The Act affects LDP3 with regard to all the SEA issues. It requires the Council, when exercising its functions for development planning under Part 2 of the Act, to contribute to the purpose of planning. The plan must also have policies regarding low and zero-carbon generating technologies in new buildings. |
| Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 | Scotland | Summary: The regulations supplement section 16(2)(b) of the Act, listing information and considerations that the planning authority must have regard to when preparing its local development plan.  Objectives: The information and considerations include various plans and strategies relevant to the area of LDP3 and include the objectives of preventing major accidents and limiting the consequences of such accidents for human health and the environment. Other objectives include the need in the long term:  (i) to maintain appropriate safety distances between residential areas, building and areas of public use, recreational areas and, as far as possible, transport routes and (aa) establishments covered by Directive 2012/18/EU; and (bb) major accident hazard pipelines  (ii) to protect areas of particular natural sensitivity or interest in the vicinity of establishments or major accident hazard pipelines, where appropriate through appropriate safety distances or other relevant measures; and  (iii) in the case of an existing establishment, to take additional technical measures in accordance with regulation 5 of the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015(4) so as not to increase the risks to human health and the environment. | The regulations affect LDP3 with regard to all the SEA issues. They set out specific information and considerations to which the preparation of the plan must have regard. |
| Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC as amended | International | Summary: The 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: The key objectives are set out in Article 4 of the Directive. This requires EU Member states and the UK to use their River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) and Programmes of Measures (PoMs) to protect and, where necessary, restore water bodies in order to reach ‘good status’, and to prevent deterioration. Good status means both good chemical and good ecological status. | The Directive affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of water, biodiversity, fauna and flora, population and human health and material assets. The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 requires the preparation of LDP3 is to have regard to any river basin management plan insofar far as relating to the LDP area. It is essential LDP3 considers the protection and improvement of the water environment. |
| Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 Act | Scotland | Summary: This legislation transposes the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC into Scottish law.  Objectives: As above. | Similar to the above. |
| Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 | Scotland | Summary: The Act introduced a more sustainable and modern approach to flood risk management that is better suited to current needs and can accommodate the impacts of climate change. The legislation also transposes Directive 2007/60/EC into Scottish law.  Objectives: Section 1 of the Act imposes a general  duty on each local authority (and other  responsible authorities) to exercise  their “flood risk related functions” with  a view to reducing overall flood risk and in particular, to exercise their functions under Part 3 of the Act so as to secure compliance with the Directive. | The Act affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of water, material assets and climatic factors.  The preparation of LDP3 will require the Council exercise its flood risk related functions with a view to reducing overall flood risk and exercise some of its functions under Part 3 of the Act (such as the duty to have regard to the flood risk management plans and local flood risk management plans). |
| Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 as amended. | Scotland | Summary: The Act sets a target date for net zero emissions of all greenhouses in Scotland by 2045. There are also interim targets of a 75% reduction in emissions by 2030 and 90% by 2040.  Objectives: Section 44 of the Act imposes general duties on public bodies (such as the Council) relating to climate change. It states a public body must in exercising its functions act: a) in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of the targets; b) in the way best calculated to help delivery any programme laid before the Scottish Parliament under section 53 of the Act; and c) in a way that it considers is most sustainable. | The Act affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA Issues of material assets and climatic factors.  The Council must fulfil the general duties in relation to exercising its development planning functions. In support of the objectives, LDP3 should encourage the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in a sustainable way through the spatial strategy, policies and proposals. |
| Many Cleaner Air For Scotland 2: Towards a Better Place for Everyone | Scotland | Summary: This strategy replaced Cleaner Air for Scotland - The Road to a Healthier Future, setting out the Scottish Government's updated air quality policy framework for five-year period 2021 - 2026 and a series of actions to deliver further air quality improvements.  Objectives: The general thrust of the strategy is to further reduce air pollution to protect human health and fulfil Scotland’s legal responsibility for air quality over the period 2021- 2026. | The strategy affects LDP3 with regard to the SEA issues of air and material assets.  Air quality is an issue in the LDP area. In support of the objectives, LDP3 should consider protective polices requiring development not to worsen existing air quality. The plan can support improved air quality, for example, through facilitating active travel and sustainable transport and directing development to sustainable locations e.g. that reduce dependency on car. |
| Air Quality Action Plans | Local | Summary: Parts of the LDP area have an air quality issue, and the Council has declared two air quality management areas – one in Falkirk Town Centre and the other in Grangemouth. Each air quality management area has an air quality action plan setting out the Council’s plans to improve air quality in the short, medium and long term.  Objectives: The aims are to improve air quality within the area quality management areas of Falkirk Town Centre and Grangemouth | As above. |