

Stirling Local Development Plan: Draft Proposed Plan

SPATIAL STRATEGY BACKGROUND REPORT October 2011

1. Introduction

This report provides the background to the Spatial Strategy, setting out how the relevant spatial implications have been considered in formulating the proposed Strategy, consistent with the Vision of the Draft Plan. It also considers the representations made to the Spatial Strategy and the development options set out in the Main Issues Report, and further research and assessment that has helped to inform the proposed Spatial Strategy set out in the Draft Proposed Plan.

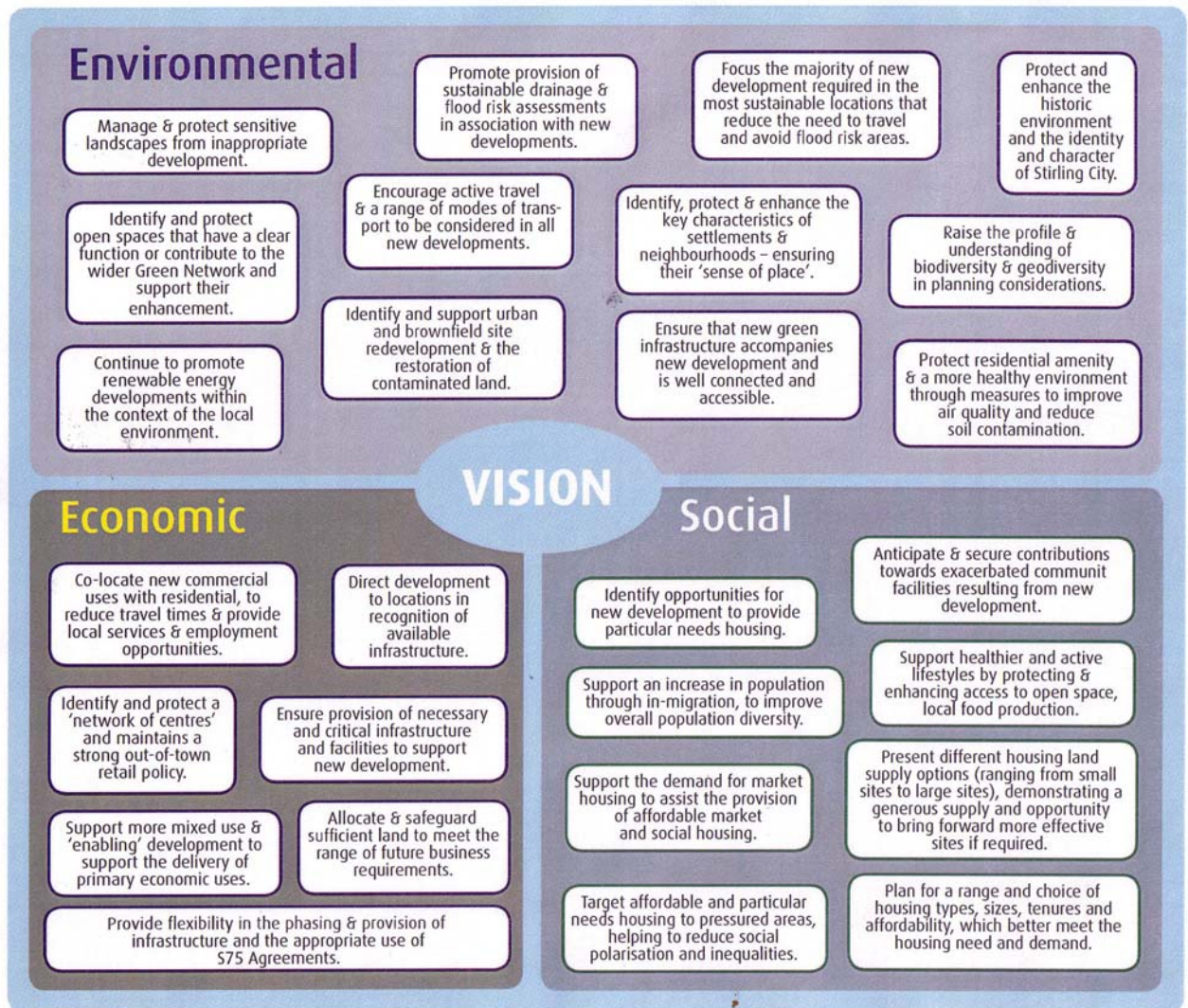
2. Spatial Implications

The Spatial issues that are relevant to Stirling and which we wish to tackle within the Local Development Plan are highlighted as Main Issues in the MIR. These are further considered below under economic, social and environmental headings. A range of sources has been used to identify the issues including: -

- **National requirements** – National Planning Framework 2, Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), other relevant legislation eg. Climate Change Act, adjoining authorities Plans etc.
- **Performance of existing Plan** – through policy monitoring, what we have achieved / not achieved by existing policies, planning consents/refusals etc.
- **Pressures and evidence for change** – population forecasting, housing need and demand, demographic trends, specific studies (transport and education modelling, business and retail space requirements, Green Belt boundaries etc), and likely constraints now and in the future including environmental and economic constraints.
- **Visions and aspirations for change** – as set out in the Council's Single Outcome Agreement (SOA), from communities, Key Agencies, political aspirations, land owners / developers etc. **Engagement and continuing support** from all these stakeholders is an important part of the process of preparing the Plan.

Reflecting on the Vision set out in the MIR, the proposed Spatial Strategy assesses the need for development with the need to tackle some of the spatial implications of economic, social and environmental change. The Council's vision is to deliver quality developments, recognise placemaking, and protect the intrinsic character and identity of the City of Stirling, its settlements and its landscape. Therefore, rather than start with a development target and look at locations to put it, the strategy starts with the spatial issues and then determines how to tackle these through appropriate land use and development. This inevitably requires a balance between competing issues, and this is expressed through the following diagram:

Figure 1: Spatial Implications



3. City Visioning and the Main Issues Report

The City Visioning exercise explored a number of spatial growth scenarios for the City and its surrounding area. It confirmed the following approach: -

- Limited growth of the villages to support and sustain local services and amenities.
- Limited expansion of the city to address structural issues in the city form, such as strengthening city edges, defining ‘gateways’ and key ‘nodes’, and strengthening relationships with the university.
- Brownfield development within the city - provided that the quality of development could be attractive to family and community living and did not lead to adverse impacts on local services, or balanced movement, or important greenspace.
- Limited support for new settlements, as there was some concern about their deliverability and quality.

The Main Issues Report sets out the geographical components of the Strategy derived from the City Visioning and spatial growth scenarios. These components comprise of Urban Consolidation, Regeneration, Strategic Development, and Sustaining Rural Communities and reflect the following: -

- Controlled, appropriately scaled development in the villages to be informed by a clear and robust analysis of sustainable communities. A hierarchy of settlement structures, with development being allocated on the basis of a settlement hierarchy.
- Controlled external expansion of the city to enhance the city image and strengthen strategic relations with the university and take advantage of the city's strategic connectivity.
- Prioritisation of brownfield development within the city to provide a range of opportunities for sustainable economic growth, high quality living and leisure opportunities, also helping to support regeneration of the City Centre as a vibrant and vital place (as envisaged by the Single Outcome Agreement).

Rather than posing three optional spatial strategies all aimed at the same overall outcome (in terms of accommodating growth), the MIR puts forward three options differing in the level of growth to be accommodated - low, medium and high. This is to ensure that all viable opportunities and alternatives for development have been explored, that are consistent with the Vision. All 3 options seek to deliver on the spatial issues highlighted above, to varying degrees, as discussed at Section 6 below.

Consistent with the proposed strategy, all 3 options focus the majority of new development within Stirling City where most people live and work and where most jobs and services exist.

Option 1 – Medium growth

Focuses new housing development at Bannockburn and the carried forward (from the existing Local Plan) new settlement of Durieshill; significant housing within the City, and to a lesser extent at Causewayhead; significant expansion of all the Eastern Villages; realising development opportunities in some of the western rural communities. Business/commercial development is focused on the City centre, Millhall, Manor Powis, Bannockburn and Durieshill, in locations close to the City.
= c.5725 housing units, c.44 ha new business land.

Option 2 – Lowest growth

Focuses new housing development at Bannockburn and Causewayhead/Bridge of Allan; significant housing within the City; significant expansion of all the Eastern Villages; realising development opportunities in some of the western rural communities. Business/commercial development is focused on the City centre, Millhall, Manor Powis and Bannockburn, in locations close to the City.
= c.3925 housing units, c.44 ha business land

Option 3 – Higher Growth

Focuses new housing development at Bannockburn, Causewayhead/Bridge of Allan and the carried forward (from the existing Local Plan) new settlement of Durieshill; significant housing within the City; significant expansion of all the Eastern Villages; realising development opportunities in some of the western rural communities; and a small new settlement west of Stirling. Business/commercial development is focused on the City centre, Millhall, Manor Powis, Bannockburn and Durieshill, in locations close to the City.
= c.6650 housing units, 34 ha business land.

The main distinction between the 3 Options is the exclusion of Durieshill in the lowest growth option (Option 2), and the inclusion of significant new housing at Airthrey Kerse (Bridge of Allan/Causewayhead) in Options 2 and 3.

4. Responses to the MIR Spatial Strategy

Within the MIR, a series of questions were posed relating to the Spatial Strategy. The following table summarises the responses received.

Table 1: MIR Comments on the Spatial Strategy

MIR Questions: Spatial Strategy	Summary of Responses
<p>Do you agree with the overall approach which is based on controlled appropriately scaled development in the villages and regeneration, controlled external expansion of the City (to the north and south) to enhance the City image and take advantage of the City's strategic connectivity, and prioritisation of brownfield development within the City and other towns and villages?</p>	<p>Responses were made up of local authorities, key agencies, land owners/developers, community Councils, local groups and the public.</p> <p>Some support for a sustainable development strategy that focuses development on brownfield sites within the City and limits development within the rural area. Mixed response in terms of expanding the City and other settlements – concerns about loss of Green Belt, open space, risk of coalescence, but recognition that affordable housing needs should be met in all areas.</p>
<p>Urban Consolidation: Do you agree with this approach, which allows for the use of Greenfield land to be reduced and provides opportunities for more sustainable forms of movement and optimises the use of existing infrastructure?</p>	<p>General support for urban consolidation which limits greenfield expansion, supports the City Centre, promotes growth within the City itself and enhances existing assets.</p>
<p>Regeneration: Do you agree that the physical, social and economic regeneration of certain communities should be a key priority and that new development has the potential to improve housing tenure mix, and bring about physical and environmental improvements?</p>	<p>General support providing the regeneration benefits for these communities are proportionate to the scale of new development proposed.</p>
<p>Strategic development – City expansion: Do you agree that expansion of Stirling City is necessary to deliver the scale and range of housing to meet future housing needs, including changing population demographics and market demand, and provide a variety of business locations?</p>	<p>Expansion of the City within the City Corridor preferable to new settlements and major village expansion.</p> <p>Careful expansion required to improve the overall attractiveness of the city, widen its facilities and encourage economic activity of the City as a whole.</p>
<p>Strategic development – New settlements: Do you agree that new settlements might be required in the long-term to meet the growing demand for new housing in the area?</p>	<p>Concerns that new settlements have little merits on the basis of viability, deliverability and the concept has a wider disconnect with the City Vision and supporting the strategic role of the City Centre.</p> <p>Also recognition that new settlements may be required to deliver housing need and demand.</p>
<p>Sustaining Rural communities: Do you agree that wider opportunities for development in the rural area should be considered in order to help sustain local services, deliver much needed affordable housing, and reflect the shift in national policy towards the promotion and facilitating of rural development?</p>	<p>Concerns that the level of unmet housing need within rural areas is not being planned for. Some support for small-scale development for housing and rural business needs to help sustain rural communities but wider concerns over impacts on the environment and local facilities.</p>

<p>Option 1: Do you agree with the preferred option (1), which plans for medium growth, including urban expansion and includes the new settlement at Durieshill for the longer term?</p>	<p>Some support for a medium level of growth, which represents a reasonable balance in terms of economic growth in the context of environmental constraints that exist in and around the City. Concerns that the proposed strategy limits ability to sustain market housing demand by focusing expansion to the south of the City and east Stirling.</p>
<p>Option 2: Or do you prefer option 2, which removes Durieshill and plans for a much lower level of growth relying mainly on settlement expansion to the north and south of the city?</p>	<p>Comments that this option does not represent the lowest growth option and still promotes significant levels of development. Concerns over loss of Green Belt in the settlement expansion options to the north and south.</p>
<p>Option 3: Or do you prefer option 3, which plans for the highest level of growth relying mainly on settlement expansion to the north and south of the City along with the retention of Durieshill for the longer term?</p>	<p>Comments for and against this option in terms of having the greatest potential to deliver housing need and demand, but greatest landscape and environmental impact.</p>

5. Other Research and Assessment

In order to arrive at the strategy for the Draft Plan, a range of studies were undertaken which helped the Council assess the impact of the spatial strategy options in the MIR.

Transport & Access Consequences of Development

A review of the transport implications of the Spatial Strategy options was undertaken to inform the MIR through the Site Assessment process and has been further reviewed in relation to the Proposed Strategy within the Proposed Plan. (A separate Background Report on the ‘transport and access consequences of development allocations’ has been produced to accompany the Proposed Plan).

The difference between the 3 options in the MIR was considered in terms of:

- Reducing the need to travel / accessibility to services
- Ability to travel by sustainable modes
- Impact on local transport network (informed by modelling the 3 scenarios)
- Impact on strategic transport network
- Mitigation.

The impact of the strategy has been further developed through the use of a transport model. The modelling shows how future traffic levels, population changes and new development may impact on the local transport network in terms of congestion, average car speeds, travel times and vehicle carbon emissions.

The key issues arising from the assessment are:

- Traffic problems are likely to start occurring before 2017. New development will account for approx 12% of total traffic.
- There will then be little difference between the LDP options until 2022 – 2032/33. By 2032, the higher growth option results in 50% more additional traffic compared to the lower growth option.

- Causewayhead is well placed to enable a choice of means of access to a range of services and opportunities
- Fallin has good bus access to employment, but not to further education or other services.
- Any new settlement is unlikely to have as good a range of facilities as developments which are part of an existing built up area. This is likely to mean more trips outwith the settlement, with less likely to be taken by sustainable modes.
- Access to Stirling via the Pirnhall interchange is critical to the perception of how accessible Stirling is. 70% of the new housing and employment sites access the motorway network via Pirnhall (this proportion is even greater when existing allocations such as Durieshill are included).

The importance of encouraging a greater proportion of trips to be made by walking cycling and public transport is critical to reducing, or at least delaying, the levels of capital investment required to getting the most out of the City's transport network and reducing the risk of severe congestion incidents. At the very least this needs to be achieved with new development, whose new trips it will be much easier to encourage to be undertaken by walking, cycling and public transport.

Hence the development management process must strive to ensure that measures required to minimise the number of car trips from all new development be implemented and enforced.

The aim of the Local Transport Strategy is to address existing and future transport demands, and the LDP spatial strategy heavily influences the new travel demands in an area. A commitment has been made to review the delivery package for the City area (the City Transport Strategy) once the pattern of future development to be proposed is known. This work is ongoing.

The LDP includes Supplementary Guidance (SG14) on 'Ensuring a Choice of Access', which sets out how the Council will consider the transport and access consequences of new development. One of the ways the transport consequences of development in the City will be mitigated against will be a contribution to the City Transport Strategy (CTS). The exact contribution is determined by the cost of the CTS programme which is developed. The draft SG currently includes the principle of the contribution and how it will be calculated using the current figures. It will be important to confirm the City Transport programme and its cost before the final LDP and its Supplementary Guidance is approved, to enable the contribution figures to be updated.

Education Provision and Modelling

The Council has undertaken specific modelling which considers the impact of new residential developments on existing school capacity, both primary and secondary. The findings and recommendations resulting from the 'pupil projection model' are set out within the Background Report on Education Provision.

When the pupil product from the programmed housing developments set out in the Spatial Strategy is analysed over the period of the Plan, a significant number of schools in the LDP area will reach optimum capacity. This problem is particularly acute within the Core Area where there is considered insufficient capacity to simply change existing catchment areas to accommodate growth, and as such additional primary school provision will have to be created. A similar picture is presented in terms of secondary school provision where 90% of the proposed house building is likely to be within the catchment areas of Bannockburn, Stirling and Wallace High Schools.

For all developments proposed within the Core Area (excluding Dunblane) a comprehensive solution to education provision is proposed across the area. This will include the creation of two new primary schools, a number of extensions and the change of school catchment areas to accommodate development. Non-denominational primary school provision for Durieshill will be provided in the form of two further primary schools. The proposed strategy to address secondary capacity is to make new provision as part of the build at Durieshill which will also provide an opportunity to rezone pupils from the eastern villages allowing development within the Bannockburn area. The timing of new developments will be crucial, given the high cost of secondary school provision and the potential impact that it could have on wider provision.

For developments proposed outwith the Core Area (within the Rural Area and Dunblane), school capacity is to be dealt with on an individual settlement basis, given that primary education provision within these areas has a tendency to be based around the settlement. In terms of secondary provision, the scale of development proposed for the Rural Area and Dunblane is such that it will be able to be accommodated from existing resources by a combination of measures, over time, including scheduling the timing of development and managing admissions including placing requests.

Developer contributions will be sought from all new residential developments towards both primary and secondary school provision.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The SEA exercise assessed the potential implication of all 3 strategy options in the Main Issues Report. The SEA Environmental Report concludes that the preferred Strategy of consolidation within the existing urban communities and location of most of the major new developments within the City Corridor and in or adjacent to the 'city spine', means that the main potential sources of adverse effects upon the environment should be similarly localised.

Localised, but not insignificant; the city represents, and sits in, a nationally important concentration of historic heritage features and a commensurately valued landscape. While landscape, biodiversity resources, and water quality issues, for instance, touch

on much wider geographical areas, they add to the particular impacts that require careful assessment in and around the city.

Consolidation also has the potential to exacerbate congestion and its associated impacts – air pollution, noise, safety etc. Conversely it should also encourage the use of alternative forms of transport with lower environmental impacts. The cumulative effects of the main strategy options, including those of the lesser developments across the Plan area, were also assessed. Chief amongst these in terms of significance is perhaps the aggregate effect of the many incremental additions to pressure on the drainage systems, most of which ultimately issue into the Teith – Forth river catchment.

The conclusion from the SEA is that there is considered to be marginal differences between the 3 options presented in the MIR in terms of strategic environmental impact. An update to the SEA is presented alongside the Proposed Plan which concludes that the changes introduced between the MIR and the Proposed Plan are not likely to result in significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed.

Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA)

Before the Council can adopt the Plan, Article 6(3) of the EC Habitats Directive, applied in Scotland through The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended), requires that the Plan be subject to an 'appropriate assessment' of its implications for a European site in view of the site's conservation objectives. [This overall assessment is termed the Habitats Regulations Appraisal or HRA]. The Plan can only be adopted after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the sites concerned.

In preparing the Proposed Plan, the assessment undertaken to inform the HRA has influenced the final drafting of the policies and proposals. The Council has concluded that subject to the mitigation identified, the Policies and Proposals set out within the Proposed Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of Natura sites.

However, the Plan highlights that any development proposal brought forward in relation to any policy, proposal or strategy in the Plan may require an appropriate assessment of any likely significant effects on *Natura* sites to be undertaken before determination. Further guidance on this is contained within Supplementary Guidance 26.

6. The Spatial Strategy

Growth Options

The Spatial Strategy set out in the Draft Proposed Plan is based on the option with the greatest potential to respond to the spatial implications discussed above, which includes delivering sustainable economic growth, appropriate housing needs and balancing the need for development within existing environmental constraints.

The MIR considers a range of growth options which are briefly analysed below.

Growth Options from the LDP Main Issues Report and HNDA process	
1. Medium Growth 90k population target	All rely on differing levels of in-migration (and new household formation) and the provision of local housing needs. All promote new business land and retail space to support job creation, a greater range and choice of sites and economic development generally.
2. Low Growth Follows GRO(S) population projections, 2008	All rely on the provision of significant new infrastructure to accompany new development (of varying degrees).
3. High Growth a) Population exceeds 90k b) High household formation*, population of 100k	All promote brownfield redevelopment and accessible locations for new development. All result in significant Greenfield land release.

* This option (3b) has emerged through the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) process in response to the high levels of housing need identified. It considers particular types of household growth as opposed to population growth as a determinant of future housing requirements. Through this option (3b), the provision of new housing growth is less about meeting in-migrant demands and more on assisting existing households in housing need to meet their needs locally.

As the SEA and HRA conclude, there is little to choose between the 3 options in environmental terms. All 3 also plan for equivalent levels of new business and retail space and support economic development. The main difference perhaps is the ability of the different options to meet a greater range of housing need and demand and to deliver the necessary infrastructure to support new development – these two issues have been highlighted as particularly important if the Council is deliver the aspirations of its Strategic Plan and the Single Outcome Agreement.

The Local Housing Strategy has therefore used option 3b as a basis for calculating the housing supply target taking account of the following:

- The housing need figures from the HNDA;
- Assessing how many of the needs identified could be met by making better use of the existing housing stock and/ or by changes in policy rather than new build (specific interventions);
- Past trends in the provision of new housing, the existing financial climate and the prospects for the coming 5 years; and
- The need to ensure a generous supply of housing land in the LDP.

From the supply targets set within the LDP, a housing land requirement for the Draft Proposed Plan has been determined.

Housing Land Requirement

From the housing supply target set within the Local Housing Strategy (LHS), a housing land requirement for the LDP area has been determined ensuring a generous supply and taking account of existing supply likely to come forward and future windfalls. 15% flexibility has also been added to the supply. (The detailed methodology is further discussed in the Housing Land Requirement Background Report).

The housing land requirement focuses on the main development proposals for the LDP area up to year 2023 (year 10 after adoption) i.e. Phase 1. The Plan also provides a broad indication of the scale and location of new housing development up to 2033 (year 20 after adoption) i.e. Phase 2. Land allocations have been appropriately phased to ensure a continuous supply of housing land over the whole Plan period and to manage the impacts of new development in terms of necessary infrastructure provision. Primary Policy 2 and Policy 5 Housing Land Requirement ensure that the supply of land is monitored, a 5-year effective land supply is maintained, and appropriate sites are brought forward as required.

Based on the findings of the HNDA and guided by the LHS, the land allocations within the Plan seek to deliver a range and choice of housing types and tenure across the LDP area. The housing land requirement has been allocated to locations according to the Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy (the approach is set out in Table 1 'Spatial Strategy' within the Plan). It reflects the specific requirements for the Strategic Areas (Core and Rural Villages) and required tenures (market and affordable housing), as indicated in the LHS, and reflects what it is considered reasonable to plan for during the first Phase of the Plan. The Affordable Housing Policy 6 and Supplementary Guidance SG04 provide for the delivery of affordable housing in the LDP area.

Table 2: Housing Land Requirement (year 10): Housing Units

	Market	Affordable	Total
Housing Supply Target: 2010/2023	4264	1144	5408
minus completions from housing land supply 2010/23	2600	627	3227
minus allowance for small sites 2010/23	520	0	520
Sub-total	1144	517	1661
plus 15% flexibility	172	78	249
Additional Housing Land Allocation Required to 2023	1316	595	1910

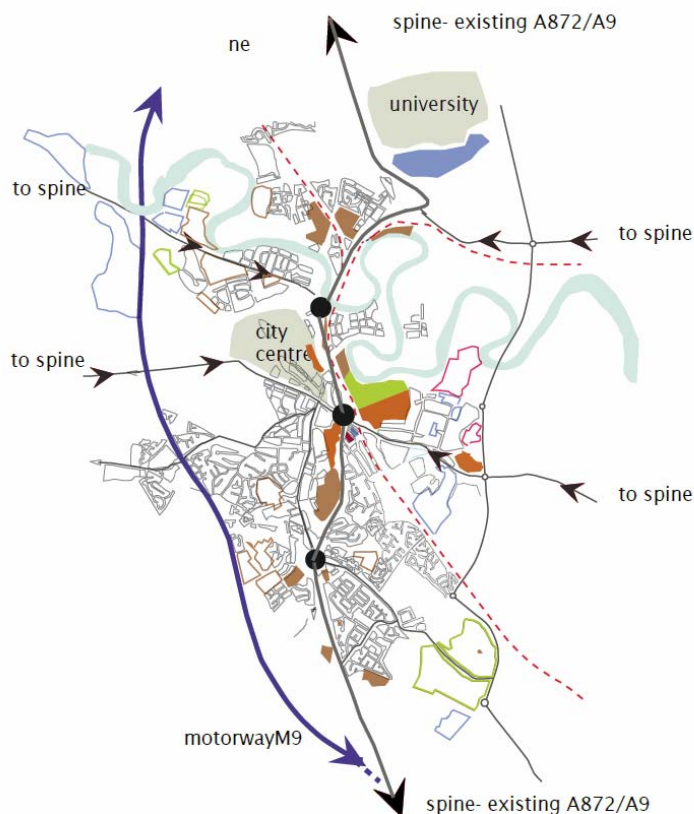
Table 3: Housing Land Supply 2010-2033: Housing Units

		Existing Supply 2010/23	Additional housing land allocation 2013/23	Total land supply effective or capable of becoming effective	Existing supply 2023/33	Additional housing land supply 2023/33	Scale of future land supply 2023/33
				Phase 1 2010-2023			Phase 2 2023-2033
Stirling Core	Urban Consolidation	1537	336	1873	320	300	620
	Regeneration	473	664	1137	1067	630	1697
	Strategic Development	750	800	1550	1750	800	2550
Stirling Rural	Rural Villages & Housing in the Countryside	467	194	667	0	100	100
	Sub-Total	3227	1994	5221	3137	1830	4967
	Small Sites			520			400
	Total	3227	1994	5741	3137	1830	5367

The locations for development set out in the Proposed Plan generally reflect those indicated in Higher Growth Option 3 presented in the MIR with the exclusion of sites (FALL.C) and the new small settlement of 100 houses. The Fallin site (FALL.C) has been excluded from the Plan due to limited school capacity and concerns over the visual impact of development in this area – this is further explained in the Site Assessment. The new small settlement has been excluded on the grounds of responses received to the proposal in that no specific location has come forward and there are doubts over its potential to be truly sustainable at the scale proposed.

The inclusion of housing site H56 (Airthrey Kerse) within the Plan reflects the aspirations set out in the City Vision to strengthen City edges and the City's physical relationship with the University, to provide a greater distribution of new housing development in accessible locations within the City Corridor to provide a wider range and choice, and to allow for a greater provision of affordable housing needs to be met within this part of the City.

Figure 4: City Corridor/Spine



Employment Land Requirement

New business space has a large role to play in the future shape of Stirling, as the availability of a good range of employment opportunities adds to the attractiveness of the area as a place to live and work. The Council's Economic Strategy (2009-2013) indicates that the objective is to increase the range and number of jobs available locally, particularly high value jobs, to reduce the need to travel outside the area and to take full advantage of its location and assets. The MIR highlights that the main issue for the Plan is how to protect existing employment land for employment uses and provide for growth in the demand for new modern business space.

The employment land requirement for the Draft Plan is based on the rate of jobs growth per annum to meet the Council's aspirations for economic growth, translated into a business space requirement and then a land requirement (the method of assessment is set out in the Stirling Business Space Strategy 2010).

The Business Space Strategy identifies a business land requirement for the whole Council Area of c.143ha based on 6.2 ha per annum. This comprises of: -

- Around 57 hectares of land required for industrial development between 2010 and 2033, averaging at 2.5 hectares per annum. This is entirely made up of replacement demand – as new space becomes available, some of this demand will potentially be absorbed by re-build of existing stock.
- Around 86 hectares of land is required for office development between 2010 and 2033, averaging at 3.7 hectares per annum. Most of this demand is for jobs growth, e.g. only 14% (around 12 hectares) is replacement demand.

Although the above target includes the National Park area, the majority of business land will be delivered within the Stirling LDP area, therefore the target of c.143ha has been used to set the employment land requirement for the Plan to 2033. For the first 10 years after adoption (to 2023 with a based date of 2010) the land requirement is considered to be c.81ha (6.2ha x 13 years).

The base year of the Business Space Strategy was 2009 and the assessment at that time identified the existing supply of employment land for the Stirling LDP area as c.205ha. This suggested that no further land required to be identified, however, the Business Space Strategy confirms that a significant proportion of this supply is not effective due to a range of constraints including certain sites likely to be lost for alternative uses.

The land allocations within the Draft Proposed Plan Spatial Strategy now confirm the uses to which certain sites in doubt and referred to above, will be put. The employment land supply has therefore been revisited (with a new base date of 2010), as well as excluding those sites within the National Park (see Appendix B in the Proposed Plan). A total land supply of c.82ha is confirmed to 2023 and a further c.39ha confirmed to 2033. Excluded from this however is Bandeath North and West at 84ha which continue to be regarded as non-effective sites for business and do not feature therefore in the effective supply, although they will continue to be safeguarded for strategic employment uses for beyond the Plan period.

No allocation for windfalls has been made, although it is expected that some new business proposals (mostly small sites / conversions) will come forward during the timeframe of the Plan. The contribution that these make can be monitored through the annual update to the Business Land Audit.

Table 4: Employment land requirement (hectares), 2010-2023

Business Space Strategy Target: 2010/2023	81 ha
minus completions from existing supply 2010/2023	61 ha
Additional land required to 2023	20 ha

Table 5: Employment land supply (hectares), 2010-2033

	Existing Supply 2010/23	Additional employment land allocation 2013/23	Total land supply effective or capable of becoming effective	Scale of future land supply
			Phase 1 2010-2023	Phase 2 2023-2033
Urban Consolidation	14.0	0	14.6	0
Regeneration	2.6	0	2.6	0
Strategic Development	38.3	19.1	57.5	122.1*
Rural Villages & Housing in the Countryside	6.4	0.6	7.0	1.0
Total	61.3 ha	19.7 ha	81.7 ha	123.1 ha

* Includes additional land at Bandedath North and West safeguarded for strategic employment purposes in the longer term.

The locations for development set out in the Draft Proposed Plan generally reflect those indicated in Higher Growth Option 3 presented in the MIR. The existing supply at Kildean, Stirling University Innovation Park, Pirnhall, Durieshill, Bandedath (except sites to the north and west), Crookbridge, Broadleys, Springkerse, Barbush and Killearn Hospital continue to be identified for employment purposes but in some instances allow for other commercial uses in order to deliver business space on the site. New employment land is allocated mainly within Strategic Development Areas within the South Stirling Gateway development area, Milhall, Manor Farm and Bannockburn Hospital, to provide for a wider range of choice of business locations.

Policy 8 seeks to safeguard existing business sites and maintain an effective supply consistent with the land requirement set within the Plan. The annual production of the Council's Business Land Audit will ensure that sites are monitored in terms of their effectiveness. Sites which are no longer appropriate or considered ineffective will be considered within the review of the Development Plan and appropriate sites brought forward as required.

Retail Floorspace Requirements

In meeting the demand for modern retail space, the role and function of existing retail centres requires to be established to ensure that they perform an appropriate role in terms of the Spatial Strategy.

A Network of Centres (see Policy 10 and SG 09 on Network of Centres) has been identified within the Draft Plan, within which there is a hierarchy, in order to define the role and function of each Centre, and to ensure appropriate scales and types of new retail and commercial leisure development are directed to appropriate centres consistent with their position in the hierarchy. This is to enhance and support their role in the Network but also to protect their long-term vitality and viability. Outwith the Network of Centres, new retail and commercial leisure development opportunities will be strictly controlled to ensure the role and function of existing centres is not compromised.

Changes to the boundaries of existing centres have been made (particularly to the City Centre boundary) to better reflect their role and function. Edge of city centre

areas are no longer specifically defined within the Plan, but are mostly subsumed within a newly defined 'City Centre'.

Recent Council studies¹ into the capacity for further retail floorspace have identified, in both qualitative and quantitative terms, the need for further retail floorspace in the Stirling LDP area. Further retail space requirements are identified within the Plan consistent with the Network of Centres.

Stirling and Dunblane Convenience retail superstore and supermarket requirements

The requirement for new superstore development within the LDP area is mainly based on improving the market share within the area and clawing back expenditure leakage to other areas.

Table 6: Stirling Convenience Retail Floorspace (sq.m net), 2010-2020

	Target	Existing Supply 2010/20	New Supply 2010/20	Total floorspace: Phase 1 2010-2020
Convenience Superstores	9000 sq.m	5165* sq.m	4000 sq.m	9165 sq.m

* STEP/Vico, Burghmuir and Former MFI Site (St.Ninians) - with planning consent for superstore developments.

Scenario 2 (Table 6.3) from the Roderick MacLean Study, 2009 is considered the most appropriate to pursue in the Plan and has the best 'fit' with the approach taken within the Spatial Strategy. In terms of the existing supply it assumes that Tesco Stirling relocates to provide a larger store at STEP/Vico, and new smaller superstores are introduced at Burghmuir and at the former MFI site at St.Ninians. This ensures new superstore provision is provided in accessible locations, adjacent to existing centres, helping to support their vitality and viability.

A new convenience floorspace supply of 4000 sq.m net within Stirling is identified to support the household and expenditure growth forecast within the LDP Spatial Strategy. This would support one additional large superstore. In line with the recommendations from the Study, the Plan allocates this additional superstore in association with the new South Stirling Gateway development at Bannockburn. A large superstore in this location has the ability to claw back significant leakage from elsewhere as well as provide for local convenience retailing needs in an accessible location.

A specific study into the convenience retailing needs for Dunblane² was undertaken to inform the LDP. This study confirms that there is a capacity of only c.800 sq.m net floorspace, when considering both qualitative and quantitative issues. A single small store of 800 sq.m net however is unlikely to deliver any additional benefits to Dunblane in qualitative terms such as deliver a wider range of retail goods. A small superstore (3,900 sq.m gross) is therefore allocated for Dunblane to enhance the retail offer within the local community.

¹ Stirling Council: Roger Tym & Partners Retail Study, 2009 and Roderick MacLean Convenience Retail Study, 2010.

² Stirling Council: Roderick MacLean Associates Dunblane Convenience Retail Requirements Study, 2011.

The location of the retail store within Dunblane has been carefully considered, recognising that there are no suitable sites adjacent to the town centre that do not raise environmental concerns such as loss of sensitive Green Belt areas and adverse impacts on the historic environment. The brownfield site at Barbush has therefore been allocated for the retail store, which although out of centre, does not raise any adverse environmental issues and will enable the delivery of a long-standing business space requirement for this location, helping to support the requirements of the Stirling Business Space Strategy.

Within Durieshill, a medium sized supermarket (2,500 sq.m gross) is identified within the Plan to meet the specific retail requirements of this new community and support the new local centre (see Settlement Statement and Supplementary Guidance on Durieshill).

Comparison Retail Requirements – Personal Goods

The City Centre is identified within the City Visioning and the MIR as having a wide strategic role in relation to the LDP area as a whole and the wider region. Its position at the top of hierarchy of centres reflects this.

As evidenced by the recent Healthchecks however, the City Centre performs well in some aspects of retail but on the whole does not provide a range and quality of services sufficient to maximise Stirling's competitiveness. This is compounded by the quality of the physical environment and public realm, and the poor linkages between the shopping core of the City and the historic and tourist areas. This suggests that there needs to be a balance within the spatial strategy for the City, which enables growth but consolidates and strengthens the City Centre.

A Development Framework for the City Centre has been produced which sets out the planning 'vision' for the area. It identifies a new boundary for the City Centre and development opportunities for providing new retail space within the City Centre for personal goods, consistent with its strategic retailing role and helping to ensure its long-term vitality and viability.

The very high levels of personal retail floorspace (30,000 sq.m net) identified for the City Centre and environs in the Roger Tym study 2009, is not being planned for. This is as a result of feedback³ on future commercial demand, which suggested that planning for this amount of floorspace would be inappropriate as there is no commercial interest or demand to satisfy this as a consequence of Stirling's proximity to several other major retail destinations. A more realistic 10,000 sq.m net is proposed which includes a possible expansion of the Thistle Centre to maintain and reinforce Stirling's strong personal shopping role in the region.

³ Stirling LDP Retail Workshop 2010 http://www.stirling.gov.uk/minute_of_retail_workshop_2.pdf

Table 7a: Comparison retail (personal goods) floorspace (sq.m net), 2010-2025

	Target	Existing Supply 2010/25	New Supply 2010/25	Total floorspace: Phase 1 2010-2025
Personal Retail (City Centre)	10000 sq.m	2400* sq.m	7600 sq.m City Centre developments	10000 sq.m

* STEP (as part of superstore) and Burghmuir - sites with planning consent for personal goods retailing.

Comparison Retail - Household Bulky goods

Outwith the City Centre, the majority of the area's household retail requirements will be met within the new Commercial Centre of Springkerse. A total requirement c.4330 sq.m net of household retail floorspace is to be planned for, with c.2230 sq.m net floorspace to be provided within the Commercial Centre.

Table 7b: Comparison retail (household bulky goods) floorspace (sq.m net), 2010-2025

	Target	Existing Supply 2010/25	New Supply 2010/25	Total floorspace: Phase 1 2010-2025
Household Bulky Goods (Commercial Centre)	4330 sq.m	2230* sq.m	2100 sq.m	4330 sq.m

*Springkerse planning consent for household bulky goods retailing.

Settlement Hierarchy and Settlement Statements

All major settlements in the area are defined in the Draft Plan in terms of a sustainable Settlement Hierarchy. That is in terms of their role in contributing to the local economy and therefore their potential to contribute to a sustainable development strategy. The Settlement Hierarchy map is contained within the Draft Proposed Plan.

The Spatial Strategy focuses development in settlements according to their relative position in the hierarchy. All Tier 1, 2 and 3 settlements are in the Core Area, tier 4 and 5 settlements are in the Rural Villages Area.

Tier 1 settlement (Stirling City) makes a major contribution to the area's economy and has the potential therefore to accommodate the majority of the areas additional development over the plan period. However the City is constrained by a range of environmental factors including Green Belt, flooding, historic battlefields etc. Locations for additional development are identified on the basis of addressing structural issues in the city form.

Tier 2 settlements (Bridge of Allan and Dunblane), given their strategic location close to the City, have the potential to make a significant contribution to the area's economy. Their ability to accommodate major additional development however is constrained by environmental factors including Green Belt, historic setting, and lack of supporting infrastructure.

Tier 3 settlements (Eastern Villages and Durieshill), being within the catchment of the City, have the potential to make a significant contribution to the area's economy and provide for wider housing needs. Major development in these areas is considered appropriate and will assist the economic, social and environmental regeneration of the east Stirling area.

Tier 4 and 5 settlements have the potential to play an important but more modest role in the area's economy and will accommodate a small share of the additional development, the aim of which is more about sustaining them.

Settlement Statements are produced for the main settlements within the Plan area which provide a planning context to the provision of further development proposals within these settlements.

Site Assessments

All sites put forward at the Expressions of Interest stage and at the Main Issues Report stage have been assessed against a range of factors in order to determine whether they contribute to meeting the Spatial Strategy objectives for that settlement (as detailed in the Settlement Statements) and the Vision for Stirling. This is further explained in the introduction to the Site Assessments. Factors considered include environmental issues (which also supports the SEA process) and sustainable transport issues.

Green Belts and the Countryside Policy Boundaries

The Spatial Strategy provides the basis for designating Green Belt areas ensuring that they contribute to the establishment of the most sustainable settlement pattern for the area. A review of existing Green Belts was undertaken (as detailed in the Supplementary Guidance SG03 on Green Belts), the primary objective of which was to consider how Green Belts can help to direct planned development to the most appropriate locations and support regeneration. In order to assist this, the objective of the landscapes around Stirling, Dunblane, Bridge of Allan and Strathblane have been considered in terms of how they protect and enhance the quality, character, landscape setting and identity of settlements and protect and give access to open spaces.

The Green Belt around the City helps to define and protect the character and identity of the settlement, whilst directing development to sustainable locations. Green Belt has been extended to the north of Cambusbarron, west of Bridge of Allan and east of Dunblane to reinforce the above objectives of the Green Belt in these areas.

Outwith defined settlements, the Countryside Policy Boundary (CPB) area defines where the policy on Housing in the Countryside (Policy 14) and SG10 apply. Where the Plan allocates sites for future development on the periphery of built up areas, the CPB will move once the details of the outer edge of the new developments has been determined. In some instances this will be when full planning permission is granted. However, in the case of larger strategic development allocations, the CPB will be reviewed when a Development Framework or Masterplan is approved.

Sites which are being considered for development over the longer term (Phase 2 developments) are removed from the Green Belt but retained within the CPB area until these can be confirmed as allocations in future reviews of the Plan.

A detailed review of CPB will be undertaken through a future review of the Plan in order that the specific boundaries for allocated sites can be accurately confirmed.

The Strategy and the supporting Development Frameworks*, Masterplans and Development Briefs, support and allow for new developments to enhance, shape and contribute to the sense of place. This is also supported by the Settlement Strategies, which describe the unique characteristics of these areas and the specific development and infrastructure requirements.

** The developer-led frameworks at Airthrey Kerse and South Stirling Gateway are produced for information, in draft form, and do not comprise Supplementary Guidance. Representations made to them will help inform the final Framework documents which the Council will prepare once the sites are confirmed in the adopted Plan.*

7. Delivering the Spatial Strategy

The Draft Plan has been prepared during a period of economic recession with both public sector budgets and sources of development finance severely affected. Nevertheless, the Scottish Government urges that development plans should have a forward Vision that anticipates economic recovery. This will inevitably introduce apparent mismatches between development needs and demands and the ability of the Council, the agencies and the development industry to implement proposals, particularly in the short term. Partnership approaches and novel financial tools may have to be adopted in order to meet targets. Phasing of implementation has been indicated on the best information available, but may need to be flexible as circumstances change.

Delivering the Spatial Strategy will rely on maintaining an effective land supply and on the ability of the public and private sector to develop in the phasing timeframe indicated in the Plan. A range of factors may affect the progress of delivering the Strategy, which will be monitored through the LDP Action Programme: -

- The Strategy seeks to deliver the business land requirement and the housing land requirement that is considered effective and deliverable over the timeframe planned for. The amount of new housing planned for assumes some revival of the housebuilding sector, albeit slow initially. This will require to be reviewed over time and may affect the phasing of any future land requirements.
- Residential-led regeneration may encounter initial problems due to the current economic climate and the lack of investors and risk aversion amongst the developer industry⁴. A combined physical, social and economic approach to regeneration will be required, which will require the participation of the business community, landowners, developers, community planning partners and local communities.
- Slow housing growth may affect the ability to fund other commercial development projects and deliver the business space to support the growth in jobs anticipated.
- Major impacts on infrastructure provision to support new development, particularly schools and drainage, is envisaged and a flexible approach will be required recognising that upfront infrastructure investment will be problematic in the current economic climate.

⁴ Building a sustainable future, Feb 2011
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/340876/0113159.pdf>