EOI REF:- LATE 005 BENTHEAD, LATE SUBMISSION

FILE COPY

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20 July 2011

DPD Consultancy
c/o 4 Lathro Park
Kinross
Perthshire
KY13 8RU

Dear Sirs,

WEST LOTHIAN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT LAND AT BENTHEAD, BY FAULDHOUSE

Thank you for your letter dated 20 July 2011 in respect of the above.

Unfortunately, we cannot consider this site under the 'call for sites' process, as the deadline for this was 4pm on 6 May.

However, there will be a further opportunity to make submissions to the council at both the 'Main Issues Report' and 'Proposed Plan' stages of the West Lothian Local Development Plan. This plan will in time, supersede the present adopted West Lothian Local Plan 2009 (WLLP).

In terms of lodging any objections or representations, I would make it clear at this stage that this 'Expressions of Interest (Call for sites)' process we have undertaken is NOT a formal part of the West Lothian Local Development Plan process. That will come later at both the 'Main Issues Report' stage and the 'Proposed Plan' stage. So whilst I would never not encourage any parties to contact the council with any concerns or making any comments, this will be more for the formal stage.

In terms of timescales for the LDP, the council has updated its Development Plan Scheme No.3 (It is now DPS No.3A). This document sets out timescales for the LDP, consultation etc), and timescales have changed to reflect delays in the progress of SESplan (the south east Scotland strategic development plan that our LDP will require to accord with), and we now anticipate the following timescales for progress on the LDP:

The proposed revised timescale for taking forward the West Lothian Local Development Plan is set out in the DPS No.3A is as follows:

• Publication of Development Plan Scheme No.3 31 March 2011 (amended version 3A published June 2011)

• Seeking expressions of interest in development sites and general questionnaire: January to May 2011

• Preparation of Main Issues Report: Autumn/Winter 2011

• Publication of Main Issues Report, Environmental Report, Monitoring Statement, Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment: Spring 2012 (after publication of SESplan Proposed Plan)

• Publish formal responses to Main Issues Report: summer/autumn 2012

• Publication of proposed plan including Environmental Report and Action Programme: within six months of Scottish Ministers approving the SDP

• Examination of outstanding issues/representations: within 12 months of the LDP being published.

These timescales were ratified by our Council Executive on Tuesday 28 June.

Your client could always submit a more detailed general pre-application enquiry, however for the site should you wish to pursue a planning application, although, in very general terms, it is likely any development would be viewed unfavourably at this stage as the site is within the countryside when assessed against the present development plan and development in the countryside policies would apply (ENV31, 32 and 33 would be key material planning considerations) i.e. unless the houses were for a full time worker(s) employed in full time agriculture or another business that merits a rural location and that the business has been confirmed justified by an independent consultant to the satisfaction of the council, such a proposal is unlikely to be supported.

Careful consideration would be required of any development on this site also, given that immediately to the north lies the Breich Valley Area of Special Landscape Control designation in the WLLP and therefore careful consideration would be required of any potential impact on the setting of this designation, against policy ENV 21.

If you have any further queries or would like a more detailed response assessing the principle of a residential development or other specific uses on this site in policy terms, please let me know and we will be able to provide this i.e. check with internal consultee colleagues, including for example Education Services (as you will be aware, any residential development in West Lothian these days will require numerous developer contributions, for example cemeteries and RC Secondary will apply to this site at a rate of £35 and £1983 per unit at the time of writing):

The council's approved Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 'New Development in the Countryside' would also be a material planning consideration and any proposed development would have to be carefully assessed against this document. Links to these documents are provided below:

http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/downloaddoc/1799514/1841832/1875738/spg_denomsec

http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/downloaddoc/1799514/1841832/1875738/spg_cemetries

The Consolidated Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) would also be a significant material consideration, particularly the sections related to 'rural development', as well we Planning Advice Notes 44 (Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape) and 72 (Housing in the Countryside). Links to these are provided below:

http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/300760/0093908.pdf

http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/04/01145231/52326

http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/02/20637/51636

Full details of all SPG (including all approved developer contribution policies) can be found at the following web link on the council's website:

http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/205/207

The development plan webpage on the council's website, can be found at the following link:

http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/178/

The comments I have made in this letter have been made without prejudice to any final decision the council may take upon allocation of land in a future development plan and with no receipt of a planning application and without neighbour notification and non statutory and non statutory consultations having been carried out.

I will keep on record the details that you have submitted for this site.

Yours sincerely

Steven McLucas
Planning Officer

Director of Planning
West Lothian Council
Development Planning & Environment
County Buildings
High Street
LINLITHGOW
EH49 7EZ

West Lothian Council
Development Management
20 JUL 2011
Date
Post No
Ref To
Actioned
Replied

c/o 4 Lathro Park
Kinross
Perthshire
KY13 8RU

19 July 2011

For the attention of Colin Miller

Dear Sir

WEST LOTHIAN LOCAL PLAN – DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES
LAND AT BENTHEAD – FAULDHOUSE, WEST LOTHIAN

We act for Benthead Developments Limited who own land to the north of the settlement of Fauldhouse. We attach a site plan delineating the extent of our client's ownership which extends to 18 acres or so of open grazing/underused land. We also attach a copy of the West Lothian Local Plan proposals map for Fauldhouse showing the site highlighted in yellow. We are of the opinion that this site offers the settlement of Fauldhouse a well located, easily developed development opportunity which has the potential to accommodate, in particular, residential development but potentially other forms of development, given its location and proximity to the town centre.

The site is bounded to the north by woodland and to the west and south/southeast by the road which connects Fauldhouse to the B7066 and recent residential development. The settlement boundary of Fauldhouse is defined by recent residential development in this area. The site is of poor agricultural quality and is not utilised for any purpose. There is an opportunity to create a more attractive boundary to the settlement through appropriate development and landscaping.

We are not aware of any infrastructure constraints which would prevent development of this site. Our client has undertaken site stability investigations and we understand that the majority of the site is developable. The site is clearly well located in terms of proximity to the town centre. Fauldhouse is a linear settlement and much of the historic residential focus has been to the east and identified development opportunities are some distance from retail and other town centre amenities and in particular, the railway station. The Benthead site is a short walk from the town. It is located on a well established transport route. It is well located in relation to local schools which are a short distance away. We understand that there is no school capacity constraint to the development of the site. The site is physically capable of accepting significant development.

We understand that a number of sites in the Fauldhouse area have been allocated for residential development in the adopted Local Plan, but very few have been developed. While this recent lack of development activity may be in part due to the economic downturn, we understand that there are physical constraints to the development of a number of sites. Notwithstanding this, government guidance on residential development confirms that there should be a balance between Brownfield and Greenfield development opportunities which satisfy the requirements of the purchasers and the housebuilding industry.

18 July 2011

West Lothian Council – (Continued – 2)

The Benthead site is a Greenfield opportunity which offers the potential to provide Fauldhouse with a range of housing, including affordable housing, which other sites cannot provide.

Our clients are realistic in terms of the scale of development which could be accommodated at Benthead. It is recognised that a proportion of the site would require to be given over to affordable housing at potentially a substantial area of public open space. As well as residential development, there is clearly an outstanding opportunity to provide the town with recreational facilities.

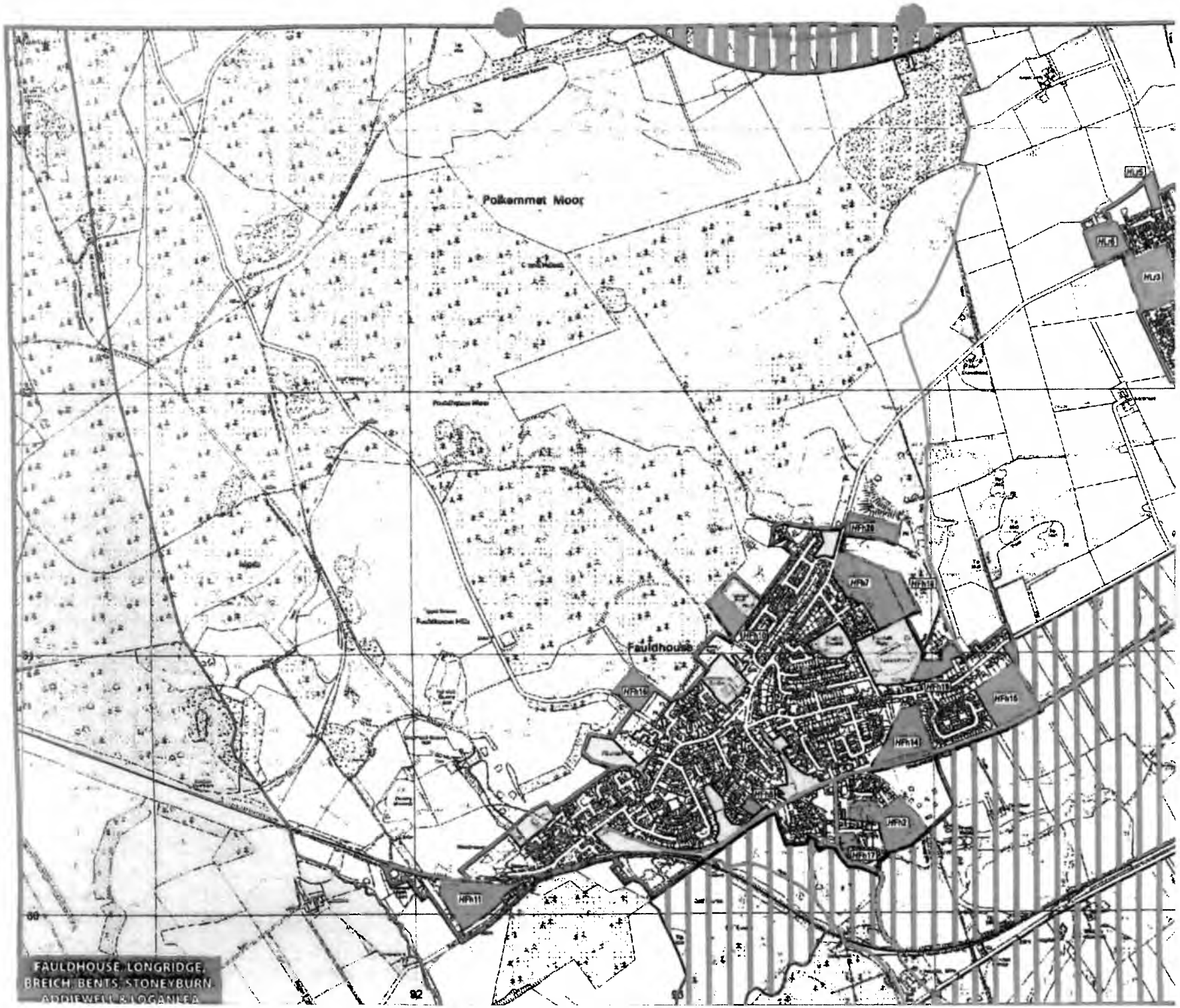
We would be grateful if you could please acknowledge receipt of this correspondence and advise us of the timescales for the preparation of the Local Plan and the opportunity to submit further representations to the Council's Planning Department.

Yours faithfully

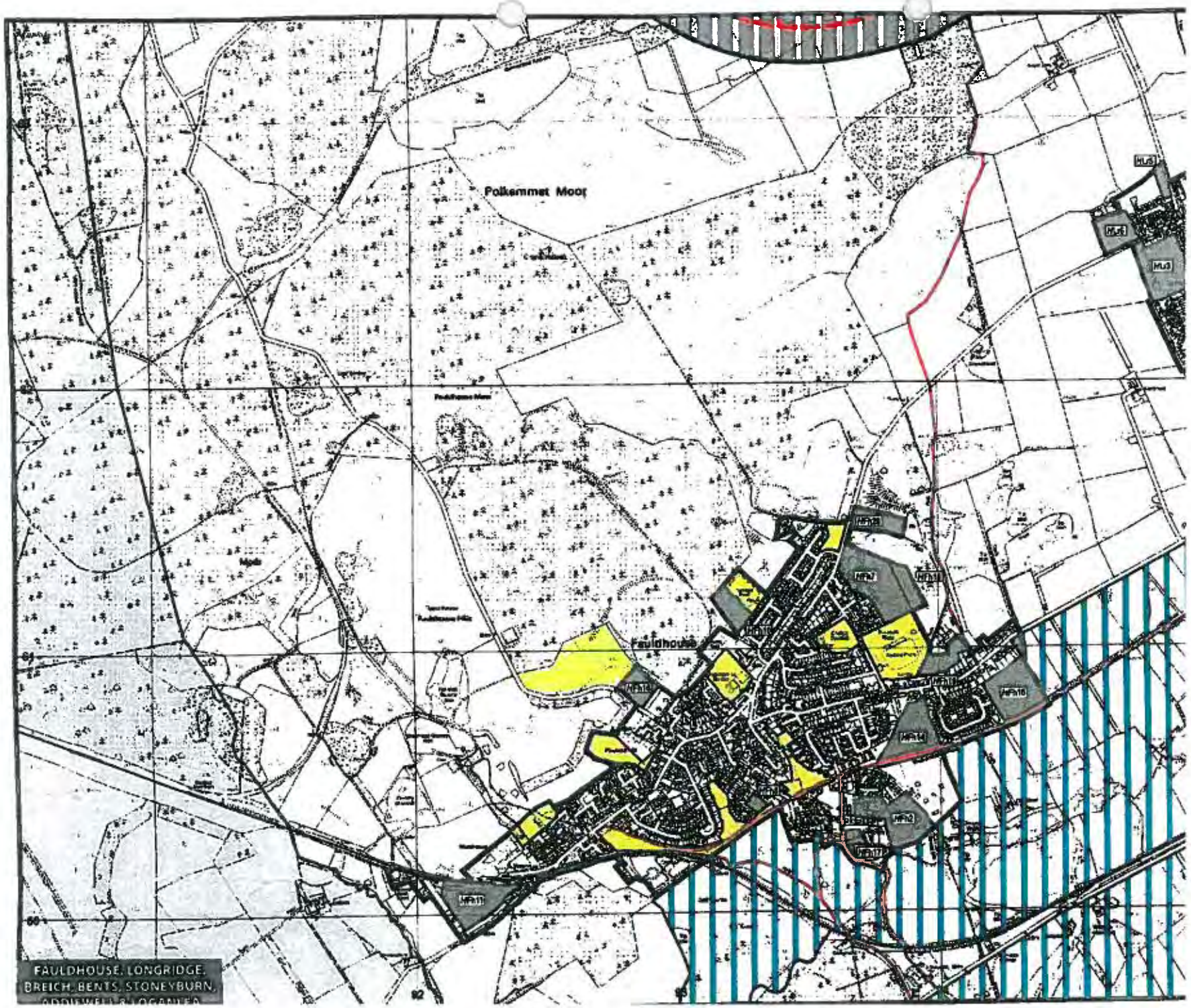
[redacted]

DPD Planning Consultancy

Encs



FAULDHOUSE, LONGRIDGE, BREICH, BENTS, STONEYBURN, ADDIEWELL & LOGANLEA



FAULDHOUSE, LONGRIDGE, BREICH, BENTS, STONEYBURN, ADDIEWELL & LOGANLEA