



Stonehaven & District Community Council

## Stonehaven Local Place Plan

### Report on Questionnaire Responses

Rev 2	Final	24 Apr 2024	M Ogden
Rev 1	Updated draft	12 Apr 2024	M Ogden
Rev 0	Draft	06 Mar 2024	M Ogden
Revision	Purpose	Date	Author



## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Summary .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Development Locations.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Housing .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Retail Facilities .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Sports and Recreation Facilities.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Additional Facilities for Tourist Motorhomes.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Local Employment Opportunities .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Green Spaces .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Community Buildings and Brownfield Sites .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Sustainable Power .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Small Projects .....</b>	<b>9</b>



## Introduction

The development of a Local Place Plan for Stonehaven was co-ordinated by a group consisting of members of the Stonehaven District Community Council and volunteer members of the community.

In order to understand the wishes and gain the opinion of as many members of the community as possible an on-line questionnaire was published in November and December 2023, supplemented with two consultation events and publicised by a dedicated website, social media posts and fliers delivered to almost all of the residences in Stonehaven.

All of the responders gave their post code as AB39, almost all being AB39 2\*\*.

From the 11,000 members of the community in 5,000 homes within Stonehaven, 966 responses were received. This means that the responders represented just under 9% of the total community.

The summary of the responses received is shown in Appendix 1 to this document.

## Summary

Overwhelmingly, the combined responses to the consultation showed that people want to protect and preserve Stonehaven's existing assets, while also making more of them. Importantly, there is a general feeling that Stonehaven does have a lot of valuable assets to protect, but that more community use could be made of many of them. At the same time, there is also a general desire to see existing assets complemented by new facilities, most notably a supermarket and more leisure facilities (the desire for which has also come up again and again in previous consultations).

There was a common perception amongst the respondents that in order to achieve the additional amenities that people wanted, then Stonehaven would have to grow.

The belief in a need for more houses was fairly evenly divided while the responders wish for new amenities identified the following specifically:

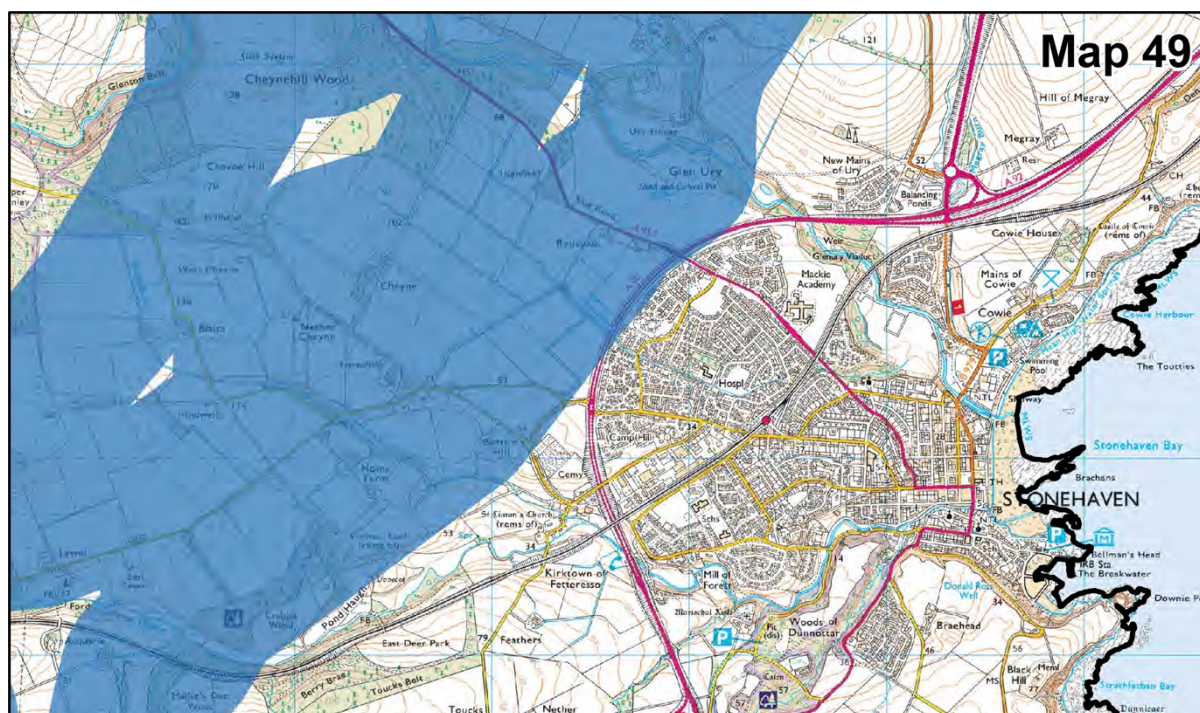
- Additional primary and secondary schools (63% and 66%)
- Supermarket (82%)
- Modern leisure facilities (53%)
- Additional business and employment opportunities
- Effective community use of existing protected buildings
- Allocation of space for sustainable power generation (71%)

## Development Locations

We had identified three primary locations based on avoiding prime agricultural land, local nature conservation areas along the coastline, the pipeline corridors running to the west of the town, areas of known flood risk and areas defined as special landscape areas where planning had been refused previously. This left three main areas for development which in order of preference for use were the Ury estate (71%), Redcloak/Cheyne Hill (54%) and Touks (42%).

It should be noted that, if developments were on the other side of the pipeline corridors from Stonehaven, they would be a significant distance from the town and probably outside the 20 minutes neighbourhood guideline from the town centre. However, these would be within the 20 minutes neighbourhood from the existing retail at Redcloak and potential future retail at Ury.

The following shows all the pipelines running to the west of Stonehaven.

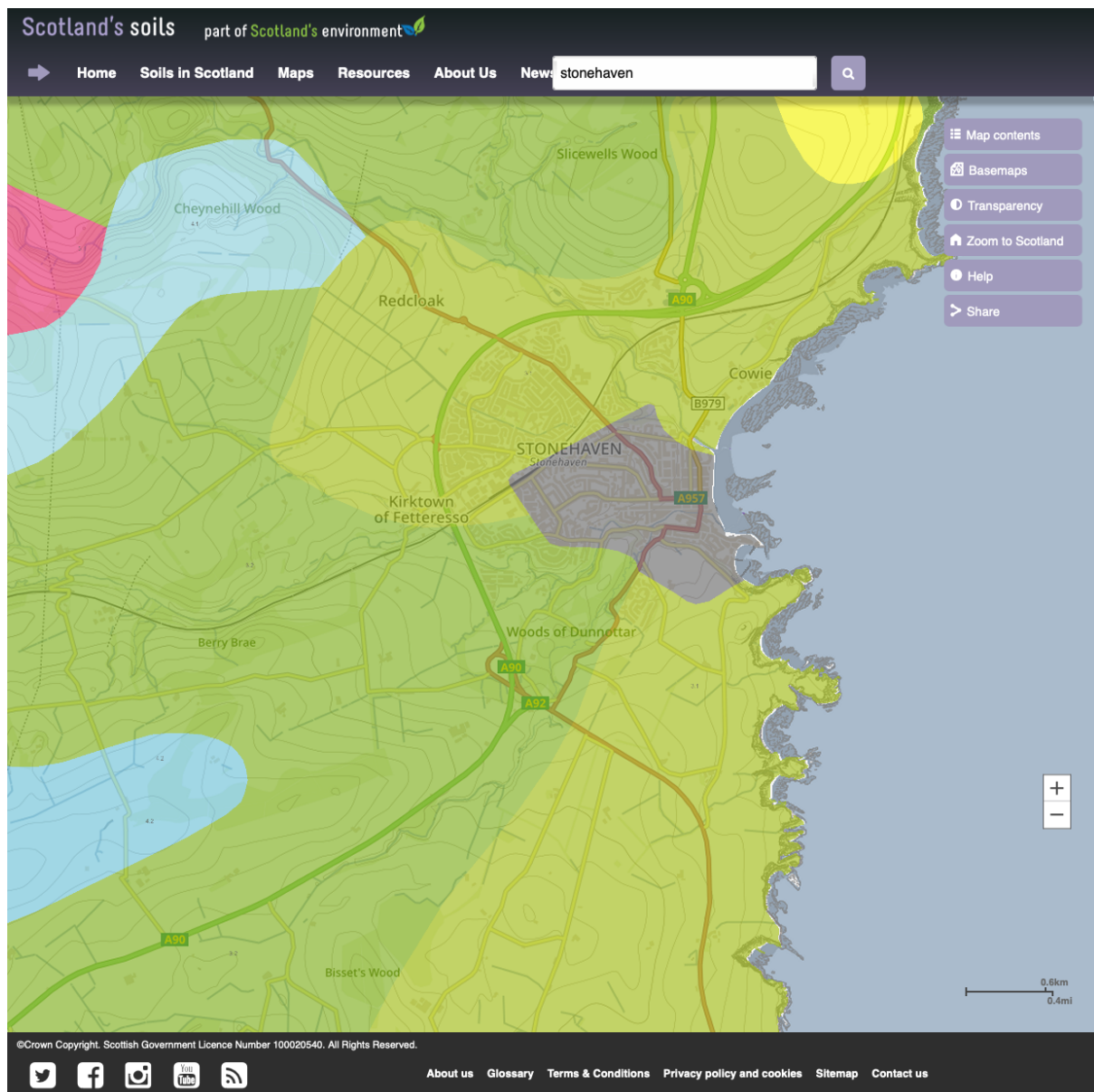


Clearly much of the potential development land in the Redcloak and Cheyne Hill area will be subject to the limitations imposed by the HSE on developing within these pipeline corridors, which will limit severely what could be done here.

The initial evaluation of the agricultural value of land around Stonehaven was taken from the “National Scale Land Capability Map for Agriculture” from Scotland’s Soils within the Scottish government environment web site. However, during the course of the consultation, it was recognised that the more detailed partial cover map actually shows parts of the Touks area to be prime agriculture as well.

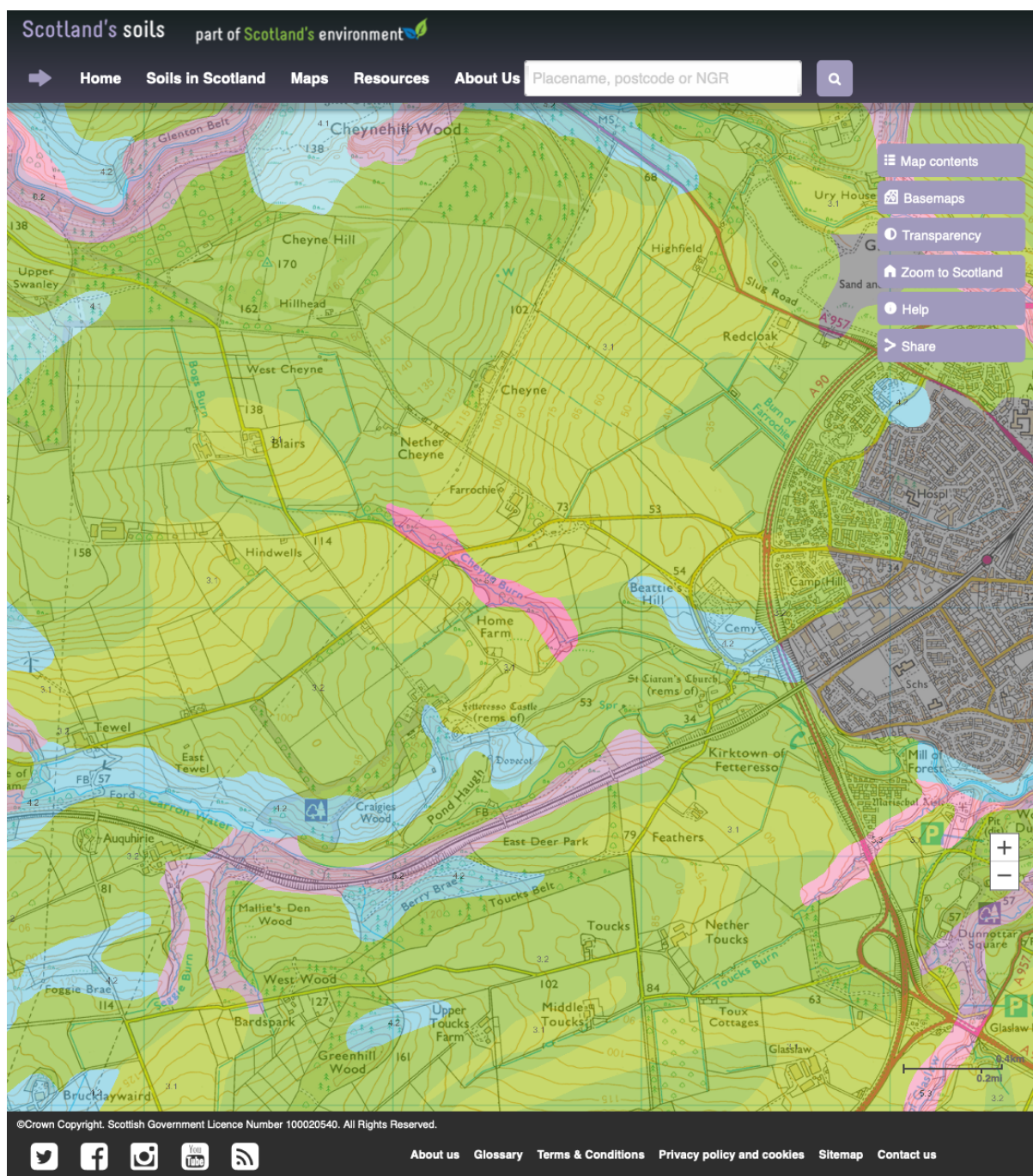
Note, in both maps the relevant colour coding is

- 3.1 - Land capable of producing consistently high yields of a narrow range of crops and/ or moderate yields of a wider range. Short grass leys are common.
- 3.2 - Land capable of average production though high yields of barley, oats and grass can be obtained. Grass leys are common.



National Scale Land Capability Map for Agriculture  
The James Hutton Institute Updated 2013





## Land capability for agriculture (partial cover)

The James Hutton Institute Updated 2013

Further, during consultations there were concerns raised that any future developments should not significantly increase the traffic load on the routes into the town and exacerbate further the parking issues in the town centre. Options for development between the A90



and the pipeline may offer more acceptable opportunities, although would not address the concerns on traffic and parking.

During consultation we received comments on the benefits that development at Braehead and to the north east of Cowie would deliver in terms of connectivity/scope to do this in a way that would not impact on landscape. The issues with this area seem to focus primarily on the potential increase in surface flooding coming into the town centre. It therefore is paramount that any development in this area has properly designed and verified drainage that is verified by suitable experts within or employed by the council.

## Housing

The responders were roughly evenly divided on whether there was a need for additional housing within Stonehaven., with 55% in favour of more houses and 45% against.

What was clearer was that there was a strong wish for any such new houses to be primarily affordable rental houses (42% / 60%), low energy homes (45% / 63%) and affordable houses for ownership (27% / 50%). (Note – the split percentages show top priority and then top and medium priority.)

## Retail Facilities

The responders were strongly in favour of an additional supermarket (82%), whether this is delivered at the Ury estate as has been promised or elsewhere if that should fall through. There was a lower but significant demand for the development of a retail park (53%) and an expansion of independent stores (48%). Only 3% of the responders wished to have no additional retail facilities. There were a range of types of additional retail, each requested by 1 responder, these can be viewed in Appendix 1 to this document.

While there was good acceptance of additional retail at any of the locations suggested, the strong contenders were at the AWPR interchange and on the Ury estate.

## Sports and Recreation Facilities

The responders expressed a strong wish to see new, modern leisure facilities. On a rating of 1 to 5 in terms of importance to the community, where 5 is the most important and 1 the least important, 53% voted at level 5, 21% at level 4 and 17% at level 3. This shows 74% of the community rated the importance of these facilities at level 4 or 5. However only 39% of the responders wished to provide clarity on what type of facilities they wished to see.

When asked where any new sports or recreation facilities should be located, there was a strong response for the extension of existing sports locations; Cowie leisure centre, the Recreation grounds, , Mackie Academy, Mineralwell Park with a lesser but positive response



for Ury Estate. Other locations which would be more remote from the town centre were much more evenly balanced between supporters and those against.

When asked which leisure facilities people in the respondents' houses would actually use, the response "never" was recorded for many of the options suggested. Most of the options showed usage by members of the household weekly or more frequently at less than 20%. The facilities that would be used most frequently (weekly or better) were swimming pool (70%), gym (67%), play park (43%), pilates / yoga facility (42%), water-based activities (33%), football pitches (33%), indoor courts for badminton etc. (25%), and running track (24%). The percentages shown here relate to those responders who elected to provide additional clarity, therefore the 39% of the total responders.

### Additional Facilities for Tourist Motorhomes

The responses on providing additional facilities for tourist using mobile homes was ambivalent for the main part. There were strong votes against providing these at the Mineralwell Park (41%), beachfront (51%), leisure centre (42%), recreation ground (40%), Backies car park (46%) and the Community Centre (43%). For each of these locations the votes against exceeded the votes for significantly, other locations were more even.

### Local Employment Opportunities

The responses to making land available for future local businesses showed positive responses exceeding the negative responses for each location, albeit that Hindwells and Toucks were almost on parity between those for and those against. The three most popular locations were Spurryhillock (63%), AWPR junction (57%) and Ury estate (50%).

### Green Spaces

The responses on the protected green spaces have been deemed to be invalid. The reason for this is that the question asked could be interpreted as either:

"Do you think that additional protected open space should form part of any new development?"

Or

"Do you think that existing protected open space should be used to create any future development?"

These alternative interpretations mean that people with the same views on protected open space could give diametrically opposite answers.

However, the question on whether future leisure development should be permitted on existing green space was much clearer. With the exception of the recreation grounds and Mackie Academy, the responses were greater for keeping the green space as it is rather than





using it for leisure developments. The strongest overall response for maintaining the existing green space was for:

- Dunnottar woods (74% for, 13% against)
- Riverside Drive to River carron ((57% for, 23% against)
- Mineralwell Park (59% for, 32% against)
- Forest Park (53% for, 31% against)

### Community Buildings and Brownfield Sites

The responses on the future use of existing protected community buildings were overwhelmingly in support of retaining them for community use for the majority of the buildings. For the following building the overall response was to maintain them for community use but the responses were more balanced:

- Dunnottar school
- Carronhill school
- Shepherds Hall
- Former Sea Cadet hut.

For the former gasworks site, the preferences for future use were car [park (49%), leisure facility (40%), Retail (31%), open space (29%), community building or hall (25%), growing space (19%), housing (17%)

The following sites are not brownfield sites at this time but if they were not required by Aberdeenshire Council they would fall into this category.

- Aberdeenshire Council Landscape Services Yard – retail (62%), workshop space (59%) office space (43%).
- Aberdeenshire Council Roads depot – retail (68%), car parking for railway station (51%), workshop space (40%) and office space (33%).

There is significant commonality in the alternative uses of these two sites, retail then workshops, then offices. However, it should be noted that the use of the Roads Department depot for additional car parking for the railway station was the second most popular.

In all cases, individuals came up with other ideas but these were almost invariably supported by one person only. They can be viewed in Appendix A.

### Sustainable Power

The responses on whether space should be allocated for the development of sustainable power generation was overwhelmingly positive, (71% in favour against 29%). There was no question asked on the form of sustainable power preferred.

It should be noted that notification of the proposal to transmit green energy between Kintore and Teeling came after the consultations had closed.



## Small Projects

The support for small projects within the town were as follows:

- Older peoples' resource centre - 70%
- Improvements to the Coastal Footpath - 66%
- Improved network of paths/cycleways around Stonehaven - 63%
- Community fridge - for redistribution of surplus food - 59%
- Community Café - 56%
- Community food growing spaces/allotments - 55%
- Community storage - for sports clubs & voluntary groups - 48%
- Town Centre CCTV - 46%
- Accessible play equipment - 45%
- Pedestrian improvements in the lanes to the beachfront - 43%
- Plainstones area refresh - 22%