

STONEHAVEN LOCAL PLACE PLAN OCTOBER 2024 (PROPOSED)



Stonehaven & District Community Council

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Abbreviations

ALDP – Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan (2023)
KMCP – Kincardine and Mearns Community Plan (2022)
LPP – Local Place Plan
NPF4 – National Planning Framework 4 (2023)
SDCC – Stonehaven & District Community Council
SLA – Special Landscape Area

Plans/figures

1. Plan area
2. Relationship of LPP to other documents
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4. Other areas protected by ALDP
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Introduction

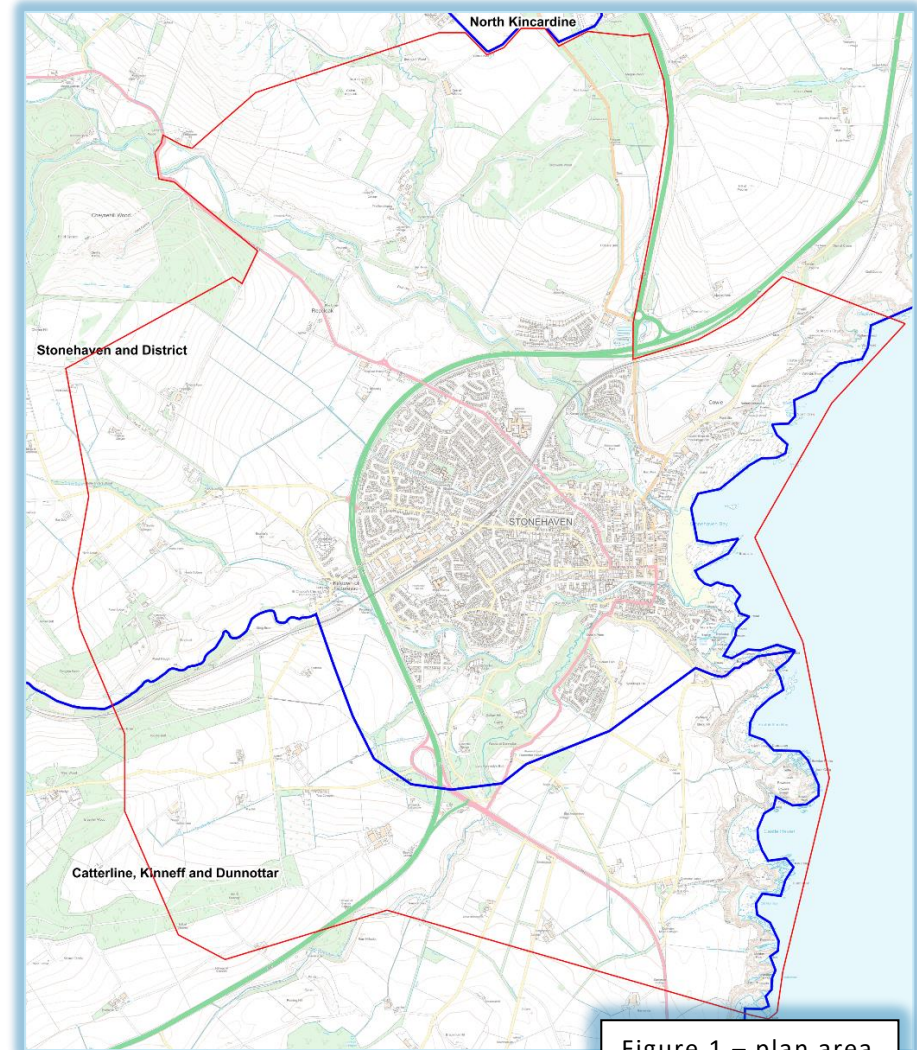
This Local Place Plan (LPP) has been prepared by the [Stonehaven & District Community Council \(SDCC\)](#) with significant voluntary assistance from the community.

It has been informed by extensive public engagement and research, with the purpose of capturing how residents would like to see the town and its immediate environs develop in the short- and medium-term future.

We live in a place with many valuable assets, but also many that could be better used, with strong demand for new facilities to complement existing ones. This LPP seeks to protect and enhance what we already have and to ensure that new development best meets the community's needs.

While the focus of this plan is the town and its immediate environs, a key matter considered during the preparation of this was the potential for the town to grow in future (and, if so, in which direction). To reflect this, the plan area extends beyond Stonehaven itself.

Once registered with Aberdeenshire Council, this LPP should be taken into account when the next Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan (ALDP) is being prepared, and will be a material consideration when future planning applications are being assessed.



Thanks go out to all who contributed to the preparation of this plan, and who make Stonehaven the unique place that it is.

Vision

The process of preparing this LPP was designed to identify what the community needs to prosper, and the community's aspirations for how land in and immediately around Stonehaven should be used for this to be a genuinely sustainable settlement with the infrastructure needed for all residents to enjoy an excellent quality of life.

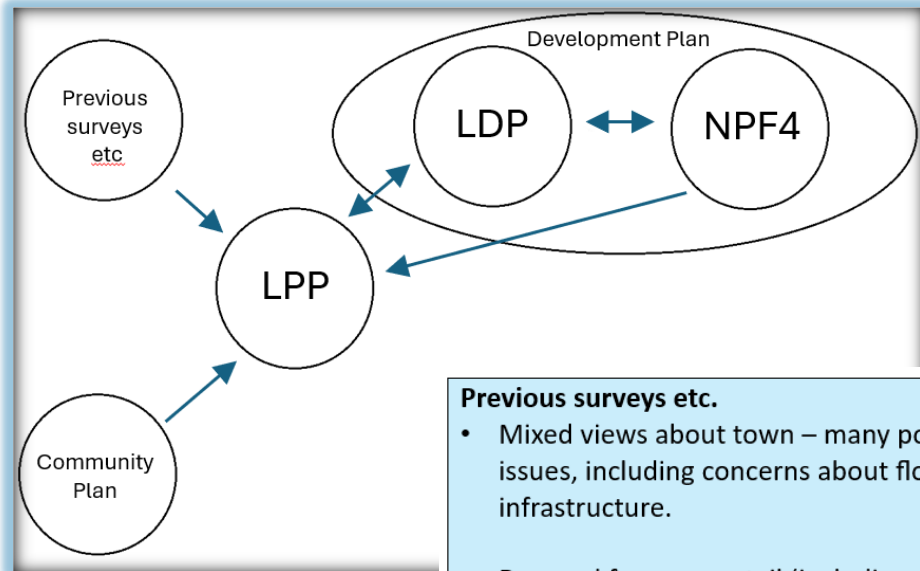
This included a desire to identify:

- new uses for vacant or under-used land;
- preferred locations for future growth; and
- new facilities which the community wishes to see delivered.



The vision: “for Stonehaven to be a genuinely sustainable settlement with the infrastructure needed for all residents to enjoy an excellent quality of life...”

Context



People of Stonehaven have previously made their views about the town known through community planning exercises, public consultations, and other studies. This LPP has been informed by the findings of those*, as well as by additional public consultation, the current development plan (the [ALDP](#) and [National Planning Framework 4 \(NPF4\)](#)) and the [Kincardine and Mearns Community Plan \(KMCP\)](#).

Figure 2 (above) – Relationship between LPP and other documents

Table 1 (right)– key points from documents that have informed this LPP

<p>Previous surveys etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed views about town – many positives, but also issues, including concerns about flooding and infrastructure. • Demand for more retail (including supermarket), affordable housing and improved facilities. • Support for limited growth of town. • Desire to protect green spaces and skyline. 	<p>LDP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps identify allocated sites and protected areas (Figures 3, 4 and 7). • community would welcome further provision of small scale and affordable housing, employment opportunities, and facilities for teenagers, the elderly and those less able to meet and engage. • All residential development may be required to contribute towards new facilities, which may be identified in a Community Plan.
<p>NPF4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on sustainability. • Champions <u>20 minute neighbourhoods</u>. • Protects prime agricultural land. 	<p>Community Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities are strong resilient communities, and community connections and wellbeing. • Outcomes include encouraging/promoting active travel and health-based activities.

Context

What makes Stonehaven special also limits our potential for growth - on one side, we have a coastline identified in the ALDP as a protected coastal zone and Special Landscape Area (SLA). On the other side are pipelines needed for North Sea oil and gas transmission. Our location means some areas are at risk of flooding while, in the surrounding countryside, much of the farmland is prime agricultural land, with some pockets of ancient woodland. These factors all need to be considered when deciding where any future development could go, along with the importance of people being able to access shops, services and facilities in the town. The pros and cons of different options have to be weighed against each other in a balancing exercise (taking the relevant policies of both the ALDP and NPF4 into account when doing so).



Figure 3 – areas where development potential limited by both NPF4 and the ALDP

Specific policy requirements in respect of above areas:

- Prime agricultural land should be protected (but ALDP allows for it to be developed if allocated).
- Land at risk of flooding should be avoided.
- Development proposals will not be supported if ancient woodland would be lost.

Context

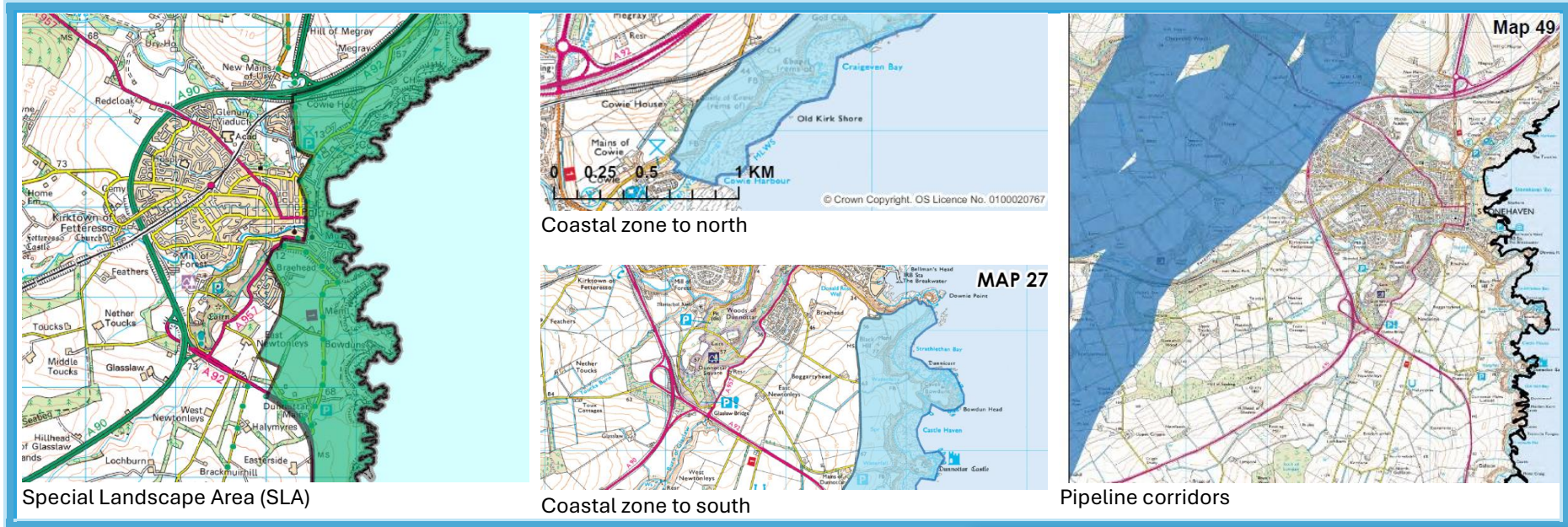


Figure 4 – Other protected areas identified in ALDP

Specific policy requirements in respect of above areas:

- Significant adverse impacts on SLAs not permitted unless clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of at least local importance.
- In the coastal zone, development must require a coastal location or must be clear social, economic, environmental or community benefits arising.
- Within the consultation zones for oil and gas pipelines, the Council will consult with HSE and the facility's owners and operators, and will seek to ensure that any risk to public safety is not increased.*

* Note – [advice from HSE in respect of recent proposals for new housing at the Ury Estate](#) states that the currently consented development should be considered to be the limit of residential development in the inner and middle consultation zones in this location.

Consultation

Overview

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 by two in-person consultation events and publicised by a dedicated website, social media posts and fliers delivered to almost all of the residences in Stonehaven. From the 5,000 households in Stonehaven, 966 responses were received*.



Figure 5 – example consultation materials and responses

*a full summary of the responses received is available on: www.stonehavenlocalplaceplan.com

Findings

Overwhelmingly, consultation responses reflected the findings from previous exercises, showing 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 has a lot of valuable assets, but that more community use could be made of them, along with a desire to see existing facilities complemented by new ones (most notably a supermarket and more leisure facilities, amongst others). There is also a common perception that, to achieve the additional amenities that people want, Stonehaven will have to grow. In all respects, the combined responses show Stonehaven has a number of strengths and weaknesses and is faced with a number of opportunities and threats, which any future development should take into account.

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly community with good community spirit. • Valued independent shops and amenities. • Unique setting by the sea. • Tourist attractions. • Number of buildings dedicated to community uses (Figure 12). 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited range of retail outlets. • Issues with traffic, parking and roads. • Lack of facilities, in particular for sports/leisure. • Hard to access affordable housing. • Some buildings are poorly maintained. • Feeling of Stonehaven falling behind other towns.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible areas for growth, if growth delivers additional facilities. • Open space audit (Figure 11) identifies spaces with capacity for further sports provision • Potential to attract more tourist spend (including through Aires*, lockers, toilets, and changing facilities at the Harbour). 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constraints to growth (Figures 3 and 4). • Declining population of increasing age. • Impacts of any increase in number of visitors to town.

Table 2 – SWOT analysis

*motorhome stopover site with basic services.

Directions for growth

To determine which areas should be considered for potential development within the consultation, we decided to respect significant physical and policy constraints and excluded land in the coastal zone, SLA, pipeline corridor and prime agricultural farmland. Respondents were then asked for their views on potential new development at Ury Estate, Redcloak/Cheyne Hill and/or Toucks. An option box was offered for 'other', which had a very low take-up.

During the consultation process, it emerged that the extent of the pipeline corridors was greater than previously understood, and that more of the Toucks area was prime agricultural land than appreciated. At the same time, feedback encouraged greater emphasis on the importance of connectivity between any new development and the existing settlement.

Taking all feedback and further information obtained during the consultation process into account, it was concluded that:

- the community's preferred location for future development is the Ury estate, albeit this should reflect the community aspirations for development as set out in this LPP;
- the Redcloak/Cheyne Hill and Toucks areas are not preferred locations for future development, with development here also constrained by the extent of prime agricultural land and the pipeline corridors; and
- if more significant growth was required in the future, it will be essential to consult on areas that were excluded at this stage but also consider connectivity to the town.

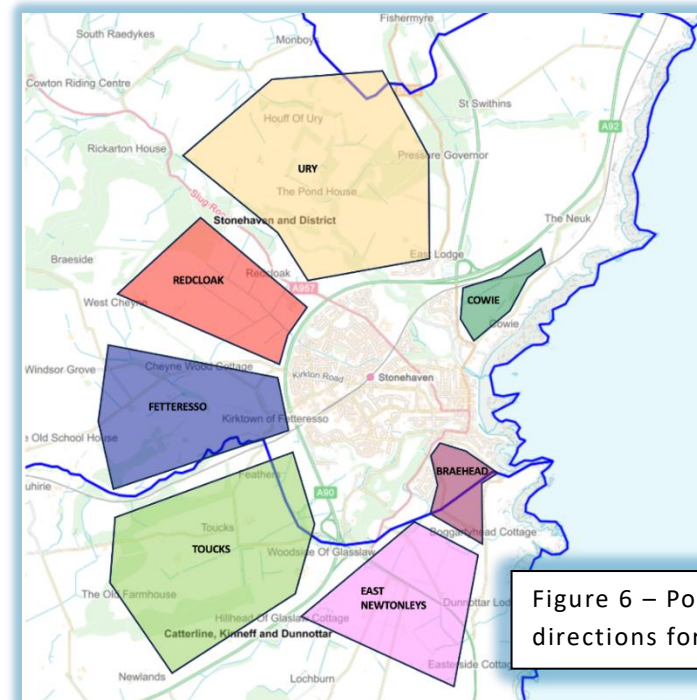


Figure 6 – Potential directions for growth

Community aspirations for new development

Taking into account the consultation findings outlined above, along with the findings of previous surveys and other relevant documents referred to above, the following aspirations for new development have been identified:

<p>Housing Mixed views on whether more housing needed. But, where built, priorities should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • low energy homes; • affordable rental houses; and • affordable houses for ownership. 	<p>Retail Strong demand for additional supermarket, with preferred locations being AWPR interchange or within the Ury estate.</p> <p>Also desire to see more independent shops and other forms of retail, particularly in vacant units/on previously developed sites within town.</p>	<p>Tourist infrastructure Potentially suitable locations for Aires are the layby overlooking Cowie, Baird Park, Dunnottar Castle Car Park and Dunnottar Quarry Car Park.</p> <p>Would also like to see changing facilities etc at Harbour/Botany Bay.</p>	<p>Facilities Strong wish to see improved schools and leisure facilities in easily accessible locations, close to existing facilities. There is most demand for a swimming pool, gym, play parks, pilates / yoga facility, water-based activities, rugby/football pitches, indoor courts for badminton etc. and running track.</p>	<p>Small Projects Support for small projects within the town as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older peoples' resource centre; • Improved youth facilities; • Improvements to the Coastal Footpath ; • Improved network of paths/cycleways; • Community fridge; • Community Café; • Community food growing spaces/allotments; • Community storage; • Accessible play equipment; • More bike racks in the town centre; and • Pedestrian improvements in the lanes to the beachfront.
<p>Energy Land should be allocated for renewable energy generation.</p>	<p>Green Spaces Existing green space should remain protected and not be used for development, except that scope for leisure development at Recreation Grounds and Mackie Academy.</p>	<p>Transport matters If it becomes surplus, Aberdeenshire Council Roads depot site could be repurposed as additional parking to support the railway station.</p>	<p>Community Buildings These should be retained and optimised for community use.</p>	
<p>Local Employment Most popular locations for employment land are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spurryhillock; • AWPR junction; • Ury estate; and • Brownfield sites. 	<p>Brownfield Sites Brownfield sites should be redeveloped in ways that deliver on these aspirations.</p>			

Proposals

There is limited land available for development and it is imperative to make the best use of the land we have, making sure all development delivers maximum value to the community. To deliver on the community's aspirations, a number of changes to the existing ALDP are proposed, and several new development opportunities have been identified, along with the assets which the community values, and which should be protected.

Development priorities:

- Additional supermarket
- New/improved primary and secondary schools
- Modern leisure facilities*
- Business and employment opportunities
- More effective use of existing community buildings
- Allocation of space for sustainable power

Existing allocations

ALDP Site(s)	Proposals
Bus1 (safeguarded for business use)	To address community demand for more retail and leisure facilities in accessible locations, this LPP supports the existing BUS1 site being used not just for business development, also for mixed use developments (including retail and leisure elements).

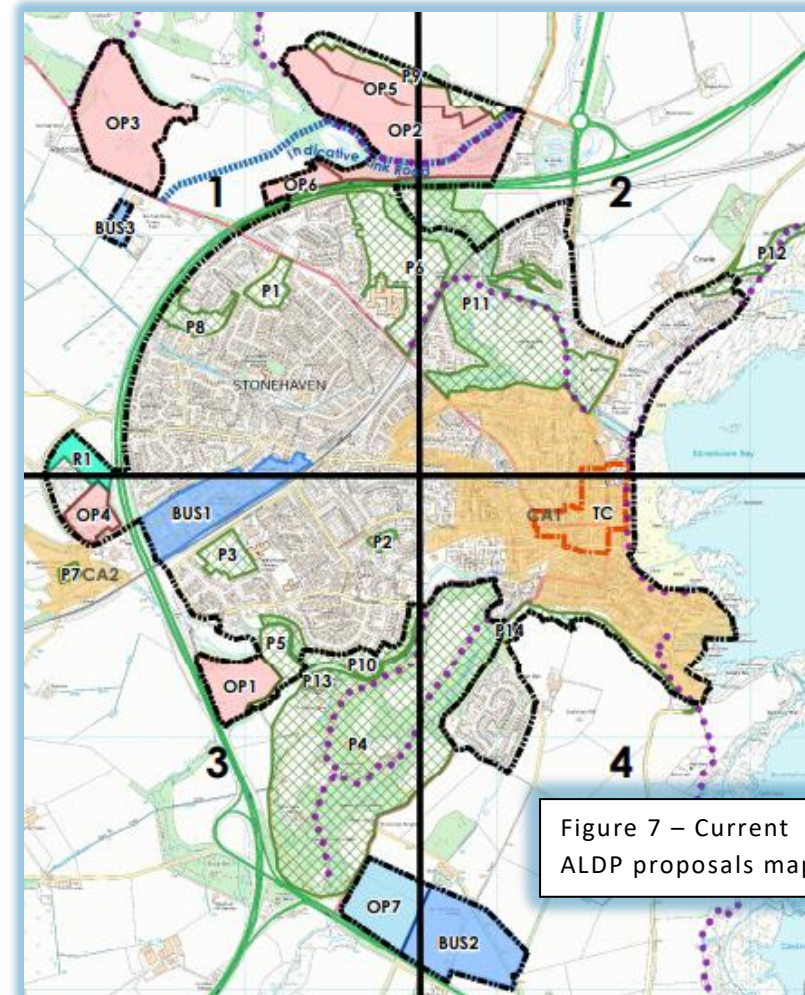


Figure 7 – Current ALDP proposals map

* See details of facilities for which there is most demand in the section of community aspirations above. Priority should be given to the delivery of these facilities, either through the development of new facilities or contributions towards upgrades to existing ones as appropriate.

Proposals

ALDP Site(s)	Proposals
<p>Existing opportunity sites</p>	<p>This LPP supports the delivery of development on currently allocated opportunity sites, with particular support for employment allocations and residential development at Ury.</p> <p>However, where possible, development proposals should make an appropriate area of land available for community recreational use, prioritising the delivery of those for which there is most demand, and focus on delivering the types of houses the community wishes to see (see community aspirations above).</p> <p>In particular, any new masterplan for the Ury Estate (which, as per the ALDP, should be prepared before any further development takes place there) should specifically identify an appropriate area of land for community/recreational use, to deliver facilities for which demand is identified in this LPP.</p>

New development opportunities

Residential development

The focus must be on:

- Delivery of allocated housing sites.
- Provision of affordable & low-energy homes.
- Delivery of facilities for which demand is identified within this LPP alongside housing.

Sport/leisure

Priority should be given to the provision of additional or enhanced facilities to complement existing provision at the Recreation Grounds, Leisure Centre, Mineralwell Park, and Mackie Academy.



Figure 8 - land for sport/leisure development

Proposals

Tourist infrastructure

Potentially suitable locations for aires are identified in red opposite.

There is also scope for both tourists and residents to benefit from the creation of more facilities in the Harbour/Botany Bay area, in particular changing facilities and more toilets.

Supermarket

This LPP supports the delivery of a supermarket at the Ury Estate, where planning permission has already been granted for this and/or on land at New Mains of Ury, between currently consented development at Ury and the A90.

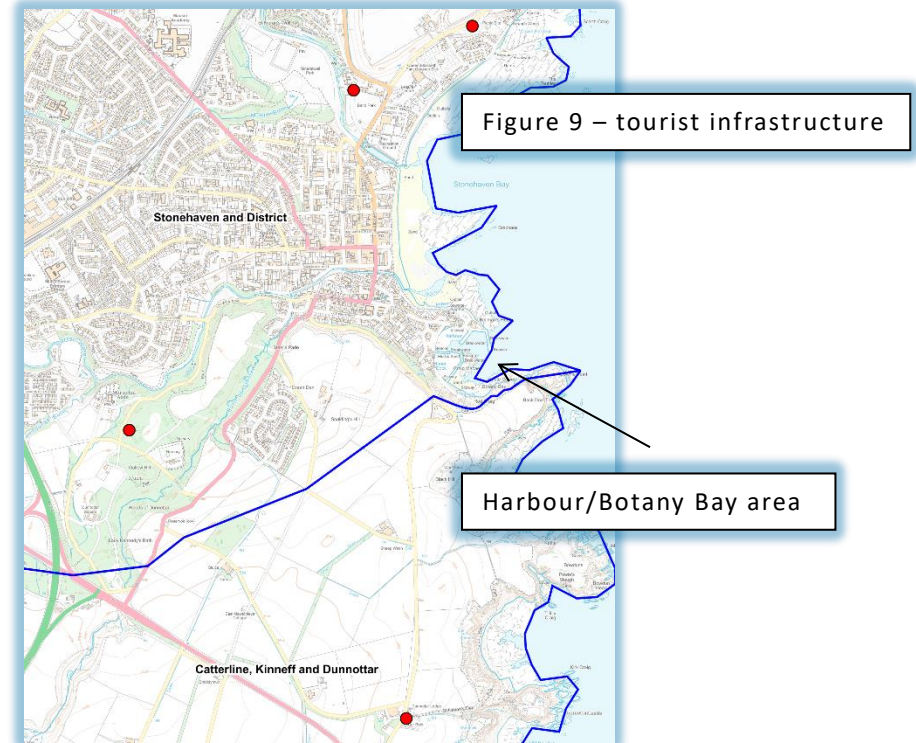


Figure 10 – potential supermarket locations

Proposals

Other development

There is a high degree of support for small community projects and a need to identify appropriate locations for these, including:

- Older peoples' resource centre
- Community fridge/café
- Community food growing spaces/allotments
- Community storage
- Renewable energy generation

Consideration should thus be given to the potential to deliver on these ambitions when designing proposals for development on any currently allocated or proposed sites, including when preparing the required masterplan for development at Ury.

In addition, where appropriate, these should be considered priorities for any brownfield sites that become available for redevelopment (along with the potential to use brownfield sites for employment uses or, where appropriate, retail uses).



Proposals

Land/buildings to be protected

Green spaces

All greenspaces should be retained as green spaces and protected from any alternative development proposals. This includes all greenspaces identified in the most recent open space audit (see below), smaller spaces that may not be shown on these plans, and new spaces which may be created in future.

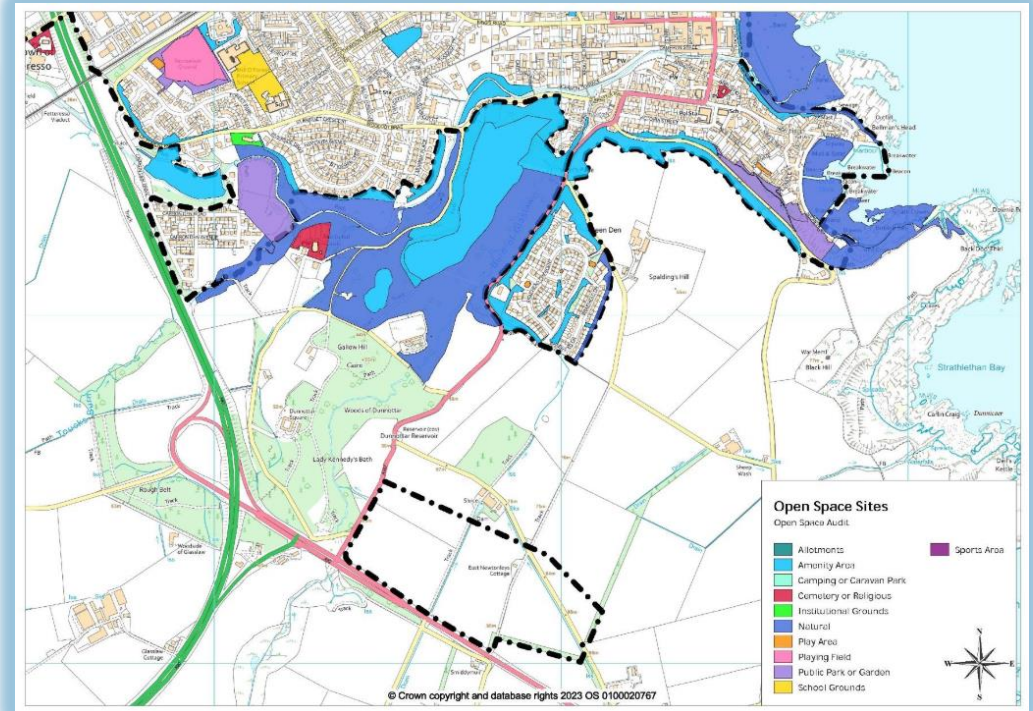
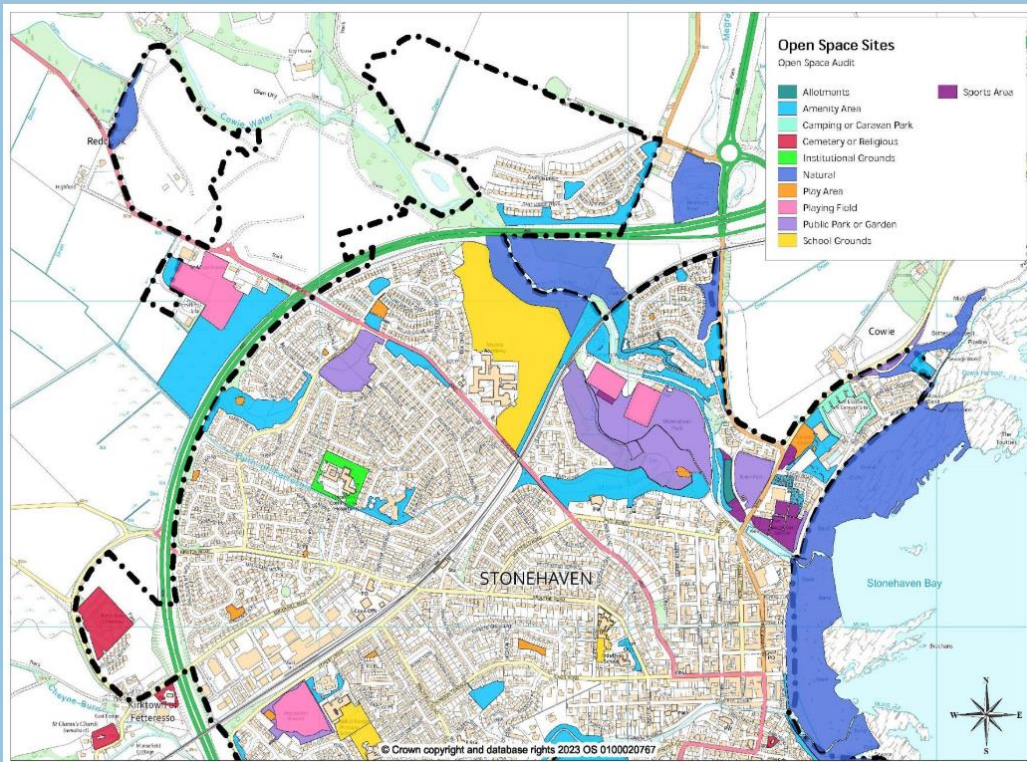


Figure 11 – green spaces to be protected

Proposals

Community buildings and facilities of importance

Stonehaven benefits from a wealth of buildings and facilities dedicated to community use, including halls, club premises, places of worship, and council run leisure facilities, as well as buildings and facilities that serve the community in a wider sense, such as the schools, library and the lifeboat shed.

These all make valuable contributions to Stonehaven as a place and are recognised as buildings or facilities of importance by the people of Stonehaven. As such, these should continue to be dedicated to community/public use in perpetuity, with a focus on making sure that these are used to their full potential, to the benefit of the community as a whole.



Figure 12 – buildings and facilities of importance

What now?

We look forward to the aspirations and expectations described in this document being considered, respected and, where possible, enabled when the next ALDP is prepared and the role of developers identified.

However, this is not the only way in which change will happen. Everyone who has an interest in Stonehaven can contribute and ensure the community's vision for the town is realised.

We can all get involved in groups protecting and enhancing those assets we already have.

We cannot expect our local authority to extend its resources – we must be proactive. In this LPP we identified many small projects that could be community led and delivered. Individuals, businesses, and the many active community organisations, associations, and clubs could all contribute.

A dynamic approach could enable us to access potential funding available – money that will go elsewhere if we do not tap in.

If you would like to help, please email: localplaceplan@gmail.com

