

# New Abbey Local Place Plan 2025- 2035

## Supporting Statement for Registration

### 1. Introduction

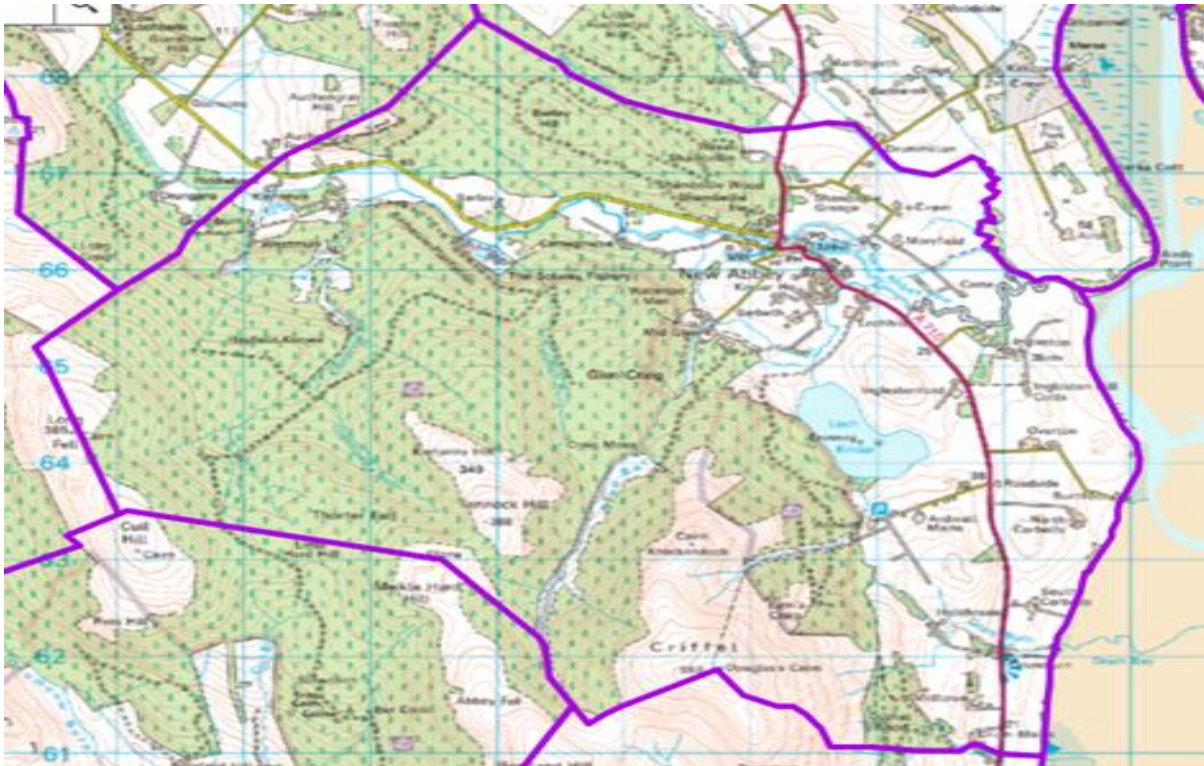
The New Abbey Community Council (NACC), as the designated Community Body for the New Abbey Community Council Area, began the Local Place Plan (LPP) exercise in September 2023 following the acceptance of their 'Expression of Interest' by the Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC). The purpose was to ensure the views of the New Abbey community could be taken into account by DGC Planning as they develop, and enact, their new 10-year Local Development Plan (LDP3).

The Local Place Plan was initiated by the New Abbey Community Council with a LPP Steering Group created to co-ordinate and drive the development of the Plan. Members of the NACC LPP Steering Group were taken from both the wider community and NACC Councillors, as follows:

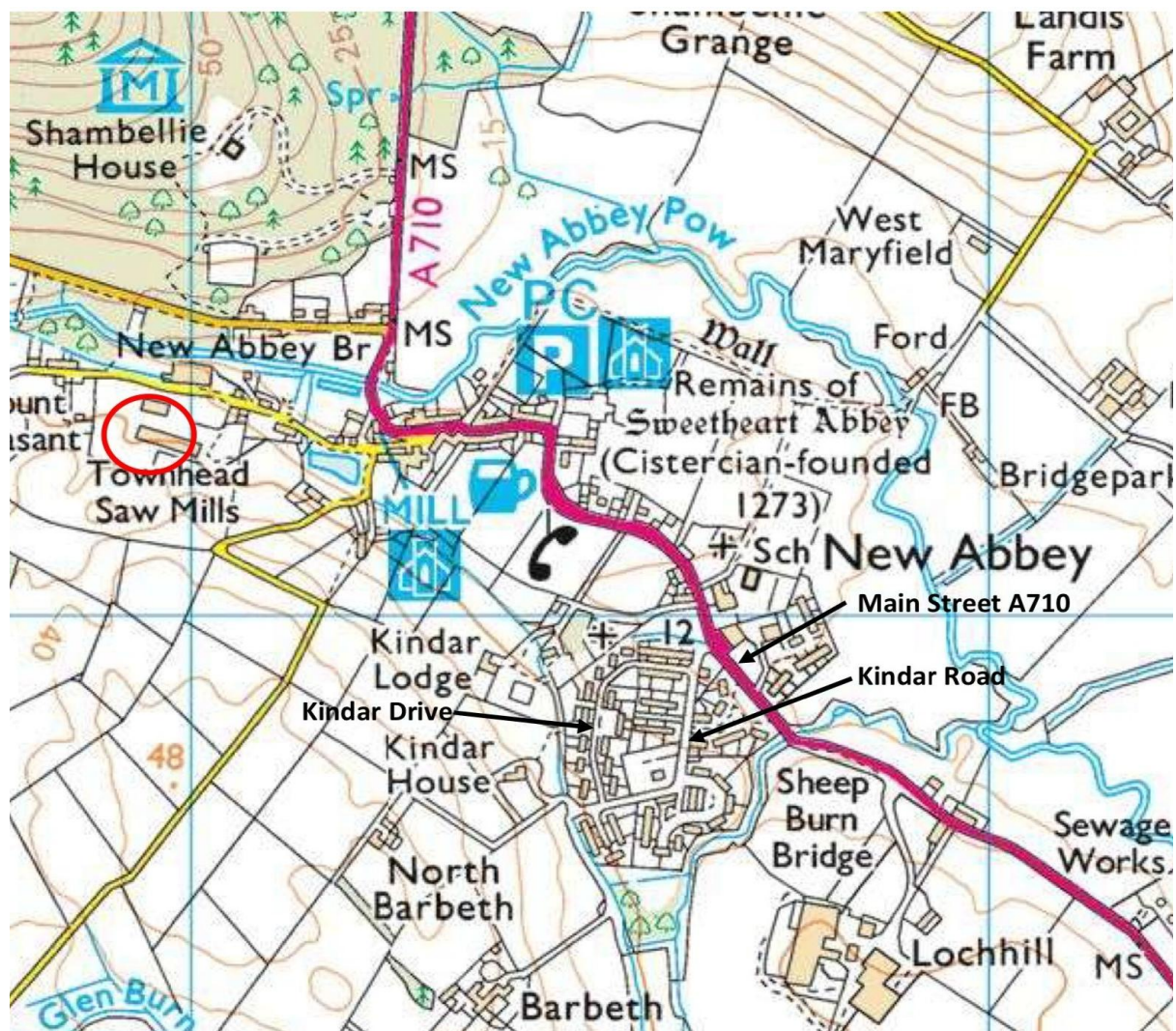
- New Abbey Community Council - Peter Barrett, Sue Wieteska, Edwin Cooper
- Shambellie House Trust - Melanie McEwen
- New Abbey Community - Anina Hutton, Scott Mackay

### 2. Our Local Place Plan Area

#### Map1 - New Abbey Community Council Area



Map2 - New Abbey Village Area.



### 3. Aim

This Statement aims to support our Expression of Interest to register our Local Place Plan for New Abbey.

It is hoped that by creating our Local Place Plan it will improve community engagement with the local planning system / planning matters, and ensure that the opportunity for a community led, collaborative approach to creating great local places in New Abbey is realised.

Through community engagement it is also hoped that the views on Development and Land Usage, and other areas of interest, expressed by individuals, social groups and parties, such as local businesses and land owners / users, could be collected and shared.

The Place Plan and this statement have been prepared in accordance with:

- Government Legislation: Town and Country Planning (Local Place Plans)
- (Scotland) Regulations 2021
- Scottish Government's Planning Circular 1/2022: Local Place Plans (LPP)

- Dumfries and Galloway Council's Overview of Requirements.

#### 4. LPP Confirmation

To meet statutory requirements for Local Place Planning, this Statement confirms the following:

##### Governance

The submission is made by New Abbey Community Council on behalf of the New Abbey Community Council Area residents.

- New Abbey Local Place Plan 2024-2034 Submission Statement

Local Place Plan was developed having regard to the National Planning Framework, Local Development Plan and Locality Plan. In preparing the Place Plan the following documents were taken into account:

- Scottish Government's Planning Circular 1/2022: Local Place Plans (LPP)
- National Planning Framework 4
- Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan 2 October 2019
- Dumfries and Galloway Council Plan 2023-2028
- Dumfries and Galloway Local Outcomes Improvement Plan
- Dumfries and Galloway Local Place Plan Toolkits and Templates
- Planning Aid Scotland Webinar Presentation Materials

##### Engagement – Community Conversations

Based on the 2022 Census data, we estimate the number of residents who provided feedback is approximately 24% of the New Abbey village population. More residents have engaged with the process less formally as the LPP team sought out available social groups, for example attending a school Parents Council meeting, 'doorstepping' events such as local coffee mornings, and through the published minutes of the New Abbey Community Council where it was regularly reported and discussed.

The communication channels used were a mix of face-to-face meetings at group gatherings, along with Facebook notices, posters in the local shop and on the village notice board, as well as flyers hand delivered to the homes in New Abbey village and its immediate surrounds.

Three 'open-to-all' community workshops were held in the village hall using the Place Standard Toolkit as the basis of discussions and gathering feedback. These workshops were spread out in terms of day of the week and time of the day to make them suit the widest range of people's availability. We also utilised online questionnaires based on the Place Standard Toolkit and created an adapted versions of it specifically for businesses.

To gather the views of our youngest community members two sessions, for the P1-P3 and P4-P7 pupil groups, were held at the local primary school with the support of the school team.

## Consultation

In line with Planning requirements, we conducted a 28-day consultation in May / June 2025.

We notified Elected Members and adjacent Community Councils of the consultation, providing them with a copy of our draft LPP and inviting them to give feedback on it in relation to how it may impact on their Areas:

- Kirkbean Community Council
- Colvend and Southwick Community Council

Our other adjacent Community Council Areas, listed below, were not active at this time.

- Kirkgunzeon Community Council
- Beeswing Community Council
- Troqueer Landward Community Council

We also included, in this consultation process, our Abbey Ward Dumfries and Galloway Council Councillors; Davie Stitt, Kim Lowe and Ian Blake.

As part of our 28-day Community Consultation of the draft plan we held a series of events in the New Abbey Village Hall. The events in the village hall were advertised on Facebook, at the village shop, and by flyers which were hand delivered to each house in New Abbey.

The 28-day Community Consultation activities included:

- 18 Posters, displaying summaries of the key messages in our draft plan and, Community Conversation feedback analysis and Action Plans, were on display in the larger of the halls in the Village Hall, from the 12th of May until the 15th of June 2025.
- Open sessions were held in the village hall, on each of the 4 Sundays from the 18th of May until the 15th of June 2025, from 3pm until 5pm, where over the 2-hour period, people could look over the posters and discuss areas of interest with the LPP Steering Group members in attendance.
- Printed versions of the full draft plan were also made available to attendees of the Sunday Hall events so that if someone wanted more detail on something than the posters gave, they could explore it further while at the hall, or take one away to read at their leisure.

We also visited New Abbey Primary School to go through the plan with the children and show how their ideas had been included in the document.

A New Abbey Community Council website was created so that an online version of the draft plan could be accessed by those unable to attend a Sunday event; this also had a feedback facility for comments or questions. The access details for the website were included in the Facebook adverts for the events and in the distributed event flyers.

The Village Hall events were attended by 21 people and the website was accessed 46 times; it is likely that some of those who attend the events had also visited the website to see a copy of the

draft LPP before coming. The response to the draft plan was very good and comments received supportive of it.

The feedback received over the whole 28-day Community Consultation was analysed by the steering group and a small number of amendments made to the final version of the Local Place Plan, namely to:

- Strengthen statements and Action Points in relation to:
  - The value of the environment in and around New Abbey to the wellbeing of the community
  - Climate change and environmental considerations
  - Affordable Housing requirements / opportunities
- Amendments to the development site options following a change by the owner of Barbeth Farm who emailed us to say that the withdrawal of his original development site, in the LDP2, is now only to be considered if his new development site option is accepted by DGC Planning and progressed.

### Development Proposals

Our Local Place Plan has identified a number objectives through the community engagement events. Key areas and objectives are:

- **Street Safety - Pedestrian Provision and Traffic Speed:**
  - improved pedestrian safety where there is no footway in Main Street
  - a reduction in the legal maximum speed of traffic in the village
  - pushing the speed restriction areas further out of the village
  - improving other areas without footways, such as Kindar Drive, the Pow Bridge and Sheep Burn Bridge, the road section to the new Shambellie House path
  - providing a controlled crossing at the primary school
- **Social Interaction and Recreation:**
  - to increase the number, variety and quality of social events
  - to resurrected whole community events that have ceased
  - to hold more special events, for example film and music nights
  - youth groups to be specifically engaged with to understand their unique social interaction and recreational needs and wants.
- **Housing:**
  - to see an increase in the amount of affordable housing stock for the community
  - to identify other building opportunities within the village
  - to encourage empty houses to be offered up for sale or rent
- **Public Transport:**
  - to have a Friday and Saturday late bus added to the current timetable
  - to better match the current bus service to ongoing travel services

- to have a 'live' bus service App available
- **Moving Around & Natural Space:**
  - to recognise the importance of the natural environment within and around the village and its impact on the wellbeing of the community
  - to have the existing core paths maintained and extended / linked
  - the provision of a bike rack in the Abbey car park
  - to help people meet hospital or other appointments if unable to travel by bus
  - to establish a community garden within the village
  - identify an available space for an allotment within the village

### Impact on Local Development Plan 3

The Local Development Plan 3, to deliver on the expressed desires of the New Abbey community, must address the pedestrian safety concerns expressed so many times over the course of our community engagements. It should also encourage the creation of more affordable housing for the benefit of the community, and develop a green space within the village where people can go to enjoy the benefits of a safe and natural space.

In terms of traffic safety within the village, the lack of pedestrian provision over a 70m section of road in Main Street is a priority; the suggestion of a shared-use space with a small single footway or a less physically distinct user separation is seen locally as having merit and as a practical solution. A reduction in the speed of vehicles through the introduction of a 20-mph limit would also improve safety for pedestrians in Main Street and the Square. A safer crossing for children at the primary school, and for those from Kindar going to the local shop or doctors' surgery, should be included and pedestrian safety at the two village bridges should also be addressed.

The need to increase community access to affordable housing, is another priority within the village. The development option identified within the LDP2, but not taken up, has been added to with the land owner proposing a second development site at Abbeybank; although the LDP2 option may be withdrawn if the Abbeybank proposal is accepted for development. The new development proposal was only made public after the conclusion of the Community Engagement Events and basic site information detail was included in the draft LPP after advice from DGC LPP Team. Comments received from attendees at the village hall events, and by email, have raised questions and concerns about the newly proposed development which can only be answered by the landowner. A Development Proposal and Transport Appraisal for the site, commissioned by the owner, were provided to NACC on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June, the last day of the Community Review period, and after the conclusion of the final 28-day Community Review village hall events.

A further potential development site was been made know to us by the owners of Lochhill Farm, during our Community Conversation events, which has the potential for a small number of houses adjacent to other cottages on their land along the A710. This is seen as a small site with limited potential due to its proximity to the Sheep Burn and potential flood risks from it.

While there are few vacant houses within the village action to encourage owners to bring them into use should be investigated. DGC should also look at ways of discouraging the sale of houses as second or holiday let homes as is being tried in other Council areas.

The importance of good design to respect the historic and landscape characteristics of the village should be, as always, a must for any development proposal, whether single build in-fill builds or multi-house developments.

The enhanced quality of life experienced by the community in the village, from its immediate physical environment with HES properties and an interesting variety of older buildings, plus the Abbey grounds and fields around the church, and surrounding landscape of woods, pasture and hills, was recognised by the community. However, there is no green park or garden, within the village, for families to sit and enjoy a natural space, and its benefits, nearer to home. While admitting there are few possible sites within the village for such a community space, support to identify and create such a facility should be addressed within the LDP3.

It is acknowledged that developing the activities detailed in the Local Place Plan will require the collective participation of the local community and its stakeholders. This means action not only by Dumfries and Galloway Council but the New Abbey Community Council, community volunteer groups, community event and activity providers, local businesses, land managers and farmers, forestry work groups and owners. Only through a whole community approach can we ensure that the voice of everyone is heard when solutions are designed to resolve the issues flagged and deliver the objectives highlighted through our community conversation exercises. In this way we will ensure that New Abbey, as a place to be, continues to develop and that the lives of the New Abbey community are enhanced in a direction supported by everyone.

## 5. Conclusion

The conversations and feedback hints at a village perhaps at risk of stagnation because of a lack of affordable housing for the community which is preventing younger families from remaining here, or returning, and so putting local facilities, like the primary school, at risk over the longer term. It also revealed that historic village 'design' needs to be sensitively improved to ensure that people can walk within it without feeling at risk from road traffic, and that despite being situated in a very rural and green landscape, the village has failed to establish a place within it where families, young and old, can enjoy nature's peace together.

The New Abbey Community Council also took the opportunity presented by their Community Conversations to create a Community Action Plan (CAP) to address the needs, wants and aspirations of the community which were expressed during these events but did not fit into the LPP Development and Land Usage remit; this is included within the submitted LPP so that the full range of needs and wants can be recognised.