

DUMFRIES TOWN CENTRE LOCAL PLACE PLAN REGISTRATION SUBMISSION STATEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper is submitted to support the registration of the Dumfries town centre local place plan by Dumfries and Galloway Council.

Dumfries, the regional capital for Dumfries known as “the Queen of the South,” is an ancient market town located beside the River Nith. It is the largest town in the South of Scotland with a population of 38,400 people

As with towns across Scotland the town centre has been impacted by changing shopping habits as people migrate to shopping online resulting in the loss of national retail chains and the need to reimagine our retail offer and how we use and develop our town centre in the future. Changing work patterns post-pandemic have also impacted how the town is used. Despite the challenges, the people of Dumfries value highly the culture and heritage of their town and at the same time celebrate innovation and our own way of doing things.

The Third Sector organisations in Dumfries and wider have committed and highly able activists who are leading the way. Today the town is attracting a national reputation with groundbreaking projects such as the Midsteeple Quarter, The Stove Network, the People’s Project and a momentum that is driving a “dynamically different” view of the town’s potential. It has been clear through the engagement around DDD and the process of developing this Local Place Plan, that the residents, businesses and visitors to Dumfries fully appreciate both our heritage and future potential.

This Local Place Plan (LPP) has concentrated on the town centre as the focal part of the town and an area people continue to use for shopping, socialising, living and accessing transport hubs. The LPP aims to include broader social and economic objectives, all in alignment with a range of local, regional and national policy objectives as listed below and described in detail in the plan itself.

The LPP was co-authored by the Loreburn Community Council (LCC) and Dumfries Partnership Action Group (DPAG) and builds on the 10-year Action Plan “Dynamically Different Dumfries” developed by Dumfries DPAG and launched in 2022. We also recognise the support of Dumfries & Galloway Council officers during the development of the LPP.

2. PURPOSE OF STATEMENT

This statement is submitted to Dumfries and Galloway Council in support of the registration of the LPP for Dumfries town centre. The LPP and this statement have been prepared in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- The 2019 Planning (Scotland) Act

- Town and Country Planning (Local Place Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 2021
- Scottish Government Planning Circular 1/2022: Local Place Plans (LPPs)
- Dumfries and Galloway Council's LPP Toolkit.

3. LPP CONFIRMATION

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

3.1 Governance

Loreburn Community Council (LCC) and Dumfries Partnership Action Group (DPAG) are the lead organisations for the coordination, production and submission of this LPP.

LCC is a recognised Community Council within the Dumfries & Galloway Council authority and a recognised Community Body under the 1997 Act and is requesting the Council Register this LPP.

DPAG is a registered charity with Scottish Charity Regulator, OSCR, registration number 051000, since 26th May 2021.

3.2 Strategic Context

The preparation of our plan has been set in the context of Local Development Plan 2 (Adopted) as well as other, current, national and regional planning objectives and a range of relevant economic, social and environmental plans and strategies. Specifically, the following documents or policies were taken into account:

National

National Planning Framework 4
Principles of Sustainable Development
Fit with Inclusive Growth
Just Transition to Net Zero

Regional

South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy

Local

Dynamically Different Dumfries [2022]
Dumfries and Galloway Council Plan 2023–2028
Dumfries and Galloway Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2023-2033
Dumfries and Galloway Active Travel Strategy 2022-2032

3.3 Our approach

This Local Place Plan (LPP) is the result of a partnership collaboration between DPAG and Loreburn Community Council (LCC). The result is an enhanced view of the

strengths, needs and potential of our town. Cognisance has also been taken of the emerging Dumfries Town Board proposals and discussions held to promote synergy between the LPP and plans evolving from the new Board.

The LPP represents the development of the Dynamically Different Dumfries (DDD) a 10-year vision and action plan for Dumfries Town Centre. It was the culmination of an approach to community led regeneration with the community working with the Council, its partners, and Elected Members. There was, as a result, extensive and documented community engagement providing opportunities for everyone who wanted to have a say and help shape the future vision for the town centre.

DDD was presented to Members of the Council's Economy and Resources Committee on 17th March 2022 where it was agreed by the Council.

This LPP can be used also as a framework for dialogue with potential investors who share our vision of a dynamic and thriving town at the centre of our region: a place to do business. The LPP includes potential sites for development or improvement for everyone using the town centre and impacting the town and surrounding area. moved up from the place to learn work and do business section.

3.4 Consultation Timetable

3.4.1 Development of the LPP

The LPP has been developed through close links with the two organisations who recognised the importance of the need to have a LPP to drive positive change in the town centre.

Given the DDD's extensive consultation work between 2020 to 2022 that included key community organisations, businesses and the DGC both organisations felt this was a sound foundation for the LPP. It was supported by the adoption of the DDD by DGC in 2022 as the 10-year framework for Dumfries town centre.

Work done to feed into the LPP including

- Development of a joint writing group between LCC and DPAG with support from town centre DGC representatives.
- A review by ARUP (<https://www.arup.com>) in 2024 who conducted face to face focus groups to review and develop the actions against the original DDD
- Local surveys of businesses in the town centre completed in 2023 by DPAG
- Discussion space on the LCC during and following their meetings

4 STATUTORY PUBLIC CONSULTATION

In line with statutory requirements, we conducted a final, 28-day consultation process this was run from 21st July to 18th August 2025. Following this period it was noted that the Lochar Ward Councillors were missed from the initial consultation period, they were contacted given until the 22nd September 2025 to provide input ensuring they

had the required 28-days to comment. The draft plan was shared with councillors for the area impacted directly by the LPP and the community councils that are immediately adjacent to the plan area as detailed below.

Nith Ward Councillors	Lochar Ward Councillors
John Campbell	Linda Dorwood
Malcolm Johnstone	Ivor Hyslop
Keith Walters	Maureen Johnstone
David Slater	Tracey Little

Northwest Dumfries Ward Councillors	Abbey Ward Councillors
Graham Bell	Ian Blake
Andy Ferguson	Kim Lowe
Emma Jordan	Davie Stitt
Paula Stevenson	

Further emails were also sent to over sixty key people / organisations including the Provost, local businesses and 3rd Sector organisations. DPAG also sent it to their membership (over 90 people) with reminders sent during the consultation period.

In addition to the statutory notifications the following communication and information was shared

- Posters put in place in key town areas advertising the consultation and providing direct web-based links to read and comment on the draft LPP Local (outlined below)
- A web page was added to the DPAG website allowing people to
 - see basic summarised details of the draft plan
 - access and read the full draft plan
 - download the full draft plan
 - see details of the drop-in sessions
 - comment directly on a pro-forma feedback form registering their comments
 - leave their email contact details if they wished.
- Wide sharing of the start of the consultation on the DPAG website, Facebook, Instagram and twitter sites
- During the consultation period there were four, 2-hour, drop-in session where printed copies of the plan were available, large versions of key areas of the plan and access directly to representatives of both LCC and DPAG. People were encouraged to provide verbal feedback, add key messages either on post-it notes directly on posters or link to the feedback site.

- Dumfries sites also shared the information on their site e.g. Dumfries Town Board and Ootn' About Dumfries.

5 IMPACT ON THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Drafting of the plan has been framed within the context of the existing LDP 2 document for the town and the intended framework for LDP 3. The partners are confident of 'fit' to both.

The Plan seeks to reinvigorate the fundamental Development Plan principle of **Town Centre First** – hopefully stopping and then reversing the outward drift of business and people.

In line with community expectations, the plan will look to enhance town-centre housing and overall sustainability of the town centre for the benefit of all.

Delivery of the Place Plan will require collaboration between residents, businesses and agencies with an interest in Dumfries Town Centre and the wider town. Collaboration is key, involving not just the Community Council, but also various local groups, regional organisations, community volunteers, farmers, land managers, businesses, and other stakeholders within the area.

This inclusive approach will ensure a comprehensive and diverse input towards achieving our shared goals. The community-led vision for the town is of one that meets the changing needs of the aging members of our community whilst remaining a place where the availability of employment, retail and hospitality, community and arts venues.

We ask Dumfries and Galloway Council as the local Planning Authority to consider the aims and expressed in the Plan in their development of the upcoming Local Development Plan (LDP3).

6. Plan Engagement.

As detailed in the LPP document, community and business engagement for the original DDD document was extensive. It was however determined that there was a need to extensively promote the consultative draft for the new LPP compliant document. As a result, for the period from Monday 21 July to 18 August, the LPP page on DPAG received the following number of visitors:

Visitors: 455

Page views: 615

There were 17 feedback entries via the website, two of which included a formal summary document including feedback from the 4 two-hour drop-in sessions with multiple points entered. The overall extremely positive nature of the feedback was strong affirmation that the community's views were well represented.

The online contacts were accessed via

- 47% Facebook
- 40% direct to site
- 7% direct search
- 3% Cycle Dumfries / Instagram / Mailchimp and Ecosia

Feedback from the above showed a high level of support for both the vision and objectives of the LPP and the more detailed spatial and project level detail within the plan appendices. This was most encouraging and an affirmation of how effectively the views of the public are represented within the LPP.

7. CONCLUSION

The statutory requirements have been met during the developmental and consultation period for the LPP. Local people have had the opportunity to comment either by completing the community survey online or in hard copy or attending drop-in events at face-to-face meetings.

The LCC is a recognised Community Council within the Dumfries & Galloway Council authority and is a recognised Community Body under the 1997 Act and DPAG as a co-author are requesting the Council now Register this LPP.

**On Behalf of Loreburn Community Council Dumfries Partnership Action Group
22nd September 2025
DOCUMENT ENDS**