

Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan

Plana Leasachaidh Ionadail Ghallaidh agus Chataibh

This is the version as recommended to Full Council on 28 June 2018.

Please note that after Full Council's consideration the following minor amendments will be made:

- a Foreword will be added where indicated;
- paragraph numbering may be further adjusted throughout the Plan;
- pagination may be adjusted to ease reading/use of the Plan.

Intention to Adopt

Please note a Foreword will be included in the Adopted Plan.

About this Plan | Mun a' Phlana Seo

The Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan) is the second of three new area local development plans that, along with the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) and Supplementary Guidance, will form the Highland Council's Development Plan that guides future development in Highland. The Plan covers the area shown on the Strategy Map on page 3. CaSPlan focuses on where development should and should not occur in the Caithness and Sutherland area over the next 10-20 years. Along the north coast the Pilot Marine Spatial Plan for the Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters will also influence what happens in the area.

CaSPlan will be of particular interest to people who live, work or invest in the Caithness and Sutherland area.

In preparing this Plan, the Highland Council has held various consultations. These included the development of a North Highland Onshore Vision to support growth of the marine renewables sector, Charrettes in Wick and Thurso to prepare whole-town visions and a Call for Sites and Ideas, followed by a Main Issues Report and Additional Sites and Issues consultation, then consultation on the Proposed Plan (from January to March 2016) and subsequently on the Modified Proposed Plan (from September to November 2016). The comments submitted during these stages helped us prepare this Plan, with an independent Examination to deal with outstanding issues reporting in April 2018. The final version of CaSPlan reflects the outcomes of that Examination.

The Highland Community Planning Partnership is supportive of these outcomes in principle and of the overall direction of CaSPlan. Individual CPP partners and other agencies have had an ongoing role to advise and comment on CaSPlan as it has been prepared and will have in implementing the Plan. The Partnership will play a key role in monitoring actions, set out in the associated Action (Delivery) Programme, that will assist delivery of the plan's vision.

A number of other pieces of work have fed into the Plan. These include:

- A Monitoring Statement - accompanied the Main Issues Report; we subsequently produced an addendum Housing Background Paper alongside the Proposed Plan;
- Strategic Environmental Assessment - carried out and consulted on during the preparation of CaSPlan;
- Habitats Regulations Appraisal - carried out during the preparation of CaSPlan;;
- Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) Screening - undertaken twice during the preparation of CaSPlan

We also made available for reference a Statement of Publicity and Consultation undertaken in the preparation of the CaSPlan.

Appendix 1 to CaSPlan contains a schedule of land that is owned by the planning authority (the Council) and affected by any of the policies, proposals or views expressed in the Plan which relate to specific built developments on specific sites. Appendix 2 contains a glossary of terms used in CaSPlan.

CaSPlan is to be accompanied by an Action (Delivery) Programme which will help deliver proposals set out in the Plan. A Proposed Action Programme was consulted on twice during the preparation of CaSPlan. We will finalise the Action Programme within 3 months of adopting and constituting

CaSPlan, and will publish it on the [Delivery Programme webpage](#)⁽¹⁾, whilst the Highland Community Planning Partnership will have a key role in subsequent monitoring of progress with implementation.

All of these Council documents are available on the [Highland Council website](#)⁽²⁾. For more information on why and how we prepare development plans, please read our [Development Plans website](#)⁽³⁾.

What is the Status of the Plan?

CaSPlan joins the HwLDP and Supplementary Guidance as part of the Development Plan that will be used to determine planning applications in Caithness and Sutherland. Any allocation and/or text in the HwLDP that relates to sites within this Plan area is updated by this Plan's content. CaSPlan also replaces the following Local Plans:

- Caithness Local Plan (adopted 2002, continued in force 2012);
- Sutherland Local Plan (adopted 2010, continued in force 2012).

It should be noted that the Council has begun undertaking a review of the HwLDP, and a Main Issues Report was published for consultation on 25 September 2015. The HwLDP Main Issues Report proposes to provide consistent planning policies for the whole of Highland, including policies for "Town Centre First" and "Growing Settlements". The review is ongoing. In the meantime CaSPlan contains policies on these two important issues; ultimately however they will be superseded by the new HwLDP policy framework in due course. It may also be noted that a new Housing Need and Demand Assessment has been prepared to feed in to review of the HwLDP and CaSPlan is based on that new assessment.

Elsewhere in this document, CaSPlan is sometimes referred to simply as "the Plan".

How to Use the Plan

The main parts of the Plan are the Vision, the Strategy and Policies followed by details for the Caithness Settlements and the Sutherland Settlements.

The Plan is made up of maps and text. If you are interested in finding out what the Plan means for your particular area or proposal then you need to read both. To get the complete picture, you need to read this Plan together with the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and associated Supplementary Guidance.

Development proposals will need to consider the relevance of all the contents of this Plan, including its Vision and Spatial Strategy. Conformity with a single policy or element of the Vision and Spatial Strategy does not indicate conformity with the Plan as a whole.

1 https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/178/local_and_statutory_development_plans/809/delivery_programmes/1

2 highland.gov.uk/casplan

3 highland.gov.uk/developmentplans

Where proposals are for development of land not specifically identified for such development in CaSPlan, the Vision and Spatial Strategy of CaSPlan together with the Highland-wide Local Development Plan provide a basis for assessing the proposals and considering whether, on balance, they can be supported.

In making planning decisions the Council will take account of a wide range of other factors, such as:

- [national planning](#) ⁽⁴⁾, policy and guidance;
- the [Highland-wide Local Development Plan](#) ⁽⁵⁾ Supplementary Guidance and non-statutory planning guidance;
- other plans, programmes and strategies of The Highland Council and other public agencies.

4 <https://beta.gov.scot/policies/planning-architecture/legislation>

5 https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/178/local_and_statutory_development_plans/199/highland-wide_local_development_plan

Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan

1 Vision Lèirsinn	1
2 Strategy and Policies Ro-innleachd agus Poileasaidhean	2
Growing Communities	5
Employment	16
Connectivity and Transport	19
Environment and Heritage	20
3 Caithness Settlements Tuineachaidhean Ghallaibh	25
Castletown	25
Halkirk	31
Lybster	36
Thurso	40
Wick	51
Caithness Economic Development Areas	59
Caithness Growing Settlements	65
4 Sutherland Settlements Tuineachaidhean Chataibh	74
Ardgay	74
Bonar Bridge	79
Brora	82
Dornoch	87
Edderton	93
Golspie	97
Helmsdale	101
Lairg	104
Lochinver	110
Tongue	115
Sutherland Growing Settlements	118
Appendices	
Appendix 1 - Schedule of Land Ownership Eàrr-ràdh 1 – Clàr de Shealbh Fearainn	129
Appendix 2 - Glossary Eàrr-ràdh 2 – Beag-fhaclair	131

- 4 The Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) has already set out a broad vision and spatial strategy for Caithness and Sutherland, which provided a starting point for preparing CaSPlan. Following discussions with a range of communities and partners we considered it also important to agree what outcomes CaSPlan should be aiming to achieve for the Caithness and Sutherland area.
- 5 To do this we took the relevant outcomes and actions from the Highland Community Planning Partnership's [Single Outcome Agreement \(SOA\)](#) ⁽⁶⁾. We have aimed to ensure that these outcomes reflect the priorities identified by all sectors of the community in Caithness and Sutherland and have checked them against other organisations' priorities, simplifying down to four themed outcomes tailored to CaSPlan.
- 6 Table 1 'Vision Outcomes' highlights the four outcomes, agreed by the Highland Community Planning Partners, where therefore make up CaSPlan's vision for 2035 and will support both the Council's Programme and the SOA, providing a strong connection to the actions outlined in this Plan.

A Vision for Caithness and Sutherland in 2035

Table 1 Vision Outcomes

Growing Communities: A network of successful, sustainable and socially inclusive communities where people want to live, which provide the most convenient access to key services, training and employment and are the primary locations for inward investment.

Employment: A strong, diverse and sustainable economy characterised as being an internationally renowned centre for renewable energy, world class engineering, land management and sea based industries and a tourist industry that combines culture, history, adventure and wildlife.

Connectivity and Transport: Enhanced communications, utilities and transport infrastructure that support communities and economic growth, with development anchored to existing or planned provision.

Environment and Heritage: High quality places where the outstanding environment and natural, built and cultural heritage is celebrated and valued assets are safeguarded.

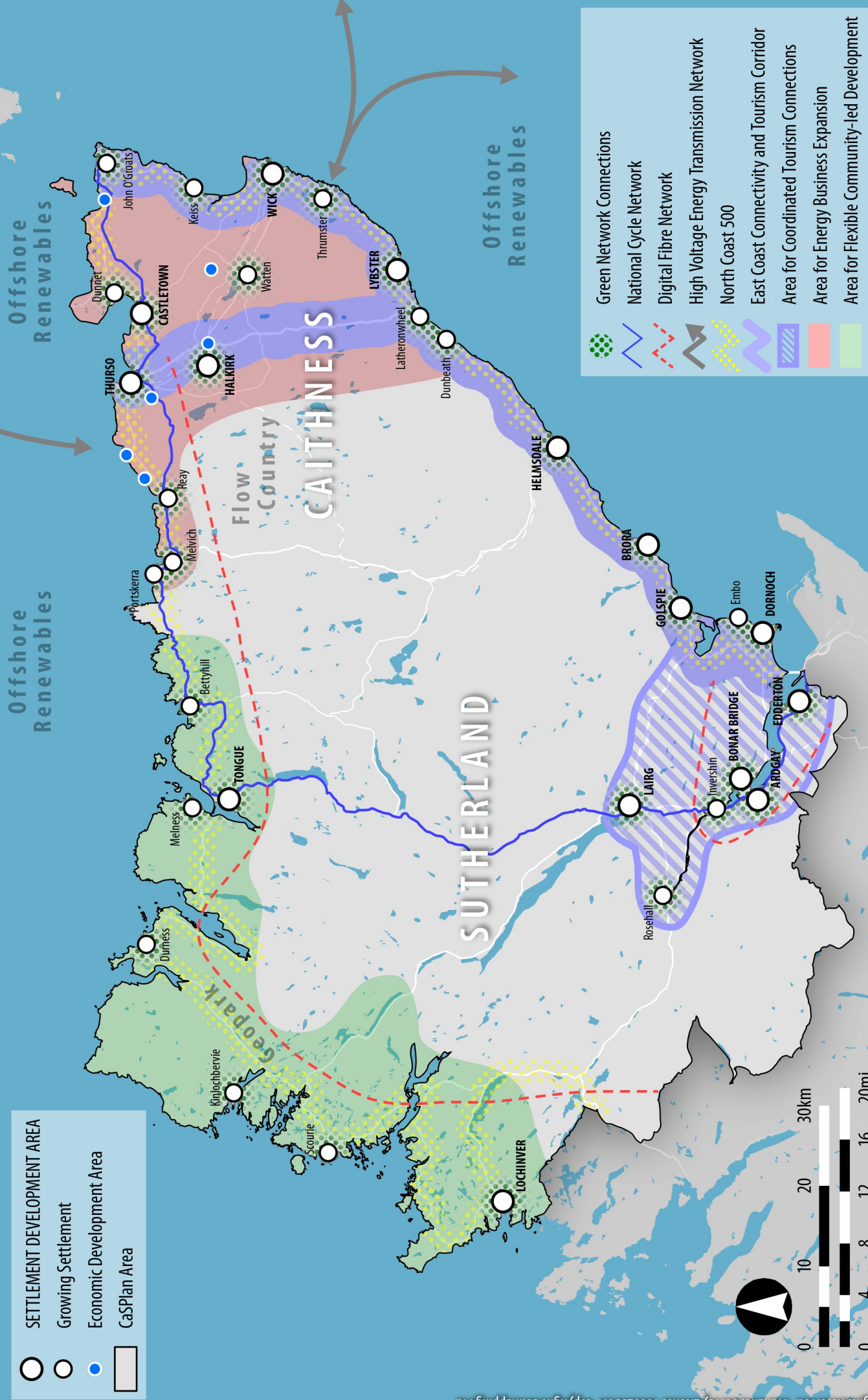
6 <https://www.highland.gov.uk/soa>

2 Strategy and Policies | Ro-innleachd agus Poileasaidhean

- 7** Caithness and Sutherland are the two most northerly parts of Highland and the British mainland and they are characterised by a unique landscape and coastal setting. Their location presents many challenges but make them well placed to take advantage of a number of opportunities. Tourism, aquaculture, renewable energy and the service industry play a strong role in the local job market.
- 8** However, new stable and skilled jobs must be found to replace those lost as Dounreay is decommissioned and new connections set up to the world wide economy. Opportunities for work, training and education must be provided for local people to stay in the area. Development and regeneration cannot take place at a cost to the outstanding built, natural and cultural heritage. New homes also need to be delivered to accommodate demand, including an ageing population, and to build the economy.
- 9** The HwLDP already provides a number of policies which seek to address these priority issues. The spatial strategy for CaSPlan reflects how this can be done at the local level.
- 10** Map 1 'CaSPlan Strategy Map' shows the Spatial Strategy for future development in Caithness and Sutherland, which aims to address the priorities for the area through the Vision's four key outcomes for: growing communities, employment, connectivity and transport, and environment and heritage. Some elements of the strategy and outcomes are inter-related so it will be important to view the Plan as a whole. The Strategy Map does not attempt to identify all development opportunities that may arise to help deliver the Vision to 2035.

Strategy Map

- SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT AREA
- Growing Settlement
- Economic Development Area
- ▭ CaSPlan Area



The main spatial elements of the strategy are as follows:

11 With a focus on 'Growing Communities':

- Focusing new development mainly within Settlement Development Areas, Economic Development Areas and Growing Settlements to strengthen communities, facilitate access to and provision of services and provide some certainty through a plan-led approach.
- Within remote and rural areas, especially in fragile areas, to take a flexible approach to support communities that are either dispersed or clustered together in settlements offering varying services and facilities. This includes enabling community-led sustainable growth and development as well as growth through inward investment, a particular focus being the Area for Flexible Community-led Development in the north-west.
- Increasing the vibrancy and vitality of town centres (including the defined town centres of Brora, Dornoch, Golspie, Thurso and Wick) by steering a mix of uses to these locations, encouraging reuse of vacant land and buildings and increasing activity and potential custom.

12 With a focus on 'Employment':

- Supporting and enabling the Energy Hub - Area for Co-ordinated Action (as identified in NPF3 for the Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters).
- Maximising opportunities arising from offshore renewables and oil and gas, particularly within the Area for Energy Business Expansion in the north east. This includes employment-generating uses to service the sector, through support for harbours, allocation of business and industrial land and a flexible approach to considering the needs of emergent sectors and strategic infrastructure proposals.
- Strengthening links between marine and terrestrial planning, for example by including harbour-related developments in the Plan, providing with the HwLDP a framework for considering proposals for the marine renewables sector and having regard to the Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Pilot Marine Spatial Plan and Aquaculture Supplementary Guidance.
- Supporting and enabling a High Voltage Energy Transmission Network (as identified in NPF3), recognising the strategic need and where relevant national priority of some schemes, whilst carefully considering route options and detail of proposals, promoting optimisation of the network to achieve significant benefits with limited impacts through a co-ordinated approach and smart solutions.
- Promoting and supporting Tourism, particularly within the East Coast Connectivity and Tourism Corridor and along the North Coast 500 whilst maximising the reach of the sector inland, for example within the Area for Coordinated Tourism Connections in south-east and central Sutherland and opportunities associated with the National Cycle Network.

13 With a focus on 'Connectivity and Transport':

- Improving the transport infrastructure particularly along the East Coast Connectivity and Tourism Corridor, key for connectivity to and from the larger service centres and providing a foundation for sustainable transport services for the wider area.
- Enabling realisation of a Digital Fibre Network (as identified in NPF3) which supports growing and inclusive communities with sustainable growth of business and employment.

14 With a focus on 'Environment and Heritage':

- Protecting and enhancing the unique natural environment, by focusing development mainly within existing settlements, taking account of key natural features in choosing sites to allocate for development and in setting developer requirements included in this Plan, including consideration of Green Network Connections.
- Safeguarding and promoting appreciation of valued historic environment assets, by taking account of key historic features in choosing sites to allocate for development and in setting developer requirements included in this Plan, and promoting tourism with a historic environment focus.
- Recognising the value of the peatland resource as a vital carbon store and encouraging the area's transition to a low carbon economy.

15 The following parts of the Plan provide additional explanation together with policies and proposals for achieving these and delivering the outcomes for Caithness and Sutherland.

Growing Communities

Outcome: A network of successful, sustainable and socially inclusive communities where people want to live, which provide the most convenient access to key services, training and employment and are the primary locations for inward investment.

16 This section outlines the way in which the Plan guides and manages development. It explains the approach taken in terms of identifying an appropriate level of housing land and how the Plan manages growth in particular places and different types of development.

17 In general, the Plan directs new development to places which can support community facilities and services that local people regularly use. An ongoing challenge for more rural areas is retaining existing facilities while also attracting additional ones which may be required. This includes services for attracting young people and to support both families and an ageing population. Some of these facilities may be provided by individuals, companies, communities or other organisations and are dependent upon their investment decisions rather than those of the Council. However, the planning system can help to ensure that appropriate sites are identified and that other, supporting development is directed to the right places

18 CaSPlan has been prepared to reflect the priorities of other Council services and our partner organisations within the Highland Community Planning Partnership. The Plan is supportive of communities working together to produce and lead on the implementation of their own

2 Strategy and Policies | Ro-innleachd agus Poileasaidhean

Community Plans that complement the CaSPlan Vision. If they are aligned this can help when considering planning applications or making development decisions. Community Plans can also help to focus communities to develop local facilities and support networks.

Housing Land Supply

- 19** A key part of the local development plan is to identify enough land to meet future demand for new housing. Matching housing supply and housing need allows people to live close to places of work and have access to important services. A range of housing options also allows families, young people of working age and elderly people to choose to remain within the area. This can then help address wider issues such as retaining our population and attracting inward migration.
- 20** The housing supply target is a policy view of the number of homes that the Council estimates is required over the period covered by the Plan. It takes into account the 2015 Housing Need and Demand Assessment, the Monitoring Statement (including the Addendum: Housing Background Paper) and wider economic and social factors. The target is founded on an approach of continued economic growth, which is the approach the Council has chosen to follow in its local development plans and is described in the 2015 Highland-wide Local Development Plan Main Issues Report as the 'high' scenario. The approach takes into account the high growth projections set out in the 2015 Housing Need and Demand Assessment. On this basis, the housing supply target for the next 20 years across the Plan area is 1140 houses (530 in Caithness and 610 in Sutherland).
- 21** The Council's reasons for adopting the continued economic growth approach are:
 - Additional new housing is required, despite an expected fall in population, in order to meet the demand generated by falling household sizes, and to eradicate the backlog of affordable housing need (predominantly in Sutherland).
 - The approach is closely aligned to the objectives of the Council and its Community Planning Partners, which seek to realise the area's economic potential, including the delivery of market and affordable housing.
 - The nature of the area's economy is changing, with several emerging growth industries being identified. In particular, the waters around Caithness and north Sutherland have significant offshore renewable energy generation potential, and there are positive signs of increasing activity in the sector, with a number of developments proceeding. Additionally, the area's remoteness means that it has potential for various scales of location sensitive development, such as the nuclear energy development at Dounreay, which has reshaped the local economy over the last 60 years. Also a delay is now expected in the substantial decline of Dounreay dependent jobs because the decommissioning timescales for reaching the Interim End State have been extended to 2030-2033.
 - The continuing diversification of the area's economy is sought. Growing the tourism industry is a key objective both regionally and nationally. It is an under developed asset which could generate significant numbers of jobs. Initiatives such as the North Coast 500 and Venture North are helping to promote and co-ordinate tourism in the north of Highland area, and there is potential for various scales of tourism/leisure development in more rural areas.

2 Strategy and Policies | Ro-innleachd agus Poileasaidhean

- Growing these sectors would bring new investment and job opportunities which could have significant effects on retaining young people and helping to reverse population decline.
- The housing supply target equates to an average of 57 house completions across the Plan area each year between 2016 and 2035, but the actual annual house completion rates in recent years have been typically well above that number.

- 22** The housing land requirement ensures that a generous supply of land for housing is provided. The Council has set the requirement at 1368 houses (636 in Caithness, and 732 in Sutherland). It has been obtained by increasing the housing supply target figure by 20%, which is at the top end of the 10-20% range referred to in Scottish Planning Policy. The Council has applied a 20% increase in order to add a suitable level of flexibility to the housing land supply in this large, rural Plan area, and to allow an appropriate range of development opportunities to be spread across the Settlement Development Areas.
- 23** Table 2'Housing Supply Targets and Housing Land Requirements' shows the Housing Supply Targets (separated into affordable and market sector housing) and the Housing Land Requirements. With regard to affordable housing provision, the Highland-wide Local Development Plan contains the affordable housing policy and our overall development plan policy framework provides the means for considering the merits of any particular proposals that come forward, be they sites allocated for housing or not.

Table 2 Housing Supply Targets and Housing Land Requirements

Housing Market Area	Housing Supply Target			Housing Land Requirement (1)
	Affordable	Market	Total	
2016 - 2020				
Caithness	138	132	270	324
Sutherland	140	104	244	293
Total (high scenario)	278	236	514	617
2016 - 2035				
Caithness	272	258	530	636
Sutherland	348	262	610	732
Total (high scenario)	620	520	1140	1368

1. Housing Land Requirement = Housing Supply Target + 20% flexibility allowance.

2 Strategy and Policies | Ro-innleachd agus Poileasaidhean

- 24** To deliver the Growing Communities Outcome the Plan directs most new housing land towards allocated sites in the main settlements. This ensures that new development builds on a network of successful, sustainable and socially inclusive communities which are accessible to key services.
- 25** The Plan contains a generous housing land supply in total and for each Housing Market Area. Based on the indicative housing capacities for each site (shown in the Settlement sections) the total land allocated for housing units is 1616 (Caithness 888 and Sutherland 728). The main reasons for this level of housing land supply, particularly in Caithness, are:
- Many larger housing sites already have planning permission and on some of these developments have either stopped or are progressing very slowly. As the permissions are live, and to ensure the effective planning of settlement expansion areas in bringing forward a variety of uses and delivering infrastructure improvements, it is important to allocate them for development, phased where appropriate.
 - The Council has allocated many brownfield opportunities to help promote regeneration and bring vacant and derelict sites back into use. They often have prominent locations and their redevelopment can have wide ranging positive impacts on the settlement. To encourage their redevelopment, and because their regeneration is a priority, the Council has been flexible in the list of acceptable uses.
 - The rural nature of the area means that due to viability and the need for choice, a greater selection of sites is necessary to ensure that an effective supply is identified. It is essential that the key settlements are supported and strengthened to be more sustainable. This helps to ensure that housing demand is met and supports young people, families, and the elderly to remain in the area.
- 26** However, not all houses will be built on land allocated for housing. Where housing is built on land which is not allocated, it is referred to as 'windfall' housing development. The Monitoring Statement indicates that out of 2111 house completions from 2000 to September 2013, 63% of all completions were effectively windfall. It also showed that the windfall rate varied across the Plan area. The majority of development has been in broadly sustainable locations, with the majority of completions in Thurso (74%) and Wick (62%) being on allocated sites, and a significant proportion being on non-allocated land in Settlement Development Areas.
- 27** The Council is now renewing its focus on tightening up housing development in the countryside, and is considering a new approach as part of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan review. It promotes a proactive approach to the delivery of allocated housing sites, and to this end is setting up a 'Delivering Development Forum', and has established the 'Highland Housing Hub'. The former will support the delivery of development and infrastructure, the latter helps to better co-ordinate housing investment opportunities, making best use of Council assets and opening up sites for housing development. While the new approach may mean that the contribution to the housing land requirement from 'windfall' development could decrease over time, it is likely to continue to have an ongoing important role in the development of the area and the number of housing completions achieved annually. This is particularly so when account is taken of the remote, rural character of the Plan area, and the absence of significant volume house building pressures.

- 28** "Long term" sites have also been identified in the Plan to indicate the likely preferred direction for growth beyond the Plan period. These are particularly important where it is connected with more strategic expansion plans or areas which comprise the logical direction for expansion for settlements. More information about long term sites is available under the Delivering Development section.

Managing Growth

- 29** Scottish Planning Policy and the Highland-wide Local Development Plan favour new development in and around existing settlements and town centre locations. This approach has a number of benefits including:
- reducing the need to travel;
 - making the best use of capacity in existing infrastructure;
 - supporting community facilities and services; and
 - minimising the impacts of development on the natural and historic environment.
- 30** CaSPlan provides clarity about how places can grow in the future and presents a proportionate policy framework for guiding development to the correct locations.
- 31** Development will be managed through a three tiered approach:
- Settlement Development Areas (SDAs) and Economic Development Areas (EDAs);
 - Growing Settlements;
 - Wider Countryside.

Settlement Development Areas (SDAs) and Economic Development Areas (EDAs)

- 32** Development allocations help provide certainty that an adequate supply of suitable land is available for development in locations that are considered to be most suitable for it. Table 3 'Settlement Development Areas', lists the settlements that have boundaries – Settlement Development Areas – and contain allocations for development:

Table 3 Settlement Development Areas

Ardgay	Bonar Bridge	Brora
Castletown	Dornoch	Edderton
Golspie	Halkirk	Helmsdale
Lairg	Lochinver	Lybster
Thurso	Tongue	Wick

- 33** Other small-scale infill developments may also be suitable as well as these allocations, if they are within the SDA boundary.

2 Strategy and Policies | Ro-innleachd agus Poileasaidhean

- 34** Maps of these settlements, Placemaking Priorities which will help guide development and information on the site allocations are available in 3'Caithness Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Ghallaibh' and 4'Sutherland Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Chataibh'.
- 35** The Plan also identifies Economic Development Areas (EDAs), as listed in Table 4'Economic Development Areas'. These are places, outwith the main settlements, which either already are or have the potential to become important economic centres. A set of guiding principles is included for each EDA identified in the Plan to guide future development in that area, which will assist in determining the extent and location of suitable opportunities. For two of the EDAs (Dounreay and the Seater Waste Management Facility) the Plan additionally identifies site boundaries.

Table 4 Economic Development Areas

Dounreay	Forss Business and Energy Park	Georgemas Junction
Gills Harbour	Janetstown Industrial Estate	Seater Waste Management Facility

Growing Settlements

- 36** For the Growing Settlements identified in Table 5'Growing Settlements', development allocations are not provided. Planning applications for development are guided by a criteria based Growing Settlements Policy, which provides a series of factors for assessing development proposals on matters such as the type, scale, siting and design of development. Issues and Placemaking Priorities are also identified for each Growing Settlement, in 3'Caithness Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Ghallaibh' and 4'Sutherland Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Chataibh'.

Table 5 Growing Settlements

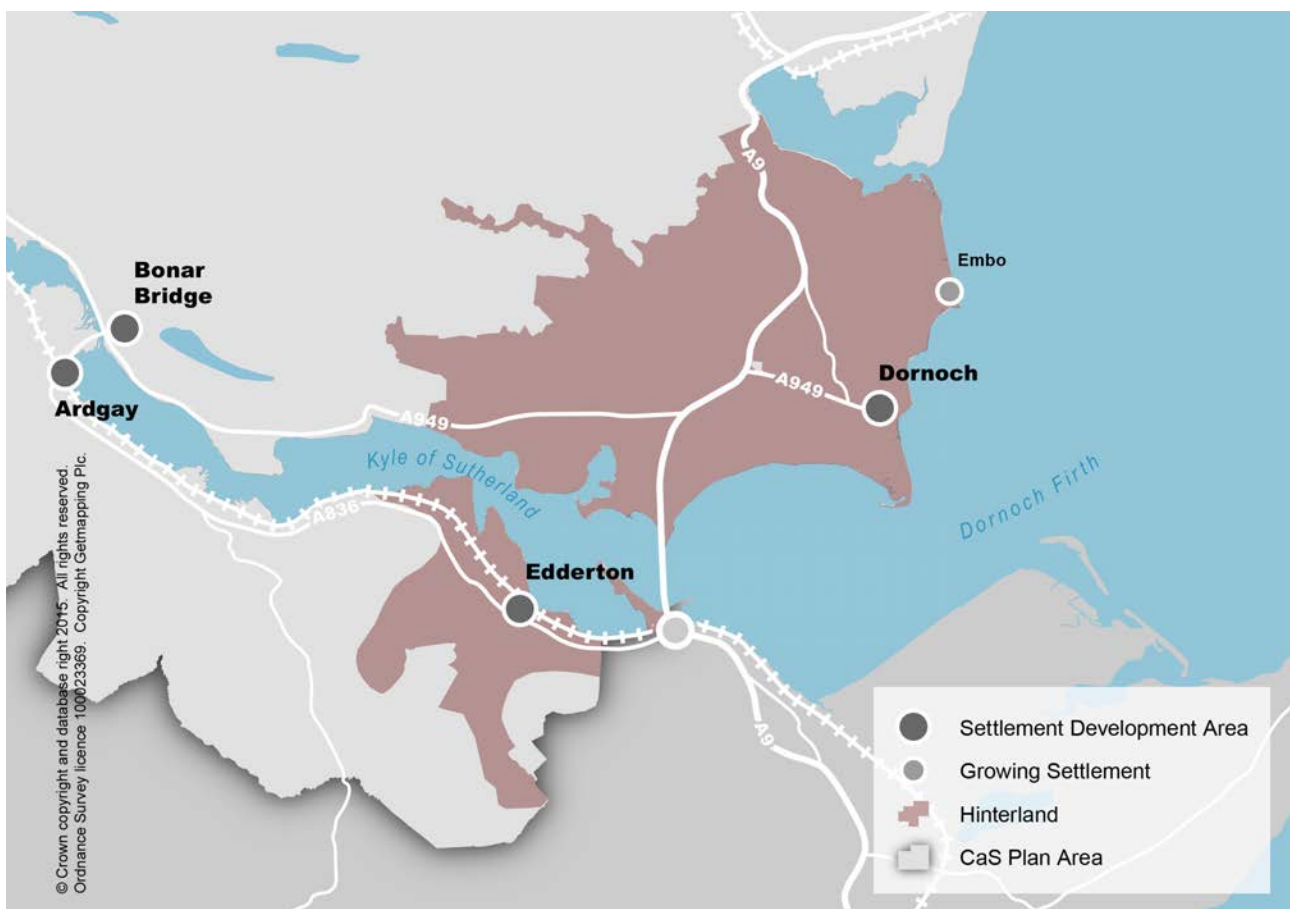
Bettyhill	Dunbeath	Dunnet
Durness	Embo	Invershin
John O' Groats	Keiss	Kinlochbervie
Latheronwheel	Melness	Melvich
Portskerra	Reay	Rosehall
Scourie	Thrumster	Watten

- 37** The Placemaking Priorities can also be used as the framework for the community and partners to work together in preparing any future community plan, development brief or masterplan.

Wider Countryside

- 38** Within other parts of the Plan area including the smallest housing groups or open countryside, planning applications for development will be assessed under HwLDP Policy on Development in the Wider Countryside. This policy provides a checklist of considerations to make sure new development does not harm the character of rural areas.
- 39** The exception to this approach is that within the area designated as Hinterland of Tain, housing proposals will be assessed under the HwLDP Policy on Housing in the Countryside in Hinterland areas. This sets out a more restrictive approach and includes the areas around Dornoch, Embo and Edderton as shown in Map 2'CaSPlan Hinterland'.

Map 2 CaSPlan Hinterland



Policy 1: Town Centre First

- 40** Town centres are at the heart of communities and should be hubs for a wide range of activities. In order to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of these centres a Town Centre First policy is set out below. This provides support for town centre living and seeks to attract a mix of uses which are active throughout the day and evening. This reflects the latest [Scottish Planning Policy \(2014\)](#)⁽⁷⁾ and the Scottish Government's [Town Centre Action Plan](#)⁽⁸⁾.

7 <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/scottish-planning-policy/>

8 <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2013/11/6415>

2 Strategy and Policies | Ro-innleachd agus Poileasaidhean

- 41** The centres of Brora, Dornoch, Golspie, Thurso and Wick play particularly key roles within the settlements and the surrounding areas. For these settlements town centre boundaries are identified and shown on the maps in the Settlements section. Development which generates significant footfall will be directed to the identified town centres in the first instance. A list of uses which this covers together with other considerations are outlined within the Policy below. For proposals of this kind a sequential assessment may be required to demonstrate that the proposal could not be located within a town centre. The Council may also request a retail impact assessment to be carried out to assess whether a proposal may have an undue impact on the viability and vibrancy of a town centre.
- 42** In principle the Council encourages services and facilities to be located centrally in all settlements not just those with town centre boundaries. This helps to ensure that they are in relatively accessible places and that settlement centres are the main hubs for social and business activity in that area.
- 43** For those settlements with town centre boundaries defined on the maps in the Settlements section, the Council intends to undertake town centre health checks, and use their findings to develop town centre strategies which deliver improvements. The health checks and strategies will be used as a baseline for future monitoring and updating. The Council also intends to use the health checks and strategies to provide further information and guidance, including the spatial elements of the town centre strategies, in Supplementary Guidance.
- 44** The current review of the HwLDP provides an opportunity to introduce a single Highland-wide Town Centre First policy which it is expected, when adopted, would supersede the policy in this Plan.

Policy 1: Town Centre First

Development that generates significant footfall will firstly be expected to be located within the town centres as identified by town centre boundaries. When identifying sites a sequential assessment will be required demonstrating that all opportunities for regeneration through reuse or redevelopment of existing sites or buildings have been fully explored. Should the scale and type of proposal not be suitable for these locations, edge of town centre locations are favoured second, and then out of centre locations that are, or can be made, easily accessible by choice of transport modes. This sequential approach does not apply to established uses and land allocations.

Significant footfall developments include:

- Retail
- Restaurants
- Commercial leisure uses
- Offices
- Hotels
- Community and cultural heritage facilities
- Public buildings, including libraries, education and healthcare facilities

If the Council considers that a proposal may result in an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of any defined town centre, the developer will be required to produce a retail or town centre impact assessment, tailored to reflect the scale and function of the town centre in question. The Council will only support proposals accompanied by competent assessments that demonstrate no significant adverse impacts.

A flexible and realistic approach will be required when applying this sequential assessment, however, developers need to consider how appropriate the nature of their proposal is to the scale and function of the centre within which it is proposed. Exceptions may be made for any ancillary uses that support existing and proposed developments.

The Council intends to undertake health checks and develop town centre strategies for the defined town centres of Brora, Dornoch, Golspie, Thurso and Wick, and to use these to provide further information and guidance, including the spatial elements of the town centre strategies, in Supplementary Guidance."

Proposals for conversion of buildings to residential use in town centres may be supported, providing there is no loss of existing or potential viable footfall generating use(s). Proposals for conversion to residential use must demonstrate that the property has been marketed for its existing use at a reasonable price / rent without success for a minimum period of 12 months. For vacant upper floor conversions (excluding hotels) support may be given without the requirement for marketing where it can be demonstrated that the proposals would contribute towards a balanced mix of uses.

Policy 2: Delivering Development

Site Capacities

- 45** Indicative housing capacities for each site are shown within the site allocation details in the Plan. Planning applications are expected to be generally consistent with the indicative capacities specified. However a different capacity than that specified may be acceptable subject to detailed design that demonstrates efficient use of land and a satisfactory site layout.
- 46** These indicative capacities were calculated having regard to the requirement for housing land, to the need to promote the efficient use of land and to take account of: any mix of uses specified, relative accessibility of the site, character of the place and the site's locality, general site conditions and constraints and the specified developer requirements, including any infrastructure to be included in the site. Where available any planning history of the site and information provided by landowners or developers of the site was also taken into consideration.

Long Term Sites

- 47** Sites identified in the Plan as "Long Term" indicate the likely preferred direction for growth beyond the period covered by this Local Development Plan. The suitability of these sites for development has been subject of initial consideration through the preparation of this Plan. However, they are not being invited for development within this Plan period and allocated sites are expected to be developed before any long term sites can be considered. During future reviews of the Plan we will consider bringing forward any of those sites as allocations (subject to further assessment and identification of any developer requirements) or whether they still reflect the likely preferred direction for growth and should remain proposed as long term sites. We review the Plan at least every five years.

Implementation

- 48** To help deliver the proposals set out within the Plan we have prepared and will maintain an Action (Delivery) Programme. It sets out who is responsible for the delivery of development sites, improved infrastructure, their priority, a broad indication of when it will need to be installed/completed by. Where possible and necessary, it will also include details of infrastructure proposed through national plans, such as the National Planning Framework and the Strategic Transport Projects Review, that are also relevant to the area's growth in order to provide as complete a picture as possible. All parties referred to in the Action Programme have a key role in the implementation of the Plan and the Council will, in conjunction with Community Planning Partners, monitor progress.
- 49** The provision of infrastructure is fundamental to the delivery of development and to create communities served by an appropriate level of services and facilities and more efficient forms of travel. The Council has taken a proactive partnership approach to identifying infrastructure requirements for new development and considering future transport needs when preparing the strategy and site allocations for the Plan. Where possible we have indicated specific requirements in the Plan. The majority of these requirements relate to the impact of new developments allocated in the Plan and therefore generally will be delivered by private sector investment. This will be secured using tools such as conditions on planning applications or

planning obligations. Public funding may also be required to help deliver certain projects. Developer requirements set out in this plan may be subject to change following the detailed assessment of proposals through the pre-application and application processes, having regard to the Developer Contributions provisions of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and related Supplementary Guidance.

- 50** In preparing planning applications, developers should therefore not only have regard to the requirements set out in this Plan but also to the policies of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and related Supplementary Guidance. This includes, for example, the requirement that most new development must connect to the public sewer and that alternative sewerage arrangements will only be acceptable in specific circumstances and subject to stringent requirements being met.
- 51** Masterplanning of larger developments can make a positive contribution to the creation of high quality, sustainable and successful places. It is an effective tool for engaging the community and others in the planning process to deliver high quality environments, good transport connections and well designed homes. As such, the Plan encourages a masterplanned approach to new developments which should be carried out at the earliest possible opportunity and taken into consideration at all stages of the planning application process. Each phase of development will need to show its relationship to the overall masterplan and demonstrate how the required infrastructure will be delivered.

Policy 2: Delivering Development

Development of the locations and uses specified in the settlements section of the Plan (3'Caithness Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Ghallaibh' and 4'Sutherland Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Chataibh') will be supported subject to provision of the necessary infrastructure, services and facilities required to support new development as indicated in this Plan or identified in accordance with the Development Plan as more detailed proposals are brought forward.

Larger sites must be appropriately masterplanned. Each phase of development will need to show its relationship to this overall masterplan and demonstrate how the required infrastructure will be delivered.

However, sites identified in the Plan as "Long Term" are not being invited for development within this Plan period and allocated sites are expected to be developed before any long term sites can be considered.

Policy 3: Growing Settlements

- 52** Our policy for guiding development in the Growing Settlements is set out below.
- 53** The Growing Settlements in the CaSPlan area are: Bettyhill, Dunbeath, Dunnet, Durness, Embo, Invershin, John O'Groats, Keiss, Kinlochbervie, Latheronwheel, Melness, Melvich, Portskerra, Reay, Rosehall, Scourie, Thrumster, Watten.

- 54 It is expected that the current review of the HwLDP provides an opportunity to introduce a single Highland-wide Growing Settlements policy which, when adopted, would supersede the policy in this Plan.

Policy 3: Growing Settlements

Development proposals that are contained within, round off or consolidate the Growing Settlements (listed above) will be assessed against the extent to which they:

- take account of the issues and placemaking priorities identified for the individual Growing Settlements in 'Caithness Growing Settlements' and 'Sutherland Growing Settlements';
- are likely to help sustain, enhance or add to facilities with proposals being located within active travel distance of any facility present;
- are compatible in terms of use, spacing, character and density with development within that settlement and demonstrate high quality design;
- can utilise spare capacity in the infrastructure network (education, roads, other transport, water, sewerage etc.) or new/improved infrastructure can be provided in a cost efficient manner, taking into account the Council's requirement for connection to the public sewer other than in exceptional circumstances;
- avoid a net loss of amenity / recreational areas significant to the local community; and
- would not result in an adverse impact on any other important heritage feature (including natural or built), important public viewpoint/vista or open space.

Proposals which demonstrate overall conformity with the above criteria will be in accordance with this policy. These criteria will also be used to determine the suitability of development proposals and as the framework for preparing any future Development Briefs or Masterplans for development for Growing Settlements.

Employment

Outcome: A strong, diverse and sustainable economy characterised as being an internationally renowned centre for renewable energy, world class engineering, land management and sea based industries and a tourist industry that combines culture, history, adventure and wildlife.

- 55 One of the aims of this Plan is to ensure that development helps to maintain and grow a strong and diverse Caithness and Sutherland economy. This is fundamental to continuing to create long-term employment opportunities and attract inward investment. In the north the decommissioning of Dounreay has been seen as the main reason for a decline in overall job numbers within the Plan area over recent years. There are signs that efforts to diversify the economy are working as the percentage of jobs dependent upon Dounreay decreased from 15% to 10% between 2006 and 2011, and the number of new businesses being created is on the rise.

- 56** Investment in renewable energy generation in North Highland is not only helping to meet Council and national climate change targets but it has also delivered economic benefits for the area. Onshore wind energy has grown significantly over recent years, particularly in the south and north-east of the Plan area.
- 57** This Plan recognises the potential for marine renewable energy generation, particularly in the north-east of the Plan area which is identified in the Spatial Strategy for Energy Business Expansion. This reflects the [National Planning Framework 3 \(NPF3\)](#)⁽⁹⁾ which designates the Orkney, Pentland Firth and North Caithness as an Area of Coordinated Action. The Plan aims to maximise the benefits to the local economy by adopting a more targeted, but still flexible, approach to identifying business and industrial land. It builds on the work carried out as part of the North Highland Onshore Vision (NHOV) which identified land use planning actions to support the growth of marine renewables. Several of the actions identified in the NHOV are being carried forward within the CaSPlan Action Programme.
- 58** The tourism sector is considered as an increasingly important component of the economy. The Plan supports suitable opportunities throughout Caithness and Sutherland including in more rural and remote locations. As shown within the Spatial Strategy the East Coast Connectivity and Tourism Corridor is considered as having particular development potential. Proposals will be assessed against the CaSPlan's vision and strategy, as well as the general policies set out in the HwLDP.
- 59** The historic environment already plays an important role within the tourism industry and the wider economy of Caithness and Sutherland. The Plan supports the principle of taking further advantage of the rich and diverse heritage for economic and cultural benefits. The [Caithness Broch Project](#)⁽¹⁰⁾, for example, aim to preserve and promote historical sites in Caithness and their plans for an archaeological trail and reconstruction of a broch could boost tourism and raise awareness of the area's heritage.
- 60** The Plan supports appropriate developments which build on existing assets, such as the [North West Highlands Geopark](#)⁽¹¹⁾. The [North Coast 500](#)⁽¹²⁾ is fast becoming established as an internationally renowned tourist route. This could have wide-ranging benefits across the larger settlements and for the small and more rural communities across the whole of the CaSPlan area. Communities are encouraged to work together to formulate a tourism plan for their own area that makes the most of their natural and cultural heritage and complements the CaSPlan Vision. This includes areas which are not necessarily along the actual North Coast 500 route.
- 61** As well as providing support for the renewables and tourist sectors, CaSPlan recognises that much of the Plan area, particularly in Sutherland, is centred on land and marine management, including agriculture, estate management, forestry, aquaculture and fishing. CaSPlan supports the growth of skills and employment opportunities within these industries. Proposals within

9 <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/NPF3-SPP-Review/NPF3>

10 <http://www.thebrochproject.co.uk/>

11 <https://www.nwhgeopark.com/>

12 <https://www.northcoast500.com/>

2 Strategy and Policies | Ro-innleachd agus Poileasaidhean

the wider countryside will also be set against the general policies of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan. This ensures that the sectors grow in balance with the protection of the wider environment.

- 62 Partnership working is essential to support existing businesses to grow, attracting new businesses to the area and maximising inward investment, for example Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), the Caithness and North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership (CNSRP) and the North Highland Initiative (NHI).
- 63 The [Dounreay Planning Framework](#)⁽¹³⁾ provides a land use development brief against which to regulate and control future decommissioning and restoration works. Going forward, this is continued with CaSPlan indicating the main principles of the Framework. Options for future use of land within or adjoining the Dounreay site will be limited due to the previous activities and ongoing decommissioning. The framework suggests some potential future uses.
- 64 The adjacent Vulcan Naval Reactor Test Establishment (NTRE) site is also due to be decommissioned in coming years. The Council would be supportive of a similar framework for setting out the phased decommissioning and future uses of the site. As a valued employer, who have designed and managed the Vulcan facility for over 50 years, the Council would encourage opportunities for Rolls Royce to continue a strong presence in the area.
- 65 In Caithness and Sutherland many of the town and village centres play an important role in the economic and social fabric of the area. A vibrant and viable town centre is fundamental to a strong and diverse economy and provides a hub for a wide range of activities. To help protect these centres the Plan includes a 'Town Centre First Policy' (shown in 'Policy 1: Town Centre First'). This directs development which generates significant footfall towards the settlement centre and avoids inappropriate out-of-town developments.
- 66 Improvements in internet connections are important for helping to encourage inward investment. This ranges from large multi-national companies monitoring new renewable energy technologies to home-working, live-work units, micro businesses and community hubs. The Scottish Government's National Digital Fibre Network project is currently delivering enhanced digital infrastructure across much of the Highlands.

Marine Planning

- 67 Highland has a range of marine activities including commercial shipping through established ports and harbours, fishing, aquaculture, tourism, leisure and recreation activities. Some of these industries are thriving and they all rely on the quality of our marine waters and coastal environment; they also have a role in maintaining these qualities to support sustainable economic development.
- 68 The policy framework for marine planning is evolving at both national and regional levels with the publication of the National Marine Plan (March 2015) and the development of Regional Marine Plans. The National Marine Plan applies from Mean High Water Springs and covers both Scottish inshore waters (out to 12 nautical miles) and offshore waters (12 to 200 nautical miles). The National Marine Plan has statutory effect for any public authority taking

13 https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/712051/dounreay_planning_framework

decisions which can affect the marine area. Statutory Regional Marine Plans will be delivered by Marine Planning Partnerships once established. The Council, in partnership with Marine Scotland and Orkney Islands Council, has finalised and adopted the non-statutory Pilot Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine Spatial Plan which is a material consideration in assessing relevant planning applications along the north Caithness and Sutherland coastline. Key elements of the National Marine Plan include the full integration of the Western and Northern Isles into the UK electricity network, which will include an AC connection between Orkney and Caithness and a high voltage DC connection between Spittal, Caithness and Blackhillock, Moray. The National Marine Plan also recognises the Caithness and Sutherland Coast's coastal and marine tourism assets.

- 69** Given the growth of various maritime industries around our coasts, including offshore renewable energy in Caithness and Sutherland, and the timescales for national and regional policy development, some policy steer is required at the local level to shape where growth sectors can develop. CaSPlan supports the integration of marine and coastal development. This is achieved by the approach to supporting employment-generating uses like offshore industries, encouraging growth of the area's ports and harbours, supporting key infrastructure, and identifying business and industrial land. The HwLDP includes policy in support of marine renewables, aquaculture, the integration of coastal and marine planning and links to relevant supplementary guidance.

Connectivity and Transport

Outcome: Enhanced communications, utilities and transport infrastructure that support communities and economic growth, with development anchored to existing or planned provision.

- 70** To be a competitive and successful place, Caithness and Sutherland need to be well connected. This will enable people and businesses to transport and communicate their goods and services, as well as making it easy for people to live, work and visit.
- 71** There are a range of key assets that the Plan area already has that CaSPlan recognises and aims to support, like improving transport infrastructure along the East Coast Connectivity and Tourism Corridor, to connect the larger service centres and provide a foundation for sustainable transport services for the wider area.
- 72** However, for some parts of the CaSPlan area, there remain some fundamental challenges:
- Some areas have limited transport options and higher dependency on car ownership, and many people travel by car to access services, education, training and employment.
 - Other areas have limited road infrastructure, with communities reliant on single-track roads as their main routes. Communities can play a key role in addressing this issue, for example, by providing community transport solutions, like Transport for Tongue.
 - Key growth sectors, like the renewables industry, may put increased pressure on the road network. In some cases renewable energy projects may result in repairs and upgrades but it is essential that the Council ensures that there is no net degradation to infrastructure from these projects.

2 Strategy and Policies | Ro-innleachd agus Poileasaidhean

- In some parts of the CaSPlan area there is limited connectivity to water, waste water treatment and high speed internet, all of which could potentially limit opportunities for growth and achieving the outcomes of the plan.
- The continued growth of the tourism industry may put increased pressure on the road network, particularly in rural areas.

73 CaSPlan addresses these challenges by:

- Aligning with the Highland Local Transport Strategy and supporting projects to be delivered by partner agencies, for example, Transport Scotland's planned improvements for Berriedale Braes on the A9, Network Rail's enhancements to the Far North Line, and measures addressing the challenges in the provision of public transport.
- Supporting National Planning Framework's national development of a Digital Fibre Network. For example, by supporting Highlands and Islands Enterprise's roll out of superfast broadband and by capitalising on such opportunities to reduce the need to travel.
- Promoting active travel opportunities, particularly between settlements such as Brora and Golspie, and within Thurso and Wick. The existing Core Path network is identified and safeguarded from inappropriate development. There are developer requirements to safeguard and/ or enhance the core path network for relevant site allocations. Proposed paths are also identified and may be included as Core Paths through the Core Path Plan review process. Developer requirements and mapping are used in the Plan to maximise opportunities for green network improvements and enhancements.
- Directing development to locations easily linked to existing connections in the transport network, and utilities and communications infrastructure. Development in such locations can attract investment to upgrade these networks.

Environment and Heritage

Outcome: High quality places where the outstanding environment and natural, built and cultural heritage is celebrated and valued assets are safeguarded.

- 74** CaSPlan is home to a diverse range of renowned and celebrated built and cultural assets. The Plan balances the need to capitalise on these assets for social, economic, environmental and other needs, whilst safeguarding their unique character and qualities.
- 75** The natural and historic environment is rich, containing: internationally and nationally recognised sites, species and habitats; locally valued sites and landscapes; dramatic landforms, and a diverse cultural heritage. HwLDP policies provide safeguards for these features.
- 76** Special Landscape Area (SLA) boundaries have been revised for the CaSPlan area to ensure key designated landscape features are not severed and that distinct landscapes are preserved (see 'Special Landscape Areas').

Conservation Areas

- 77** In 3'Caithness Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Ghallaibh' and 4'Sutherland Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Chataibh', CaSPlan identifies where there may be potential for designation or review of Conservation Areas for the following places:
- Dornoch Conservation Area (review)
 - Golspie's historic core (potential future designation)
 - Helmsdale's historic core (potential future designation)
 - Lybster Conservation Area (potential extension to harbour)
 - Thurso Conservation Area (review)
 - Wick Pultneytown Conservation Area (review)
- 78** There may be other areas with special architectural or historic interest that merit Conservation Area designation, and these may be appraised and considered in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.
- 79** Appraisals for Conservation Areas may be undertaken and Management Plans prepared. These Management Plans will include details on the following issues for each Conservation Area (as set out in [Planning Advice Note PAN71: Conservation Area Management](#)⁽¹⁴⁾):
- Opportunities for development in the Conservation Area (e.g. preparing design statements for sensitive sites)
 - Opportunities for Planning action (e.g. identifying need for urgent works, building repairs etc.)
 - Opportunities for enhancement (e.g. identifying opportunity for new or restored surfaces, planting and street furniture)
 - Conservation strategy (providing guidance on key aspects of the Conservation Area)
 - Monitoring and review (e.g. creating monitoring indicators and mechanism for review).

Green Networks and Green Space

- 80** CaSPlan's geography is made up of a large rural area, much of which is of high nature conservation value, has a range of natural heritage assets and provides good access to the countryside. Green networks offer great opportunity for the Plan to reinforce links between settlements and the natural environment and to enhance this already well-connected network.
- 81** Green networks do not prevent development but their integrity must be maintained and opportunities for enhancement considered, as shown on Map 1'CaSPlan Strategy Map'. Safeguarding and enhancement opportunities are identified in Placemaking Priorities for Settlements and in Developer Requirements for sites. As Green Networks comprise multiple functions including open space, core paths, forests and woodlands, coastal zones, allotments and private green spaces (etc.), there may be additional opportunities for enhancements that are not outlined in the Plan.

14 <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2004/12/20450/49062>

2 Strategy and Policies | Ro-innleachd agus Poileasaidhean

82 There are important Green Spaces in and around the settlements in the Plan area. HwLDP policies safeguard these networks of sustainable, accessible and fit for purpose green spaces including sports facilities. Therefore as well as identifying Green Networks, CaSPlan also identifies important green spaces in settlement development areas to be safeguarded from inappropriate development and enhanced where appropriate.

Climate Change

83 The Council is committed to working with communities, businesses and partners to mitigate our impact on climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, maximising renewable energy contributions, taking steps to adapt to the unavoidable impacts of a changing climate and to working with communities to respond to climate change. This commitment is reflected in the Council-led Carbon CLEVER initiative which aims for a "carbon neutral Inverness in a low carbon Highlands" by 2025.

84 The area has a vital contribution to make towards achieving the Council's ambitious aim of a low carbon Highlands by 2025 and is already playing a significant part in this. Alternative fuels and heating options are important and the district heating scheme in Wick and the biomass boilers being widely implemented in Council buildings are examples of what is already being achieved. Developers are encouraged to consider options for low or zero carbon heating and district heating schemes by making use of the [Scotland Heat Map](#)⁽¹⁵⁾ which provides information on heat demand and supply opportunities.

85 The area also has a substantial renewable energy resource, with onshore wind and hydro energy sectors well established and offshore and marine energy developments currently emerging.

86 Peatland is a vital carbon store and Caithness and Sutherland's peatland resource is of international importance. Through the policies in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) we can help safeguard important peatland resources.

Special Landscape Areas

87 Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) are regionally valuable landscapes identified to protect and enhance landscape qualities and promote their enjoyment. HwLDP policy safeguards these areas and is accompanied by a background paper "The Assessment of Highland Special Landscape Areas".

Special Landscape Area Boundary Revisions

88 Through the preparation of CaSPlan the Council consulted on the revision of SLA boundaries to better reflect the landforms identified, to avoid severing landscape features, and to ensure any extensions reflected similar special landscape characteristics.

15 <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Business-Industry/Energy/Energy-sources/19185/Heat/HeatMap>

89 Map 3'CaSPlan Special Landscape Areas' indicates the extent of the revised SLAs within the Caithness and Sutherland area and detailed maps are available on our [website](#)⁽¹⁶⁾. The following boundary revisions have been made:

90 Dunnet Head SLA:

- The western boundary has been extended to include all of Dunnet Bay to avoid bisecting Dunnet Bay, a self contained landscape feature within the SLA.

91 Oldshoremore, Cape Wrath and Durness SLA:

- Firstly, the eastern boundary has been extended to include: the promontory at Rispond; Rispond Bay; Eilean Cluimhrig and An Dubh-sgeir islands. This is to avoid bisecting the beach Traigh Allt Chailgeag, incorporate key landscape and visual characteristics described in the SLA citation (rocky promontories, skerries and lower lying sheltered bays) and because the coastline changes at the southeast edge of the extension.
- Secondly, important landscape features in the seascape are included: Duslic off the coast at Cape Wrath; Am Baig off the coast at Am Buachaille; Eilean a' Chonnaidh. This is because the extension incorporates key landscape and visual characteristics described in the SLA citation (skerries) and to avoid severing Eilean a' Chonnaidh, a self contained landscape feature within the SLA.

92 Eriboll East and Whiten Head SLA:

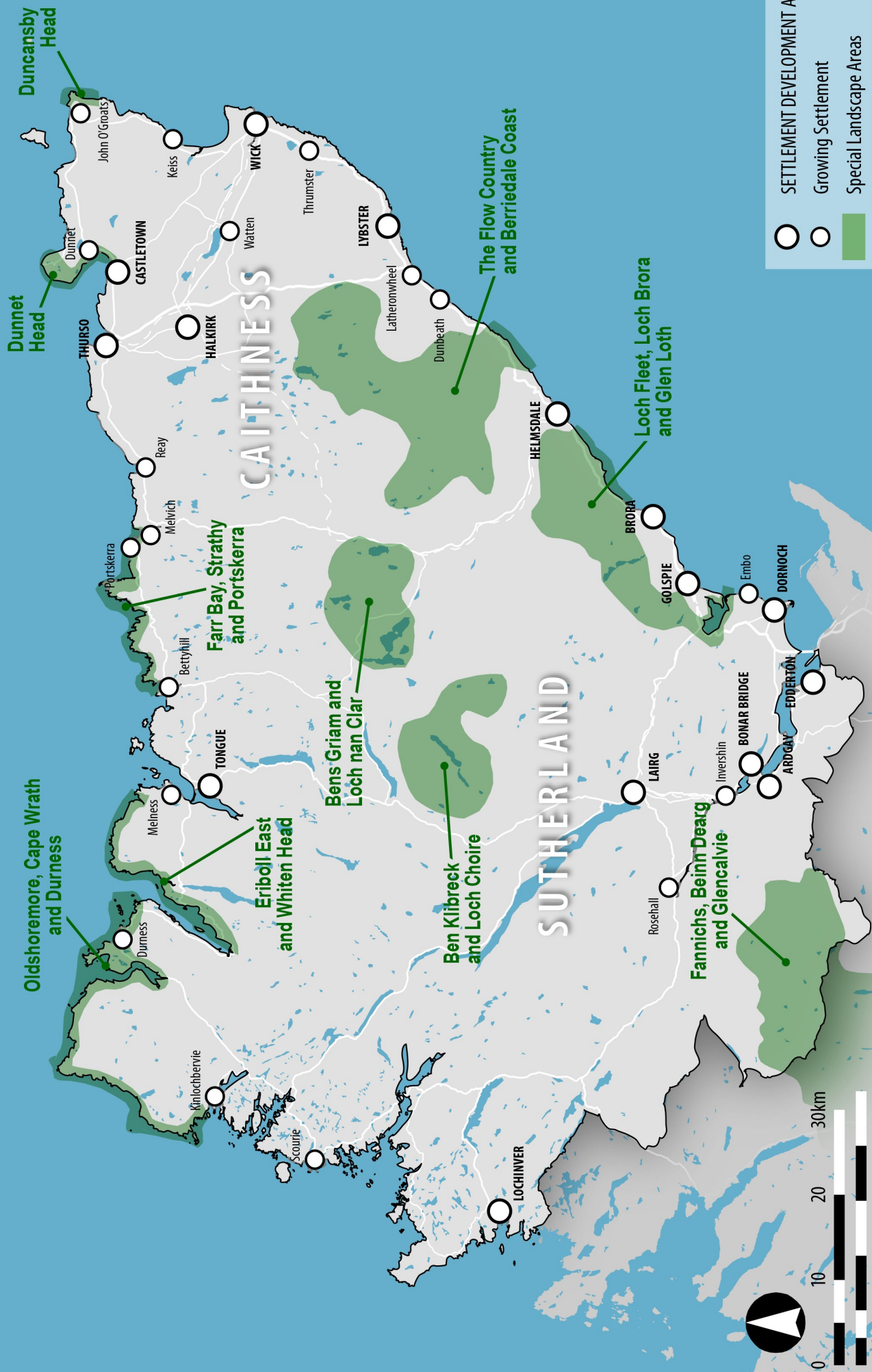
- The western extent of the SLA boundary has been extended to include the entire island Eilean Choraidd. This is to avoid bisecting the island, a self contained landscape feature within this SLA.

93 Farr Bay, Strathy and Portskerra SLA:

- The eastern boundary has been extended to include Rubh Bra promontory and Melvich Bay. This is because Melvich Bay shares landscape characteristics with Armadale and Strathy Bays which both lie within this SLA, Melvich Bay reflects a key landscape and visual characteristic of the SLA citation (fine sandy beaches in the largest and most sheltered bays which form foci that contrast in colour, form and texture to the rocky coastal cliffs), the land between the SLA boundary and bay reflects one of the key landscape and visual characteristics of the SLA, (elevated areas on the intervening high ground between the bays close to the sea provide expansive views both along the coast and out to sea) and because beyond the extended boundary there is a change in the character of the coastline so this provides a more appropriate boundary for this SLA.

16 https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/712044/special_landscape_area_citations

Special Landscape Areas



94 In this section of the Plan you will find the detail for the following places.

Settlement Development Areas	Economic Development Areas	Growing Settlements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 'Castletown' ● 'Halkirk' ● 'Lybster' ● 'Thurso' ● 'Wick' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 'Dounreay' ● 'Forss Business and Energy Park' ● 'Georgemas Junction' ● 'Gills Harbour' ● 'Janetstown Industrial Estate' ● 'Seater Waste Management Facility' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 'Dunbeath' ● 'Dunnet' ● 'John O' Groats' ● 'Keiss' ● 'Latheronwheel' ● 'Reay' ● 'Thrumster' ● 'Watten'

Castletown

- 95 Much of Castletown was planned on a grid pattern and built during its time at the centre of a thriving flagstone industry in the 19th Century. The shore front at Castlehill was pivotal to the production and transportation of the flagstone which was exported all over the world. Nowadays the harbour is only used by several small boats and many of the buildings along the coast line have fallen into ruin. This rich history remains clearly visible in the landscape and there is great potential to convert and redevelop the area into a well defined tourism destination.
- 96 In 2007 The Prince's Foundation for Building Community (PFBC), in consultation with the local community, prepared the [Castletown Village Masterplan](#)⁽¹⁷⁾ which included proposals to reconnect the village with the historic shorefront. Work has already been carried out to establish heritage trails to the north-west. The former dairy and steading at Castlehill has also recently been renovated and is now home to the heritage centre which provides a high quality visitor experience and educational resource.
- 97 The PFBC masterplan provides a useful illustration of housing and commercial development and regeneration opportunities across the village. It also recognises the mature woodland, good quality agricultural land and watercourses which provide important green corridors that need to be protected and where possible enhanced.
- 98 The former freezer manufacturing site has remained largely vacant since the closure of Icetech in 2013 and offers a wide range of business and industrial opportunities.

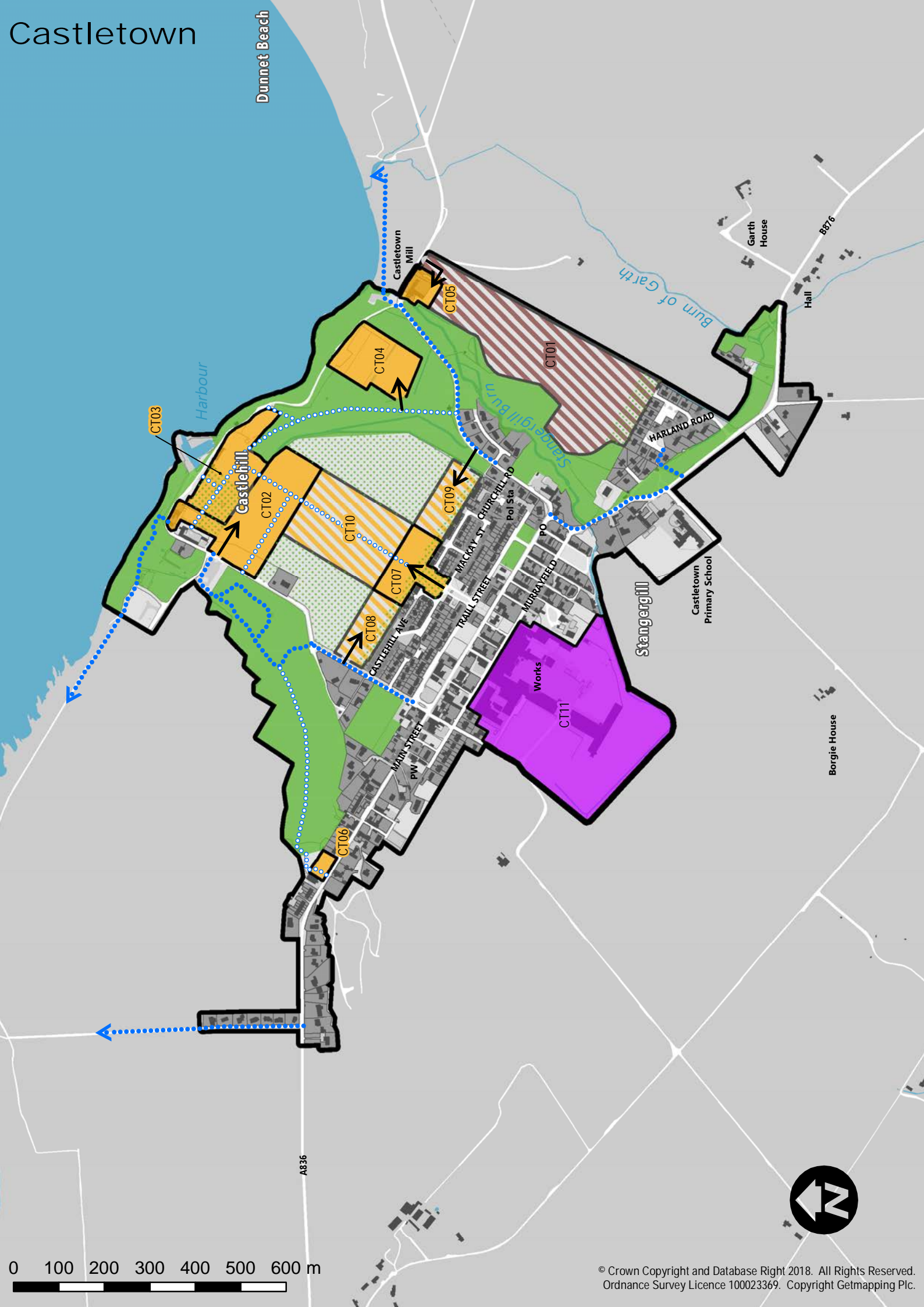
17 www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1789/castletown_reportpdf.pdf

Placemaking Priorities

- Promote opportunities for redevelopment, renovation and infill development within the village centre and other brownfield sites.
- Better connect the village with Castlehill and the harbour with long term potential for a mixed use expansion extending from the centre of Castletown connected via a new, wide tree-lined street and green corridors.
- Develop high quality leisure and tourism facilities along the shore front which could provide an anchor for further development.
- Enhance access to green corridors surrounding the village and protect these areas from development.

99 The following map and table show the site allocations for Castletown.

Castletown



CaSPlan Settlement Map Legend

Settlement Development Area



Long Term Sites

- Long Term Housing
- Long Term Mixed Use
- Long Term Business
- Long Term Industrial

Allocations

- Housing
- Mixed Use
- Community
- Business
- Industrial
- Greenspace
- Expansion of Green Network

Town Centres



Paths and Access

- Site Access
- Indicative Road
- Long Term Potential Distributor/Relief Road Routes
- Core Path (existing)
- Proposed Path

Housing

CT01: Land North of Harland Road

Use: Long Term Housing

Area (ha): 8.4

This is identified as a 'Long Term Site'. These sites indicate the likely preferred direction for growth beyond the Plan period. They are not being invited for development within this Plan period and therefore developer requirements have not been identified in this Plan. More information about Long Term Sites is provided in the Glossary.

Mixed Use

CT02: Castlehill Steading and adjoining land

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business, Tourism)

Area (ha): 3

Indicative Housing Capacity: 69

Developer Requirements: Development in accordance with planning permission 16/00927/FUL including carrying out a Programme of Archaeological Work; Tree Protection and Management Plan; Protected species walkover survey; Waste Management Plan; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Deliver or fund section of tree lined boulevard connection between Traill Street and Castlehill which lies within the boundary of the allocation.

CT03: Former Castlehill House site

Use: Mixed Use (Business, Tourism)

Area (ha): 2.3

Indicative Housing Capacity: N/A

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Programme of Archaeological Work; Tree Protection and Management Plan; Protected species walkover survey; Waste Management Plan.

CT04: Former Castlehill Gardens

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Tourism)

Area (ha): 2

Indicative Housing Capacity: 12

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Woodland protection and setback; upgrades to local road network - preferred access from Harbour Road; Upgrades to active travel routes through Castlehill estate; Sensitive siting and design required due to proximity of Listed Buildings; Early engagement with Scottish Water is recommended to determine potential requirement for pumped water supply; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required.

CT05: Castlehill Mill

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business, Tourism, Leisure, Community)

Area (ha): 0.5

Indicative Housing Capacity: 4

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Preferred access via the existing farm track to the east; Respect for the fabric and setting of the Listed Building; Bat survey may be required.

CT06: Former Free Church, Main Street

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business, Community)

Area (ha): 0.2

Indicative Housing Capacity: 4

Developer Requirements: The retention and renovation of the existing building is preferable; Protect stone dyke; If feasible, provide access through the site to allow for connections with the Core Path network within the former quarry.

CT07: North of Mackay Street

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Community)

Area (ha): 1.4

Indicative Housing Capacity: 30

Developer Requirements: Deliver or fund section of tree lined boulevard connection between Traill Street and Castlehill which lies within the boundary of the allocation.

CT08: North of Castlehill Avenue

Use: Long Term Mixed Use

Area (ha): 1.2

This is identified as a 'Long Term Site'. These sites indicate the likely preferred direction for growth beyond the Plan period. They are not being invited for development within this Plan period and therefore developer requirements have not been identified in this Plan. More information about Long Term Sites is provided in the Glossary.

CT09: North of Churchill Road

Use: Long Term Mixed Use

Area (ha): 1.2

This is identified as a 'Long Term Site'. These sites indicate the likely preferred direction for growth beyond the Plan period. They are not being invited for development within this Plan period and therefore developer requirements have not been identified in this Plan. More information about Long Term Sites is provided in the Glossary.

CT10: Land at Shelley Hill

Use: Long Term Mixed Use

Area (ha): 3.3

This is identified as a 'Long Term Site'. These sites indicate the likely preferred direction for growth beyond the Plan period. They are not being invited for development within this Plan period and therefore developer requirements have not been identified in this Plan. More information about Long Term Sites is provided in the Glossary.

Industry

CT11: Former Icetech Site

Use: Industry

Area (ha): 11.5

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Protect and enhance watercourse; Potential protected species surveys; Enhance pedestrian access along Murrayfield road.

Halkirk

- 100** Halkirk is one of Scotland's oldest planned villages, established on a grid-iron pattern. Despite additional siting and design guidance within the Caithness Local Plan (2002), development over more recent times has often been haphazard and inconsistent.
- 101** Land west of Bridge Street has been allocated for housing due to relatively high levels of housing development in Halkirk over recent years and active landowners in the area. The site is also close to services and development could help to regenerate the village centre. Development will, however, be required to have shared access and be designed to allow further expansion (including into neighbouring land) in the future. This will ensure that it is delivered in a coordinated and consistent way.
- 102** The River Thurso runs through the village and is an important feature which must be safeguarded from development. Opportunities may exist to improve access along the riverfront, which would be beneficial as there is limited recreational space in the village. The local waste water treatment works has very limited supply due to both increased housing development and surface water drainage issues. This could restrict development in the future.
- 103** The siting and design of housing developments have not always been complementary to the distinct character of the village. This Plan seeks to reinforce the importance of high quality siting and design for maintaining the distinct and valued qualities of the village, for example encouraging traditional scale and form of buildings, off street parking preferably being behind the building line and maintaining established street frontage lines including the traditional streetscape relationship of footpath, grass strip, house and rear garden.

104 Development in Halkirk has the potential to have an adverse effect on the River Thurso Special Area of Conservation (SAC) alone or in combination. The following site allocations have been identified as potentially having an effect HK01, HK02, HK03 and HK04. Any development of these sites will be required to assess and demonstrate appropriate mitigation measures which ensure avoidance of any adverse effect on the integrity of the River Thurso SAC.

Placemaking Priorities

- Insist on higher quality of design than has often been accepted in the past, to preserve the distinct and attractive qualities of the village.
- Continue to focus development towards infill opportunities to help consolidate the village.
- Improve access to and along the riverside for recreational purposes while safeguarding the area from intrusive development.
- Avoid uncoordinated and fragmented expansion on the fringes to help protect the setting of the village.
- A coordinated approach must be adopted by landowners and developers in relation to any development west of Bridge Street.
- Support the proposal by Halkirk Community Sports Foundation to provide a healthy living centre in the village.

105 The following map and table show the site allocations for Halkirk.

Halkirk



B874

Braal

Burn of Halkirk

B874

COMLIFOOT TERR
HK01

Halkirk Primary School

BRAAL TERR

HK03

Burial Ground

River Thurso

PO

CRESCENT STREET

HK04

PW

SINCLAIR STREET

Milton Farm

CHURCH LANE

SINCLAIR LANE

HK02

BRIDGE STREET

CHURCH STREET

GEORGE STREET

Works

HK05

CAMILLA STREET

Moss of Halkirk

PW

Station (disused)



0 100 200 300 400 m

CaSPlan Settlement Map Legend

Settlement Development Area



Long Term Sites

- Long Term Housing
- Long Term Mixed Use
- Long Term Business
- Long Term Industrial

Allocations

- Housing
- Mixed Use
- Community
- Business
- Industrial
- Greenspace
- Expansion of Green Network

Town Centres



Paths and Access

- Site Access
- Indicative Road
- Long Term Potential Distributor/Relief Road Routes
- Core Path (existing)
- Proposed Path

Housing

HK01: Comlifoot Drive

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 3.2

Indicative Housing Capacity:28

Developer Requirements: Development in accordance with planning permission 07/00133/FULCA including preparation of a Design Brief, creation of playpark, active travel link from Comlifoot Terrace to the riverside. In addition, Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown at risk of flooding); Extend 30 mph zone; Development proposals must demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Thurso SAC through submission of a satisfactory Construction Environmental Management Plan (including pollution prevention).

HK02: West of Bridge Street

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 3.5

Indicative Housing Capacity:35

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Shared access onto Bridge Street and avoidance of ransom strips to adjoining land; Contaminated land survey may be required; Vegetation survey may be required; High standard of siting and design; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required; Development proposals must demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Thurso SAC through submission of a satisfactory Construction Environmental Management Plan (including pollution prevention); Peat assessment and management plan.

Community

HK03: North East of Old Parish Church

Use: Community

Area (ha): 2.3

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Otter survey may be required; Access and openspace provision to riverside; Built development must have sensitive siting and design due to proximity to B-Listed former parish church; Adequate provision must be made for parking; Development proposals must demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Thurso SAC through submission of a satisfactory Construction Environmental Management Plan (including pollution prevention).

Business

HK04: South West of Ulbster Arms Hotel

Use: Business /Tourism

Area (ha): 1.1

Developer Requirements: Development in accordance with 15/01745/FUL including SUDS and protection/retention of trees. In addition, Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Shared access onto Bridge Street and avoidance of ransom strips to adjoining land; Contaminated land survey may be required; High standard of siting and design; Improvements to junction and pedestrian facilities; Development proposals must demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Thurso SAC through submission of a satisfactory Construction Environmental Management Plan (including pollution prevention).

Industry

HK05: Site at Camilla Street

Use: Industry

Area (ha): 1.3

Developer Requirements: Improve pedestrian facilities on Sinclair Lane within the vicinity of the main entrances.

Lybster

- 106** Lybster is a key settlement on the A99, providing a range of services for the immediate community as well as for the wider area. The settlement's facilities and strategic location on the A99 that leads south and to the northern isles makes it a desirable place to live and for passing trade.
- 107** The settlement is made up of an early 19th Century planned village that has a coherent structure with a traditional centre and more recent expansion south towards the coast. The main entrance to the settlement is from the A99 where a series of listed buildings are present in proximity to the cross roads of the A99, Norland Road and Village Road. This entrance creates a sense of arrival, particularly from the south, and has gateway qualities that should be respected.
- 108** The harbour provides visitor and community attractions and has strong historic and cultural links. Future extension of the Conservation Area to include the harbour may be considered.
- 109** Future development should complement and add to the distinct linear built form of the settlement and help to promote tourist, cultural and heritage assets.
- 110** Recent development at Young Crescent has raised issues with flooding and foul water drainage issues that should be addressed with future development.

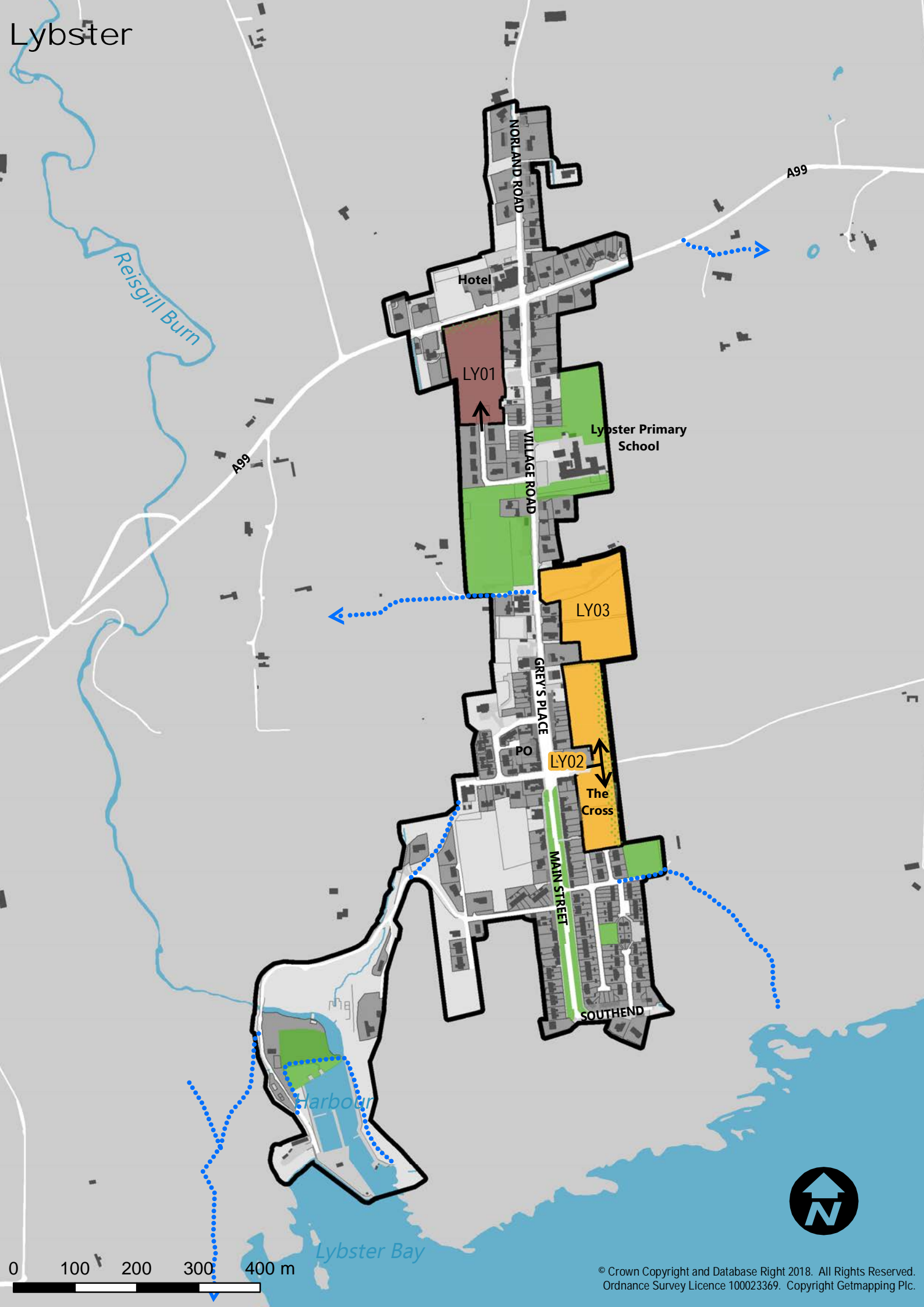
111 There are a range of key designations along the coast at Lybster including the East Caithness Cliffs Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation, as well as the Dunbeath to South Gaps Geo Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Placemaking Priorities

- Support settlement centre uses by encouraging business development.
- Encourage development of the tourism and service industries to take advantage of the settlement's location and heritage assets.
- Promote the linear pattern of development to consolidate the built-form of the settlement.
- Avoid and adverse impacts on the designated sites and features.

112 The following map and table show the site allocations for Lybster.

Lybster



Reisgill Burn

NORLAND ROAD

A99

Hotel

LY01

Lybster Primary School

VILLAGE ROAD

LY03

GREY'S PLACE

PO

LY02

The Cross

MAIN STREET

SOUTHEND



















Harbour

Lybster Bay

0 100 200 300 400 m



CaSPlan Settlement Map Legend

<p>Settlement Development Area</p> 	<p>Allocations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Housing  Mixed Use  Community  Business  Industrial  Greenspace  Expansion of Green Network 	<p>Town Centres</p> 
<p>Long Term Sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Long Term Housing  Long Term Mixed Use  Long Term Business  Long Term Industrial 		<p>Paths and Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Site Access  Indicative Road  Long Term Potential Distributor/Relief Road Routes  Core Path (existing)  Proposed Path

Housing

LY01: Young Crescent

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 1.4

Indicative Housing Capacity:
16

Developer Requirements: Sensitive siting and design to safeguard nearby historic environment features and capitalise on gateway location; Green network enhancements to north, adjacent to A99; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Drainage issues to be addressed- SuDS may offer a solution but further discussion with Scottish Water required; Consider open space provision at northern end of site; Preferred access from Young Crescent.

Mixed Use

LY02: The Cross

Use: Mixed Use (Housing and Business)

Area (ha): 1.8

Indicative Housing Capacity:
20

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Sensitive siting and design to safeguard setting of Conservation Area, including ensuring development fits the linear development pattern; Consider connecting access to Golf View Place; No development over culverts and no further culverting; Traffic calming may be required.

LY03: South of Golf Club House

Use: Mixed Use (Business and Community) **Area (ha):** 1.9

Developer Requirements: Consider potential for impacts on new development from neighbouring golf course and any necessary mitigation; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Sensitive siting and design to safeguard setting of Conservation Area, including ensuring development fits linear development pattern; No development over culverts and no further culverting; Traffic calming on Village Road may be required; Preference for access to be taken from the unclassified road from Lybster to Hillhead; Green network enhancements along the eastern boundary to soften development edge.

Thurso

- 113** Thurso is the principal market, service and social centre for west and central Caithness and an area reaching into north Sutherland. The strategy for Thurso aims to maintain this position and strengthen the range of services and facilities which it provides.
- 114** The Settlement Development Area includes Thurso and Scrabster both of which have important heritage value to the area. In Thurso the historic built environment is a major asset to the town and this is reflected in a Conservation Area designation covering much of the town centre and containing a number of important listed buildings. The Conservation Area may be reviewed in future (see 'Environment and Heritage' for more details).
- 115** The town centre remains the economic, social and cultural focal point of the town. The new Town Centre First Policy directs all significant footfall generating developments towards the area included within the identified Thurso town centre boundary and encourages a wide range of uses including promoting those which are active during the daytime and evening. Land uses which compete with town centre businesses and risk impacting on the vibrancy and vitality will be restricted by the new Town Centre First Policy.
- 116** The town sits at the mouth of the River Thurso and the south of Thurso Bay. Despite the river setting being one of its greatest assets, some of the uses along it detract from its amenity. Redevelopment opportunities exist which would help open up the riverfront for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.
- 117** Dounreay has played a pivotal role in the development of Thurso over the past 60 years. However, with decommissioning expected to be completed by 2030 it is essential that new opportunities for inward investment and job creation are identified and supported. The marine renewables sector has been identified as a significant growth sector due to the significant potential for generating energy from wave, tidal and off-shore wind in the northern Highlands.
- 118** Improving the tourism experience is one of the Plan's main aims. Although there have been many improvements in Caithness over recent years, such as the redevelopment of John O' Groats and the successful promotion of the North Coast 500, there are many opportunities which still exist.

- 119** The western expansion of the town continues to be a central component of the long term plan for Thurso. Since the last local plan was adopted in 2002 most of the other allocated sites have been built out. With the recently designated Scrabster Renewable Energy Enterprise Area and upgrades to the harbour facilities it continues to be the logical direction of growth for the town. It is anticipated therefore that attention will now focus on the housing and mixed use allocations at Pennyland and High Ormlie.
- 120** The Plan incorporates some of the key outputs of the 'Charrette' (an interactive design workshop) which was held in Thurso over the course of a week in February 2013. Urban designers, architects, planners and the public came together to explore ideas and aspirations for Thurso's future. This fed into [Masterplan and Charrette Report](#) ⁽¹⁸⁾ which brought together all the ideas and issues which were raised.
- 121** The cliff top land on the north side of the A9, between the housing at Burnside to the west and the Thurso Bay Caravan and Camping Park to the east is important to the character and identity of Thurso, and its distinctive sense of place. This is because of the land's openness, the views from and of it, and its location within the settlement boundary between different built up areas of the town. In order to safeguard it from inappropriate development, it has been designated as Greenspace on the Settlement Map.
- 122** Strategic transport improvements have been a priority in Thurso for several decades. Traffic congestion in the central area is a major problem at certain times and is exacerbated by there only being one river crossing. HGVs often struggle to travel through the town centre's narrow streets and sharp corners, particularly while transporting large haulage items. The Council considers that improvements to the road network are vital to unlocking the full potential for development sites and job creation at Scrabster and the business and industrial parks.
- 123** The Plans for expansion of the town to the west present an ideal opportunity to deliver at least some improved transport infrastructure. In particular, a local distributor/link road, funded by developer contributions, will be provided between Ormlie, Pennyland and Upper Burnside as a part of the development of Thurso West (TS04). This road requires to be capable of upgrade because, in the long term, it could potentially be extended to form a distributor/relief road around the western edge of Thurso, which would connect to the A9 north and south of the town, crossing the A836, the B874, the railway, and the river. There are 2 options for such a route, one to the west of Thurso Business Park, which emerged from the Thurso Charrette, and the other through Thurso West (TS04), which is proposed in the 2003 Thurso Western Expansion Area Development Brief and the previous Local Plan. At present, there is no funding commitment for such a distributor/relief road, or support from Transport Scotland, but its provision is an aspiration of the Council.
- 124** Development in Thurso has the potential to have an adverse effect on the River Thurso Special Area of Conservation (SAC) alone or in combination. The following site allocations have been identified as potentially having an effect TS01, TS06, TS07 and TS08. Any development of these sites will be required to assess and demonstrate appropriate mitigation measures which ensure avoidance of any adverse effect on the integrity of the River Thurso SAC. Similarly, any future proposal for a crossing over the River Thurso as a part of a distributor/relief road

18 https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/178/local_and_statutory_development_plans/283/caithness_and_sutherland_local_development_plan/3

would also be required to demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC (through submission of a satisfactory Construction Environmental Management Plan [including pollution prevention]).

Placemaking Priorities

- Support the expansion of Scrabster Harbour, development of the Enterprise Area, and extension of the Business Park to attract energy related opportunities which will create new employment opportunities
- Promote and enhance the built heritage of the town.
- A masterplanned approach is needed to set out a strategy for the long term western expansion of the town. Land is identified for a range of uses including housing, business, leisure, petrol station and open space together with important transport and connection improvements.
- Establish a green network stretching from the coastline at Victoria Walk, through Pennyland and the Ormlie moors and out to a new community woodland north of the golf course.
- Regeneration of the settlement centre by directing all significant footfall generating uses towards the town centre which will help to enhance its vitality and vibrancy.
- Regeneration and redevelopment of Thurso Harbour area for tourism and recreational uses including new high quality water sports facilities.
- Relocate industrial uses along the riverfront and replace them with residential and mixed use development to make the most of the river corridor setting.
- Improve connections to the wider green network including a footpath from Thurso along the Mall walk and extending southwards.
- Development should contribute towards the delivery of the priority actions identified in the Council's [Thurso Active Travel Audit](#)⁽¹⁹⁾.

125 The following map and table show the site allocations for Thurso.

19 https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/775/thurso_active_travel_audit_050811_app_part3

Housing

TS01: East of Juniper Drive

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 4.8

Indicative Housing Capacity:
50

Developer Requirements: Enhance the Juniper Bank Core Path; Setback from the eastern slope and railway line; Existing field track/core path should be retained and made into a positive environmental and recreational feature; Development proposals must demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Thurso SAC through submission of a satisfactory Construction Environmental Management Plan (including pollution prevention).

TS02: Site at Mountpleasant

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 5.6

Indicative Housing Capacity:
25

Developer Requirements: Development in accordance with 09/00300/FULCA and other relevant planning permissions.

TS03: West of Upper Burnside

Use: Long Term Housing

Area (ha): 8.3

This is identified as a 'Long Term Site'. These sites indicate the likely preferred direction for growth beyond the Plan period. They are not being invited for development within this Plan period and therefore developer requirements have not been identified in this Plan. More information about Long Term Sites is provided in the Glossary.

Mixed Use

TS04: Thurso West

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business, Retail [petrol station only], Openspace)

Area (ha): 61.4

Indicative Housing Capacity:
200

Developer Requirements: The Council will prepare a masterplan/development brief which will be adopted as Supplementary Guidance. Applications on TS04 may be supported prior to the development brief being prepared if the developer includes a masterplan with their application which addresses the points below. The Brief should include/address: Provision of approximately 12ha of Business land adjoining the existing business park; Land for 180 homes west of Pennyland Drive/north of Provost Cormack Drive; 1ha of land adjoining the new A836 junction for a petrol station and small business units; Additional long term potential for low level/low density housing development and amenity openspace east of proposed petrol station (to be treated as a long term site as per the definition in the Glossary); Safeguard and enhance 8ha of moorland at High Ormlie for recreational use and green network purposes; Potential for additional long term housing to the west of Wolf Burn (to be treated as a long term site as per the definition in the Glossary); Transport Assessment including single, shared access taken from A836 to form local distributor/link road within TS04, with capability of upgrading to distributor/relief road status; Enhancement of active travel connections through the site; Areas of openspace and creation of positive environmental and recreational features of Wolf Burn and connections to potential community woodland to the south west; At least a 40 metre amenity/openspace corridor alongside the A836/A9; High quality siting and design especially around more visually prominent; Sensitive siting and design to safeguard residential amenity; Phasing strategy from A836 southwards. To inform the development brief/masterplan the following need to be addressed: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding) and Drainage Impact Assessment; The Wolf Burn should be protected by a 25 metre development exclusion buffer (note that discharges to this watercourse are unlikely to be acceptable); Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required; Protected species survey; contaminated land survey; Agreement of a Developer Contributions Protocol in advance of any development.

TS05: Former Mart Site

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business, Tourism, Leisure, Community, Retail)

Area (ha): 3.7

Indicative Housing Capacity:
30

Developer Requirements: Planning permissions 07/00038/OUTCA [PPA/270/459] (and 08/00494/REMCA), and 15/4656/FUL (expires 31 July 2020) are live; Planning applications are to be accompanied by a developer led masterplan; High quality siting and design, including sympathetic streetscape siting and design and street frontage, particularly on the northern part of the allocation, all to reflect the prominent location, the immediate surroundings, and the proximity to heritage features; Transport Assessment; Improvements to the current access and parking arrangements associated with the High School and Ormlie Road; Active travel route to be established along the east side of Ormlie Road and through the site from Janet Street as part of Safer Routes to Schools; Retail Impact Assessment and/or Town Centre Impact Assessment for a hotel may be required.

TS06: Former Mill Site At Millbank

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business, Tourism, Community, Retail)

Area (ha): 0.7

Indicative Housing Capacity:
7

Developer Requirements: Access via Mill Terrace; Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); protected species survey; Respect for the fabric and setting of the Listed Buildings; Development proposals must demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Thurso SAC and SSSI through submission of a satisfactory Construction Environmental Management Plan (including pollution prevention).

TS07: Land at Sir Archibald Road

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business, Retail)

Area (ha): 2.2

Indicative Housing Capacity:
25

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); protected species survey may be required; Enhance active travel connections through the site, including providing a footpath to help connect footpath provision along the coast; Contaminated land survey; Development proposals must demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Thurso SAC and SSSI through submission of a satisfactory Construction Environmental Management Plan (including pollution prevention).

TS08: Land at Bridgend

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business, Community, Retail)

Area (ha): 1.3

Indicative Housing Capacity:
16

Developer Requirements: Possible access from Sir Archibald Road; Flood Risk Assessment required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Protected species survey may be required; Enhance active travel connections, including providing a footpath to help connect footpath provision along the coast; Contaminated land survey; Development proposals must demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Thurso SAC and SSSI through submission of a satisfactory Construction Environmental Management Plan (including pollution prevention).

TS09: North of Scrabster Community Hall

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Community)

Area (ha): 0.9

Indicative Housing Capacity:
10

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Maintain access to Core Path; Extend St Clair Avenue public road and footway along frontage of site; Road to terminate in a turning area; Provide bus stop Clett Terrace end of St Clair Avenue.

TS10: North West of Dunbar Hospital

Use: Long Term Mixed Use

Area (ha): 3.8

This is identified as a 'Long Term Site'. These sites indicate the likely preferred direction for growth beyond the Plan period. They are not being invited for development within this Plan period and therefore developer requirements have not been identified in this Plan. More information about Long Term Sites is provided in the Glossary.

Community

TS11: Viewfirth Park

Use: Community

Area (ha): 2.5

Developer Requirements: Transport Assessment with particular focus on impact on local transport network; Access arrangements and parking issues; Careful siting and design of development to safeguard residential and visual amenity, and avoid overdevelopment of the site; Development proposals to show the general measures to be taken in the operation of the facility to avoid unacceptable effects on the surrounding residential area.

TS12: Thurso Harbour

Use: Community (recreation facilities)

Area (ha): 1.6

Developer Requirements: Community facilities will be supported alongside the existing businesses; Drainage Impact Assessment; Flood Risk Assessment required to inform layout and design (only low vulnerability uses or operationally essential uses in areas shown to be at risk of flooding, to be accompanied by resilience measures); Protected species survey may be required; Improve signage to and from harbour and define parking spaces.

Industry

TS13: Scrabster Harbour

Use: Industry

Area (ha): 28.1

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment required to inform layout and design (only low vulnerability uses or operationally essential uses in areas shown to be at risk of flooding, to be accompanied by resilience measures); Protect Core Path to Holborn Head; Enhance watercourse; Potential protected species surveys; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required; Sensitive siting and design due to proximity to Listed buildings; Bird survey work may be required for major or significant development proposals; Development proposals must demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the North Caithness Cliffs Special Protection Area; Development proposals must demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Thurso Special Area of Conservation through, for example (but not limited to), noise and vibration caused by major construction activities, such as piling.

TS14: Land at Scrabster Mains Farm

Use: Industry

Area (ha): 14.1

Developer Requirements: Development in accordance with 14/00418/FUL planning permission including archaeological watching brief; Noise Impact Assessment, Landscaping Plan, Design Brief. In addition, positive features should be made of watercourses and landscaping such as hedgerows; Access arrangements should be compatible with potential future relief road; Access to public transport and need for new infrastructure and/or enhanced services to be considered.

TS15: North West Of Thurso Business Park

Use: Long Term Industry

Area (ha): 20.5

This is identified as a 'Long Term Site'. These sites indicate the likely preferred direction for growth beyond the Plan period. They are not being invited for development within this Plan period and therefore developer requirements have not been identified in this Plan. More information about Long Term Sites is provided in the Glossary.

CaSPlan Settlement Map Legend

Settlement Development Area



Long Term Sites

- Long Term Housing
- Long Term Mixed Use
- Long Term Business
- Long Term Industrial

Allocations

- Housing
- Mixed Use
- Community
- Business
- Industrial
- Greenspace
- Expansion of Green Network

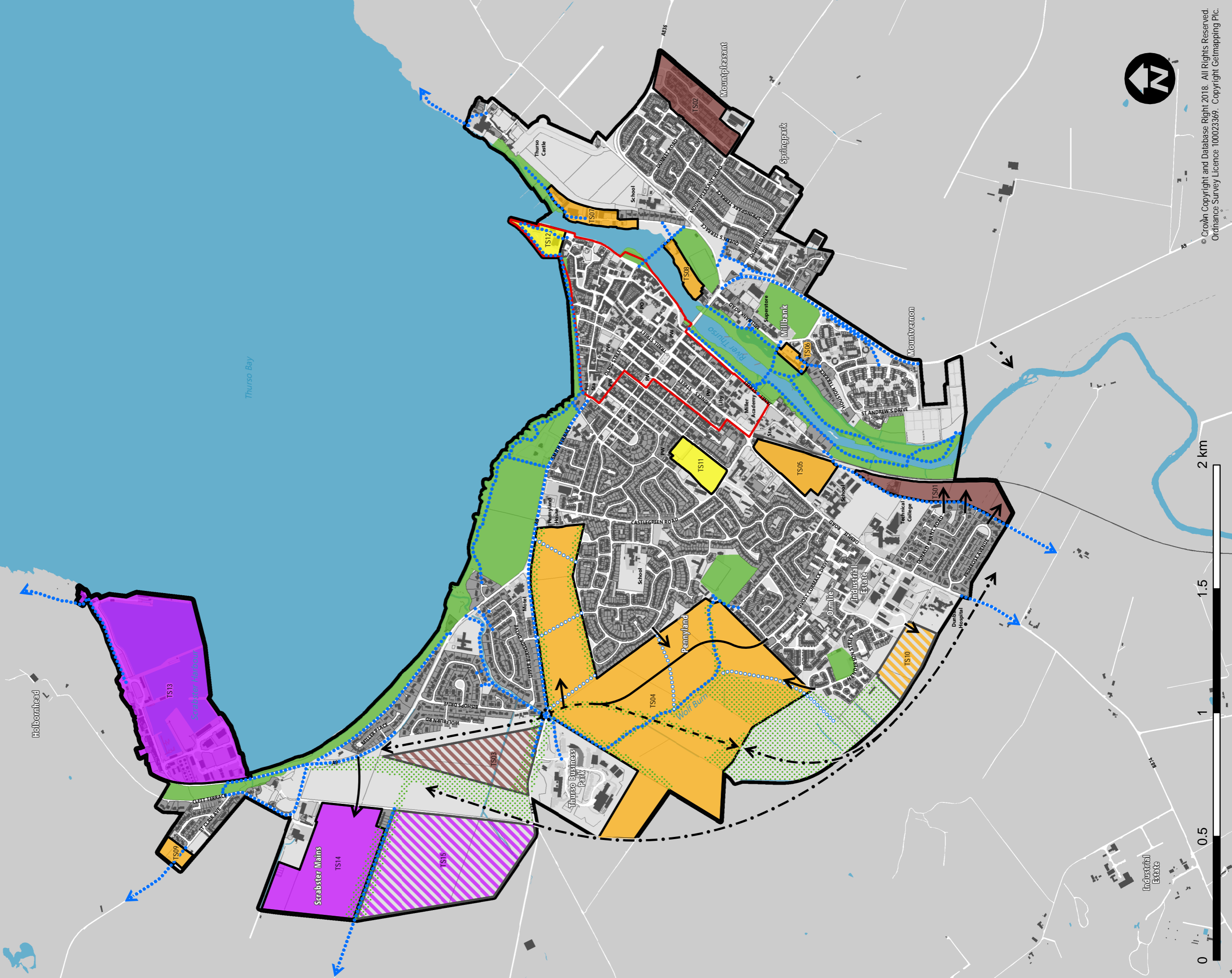
Town Centres



Paths and Access

- Site Access
- Indicative Road
- Long Term Potential Distributor/Relief Road Routes
- Core Path (existing)
- Proposed Path

Thurso/Scrabster



Wick



















- 126** Wick is a regional service and shopping centre and provides the main administrative and medical functions for the wider north Highland area. The strategy for Wick is focused on promoting these existing businesses and facilities while also supporting the growth of new industries.
- 127** Over recent years there has been renewed focus on the harbour and its role in supporting the growth of the renewable energy sector. There is need for the harbour to upgrade and expand its facilities to meet the needs of this growing industry. This is reinforced by the announcement that Wick will serve as the service base for the construction and operation of the Beatrice offshore windfarm. Renewed investment in the harbour may provide significant opportunities to regenerate the more central areas of the town.
- 128** The harbour sits within Pulteneytown which is a key part of the area's heritage. It is designated as a Conservation Area which may be reviewed in future (see the Environment and Heritage section for more details). Pulteneytown was designed by Thomas Telford in the early 1800s as a herring fishing town and harbour at the estuary of the River Wick. Many of the historic buildings are empty or derelict and offer opportunities for conversion and redevelopment into commercial, tourism, community or residential uses.
- 129** The town centre remains the economic, social and cultural focal point of the town. The Town Centre First Policy will help to maintain this function by directing development which generates significant footfall towards the centre and restrict competing uses in other areas. Proposals for town centre regeneration and riverside rejuvenation, including greater accessibility, were also identified during the Wick Charrette. The principle of these changes is supported and reflected by sites around the river being allocated for development.
- 130** The Plan incorporates some of the key outputs of the 'Charrette' (an interactive design workshop) which was held in Wick over the course of a week in February 2013. Urban designers, architects, planners and the public came together to explore ideas and aspirations for Wick's future. This fed into Masterplan and Charrette Report which brought together all the ideas and issues which were raised.
- 131** Wick benefits from an established District Heating System which provides a secure, renewable source of hot water and heating to over 200 domestic properties, the Assembly Rooms and Old Pulteney Distillery. Caithness General Hospital has also recently agreed to be linked to the heating system. The Plan supports further expansion of the network and encourages any new developments in the town to consider connecting to the district heating system.
- 132** Development in Wick has the potential to have an adverse effect on the East Caithness Cliffs Special Protection Areas (SPA) alone or in combination. The following site allocations have been identified as potentially having an effect: WK01, WK02, WK03, WK17, WK19 and WK22. Any development of these sites will be required to assess and demonstrate appropriate mitigation measures which ensure avoidance of any adverse effect on the integrity of the East Caithness Cliffs SPA .

Placemaking Priorities

- Consolidate the existing town with allocations which help to round off or infill rather than expand Wick in any one particular direction.
- Encourage all footfall generating uses towards the town centre to help enhance its vitality and vibrancy.
- Support the expansion of Wick Harbour to attract renewable energy sector opportunities which will help to revitalise the local economy.
- Enhance Lower Pulteneytown through building on the vibrant uses which already exist together with the regeneration of vacant and derelict sites.
- Employ a flexible approach to encourage the reuse/redevelopment of surplus Council owned buildings.
- Conserve and promote the history and heritage of the town and surrounding area to help create a positive image and attract more visitors.
- The creation of a new home for the National Nuclear Archive and North Highland Archive provides a range of wider employment and tourism opportunities.
- Development should contribute towards the delivery of the priority actions identified in the Council's [Wick Active Travel Audit](#) ⁽²⁰⁾.

133 The preceding map and following table show the site allocations for Wick.

CaSPlan Settlement Map Legend

<p>Settlement Development Area</p> 	<p>Allocations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Housing  Mixed Use  Community  Business  Industrial  Greenspace  Expansion of Green Network 	<p>Town Centres</p> 
<p>Long Term Sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Long Term Housing  Long Term Mixed Use  Long Term Business  Long Term Industrial 		<p>Paths and Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Site Access  Indicative Road  Long Term Potential Distributor/Relief Road Routes  Core Path (existing)  Proposed Path

Housing

WK01: Hill of Man

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 5.5

Indicative Housing Capacity:
55

Developer Requirements: Development in accordance with planning permission 07/00157/OUTCA. In addition, Drainage impact assessment and Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Contaminated land survey may be required; Road widening and footpath provision; Opportunity for permeable layout;

20 https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/779/wick_active_travel_audit_050811_main_report

Development proposals should be accompanied by recreational management plans, if appropriate; Development proposals will require to identify what measures will be put in place to ensure that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the East Caithness Cliffs SPA through increased disturbance caused by increased recreational use of the area by residents of the new housing.

WK02: South of Kennedy Terrace

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 10

Indicative Housing Capacity:
44

Developer Requirements: Development in accordance with planning permission 98/00349/FULCA. In addition, Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Development proposals should be accompanied by recreational management plans, if appropriate; Development proposals will require to identify what measures will be put in place to ensure that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the East Caithness Cliffs SPA through increased disturbance caused by increased recreational use of the area by residents of the new housing.

WK03: East Of Carnaby Road

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 3.4

Indicative Housing Capacity:
23

Developer Requirements: Development in accordance with planning permission 03/00054/FULCA. In addition Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); 25 metre development setback from watercourse; Avoid any discharge into the watercourse; Development proposals should be accompanied by recreational management plans, if appropriate; Development proposals will require to identify what measures will be put in place to ensure that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the East Caithness Cliffs SPA through increased disturbance caused by increased recreational use of the area by residents of the new housing.

WK04: North Of Coghill Street

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 7

Indicative Housing Capacity:
48

Developer Requirements: Development in accordance with planning permission 14/04467/FUL. In addition: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding) and Drainage Impact Assessment; Open space to be provided through the next phase of development. Open space to be provided on the east of the site; Minimum 20 metre buffer from The Pap Broch Scheduled Monument; Sensitive siting and design due to proximity of Listed Building and Scheduled Monument; Connections into existing/future streets (east and west) to create permeable layout; Increase in vehicles may require mitigation on Broadhaven Road/Willowbank to address traffic speeds/volumes.

WK05: West of Police Station

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 0.5

Indicative Housing Capacity:
6

Developer Requirements: Safeguard existing woodland adjoining the site; Contaminated land survey; Enhance path network to the north and west of the site; Sensitive siting and design due to proximity of Listed Building; Junction of Bankhead Road/Station Road requires improvement, including formalisation of high levels of on-street parking and improved facilities for pedestrians; Extension of adoption on Creamery Road may be required; Part of Active Travel Network.

WK06: East of Murray Avenue

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 4

Indicative Housing Capacity:
40

Developer Requirements: Ensure the provision of suitable open space; Safeguard a development buffer of at least 100 metres from the Waste Water Treatment Works.

WK07: West of Coronation Street

Use: Long Term Housing

Area (ha): 8.1

This is identified as a 'Long Term Site'. These sites indicate the likely preferred direction for growth beyond the Plan period. They are not being invited for development within this Plan period and therefore developer requirements have not been identified in this Plan. More information about Long Term Sites is provided in the Glossary

Mixed Use

WK08: South East of Terminal Building

Use: Mixed Use (Community, Business, Industrial)

Area (ha): 5.5

Indicative Housing Capacity:
N/A

Developer Requirements: Development in accordance with planning permission 15/00346/FUL, including landscaping scheme, drainage impact assessment, and travel plan.

WK09: North of Wick North Primary School

Use: Mixed Use (Business, Industrial)

Area (ha): 8.3

Indicative Housing Capacity:
N/A

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Increased traffic on Ackergill St may require mitigation in residential areas especially within vicinity of school; Preferred access through Industrial Estate rather than through residential area; Part of Active Travel Network; Consider Safe Routes to Schools audit.

3 Caithness Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Ghallaibh

WK10: North of Wellington Avenue

Use: Mixed Use (Business, Industrial)

Area (ha): 2.2

Indicative Housing Capacity:
N/A

Developer Requirements: If taken forward as part of harbour-related expansion then the developer must prepare a masterplan/development brief for this site and Wick Harbour (WK22), in consultation with environmental agencies and other stakeholders. This should be agreed with the Council who may adopt this as Supplementary Guidance. This should address: Safeguard the existing South Head core paths; Sensitive siting and design due to proximity of Listed Building; Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Drainage impact assessment; Coastal protection works; Demonstration that there will be no adverse effect on the East Caithness Cliffs SPA and MPA; Local road upgrades and footpath provision; Construction and Environment Management Plan; Contaminated land and protected species surveys may be required depending on the nature of the proposal.

WK11: Site at The Shore

Use: Mixed Use (Business, Tourism, Retail)

Area (ha): 0.5

Indicative Housing Capacity:
N/A

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Proposals to maintain the stability of the embankment to the rear, and not to protrude higher than the top of the bank; Environmental and recreational improvements to the land south of The Shore; Sensitive redevelopment due to the heritage value of the site; Contaminated land survey; Consider potential parking issues depending on use and density; Possible visibility issues at existing entrance to site.

WK12: Lower Pulteneytown

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Community, Business, Tourism, Leisure, Industrial, Retail)

Area (ha): 5.9

Indicative Housing Capacity:
25

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Sensitive siting and design due to being within a Conservation Area and due to the proximity of Listed Buildings and residential properties; Contaminated land survey and protected species survey may be required for specific sites; Part of Active Travel Network.

WK13: Land West of Green Road

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business)

Area (ha): 0.8

Indicative Housing Capacity:
12

Developer Requirements: Contaminated land survey may be required; Bat survey.

WK14: Hillhead Primary School

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Community)

Area (ha): 1.3

Indicative Housing Capacity:
18

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Play ground should be retained for public access; Sensitive siting and design due to proximity to Listed Buildings; Connections into existing and future streets to create permeable layout; Bat survey may be required for demolition.

WK15: Wick High School Building

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Community, Business)

Area (ha): 1.5

Indicative Housing Capacity:
12

Developer Requirements: Local road improvements; Contaminated land survey may be required; Sensitive redevelopment which respects the fabric of the Listed Building; Bat survey.

WK16: Land at Francis Street

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business)

Area (ha): 0.2

Indicative Housing Capacity:
8

Developer Requirements: Footpath provision.

WK17: South of Roxburgh Road

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Community, Business)

Area (ha): 4.1

Indicative Housing Capacity:
10

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Protected species survey; 25m development setback from watercourse; Avoid any discharge into the watercourse; Provision of areas of openspace and creation of positive environmental, heritage and recreational feature of the mill lade/watercourse; Opportunity for multiple accesses into site; Development proposals should be accompanied by recreational management plans, if appropriate; Development proposals will require to identify what measures will be put in place to ensure that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the East Caithness Cliffs SPA through increased disturbance caused by increased recreational use of the area by residents of the new housing.

WK18: West of George Street

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business)

Area (ha): 0.4

Indicative Housing Capacity:
6

Developer Requirements: Safeguard woodland (TPO) on adjoining land; Prefer redevelopment of existing building rather than demolition; Improved pedestrian footpath on George Street; Contaminated land survey; Bat survey may be required; Part of Active Travel Network.

Community

WK19: East of Wick Burial Ground

Use: Community

Area (ha): 1.1

Developer Requirements: Land allocated for expansion of the adjoining cemetery; Investigation into impact on groundwater conditions may affect suitability of land for cemetery extension; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Development proposals should be accompanied by recreational management plans, if appropriate; Development proposals will require to identify what measures will be put in place to ensure that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the East Caithness Cliffs SPA through increased disturbance caused by increased recreational use of the area by residents of the new housing.

Business

WK20: Wick Business Park

Use: Business

Area (ha): 5.4

Developer Requirements: Installation of covered long stay cycle parking as well as a bus shelter/bus information/real time information; Part of Active Travel Network.

WK21: North Of Wick Business Park

Use: Business

Area (ha): 8.8

Developer Requirements: Extension required to connect to Wick waste water treatment works; Installation of covered long stay cycle parking as well as a bus shelter/bus information/real time information; Part of Active Travel Network.

Industry

WK22: Wick Harbour

Use: Industry

Area (ha): 21.1

Developer Requirements: Developer to prepare masterplan/development brief in consultation with relevant environmental agencies and other stakeholders, to be agreed with the Council who may adopt this as Supplementary Guidance. This should address: High quality siting and design; Safeguard and improve core path where possible, re-routing may be appropriate; Formalise car parking; Ensure Harbour Quay is an adaptable space for recreational uses; Sensitive siting and design due to being within a Conservation Area and proximity of Listed Buildings; Drainage impact assessment; Flood Risk Assessment required to inform layout and design (only low vulnerability uses or operationally essential uses in areas shown to be at risk of flooding, to be accompanied by resilience measures); Coastal protection works may be required; Demonstration that there will be no adverse effect on the East Caithness Cliffs SPA and MPA; Construction and Environment Management Plan; Development proposals should be accompanied by recreational management plans, if appropriate; Contaminated land and protected species surveys may be required depending on the nature of the proposal.

WK23: Wick Industrial Estate

Use: Industry

Area (ha): 16.8

Developer Requirements: Installation of covered long stay cycle parking as well as a bus shelter/bus information; Improve pedestrian facilities through the site; Consider restricting vehicular access to industrial sites to A99 only with no access from residential area (Ackergill Street); Part of Active Travel Network; Development at the southern part of the WK23 must avoid and where appropriate enhance the woodland area as part of the Green Network.

Caithness Economic Development Areas

Dounreay

Issues

- The Dounreay Nuclear Research Facility is being decommissioned to what is known as the Interim End State by around 2030.
- The Council has a role in regulation and control of the decommissioning and restoration works.
- Options for future use of land within or adjoining the Dounreay site will be limited due to the previous activities and ongoing decommissioning.

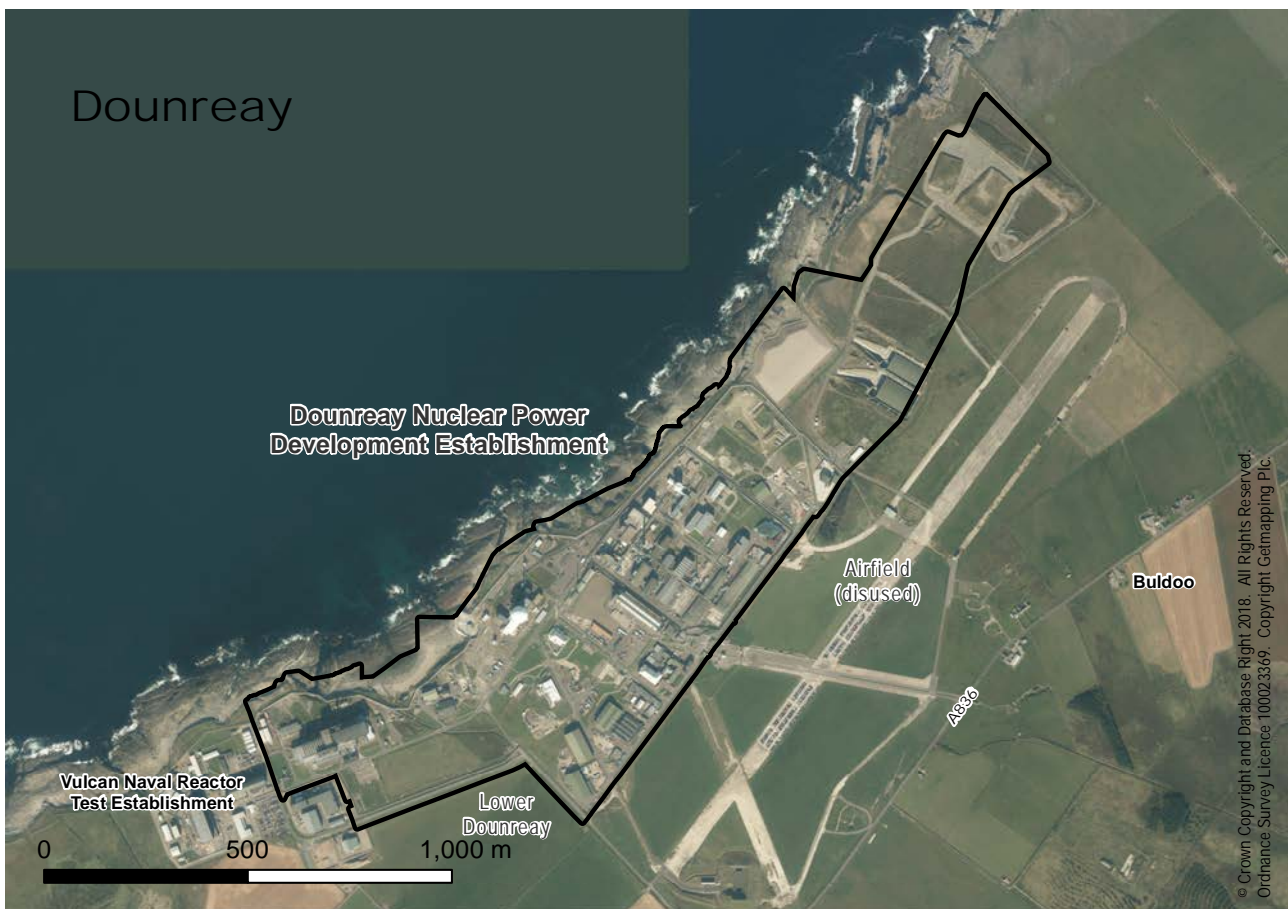
Placemaking Priorities

The Dounreay Planning Framework 2 (DPF2) will guide decommissioning of the site. The main principles of DPF2, which we consulted on through preparation of the HwLDP and DPF2, are:

3 Caithness Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Ghallaibh

- the timely, safe and environmentally acceptable decommissioning, restoration and after-use of the Dounreay site;
- phasing through to the interim end point, setting out the developments required for decommissioning and restoration towards achieving the site end state, including new build, adaptation, demolition and remediation;
- sufficient flexibility to respond to changing constraints whilst not placing undue restrictions on the site operator;
- indication of potential new interim uses and end uses for parts of the site in support of economic development of the area; and
- developer requirements that were identified when we prepared the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP).

DPF2 indicates that the Council's vision for the end use of the Dounreay Site is to see it as far as practicable redeveloped for employment uses and suggests some potential opportunity sectors. The Council will continue to review potential options for the re-use of the Dounreay Site with the site owner, regulators, the local public and stakeholder groups. This Plan does not identify specific future uses beyond what is set out in DPF2, but we remain open minded to considering suggestions of and proposals for uses, particularly ones that would support the economic regeneration of the area.



Forss Business and Energy Park

Issues

- Existing business park with office, workshop and storage space available.
- The Park has potential to provide further support to the decommissioning of Dounreay and the growth of the renewable energy industry.

Placemaking Priorities

- High quality siting and design is required.
- Expansion opportunities may exist to the west between the business and energy park and the wind turbines.
- Visual impact from the A836 needs to be considered as part of any expansion proposals.
- Consideration is required of the use of the site by geese connected with the Caithness Lochs SPA. Ensure the maintenance of the Scottish Primrose (*Primula scotica*) population found at this location.



Georgemas Junction

Issues

- Strategic rail freight and transport hub.

3 Caithness Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Ghallaibh

- Modern purpose built railhead freight terminal.
- Biomass fuel processing and energy plant supported in principle by the Council (planning consent granted (14/04545/FUL) for combined heat and power (CHP) plant with a capacity to generate 15MWe of electricity and 6.5MW of heat)..

Placemaking Priorities

- The area offers significant potential to increase rail freight to and from Caithness which would take pressure off the A9 trunk road.
- Potential opportunities for high heat demand developments to be co-located with the biomass energy plant.
- Early engagement with Transport Scotland advised given the location adjacent to the A9 Trunk Road.



Gills Harbour

Issues

- Gills Harbour is well placed to become an important service base for the marine renewables sector over the coming years but to attract marine renewables business the harbour will likely need to invest in upgrading and expanding the services which it can offer.

3 Caithness Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Ghallaibh

- Steep slopes on the landward side of the harbour limit terrestrial development.
- Potential access constraints due to topography and depending on uses at the harbour. Current access arrangements may need to be addressed to accommodate the expansion of harbour facilities.

Placemaking Priorities

- Improve harbour facilities to help support the growth of the offshore renewables sector.
- Protect the surrounding landscape from inappropriate development including unsuitable land uses and poor layout and design.
- Avoid any adverse effect on North Caithness Cliffs SPA.



Janetstown Industrial Estate

Issues

- Long term established industrial site.
- Potential for large scale external storage purposes in the former quarries, such as stock piling for the energy sector.

Placemaking Priorities

- New built-development should be directed to the existing undeveloped serviced plots before other greenfield land is considered.
- Landscaping and screen planting may be required to reduce the visual impact.



Seater Waste Management Facility

Issues

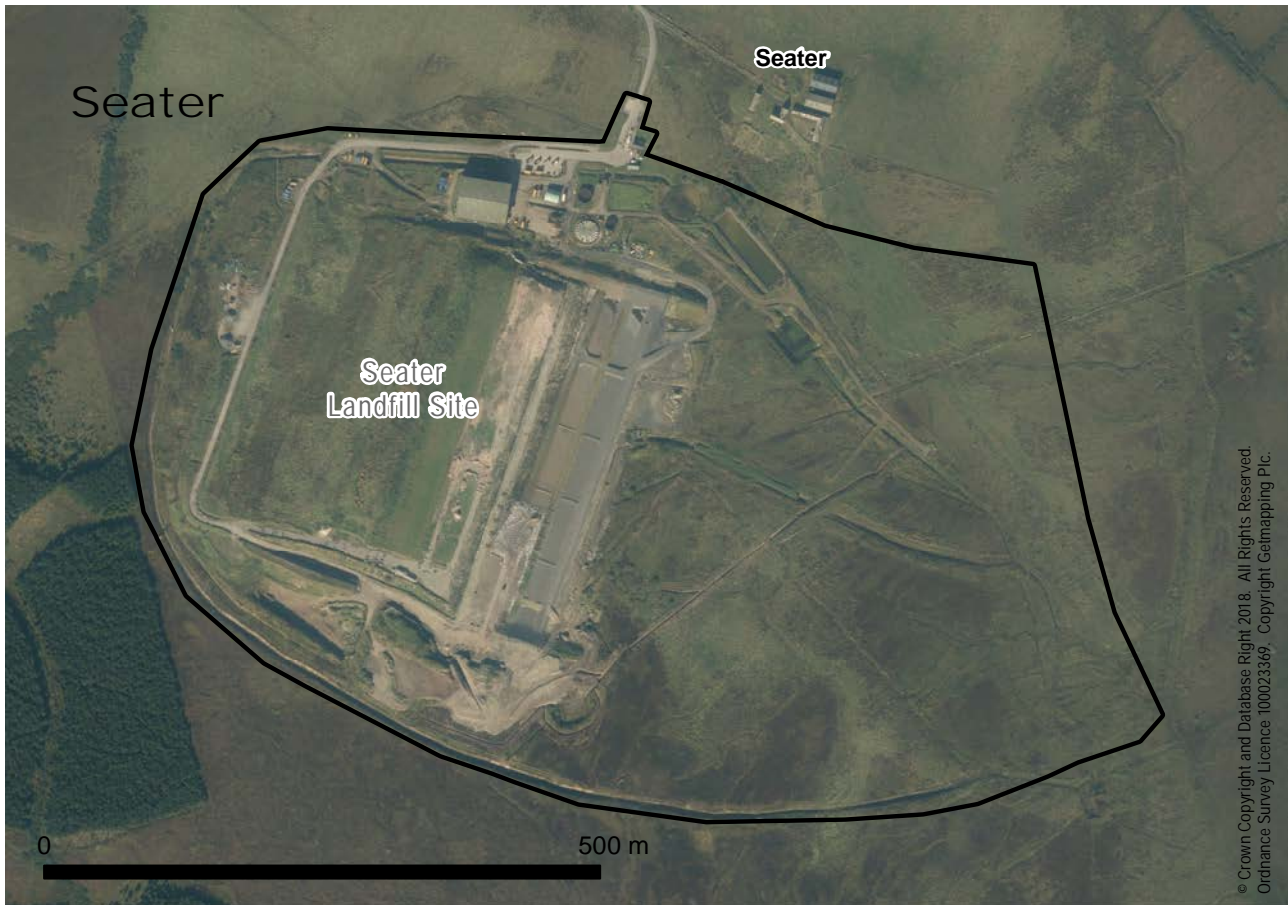
- The Highland Council operates two landfill sites: Seater in Caithness being one and the other being Granish in Badenoch and Strathspey.
- Area LDPs need to identify and allocate any strategic waste management sites in that area.
- Legislation currently states that the Council cannot landfill municipal waste after the end of 2020 but treatment/disposal facilities will still be required.

Placemaking Priorities

- The site at Seater benefits from existing infrastructure, existing waste management permissions and Council landownership.
- Significant remaining licenced landfill capacity and existing large transfer building for recyclables.

3 Caithness Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Ghallaibh

- Prime location for future waste management transfer and/or treatment infrastructure.
- Potentially suitable site for energy from waste (EfW) if it was associated with high heat demand development that would make use of heat generated.



Caithness Growing Settlements

Dunbeath

Issues

- The harbour and Dunbeath Heritage Centre are key assets that provide attractions for visitors.
- A range of community facilities are concentrated along Portormin Road.
- The settlement straddles both sides of Dunbeath water, with services and residential properties bisected by steep terrain and the A9, which forms a disjointed settlement pattern.
- Capacity at Dunbeath waste water treatment works is limited to 17 housing units.
- Previous masterplans have been prepared for parts of the settlement south of Dunbeath Water.

3 Caithness Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Ghallaibh

Placemaking Priorities

- The strategic A9 location should be capitalised on to maximise the benefits of the settlement's cultural and heritage tourism potential, particularly at the harbour and heritage centre.
- Support reuse of brownfield land at the former quarry site next to the tennis courts on Portormin Road.
- Support housing development along the east side of Neil Gunn Road.
- Safeguard and enhance the unique wooded strath along Dunbeath Water.
- Protect natural heritage features along the north bank of Dunbeath Water, development should avoid any adverse effect on East Caithness Cliffs SPA, MPA and SAC or Dunbeath Water SSSI.



Dunnet

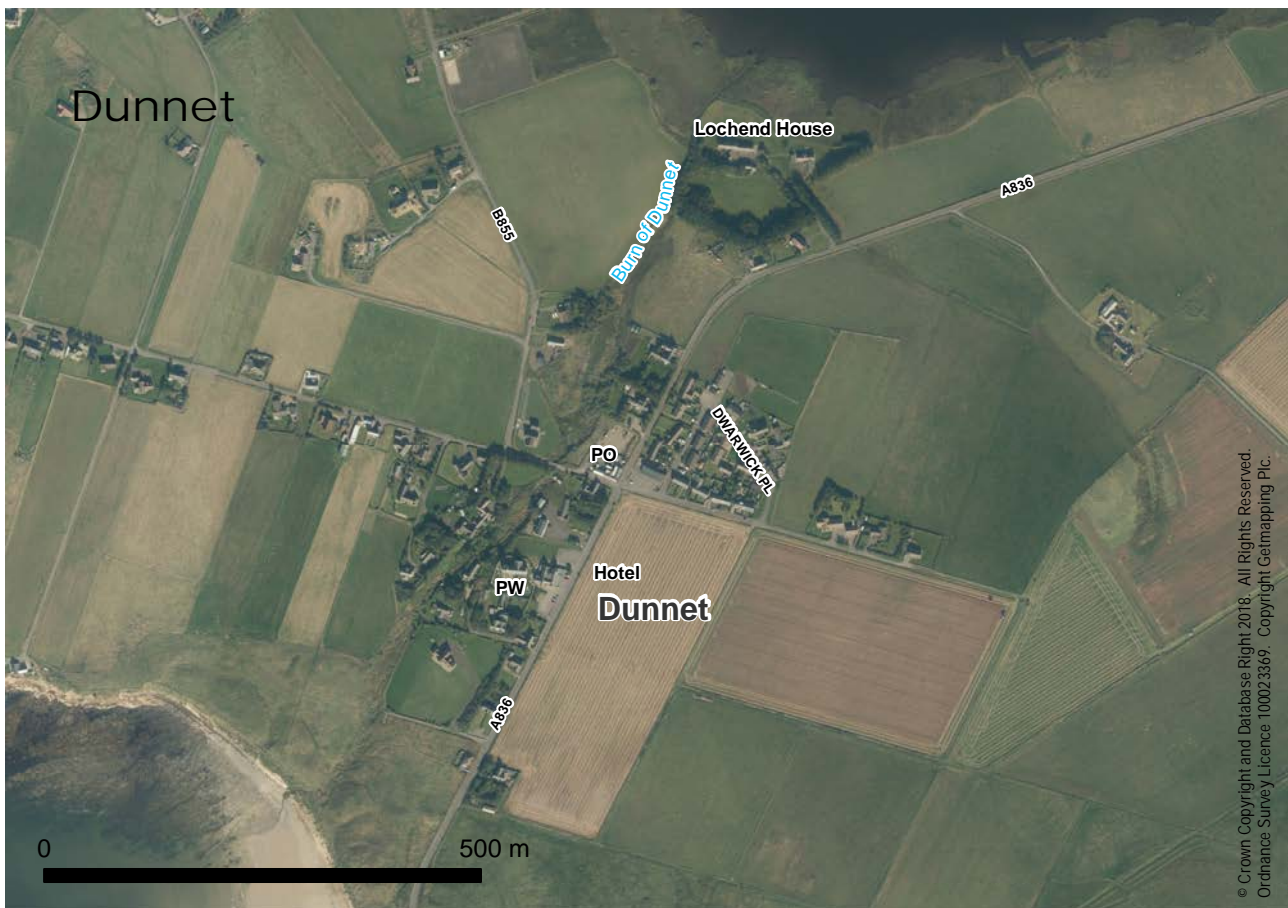
Issues

- Development to the west has been mostly of ribbon form and resulted in some traffic problems due to the narrow, single track roads and a lack of pavements for pedestrians, especially on the road to Dwarwick.

- Drainage issues westwards of the A836 and the prevalence of soft rush vegetation suggests wider drainage issues along the B855.
- Access constraints for former commercial allocation between the A836 and the playing fields.

Placemaking Priorities

- Focus future development close to the traditional settlement centre at the A836 cross roads.
- Protect and enhance the setting of the A-listed Dunnet Parish Church.
- Restrict development further southwards to protect the setting of Dunnet Beach.
- Take advantage of Dunnet's strategic position on tourist routes including the North Coast 500 and John O' Groats to Lands End.
- Avoid any adverse effect on North Caithness Cliffs SPA or Dunnet Links SSSI.



John O' Groats

Issues

- A renowned tourist attraction which suffered from a lack of investment and coordination during the second half of the 20th Century.
- Significant investment in the area is transforming it into a high quality visitor destination with award winning architectural design.

Placemaking Priorities

- Support appropriate expansion of the John O' Groats tourist site in line with the principles set out in the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) masterplan (2009) which include providing a diverse range of uses and activities, improving and expanding local public services and creating a pedestrian friendly environment.
- Future development of the tourist destination needs to be well integrated with the local community to create a coherent place and sustainable community rather than resulting in a detached and standalone commercial facility.
- The restoration of John O'Groats Mill has the potential to form the focus for a range of cultural, commercial and community activities.
- Avoid any adverse effect on North Caithness Cliffs SPA or John O'Groats SSSI.



Keiss

Issues

- Reasonable level of existing services and facilities within the village.
- Significant housing development taken place in wider crofting community rather than within Keiss.
- Cultural and natural heritage are important features to the setting and character of the village.
- Limited waste water treatment capacity may restrict future development.

Placemaking Priorities

- Further development and other works which will help to improve the appearance of the centre of the village.
- Promote and enhance the historic harbour.
- Take advantage of the archaeological heritage of Keiss and the surrounding area e.g. broch remains in the village and at the shore.
- Exploit the potential economic benefits of Keiss's strategic position along the main John O' Groats to Land's End route and the North Coast 500.
- Focus future development within or close to the existing village to safeguard the surrounding croftland from ad hoc development, unless there are justifiable reasons in terms of croft management.
- Protect and restrict further built encroachment along the strand line of Sinclair's Bay at Stain.

Map



Latheronwheel

Issues

- Latheronwheel is a distinct settlement on the A9 comprised of a single linear built form leading south from a small cluster of buildings along the A9, including B and C listed, to a small harbour at the shore.

3 Caithness Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Ghallaibh

- Older buildings at the north end of the settlement create a sense of enclosure and lead to an open street layout of more modern buildings south.
- The settlement of Latheron is approximately 1km north, and is linked by the A9 road and partially by a footpath. Latheron and Latheronwheel share some services and community facilities but for most the community must travel to neighbouring settlements.
- There is limited road capacity, and access at the A9 junction is constrained.
- Current wastewater treatment capacity is for an additional 20 housing units.

Placemaking Priorities

- Support future development that compliments and consolidates the existing settlement.
- Encourage growth that supports existing services and community facilities.
- Promote the range of tourist and heritage assets present and take advantage of the settlement's strategic position on the A9 tourist corridor.
- Avoid any adverse effects on East Caithness Cliffs SAC and SPA and Dunbeath to Sgaps Geo SSSI.



Reay

Issues

- Reasonable level of existing services and facilities which need protected and enhanced.
- The village has benefited from relatively high levels of renovation of historical buildings in recent years.

Placemaking Priorities

- Opportunities for better interpretation of historical and archaeological assets in and around the village.
- Take greater advantage of the village's location on the North Coast 500 route.
- Safeguard the edges of the village and the south side of the road between New Reay and Old Reay to protect the character of the area.
- To ensure road safety maintain the need for house developments to have shared access onto the main public road.
- Avoid any adverse effect on North Caithness Cliffs SPA or Sandside Bay SSSI.



Thrumster

Issues

- Wide variety of existing facilities in the village including the recently restored railway station into a venue for themed exhibitions and community woodland garden.
- Ribbon development pressure over recent years in certain areas.
- Countryside around Thrumster is rich in cultural heritage.

Placemaking Priorities

- Development potential to the north of Stewart Crescent which benefits from good road and footpath connections and being close to the village centre.
- Avoid inappropriate ribbon development to the south-east of Thrumster.



Watten

Issues

- Recent ribbon development along the B870 is not of particularly high quality siting or design and is disjointed from the village.
- Reasonable level of existing services and facilities which need protected and enhanced.

3 Caithness Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Ghallaibh

- Limited waste water capacity (up to 35 additional housing units). Further development should await completion of sewage treatment works.
- Low water pressure in some areas.

Placemaking Priorities

- Safeguard the countryside around the village which is relatively high quality agricultural land.
- Seek to maintain and enhance the hedgerows in and around the village.
- Protect the setting of Loch Watten and improve recreational facilities and tourist appeal, subject to no adverse effect on its site integrity as SPA, SAC and SSSI.
- Prohibit further linear development along the B870 past Henderson Square.
- Housing opportunities may exist on the east side of Station Road, land immediately north west of the primary school, and east of Bain Place.
- Potential opportunity for village hall car park extension to the south of the existing hall.
- Avoid any adverse effect on Loch Watten SAC/SSSI and Caithness Lochs SPA.



134 In this section of the Plan you will find the detail for the following places.

Settlement Development Areas

- 'Ardgay'
- 'Bonar Bridge'
- 'Brora'
- 'Dornoch'
- 'Edderton'
- 'Golspie'
- 'Helmsdale'
- 'Lairg'
- 'Lochinver'
- 'Tongue'

Growing Settlements

- 'Bettyhill'
- 'Durness'
- 'Embo'
- 'Invershin'
- 'Kinlochbervie'
- 'Melness'
- 'Melvich'
- 'Portskerra'
- 'Rosehall'
- 'Scourie'

Ardgay

135 Ardgay provides local services including a primary school. There is a railway station in the heart of the village which serves the Far North railway line and it benefits from a commuter train service to Inverness. It is situated on the A836 and National Cycle Route 1 passes through the settlement.

136 Land is allocated for housing beside the Primary School and the Lady Ross site has housing as a potential use. Infill opportunities for housing will be supported but piecemeal development between Ardgay and Lower Gledfield will be discouraged. There may be potential for a planned and long term growth in this area. Land at AG03 Ardgay Railway Station Yard North railway yard is allocated for business use and would be suitable for small business units. There is also land allocated for business use at AG04.

137 Village centre regeneration, in particular the site of the former Lady Ross will be supported for a variety of potential uses.

138 Land behind the public hall could be a potential location for additional car parking to the village, subject to suitable funding being found and having regard to residential amenity and the need for a safe parking layout being accommodated.

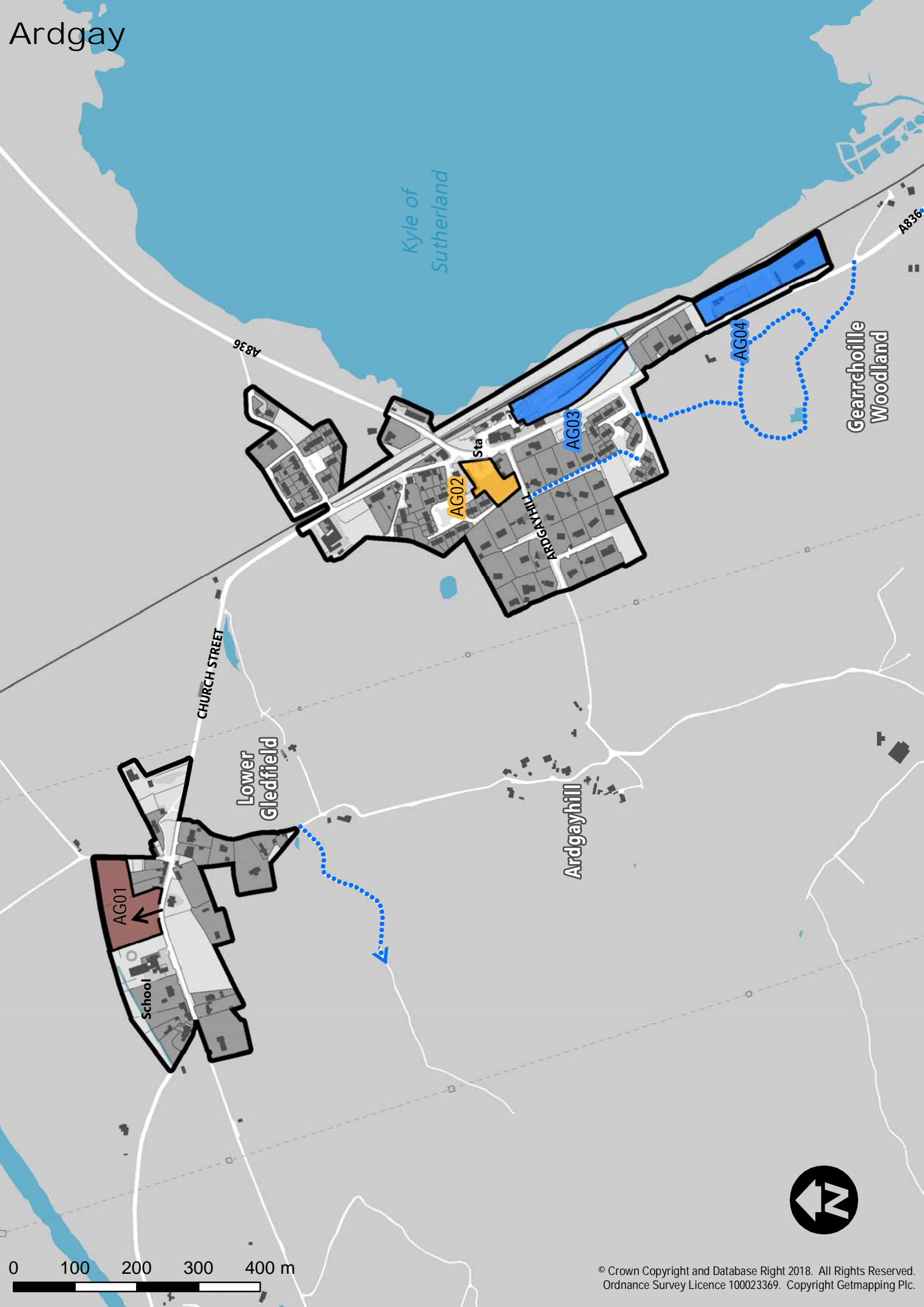
139 The Gearchoille Ancient Woodland is owned by and is in the care of the local community. It has a long history of providing recreational facilities for the local community and today it provides opportunities for access via pathways through the woodland. It also provides an attractive entrance from the south into Ardgay. It should be protected from development due to its high value for biodiversity and amenity.

Placemaking Priorities

- Support village centre regeneration and infill development of housing.
- Assist and promote economic development.
- Support additional tourist facilities.
- Sensitive siting and design that respects the settlement's location partly within the Dornoch Firth National Scenic Area.
- Maintain access to Core Path.
- Avoid any adverse effect on Dornoch Firth and Morrich More SAC (including otter).

140 The following map and table show the site allocations for Ardgay.

Ardgay



Kyle of Sutherland

A836

A836

Gearrhoille Woodland

AG02

Sta

AG03

AG04

CHURCH STREET

Lower Gledfield

Ardgayhill



















AG01

School

0 100 200 300 400 m



CaSPlan Settlement Map Legend

<p>Settlement Development Area</p> 	<p>Allocations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Housing  Mixed Use  Community  Business  Industrial  Greenspace  Expansion of Green Network 	<p>Town Centres</p> 
<p>Long Term Sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Long Term Housing  Long Term Mixed Use  Long Term Business  Long Term Industrial 		<p>Paths and Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Site Access  Indicative Road  Long Term Potential Distributor/Relief Road Routes  Core Path (existing)  Proposed Path

Housing

AG01: Adjacent to Primary School and North of Church Street

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 1.0

Indicative Housing Capacity:
6 Units

Developer Requirements: Access should be taken from land adjacent to the Primary School, designed to enable safe route to school across the entrance and to allow forward visibility to the junction; To encourage active travel provide an upgraded pedestrian crossing point where the single footway crosses from the south to the north of Church Road; Overhead lines will require diversion/undergrounding; Sensitive siting and design required due to proximity of Listed Buildings; Landscaping/planting on site to provide habitat links to wider countryside.

Mixed Use

AG02: Lady Ross

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business, Tourism, Community, Open space)

Area (ha): 0.4

Indicative Housing Capacity:
4

Developer Requirements: Masterplan required for site; Potential bat survey required as building has stood empty for a considerable time; Sensitive siting and design; Limit to one access; Improve pedestrian footway along A836 site boundary; Potential for pedestrian access link from Carron Place.

Business

AG03: Ardgay Railway Station Yard North

Use: Business

Area (ha): 0.9

Developer Requirements: Development should be set back from the railway line; Sensitive siting and design required due to location within Dornoch Firth National Scenic Area and proximity to listed railway bridge; Preferred access via existing station road; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); No sewage discharge to land or water; Retain and enhance tree screening; Assessment of potential contamination issues; Development proposals will require to demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the Dornoch Firth and Morrich More SAC.

AG04: Ardgay Railway Station Yard South

Use: Business

Area (ha): 1.0

Developer Requirements: Development should be set back from the railway line; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); No culverting of watercourse and provide buffer between watercourse and development; Sensitive siting and design required due to location within Dornoch Firth National Scenic Area; Trees between the site and the A836 to be retained and additional planting encouraged; A footpath connection to the village should be considered; Assessment of potential contamination issues; Utilise existing access; Development proposals will require to demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the Dornoch Firth and Morrich More SAC.

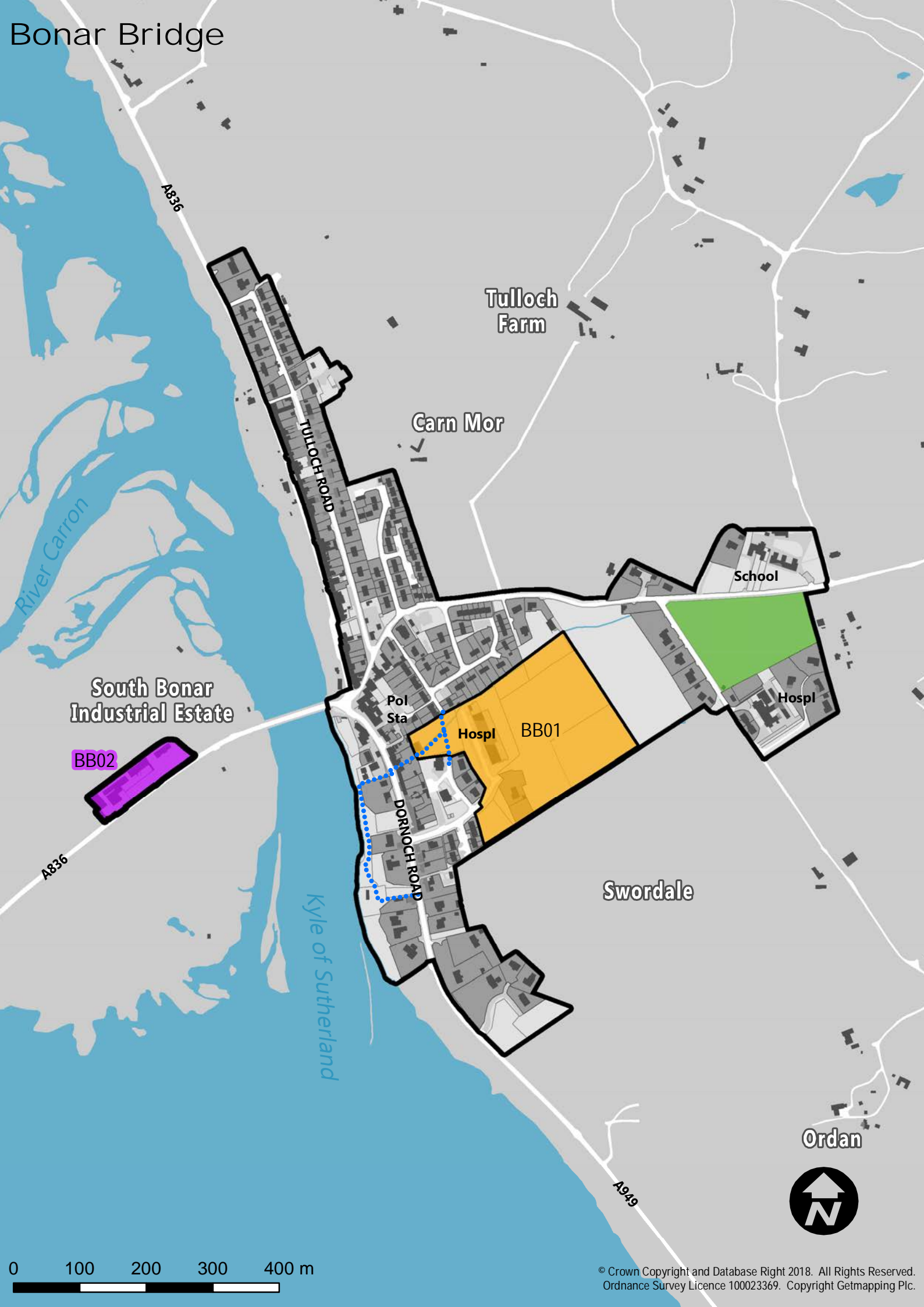
Bonar Bridge

- 141** Bonar Bridge provides a wide range of local services including a primary school and health care facilities.
- 142** The New Migdale Hospital is now open and the remainder of the Cherry Grove site is allocated for mixed use comprising housing and community uses. Opportunity for redevelopment of the Old Migdale Hospital exists.
- 143** The garden ground and open space between the road and the Kyle of Sutherland are of particular importance in retaining the character of the village and development here will be resisted. Linear development along the A836 is discouraged.
- 144** South Bonar Industrial Estate is located on the A836 between Ardgay and Bonar Bridge. It is an important employment site and its continuation for this use is important to the local economy. Opportunities to enhance the appearance of the site will be encouraged. The site is allocated for industrial use however there is an existing community use on the site and planning permission was granted for a youth and family hub.

Placemaking Priorities

- Develop remainder of Cherry Grove site
 - Reinforce economic development at South Bonar Industrial Estate which fits with the community uses on the site
 - Protect settlement setting
 - Sympathetic redevelopment of Old Migdale Hospital
 - Avoid any adverse impact on Dornoch Firth and Morrich More SAC (including otter) and River Oykel SAC
 - Maintain access to Core Paths
 - Sensitive siting and design that respects the settlement's location partly within the Dornoch Firth National Scenic Area
- 145** The following map and table show the site allocations for Bonar Bridge.

Bonar Bridge



A836

Tulloch Farm

Carn Mor

TULLOCH ROAD

River Carron

School

South Bonar Industrial Estate

BB02

Pol Sta

Hospl

BB01

Hospl

A836

DORNOCH ROAD

Kyle of Sutherland

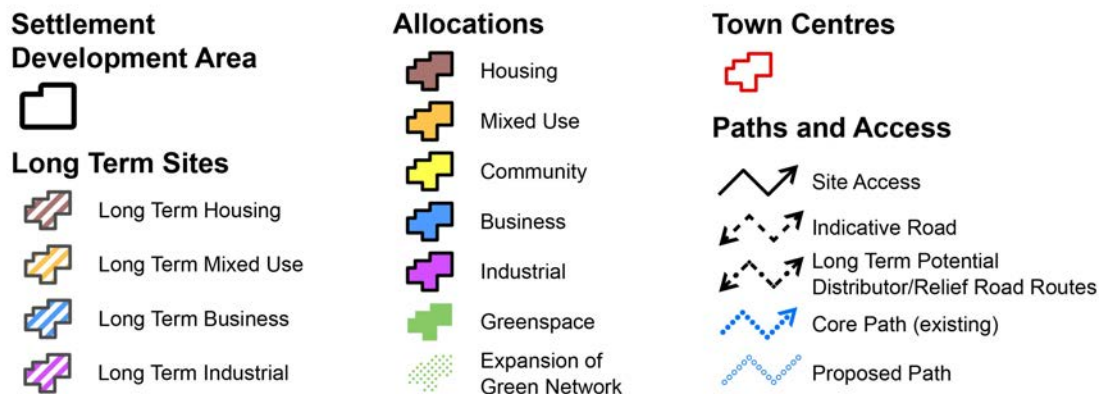
Sworddale

A949

Ordan



0 100 200 300 400 m



Mixed Use

BB01: Cherry Grove

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Community)

Area (ha): 5.1

Indicative Housing Capacity: 30

Developer Requirements: Masterplan required; Sensitive siting and design, especially in the eastern section; Design Statement, which includes a landscaping plan, to be prepared to safeguard the landscape features and setting that contribute to the special qualities of the Dornoch Firth NSA; Retain and integrate watercourses as natural features within the development; Provide buffer strip between watercourses and development; Maintain hedgerows; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Maintain pedestrian link to Swordale Road; Ensure pedestrian links to hospital and GP Surgery; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required; Development proposals will require to demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the Dornoch Firth and Morrich More SAC or the River Oykel SAC.

Industry

BB02: South Bonar Industrial Estate

Use: Industry

Area (ha): 0.7

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment required to inform layout and mitigation measures; Development limited to previously developed areas; High standard of design, incorporating landscaping and screen planting; Consolidate access by closing one entrance and improvements made to two remaining accesses; Assessment of potential contamination; Any industrial use must fit with the community uses already on site.

Brora

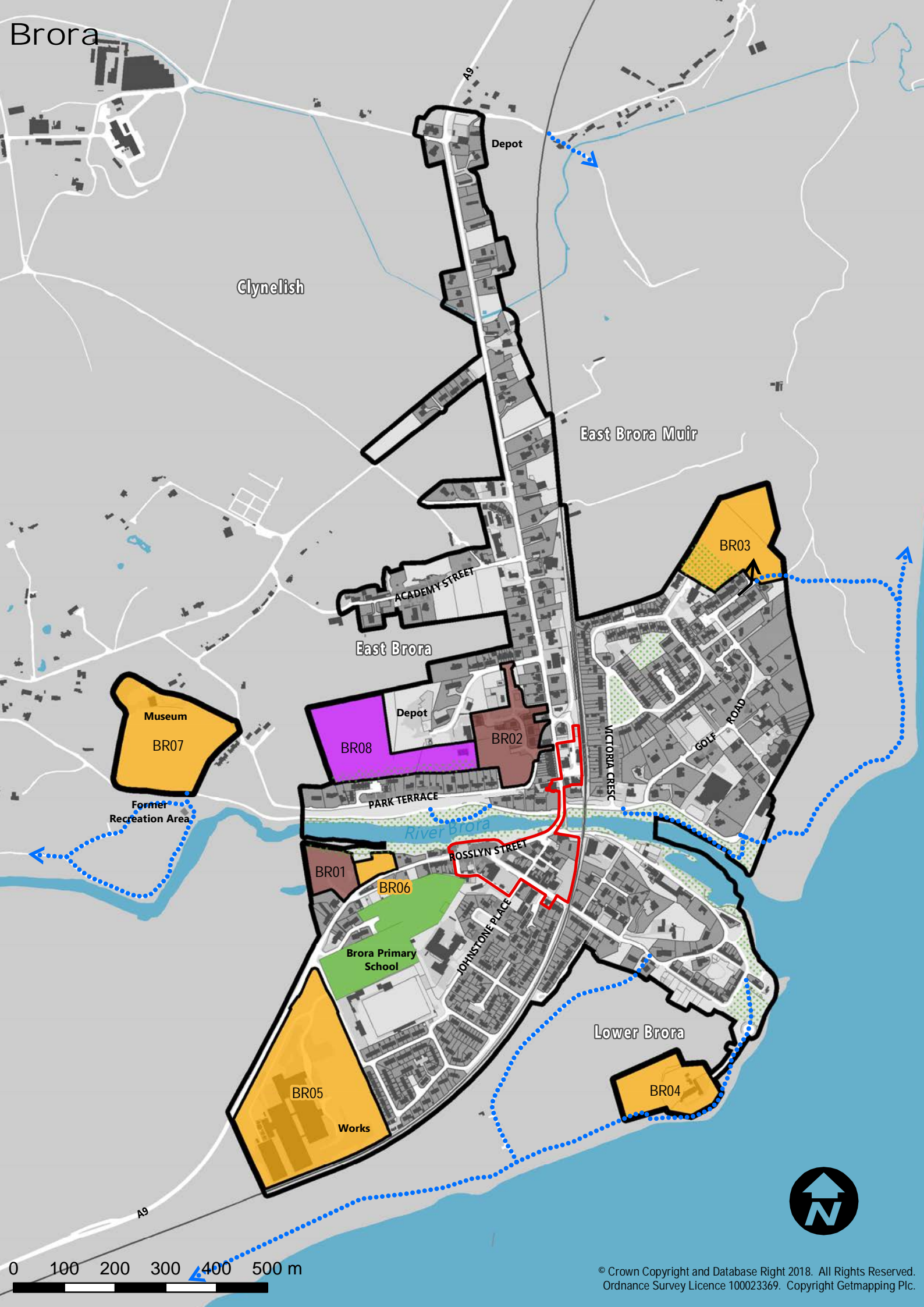
- 146** Brora is a key service centre for Sutherland providing education and health services and a variety of local shops. It lies on a main transport route, with the A9 trunk road going through the settlement and a railway station served by the Far North Railway Line which provides services north towards Thurso and Wick and south towards Inverness.
- 147** Brora sits on the coast adjacent to the Moray Firth SAC and straddles the River Brora which provides an attractive backdrop to the settlement.
- 148** Regeneration of the town centre is a key priority, with some prominent vacant buildings that could be redeveloped to provide small units, for example retail units. A civic space would also be beneficial. The new Town Centre First Policy directs all new footfall generating developments towards the area included within the town centre boundary and encourages a wide range of uses including promoting uses which are active during the daytime and evening. Land uses which compete with town centre businesses and risk impacting on the vibrancy and vitality will be restricted by the new Town Centre First Policy.
- 149** Regeneration of the harbour and the adjacent area could help link the centre of the village to the coast and an appropriate visitor attraction at the harbour would be supported. Brora Station and Goods Shed provide opportunities for regeneration and land around them could potentially provide additional car parking for the station.
- 150** Tourism is vital to the local economy as it is a major employer. There are numerous local visitor attractions based upon the town's coastal and countryside setting and its historic heritage, including those recognised as Placemaking Priorities. Such attractions include the Heritage Centre, the historic harbour, coastal and riverside footpaths, the whisky distillery and the golf course. However there is potential to expand on what is offered. There is potential for tourism/recreational related activities at the former Radio Station site, which could be linked in with paths along the coast. Upper Fascally is allocated for recreation/community uses. The site should remain as an outdoor sports facility but there is potential for the current building on the site to be re-used for these purposes and the entire site could be regenerated for recreational uses.
- 151** Land at the former River Fascally recreation area is at high risk of flooding and is therefore unsuitable for most forms of development. However there are opportunities to enhance the existing recreational area by the promotion and maintenance of the adjacent core path, the maintenance of a green corridor along the River Brora and the provision of new or improved changing facilities.
- 152** A variety of housing sites are available, including some on previously used land. BR03 East Brora Muir is allocated for housing and community use. The preferred community use is allotments, potentially at the south western end adjacent to the Day Care Centre. Potential exists at BR05 Scotia House for 10 houses on 0.5ha of land between the existing bund and Dudgeon Drive.
- 153** All development proposals in Brora should have regard to the potential presence of former coal mining activity.

Placemaking Priorities

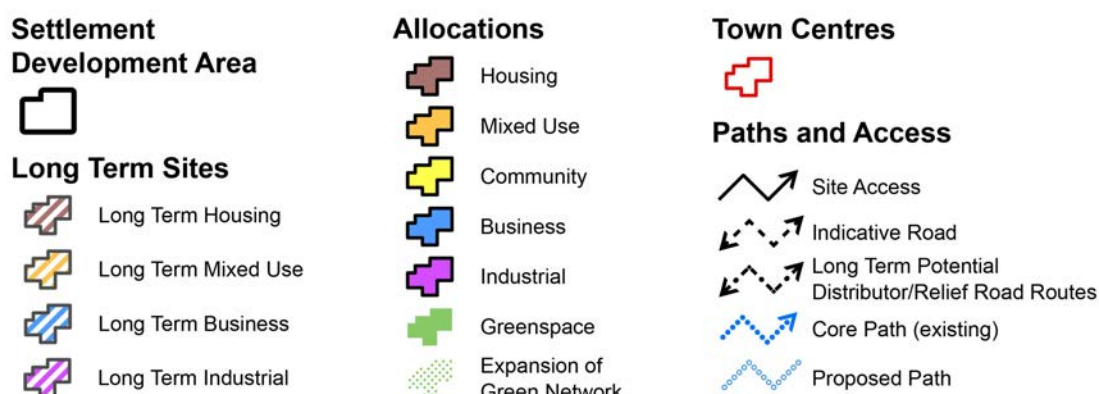
- Regeneration of the town centre.
- Re-use of the former Radio Station site for tourism uses.
- Regeneration of harbour and adjacent area.
- Coastal path towards Golspie.
- Delivery of new Heritage Centre at the Old School building to replace the existing one at Upper Fascally.
- Maintain green corridor along the River out towards the coastline.

154 The following map and table show the site allocations for Brora.

Brora



0 100 200 300 400 500 m



Housing

BR01: Rosslyn Street

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 0.8

Indicative Housing Capacity:
10

Developer Requirements: Link from A9 Trunk Road and internal road layout partially constructed; Retain and reinforce tree buffer between the river and any development; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Provide wildlife corridors into adjacent wider countryside; Avoid intrusion into, and adverse impacts on, the Inverbrora SSSI and the Brora Geological Conservation Review site.

BR02: Old Woollen Mill

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 2.0

Indicative Housing Capacity:
23

Developer Requirements: Traffic calming may be required for further development.

Mixed Use

BR03: East Brora Muir

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Community)

Area (ha): 2.6

Indicative Housing Capacity:
25

Developer Requirements: Ben Mailey Gardens to serve as main access, with emergency access only to Muirfield Gardens; Transport Statement to assess impact on existing residential streets and extent of any mitigation required; Traffic calming may be required remote from the site; A masterplan is necessary to prevent piecemeal development and it is to set out the future phasing and layout of the site and show a co-ordinated approach to the implementation of any requirements of the Transport Statement and reflect the preferred community use for allotments; Shelterbelt planting to minimise exposure; Maintain access to Core Path; Design sympathetic to landscape setting with regard to proximity to the golf course.

BR04: Former Radio Station Site

Use: Mixed Use (Tourism, Recreation)

Area (ha): 1.8

Indicative Housing Capacity:
N/A

Developer Requirements: Design Statement required with a preference for low rise and low density building design; Transport Assessment to assess the impact of development on the Brora level crossing so that level crossing risk is updated and additional safety measures may be required following the assessment; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Need to address erosion and ground stability issues; Any development should be inland of the coastal footpath; Bat survey; New sewer laid to Sewage Pumping Station; Maintain and improve path link along coast; Maintain access to core path; Promote and maintain active travel links; Incorporate most important historical features of the site into any new development.

BR05: Scotia House

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business)

Area (ha): 7.2

Indicative Housing Capacity:
10

Developer Requirements:

Any housing development should have a separate access from Scotia House, with access from Dudgeon Park Road and a suitable internal road layout put in place; On site extension of sewer may be required; Incorporate planting and landscaping to address landscape impact; An assessment of contamination issues may be required.

BR06: Former MacKay's Garage

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business)

Area (ha): 0.3

Indicative Housing Capacity:
4

Developer Requirements:

Formalise appropriate access onto A9(T); Improve pedestrian footway provision along A9 frontage; Retain and reinforce tree buffer between the river and any development; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding) Assessment of potential contamination issues will be required; Sensitive siting and design to ensure no impact on adjacent listed building; Avoid intrusion into, and adverse impacts on, the Inverbrora SSSI and the Brora Geological Conservation Review site.

BR07: Upper Fascally

Use: Mixed Use (Community, Recreation) **Area (ha):** 3.6

Indicative Housing Capacity:
N/A

Developer Requirements:

Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Encourage links to open space to the south at the Former River Fascally recreation area and the surrounding wider countryside; Access to core path to be protected; Site investigation for potential contamination; Sensitive siting and design; Retain any features linked to coal mining history; Surrounding road network requires upgrading with visibility improvements and passing places; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required.

Industry

BR08: Adjoining Industrial Estate

Use: Industry

Area (ha): 3.0

Developer Requirements:

Consideration of traffic calming on Stafford Terrace; Incorporate new planting into the development and ensure linkages into wider countryside remain; Landscaping and planting on boundary adjacent to housing; Setback from overhead lines; Connect to footpath network.

Dornoch

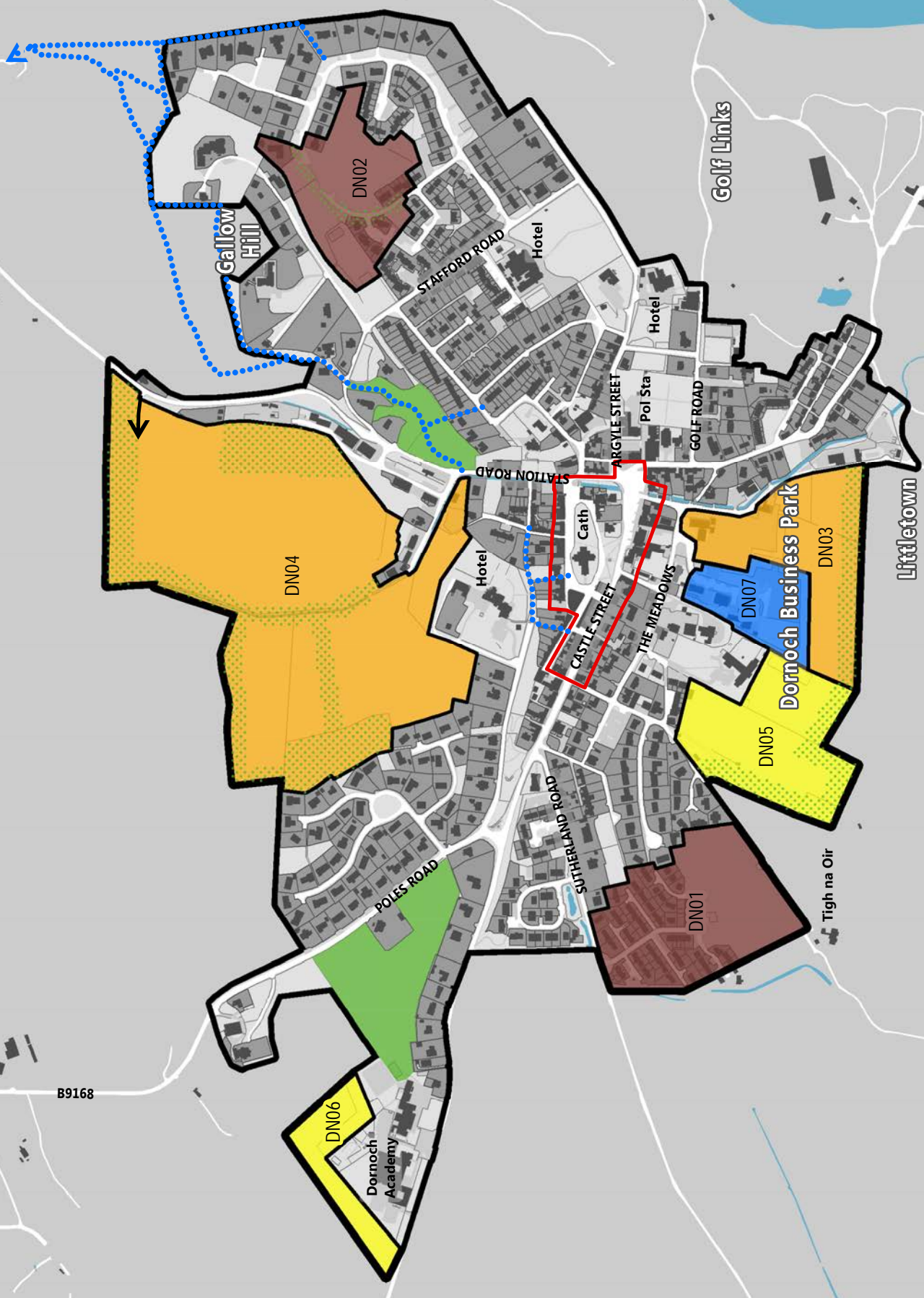
- 155** Dornoch functions as a service centre for the local area providing schools, retail and employment. It is a Royal Burgh with a history stretching back to the sixth century. A Conservation Area covers the historic core and it may be reviewed in the future (see 'Environment and Heritage' for more details). The new Town Centre First Policy directs all new footfall generating developments towards the area included within the town centre boundary and encourages a wide range of uses including promoting uses which are active during the daytime and evening. Land uses which compete with town centre businesses and risk impacting on the vibrancy and vitality will be restricted by the new Town Centre First Policy.
- 156** Tourism is a major source of income for the area with visitors being attracted by the history of the settlement, the quality of the local environment and the Royal Dornoch Golf Club. Facilities for visitors can be found at the links area to the south of the settlement where the caravan park is situated. The Dornoch Economic Masterplan was commissioned by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and it highlighted the importance of raising the profile of the town in the tourism industry.
- 157** Dornoch plays an important role in local education providing primary and secondary education and tertiary education at the North Highland College UHI. There is potential in the future for North Highland College UHI to expand at Burghfield. There is also a desire to provide residential student accommodation.

- 158** The delivery of a sports centre for Dornoch is a long held aspiration of the community and a project to do so on a site beside Dornoch Academy is being progressed. Land is allocated adjacent to the Academy for community use. Additional car parking and drop off facilities are required at the school, however it is not intended that the full extent of the allocation is used for additional car parking. Planning permission has been granted for a new community centre on part of Dornoch's Meadow Park.
- 159** There is a significant area for development planned at Dornoch North which will serve the expansion needs of the settlement. A masterplan has been developed which provides guidance on numerous aspects including the phasing of development and green spaces. Planning permission has been granted for 25 houses as part of phase one.
- 160** Dornoch sits adjacent to the Dornoch Firth National Scenic Area, Dornoch Firth and Morrich More Special Area of Conservation, Dornoch Firth and Loch Fleet Special Protection Area/Ramsar and the Moray Firth Special Area of Conservation. The sand dunes to the south east of the town provide an essential part of the setting of the settlement and also have great value as a tourist and recreational resource. However increasing pressure on the sand dunes from use by residents and visitors and potential for disturbance to wintering or breeding birds means there is a need to assess any effect arising from new development due to European Protection given to them. Where appropriate, new development proposals on sites allocated for development in Dornoch shall be accompanied by a recreational management plan which examines any likely increased pressures from recreational access of the sand dunes or disturbance to wintering or breeding birds. Appropriate Assessment is required to be undertaken if Natura site interests are likely to be significantly affected. Where necessary, avoidance or mitigation measures should be provided.

Placemaking Priorities

- Environmental improvements at The Square.
 - Redevelopment of the former abattoir site.
 - Assist and promote tourism and additional tourist facilities.
 - Support expansion of North Highland College UHI.
 - Maintain access to Core Paths.
 - Avoid any adverse effect on adjacent European nature conservation sites (individually or cumulatively), including through recreational disturbance/damage.
 - Development proposals to be accompanied by a Recreational Management Plan, if appropriate.
 - Development proposals must demonstrate that there would be no adverse effect in the integrity of the Dornoch Firth and Morrich More SAC and the Dornoch Firth and Loch Fleet SPA and Ramsar, by satisfactory submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (including pollution prevention).
 - Insofar as otters are a qualifying interest of the adjacent SAC, a survey indicating whether or not otters are present should accompany any planning application, other than for the modest extension or alteration of an existing building, within 250 metres of a watercourse, coast, loch or pond.
- 161** The following map and table show the site allocations for Dornoch.

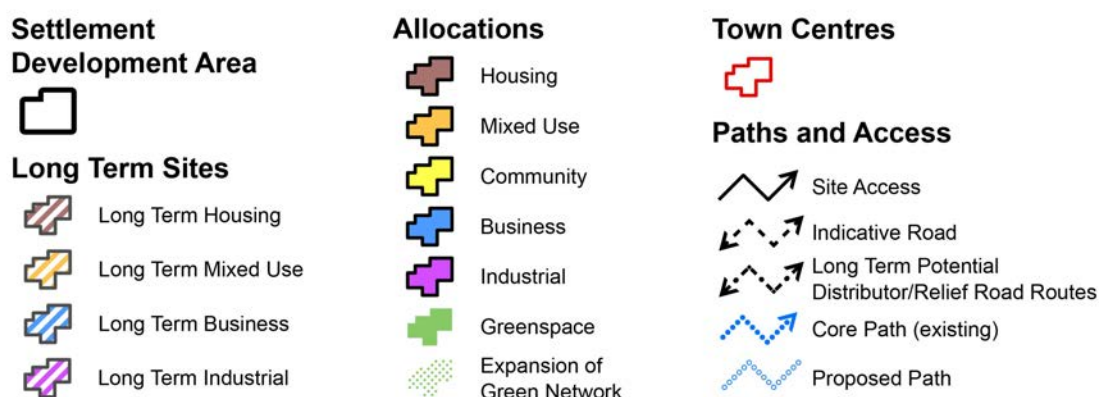
Dornoch



B9168

A949





Housing

DN01: Meadows Park Road

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 5.0

Indicative Housing Capacity:
70

Developer Requirements: Planning permission granted and site to be completed under existing planning conditions. However if a new planning application is submitted for the site the following list of requirements would apply: Retain and integrate watercourses as natural features within site; Flood Risk Assessment required and built development should avoid flood risk area; Appropriate disposal of surface water drainage; Establish active travel links towards settlement centre and Meadows Park; Sensitive siting and design including landscape works, stone walls and hedgerows to reflect proximity to Dornoch Firth NSA; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required; Development proposals will require to identify what measures will be put in place to ensure that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the Dornoch Firth & Morrich More SAC and the Dornoch Firth & Loch Fleet SPA through increased disturbance of species and habitat damage caused by increased recreational use of the area by residents of the new housing.

DN02: Bishopsfield

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 3.6

Indicative Housing Capacity:
40

Developer Requirements: Masterplan already in place; Access loop to be completed; Drainage Impact Assessment to address Pluvial Flood Risk; Extra planting on site such as hedgerow planting and trees to help link to adjacent woodland; Provide linkage to nearby core path and ensure links provided to existing play park; Provide footpath linkages towards centre of Dornoch; Development proposals will require to identify what measures will be put in place to ensure that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the Dornoch Firth & Morrich More SAC and the Dornoch Firth & Loch Fleet SPA through increased disturbance of species and habitat damage caused by increased recreational use of the area by residents of the new housing.

Mixed Use

DN03: Dornoch South Abattoir Site

Use: Mixed Use (Student accommodation, Business, Leisure, Community, Open space, Recreation)

Area (ha): 4.1

Indicative Housing Capacity:
N/A

Developer Requirements: Pedestrian linkage to wider area; Promote active travel and links to public transport; Possible access link from Dornoch Business Park road; Provide buffer to watercourse on southern boundary; Sensitive siting, design and scale; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required; Site investigation for potential contamination from former uses; The site is at risk of flooding which will limit the extent and type of development suitable for the site - a Flood Risk Assessment will be required; (The design and layout of a development would have to comply with the following – (1) Land raising (with appropriate compensatory flood storage capacity) would only be acceptable on the areas of previously developed land to the north and any buildings in this area would have to be demonstrated to be outwith the area at risk of flooding, not create an island of development and be demonstrated to not impact on flood risk elsewhere. Areas of previously developed land which are shown to be at risk of flooding may be suitable for car parking but should not be subject to any land raising. (2) Greenfield areas of the site are only suitable for types of recreation and leisure uses which are less vulnerable to flood risk, such as a golf driving range or car park. Such proposals should not result in a change in ground levels (i.e. no land raising) and be designed so that they are flood resilient and do not impact on flood water flows. An appropriate evacuation procedure should also be prepared); Development proposals will require to identify what measures will be put in place to ensure that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the Dornoch Firth & Morrich More SAC and the Dornoch Firth & Loch Fleet SPA through increased disturbance of species and habitat damage caused by increased recreational use of the area by residents of the new housing.

DN04: Dornoch North

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business, Retail, Open Space)

Area (ha): 19.7

Indicative Housing Capacity:
200

Developer Requirements: Development in accordance with Masterplan and phased approach for the site (10/01185/PIP); 25 houses approved for phase 1 of Masterplan (14/03060/FUL) and access to be taken at north eastern end of site as shown on the access arrow on the settlement map; Development should be in line with existing agreed Flood Risk Assessment, or Flood Risk Assessment work to be extended if proposals vary or site extent is larger. No new development to be located in any areas shown to be at risk of flooding; No culverting for land gain; Retain and integrate watercourse as a natural feature within development; Sensitive layout and design of housing to reflect existing buildings in Dornoch and adjacent Conservation Area; Development will need to be visually contained, taking the esker landform and existing field pattern into consideration; A high quality gateway should be created on the northern approach; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required; Exclusion zone around cists; Active Travel links into centre of Dornoch and towards the schools; Travel Plan; Safer Routes to School plan; Contributions towards Dial a Bus; Provision of bus stops and shelters; Upgrading of the Embo Road including widening to 5.5 metres and provision of a 2 metre wide footway; SUDs strategy; Layout should acknowledge Designing Streets; Neighbourhood road linking Embo Road and Poles Road; Development proposals will require to identify what measures will be put in place to ensure that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the Dornoch Firth & Morrich More SAC and the Dornoch Firth & Loch Fleet SPA through increased disturbance of species and habitat damage caused by increased recreational use of the area by residents of the new housing.

Community

DN05: Meadows Park

Use: Community

Area (ha): 4.2

Developer Requirements: Planning permission granted on part of site for a community centre; New access or an upgrade of the existing access; Drainage Impact Assessment; Encourage and maintain existing pedestrian links to surrounding built up area; Sensitive development of site; High quality design; Appropriate scale; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required.

DN06: Adjacent to Dornoch Academy

Use: Community

Area (ha): 1.5

Developer Requirements: No direct access from public road; Review 20mph and 30mph speed limits and consider amending the extent; Safe Route to School audit; Retain existing mature vegetation along boundary with school; Provide landscaping with tree planting along outer perimeters to establish a structured edge; Provide cycle parking; Ensure pedestrian connection to school ground; Sensitive landscaping and boundary planting to reduce impact on settlement setting.

Business

DN07: Dornoch Business Park

Use: Business

Area (ha): 1.9

Developer Requirements: Retain trees around the boundary; Pedestrian linkage to wider area; Retain recycling facilities already on site.

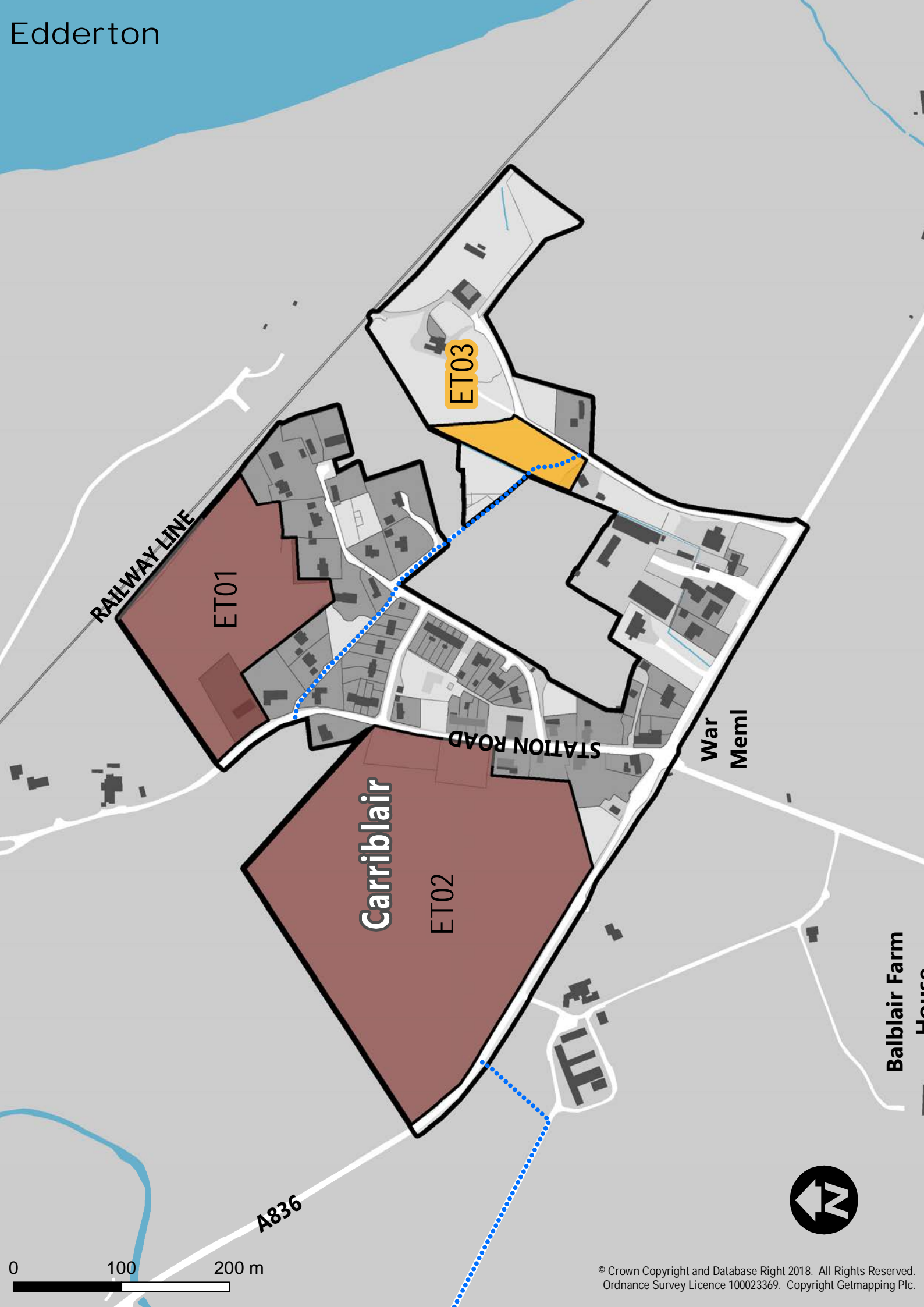
Edderton

- 162** Edderton lies 6km to the west of Tain and sits on the southern shore of the Dornoch Firth.
- 163** Potential for development in Edderton lies primarily with two sites that already have planning permission for housing - ET01 for 26 houses and for ET02 for 37 houses. Infill opportunities also exist although the settlement boundary is drawn so that the smallholdings towards the centre of the village are excluded, in order to protect what forms an intrinsic part of the character of the settlement. Opportunities exist for small scale business development or home working units on ET03. Longer term expansion to the north is constrained by the railway line. Growth to the south of the A836 could be considered in the longer term.
- 164** Regard needs to be had to the proximity of the Dornoch Firth and Loch Fleet Special Protection Area and Ramsar site, Dornoch Firth and Morrich More Special Area of Conservation, Dornoch Firth SSSI and the Dornoch Firth National Scenic Area. There are also significant historic environment assets in the settlement; two Scheduled Monuments sit within the settlement (the Clach Chairidh and the Carrieblair stone circle).

Placemaking Priorities

- Housing land allocated that will consolidate the settlement.
 - Safeguard natural assets in and around settlement.
 - Safeguard historic environment assets.
 - Explore opportunities to improve interpretation of historic environment assets.
 - Maintain access to Core Paths.
- 165** The following map and table show the site allocations for Edderton.

Edderton



Settlement Development Area



Long Term Sites

- Long Term Housing
- Long Term Mixed Use
- Long Term Business
- Long Term Industrial

Allocations

- Housing
- Mixed Use
- Community
- Business
- Industrial
- Greenspace
- Expansion of Green Network

Town Centres



Paths and Access

- Site Access
- Indicative Road
- Long Term Potential Distributor/Relief Road Routes
- Core Path (existing)
- Proposed Path

Housing

ET01: North-East of Haven

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 2.5

Indicative Housing Capacity:
26

Developer Requirements: Access to be taken in accordance with 08/00477/FUL; To protect existing users, discharge to the Craigroy Burn should be avoided; Trees alongside railway line should be kept; Traffic calming on Station Road; Improve pedestrian links outwith the site; Site history to confirm when nearby refuse tips ceased operating; Sensitive design, landscaping and planting to reduce impact on NSA; Sensitive siting and access to site required taking account of Scheduled Monument in north west of site; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required.

ET02: West of Station Road

Use: Housing

Area (Ha): 6.9

Indicative Housing Capacity:
37

Developer Requirements: To protect existing users, discharge to the Craigroy Burn should be avoided; Formal open space within the site; Phased development led by a masterplan for the site; Frontage access on A836 requires traffic calming and careful design to achieve reduced speed limit of 30mph; Frontage access onto Station Road acceptable provided no on-street parking; Position of access from Station Road for majority of site requires safeguarding; Safe Routes To School upgrade; Upgrading of junction with A836 may be required; Active Travel links; Pedestrian/cycle links through site connecting to rest of village; Sensitive landscaping and planting to reduce impact on settlement setting; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required; Open space around the Clach Chairidh symbol stone (buffer) and no development which would encroach on the line of sight from the Carrieblair stone circle and symbol stone to the hills to the west and south west.

Mixed Use

ET03: Adjacent to Glebe Cottage

Use: Mixed Use (Business, Homeworking units)

Area (ha): 0.4

Indicative Housing Capacity:

2

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Retain and integrate watercourses as natural features within development; Retain trees in site layout to provide stepping stones for wildlife; Existing access road may require upgrading; Maintain public access through the site; Maintain access to core path; Sensitive landscaping and planting to reduce impact on settlement setting; New boundary planting of appropriate species.

Golspie

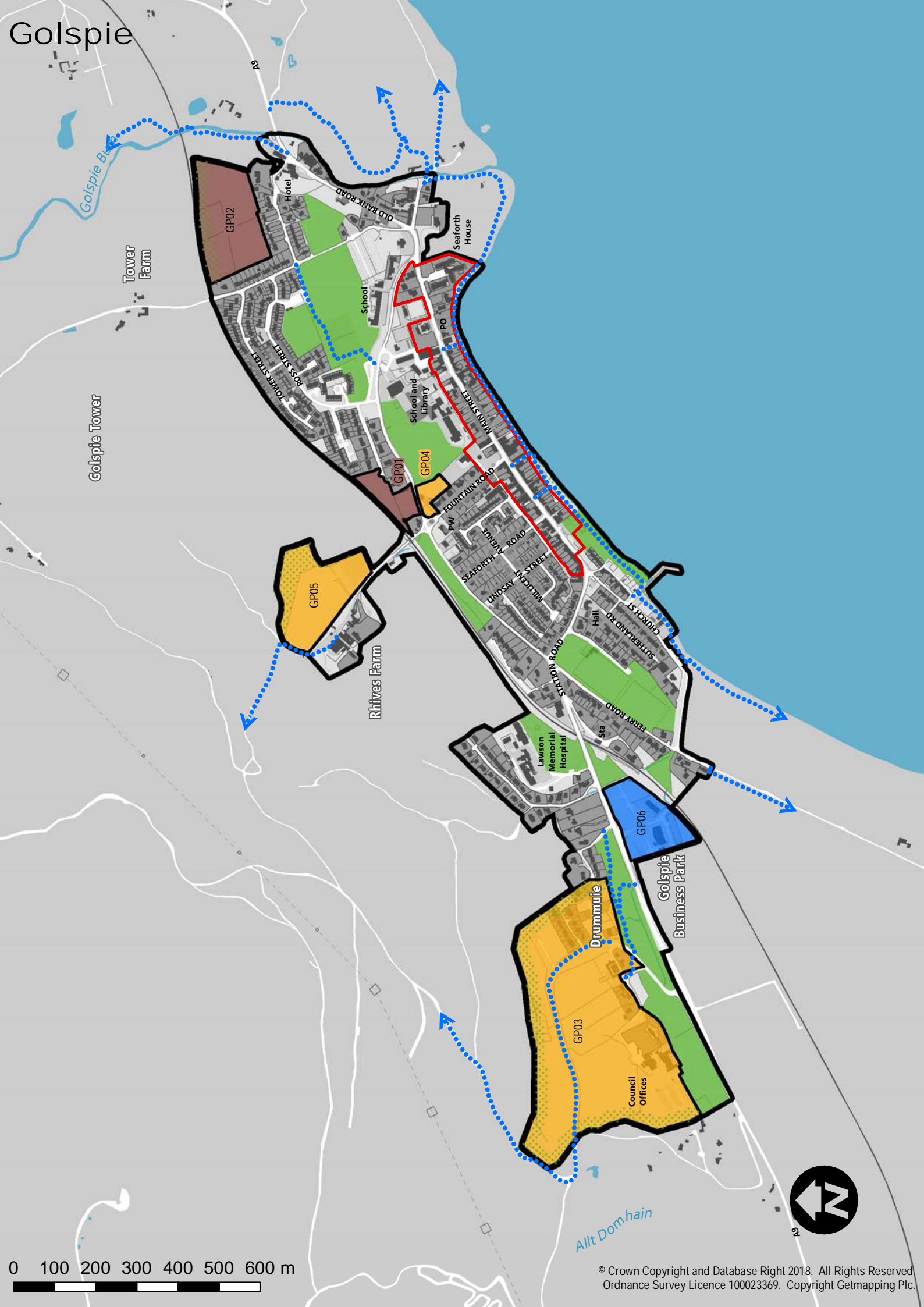
- 166** Golspie plays an important role in providing a variety of retail and service uses to a large part of Sutherland. A town centre boundary is identified for Golspie. The new Town Centre First Policy directs all new footfall generating developments towards the area included within the town centre boundary and encourages a wide range of uses including promoting uses which are active during the daytime and evening. Land uses which compete with town centre businesses and risk impacting on the vibrancy and vitality will be restricted by the new Town Centre First Policy. The historic core may merit formal Conservation Area status.
- 167** Golspie lies on a main transport route. The A9 trunk road goes through the settlement and there is a railway station which is served by the Far North Railway Line, which provides services north towards Thurso and Wick and south towards Inverness.
- 168** Land for employment uses is important and existing sites at the Business Park and at Drummie have been allocated. At GP03 Drummie the development of the former Technical College to Highland Council offices is complete and the remainder of the site provides opportunities for a variety of uses. The existing [Drummie Development Brief](#)⁽²¹⁾ provides non-statutory planning guidance on the development potential of the site.
- 169** Tourism continues to be important to the local economy and provides employment. Appropriate tourist facilities that would support the Wildcat bike trails should be encouraged. Land adjacent to this at GP05 Rhives has planning permission for a camping/caravan site with space for up to 30 touring caravans.
- 170** There is a Core Path along the seafront and the open aspect of it around the pier should be maintained. There is potential to extend this coastal path towards Little Ferry and northwards towards Brora.

Placemaking Priorities

- Assist and promote economic development.
 - Assist and promote tourism and tourist facilities.
 - Phased development at Drummie.
 - Safeguard the settlement setting, including the wooded and open seaboard approaches.
 - Maintain access to Core Paths.
- 171** The following map and table show the site allocations for Golspie.

21 https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/1738/drummie_golspie_development_brief_january_2001

Golspie



0 100 200 300 400 500 600 m

Settlement Development Area



Long Term Sites

- Long Term Housing
- Long Term Mixed Use
- Long Term Business
- Long Term Industrial

Allocations

- Housing
- Mixed Use
- Community
- Business
- Industrial
- Greenspace
- Expansion of Green Network

Town Centres



Paths and Access

- Site Access
- Indicative Road
- Long Term Potential Distributor/Relief Road Routes
- Core Path (existing)
- Proposed Path

Housing

GP01: Woodland Way

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 0.9

Indicative Housing Capacity:
9

Developer Requirements: Access to be taken from Woodland Way; Provide pedestrian link to Back Road; Investigate potential of retaining some existing trees on site. If any trees are proposed to be removed a species survey may be required and compensatory planting on site will be required.

GP02: Sibell Road

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 3.8

Indicative Housing Capacity:
34

Developer Requirements: Pedestrian provision and upgrade to existing surrounding footways; Scheme of landscaping - investigate potential of retaining some trees on site or if existing trees are proposed to be removed then some replacement planting on site will be required, preferably creating a wildlife corridor in an eastwards direction; Set back development from any remaining semi-natural woodland.

Mixed Use

GP03: Drummuie

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business, Industry)

Area (ha): 17.7

Indicative Housing Capacity:
34

Developer Requirements: Scheme of landscaping and planting to provide screening at "gateway" to settlement; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Provide buffers to watercourses on north and west boundaries; Ensure greenspace element of any development provides links to adjacent woodland for pedestrians and wildlife; Have regard to the TPO along the A9 frontage; Maintain access to Core Path; Maintain settings of Listed Buildings.

GP04: Mackay House Hostel Site

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business)

Area (ha): 0.4

Indicative Housing Capacity:
2

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Drainage Impact Assessment to address pluvial flood risk; Upgrade access to Fountain Road by widening it and providing footway provision; Have regard to adjacent listed buildings and their settings.

GP05: Rhives

Use: Mixed Use (Tourism)

Area (ha): 3.6

Indicative Housing Capacity:
N/A

Developer Requirements: As per planning permission 13/04772/FUL for a camping/caravan site with space for up to 30 touring caravans; New passing place on Rhives Road; widening footway along Rhives Road; Widen site access; Traffic Management Plan describing measures proposed to manage access to and from the site by caravans; Maintain pedestrian access to the Ben Bhraggie hill path; Design of the site should address any potential impact on the setting of the adjacent chambered cairn which is a Scheduled Monument; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required.

Business

GP06: Golspie Business Park

Use: Business

Area (ha): 2.4

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Provide buffer to the small watercourse adjacent to the site.

Helmsdale

- 172** Helmsdale converges at the A9 and Far North Railway Line and provides services for the immediate and wider communities. There is potential for the settlement to further capitalise on its strategic location as a service and tourism hub on the A9 corridor.
- 173** The settlement centre has an original planned village with a formal grid pattern that may merit future Conservation Area status. There are a range of heritage and cultural assets, including the A-Listed Helmsdale Bridge, which contributes to the settlement setting, and also compliments the Timespan Heritage and Arts Centre.
- 174** The community has led with initiatives to address housing needs in the area. CaSPlan recognises this and land is allocated to meet future housing needs, enabling the settlement to continue to benefit from community-led development.
- 175** There are key community assets along Helmsdale River including the historic bridge, the original harbour, and the modern harbour at the mouth of the river.
- 176** A range of designations highlight the high quality natural environment Helmsdale sits within, including the East Caithness Cliffs Special Area of Conservation; Moray Firth Special Area of Conservation, and Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth Special Landscape Area.

Placemaking Priorities

- Support community-driven development by offering a range of well connected sites for housing and employment growth.
 - Promote existing assets around the old harbour and the Timespan centre by enhancing the setting and environment, and by improving green network connectivity.
 - Ensure active travel opportunities are maximised by improving the existing green network routes and establishing new ones.
 - Capitalise on the strategic position of the settlement by ensuring the provision of facilities and a high-quality environment for visitors and the local community.
 - Safeguard key features including natural environment designations.
- 177** The following map and table show the site allocations for Helmsdale.

Helmsdale



Settlement Development Area



Long Term Sites

- Long Term Housing
- Long Term Mixed Use
- Long Term Business
- Long Term Industrial

Allocations

- Housing
- Mixed Use
- Community
- Business
- Industrial
- Greenspace
- Expansion of Green Network

Town Centres



Paths and Access

- Site Access
- Indicative Road
- Long Term Potential Distributor/Relief Road Routes
- Core Path (existing)
- Proposed Path

Housing

HD01: St. John's Church

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 0.1

Indicative Housing Capacity:
5

Developer Requirements: Sympathetic conversion of church building to complement neighbouring Listed Buildings; Improved access and upgraded parking; Bat species/ habitat survey; Landscaping and planting sensitive to the setting.

HD02: North of Rockview Place

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 1.4

Indicative Housing Capacity:
20

Developer Requirements: Existing access should be used; Development in accordance with 12/00444/FUL; Development density and layout consistent with the current development pattern; Active travel routes and pedestrian links enhanced; Landscaping and planting sensitive to the setting.

HD03: Simpson Crescent

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 1.3

Indicative Housing Capacity:
15

Developer Requirements: Maintain existing green networks (including informal foot paths and core path) across eastern side of site and enhance connectivity of site including new footway along roadside boundaries; Provide a buffer comprising of an enhanced green network between residential development and the seaward edge of the site; Assessment of potential contamination issues; Landscaping and planting sensitive to the setting; Site layout sensitive to the amenity views from Simpson Crescent.

Mixed Use

HD04: Shore Street

Use: Mixed Use (Business and Community) **Area (ha):** 1.0

Indicative Housing Capacity:
N/A

Developer Requirements: No built development west of Shore Street (shore side of site); Flood Risk Assessment required to inform layout and design (only low vulnerability uses or operationally essential uses in areas shown to be at risk from flooding, to be accompanied by resilience measures); Bat species/ habitat survey for redevelopment of garage buildings; Careful siting, design and layout to safeguard A-Listed Helmsdale bridge, the historic harbour and green networks; Otter survey required where river works involved; Assessment of potential contamination issues.

Industry

HD05: East of Industrial Estate

Use: Industry

Area (ha): 1.4

Developer Requirements: Access to be taken from existing access to industrial estate from Rockview Place; Access improvements to alleviate parking issues and improve local road network; Landscaping and sensitive siting and design, having regard to residential neighbours and trunk road.

Lairg

- 178** Lairg is Central Sutherland's largest service, transport and employment centre. It sits next to the attractive man-made Little Loch Shin and is at the gateway where the Far North Rail Line meets cross-County roads.
- 179** Expanded tourist facilities in Lairg would be beneficial to consolidate its role, especially with the loss of facilities at Falls of Shin; tourist footfall around the Ferrycroft Centre should be encouraged. Land North West of Ferrycroft (LA05) is unsuitable for most forms of built development due to high flood risk; however it may be suitable for recreational uses.
- 180** Environmental improvements would be welcomed on the site of the Former Sutherland Transport and Trading Company on the corner of Main Street and the A836. The area is a key focal point for Lairg and the local community is keen to enhance the range of facilities on the site for both the community and tourists. Some car parking should be retained, but there may be potential to provide picnic tables, a children's play area, a tourist information point/interpretation and a local craft hub. The opportunity should be taken to link into the recently improved Church Hill wooded path.
- 181** Land to the south of Main Street is the key site where housing expansion will be encouraged. It is close to local facilities and has access to the Main Street. Development of this site would consolidate the existing built environment and would not have a major impact on landscape.

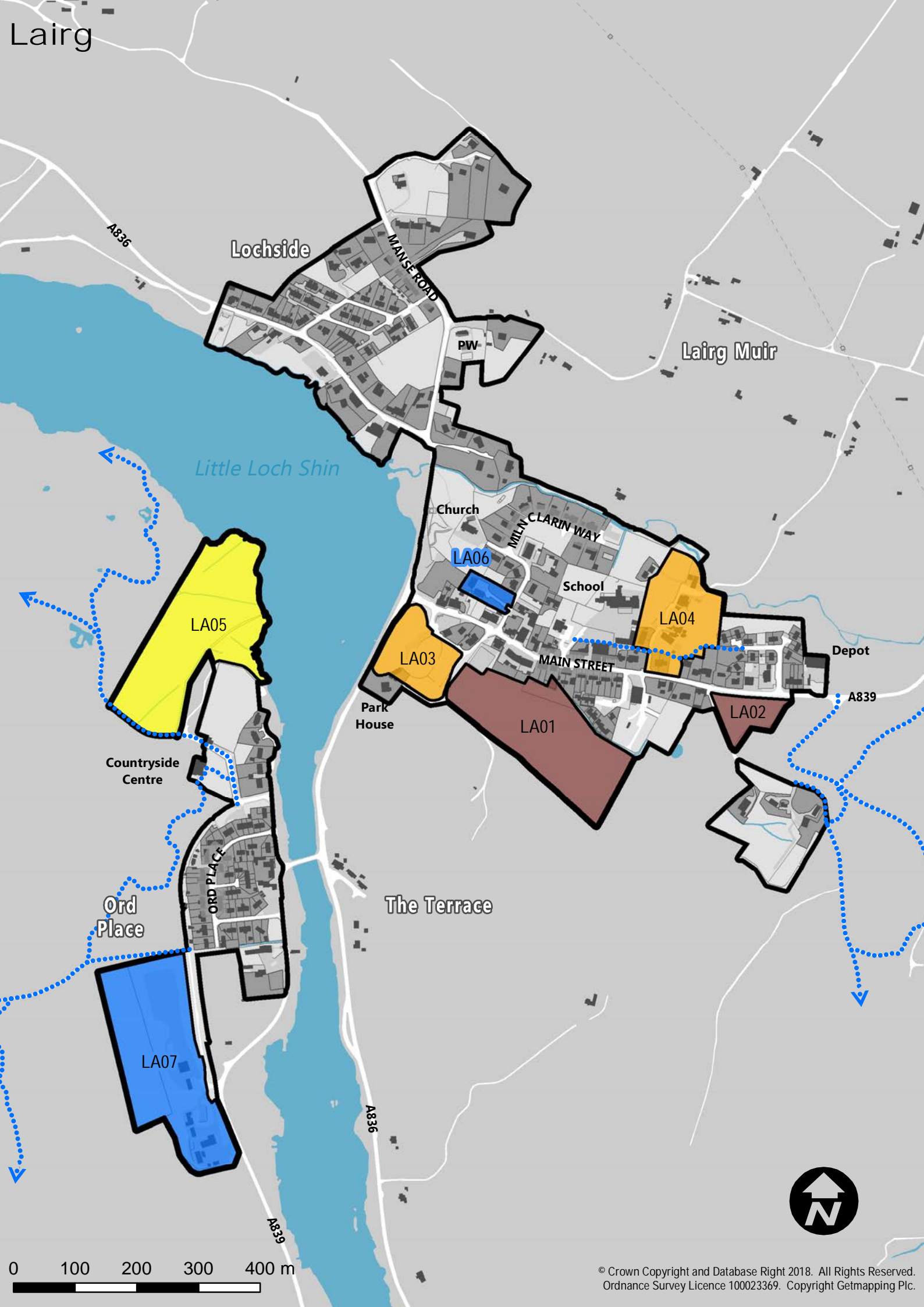
It needs to be developed via a masterplan, which shows phasing of development and take account of the adjacent site of the former Sutherland Arms. The Former Sutherland Arms site (LA03) is a key entrance site to Lairg and is previously used land.

- 182** The Former Laundry site has become mainly residential at the entrance; further residential use to the north east of the site will be discouraged and business use promoted. Any proposed business use must be able to co-exist with the existing residential properties. In addition to land at the Former Laundry LA04, business land is allocated at LA06 West of Church Hill Road and at LA07 Southwest of Ord Place.

Placemaking Priorities

- Assist and promote economic development.
- Support additional tourist facilities.
- Development proposals should have regard to the proximity of the Ferry Wood Ancient Woodland and The Ord Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- Maintain access to Core Paths.

- 183** The following map and table show the site allocations for Lairg.



Lairg

Lochside

Lairg Muir

Little Loch Shin

LA05

Church

LA06

School

LA04

Depot

LA03

LA01

LA02

Countryside Centre

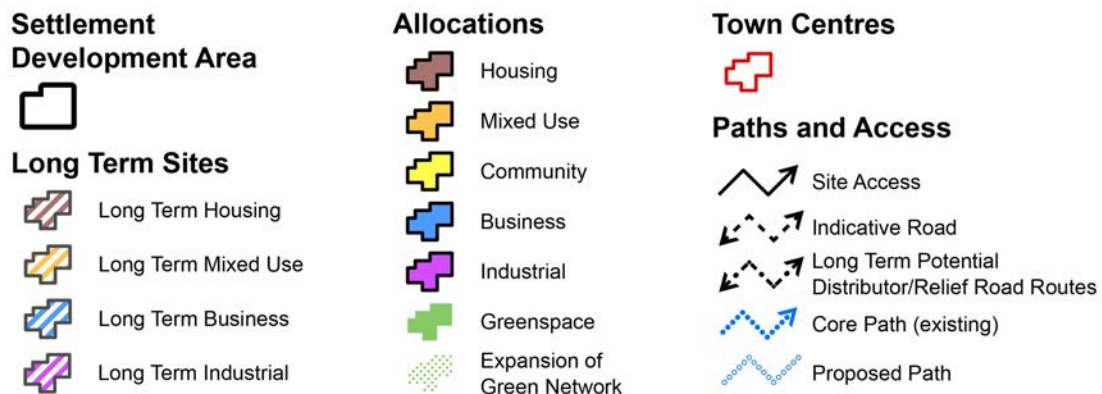
Ord Place

The Terrace

LA07

0 100 200 300 400 m





Housing

LA01: South-West of Main Street

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 3.4

Indicative Housing Capacity:
50

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Masterplan required which should take into account the allocation at the former Sutherland Arms Hotel and to ensure houses are carefully designed to fit with the undulating landform and not visually intrusive; Phased development; Suitable access from A839 to be determined; Retain and integrate watercourse as a natural feature within the development; Pedestrian linkages to Main Street to encourage active travel; Ensure improved pedestrian access/links to football pitch and tennis courts; Provide landscaping using a variety of vegetation, as part of the overall design layout and encourage linkages to mature trees on former Sutherland Arms site to create habitat areas and links; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required.

LA02: Opposite Fire Station

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 0.6

Indicative Housing Capacity:
9

Developer Requirements: Suitable access point to be determined; Masterplan required for site; Footways required; Provide pedestrian link to woodland to the east.

Mixed Use

LA03: Former Sutherland Arms Site

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Community, Tourism, Retail)

Area (ha): 1.2

Indicative Housing Capacity:
5

Developer Requirements: A masterplan should be prepared for this site taking account of adjacent allocated land; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); The junction at the existing access from A839 is adequate but the access road will need upgrading before further development; Ensure any development does not affect TPOs, retain as many trees as possible; Bat/species survey may be required if any removal of mature trees is proposed; Ensure pedestrian links provided to adjacent sites.

LA04: Former Laundry

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Business)

Area (ha): 1.9

Indicative Housing Capacity:
4

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Widen access road and provide footways; Upgrade crossing of Laundry Road at school side entrance; Safe Routes to School audit; Review 30mph zone extents; Retain and integrate watercourses as natural features within development; Provide buffer between watercourse and any development; Provide screen planting along boundary with the school; Pre-determination bat survey, general species survey due to trees and potentially otter survey due to watercourse along boundary; Maintain access to core path at southern end of site; Assessment of potential contamination issues; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required; Any business use must be compatible with adjacent domestic buildings.

Community

LA05: North-West of Ferrycroft

Use: Community

Area (ha): 4.0

Developer Requirements: A Flood Risk Assessment may be required to inform layout and design of development; Peat Management Plan to show how disturbance of peat has been minimised and how peat will be managed on site and a vegetation survey to demonstrate how impacts on wetlands have been avoided or if necessary, mitigated – these issues may affect the area of the site which can be developed; Restore small watercourses on the site to their more natural form; Provide buffer between site and Little Loch Shin; Re-engineer watercourses to give them a more natural course; Any development should have regard to adjacent Ferrywood ancient woodland; Maintain existing vegetation and wildlife corridors around site; Potential to link access with adjacent woodland; Any development should be of an appropriate design and carefully sited in order to protect the open character and amenity of the site, with particular regard to views from across the loch; Have regard to The Ord Chambered Cairns; Carpark may need extended if recreation provision is increased; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required.

Business

LA06: West of Church Hill Road

Use: Business

Area (ha): 0.3

Developer Requirements: Drainage Impact Assessment required with planning application; Maintain tree line around site.

LA07: South-West of Ord Place

Use: Business

Area (ha): 4.2

Developer Requirements: Peat Management Plan showing how disturbance of peat has been minimised and how peat will be managed on site and a vegetation survey to demonstrate how impacts on wetlands have been avoided – these issues may affect the area of the site which can be developed; Retain existing tree belt around site; Any felling of mature trees will require a species survey; Masterplanning required for access roads within the site; Promote track at the rear of Ord Place as an Active Travel route to the site; Programme of archaeological works/mitigation may be required; Have regard to the adjacent Scheduled Ancient Monument at The Ord Chambered Cairns.

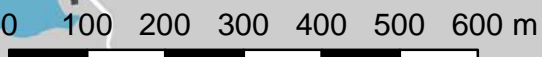
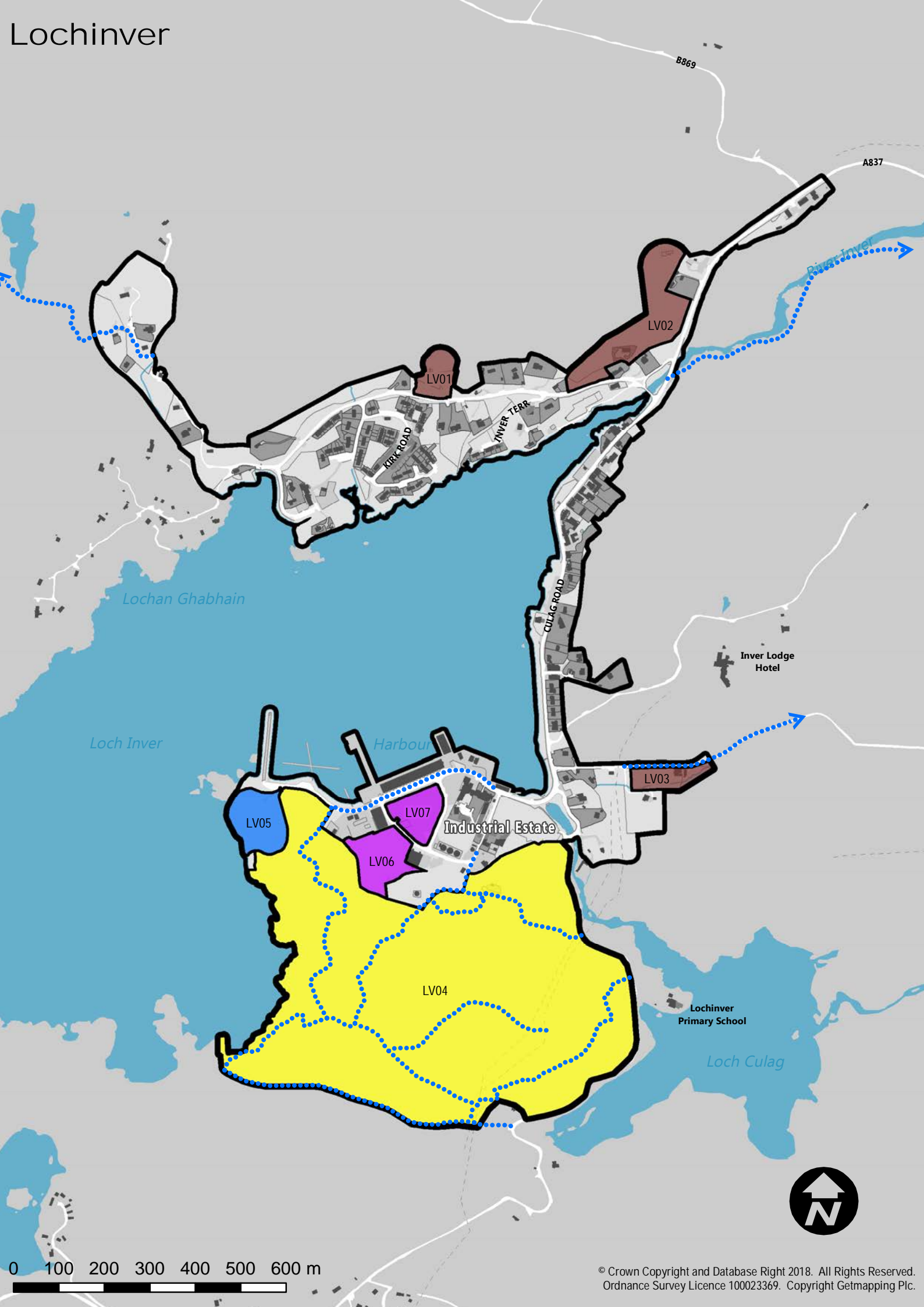
Lochinver

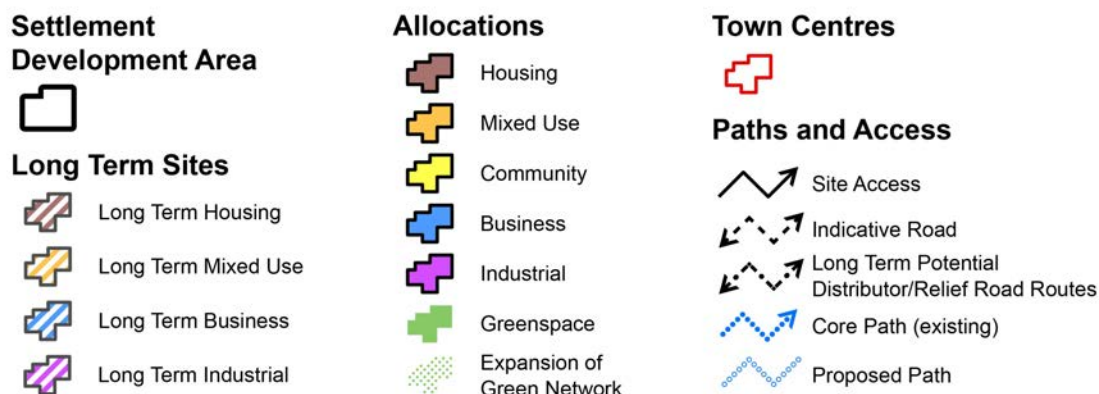
- 184** Lochinver is the main service, employment and tourist centre for south-west Sutherland. The settlement is known for its role in community ownership, and as such there are a range of active community organisations both within the settlement and in the wider Assynt area.
- 185** The Highland Council's Housing Strategy identifies Lochinver as a longer term priority for housing. The majority of housing developments in recent years have occurred as single plots, mainly on windfall sites. A range of affordable homes were delivered by Albyn Housing Society during the lifetime of the Sutherland Plan. Different options for housing are allocated to give a choice of sites, ownership and developer type.
- 186** There are a range of business and employment focuses that include the fishing port, deep water berth and services in the settlement centre. The role of the harbour and future potential for its expansion, including for commercial fishing and tourism, is recognised with a range of site allocations for business and industry.
- 187** Culag Community Wood is an important asset both for the local community and for visitors to the area. Culag Community Woodland Trust manage the wood and offer a range of services and opportunities including environmental education, training and employment, and enjoyment of the environment. National Planning Framework (2014) highlights the importance of strengthening links between people and the land, and suggest activities like hutting to achieve this. Proposals for woodland hutting community uses are identified for Culag Community Wood.
- 188** Lochinver sits in an iconic landscape that contributes to it being a high quality place to live and visit. This is reflected in the Assynt-Coigach National Scenic Area designation that covers a wide area, including the settlement. The landscape is therefore highly sensitive to development.

Placemaking Priorities

- Encourage housing development to help meet the Council's longer term priority for housing through the range of allocated housing sites.
 - Support and promote economic growth through development on allocated business and industrial sites.
 - Capitalise on opportunities for community-led development including Culag Community Wood.
 - Safeguard the sensitive landscape setting.
- 189** The following map and table show the site allocations for Lochinver.

Lochinver





Housing

LV01: Former Sheep Pens North of Inver Park

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 0.7

Indicative Housing Capacity:
6

Developer Requirements: Existing access requires upgrading for improved visibility; Flood Risk Assessment and no development should take place in areas shown to be at risk of flooding; No culverting of small watercourse on site; Peat assessment and management plan; Vegetation survey and mitigation to avoid impacts on wetlands; Careful siting, design and layout to safeguard sensitive landscape setting.

LV02: Cnoc A' Mhuilin

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 2.9

Indicative Housing Capacity:
10

Developer Requirements: Design statement to be prepared to safeguard the landscape features that contribute to the special qualities of the Assynt-Coigach NSA, in particular the landform and landscape setting of the surroundings; Separately, the design statement should address, to the satisfaction of the Council, the setting in relation to the nearby listed buildings; Peat assessment and management plan; Vegetation survey and mitigation to avoid impacts on wetlands; Housing restricted to maximum of 1.5 storey; Limited existing access at Baddidaroch Road, upgrading required; Access from A837 will require provision of footways, extension of 30mph speed restriction and should not prevent further future expansion of site; Sensitive siting and design to safeguard residential amenity.

LV03: Canisp Road

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 0.7

Indicative Housing Capacity:
8

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Current single-track road access is only partially adopted and requires upgrading to provide suitable passing places and pedestrian links to the settlement; Watercourse on site should not be culverted and should be designed into development with appropriate buffering; Peat assessment and management plan; Vegetation survey and mitigation to avoid impacts on wetlands; Design statement and sensitive layout (including planting) to safeguard sensitive landscape setting; Otter species and habitat survey may be required; Retention of as much of woodland as possible, maximise opportunities for woodland to screen development from surrounding sensitive landscape.

Community

LV04: Culag Wood

Use: Community

Area (ha): 40.3

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment may be required (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Peat assessment and management plan may be required; Built development is restricted to 'off-grid' structures, for example, woodland huts; Development should safeguard and enhance the existing path network on site and retain as much woodland as possible; Development should not significantly diminish the woodland characteristics, or the contribution it makes to the setting of the settlement; Tree removal in line with Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy; Design statement to safeguard the sensitive landscape setting; Species surveys and mitigation may be required.

Business

LV05: West of the Coastguard Station

Use: Business

Area (ha): 1.5

Developer Requirements: First priority for industrial development should be at sites LV06 and LV07, after which this site may be considered appropriate; Otter species survey; Heron disturbance between March and August should be avoided; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Site history for contaminated land risks required; Careful siting, design and layout to safeguard sensitive landscape setting; Current access track to be upgraded including for pedestrians.

Industry

LV06: Land Adjacent to Assynt Leisure Centre

Use: Industry

Area (ha): 1.4

Developer Requirements: Development to remain within extent of old quarry with set back from quarry faces, designed and finished to be sensitive to the old quarry setting; No further quarrying or freshening of rock faces; Protected species and habitat survey may be required; Safeguard ancient woodlands to south of site; Careful siting, design and layout to safeguard sensitive landscape setting.

LV07: Culag Harbour

Use: Industry

Area (ha): 1.0

Developer Requirements: Flood Risk Assessment required to inform layout and design (only low vulnerability uses or operationally essential uses in areas shown to be at risk of flooding, to be accompanied by resilience measures); Careful siting, design and layout to safeguard sensitive landscape setting.

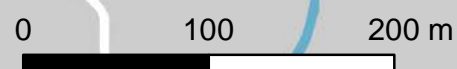
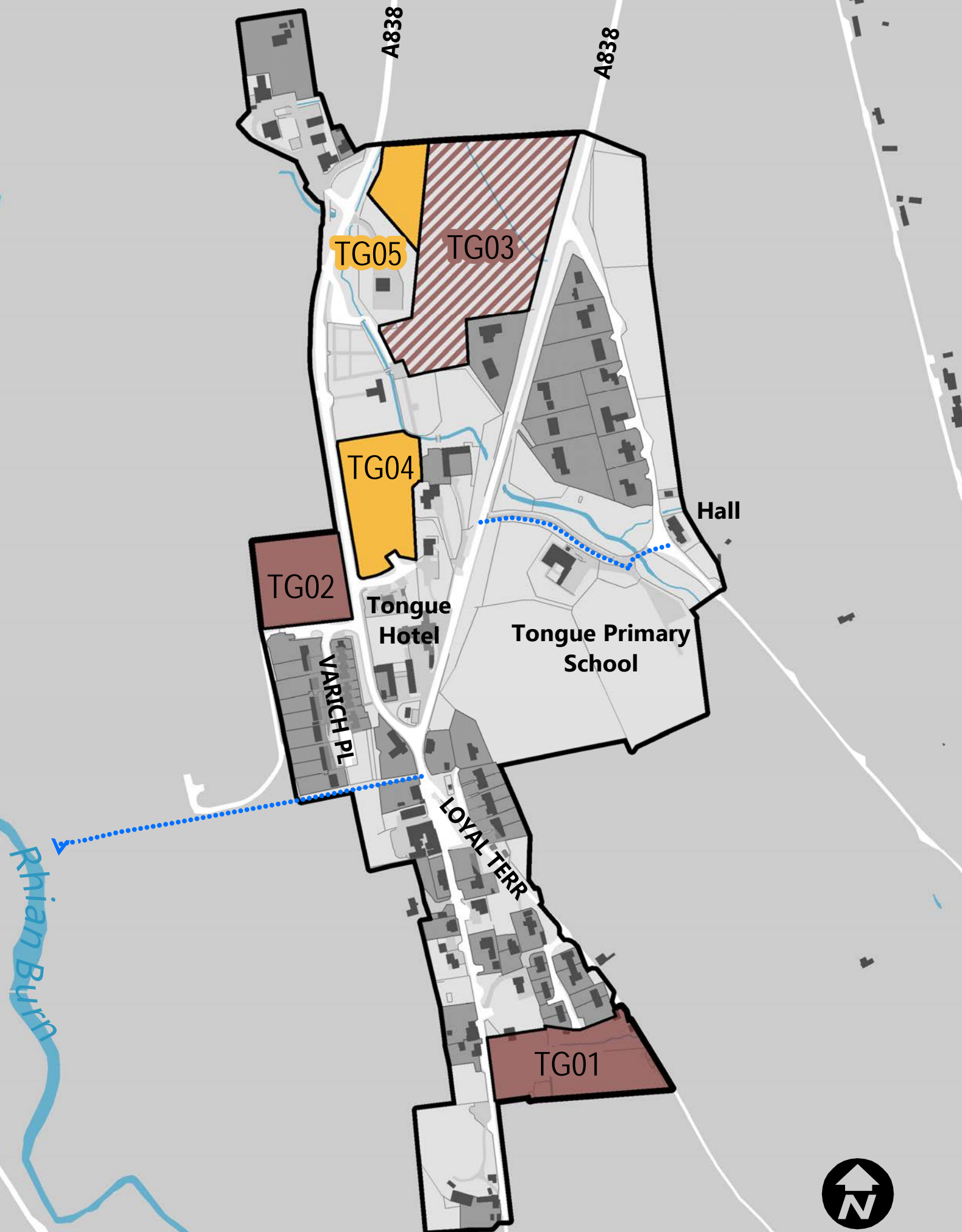
Tongue

- 190** Tongue is a strategic service and tourist centre for north-west Sutherland. The settlement provides key community services including the Health Centre and Kyle Centre. It also provides the community and visitors with hotels and bars, local stores, post office, and a community transport service, Transport for Tongue.
- 191** Recent development proposals, including emerging industries and a new large-scale tourism development, have introduced the potential to increase demand for housing. To ensure an adequate housing land supply, as well as providing key housing sites, a longer-term housing site is identified.
- 192** Future development should reinforce and complement the existing village setting, which is formed in a north-south oriented linear pattern across the hillside facing the Kyle. Development should also seek to support community growth and safeguard the quality of the multiple natural and built heritage designations.
- 193** The settlement sits within a dramatic and striking landscape, designated as the Kyle of Tongue National Scenic Area.


















Placemaking Priorities

- Promote development by providing a range of options in the north and south of the settlement.
 - Support the potential for future growth by identifying longer term housing sites.
 - Encourage development that reflects the special qualities of the Kyle of Tongue National Scenic Area.
- 194** The following map and table show the site allocations for Tongue.

Tongue



Legend

<p>Settlement Development Area</p>  <p>Long Term Sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Long Term Housing  Long Term Mixed Use  Long Term Business  Long Term Industrial 	<p>Allocations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Housing  Mixed Use  Community  Business  Industrial  Greenspace  Expansion of Green Network 	<p>Town Centres</p>  <p>Paths and Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Site Access  Long Term Potential Distributor/Relief Road Routes  Core Path (existing)  Proposed Path
--	---	---

Housing

TG01: South of Loyal Terrace

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 0.9

Indicative Housing Capacity:
12

Developer Requirements: From Loyal Terrace road spurs, access upgrading with passing places and pedestrian footways; Development should not prevent further future expansion south; Design statement required to safeguard the sensitive landscape setting and residential amenity; Flood Risk Assessment and no development should take place in areas shown to be at risk of flooding- no culverting of watercourse on site; Species survey and mitigation plan may be required.

TG02: North of Varich Place

Use: Housing

Area (ha): 0.6

Indicative Housing Capacity:
10

Developer Requirements: Layout should reflect building lines of the adjacent Varich Place; Development should be supported by a design statement to safeguard the sensitive landscape setting; Dry stone wall boundary along the A838 should be retained and footway provided; Extension to the 30mph speed restriction may be required.

TG03: East of the Fire Station

Use: Long Term Housing

Area (ha): 2.2

This is identified as a 'Long Term Site'. These sites indicate the likely preferred direction for growth beyond the Plan period. They are not being invited for development within this Plan period and therefore developer requirements have not been identified in this Plan. More information about Long Term Sites is provided in the Glossary.

Mixed Use

TG04: South of St. Andrew's Church

Use: Mixed Use (Housing, Community, Business)

Area (ha): 0.7

Indicative Housing Capacity:
10

Developer Requirements: Design statement required to safeguard both the sensitive landscape setting and adjacent A and B-Listed Buildings; Dry stone wall boundary along the A838 should be retained; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding)- no culverting of Kirkiboll Burn and appropriate buffering required; Extension to 30 mph speed restriction may be required.

TG05: North of Fire Station

Use: Mixed Use (Community, Business)

Area (ha): 0.3

Indicative Housing Capacity:
N/A

Developer Requirements: Careful siting and design to safeguard sensitive landscape setting and gateway qualities of site; Siting of buildings should reflect linear pattern of existing development; Flood Risk Assessment (no development in areas shown to be at risk of flooding); Relocation of 40 mph speed limit signage to be sited on the A838 north of the site.

Sutherland Growing Settlements

Bettyhill

Issues

- The settlement is a key centre for local services, including Farr Primary and High School, and visitor attractions, for example the Strathnaver Museum and Visitor Information Point.
- Iconic designated landscapes lie to the west and east of the settlement creating a high quality environment for the community and key attractions for visitors, including the Kyle of Tongue
- The development pattern across the settlement is varied due to differences in ground level and slope, historic land uses, land values and ownership (e.g. Crofting).

Placemaking Priorities

- Capitalise on the tourism and service potential provided by the settlement's existing assets and proximity to nearby natural and historic environment features.
- Support future development that reflects the existing patterns of development in the settlement, whilst avoiding any areas of good quality peatland or deep peat.
- A key residential development opportunity remains to the west of Munro Place.
- Ensure future development is sensitive to the Kyle of Tongue National Scenic Area and Farr Bay, Strathy and Portskerra Special Landscape Area.

Map 4



Durness

Issues

- Services for a large rural area are concentrated in Durness, including Durness Primary School and a range of service and tourist related businesses.
- The settlement is situated on level cliff top terrain and has a dispersed development pattern along the A838 road and around its junction with the road to Balnakeil.
- There are multiple natural heritage designations and features including Durness Special Area of Conservation; Oldshoremore, Cape Wrath and Durness Special Landscape Area; Smoo Cave, and Balnakeil.

Placemaking Priorities

- Continue to support the role of the settlement as a local and visitor service centre.
- Promote Balnakeil Craft village as a tourist destination and local centre for business and employment.
- Support the potential for a community-owned harbour facility on the west banks of Loch Eriboll.
- Celebrate and safeguard the diverse range of natural, cultural and historic environment assets, and ensure development avoids areas of good quality peatland and deep peat.

4 Sutherland Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Chataibh

- Crofting in the parish of Durness should continue to be recognised as playing an important role for the community.
- Development should minimise the loss of traditionally crofted inbye land which provides suitable habitat for corncrake.



Embo

Issues

- Limited development opportunities at Embo Street until significant realignment and widening of existing road and junction with Dornoch-Embo Road.
- Improvements required to the Dornoch-Embo Road.
- Increased pressure on local road network due to traffic from the caravan site.
- Potential for development of new crofts as part of a community led initiative.

Placemaking Priorities

- Developments should reinforce existing street layout e.g. principal elevation facing the road, similar design/materials.
- Re-use of old school building for community uses.
- Maintain open space to north of the village at the football field.

4 Sutherland Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Chataibh

- Significant developments to be accompanied by a recreational management plan to assess any likely increased pressures from recreational access of the sand dunes or disturbance to wintering or breeding birds.
- Development proposals should have regard to Dornoch Firth and Loch Fleet SPA and Ramsar site, Moray Firth SAC and Loch Fleet SSSI.



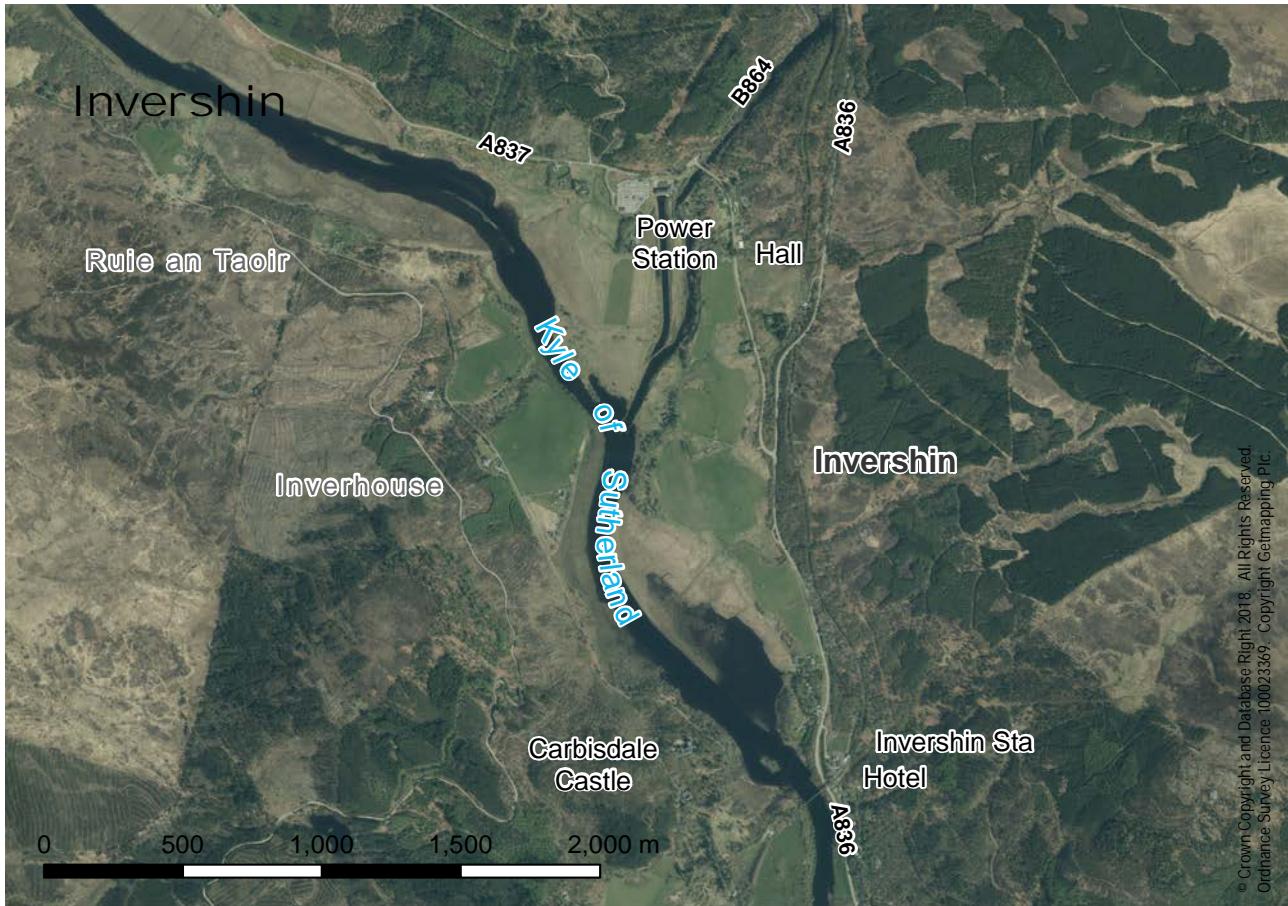
Invershin

Issues

- Existing settlement pattern is one where houses are dispersed in a linear pattern along the A836.

Placemaking priorities

- Supportive of growth whilst seeking to avoid proposals that would lead to the creation of numerous new accesses onto the A836.
- Development proposals should have regard to the proximity of the River Oykel SAC, Kyle of Sutherland Marshes SSSI, Shin Viaduct A-Listed Building, areas of Ancient Woodland and Invershin Farm standing stone Ancient Monument.



Kinlochbervie

Issues

- The settlement is a key centre for services for north-west Sutherland, including the High School and fishing port.
- Fishing, aquaculture, the public sector and tourism provide the main employment, with crofting also playing a key role.
- Complex topography and the road pattern around the lochs have contributed to a fragmented development pattern.
- In recent years, almost half of housing completions were outwith the previous plan's settlement boundary (Sutherland Local Plan) on non-allocated sites.

Placemaking Priorities

- Continue to support the role of marine industries in the local economy.
- Encourage the development of Loch Clash Community Harbour.
- Support the roll-out of broadband to improve connectivity in the area.
- Direct development to infill sites, and prevent sprawl of the settlement into the surrounding countryside, unless there are justifiable reasons in terms of croft management.



Melness

Issues

- The settlement is made up of several small crofting townships along the cliff tops on the west side of Tongue Bay.
- The Melness Crofter's Estate manage the land for crofting, a key source of employment for the community along with aquaculture, public and service sectors and other forms of land management.
- Designations highlight the high quality natural environment that is attractive to live in and visit. Designations include the Kyle of Tongue National Scenic Area; Eriboll East and Whiten Head Special Landscape Area, and Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SPA.
- Services in the settlement are dispersed due to the traditional crofting land use and community's historic patterns of growth. Talmine Stores and Post Office, the community centre and Caladh Sona care facility are located around Cornhill Road.
- Future replacement of Caladh Sona is being planned by NHS Highland.
- The settlement may be well placed to support emerging industries, including a new tourism development proposal.

Placemaking Priorities

- Crofting should continue to be recognised as playing an important role for the community.

4 Sutherland Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Chataibh

- Support development that enables the settlement to capitalise on opportunities for future growth and economic development.
- Larger scale residential development proposals (e.g. more than 2 houses) should be located near existing facilities, for example near Cornhill Road.
- There may be opportunity for future residential expansion at Joseph Mackay Court.
- Ensure future development is sensitive to designations in the area.



Melvich

Issues

- Melvich shares local services and facilities with neighbouring Portskerra, but both settlements are discrete and situated at the mouth of the River Halladale.
- The built form is dispersed and linear along the A836 road, with a small back land housing cluster adjacent to the industrial estate.
- There is capacity for less than 10 housing units at Portskerra Waste Water Treatment Works.
- The rigs that run from the road east to the coast are on the boundary of the Strathy Coast SSSI. The settlement overlooks the North Caithness Cliffs SPA, the Farr Bay, Strathy & Portskerra Special Landscape Area lies to the north.

Placemaking Priorities

- Support use of the industrial estate that still has capacity for further small units.

4 Sutherland Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Chataibh

- Support potential for use of industrial estate as an office hub for small businesses currently working from home and for remote working.
- Support the potential for the settlement to capitalise on its location on the A836 for local and visitor economies.
- Any proposed development should have regard to nearby natural heritage designations.
- Development should seek to preserve the historic crofting settlement pattern.
- Crofting should continue to be recognised as playing an important role for the community.



Portskerra

Issues

- Portskerra shares local services and facilities with neighbouring Melvich, but both settlements are discrete and situated at the mouth of the River Halladale.
- The settlement features traditional Highland buildings concentrated around the junction from the A836 and the junction to the School, with more dispersed dwellings in the north to Berrigoe and at Shore Street.
- There is capacity for less than 10 housing units at the Portskerra wastewater treatment works.
- The western half of the settlement is within the Farr Bay, Strathy & Portskerra Special Landscape Area, and the rigs to the east running to the coast are on the boundary of the Strathy Coast SSSI and near the North Caithness Cliffs SPA.

Placemaking Priorities

- Promote opportunities to capitalise on trade from local and visitor traffic along the A836.
- The traditional pattern of rigs associated with houses should be maintained.
- Any proposed development should have regard to the nearby natural heritage designations.
- Development should seek to preserve the historic crofting settlement pattern.
- Crofting should continue to be recognised as playing an important role for the community.



Rosehall

Issues

- Development needs to be proportionate to the capacity of the mainly single track A837.

Placemaking priorities

- Development close to the River Oykel Special Area of Conservation will be discouraged.
- Development between the road and the river will be required to connect to mains sewerage to avoid impacts on the Special Area of Conservation.
- Concentrate development around the existing facilities in the village.
- Maintain access to Rosehall Trails Path.



Scourie

Issues

- Scourie is a key village in north-west Sutherland that provides a range of services to visitors and the local community.
- The settlement has retained a range of its traditional Highland forms like crofting rigs, but has also developed modern facilities, like the Sports Pavillion.
- There are a range of community-led development initiatives that continue to serve the needs of the local community as well as building on the potential of the tourism industry.
- The settlement is surrounded by natural heritage designations including Handa Special Protection Area and Scourie Coast SSSI and therefore is sensitive to development.
- Capacity for Waste Water Treatment is limited to 10 housing units at Scourie Village Septic Tank, and less than 10 at Scourie Handa Septic Tank.

Placemaking Priorities

- Support future development that helps to sustain existing services.
- The traditional crofting landscape in the centre of the village should be safeguarded (bounded by the A894 road to the north and west, and by the road linking the settlement in the north-east to the playing fields in the south-east).
- Development on the land between the village hall and the caravan and camping site should be sensitive to the amenity of coastal views across Scourie Bay.

4 Sutherland Settlements | Tuineachaidhean Chataibh

- Development at Scourie More should not create skylining along the ridge.
- Any proposed development should have regard to the nearby natural heritage designations.



Appendix 1 - Schedule of Land Ownership | Eàrr-ràdh 1 – Clàr de Shealbh Fearainn

This Schedule of Landownership sets out where The Highland Council own land covered by allocations in the Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan. This is a requirement of Regulation 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2008.

Schedule of Landownership

Description of land owned by planning authority	Settlement	Reference to policies, proposals or views contained in local development plan which relate to the occurrence of development of the land
Council roads depot	Ardgay	AG04 Ardgay Railway Station Yard South
Old Migdale Hospital	Bonar Bridge	BB01 Cherry Grove
Former coal yard	Bonar Bridge	BB02 South Bonar Industrial Estate
East Brora Muir	Brora	BR03 East Brora Muir
Fascally Recreation Area	Brora	BR07 Upper Fascally
Castletown Heritage Centre	Castletown	CT02 Castlehill Steading and adjoining land
Bishopsfield	Dornoch	DN02 Bishopsfield
Meadows Park	Dornoch	DN05 Meadows Park
Former agricultural land	Golspie	GP01 Woodland Way
Sibell Road	Golspie	GP02 Sibell Road
Drummuie Farm	Golspie	GP03 Drummuie
Business Park	Golspie	GP06 Golspie Business Park
Coupers Yard	Helmsdale	HD04 Shore Street
Helmsdale New Fire Station	Helmsdale	HD05 East of Industrial Estate
Ord Croft Roads depot and salt store	Lairg	LA07 South-West of Ord Place
Laundry road depot	Lairg	LA04 Former Laundry

Appendix 1 - Schedule of Land Ownership | Eàrr-ràdh 1 – Clàr de Shealbh Fearainn

Description of land owned by planning authority	Settlement	Reference to policies, proposals or views contained in local development plan which relate to the occurrence of development of the land
Former quarry site	Lochinver	LV05 West of the Coastguard Station
Former quarry site	Lochinver	LV06 Land Adjacent to Assynt Leisure Centre
Vacant industrial land	Lochinver	LV07 Culag Harbour
Viewfirth Park	Thurso	TS11 Viewfirth Park
Council depot	Thurso	TS07 Land at Sir Archibald Road
Old manse	Tongue	TG04 South of St Andrew's Church
Wick Industrial Estate	Wick	WK23 Wick Industrial Estate
National Nuclear Archive site	Wick	WK08 South East of Terminal Building
South Primary School	Wick	WK17 South of Roxburgh Road
Hillhead Primary School	Wick	WK14 Hillhead Primary School
Expansion site for industrial estate	Wick	WK09 North of Wick North Primary School
Council depot	Wick	WK13 Land West of Green Road
Wick High School building	Wick	WK15 Wick High School Building
Land at South Head	Wick	WK10 North of Wellington Avenue
Swimming pool, Council depot and several small properties	Wick	WK12 Lower Pulteneytown
Landfill and waste management facility	Seater	Seater Waste Management Facility EDA

The list below explains some of the terms used in the Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan or related material. Please note the explanations given are not intended as legal definitions of the planning terms used.

A

Action Programme: Prepared alongside the local development plan to help deliver the proposals with the plan by setting out who is responsible for the delivery of development sites, improved infrastructure and a broad indication of when it will need to be installed/completed by. All parties referred to in the Action Programme have a key role in the implementation of the Plan and the Council will, in conjunction with Community Planning Partners, monitor progress.

Allocations: Land identified in a Local Development Plan as appropriate for a specific use or mix of uses (see Uses below for further detail).

Area for Co-ordinated Tourist Connections: Area where maximising the reach of the tourism sector inland is promoted, for example opportunities associated with the North Coast 500 and the National Cycle Network.

Area for Energy Business Expansion: Area within which the Plan seeks to maximise opportunities arising from offshore renewables and oil and gas, including employment-generating uses to service the sector, through support for harbours, allocation of business and industrial land and a flexible approach to considering the needs of emergent sectors and strategic infrastructure proposals.

Area for Flexible Community-led Development: A flexible approach in remote and rural areas, especially in fragile areas, to support communities that are either dispersed or clustered together in settlements offering varying services and facilities, by enabling community-led sustainable growth and development as well as growth through inward investment.

C

Carbon CLEVER: An initiative aimed at achieving a carbon neutral Inverness and a low carbon Highlands by 2025, toward which the Council has committed resources from its capital budget.

Community Planning Partnership: The partnership is made up of representatives from each Council Service together with key public sector and third sector organisations. Its purpose of it to provide strategic political leadership and expertise to drive and enable public service reform, including the delivery of the Single Outcome Agreement and continuous improvement of partnership working, so as to achieve better and fairer outcomes for the Highland population.

D

Designing Streets: A Scottish Government policy document that puts place and people before the movement of motor vehicles. Its aim is to promote sustainable development that focuses on creating high quality places. It enables designers and local authorities to unlock the full potential of streets to become vibrant, safe and attractive places.

Developer contributions: These planning obligations provide a means of ensuring that developers contribute towards the infrastructure and services needed to make proposed developments acceptable in terms of land use planning. Contributions may be made as financial payments or as direct works.

Development brief: Documents which are prepared to provide additional, detailed information on an allocation within a local development plan. They are designed to inform developers and other interested parties of the constraints and opportunities presented by a specific site, and the type of development expected or encouraged.

Development Plan: A set of documents that set out the local authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land in their area.

Developer Requirements: These are issues which a developer of the site need to address as part of developing the site. These can include survey work to inform a planning application or features which need to be incorporated into the final development.

E

East Coast Connectivity and Tourism Corridor: This covers an area stretching along the east coast of Caithness and Sutherland where the Council consider as particularly suitable for investment and development which helps to strengthen transport linkages and infrastructure and supports the growth of tourism and the expansion of the energy sectors.

Economic Development Areas (EDAs): These refer to places, outwith the main settlements, which either already are or have the potential to become important economic centres. A set of guiding principles is included for each EDA identified in the Plan which will assist in determining the extent and location of suitable opportunities. For two of the EDAs (Dounreay and the Seater Strategic Waste Management Facility) the Plan additionally identifies site boundaries.

G

Green Network: The network of existing and proposed green spaces and green corridors within and around settlements, linking out into the wider countryside, which help to enhance the area's biodiversity, quality of life and sense of place. Green Networks are made up of woodlands, other terrestrial habitats watercourses, wetlands and other open spaces, such as formal and informal green space in and around urban areas and active travel routes.

Greenspace: Important areas of grass, trees, or other vegetation set apart for recreational or aesthetic purposes in and around the settlements to be safeguarded from inappropriate development and enhanced where appropriate. HwLDP policies safeguard these networks of sustainable, accessible and fit for purpose green spaces including sports facilities.

Greenfield land: Land (or a defined site) which has previously never been built on.

Growing Settlement: These are settlements whereby planning applications will be guided by the criteria based in the Growing Settlements Policy and a list of guiding factors set for each settlement. The Growing Settlements approach is intended to provide some flexibility in these settlements while also ensuring that development is directed to the best locations.

H

Highland-wide Local Development Plan(HwLDP): This is the overarching Development Plan document which sets the strategy and vision for the whole Highland area (excluding the area covered by the Cairngorms National Park which has its own local development plan) and sets out how land can be used by developers for the next 20 years.

Hinterland: Areas of land around settlements that experience the greatest pressure for housing development. There is a general presumption against new housing development within these hinterland areas.

Housing Needs and Demand Assessment: Provides the evidence base to inform the policy discussions and decisions in relation to the delivery of affordable housing and market housing. It employs the recommended approach to analysing housing need and demand over the next 10 years and beyond.

Housing requirement: The number of housing units for which land must be identified to meet future demand. We work this out by considering market demand, changes in the number of people and households, the existing housing stock and the existing availability of land for housing.

Hut: A simple building used intermittently as recreational accommodation (i.e. Not as a principal residence); having an internal floor area of no more than 30m²; constructed of low impact materials; generally not connected to mains water, electricity or sewerage; and built in such a way that it is removable with little or no trace at the end of its life. Huts may be built singly or in groups. (SPP, 2014).

I

Infrastructure: The basic services and facilities needed to support development. These include road access and water and sewerage facilities and green infrastructure, e.g. landscaping, green networks, open spaces, and paths.

L

Local Development Plan: See Development Plan.

Long Term Site: Sites identified in the Plan as "Long Term" indicate the likely preferred direction for growth beyond the period . The suitability of these sites for development has been subject of initial consideration through the preparation of this Plan. However, they are not being invited for development within this Plan period and allocated sites are expected to be developed before any long term sites can be considered. During future reviews of the Plan we will consider bringing forward any of those sites as allocations (subject to further assessment and identification of any developer requirements) or whether they still reflect the likely preferred direction for growth and should remain proposed as long term sites. We review the Plan at least every five years.

M

Marine Renewable Energy: The generation of electricity from wave, tidal and offshore wind resources.

Masterplan: A document that explains how a site or series of sites will be developed. It will describe how the proposal will be implemented, and set out the costs, phasing and timing of development. A masterplan will usually be prepared by or on behalf of an organisation that owns the site or controls the development process. Those preparing masterplans should engage with the Council from the outset and should demonstrate that they have undertaken effective and meaningful public consultation, which has informed the content of the masterplan.

Material consideration: Matters we must consider when making a decision on a planning application. Scottish Government guidance states that there are two main tests in deciding whether a consideration is material and relevant and advises as follows:

“It should serve or be related to the purpose of planning. It should therefore relate to the development and use of land; and

It should fairly and reasonably relate to the particular application. It is for the decision maker to decide if a consideration is material and to assess both the weight to be attached to each material consideration and whether individually or together they are sufficient to outweigh the development plan. Where development plan policies are not directly relevant to the development proposal, material considerations will be of particular importance.”

Whether a consideration is material is a matter that may ultimately be decided by the courts when required.

Mitigation: Actions taken to avoid, reduce, remedy or compensate the effects of an adverse impact associated with a development.

Mixed Use: The practise of allowing more than one type of compatible Use on a site, e.g. a combination of housing, business, and community uses, or that any of these uses are suitable on the site. If the Plan allocates a site for Mixed Use development, it will specify the particular uses that are considered to be suitable. If the Plan requires that the development of a particular site must deliver a mix of uses then that will be specified as a Developer Requirement for that site.

O

Open Space: Taken to mean areas of greenspace or civic space which provide public value by offering opportunities for sport and outdoor recreation or visual amenity. These areas are protected from inappropriate development through HwLDP policies.

P

Permeability: The extent to which there are a number of alternative ways through an environment. A permeable layout allows people to move around with greater ease and more choice of routes.

Placemaking Priorities: These are important considerations for how a settlement can grow and be enhanced in order that it functions well and is an attractive place to live. These priorities will help to guide decisions on individual development and investment proposals.

Proposed Plan: This is the first main draft of the Local Development Plan and represents the planning authority's 'settled view' as to what the final adopted content of the plan should be.

S

Sequential Approach: The sequential approach requires developers to search for a suitable site for their proposal following a sequential list of possible locations. For example, developers of large scale retail developments are required to look first of all at city and town centres locations.

Settlement Development Areas (SDAs): Reflects the built up area and allocated expansion areas for mapped settlements. These areas are preferred areas for most types of development subject to consistency with HwLDP Policy 34: Settlement Development Areas.

Spatial Strategy: Encapsulates the headline changes that the Plan seeks to achieve and provide locational guidance for new development.

Special Landscape Area (SLA): These are areas where the scenery is highly valued locally, and have been designated by the Council to ensure that the landscape is not damaged by inappropriate development, and in some cases encourage positive landscape management.

U

Uses: We have allocated sites for the following different land uses. Where relevant the corresponding permissible use(s) taken from The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes)(Scotland) Order 1997 is/are defined below.

Housing: Class 9 Houses (but may also allow Class 8 Residential institutions)

Business: Class 4 Business (but may also allow ancillary storage or distribution uses)

Tourism: Various Classes, dependent upon site circumstances

Industry: Class 4 Business, Class 5 General Industrial, Class 6 Storage or Distribution

Community: Class 10 Non residential institutions (but may also include other public facilities such as sports pitches)

Retail: Class 1 Shops (but Plan text may restrict scale and type of retailing)

Additional Uses are included for allocations where specific developments are being supported, e.g. student accommodation.

In addition to the allocations above, the Plan mapping shows areas of safeguarded Greenspace. These are areas where the Council does not wish to encourage development because they represent greenspace from which the general public derive an amenity value. The protection of these areas is underpinned by policies within the HwLDP.

W

Windfall sites: These are sites that have come forward for development that are within areas identified as Allocations within the Development Plan.



**The Highland
Council
Comhairle na
Gàidhealtachd**
