

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Annual Report 2017 - 2018





Contents

	Page
Introduction	4
Welcome to Dumfries and Galloway	5
Part 1: Defining and Measuring a High-Quality Planning Service	6
Part 2: Supporting Evidence	32
Part 3: Service Improvements 2017-18	34
Part 4: National Headline Indicators (NHIs)	38
Part 5: Official Statistics	42
Part 6: Workforce Information (as on 31 March 2017)	19
Part 7: Planning Committee Information	46
Part 8: Performance Markers	47
 Case Studies	
Case Study 1 - Dumfries & Galloway Royal Infirmary - 'The Garden Hospital'	12
Case Study 2 - Visit of RTPI President to Dumfries & Galloway	16
Case Study 3 - Proposed Plan - Local Development Plan 2 and Supplementary Guidance	18
Case Study 4 - Strategic Housing Development Forum	20
Case Study 5 - Charging for Pre-Application Enquiries and Other Non-Statutory Services	22
Case Study 6 - Simplified Planning Zone - Housing Pilot	24
Case Study 7 - The Galloway Viking Hoard	26
Case Study 8 - Stranraer Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS)	28
Case Study 9 - Planning Focus on Heritage	30

Introduction

Welcome to the annual performance report for our Planning Service, which provides details and case studies highlighting the work of our Planning team during 2017/18. This Planning Performance Framework (PPF) Annual Report outlines our continued commitment to improving our performance, meeting our customers' needs and helping the delivery of quality new development across our region.



Cllr Archie Dryburgh



Cllr Andrew Wood

There has been an encouraging 10% increase in planning applications this year, and our timescales for dealing with these have held up well. Work on our next Local Development Plan is well advanced and an important milestone was reached this year with the publication of our Proposed Plan. The Planning Service plays a key role in delivering our Council's main priority of building the local economy.

There are encouraging signs that the economy may be starting to recover following years of underperforming. The Borderlands initiative has received high level backing from both UK and Scottish Governments, and this innovative "rural deal" could unlock investment in the region's infrastructure and economic capacity in coming years. The South of Scotland Enterprise Agency will be set up in 2020 and an interim economic partnership is already up and running. Our Planning service is well positioned to play a vital role in coming years in supporting the delivery of these initiatives. We will endeavour to seek the best possible outcomes for our region from these valuable opportunities.

Cllr Archie Dryburgh, Chair and **Cllr Andrew Wood, Vice Chair**

Environment, Economy and Infrastructure Committee

Dumfries and Galloway Council

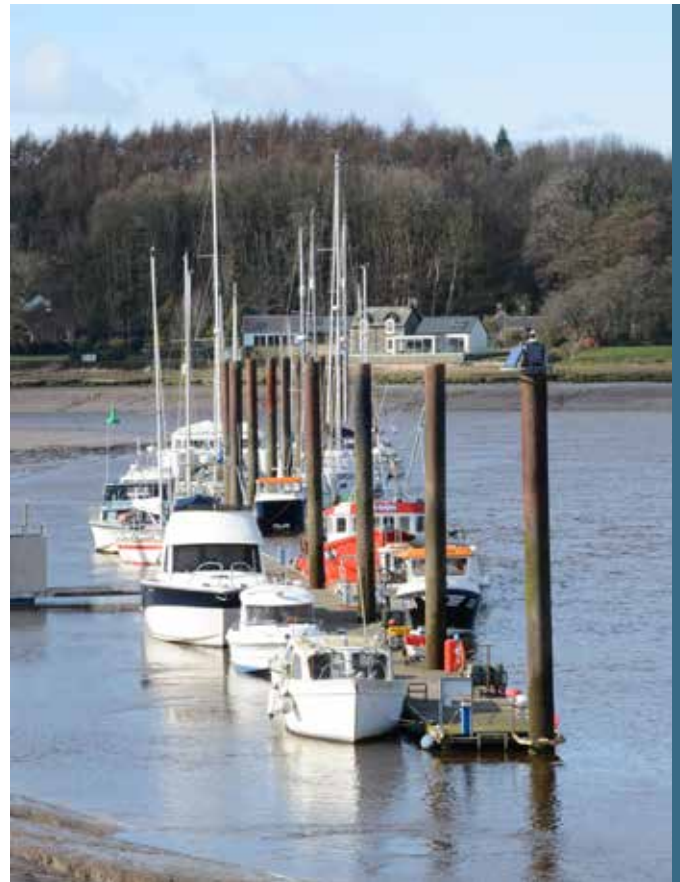
Welcome to Dumfries & Galloway

Dumfries and Galloway covers 2,481 square miles (6,427 km²), making it the 3rd largest region by area in Scotland. In 2017, the population was estimated as 149,200, the 13th largest Scottish local authority by population. There are about 60 people for every square mile (23/km²), reflecting the sparsely populated rural areas of the region.

The largest town in the region is Dumfries with a population of 49,221, next is Stranraer with nearly 13,000 people and then Annan with around 10,000. All other villages and towns have a population of 4,000 or less.

The main employment sectors in the region are:

- Public sector
- NHS
- Business and customer services
- Manufacturing
- Distribution and logistics
- Tourism
- Retail
- Agricultural & forestry



Part 1: Defining and Measuring a High-Quality Planning Service



1.1 Quality of outcomes

1.1.1 One of the most significant new buildings in Dumfries & Galloway in decades was completed and opened in 2017, namely the new Dumfries & Galloway Royal Infirmary (DGRI) [see Case Study 1]. The hospital was designed around the concept of it being a “Garden Hospital” where its semi-rural location on the edge of Dumfries meant that the development could maximise views out to the countryside and so “create a naturally therapeutic and healing environment”. It also has 17 separate courtyards and gardens and each of the 344 single bed en-suite rooms has a view to either the countryside or one of these courtyards. Palliative care bedrooms have their own private gardens, with dedicated space for beds to be wheeled outside. The women and children’s courtyard has safe space for children to play.

1.1.2 The NHS involved planning staff in the development of the hospital from the outset. From the initial concept stages to sitting on the Project Board, to site selection from 27 initial options through to providing detailed pre-application

advice on 3 detailed designs from 3 competitive bidders, DGC planners worked very closely with the proposals. The initial planning permission in principle application was the first application to be the subject of a Processing Agreement in Dumfries & Galloway and this project management approach proved to be very beneficial to all parties and helped deliver a permission within 4 months (quite an achievement given the complexity and scale of the proposals) and ensured that financial deadlines were met.

1.1.3 The Council made a submission on behalf of all the parties involved for the 2018 Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Awards for Planning Excellence and the submission was shortlisted as a Finalist in the Health and Wellbeing category.

1.1.4 2017/18 was always going to be a ‘fallow year’ for the Dumfries & Galloway Council Design Awards but following the success of the scheme in 2017, we have made running a 2nd award scheme one of our commitments for 2018/19 (see Part 3 below).

1.1.5 In May 2017, the President of the RTPI, Stephen Wilkinson, visited Dumfries & Galloway as one of only 2 stops on his tour of Scotland [see Case Study 2]. We were able to show him one of the winners of the 2017 Design Awards, the Kirroughtree Visitor Centre, then the DGRI whilst it was still under construction, and finally give him a walking tour of Dumfries town centre to show him previous and proposed regeneration projects.

1.1.6 The geography of Dumfries & Galloway means that it has a combination of large upland areas and relatively high wind speeds, making it an area of considerable interest to wind energy developers. In order to ensure that the right developments go in the right place, the LDP has a specific policy on wind energy, Policy IN2, and related statutory Supplementary Guidance, entitled **Part 1 Wind Energy Development: Development Management Considerations**. The Supplementary Guidance includes Appendix C which is the Dumfries & Galloway Wind Farm Landscape Capacity Study (DGWLCS). This document assesses the sensitivity of landscape character types, and more locally defined character areas, to different sizes of wind turbine development and as such, is an essential document in the assessment of wind farm applications. However, the Supplementary Guidance dated from March 2015 and the initial DGWLCS dated from January 2011. These were found to have been superseded by ever larger turbine sizes and the 'Large Turbine' typology (>80m to blade tip) was no longer representative of the turbine types coming forward. Furthermore, the cumulative impact of wind farms was having an impact on some landscape character types. Accordingly, a revised DGWLCS was commissioned, produced by a recognised expert in the field (who had also been involved in the initial document), in conjunction with the Council Landscape Architect.

After consultation, the revised Supplementary Guidance and DGWLCS were adopted in June 2017.

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15342/Supplementary-guidance>



1.2 Quality of service and engagement

1.2.1 During 2017/18, our second Local Development Plan (LDP2) moved from the **Main Issues Report (MIR)** phase of the process into the **Proposed Plan** stage. Following Full Council approval, the MIR consultation ended in April 2017 and 419 representations were received. LDP team members steadily worked through these representations and from that, were able to work up a draft Proposed Plan. There was a significant amount of engagement with Elected Members prior to the Proposed Plan going before a special Full Council meeting on 18 January 2018. There were a total of 3 Member seminars, identifying the issues raised in the representations and covering both an overview of the process and specific topics:- Economic Development (and Renewable Energy); Housing; and Proposed Plan Overview. There were also 10 Ward meetings held so Members could see all the site specific proposals in their area. This proved to be a useful two-way exchange of information, with Members being able to provide detailed local knowledge about individual sites and also having early sight of the proposals allowed for the Full Council meeting to progress more smoothly.

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16513/Local-Development-Plan-2---Main-Issues-Report>

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/ldp2>

1.2.2 Following the decision in January 2018, the agreed Proposed Plan progressed to publication [see Case Study 3]. In addition to the required statutory notices, the LDP team undertook neighbour notification for identified sites and continued to make use of the GovDelivery system for notifying the 1,700 interested parties who have signed up to receive targeted emails. The period for representations to the Proposed Plan was set to end on 30 April 2018.

1.2.3 Whilst the Council ceased providing formal pre-application advice for most Local applications for a temporary period (see C: Context, Para 5 below), we continued undertaking pre-application enquiries and meetings for Major and large Local applications which represented significant potential inward investment opportunities. All the relevant key stakeholders would be invited to meetings, in order to try to provide a 'one stop shop' service. Developer contribution requirements are always explained during these meetings. The Council's developer contributions policy is set out in one of the 3 overarching policies in the Local Development Plan, Policy OP3, and this is supported by Supplementary Guidance. **Revised Supplementary Guidance for Developer Contributions** was adopted in June 2017 and this included updated education contributions criteria. A separate Likelihood Table (which sets out which schools currently have a capacity issue and so require a developer contribution) is maintained and regularly reviewed as school rolls change.

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15327/Planning-advice-and-enquiries>

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15342/Supplementary-guidance>



1.2.4 Reflecting the 'channel shift' to greater use of the internet for information, the Council's website is a source of significant planning information, to aid self-service. The **planning pages** provide links to the eDevelopment portal and clearly signpost that this is the preferred method for the submission of applications. Our various Charters (including the Enforcement Charter), the **LDP and all the related Supplementary and other Guidance** are available online using the links below.

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/planning>

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/ldp>

1.2.5 One of the documents included in our **webpages** is a customer guidance / advice note for small to medium sized business proposals. This 20 page document covers all aspects of planning and related processes relevant to SMEs in plain English. It also sets out the level and type of supporting information which we would expect to see submitted with such planning applications.

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15327/Planning-advice-and-enquiries>

1.2.6 There are strong links between the Council's Planning Service and Economic Development Service. They fall within the same Directorate and the 2 respective Heads of Service attend the Departmental Management Team (DMT) together. A Strategic Projects Leadership Board (chaired by the Director of Economy, Environment & Infrastructure and including the Head of Planning & Regulatory Services and the Head of Economic Development) operates to ensure that major projects within the region are suitably prioritised and a joined-up approach is taken.

1.2.7 Colleagues in Strategic Housing have worked closely with the LDP team in producing the Housing Needs & Demand Assessment (HNDA) which achieved Robust and Credible status in August 2016. This close working relationship has carried over into the setting up by Strategic Housing of a Development Forum, which includes all of the Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) operating in the region [see Case Study 4]. Senior planning staff always attend these meetings and they are being used as a method of highlighting development proposals by the RSLs early in the process and ensuring that communications between RSLs, Strategic Housing and planning are open and frequent, so as to effectively deliver much-needed affordable housing.



1.2.8 The annual Agents' Forum meeting was held on 22 February 2018 and, for the first time, it was a joint Planning and Building Standards event, which was one of our PPF improvement commitments for last year. This not only better reflects the revised management structure of the service but makes more effective use of professional agents' time – as most submit both planning applications and building warrants, they only need to attend one event instead of several.

1.2.9 In terms of our Development Management customer satisfaction results, in 2016/17, our survey rating fell from 75% to 69%. In 2017/18, the rating increased up to 77%. Whilst this is still not as high as well would like, it does represent a welcome reversal of the trend, despite being in challenging times for local authority service provision. During the reporting period, we added customer satisfaction survey forms to all decision notices and added a link to staff email signatures in order to try and obtain greater customer feedback. However, there remains a difficulty in obtaining a statistically meaningful / representative number of responses to customer surveys, as a more widespread public 'survey fatigue' becoming a factor. However, the Council's Archaeologist, who is based within the Development Planning team, continues to receive unsolicited letters of thanks for his talks around the UK about the significant find of a Viking hoard in the Stewartry area [see Case Study 7].



1.3 Governance

1.3.1 The Council's Scheme of Delegation to Officers for Planning continues to operate effectively, with 95.3% of decisions being made under delegated powers in 2017/18.

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15336/Planning-decisions>

93.6% of applications were approved over the reporting period. This represents a slight decrease (1.8%) in the approval rate during 2016/17. 20 planning applications were refused by the Planning Applications Committee during the reporting period, compared with 6 in 2016/17.

1.3.2 In terms of **Committees**, there are normally 12 Planning Applications Committee meetings each year although in 2017/18, there were only 11 due to the local government elections. There were 6 scheduled Local Review Body meetings in 2017/18, although only 5 meetings were called. All Development Planning matters are reported to the Economy, Environment & Infrastructure Committee, which meets every 2 months. Key Local Development Plan decisions are made by the Full Council, which meets every 3 months. A special Full Council meeting was held on 18 January 2018 to consider the Proposed Plan.

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15143/Committee-meetings>

1.3.3 The Development Management structure which was introduced in 2014/15 remained largely unaltered during 2017/18 and has continued to allow the Council to provide the appropriate and proportionate level of skill and expertise for each respective application i.e. the Major Developments team includes more experienced planners with specialist knowledge.

1.3.4 A project management approach is undertaken for Major applications and indeed large Local applications, best exemplified where a Processing Agreement is used. Our **pre-application form for Major applications** expressly states:- *"Dumfries and Galloway Council will promote a partnership protocol, or project plan, for all Major developments... It is requested that developers approach the partnership protocol in a positive and collaborative manner."* There has been an encouraging increase in the take-up of Processing Agreements. In 2017/18, 9 applications were the subject of a Processing Agreement compared with just 4 in 2016/17 – this represents a 125% increase. However, despite our active promotion of the benefits to both parties in entering into Processing Agreements, there remain some developers who are unwilling to enter into such agreements.

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15327/Planning-advice-and-enquiries>

1.3.5 10 legacy cases (i.e. applications of more than 1 year old) were determined during 2017/18. However, there remained 44 active legacy cases as of 31 March 2018 (there were 31 outstanding legacy cases at the end of 2016/17). This represents a disappointing increase in such cases. Greater emphasis will be made in the coming year to try and ensure that fewer legacy cases remain undetermined and this is one of our Service Improvement Commitments for 2018/19 (see Part 3 below).

1.3.6 The Project Board for LDP2, which was established in 2016, continues to hold meetings every 2 months and this has helped provide scrutiny from outwith the Planning Service and has ensured that the programme will meet the target set out in the Development Plan Scheme. Amongst others, the board includes representatives from Economic Development and Community Planning.



1.3.7 The Dumfries & Galloway Council Planning Service continues to face significant budget pressures due to both wider Council funding efficiencies and continuing low levels of planning fee income, which has never returned to pre-2008 levels. Stringent budget monitoring processes have been put in place to monitor and report on budget pressures.

1.3.8 Budget and efficiency measures are considered at management team meetings of all levels and reports are made regularly to the Economy, Environment & Infrastructure Committee.

1.4 Culture of continuous improvement

1.4.1 Analysis of the Development Management performance is set out in Part 5 - C : Context below.

1.4.2 We have continued to see a year-on-year increase in the number of applications submitted online via the Scottish Government's ePlanning portal for application submissions. The percentage has steadily grown from just 6% of submissions in the launch year (2010/11) to us now receiving 76.3% of all applications online. This figure is expected to continue to grow as more agents use the eDevelopment website for submitting both building warrants and planning applications.

1.4.3 The Development Planning team continued with the monitoring of identified sites in the current Local Development Plan and with the contacting of landowners of allocated sites to establish just how effective their sites were (e.g. was the site being actively marketed and promoted for development?). This, combined with the 2 Call for Sites exercises which were undertaken at the pre-MIR stage, should ensure that any demonstrably ineffective sites are not allocated in LDP2.

1.4.4 The Council continues to operate a practice of requiring all staff to have an annual Professional Development Review (PDR). This formalised process allows staff development needs to be identified and for useful 2 way feedback to be facilitated and recorded. The present format of PDR is being reviewed corporately currently.

1.4.5 Team meetings are used as a method of ensuring that all staff are aware of relevant changes both at a national and local level. Each of the managers holds regular meetings with their Team. There is a cascade process of information from the Corporate Management Team to the Departmental Management Team, the Service Management Team and the Planning & Building Standards Management Team meetings. These meetings are however a 2 way process, where staff are encouraged to provide feedback. 1-2-1 meetings are also held.

1.4.6 Benchmarking has been used as a method of sharing best practice between authorities and among staff. For planning purposes, Dumfries & Galloway Council sits within Benchmarking Group 1 (Large Rural Authorities) and this also includes the following planning authorities:- Aberdeenshire; Argyll & Bute; Cairngorms National Park; Highland; Moray; Orkney; Scottish Borders; Shetland; & Western Isles. Our PPF Benchmarking partner for 2017/18 was Argyll & Bute Council. The Planning & Building Standards Manager attended all the Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS) Development Management Sub-Committee meetings during 2017/18 and is also a Vice-Chair of HOPS Energy & Resources Sub-Committee. The Team Leader LDP attended HOPS Development Planning Sub-Committee meetings. During 2017/18, the Head of Planning & Regulatory Services was the Immediate Past Chair of HOPS and attended meetings of the HOPS Executive and the High Level Group meetings with the Cabinet Minister.

Dumfries & Galloway Royal Infirmary - 'The Garden Hospital'



Location and Dates:

Dumfries - 2011 to 2017

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement
- Culture of continuous improvement

Key Markers:

2, 3, 4, 6, 12 & 15

Key Areas of Work:

- Design
- Environment
- Greenspace
- Economic Development
- Development Management Processes
- Planning Applications

- Interdisciplinary Working
- Collaborative Working
- Community Engagement
- Placemaking
- Process Improvement
- Project Management
- Transport
- Active Travel

Stakeholders Involved:

- General Public
- Local Developers
- Key Agencies
- Planning Committee
- Authority Planning Staff
- Authority Other Staff

Overview:

Dumfries & Galloway Royal Infirmary, the Garden Hospital, on the rural fringe of Dumfries, is an example of what can be achieved by effective collaboration, a pioneering approach, and a passion to deliver to the highest quality. A strong community planning partnership was formed to deliver the single biggest development in south-west Scotland for decades within a very tight timescale, from conception in 2011 to completion and opening in 2017. The development was planned and designed to maximise its rural setting by bringing the wider landscape into the site and the building, in order to create a naturally therapeutic and healing environment.

Goals:

Creation of a naturally healing environment

The development of the site was planned to secure the maximum benefits from the site's rural context, in order to bring the wider landscape into the hospital and provide a natural 'healing environment'. This approach to design was based on scientific research that connects the natural environment with positive health outcomes and faster healing times. Examples of how this

philosophy informed the resultant design are set out above and in the accompanying images. Usually associated with hard urban environments, this hospital project demonstrates the benefits of the rural healing environment on healthcare facilities. The 'Garden Hospital' concept is transferable to other healthcare infrastructure projects elsewhere.

Collaborative working

To ensure strong and effective leadership of the project from the outset, the NHS and DGC worked under a community planning partnership which involved key staff at all levels. At CEO and Director level, a monthly Project Board was established. At operational level, a DGC senior planning officer was embedded in weekly project meetings from early in the pre-application stage. DGC entered into its first Processing Agreement to deliver the decision within the timescale required for the business case, and chaired pre-application 'consultee meetings' to ensure that all key consultees were fully engaged and committed to the process. Whilst innovative at the time, such agreements and meetings are now standard practice for the Council on larger projects.





Outcomes:

Benefits for the community include:-

- State of the art 344-bed healthcare facility for region, with single-bed en-suite rooms for privacy and dignity
- Positive and therapeutic healing environment for patients
- Reduced travel times for rural area
- Improved pedestrian and cycle infrastructure across town.
- Improved bus service from town centre.
- Improved infrastructure on both local and trunk road networks
- Positive and far reaching community engagement.

Positive impacts for the economy include:

- Largest single construction project in SW Scotland for a number of decades.
- Up to 1000 construction workers on site at any one time.
- Significant allocation of construction work to local employers.
- Significant knock-on benefits to local economy, including hotels, restaurants, etc.
- Increased number of locally employed support staff to service hospital.

Positive impacts for the environment include:-

- New public hospital building which is on track for BREEAM Excellent status.
- Improved sustainable transport links.
- Improved public transport links.
- Significant planting scheme to integrate site into wider landscape, with wild planting areas on site peripheries to encourage wildlife habitats.



...and finally:-

The project was a finalist in the RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence 2018 (Health and Wellbeing Category)

Name of key officer

Patrick Hanna

Visit of RTPI President to Dumfries & Galloway



Location and Dates

Various sites across Dumfries & Galloway - 18 May 2017

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement
- Governance
- Culture of continuous improvement

Key Markers

2, 3, 12 & 13

Key Areas of Work

- Design
- Conservation
- Regeneration
- Environment
- Greenspace
- Town Centres
- Economic Development
- Development Management Processes
- Planning Applications
- Interdisciplinary Working
- Collaborative Working
- Community Engagement
- Placemaking
- Process Improvement
- Project Management
- Skills Sharing
- Transport
- Active Travel



Stakeholders Involved

- Authority Planning Staff
- Other – RTPI / Forestry Commission / NHS

Overview

The President of the Royal Town Planning Institute during 2017 was Stephen Wilkinson. He visited Dumfries & Galloway on 18 May 2017 and Council planners arranged a full day of activities to demonstrate the variety of development across the region and show the contribution which planners have made in their delivery.

The first stop was at the Forestry Commission's Kirroghtree Visitor Centre near Newton Stewart. This building was the Winner of the Best Build Non-Residential in the 2016 Council Design Awards. In addition to seeing the building firsthand, the President was able to appreciate the recreational facilities (which forms one of the 7 Stanes mountain biking centres across southern Scotland) and the Dark Skies Park within the Galloway Forest and the contribution which these make to both the rural economy and the wellbeing of the wider population.

Next was a visit to the new DGRI hospital site, which was still in the final stages of construction at the time. The President was able to hear about the background to the design and the ethos behind the Garden Hospital concept. He also learned how the Council planners had been involved from the outset of the project by the NHS and how it had been the first application to be the subject of a Processing Agreement locally.

Finally, he was given a tour of Dumfries town centre and shown some of the previous and proposed regeneration projects. While on the Devorgilla Bridge across the River Nith, he was given an opportunity to view what the proposed Whitesands flood prevention scheme would look like using VR goggles.



Goals

To demonstrate to the President of the RTPI the different types developments in which the Council is involved.

Outcomes

Of his visit, Stephen said:-

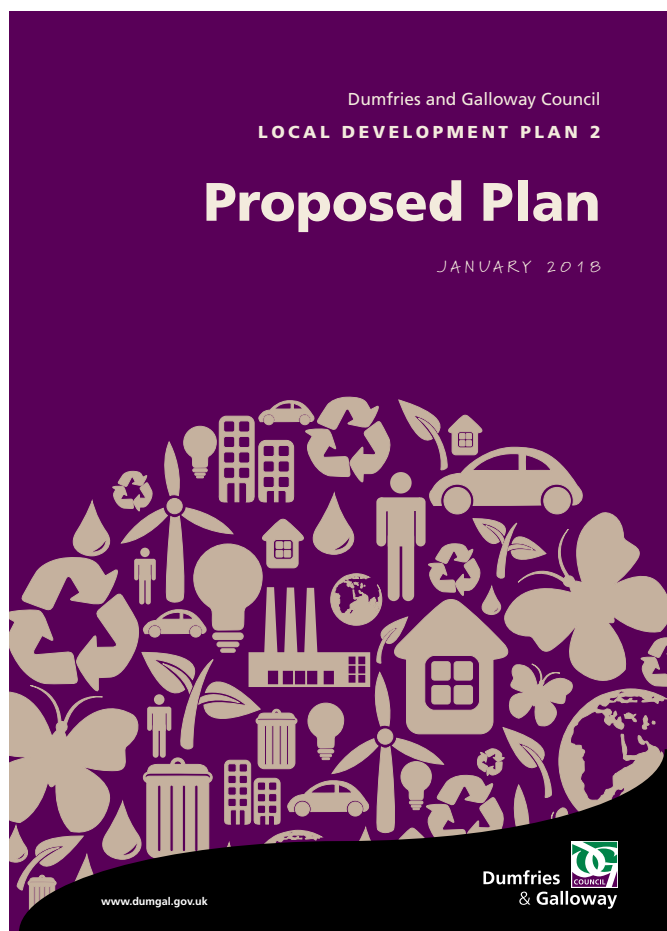
"The skills of planners have been put to diverse use in Dumfries and Galloway, from enhancing its rich heritage and natural assets to improving the public realm and finding new ways to boost the local economy."

<http://www.rtpi.org.uk/briefing-room/news-releases/2017/may/president-saw-talent-of-planners-put-to-diverse-use-in-scotland/>

Name of key officer

Steve Rogers

Proposed Plan - Local Development Plan 2 and Supplementary Guidance



Location and Dates

The Local Development Plan and associated supplementary guidance provides the land use framework for the whole of Dumfries and Galloway.

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to (please select all that apply):

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement
- Governance
- Culture of continuous improvement

Key Markers

7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15



Key Areas of Work

- Design
- Conservation
- Regeneration
- Environment
- Greenspace
- Town Centres
- Masterplanning
- Local Develop Plan & Supplementary Guidance
- Housing Supply
- Affordable Housing
- Economic Development
- Enforcement
- Development Management Processes
- Planning Applications
- Interdisciplinary Working
- Collaborative Working
- Community Engagement
- Placemaking
- Place Standard
- Performance Monitoring
- Project Management
- Skills Sharing
- Transport
- Active Travel

Stakeholders Involved

- General Public
- Hard to reach groups
- Local Developers
- Key Agencies
- Planning Committee
- Authority Planning Staff
- Authority Other Staff
- Other (please note)

Overview

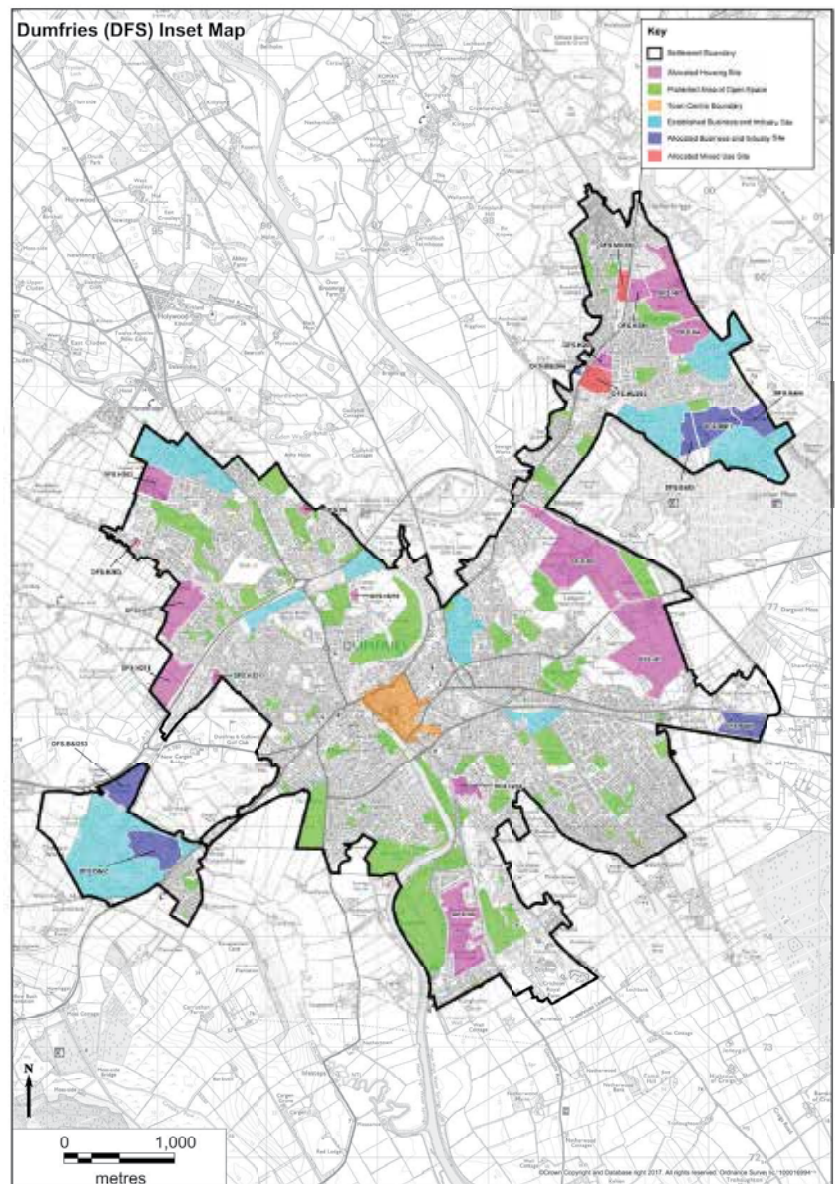
The Main Issues Report consultation closed at the end of April 2017. 419 representations were received. The points raised in the representations were taken into consideration when drafting the Proposed Plan.

To ensure Elected Member had an understanding of the issues raised in representations, 3 seminars were held with them to advise them of the key issues raised in the representations. Meetings were also arranged on a Ward basis to advise Members of all the sites that had been assessed as part of the process of preparing the Proposed Plan.

The Proposed Plan and draft supplementary guidance were published on 29 January 2018 with the closing date for representations as 30 April 2018.

Goals

The Local Development Plan supports the Council's vision for the future development of Dumfries and Galloway. It seeks to promote sustainable economic growth by setting out a land use framework which builds upon the special qualities of the area which make it an attractive place to live and do business, whilst at the same time recognising the importance of place making and protecting our most valuable built and natural assets. It is also the basis for decision making on planning applications and provides a framework for future development and infrastructure investment decisions by both the private and public sector.



Outcomes

The project is still underway. The Council is aiming to submit the proposed plan to Scottish Ministers for examination in September / October 2018. This will ensure that the proposed plan is on track with timetable set out in the Development Plan Scheme. A project board was established to oversee the project. The board helps to ensure the project is kept on track and is given scrutiny from non-planning parts of the Council.

Name of key officer

Shona McCoy

Strategic Housing Development Forum

Location and Dates

Dumfries & Galloway 2017 onwards

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement
- Governance
- Culture of continuous improvement

Key Markers

3, 12, 15

Key Areas of Work

- Regeneration
- Town Centres
- Affordable Housing
- Economic Development
- Development Management Processes
- Planning Applications
- Interdisciplinary Working
- Collaborative Working
- Process Improvement
- Project Management
- Skills Sharing

Stakeholders Involved

- Local Developers (RSLs)
- Key Agencies
- Authority Planning Staff
- Authority Other Staff

Overview

A number of meetings of the Development Forum took place during the year. These meetings are organised and chaired by the Council's Strategic Housing team and include senior members of Planning Services and other Council staff, representatives from all 3 Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) operating in the region and representatives from the Scottish Government. The forum has the objective of improving communications between all the relevant parties involved in the delivery of affordable housing in the region, ensuring that everyone is aware of the relevant evolving issues in respect of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP), Local Housing Strategy (LHS), Local Development Plan (LDP) and Development Management procedures and processes, together with providing an early awareness of the RSLs' development programme for the year.

Goals

After working very closely together on the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (which received Robust and Credible status in August 2016), staff from the Council's Strategic Housing team and Planning Services realised that there would be significant benefits in continuing with this positive working relationship, specifically with the aim of improving liaison with the RSLs operating in the area. There was a clear desire of all parties to ensure that the maximum amount of affordable housing in the SHIP was delivered on the ground, providing an important proportion of housing provision in the Local Development Plan, optimising the take up of available funding from the Scottish Government and, most importantly, providing new high quality housing stock for those on the waiting list. Experience had shown that, in the past, such a joined-up approach was not always present, which could result in the submission late in the financial year of substandard proposals, with the inevitable resultant pressure to get these applications satisfactorily amended and through the planning process before the funding options ran out – a



situation which was less than ideal for everyone. By having early and ongoing engagement with all the relevant parties, the objective of the forum was to allow for improved dialogue, better appreciation of the respective regulatory requirements and processes, early awareness of RSLs' annual development programmes and the key priorities within those, and early resolution of potential obstacles to delivery.

Outcomes

During 2017/18, the Development Forum met 3 times, including a special workshop session on the LHS. Strategic Housing staff have been very supportive of, and see the clear benefits of, our new pre-application enquiry service in addressing potential issues early in the development process. As such, they have made it a requirement for all new affordable housing proposals in the SHIP to have been the subject of a formal pre-application enquiry prior to submission. Whilst the true impact of these changes and the benefits of the Forum will only be come apparent as RSL applications come forward during 2018/19 and beyond, early indications are that this new approach is producing tangible benefits. The outcomes will be reported on in the next PPF.

Name of key officer

David Suttie

Charging for Pre-Application Enquiries and Other Non-Statutory Services

Location and Dates:

Dumfries & Galloway – 2017 to 2018

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement
- Governance
- Culture of continuous improvement

Key Markers:

3, 6, 12, 15

Key Areas of Work:

- Development Management Processes
- Planning Applications
- Collaborative Working
- Performance Monitoring
- Process Improvement

Stakeholders Involved:

- General Public
- Local Developers
- Authority Planning Staff
- Authority Other Staff

Overview:

The provision of pre-application advice is a non-statutory service, which has historically been free of charge in Dumfries and Galloway. A benchmarking exercise showed that a number of other Scottish planning authorities had started to charge for such services and anecdotally it is known that others are considering it. Following a customer survey, which indicated that 56% of customers would be prepared to pay a fee for an improved service, the Council decided to introduce charges from April 2018, with the fee to be set as a proportion of the statutory fee scale.

Goals:

The key goals of the new service were three-fold:

To speak to our customers and understand exactly what they wanted from a pre-application enquiry service

To design and deliver a high quality and meaningful pre-application enquiry service for customers.

To recruit additional resource to ensure that the service could be successfully delivered as promised.

Outcomes:

Following customer surveys to ascertain the needs of customers, a business case was prepared in early 2017. The business case calculated estimated operating costs for three typical enquiry types, householder, local and major; benchmarked fee structures with other planning authorities; calculated projected workload based on historical workload and benchmarking with other authorities.

To deliver this service and avoid the potentially significant reputational damage of failure, recruitment will be undertaken to manage the new service.

The service was launched on 3 April 2018, and will be subject to ongoing monitoring and review. The detailed outcomes will feature in next year's Planning Performance Framework.

Name of key officer

Patrick Hanna



Simplified Planning Zone - Housing Pilot



Location and Dates

Hardthorn Road, Dumfries 2017

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to (please select all that apply):

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement
- Governance
- Culture of continuous improvement

Key Markers

1, 3, 6, 12, 15

Key Areas of Work

- Design
- Environment
- Greenspace
- Masterplanning
- Local Develop Plan & Supplementary Guidance
- Housing Supply
- Affordable Housing
- Development Management Processes
- Planning Applications
- Interdisciplinary Working
- Collaborative Working
- Community Engagement
- Placemaking
- Project Management
- Skills Sharing
- Staff Training
- Transport
- Active Travel

Stakeholders Involved

- Local Developers
- Key Agencies
- Authority Planning Staff
- Authority Other Staff

Overview

The Council along with Architecture and Design Scotland were one of 3 local authorities who were successful in securing funding from the Scottish Government to bring forward a simplified planning zone (SPZ) for housing.

During the case study period, the Council along with the appointed consultants (John Gilbert Architects and Angela Dorran) initially identified 2 potential sites. This has since been reduced to 1 site which is in Dumfries.

A welcome meeting led by the consultants was held in May 2017 to introduce the project to a number of interested parties and to gain support for taking it forward. The attendees included officers from across all the relevant sections of the Council, representatives from key agencies (SNH, SEPA and Scottish Water), elected members and a representative from each RSL active in the region and a local developer/landowner with an interest in one of the potential sites

A draft masterplan, design brief and plot passport have been developed.

Goals

Improve the quality of serviced site and self build development. Enhance the quality of place and extend choices for housing affordability for rural communities. Simplify and speed up the planning process especially for people who are not regular users of the service.

Outcomes

The case study is ongoing. The work undertaken in creating the masterplan for the site has, amongst other things demonstrated how important development viability is in determining the layout of a site and how it is developed.

The formal process of progressing the SPZ to adoption has not yet started as work is ongoing to refine the masterplan, design brief and plot passport in discussions with a potential developer.

Name of key officer

Shona McCoy



The Galloway Viking Hoard



Location and Dates:

Region-wide, 2015-18

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of service and engagement

Key Markers:

12, 13

Key Areas of Work:

- Community Engagement
- Placemaking
- Other - Archaeology

Stakeholders Involved:

- General Public
- Hard to reach groups

- Key Agencies
- Authority Planning Staff
- Authority Other Staff

Overview:

Dumfries and Galloway is an area rich in history, with over 26,000 historical and archaeological sites recorded in the Council's Historic Environment Record, ranging from prehistoric stone circles and burial tombs through to Mulberry Harbour remains from the Second World War. These are a consideration within the development management process, as well as with wider planning consultations from the forestry industry and utility companies. The natural and built environments are both key to the economic success of the area and the LDP seeks to safeguard and enhance these assets with appropriate policies and supplementary guidance.

In 2014, the Council's Archaeologist responded to a request for help from the Treasure Trove Unit to excavate a find made locally by metal-detectorists. This turned out to be the largest Viking hoard found in Scotland since 1858, of national and international significance, with over 100 stunning artefacts buried over 1100 years ago. It is also the first hoard in recent times to be professionally excavated by an archaeologist, resulting in a much greater understanding of its deposition and context.

The find engendered tremendous public interest and provided an ideal opportunity to foster wider public interest in the cultural heritage of the region and the role of Dumfries and Galloway Council in its preservation. As part of a scheme of public engagement, the Council's Archaeologist has delivered over 50 public lectures within the region, as well as further afield in neighbouring areas. This outreach has now attained over 3,000 attendees, covering all ranges of the populace from schools through to retirement groups, and the geographic breadth of the region from Portpatrick to Langholm. These lectures have included specially designed talks for visually-impaired groups, and a signed lecture for those with hearing impediments.

Goals:

To increase public appreciation of the region's cultural heritage and the role of the planning service in safeguarding and enhancing it.



Outcomes:

The heightened public interest led to a strong campaign to have the hoard retained within the regional museum service, and although this was ultimately not successful, it did result in an arrangement for significant elements of the hoard to be loaned out by the National Museum of Scotland to the new gallery in Kirkcudbright, which will bring an economic boost to local tourism. This aligns closely with the Government's Historic Environment Strategy, *Our Place in Time*, which strives "To ensure that the cultural, social, environmental and economic value of Scotland's heritage makes a strong contribution to the wellbeing of the nation and its people".

The site has been subsequently been designated as of national significance, with further research and survey undertaken and ongoing.

The timeous response of the Archaeology Service highlighted a gap in provision for emergency archaeological expertise when unexpected treasures of national import are uncovered, and has resulted in Historic Environment Scotland introducing a new scheme to mitigate against this in future occurrences.

"The fact that your council had an archaeologist who could respond quickly and as a bonus was a specialist in the field meant that the context of the find could be recorded; raising it from the mere recovery of interesting artefacts to placing it firmly into the historical record of Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish nation".

Name of key officer

Andrew Nicholson

Stranraer Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS)



Location and Dates:

Stranraer: 2016 - 2021

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes

Key Markers

3, 12

Key Areas of Work

- Design
- Conservation
- Regeneration
- Town Centres
- Masterplanning
- Economic Development
- Community Engagement
- Placemaking
- Project Management

Stakeholders Involved

- General Public
- Key Agencies
- Planning Committee
- Authority Planning Staff
- Authority Other Staff

Overview

Stranraer's setting at the head of Loch Ryan, the rural nature of the surrounding countryside and distance from other major settlements are defining characteristics. The high quality of the natural environment coupled with the relocation of ferry services to Cairnryan a few miles to the north have created an opportunity for Stranraer to develop a new identity as a marine leisure tourism destination. With the steps towards this captured in the Stranraer Waterfront Urban Design Strategy and Masterplan, substantial investment in recent years has seen major improvements to the town. An award winning design for Castle Square has created a welcoming public

space that acts as a vibrant social hub, investment in Agnew Park has provided high quality amenity grounds including a waterfront promenade, while a new marina and supporting facilities have enabled the development of water-sports activities on the loch.

Stranraer CARS aims to complement and build on these developments by investing in the historic core of the town centre and preserving the distinctive character of many of Stranraer's fine traditional buildings. CARS priority buildings have been the focus of most work to date with the unique qualities of each presenting their own challenges and opportunities. Its prominent location at the entrance to the west pier along with its distinctive 1930's design give the Harbourmaster's building a presence that outweighs its diminutive scale. With its original function as a weighbridge now obsolete, the addition of an extension alongside restoration of the original building will provide a flexible space that is relevant to changing use of the waterfront. Complementary landscaping will provide the final touch to the transition from industrial to amenity space allowing the building to adopt a new role supporting marine leisure tourism. This project is being part-funded by CARS and the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) with works due for completion in 2018.

Plans to conserve a further two Category A listed priority buildings in Stranraer town centre are well developed with work on site at Stranraer Museum scheduled for later this year. Gillespie's bakery, regarded as one of the best-preserved traditional bakeries in Scotland, is also due for substantial works to ensure it remains an asset for the town into the future. In addition, the CARS small grants scheme is generating much interest and property owners are being assisted with proposals for appropriate conservation work to buildings throughout the Conservation Area.

Stranraer enjoys the strong sense of community, independent spirit and friendly quality that is typical of more remote settlements. Engaging with the local community has been an integral part of the CARS project throughout with regular presentations, events and partnership working to help raise awareness of the scheme and encourage active involvement. Work is underway on preparation of an exhibition for Stranraer Museum this autumn along with development of apprenticeships in traditional building crafts in partnership with local agencies and businesses.



Goals

The Stranraer CARS project aims to promote and demonstrate best practice in the conservation of traditional buildings through the provision of specialist technical advice and by examples such as the priority building works in progress. Grant funding is intended to act as an incentive to engage people in this process as well as a means of investing in Stranraer's historic buildings. In tandem with delivery of the CARS project, the Senior Planner (Built Heritage Policy) has developed a Conservation Area Management Plan that supports the planning process and helps guide future delivery of the project.

Outcomes

There is considerable scope to develop greater understanding, appreciation and care of traditional buildings to ensure that heritage-led regeneration plays an effective part in Stranraer's future economic development. The continued facilitation of inter-departmental working, provision of accessible guidance and delivery of building works will all have a role in the achievement of these outcomes. Perhaps the most important legacy the project can achieve will be to effect a degree of culture change and capacity building, both within the local authority and the local community, to improve recognition of the value of historic buildings and develop the skills needed to look after them.

Name of key officer

Pam Taylor

Planning Focus on Heritage



Location and Dates

2017 – 2018

The Planning Service has given additional recognition to the built heritage as a key contributor to the economy of the region and a big part of its appeal as an attractive place to live, work and visit. In different locations across Dumfries and Galloway, organisations and individuals are involved in projects and initiatives which focus on reviving and re-purposing places or buildings of historic or aesthetic importance especially where local people value them. The Planning Service has provided Supplementary Guidance and supported and approved a range of innovative planning applications.

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement
- Culture of continuous improvement

Key Markers

3, 11, 12

Key Areas of Work

- Design
- Conservation
- Regeneration
- Environment
- Town Centres
- Local Develop Plan & Supplementary Guidance
- Economic Development
- Planning Applications
- Interdisciplinary Working
- Collaborative Working
- Community Engagement
- Placemaking
- Place Standard
- Project Management
- Skills Sharing
- Active Travel

Stakeholders Involved

- General Public
- Hard to reach groups
- Local Developers
- Key Agencies
- Planning Committee
- Authority Planning Staff
- Authority Other Staff

Overview

The Council has taken a wider view of less conventional proposals when there is a clear benefit to the reuse of a historic building or place by providing a focus for regeneration and economic benefits.

The Council's Supplementary Guidance: Historic Built Environment was adopted in June 2017. It sets out to assist deliver well considered design and development in the context of the historic environment, helping find a balance between preservation and change. It supports the historic environment policies of the current Local Development Plan. It is intended to help protect the significant historic character given to the landscape and townscape of Dumfries and Galloway by traditional buildings and structures. *Cover of Supplementary Guidance

In 2016/17, following several years of fund raising and project development by the Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust, the 19th century Category B Listed Moat Brae House in George Street, Dumfries has taken shape as Scotland's National Centre for Children's Literature and Storytelling. The Trust began as an action group in the 1990s to rescue the elegant Moat Brae House and its riverside garden: a place where J M Barrie played and was inspired to write. It is one of a number of buildings designed in the early 1800s by local architect Walter Newall. Many challenging planning and listed building decisions have been made in previous years to reach this point. The building will open to the public in 2018. *photo opportunity

Dumfries Neighbourhood Street Design Project, an inclusive, community led public realm enhancement of part of Dumfries Conservation Area in a Victorian area of the town is a partnership between DG1 Neighbours (residents), Sustrans and DGC. High quality materials, traffic calming measures and tree planting have reduced speeds of traffic and enhanced the pavement and street, making it safer and more attractive as a connecting route for pedestrians and cyclists. Residents have also developed art and lifestyle projects which knit the community together. It coincided with a housing renewal programme for the area led by the Council. The area included the space around Dumfries Theatre Royal, a thriving performance hub, restored in 2015 by the Guild of Players. The combination has resulted in a new perception of a safe, vibrant

and 'cared for' environment. The project was selected as one of the Ramblers Association top ten Britain's Best Walking Neighbourhood 2018; and DG1 Neighbours were awarded the Civic Champion prize with the project also gaining a 'My Place' Award from the Scottish Civic Trust in 2018. *photo opportunity

Whithorn Conservation Area is centred on a small town with the remains of an important 12th century priory. The area, associated with St Ninian, has been celebrated as a place of Christian pilgrimage for many centuries and as a successful settlement from the first millennium. Planning permission was given for a replica Iron Age Roundhouse, commissioned by the Whithorn Trust and completed in Spring 2018. The historic replica is being used to explain elements of the early archaeology of the surroundings. It has attracted events and visitors and is contributing to the enhancement of the economy of the immediate area. Although a little unorthodox as a design, the Council considered the wider economic and education benefits of the roundhouse when approving the application. *photo opportunity

There are a number of heritage led projects which were in the very early stages of being developed in 2017/18 which the Council's Planning Service will help take shape in the next financial year. There are in particular a number within Dumfries Conservation Area and Crichton Conservation Area in Dumfries.

Goals

Provide guidance and support for sensitive adaptation of historic places and structures which will improve their performance for modern living and give them new life in a way which enhances or preserves character.

Outcomes

The Supplementary Guidance will continue to be part of the adopted LDP and be re-adopted with LDP2 as appropriate. Enhancement, restoration and adaptation of historic places and buildings will roll forward into new projects based on the success of others.

Name of key officer

Marie-Isabelle Marshall

Part 2: Supporting Evidence

Part 1 of this report was compiled, drawing on evidence from the following sources:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dumfries & Galloway Council Economy, Environment & Infrastructure Committee Reports and Minutes• Dumfries & Galloway Council Full Council Reports and Minutes• Dumfries & Galloway Council Planning Performance Framework 2016/17• Dumfries & Galloway Council Economy, Environment & Infrastructure Business Plan 2016-18• Dumfries & Galloway Council Development Management Customer Charter 2018• Dumfries & Galloway Council Service Customer Guidance Note 2018 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dumfries & Galloway Council Planning Enforcement Charter September 2017• Dumfries & Galloway Council Local Development Plan Project Board Minutes• Planning Services Structure Charts• Dumfries & Galloway Council website• Reports from IDOX Uniform (Development Management back-office system)• Reports from Scottish Government ePlanning portal• Heads of Planning Scotland Meeting Minutes• Scottish Government Planning website |
|--|---|



Case Study Topics	Issue covered in PPF7	Case Study Topics	Issue covered in PPF7
Design	1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9	Interdisciplinary Working	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9
Conservation	2, 3, 8, 9	Collaborative Working	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9
Regeneration	2, 3, 4, 8, 9	Community Engagement	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9
Environment	1, 2, 3, 6, 9	Placemaking	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9
Greenspace	1, 2, 6	Charrettes	
Town Centres	2, 3, 4, 8, 9	Place Standard	3, 9
Masterplanning	3, 6, 8,	Performance Monitoring	3, 5,
LDP & Supplementary Guidance	3, 6, 9	Process Improvement	1, 2, 4, 5
Housing Supply	3, 6	Project Management	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9
Affordable Housing	3, 4, 6	Skills Sharing	2, 3, 4, 6, 9
Economic Development	1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9	Staff Training	6
Enforcement	3	Online Systems	
Development Management Processes	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Transport	1, 2, 3, 6
Planning Applications	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9	Active Travel	1, 2, 3, 6, 9
Other: please note			

[NB - Wherever possible, weblinks have been included within Part 1 above, in order to give direct online access to the relevant evidence and thus avoiding unnecessarily duplication in the PPF. Case studies of key elements have been also provided within the PPF.]



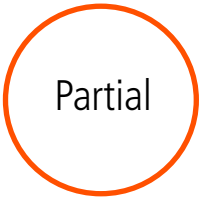



Part 3: Service Improvements 2018 - 19



In the coming year we will:

- Launch, resource and maintain the new pre-application service prepared during 2017-18;
- Investigate the potential for creating a system for the online submission of electronic non-statutory requests e.g. pre-application enquiries, certified copies of documents, etc.
- Update our Tree Preservation Order (TPO) register and make it available online;
- Produce a guidance note on how we will assess TPO requests;
- Complete the Simplified Planning Zone (SPZ) Pilot Passport scheme;
- Hold the 2nd Dumfries & Galloway Council Design Awards Scheme to raise awareness of design quality and to provide excellent examples in the region.
- Ensure that more legacy cases (i.e. applications > 1 year old) are determined during 2018/19. Also ensure that applications which have the potential for becoming legacy cases are either made the subject of a Processing Agreement or are determined before reaching 1 year old.



Committed improvements and actions	Complete?
<p>Commit the time and resources to further develop the Uniform back office system, with particular focus on getting the Development Planning Monitoring module operational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerable improvements have been made to the Development Management module during the year. New modules have also been set up and / or are now operational, such as the Appeals module, the Enforcement module and the TPO module. • Due to issues with the Building Standards module (to which it is interlinked), the Development Planning Monitoring module has not been made operational yet. Limited staff resources being prioritised onto progressing the Proposed Plan was another contributory factor as to why this module has been delayed. 	
<p>Following the review of our pre-application enquiry service which was undertaken during 2015/16, we will implement a revised service which will include a banded scheme of charges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 2017/18, we ceased providing any pre-application service for anything other than Major applications or proposals which would result in significant inward investment. The reasons for this were to allow us to focus limited resources onto fee paying applications and also to allow us to set up an effective new pre-application service which would be chargeable. This was achieved through a process of team working, with different people undertaking specific tasks, under the supervision of a Team Leader. The result was the new pre-application enquiry service which was ready for launch at the start of April 2018. <p>http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15327/Planning-advice-and-enquiries</p>	
<p>In conjunction with A+DS, we will progress the development of the SPZ Plot Passport scheme for self-build residential developments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultants were appointed in April 2017. Since then good progress has been made in developing the SPZ. 2 sites were initially identified as potential locations, this has since been reduced to 1 site in Dumfries. A draft masterplan, design brief and plot passport have been developed. Work is ongoing to refine the scheme in discussions with a potential developer. 	
<p>Introduce enhanced Member engagement for the Proposed Plan stage of LDP2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 seminars for all Members were organised in advance of the Proposed Plan going before the Full Council in January 2018. These were:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development (including renewable energy) (20/09/17); • Housing (10/10/17); & • Proposed Plan overview (17/11/17) • A total of 10 individual meetings with Ward Members were held across Dumfries & Galloway during October and November to discuss the proposed development sites (both Housing and Business & Industry) in the Proposed Plan [NB – although there are 13 multi-Member wards across Dumfries & Galloway Council, a conjoined meeting for the 3 main Dumfries wards was held]. This afforded all Members the opportunity to discuss and comment on all the proposed sites in advance of the Full Council meeting, resulting in that meeting being a more streamlined process. 	

Committed improvements and actions

Complete?

Review and update as necessary all our Customer Charters

- The **Planning Enforcement Charter** was updated and republished in September 2017.
<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15339/Enforcing-planning-controls>
- The **Development Management Customer Charter** and the **Development Management Customer Guidance Note** were both reviewed and updated during 2017/18 and the revised versions are now published on the Council's website.
<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15340/Service-standards>

Yes

In conjunction with Building Standards, review our engagement with customers through the agents' forum (format / frequency / location of meetings)

- This was undertaken and as a result, the first conjoined Annual Planning & Building Standards Agents' Forum took place on 22 February 2018, attended by some 25 local agents. As well as providing a 'one-stop shop' for agents involved in both processes, it made more effective use of the agents' time as they did not need to attend separate events.

Yes



Part 4: National Headline Indicators (NHIs)

Key outcomes	2017-18	2016-17
Development Planning:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> age of local development plan at end of reporting period <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i> 	3 years 6 months	2 year 6 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the local development plan be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme? 	Yes	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year? 	No	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year? 	Yes	Yes
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established housing land supply 	9,012 units	9,246 units
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-year effective housing land supply programming 	2,914 units	3,299 units
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-year effective land supply total capacity 	6,674 units	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-year housing supply target 	2,856 units	2,707 units
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-year effective housing land supply (to one decimal place) 	5.1 years	6.1 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing approvals 	575 units	295 units
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing completions over the last 5 years 	1,790 units	1964 units
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketable employment land supply 	269.53 ha	225.78 ha
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment land take-up during reporting year 	0.0 ha	32.9 ha
Development Management		
Project Planning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice 	0% (0)*	61.4% (736)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement 	57.1% (4)	16.7% (1)
Decision-making		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application approval rate 	93.6%	95.4%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delegation rate 	95.3%	95.0%
Validation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of applications valid upon receipt 	40.4%	30.0%

Key outcomes	2017-18	2016-17
Decision-making timescales		
Average number of weeks to decision:		
• Major developments	35.7	34.0
• Local developments (non-householder)	13.6	12.9
• Householder developments	6.7	6.5
Legacy Cases		
• Number cleared during reporting period	10	19
• Number remaining	44	31
* [NB - 0% for smaller Local applications. See Para 1.2.3, Case Study 5 and C: Para 5 below]		
Enforcement Activity		
• Time since Enforcement Charter published / reviewed Requirement: review every 2 years	6 Months	15 months
• Complaints lodged and investigated	187	155
• Breaches identified - no further action taken	New category	New category
• Cases closed	145	131
• Notices served	4	9
• Direct Action	0	0
• Reports to Procurator Fiscal	2	1
• Prosecutions	1	0





4.1 Development Planning

4.1.1 The current LDP was adopted in September 2014. During the course of the reporting period, the consultation period for the Main Issues Report finished at the end of April 2017. A total of 419 responses were received. Those responses were used to inform the Proposed Plan. The Proposed Plan was published for representations at the end of January 2018.

4.2 Effective Land Supply

4.2.1 The effective housing land supply figures contained in this year's return are based on the adopted Local Development Plan. The figures in this year's return cover the full reporting period. There continues to be more than adequate housing land supply across all market areas.

4.2.2 A rigorous assessment has been made of all the allocated housing sites in the adopted LDP to assess their effectiveness for inclusion in the Proposed Plan for LDP2. This assessment along with completions has resulted in a reduced effective land supply.

4.3 Employment Land

4.3.1 There were no completions during the reporting period.

4.4 Development Management

4.4.1 The Development Management service continued with the same 3 hierarchy-based teams which were introduced in 2014/15, namely Major Developments, Local Applications, and Minor Applications & Enforcement. Commentary on performance is provided under Part 5 – C: Context below.



Part 5: Scottish Government Official Statistics

A: Decision-making timescales (based on 'all applications' timescales)

Category	Average timescale (weeks)		
	2017-2018	2017-2018	2016-2017
Major developments	7	35.7	34.0
Local developments (non-householder)	635		
• Local: less than 2 months	200 (31.5%)	6.6	6.7
• Local: more than 2 months	435 (68.5%)	16.9	17.2
Householder developments	404		
• Local: less than 2 months	368 (91.1%)	6.1	5.8
• Local: more than 2 months	36 (8.9%)	13.2	11.6
Housing developments			
Major	2	25.9	-
Local housing developments	228		
• Local: less than 2 months	26 (11.4%)	7.5	7.3
• Local: more than 2 months	202 (88.6%)	16.8	20.3
Business and industry			
Major	0		25.6
Local business and industry	11		
• Local: less than 2 months	3 (27.3%)	5.4	6.9
• Local: more than 2 months	8 (72.7%)	20.8	20.1
EIA developments	0		223.2
Other consents	282	7.1	10.3
Planning/legal agreements	4		
• Major: average time	1	45.9	54.4
• Local: average time	3	69.9	37.4
Local reviews	17	15.9	17.9

B: Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

Type	Total number of decisions	Original decision upheld			
		2017-18		2016-2017	
		No.	%	No.	%
Local reviews	17	10	58.8	12	70.6
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	11	10	90.9	7	46.7

C: Context

1. In terms of Development Management performance, after a number of years of continuous improvement, there was a slight increase in average time taken to process planning applications in comparison to 2016/17. Major applications took 35.7 weeks on average (34.0 in 2016/17), Local applications (non-householder) took 13.6 weeks (12.9 in 2016/17) and Householder applications took 6.7 weeks (6.5 in 2016/17).

2. The Major application performance was skewed by the determination of 1 legacy wind farm case (dating from 2013); without this application, the average determination period would have been 23.6 weeks. The Local application team had reduced capacity during 2017/18 due to 2 members of staff being on maternity leave but there was only sufficient financial resource to provide cover for 1 of these vacancies. There were also issues during the year with Business Support administrative staff in the 2 offices (Dumfries and Stranraer) which the service shares with Building Standards. These were in terms of both the number and the level of experience of available staff.

3. However, it should be noted that there was a 10% increase in the number of applications determined in 2017/18 in comparison with the previous year (1046 in 2017/18, 949 in 2016/17) and in this context, performance can be seen to have held up quite well.

4. Where a legal agreement is required, it has been our standard practice for several years now for us to recommend to the Planning Applications Committee that approval is "subject to the successful completion of the appropriate legal agreements within 6 months of the date of the decision or any extended timescale as agreed by the appointed officer". This ensures that legal agreements are concluded promptly (applications can be refused under delegated powers where this is not the case) but allows flexibility where conclusion is still going to be achieved within a reasonable timescale. Examples can be found in the Minutes of the Planning Applications Committee on the Council webpage (e.g. [Item 5 on the 17 August 2017 agenda](#))

<http://agenda.dumgal.gov.uk/aksdumgal/users/public/admin/kab12.pl?cmte=PLN&meet=97&arc=71>



5. Performance Marker 3 is covers “Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications” and includes “availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications”. During 2017/18, we took the difficult decision to stop providing formal pre-application enquiry advice for the majority of Local application proposals on a temporary basis. There were a number of reasons for this. Firstly, with reduced resources (see 2 above), we considered it important to prioritise determination of the fee-paying planning applications, especially since it was their approval which would put actual development on the ground, in turn meeting one of the Council’s key priorities of growing the local economy. Secondly, from the results of a survey of local agents, it was clear that many were dissatisfied with the speed and quality of the pre-application service which we used to provide. Finally, as a result of the feedback, which indicated that 56% of our customers would be prepared to pay a fee for an improved service, we suspended providing the service while we prepared a revised chargeable formal pre-application service for launch in April 2018. It should be noted however that the service did not cease entirely. We continued to provide a free pre-application enquiry service for Major applications and large Local applications which represented significant potential inward investment opportunities. We also continued to have a **duty officer** service for general queries and we provide a considerable amount of **FAQ** advice on our website, to allow members of the public a high degree of self-service.

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15331/What-needs-planning-permission>

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15327/Planning-advice-and-enquiries>

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15332/Work-which-doesn-t-need-planning-permission>

6. During 2017/18, we also adopted the **Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS) national guidance note for registering applications**. This useful and well presented document has allowed for greater consistency and clarity in respect of what is required in order to make submissions valid. Although we only adopted this document in October 2017, it is notable that there was a 10% increase in applications which were valid on receipt during 2017/18 as a whole.

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15329/Apply-for-planning-permission>

7. Appeals & Local Review Body – There was a drop in the number of DPEA appeal decisions compared to the previous year. 11 appeals were determined by the Scottish Ministers within the period (there were 15 in 2016/17). Notably, there was a significant increase in the number of appeal decisions where the Council’s original decision was upheld (from 46.7% in 2016/17 to 90.9% in 2017/18). The number of Local Review Body decisions remained identical to the previous year (17) although there has been a noticeable trend towards the Local Review Body not upholding original delegated decisions in recent years (58.8% were upheld in 2017/18, 70.6% in 2016/17 and 80.0% in 2015/16).

8. Consultations received by ourselves regarding applications made to the Scottish Government under Section 36 & 37 under the Electricity Act 1989 are not captured in the PPF statistics but have a very significant impact on Dumfries & Galloway Council. These type of consultations require a considerable amount of time and resources to be dedicated to them, especially where the Council decides to object, as this automatically generates a Public Local Inquiry. The Council provided responses on 2 S36 consultations for wind farms during this period, both requiring comments from a number of internal consultees and the production of a lengthy Committee report. The volume of EIA screening requests (11) and scoping requests (8) received also has an impact on workload.

9. 187 Enforcement cases were taken up during 2017/18 and 145 breaches were resolved, a slight increase on the previous year (where there were 155 cases taken up and 131 resolved) despite a reduced resource. By the end of the reporting period, we were down to just 1 Planning Inspector to cover the region. 2 High Hedge applications were determined in 2017/18.

Part 6: Workforce Information

(as on 31 March 2018)

	Tier 1 Chief Executive	Tier 2 Director	Tier 3 Head of Service	Tier 4 Manager
Head of Planning Service			•	

RTPI Qualified Staff	Headcount	FTE
Development Management	14	12.4
Development Planning	6	5.2
Enforcement	0	0
Specialists	0	0
Other (including staff not RTPI eligible)	2 MRTPI* 14 Non-RTPI eligible	2 13

* Head of Planning & Regulatory Services + Planning & Building Standards Manager

Staff Age Profile	Headcount
Under 30	2 (5%)
30 - 39	6 (17%)
40 - 49	13 (36%)
50 and over	15 (42%)

Context:

Dumfries & Galloway Council's planning function sits within Planning & Regulatory Services, one of 4 services which comprise Economy, Environment & Infrastructure. The Head of Service is also responsible for Building Standards, Environmental Health and Trading Standards. The service is based principally within Dumfries & Stranraer with a satellite office in Newton Stewart although all officers can and do undertake agile working. A shared Business Support function is provided from within Economy, Environment & Infrastructure.



Part 7: Planning Committee Information

Committee and Site Visits	Number per year
Full council meetings	0 (for planning applications)
Planning committees	11 *
Area committees (where relevant)	N/A
Committee site visits	4
LRB	5
LRB site visits	1

* Normally 12 meetings but 1 less due to 2017 Council elections



Part 8: Performance Markers

Driving Improved Performance				
Performance Marker		Measure	Policy Background to Marker	PPF
1	Decision making: authorities demonstrating continuous evidence of reducing average timescales for all development types		Official Statistics and PPF reports	NHI Scottish Government Official Statistics and C: Context Paras 1.3.3, 1.4.1
2	Project management: offer of processing agreements (or other agreed project plan) made to prospective applicants in advance of all major applications and availability publicised on planning authority website	Y/N	Modernising the Planning System (Audit Scotland); SG website / template	NHI; Quality of Service and Engagement; Para 1.3.4 Case Study 5
3	Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications: - availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications - clear and proportionate requests for supporting information	Y/N Examples	White Paper; Delivering Planning Reform; Planning Reform Next Steps	NHI; Quality of Service and Engagement Paras 1.2.3, 1.2.5 Case Study 5 Part 3: Delivery of Service Improvements 2017-18 C: Context Paras 5 & 6
4	Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications within 6 months of ‘resolving to grant’ ¹	Reducing number of live applications more than 6 months after resolution to grant (from same time last year)	Official statistics; PPF reports; evidence of delays to major developments	Quality of Service and Engagement; Governance C: Context Para 4

Driving Improved Performance				
Performance Marker		Measure	Policy Background to Marker	PPF
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published	Within 2 years	Planning Act (s158A)	NHIs Part 4 Para 1.2.4 Part 3: Delivery of Service Improvements 2017-18
6	Continuous improvements: - show progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators - progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report	Progress on all commitments	Delivering Planning Reform; PPF Report	Culture of Continuous Improvement; Service Improvement Plan Part 5: Official Statistics and C: Context Paras 1.2.7, 1.2.9, 1.4.2



Promoting the Plan-Led System				
Performance Marker		Measure	Policy Background to Marker	PPF
7	LDP (or LP) less than 5 years since adoption	Y/N	Planning Act (s16); Scottish Planning Policy	NHI; Quality of Outcomes; Quality of service and engagement Paras 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.3.6, 4.1.1 Case Study 3
8	Development plan scheme demonstrates next LDP: - on course for adoption within 5-year cycle - project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale	Y/N Y/N	Planning Act (s16); Scottish Planning Policy	NHI; Quality of Outcomes; Quality of service and engagement Paras 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.3.6, 4.1.1 Case Study 3
9	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	Evidence of activity		Quality of Service and Engagement Governance [NB – not applicable at this stage]
10	Cross-sector stakeholders, including industry, agencies and Scottish Government, engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	Evidence of activity		Quality of Service and Engagement Governance [NB – not applicable at this stage]
11	Production of regular and proportionate policy advice, for example through supplementary guidance, on information required to support applications	Evidence of activity		Quality of Service and Engagement Paras 1.1.6, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5 Case Studies 3, 4 & 9

Simplifying and Streamlining			
Performance Marker	Measure	Policy Background to Marker	PPF
12	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (e.g. protocols; joined-up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice)	Examples from the year	Quality of Service and Engagement Governance Paras 1.2.3 to 1.2.8, 1.4.4, 1.4.5 Case Studies 4, 5, 6, 8 & 9
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Evidence of activity to pass on and adopt good practice	Delivering Planning Reform; Planning Reform Next Steps Culture of continuous improvement Para 1.4.6 C: Context Para 6
Delivering Development			
Performance Marker	Measure	Policy Background to Marker	PPF
14	Stalled sites/legacy cases: conclusion/withdrawal of planning applications more than one-year-old	Reducing number of applications more than one-year-old (from same time last year)	Governance Para 1.3.5 C: Context Para 2 Part 3: Service Improvements 2018-19
15	Developer contributions: clear expectations - set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan,) and - in pre-application discussions	Y/N Examples	Quality of service and engagement Paras 1.2.3 C: Context Para 5 Case Study 5



