



# **YOUR COMMUNITY YOUR INVERCLYDE**

## **Local Development Plan Evidence Report 2025**

**CREATE A LOCAL PLACE PLAN  
HELP TO SHAPE YOUR INVERCLYDE**

Inverclyde  
council



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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to summarise the key matters contained within the Inverclyde Council Local Development Plan 4 (LDP4) Evidence Report. The Evidence Report has been prepared as part of the ongoing exercise to review and replace the Council's current Local Development Plan (LDP3) which was adopted in 2019.

The intention of the Evidence Report is to set out the baseline information that is available to the Council to enable the development of the new Local Development Plan. This report contains a summary of that information and outline the various topics chapters which have been reviewed as part of an evidence gathering exercise.

Each evidence topic has been presented in a structured format, out by a Topic Title, Summary of Evidence and a brief summary of the implication for the new Local Development Plan (LDP4). Each evidence topic also includes details of all relevant engagement and consultation with stakeholders.

Concurrent to the progression of the Evidence Report, the Council remains engaged with various community bodies across Inverclyde in relation to the production of Local Place Plans (LPPs). The Council remains fully committed to the development of LPPs and aims to provide as much support and assistance as practicably possible to those who have expressed an interest in preparing an LPP.

The final draft of the Inverclyde Council Evidence Report will be presented to the Council's Environment and Regeneration Committee for approval in March 2025, concluding the second stage of the Development Plan Scheme (DPS) which was published in January 2024. Stage three of the DPS will require the submission of the Evidence Report to the Scottish Government Division of Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA) to commence the Gatecheck process. This process shall review the sufficiency and appropriateness of the information gathered within the Evidence Report.

The Evidence Report and Gatecheck are two new processes which have been introduced through the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, as amended, for the Local Development Plan process.

## **Setting the Scene**

The current Inverclyde Local Development Plan was adopted on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 2019. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2021, Inverclyde Council published its Proposed Local Development Plan, which represents the Council's updated thinking in relation to development and is a material planning consideration in assessing development proposals.

The current Inverclyde Local Development Plan therefore consists of the Adopted Inverclyde Local Development Plan 2019 and associated guidance and the Proposed Inverclyde Local Development Plan 2021, as a material consideration, and associated guidance.



Work is now underway to prepare a new Inverclyde Local Development Plan, which would supersede the current adopted and the proposed Inverclyde Local Development Plans and the associated planning guidance. The new Local Development Plan considers the National Planning Framework 4 in adopting a 'new style' approach to Development Planning. The next stage in the preparation of the new Local Development Plan is the preparation and submission of the Evidence Report.

### What is an Evidence Report?

The Evidence Report is a document containing summary information which informs the direction, structure and content of the upcoming Local Development Plan. The Evidence Report is subject to approval of the full Council. Following approval, it will be submitted for 'Gate Check', which is an independent assessment of whether the Planning Authority has sufficient information to prepare the Local Development Plan.

### SEA and the relationship with Evidence Report

A series of SEA Objectives have been suggested in the SEA Scoping Report for each SEA topic, taking into account the policy themes and outcomes for NPF4. These are outlined in Extract 1 as follows:

SEA Topic	NPF4 Theme	SEA Objective
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flood risk and water management</li> <li>Coastal development</li> <li>Blue and green infrastructure</li> <li>Infrastructure first</li> </ul>	<p>To avoid adverse impacts on and sustain and enhance the ecological status of the water environment.</p> <p>To ensure the sustainable use of water sources.</p> <p>To reduce the risk of flooding and damage to people and properties and avoid development in areas which will exacerbate flood risk.</p> <p>To promote flood risk management and climate adaptation (particularly natural flood risk management through blue and green infrastructure).</p>
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biodiversity</li> <li>Natural Places</li> <li>Soils</li> </ul>	<p>To avoid adverse impacts to designated habitats and species.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts to undesignated habitats and species.</p> <p>To protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate</li> </ul>	





Climatic Factors	<p>mitigation and adaptation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coastal development</li> <li>• Blue and Green Infrastructure</li> <li>• Infrastructure First</li> </ul>	<p>To reduce sources and levels of lifecycle GHG emissions throughout Inverclyde to contribute towards Scotland's net zero target by 2045.</p> <p>To promote opportunities for climate change adaptation and enhancing resilience of existing and planned infrastructure.</p> <p>To support opportunities for nature-based solutions in new development and land use change.</p>
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate mitigation and adaptation</li> <li>• Health and Safety</li> </ul>	<p>To avoid adverse impacts to air quality arising from the use of development or land.</p> <p>To promote measures which can reduce emissions of key pollutants which affect air quality (including carbon, Nitrous Dioxide and Particulate Matter emissions, dust and odour).</p>
Population and Human Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design, Quality and place</li> <li>• Local living and 20 min neighbourhoods</li> <li>• Blue and green infrastructure</li> <li>• Play, recreation and sport</li> <li>• Sustainable Transport</li> <li>• Health and safety</li> <li>• Infrastructure First</li> </ul>	<p>To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing through improving the quality of the living environment of people and communities.</p> <p>To promote and enhance access to spaces and places which support wellbeing, including amenity green space, public realm, the historic environment and the countryside.</p> <p>To maintain and enhance opportunities for active and sustainable travel throughout Inverclyde.</p> <p>To maintain and enhance opportunities for education, learning and play (formal and informal) throughout Inverclyde.</p> <p>To improve access to essential community services and employment.</p>
Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soils</li> <li>• Brownfield, vacant and derelict land</li> </ul>	<p>To safeguard or improve soil quality, quantity and function of all soil types.</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate mitigation and adaptation</li> </ul>	<p>To safeguard prime quality agricultural land within Inverclyde.</p> <p>To avoid loss of carbon rich soils.</p> <p>To promote opportunities for restoration of peatlands.</p> <p>To promote the sustainable use of brownfield land (taking account of the biodiversity value of naturalised sites).</p> <p>To reduce levels of contaminated and vacant and derelict land in Inverclyde.</p>
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural Places</li> </ul>	<p>To safeguard and enhance landscape character, scenic value and geodiversity.</p> <p>To protect and enhance designated landscape areas.</p>
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historic assets and places</li> <li>Natural Places</li> <li>Design, quality and place</li> </ul>	<p>To avoid adverse impacts on designated historic environment assets and their setting.</p> <p>To promote opportunities for long-term sustainable re-use and sensitive adaptation of designated historic environment assets.</p> <p>To protect and enhance valued landscapes, historic and archaeological sites and other culturally and historically important features, landscapes and settings.</p>
Material Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zero Waste</li> <li>Design Quality and place</li> <li>Climate Mitigation and Adaptation</li> <li>Heat and Cooling</li> </ul>	<p>To reduce material, use and waste, and promote circular economy principles in line with the waste hierarchy as defined in Annex F of NPF4.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts on material assets including infrastructure for water, energy, heat, flood protection and climate resilience, and promote opportunities for enhancement.</p>



		<p>To maintain and promote the provision of facilities and infrastructure that will support circular economy principles throughout Inverclyde.</p> <p>To promote opportunities for the sustainable management and re-purposing of existing buildings, land and infrastructure.</p> <p>To safeguard important workable mineral resources from loss to other development or land use.</p>
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#### Extract 1 – SEA Objectives

### **Climate Change Crisis**

The Climate Change crisis is addressed throughout the Evidence Report, within the thematic topics of the document.

The climate change crisis is a global issue with far-reaching consequences, of severe weather events, deadly flooding and wildfire events. Inverclyde is not immune to its effects and will continue to be affected by climate change. With its unique geographical location along the River Clyde, Inverclyde is and will continue to be affected by climate change.

Scotland's weather is predicted to become wetter and windier and in Inverclyde, an area already prone to flooding, this will continue to have a disruptive effect through transport disruption, and damage to property and loss of businesses which will cost time, money and distress.

The social implications of climate change are also significant, with vulnerable populations bearing the brunt of its impacts. Low-income households, the elderly, and those with pre-existing health conditions are more susceptible to the adverse effects of heatwaves, flooding, and air pollution. The increased burden on healthcare services and social support systems is straining the region's resources, necessitating urgent action and adaptation measures.

Even small shifts in temperature can have an impact on fragile ecosystems, which could lead to some species disappearing from the local ecosystem.

As well as climate change impacting on Inverclyde, greenhouse gas emissions from Inverclyde will contribute to world climate change and will therefore have an impact globally. For the benefit of Inverclyde and the world as a whole, the climate change crisis must be addressed through mitigation and adaptation measures.

### **Current LDP's effectiveness and Inverclyde Priorities**



The Evidence Report also considers the extent to which the existing Local Development Plan works to achieve its aims and draws out lessons learned for the new LDP.

Inverclyde Council's Key Priority areas have been identified within the Council Plan and Alliance Partnership Plan as areas of challenges for the district, where the Council is working collaboratively to deliver improvements.

Key Priorities for Inverclyde are Health, Climate, Inequalities and Deprivation, Employment and Jobs, De-population and Tourism. The new LDP will be formulated around these topics to ensure that the new LDP achieves improved Health statistics, Climate change continues to be addressed, Inequalities between affluent and deprived areas are reduced and Deprivation is minimised, the Employment market is revitalised with a wider variety of Jobs being available, keeping Inverclyde youth in the area, thereby reducing De-population. This is intended to be achieved by working to attract development in the area and through reigniting Inverclyde's Tourism sector to showcase its rich history and incredible waterside views.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

Community Engagement has been carried out by the Inverclyde Alliance Partnership in preparing the Partnership Plans which are due to run from 2023 onwards. The Inverclyde Alliance includes public sector organisations, along with the voluntary sector and businesses. Consultation took place via various methods including surveys, focus groups and community listening events.

### **Open Public Consultation**

Four different pieces of research were undertaken, three using a survey format involving public consultation, Citizens Panel and employee survey and one comprising of listening events with members of the public and school groups.

The public consultation used the 'SmartSurvey' platform, promoted via various channels, which was open to all residents of Inverclyde and generated 315 responses. The participants were asked to rank seven priorities in order of importance with the following results:

1. Increasing employment levels
2. Supporting the creation of good jobs with fair pay and conditions
3. Improving health and wellbeing
4. Having more good quality housing
5. Reducing drug and alcohol misuse
6. Improving our town centres and public spaces
7. Increasing participation in community life

Questions on community empowerment and 'getting it right for every child, citizen and community' were also asked. Then participants were invited to expand on three questions: What one thing matters to you the most, that would make a difference to Inverclyde over the next 10 years? How should we, working together, tackle your top key areas? Is there anything else that should be a key area?





Perceptible from the findings are the reoccurring issues of jobs and employment, with interlinked mentions of housing and young people. There was also the overarching sentiment of strengthening the 'community'. Other areas that participants pointed to were education, crime, drug use, and transport.

### Listening Events

The listening events were based around three different research methods: digital listening events, a physical listening event and focus groups with secondary school pupils.

The issues discussed at **digital listening events** were - Inequalities, repopulation and local economy. Participants confirmed that these issues should remain a priority for the council. Topics arising in these discussions were in line with survey findings. Participants overwhelmingly noted the issues with the local economy and connected the poor economy, i.e. employment and wages, with tackling the other priorities. The cost-of-living-crisis' effects, as well as the energy crisis caused anxiety caused amongst the participants who displayed disbelief and anger. It was also noted that the council alone cannot solve these issues and pointed to partnership working with the third sector as well as community groups. Difficulties regarding funding for local government were acknowledged. To tackle depopulation participants noted the need for better paying jobs and opportunities, and the need for better housing and transport. Again, this was echoed in methods of tackling inequalities. Participants acknowledged that a better local economy would provide people with the tools to tackle the inequalities that exist in their own lives and their local community.

**Young people (secondary school pupils) focus groups** centred around the same issues as above, with additional priorities of environment, heritage and culture. In the responses, attention was given to shops and youth orientated events/facilities. Broader themes such as the local economy, transport and the condition of Inverclyde also arose. The local economy was reflected in discussions around the lack of "good" shops and other private/public facilities. With bus travel being free participants suggested that this should be extended to trains as this would make travelling around Inverclyde easier and accessible to those on lower incomes. Participants noted the general condition of streets and the perceived neglected areas. They suggested that improving this would aid tackling depopulation as it would encourage people to stay and move to the area. The way the council communicates with younger people was noted. Using social media effectively would engage younger people in local issues and events. Some younger people do not know how to help Inverclyde, what the area has to offer, or the history of the area. However, using social media would educate them and make them proud of the area.

During an **in-person listening event** at Port Glasgow Town Hall participants were asked to identify issues around health and wellbeing, economy, communities, population, housing, and alcohol and drugs. Issues such as poor employment opportunities, lack of investment, and deprivation were consistent with those already raised. In addition, it was suggested that the council should be more prominent in



facilitating and aiding community groups. On tackling health issues, suggestions were to deploy teams to localities to undertake fitness/wellbeing classes.

### Citizens' Panel

The Citizens' Panel was established in 2007 to enable Inverclyde Council to regularly consult with Inverclyde residents on a wide range of issues. The Panel comprises around 1,000 local residents, with membership refreshed annually. The responses to the Autumn 2022 survey totalled 616, this is around 62% of the total membership of the Panel. Responses gathered were similar to those of other participants. However, one noteworthy theme arising frequently was that of the town centres, and mainly Greenock Town Centre. Participants displayed concern over the current state of the town centre, referenced the closed shops, quality of shops, and the overall cleanliness. Participants believed that having a thriving town centre would help tackle the systemic issues of deprivation, low employment and depopulation. Regeneration of town centres was seen as a path to creating an economic base that could provide the area with more employment. It was acknowledged that this would make the town centres attractive for people who may move to the area.

### Key Agencies

Consultation with the Key Agencies took place via email correspondence from the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 2024, whereby initial views on issues that the consultees may wish to see included in the plan were sought. The following organisations were engaged during consultation:

- The Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland
- Marine Directorate
- Transport Scotland
- Sport Scotland
- Architecture and Design Scotland
- Nature Scot
- Visit Scotland
- SEPA
- SPT
- Historic Environment Scotland
- Scottish Water
- Scottish Forestry
- Forestry and Land Scotland
- Climate Ready Clyde
- Homes for Scotland
- GCV Green Network

Views were also sought from Scottish Enterprise and NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde; however, no responses were received.



The responses from the key agencies have been included and referenced within the thematic topics in the evidence report and will go on to inform plan preparation at future stages of the process.

## Place Standard Tool

The Place Standard is a tool to structure conversations about local places. It helps us to think about the physical and social aspects of places, and the important relationships between them. The Place Standard Tool has relevant themes to inform the assessment of places and will allow us to identify specific issues for improvement. The themes have been carefully chosen based on evidence about their combined influence on our health and wellbeing.

Understanding what is good about a place now, and what could be better, can help us make informed decisions and allow us to target resources where they are needed most. The Place Standard Tool can support the design and delivery of successful places, creating good-quality places where people want to live.

The survey commenced 08/11/2024 and concluded on 04/02/2025 with 22 responses having been received from across Inverclyde. The questionnaire can be viewed on the Council's website:

## The Place Standard Tool - Inverclyde Council

The main issues raised from survey results which were conveyed in participants' responses centre around: litter/dog mess, street lighting, anti-social behaviour, pot holes and poor roads and paths maintenance, traffic during peak times, negative morale among residents, many find the area depressing, more spaces to play and exercise are needed, activities/spaces for older children are needed, lack of employment opportunities locally, need more family housing (to encourage families to come to the area), more community events required i.e. celebrate being Scottish, improved adaptations/facilities for children with special needs/disabilities, better community warden/police presence, more opportunities for community meetings/engagement required, more safe cycling routes for children, retail and entertainment offer in (Greenock) town centre lacks variety, lack of suitable public toilets, invest in local volunteers/beauty spots, reduce rates to encourage new businesses to open, advertising Inverclyde natural spaces to attract interest to the area, more investment in public health and area generally is needed, drug dealers are a problem, too many people on benefits, better street furniture/planting, take pride in area, reduce car speeds in Kilmacolm.

The results suggest a variety of improvements to be made to local places within Inverclyde, which LDP4 will seek to address. The Planning Service will continue working with relevant Council Services, such as Community Safety Development and Engagement, as LDP4 develops to reach a wider audience, in order to achieve a higher participation rate. It will then be possible to produce a Place Standard Report outlining the findings from the survey based on residents' perception of the places they live.

## Play Sufficiency Assessment

This assessment was carried out on the premise that children have a right to play. Through play, children and young people can explore the world around them in a creative and engaging way. Research shows that children experience a range of health, wellbeing, developmental and educational benefits from outdoor play, and through learning in and connecting with nature. Ensuring children's access to play and engaging children in the planning system upholds their right to play and relax.

The questionnaire, which was prepared, applied to children of all ages, from 0 – 16, to enable Inverclyde Council to assess existing play spaces for children in their area, to better understand the spaces that are working well and the improvements that require to be made for the creation of better play environments. This survey helped the Council understand what children like and do not like about the outside play spaces in their area. It may also help officers to find new spaces for children to play with their family and friends.

The survey commenced 08/11/2024 and concluded on 04/02/2025, with 237 responses having been received.

The data from the responses provides as insight into the children's play habits, frequency, and places they like to play in their local areas. From this data, it will be possible to identify areas where and what improvements can be made on the ground. Furthermore, the gathered data will enable the Council to prepare a detailed Play Sufficiency Assessment Report for LDP4, in consultation with Play Scotland. Relevant planning policies will then be shaped, incorporating recommendations and priorities for improvement from the Report, which will update and supersede existing Supplementary Planning Guidance on Play Areas.

## Local Place Plans (LPPs)

Community bodies at Inverclyde were invited to prepare Local Place Plans for LDP4. To date, an expression of interest has been received from Braeside, Branchton and Larkfield Community in East Greenock. Furthermore, Kilmacolm Civic Trust have committed to producing a Local Place Plan by July 2025.

More information on this process can be found on the website:

[Local Place Plans - Inverclyde Council](#)





## Detailed Topic Schedules

### Inverclyde Environment – (Sustainable Places)

Topic	Tackling Climate Change, Nature Crisis and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
<b>Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended:</p> <p><u>Section 3F:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs must include policies requiring all developments in the area to be designed so as to ensure that all new buildings avoid a specified and rising proportion of the projected greenhouse gas emissions from their use, calculated on the basis of the approved design and plans for the specific development, through the installation and operation of low and zero-carbon generating technologies.</li> </ul> <p><u>Section 15(5)(a):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district</li> </ul>
<b>NPF4 LDP Requirements</b>	<p><u>Policy 1: Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs must address the global climate emergency and nature crisis by ensuring the spatial strategy will reduce emissions and adapt to current and future risks of climate change by promoting nature recovery and restoration in the area.</li> </ul> <p><u>Policy 2: Climate Mitigation and Adaptation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The LDP spatial strategy should be designed to reduce, minimise or avoid greenhouse gas emissions. The six spatial principles identified in NPF4 should form the basis of the spatial strategy, helping to guide development to, and create sustainable locations. The strategy should be informed by an understanding of the impacts of the proposals on greenhouse gas emissions.</li> <li>LDPs should support adaptation to the current and</li> </ul>



	<p>future impacts by taking into account climate risks, guiding development away from vulnerable areas, and enabling places to adapt to those risks.</p> <p><u>Policy 10: Coastal Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDP spatial strategies should consider how to adapt coastlines to the impacts of climate change. This should recognise that rising sea levels and more extreme weather events resulting from climate change will potentially have a significant impact on coastal and islands areas and take a precautionary approach to flood risk including by inundation. Spatial strategies should reflect the diversity of coastal areas and opportunities to use nature-based solutions to improve the resilience of coastal communities and assets. LDP spatial strategies should identify areas of developed and undeveloped coast and should align with national, sectoral and regional marine plans.</li> </ul> <p><u>Policy 11: Energy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should seek to realise their area's full potential for electricity and heat from renewable, low carbon and zero emission sources by identifying a range of opportunities for energy development.</li> </ul> <p><u>Policy 19: Heat and Cooling</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should take into account the area's Local Heat &amp; Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES). The spatial strategy should take into account areas of heat network potential and any designated Heat Network Zones (HNZ).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Links to Evidence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UK Local Authority and Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions National Statistics (2024)  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics-2005-to-2022">https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics-2005-to-2022</a>.</li> <li>UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2022)</li> </ul>



	<p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-climate-change-risk-assessment-2022">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-climate-change-risk-assessment-2022</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme Progress Report (2023-24) <a href="https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-climate-change-adaptation-programme-progress-report-2023-2024/">https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-climate-change-adaptation-programme-progress-report-2023-2024/</a></li> <li>• 'Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029' <a href="https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-national-adaptation-plan-2024-2029-2/">https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-national-adaptation-plan-2024-2029-2/</a>.</li> <li>• Climate Ready Clyde Glasgow City Region Climate Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (2021) <a href="https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/assets/attach/02-4873-Glasgow-City-Region-Adaptation-Strategy-1.pdf">02-4873-Glasgow-City-Region-Adaptation-Strategy-1.pdf</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Net Zero Strategy 2021 – 2045 <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/14504/Net-Zero-Strategy_WEB.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/14504/Net-Zero-Strategy_WEB.pdf</a></li> <li>• Strategic Needs Assessment <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/15284/Inverclyde-SNA2022-FINAL-07-07-22.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/15284/Inverclyde-SNA2022-FINAL-07-07-22.pdf</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Public Bodies Duties Climate Change Report (2023) <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/14089/Inverclyde-Council-PBCCD-Annual-Report-2023.xlsx">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/14089/Inverclyde-Council-PBCCD-Annual-Report-2023.xlsx</a></li> <li>• Scottish Government Heat in Buildings Strategy (2021) <a href="https://www.gov.scot/policies/energy-efficiency/the-heat-in-buildings-programme/">https://www.gov.scot/policies/energy-efficiency/the-heat-in-buildings-programme/</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (2024) <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16979/Inverclyde-LHEE-Strategy-Final.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16979/Inverclyde-LHEE-Strategy-Final.pdf</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>This schedule should be read in conjunction with the other relevant topic schedules in this Evidence Report including waste, flooding, brownfield sites, nature networks, woodland and sustainable transport.</b></p>	
<p><b>Summary of Evidence</b></p>	
<p>Climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing the planet and has already begun to cause irreversible damage. There is clear evidence demonstrating the pace of warming in recent decades and the impacts that will be faced if this</p>	



continues. As well as focusing efforts on achieving net zero, it is also necessary to continue to aspire to greater achievements on adaptation, to ensure there is increased resilience to the challenges of a warming world.

## Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009

The Act places a statutory duty on all public bodies to act to deliver on the national climate change targets. Scotland aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 75% by 2030 and to reach net zero by 2045.

## Greenhouse Gas Emission and Climate Change

Scotland has higher per capita emissions than the UK average in almost every sector, in particular from agriculture (1.4 tonnes CO2 per person) and Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (0.4 tonnes CO2 per person).

Inverclyde has made good progress in reducing its CO2 emissions and has consistently reduced emissions year on year. CO2 emissions within the scope of influence of the local authority have decreased in Inverclyde from 6.3 tonnes per capita to 3.7 tonnes per capita. When compared with other local authorities in Scotland in 2019, Inverclyde had the joint fourth lowest emissions of all Scottish Councils.

Greenhouse gas emissions, which continue to rise substantially. This means those changes that are already being experienced are projected to continue and intensify:

- Average temperatures will increase across all seasons.
- Typical summers will be warmer and drier.
- Typical winters will be milder and wetter.
- Intense, heavy rainfall events will increase in both winter and summer.
- Sea levels will rise.
- There will be reduced frost and snowfall.
- Weather will remain variable, with increased incidents of storms.

## Adaptation

With predicted increases in temperatures resulting in extreme heat, rising sea levels and extreme weather events, Inverclyde as a coastal authority with a steep sloping hinterland is particularly vulnerable to their impact. Flooding could have a severe negative impact on buildings, infrastructure and the landscape, while extreme weather events could affect energy, water, transport and communication networks, natural habitats and wildlife, and have implications for the delivery of Council services and social and economic well-being.



Increased temperature could also have health implications, especially for the elderly population which is significant for Inverclyde which has an aging population. It could also have implications for fragile ecosystems with the loss of species and the introduction of previously non-native species.

Climate change adaptation and carbon offsetting projects such as peatland restoration and tree planting have been introduced by Inverclyde Council to minimise the impact of the rise in greenhouse gases. Working in collaboration with the Climate Ready Clyde adaptation partnership, additional climate impacts will be considered by the Council through the Glasgow City Region Climate Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan, in order to assess and mitigate where necessary.

The Strategy and Action Plan:

- seeks to build the region's social, economic, and environmental resilience to climate change.
- outlines the processes and early interventions needed to manage climate risks and realize opportunities in line with our Theory of Change.
- provides a strategic framework for adaptation in and by Glasgow City Region that fits alongside and supports key plans, policies and activities to enable delivery.
- sets out how we will deepen and expand collaboration and collective impact by working together and engaging, equipping and enabling citizens and organizations to play a role in realizing the vision.
- sets out how progress in increasing climate resilience will be monitored, evaluated and learnt from to improve policies, strategies, programmes and projects

### Heating Systems for Buildings

Reducing emissions from Scotland's homes and buildings by moving to cleaner heating systems is one of the most important things that can be done to combat climate change.

Examples of clean heating systems are Heat Networks and Heat Pumps, as well as other electric systems like storage heaters represent clean heating as they don't produce emissions when used, unlike gas and oil boilers.

Transforming how we heat our buildings will not only help us reach our climate change targets but will help create jobs and make our homes warmer and cheaper



to heat.

The environmental impact rating is a measure of a home's impact on the environment in terms of carbon dioxide emissions. The higher the rating the less impact it has on the environment. Data on environmental impact ratings is published in the Scottish House Condition Survey. The average environmental rating in Inverclyde is slightly higher than the Scottish average, 63.6 compared to 60.8.

The Council published a Local Heat and Energy Strategy (LHEES) for Inverclyde Council in 2024 along with a Delivery Plan 2024-2028 will play a crucial role in helping the Council meet the 2045 net zero target. It has two aims:

- Improving the energy efficiency and decarbonising the heat supply of all of Inverclyde.
- Reducing inequality by eliminating poor energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty.

The LHEES addresses the changes required to Inverclyde's buildings and infrastructure, including all domestic and non-domestic buildings.

The Delivery Plan proposes heat network zoning opportunities across Inverclyde, recognising the immense potential of building the next generation of infrastructure that brings jobs, investment, and skills to Inverclyde as well as drives decarbonisation at scale. Heat networks will also provide the benefit of reducing impact of volatile energy prices on residents and businesses, if delivered well.

The Deliver Plan also highlights retrofitting delivery area opportunities of three different types:

1. areas with high prevalence of fuel poverty to focus energy efficiency improvement activity and funding to reduce bills.
2. areas with high fuel poverty where there is potential to undertake energy efficiency improvements as well as install heat pumps to decarbonise their fuel supply.
3. areas with the potential for widespread roll-out of heat pumps to decarbonise the heat supply of homes at scale.

### Summary of Stakeholder Engagement



The targets and priorities identified in the Council's Net Zero Strategy 2021-2045 will be reiterated in the Evidence Report, as seen in the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Schedule.

## Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

- ### Statements of Agreement / Dispute

**YOUR COMMUNITY  
YOUR INVERCLYDE**



Topic	Biodiversity
<b>Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended,  <u>Section 15(5)(a)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district</li> </ul>
<b>NPF4 LDP Requirements</b>	<p><u>NPF4 – Policy 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should protect, conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity in line with the mitigation hierarchy. They should also promote nature recovery and nature restoration across the development plan area, including by: facilitating the creation of nature networks and strengthening connections between them to support improved ecological connectivity; restoring degraded habitats or creating new habitats; and incorporating measures to increase biodiversity, including populations of priority species.</li> </ul>
<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u><a href="https://www.gov.scot">Scottish Biodiversity Delivery Plan 2024–2030 - gov.scot</a></u></li> <li><u><a href="#">Marine and Coastal Restoration Plan – publication date of December 2025. To follow progress.</a></u></li> </ul> <p><u>Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Local Biodiversity Action Plans:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u><a href="#">Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP)</a></u></li> <li><u><a href="#">LBAP Update Report &amp; Rolled Forward Actions 2008-11</a></u></li> <li><u><a href="#">Habitat Action Plans</a></u></li> <li><u><a href="#">Species Action Plans</a></u></li> <li><u><a href="#">A Wee Walk On The Wild Side</a></u></li> </ul> <p><u>Biodiversity Duty Reporting:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u><a href="#">Biodiversity Report 2011-2014</a></u></li> <li><u><a href="#">Biodiversity Report 2015-2017</a></u></li> <li><u><a href="#">Biodiversity Report December 2023</a></u></li> <li><u><a href="#">Tree Management and Planting Strategy</a></u></li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>	





### **National Directive**

The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045:

Tackling the nature emergency is the first part of the Strategic Framework for Biodiversity and sets out the compelling evidence of long-standing global and Scottish biodiversity loss. The Strategy sets our high-level goal: to halt biodiversity loss and be Nature Positive by 2030 and to have restored and regenerated biodiversity by 2045.

This is embodied in the Strategic Vision:

- By 2045, Scotland will have restored and regenerated biodiversity across our land, freshwater and seas.
- Our natural environment, our habitats, ecosystems and species, will be diverse, thriving, resilient and adapting to climate change.
- Regenerated biodiversity will drive a sustainable economy and support thriving communities, and people.

The Strategy identifies a series of outcomes which capture what success looks like across our landscapes and marine environments.

### **Inverclyde Context**

The Council have a regulatory remit and relevant to biodiversity is our role as the Planning Authority for Inverclyde. This includes the preparation of a Local Development Plan aligned with various plans and policies which protect and enhance biodiversity. The Planning service further manages the Tree Preservation Order process.

Our Ranger Service is based at the Greenock Cut Visitor Centre within the popular Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park (which also covers Lunderston Bay). The Rangers provides a point of contact with the public and engage in providing information to visitors in line with Nature Scotland's Connecting people and Places policy to *"connect people with places, to encourage more people from all backgrounds to enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly, and to take the action needed to address biodiversity loss and climate change."* This is achieved via their work in delivering outdoor learning sessions for local schools, nurseries, and community groups. They undertake practical site maintenance and conservation tasks, wildflower meadow creation and management, tree planting and installation of animal boxes for mammals and birds. Within the seasons Rangers undertake habitat survey work and record species within Inverclyde to add data to national databases.



Our principal environmental impacts resulting from our statutory duties and estate management include carbon emissions arising from operations including:

- Vehicle emissions and properties/plant through heating and lighting.
- The Council has produced a net zero plan outlining steps to reduce the Council's Carbon impact.

### **Actions to protect and enhance Biodiversity**

Inverclyde Council have engaged with the Green Action Trust (GAT) to develop a wide range of projects which will enhance biodiversity within Inverclyde. This includes the following:

#### **Coves Nature Reserve (Greenock)**

Delivery of a suite of habitat improvements for biodiversity including woodland and scrub management, small-scale woodland creation, species rich grassland creation, invasive species treatment and path refurbishment/creation.

#### **St Ninian's Primary school demolition site (Gourock) – creation of dedicated green space.**

Site investigation studies and commissioning a landscape architect to produce concept designs for community consultation.

#### **Clyde Climate Forest – urban tree planting and large-scale woodland creation on council landholdings.**

Apply the methodology used for the Greenock central target neighbourhood to identify urban tree planting in six town centres (Wemyss Bay, Inverkip, Gourock, Greenock, Port Glasgow and Kilmacolm). Aim to plant 30 trees in each of the six town centres.

Investigate opportunities for woodland creation on Council owned farmlands.

#### **Species rich grassland development**

A network of species rich grasslands and pollinator corridors are being developed in accordance with recommendations from the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership feasibility studies.

An ecology consultant has been commissioned to survey a network of priority sites to establish if the sites are suitable for creating species rich grasslands. Potential sites include the extensive waterfront area in Port Glasgow and the Coves Nature Reserve.

Suitable cut and lift ride-on mowers to maintain grasslands have been purchased. The Council will continue to work closely with GAT to develop further projects.



## **Tree Management and Planting Strategy – Habitat Development**

Developing woodlands and even individual tree planting can encourage and enhance wildlife and create a diverse tree population which supports a valuable food chain and ecosystem, as well as a home for many species.

It is recognised that a corridor of trees, hedgerow copses and naturalised grassland could have a beneficial impact on the movement of wildlife and insect habitat within an area. Connected corridors encourage and enhance pollinators, foraging wildlife and can maintain bird and invertebrate populations. Inverclyde Council's Grounds Services have identified several hedgerows and replanted these to improve such conditions, this along with the development of naturalised wildflower meadows has demonstrated a noticeable increase in pollinator populations.

### **Other projects**

A three-year project to restore an area of peatland larger than 780 football pitches in Inverclyde has been given funding by Peatland ACTION. The Duchal Moor project will restore an area of 788 hectares of drained peatland in Inverclyde in a bid to cut carbon emissions.

Inverclyde Council has been awarded funding from NatureScot's Peatland ACTION partnership to carry out the work, which is due to begin on site in January 2024. The project has been supported by the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network's Clyde Peatlands initiative, which aims to increase the rate and scale of peatland restoration across the whole City Region.

Inverclyde Council is one of the first local authorities in Scotland to carry out peatland restoration on a scale of this size. Much of the peatland in Inverclyde had drainage ditches cut into it around 60 years ago to create moorland hunting estates.

A restored peatland can reduce the amount of greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere, slow down water flow, prevent flooding and provide habitats for a range of wildlife, which improves biodiversity. The development and delivery of the Duchal Moor project is being supported by Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership's Peatland Officer, who is also funded by Peatland ACTION.

A further Peatland restoration project for Dowries Farm has also been funded by Peatland ACTION. This will restore 154 hectares of peatland on the farm. Inverclyde Council will also plant 1000 new trees in 2023/24 and have identified areas for creating small orchards in two towns along with the creation of further wildflower meadows within Inverclyde. We are also replanting areas where diseased ash tree removal was undertaken.



### **Mainstreaming Biodiversity**

Inverclyde Council's Procurement section embeds all the best environmental practices, social and economic values in procuring services and goods from the business community. The Council is a responsible buyer and aims to embed sustainability principles which benefit the environment, economy and general population. Carbon management is embedded in many of the procurement quality assessments.

The Council have a sustainable approach to construction and projects are managed to ensure the best practice. New developments look to improve biodiversity by including where possible the opportunities for native planting, minimising tarmac / rubber crumb – an example of this is Larkfield Children's Centre which includes a range of natural native plants, naturalised hedging and facilities including FSC standard timber.

The Ranger service actively engages with students to show them the range of biodiversity that can be found within Inverclyde and especially within their own school grounds, offering advice to schools who wish to achieve or maintain Eco School - Green Flag Status.

### **Nature Based Solutions, Climate Change and Biodiversity**

Inverclyde Council's rich and varied land includes many localised biodiversity sites such as coastal areas to higher moorland areas which include peat bogs, woodland, wetlands, lochs and dams.

The Council has engaged GAT and will develop strategies for further native tree planting, a pollinator corridor strategy and expansion of peatland restoration projects. We will develop open spaces in a more sustainable and biodiverse manner.

### **Public Engagement and Workforce Development**

Inverclyde Council currently employs nine apprentices in grounds maintenance and horticulture. The apprentices are heavily involved in tree planting, wildflower meadow creation and maintenance.

The Environmental Services training officer provides toolbox talks to all ground services teams who have engaged in moving from traditional planting to more biodiverse planting and native tree planting.

The Ranger service is engaged with local community groups and with local school children and teachers alike.





Through Ranger service education staff are engaged with promotion of biodiversity projects however volunteering days and secondment are not widely up taken.

### **Research and Monitoring**

Inverclyde Council report progress regularly on capital works relevant to biodiversity and environmental actions to the Environment and Regeneration committee. New projects are reported to relevant committees including Planning and Policies. Net zero strategy is reported regularly.

Inverclyde Council have established a comprehensive database for recording planted trees and use a GIS system to map changes to our approach to biodiversity including new planting areas. Rangers record events and activities undertaken. Records are maintained of all planting undertaken throughout the year including the number and nature of plants used.

### **Biodiversity Highlights and Challenges**

Inverclyde's main achievements for improving biodiversity during the reporting period are as follows:

- Development of new tree planting – 1000 new native trees planted.
- A wide range of GAT supported projects are underway.
- Ranger service and events of local engagements with schools on native tree growing.
- Introduction of further wildflower meadows throughout Inverclyde.

The major challenges are delivering change during a period of reducing resources. Improving biodiversity requires new skills and staff development. The modern apprentice scheme will allow us to manage succession planning to an extent. Further engagement with local communities needs to be developed.

With all the changes there is resistance, and managing public perception of a service which introduces naturalised planting and reduced grass cutting will need to be carried out.

### **Summary of Stakeholder Engagement**

Nature Scotland were consulted via email as Key Agency during the preparation of the Evidence Report and had submitted the following comments:

#### **Nature Networks**



To support NPF4 Policy 3 – Biodiversity, we suggest that a good starting point for mapping existing and potential nature networks will be the CSGN 2021 Habitat Connectivity Map. This identifies areas of habitat (woodland, grassland, wetland and bog and heath) across central Scotland which should be protected and improved, as well as key sites for connecting these habitats so that species can move between them. This data is available from the Open Data Hub at the following link: <https://opendata.nature.scot/maps/snh::csqn-habitat-networks-and-opportunity-areas/about>.

There is also relevant work progressing at the regional scale, led by the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership (GCVGNP), to develop thinking on a city region approach to nature networks. This work draws on the GCVGN Blueprint strands: Clyde Climate Forest, Clyde Peatlands, Clyde Grasslands and Clyde Wetlands. We suggest that engaging with the GCVGNP, if the Council has not already done so, would be useful.

### **Protected areas for nature conservation**

Inverclyde has a number of protected areas – Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) - wholly or partially within its boundary. Details of these are available from the Open Data Hub: <https://opendata.nature.scot/search?categories=%252Fcategories%252Fprotected%2520sites&tags=Nature%2520conservation>

In addition to nature, conservation areas with statutory designations, we would welcome the Evidence Report providing details of any Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS) in Inverclyde; as well as any relevant information provided by the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

### **River Clyde**

The River Clyde is the focus of attention for a number of strategies, programmes and projects at various scales and stages of development. This includes initiatives like the Clyde Mission (now being led by the Glasgow City Region), and the recent Climate Change work on tidal flooding on the Clyde: <https://www.climateexchange.org.uk/research/projects/tidal-flooding-on-the-clyde-options-analysis-and-scoping-of-adaptation-pathways/>. Additionally, data on coastal change from Dynamic Coast (<https://www.dynamiccoast.com/>) will be relevant to Inverclyde. We would welcome a strong focus on the Clyde within the Evidence Report and Proposed Plan, drawing upon various sources of evidence including those mentioned above.

### **Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan**



- |   |  |
|---|--|
|   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review suggested designation of Local Nature Conservation Sites LNCS in the new LDP.</li> <li>Consider preparation of HRA for Inverclyde.</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>Statements of Agreement / Dispute</b>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None identified.</li> </ul>  |  |

<b>Statements of Agreement / Dispute</b>
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- None identified.

Topic	<b>Natural Places</b>  This schedule should be read in conjunction with the following schedules:  Blue and Green Infrastructure Soils Forestry and Woodland
Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section	Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended. <u>Section 15(5)(a)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district</li> </ul>
NPF4 LDP Requirements	<u>NPF4 Policy 4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs will identify and protect locally, regionally, nationally and internationally important natural assets, on land and along coasts. The spatial strategy should safeguard them and take into account the objectives and level of their protected status in allocating land for development.</li> <li>Spatial strategies should also better connect nature rich areas by establishing and growing nature networks to help protect and restore the biodiversity, ecosystems, and natural processes in their area.</li> </ul>
Links to Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Framework for Nature Networks in Scotland (Draft) <a href="#">Framework for Nature Networks in Scotland - Draft   NatureScot</a></li> <li>Making Space for Nature (Lawton, 2010). Focused on England but Nature Network principles equally apply in Scotland</li> <li>Pollinator Strategy for Scotland (2017-27) <a href="https://www.nature.scot/doc/pollinator-strategy-scotland-2017-2027">https://www.nature.scot/doc/pollinator-strategy-scotland-2017-2027</a></li> <li><a href="#">Advising on peatland, carbon-rich soils and priority peatland habitats in development management   NatureScot</a></li> <li>Draft Scottish National Adaptation Plan <a href="#">Draft Scottish National Adaptation Plan (2024-2029) (www.gov.scot)</a></li> <li>Glasgow &amp; Clyde Valley Green Network Blueprint <a href="#">Our Blueprint - GCV Green Network</a></li> <li>Glasgow &amp; Clyde Valley, Forestry and Woodland Strategy (2020)</li> </ul>



[clydeplanforestryandwoodlandstrategy.pdf \(storyblok.com\)](#)

- Glasgow City Region, Species Rich Grassland Opportunity Mapping (2023) [Clyde Grasslands - GCV Green Network](#)
- Glasgow City Region, Wetland Opportunity Mapping (2024) [Clyde Wetlands - GCV Green Network \(report due Oct 24\)](#)
- Inverclyde Council Plan 2023 – 2028 - [5908 Inverclyde Council Plan with Appendix.pdf](#)

## Summary of Evidence

### **Nature Networks Scotland**

Nature Networks are best considered at a landscape scale to ensure species can move around freely between existing nature rich areas and irrespective of administrative boundaries. NPF4 states: *“Scotland’s Nature Networks will enable opportunities for achieving ecological connectivity that meet local priorities for biodiversity and nature; whilst building and strengthening an evolving regional and national connectivity.”*

A regional, cross-boundary approach is also supported by NatureScot’s draft Nature Network Framework that states: *“Nature networks will build on connections at the local level and look at opportunities to deliver strategic connectivity regionally and support national objectives and priorities. This will need to be facilitated across administrative boundaries to ensure strong connectivity between landscapes. Working regionally enables the connection of neighbouring networks, further increasing the ability for dispersal, strengthening populations and improving their resilience to pressures.”*

Additionally, NatureScot’s “Nature Networks: Frequently Asked Questions (2024)” states: *“...cross-border collaboration will be important to ensure that Nature Networks which cross shared boundaries remain fully functional” and “Implementation would ideally take place through local and regional partnerships to agree upon Nature Network corridors across an area...”*

In recognition of the above, the eight authorities that comprise Glasgow City Region (GCR) have agreed to work collaboratively on the identification of Nature Networks that uses a common approach, based on common baseline data, while allowing for the reflection of local nuance and circumstances.

The Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network (GCVGN) has extensive experience and expertise in developing Nature Networks and is leading the work in collaboration with the GCR local authorities, including Inverclyde.





### **Inverclyde Context**

While much more nuanced at a local level, Inverclyde has three broad geographical and land use characteristics that influence Nature Networks and the ability to enhance and manage them.

The north of Inverclyde is defined by the coastal strip which extends up the hillside southwards towards Renfrewshire Heights and Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park. Within this strip there are two distinct characters. The shoreline and the mudflats are important habitats and nature networks in their own right and subject to multiple international and national designations. The remainder of the strip is heavily urbanised and constrained with a mix of residential, industrial, business and transport land uses, albeit with extensive areas of greenspace and bounded by greenbelt.

In these urban and peri-urban contexts the council has wide-ranging influence on Nature Networks through strategic planning & development management, the management of council owned spaces and protected site and greenbelt designations.

The remainder, and vast majority, of Inverclyde is rural in character. It is split between the uplands of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, where the predominant land uses are moorland grazing, water supply catchment and forestry, and lowland farming at particularly to the east around Kilmacolm.

In this context the LDP has less influence on management and delivery of Nature Networks on private land although opportunities exist associated with the Open Space Strategy and greenspaces in and around the smaller settlements of Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay, the way in which Forestry and Woodland Strategy could target planting to support Nature Networks and LNCS designations.

Inverclyde is unique in Glasgow City Region in that it owns a considerable area of rural land in the Regional Park on which it has already undertaken extensive peatland restoration. Scope may exist to influence delivery of other habitat types, though delivery will be much more reliant on the replacement for Agri-Environment Climate Scheme payments to farmers and landowners, and on Forestry Grants.

Each of the broad circumstances described above present opportunities and issues for identifying Nature Networks, for their delivery and for the role of the LDP.

### **Inverclyde Designated Sites**

The Scottish Government has set a target of having 30% of Scotland's land and sea under protected designations by 2030. The designations that count towards that total are RAMSAR sites, Special Protected Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserves (NNR).



While not the primary driver for more local and nuanced Nature Networks, Inverclyde has substantial areas covered by some of the 30 x 30 designations and Nature Networks should ensure connectivity to and between these nature rich areas. The Inverclyde 30 x 30 sites are:

Designation	Site
<b>Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</b>	Inner Clyde Estuary Renfrewshire Heights Shielhill Glen Dunrod Hill Knocknairs Hill Dargavel Burn Glen Moss
<b>Special Protection Areas (SPA)</b>	Inner Clyde Estuary Renfrewshire Heights
<b>RAMSAR</b>	Inner Clyde Estuary

Table 1 – List of Designated Sites

#### Key Nature Network Themes in Inverclyde

##### **Habitats**

Through collective discussion, the Glasgow City Region authorities have identified the following broad habitat types as being key to regional Nature Networks:

Broad habitat type	Rational for inclusion
Broadleaved woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive existing woodland networks, however, are often discontinuous.</li> <li>• Provides multiple benefits additional to biodiversity including carbon sequestration, flood mitigation, temperature regulation.</li> <li>• Existing woodland covers around 17%, much lower than other European countries. Target of 20% for urban canopy cover in Glasgow City Region and 21% for the total area of Scotland by 2032.</li> </ul>
Grassland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Across UK, 97% of species rich grassland lost since the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. What remains is vulnerable and highly fragmented.</li> <li>• Key habitat for pollinators which are critical to the agricultural sector.</li> <li>• Increasingly recognised as playing a major role in carbon sequestration.</li> </ul>



Wetland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A habitat type decimated by agricultural intensification and urban expansion.</li> <li>• Provides additional benefits including flood mitigation, pollution mitigation and water quality.</li> <li>• Increasingly recognised for carbon sequestration value.</li> </ul>
Peatland/heath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique habitat and home to an array of species.</li> <li>• Around 50,000ha of peatland across the region (15% of land area) with much of it degraded.</li> <li>• Provides multiple benefits additional to biodiversity including carbon sequestration and flood mitigation.</li> </ul>
Coastal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive protected areas, particularly intertidal mudflats.</li> <li>• Forward planning required to address impacts of rising sea levels in coming decades.</li> <li>• Large parts of the coastline engineered/industrial/post-industrial with potential for improving biodiversity value.</li> </ul>

Table 2 – Habitat Types

## Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

### Nature Scotland initial consultation response:

#### Nature networks

To support NPF4 Policy 3 – Biodiversity, we suggest that a good starting point for mapping existing and potential nature networks will be the CSGN 2021 Habitat Connectivity Map. This identifies areas of habitat (woodland, grassland, wetland and bog and heath) across central Scotland which should be protected and improved, as well as key sites for connecting these habitats so that species can move between them. This data is available from the Open Data Hub at the following link: <https://opendata.nature.scot/maps/snh::csgn-habitat-networks-and-opportunity-areas/about>.

There is also relevant work progressing at the regional scale, led by the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership (GCVGNP), to develop thinking on a city region approach to nature networks. This work draws on the GCVGN Blueprint strands: Clyde Climate Forest, Clyde Peatlands, Clyde Grasslands and Clyde Wetlands. We suggest that engaging with the GCVGNP, if the Council has not already done so, would be useful.

#### Protected areas for nature conservation



Inverclyde has several protected areas – Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) - wholly or partially within its boundary. Details of these are available from the Open Data Hub: <https://opendata.nature.scot/search?categories=%252Fcategories%252Fprotected%2520sites&tags=Nature%2520conservation>

In addition to nature conservation areas with statutory designations, we would welcome the Evidence Report providing details of any Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS) in Inverclyde; as well as any relevant information provided by the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

### River Clyde

The River Clyde is the focus of attention for a number of strategies, programmes and projects at various scales and stages of development. This includes initiatives like the Clyde Mission (now being led by the Glasgow City Region), and the recent ClimateXChange work on tidal flooding on the Clyde: <https://www.climateexchange.org.uk/research/projects/tidal-flooding-on-the-clyde-options-analysis-and-scoping-of-adaptation-pathways/>. Additionally, data on coastal change from Dynamic Coast (<https://www.dynamiccoast.com/>) will be relevant to Inverclyde. We would welcome a strong focus on the Clyde within the Evidence Report and Proposed Plan, drawing upon various sources of evidence including those mentioned above.

### **GCV Green Network** – consultation response:

The draft Nature Networks are a result of extensive stakeholder engagement with a range of organisations and individuals to ensure that expert opinion has informed their development. These include NatureScot, Plantlife Scotland, Butterfly Conservation, Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Buglife, Napier University, Wildfowl and Wetland Trust, RSPB, Scotland's Rural College, Glasgow Records Centre, Inverclyde's Local Biodiversity Partnership, individual biological recorders as well as council officers from Inverclyde Council and the other seven Glasgow City Region authorities. The engagement took several forms including:

**Face to face workshops** – 16 individual sessions have been run across the region, with 2 to date covering Inverclyde. These have varied in the geographical scale considered, and the number of participants e.g. national agencies such as NatureScot looking at strategic and regionally significant networks, local authority officers, local biodiversity partnerships and key individuals looking at a local authority scale, and more detailed discussions on more localised networks with interested parties such as Scottish Water or Forestry and Land Scotland.



The sessions have generated extremely detailed and nuanced information and data that have shaped the draft Nature Networks. Further sessions will be held as the work progresses.

**Presentation** to, and discussion with, key agencies and partners –these are organisations that could play a key role in the delivery of Nature Networks and that hold organisational data that has been used to inform the networks. These include Transport Scotland, Amey, Scottish Water, NHS, SSE and SPEN.

**Steering Groups** for individual pieces of work – as outlined above, new data and analysis has been undertaken to inform the draft Grassland and Wetland Nature Networks. Each of these brought together a Steering Group of key organisations to oversee and shape the work. These were:

**Grassland** - Plantlife Scotland, Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Butterfly Conservation, Scottish Agricultural College.

**Wetland** - Buglife, Edinburgh Napier University Wetland Ecology, Wildfowl and Wetland Trust, Green Action Trust, Scottish Agricultural College.

### Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

- Directive in Council Plan to protect our natural environment. At present, this is done via the policies within the existing LDP.
- Importance of managing natural spaces within the district.
- Commitment to enhancing natural spaces within the new LDP.

#### Inverclyde Draft Nature Networks

The GCVGN has worked with local authorities across Glasgow City Region to develop draft Nature Networks. These are set out below for Inverclyde in a series of maps for each of the broad habitat types considered, supported by summaries of key themes and opportunities.

In order to highlight opportunities and challenges for protection, management and delivery more clearly, each individual Nature Network corridor identified in the maps is characterised in one of three ways:







### **Summary of Woodland Themes**

Figure 1 clearly demonstrates that Inverclyde has extensive, existing broadleaved woodland networks but that these are predominantly associated with urban and peri-urban areas, estate policy woodlands and lowland agricultural land to the east. Very little broadleaved woodland exists in the uplands of the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park.

On closer examination some of the existing network connections are based on narrow corridors and are therefore vulnerable to land use change. These connections would ideally be secured and augmented to maintain and enhance connectivity. Figure 1 also identifies several small gaps in the networks where targeted woodland creation could greatly increase connectivity.

In the Regional Park it will be the case that other habitat types such as peatland, heath and acid grassland are more of a priority however, given the scale of the area there is clearly scope for more woodland in the landscape and, if well targeted, the creation of new Woodland Nature Networks.

### **Summary of woodland opportunities**

Ensuring that key nodes and connections within the existing networks are protected through LNCS designations is a key role for the new LDP.

In the urban and peri-urban areas of Inverclyde opportunities exist to connect existing networks through a programme of targeted urban tree planting in council owned land, through the requirement for trees and woodland in new planned development and tree replacement for Ash Dieback. Other public land managed by organisations such as the NHS, Transport Scotland and Scottish Water may also present opportunities for increasing urban woodland cover and creating connectivity, with the latter owning and managing substantial areas of Inverclyde.

In rural, private land, which constitutes a substantial proportion of Inverclyde, the LDP has less ability to influence change on Nature Networks however, opportunities do exist through the Forest and Woodland Strategy's influence in targeting woodland to areas that support connectivity. Figure 1 also shows large areas of conifer forestry felling and reforestation plans may present the opportunity to include more broadleaves, particularly in key locations for connectivity.

Forestry Grant payments will continue to be a key driver for broadleaved woodland delivery in Inverclyde, and across Glasgow City Region, with Clyde Climate Forest a key delivery agent helping target creation to areas contributing to Nature Networks. The above will also deliver on Policy 6 Forestry, Woodland and Trees.

### **Grassland**

Figure 2 below shows a draft Grassland Nature Network for Inverclyde identified using the data set out above, and expert stakeholder knowledge.





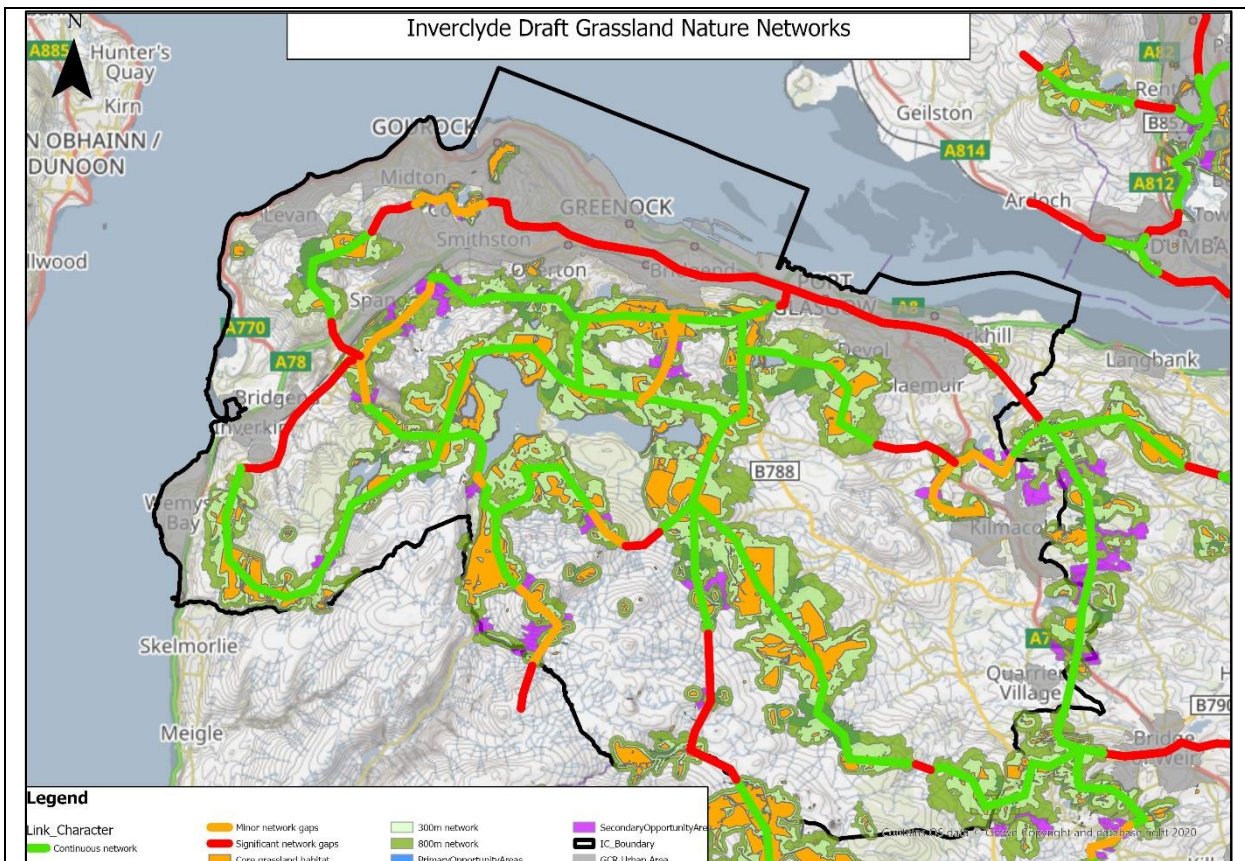


Figure 2 – Grassland Nature Network for Inverclyde

### **Summary of Grassland Themes**

It is estimated around 97% of species rich grassland has been lost across the UK since WW2 due to agricultural intensification and urban expansion. Figure 2 suggests that this isn't the case in Inverclyde which has significant areas of grassland that are also well networked. These however are predominantly associated with the uplands of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park and are likely to comprise mostly acid and marshy grassland, having escaped urbanisation and intensive agriculture. Much of the grasslands are covered by multiple designations.

There is much less remaining grassland in urban Inverclyde with Coves, Lyle Hill and Coppermine being the main nodes. A programme of work to create a network of urban meadow sites is underway although as the "red" urban Nature Network running east /west demonstrates this will be a long-term project.

### **Summary of Grassland Opportunities**

Creating grassland Nature Networks will require different approaches dependent on location and circumstances. In rural Inverclyde the replacement for Agri-Environment Climate Scheme payments to farmers and landowners will play a leading role in what can be delivered. Grazing pressure is likely to be the main impactor on species diversity and grassland quality. There may be scope to work with Scottish Water and other landowners to explore options for decreasing grazing numbers if this can be



incentivised through new rural payments. The influence of the LDP will be limited in this rural context although it should ensure that remaining grassland habitat not currently designated is afforded protection through LNCS designations, and that the Forestry and Woodland Strategy targets woodland creation away from other valuable habitats.

Policy 29, Rural Development, allows for diversification of rural businesses where “natural assets ... are safeguarded and enhanced”. Essential infrastructure, such as windfarms and solar arrays, can be developed in rural areas, although this may not be applicable to Inverclyde due to the designations covering much of the uplands. If any such developments do come forward, they may present opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and could make significant contributions to Nature Networks through good Habitat Management Plans.

In urban locations a new Open Space Strategy should play a key role in targeting the creation of grasslands within urban and peri-urban green spaces, particularly amenity spaces with low biodiversity and functional value. Biodiversity enhancement through new planned development, as required by Policy 3, based on site statements and design briefs that clearly identify the biodiversity and Nature Network elements to be delivered, will also be a key urban delivery mechanism. In urban/peri-urban areas there is also a greater possibility of working with local community organisations on projects that could help build grassland habitat connectivity.

The identification of Nature Networks within the LDP should also initiate dialogue with other public landowners and managers on how their assets can assist with delivery including, Transport Scotland, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, Scottish Enterprise, Forestry and Land Scotland and Scottish Water.

## Wetland

Figure 3 below shows a draft Wetland Nature Network for Inverclyde identified using the data set out above and expert stakeholder knowledge.





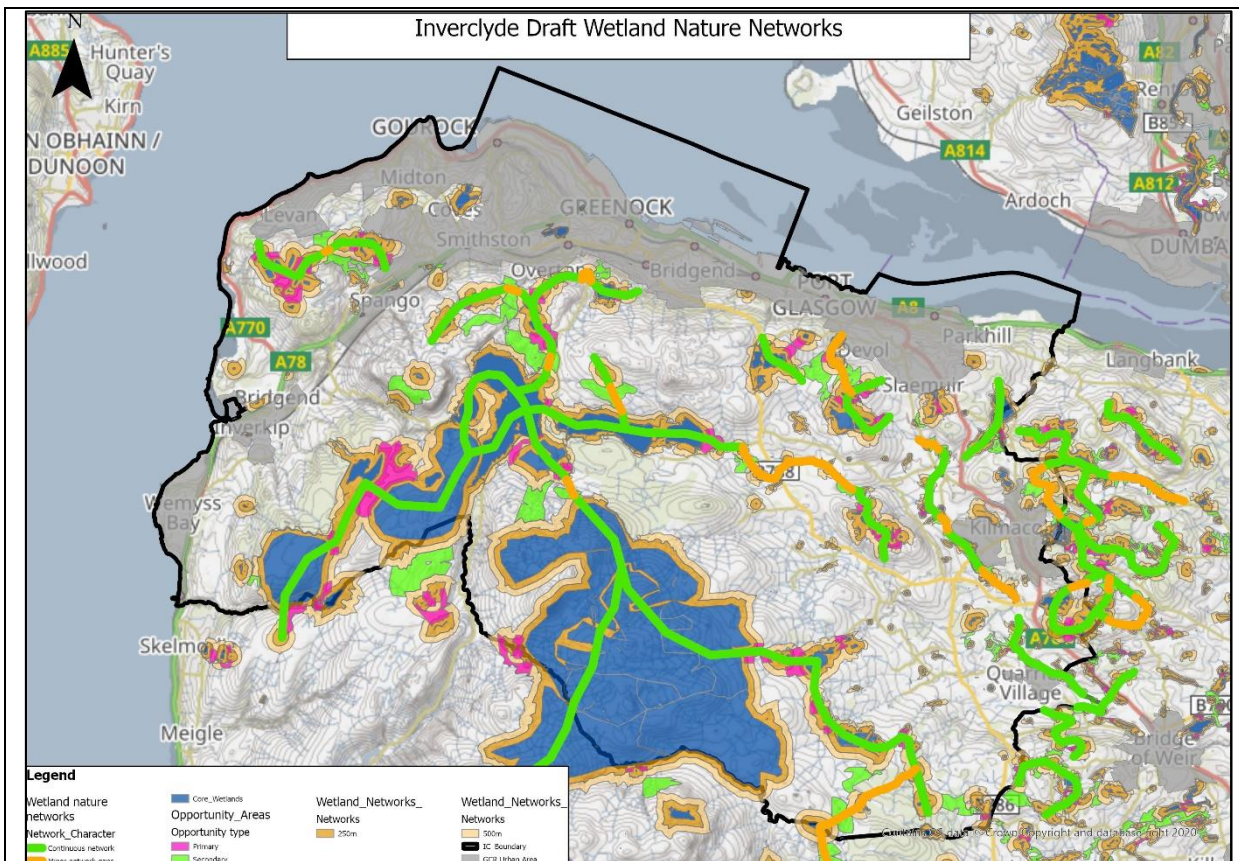


Figure 3 – Wetland Nature Network for Inverclyde

### **Summary of Wetland Themes**

Figure 3 above clearly demonstrates that Inverclyde has extensive existing wetland networks and a series of minor network gaps that could form the basis of a wetland creation programme. These wetlands are, however, almost exclusively associated with rural Inverclyde and the uplands in and around the Regional Park where the LDP has much less influence.

Some significant urban wetlands do exist, such as Coves and Cowdenknowes Reservoirs and Coppermine, but these are isolated and not part of wider networks.

Many of the building blocks of a Wetland Nature Network are in place, particularly in the rural context, forming large habitat nodes and with opportunities identified to create stepping-stones and habitat corridors. However, the geography of the authority, and competing intervening land uses, means a fully interconnected and functioning Wetland Nature Network will be a long-term programme that can only be partially influenced by the LDP.

'Wetlands', more so than other broad habitat types that underpin Nature Networks, are highly varied in habitat type. This is likely to provide opportunities for connectivity as they overlap with other Nature Network habitats such as wet grassland or wet woodland in mosaics.





## Summary of Wetland Opportunities

In rural locations restoration of degraded peatland, Policy 5 Carbon Rich Soils, can make a significant contribution to the wetland network and is detailed further in the Peatland section below. Inverclyde is in the process of restoring around 800ha at Dowries and Hardridge and this forms a significant part of the network shown in Figure 3. Identification of Peatland Restoration opportunities with other landowners could also make major contributions to the network.

As with other rural habitat types the replacement for Agri-Environment Climate Scheme payments to farmers and landowners will play a key role in what can be delivered for wetlands. The influence of the LDP will be limited protective designations and opportunities associated with rural development as discussed above.

The LDP has considerably more influence over wetland network delivery in urban locations. This includes the requirement for high quality, naturalised SUDS in new development, Natural Flood Management schemes, river restoration and deculverting projects. The Open Space Strategy should also identify spaces that are wet and perhaps difficult to maintain. These could have the potential to create new urban wetlands with relatively little intervention.

Collectively these interventions would also contribute to Policy 22 - Flood Risk and Water Management and to Policy 20 - Blue & Green Infrastructure. Given the very limited number of existing wetlands in urban Inverclyde, delivery of an urban network will be a long-term programme, however, every opportunity should be taken to start recreating the building blocks of a wetland network.

## Peatland

Figure 4 below shows peatland distribution across Inverclyde (Carbon & Peatland Map for Scotland, 2016).



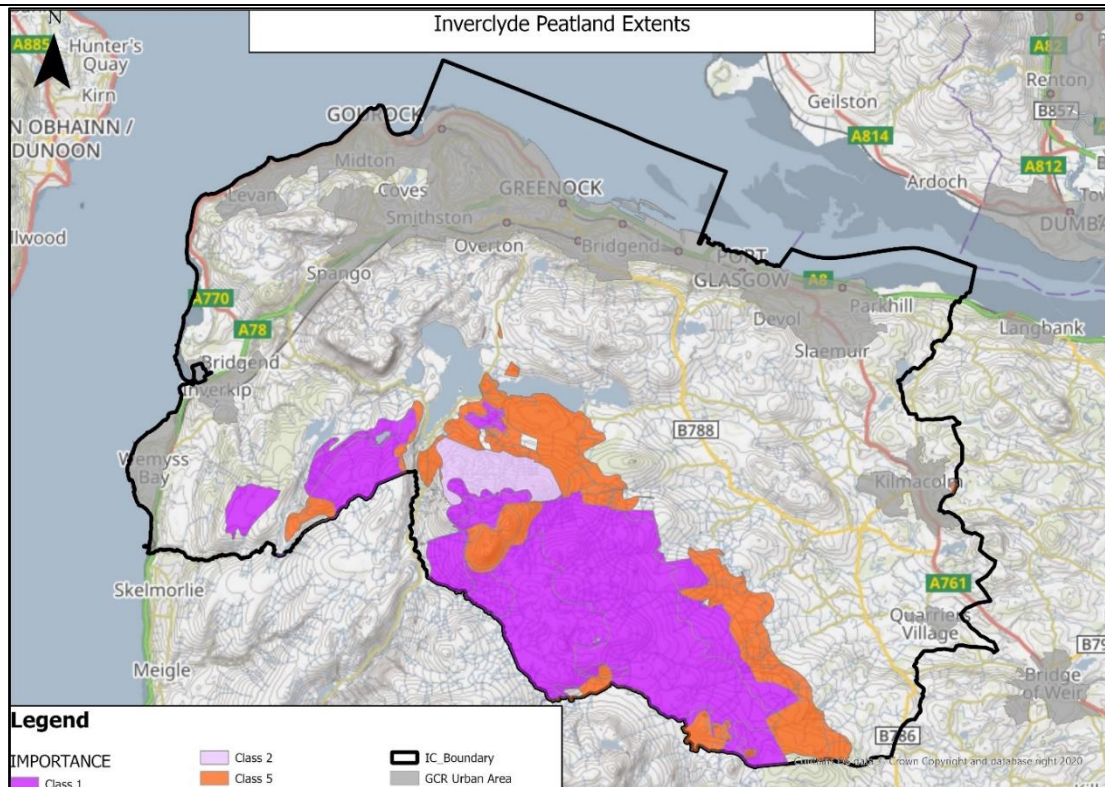


Figure 4 – Peatland distribution across Inverclyde

### Summary of Peatland Themes

Inverclyde has approximately 3,965ha of deep peat across its area, around 8% of the total for the region. It comprises:

- Class 1** - Nationally important carbon-rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat - Areas likely to be of high conservation value.
- Class 2** - Nationally important carbon-rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat - Areas of potentially high conservation value and restoration potential.
- Class 5** - Soil information takes precedence over vegetation data - No peatland habitat recorded. May also show bare soil. All soils are carbon-rich soil and deep peat.

Peatland cannot be recreated like other habitat types however, peatland that has been drained for agriculture or estate sports and is in a poorly degraded state can be restored. It is estimated by NatureScot that around 80% of Scotland's peatland is degraded. This represents a huge opportunity to enhance biodiversity and deliver Nature Networks while providing at scale carbon storage for Net Zero and natural flood management, delivering on Policy 2 - Climate mitigation and adaptation, Policy 5 – Soils, and Policy 22 - Flood Risk and Water Management.

### Summary of Peatland Opportunities



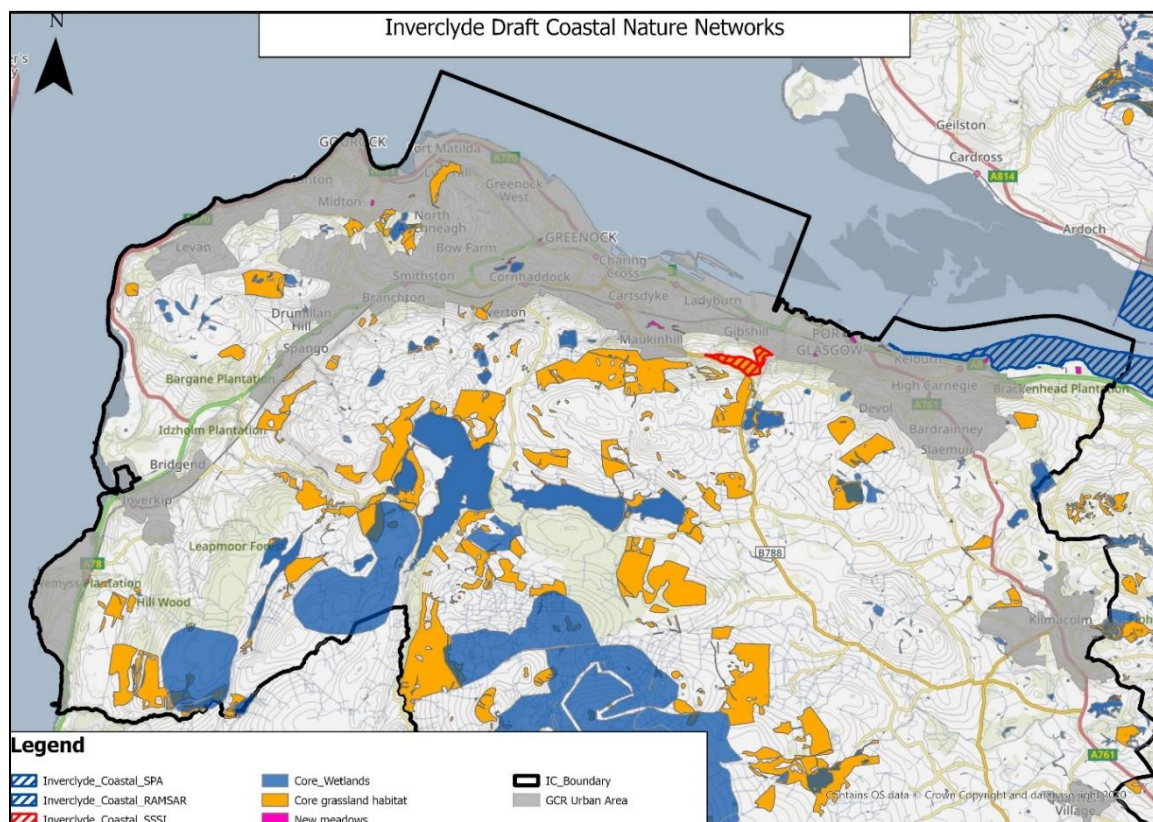


Inverclyde Council is currently in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a 3-year programme of peatland restoration on its land holdings. When complete 788ha of peatland will have been rewetted bringing a valuable wildlife habitat back into good condition and making a significant contribution to the regional Wetland Nature Network.

Other landowners and interest groups have expressed an interest in restoring peatland in other areas of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park. These opportunities should be explored and supported through the LDP.

### **Coastal**

Figure 5 below shows the coastal zone of Inverclyde, including habitat patches from the above maps for wetland, grassland and woodland, as well as protected,



designated areas.

**Figure 5 – Coastal Zone for Inverclyde**

### **Summary of Coastal Themes**

The coast of Inverclyde is defined by the River Clyde Estuary and broadly has three distinct section characters. From Finlaystone Country Estate to Newark Castle the intertidal mudflats constitute a unique and valuable Nature Network in their own right. They are subject to multiple international and national designations based on the large and diverse assemblage of wintering bird species but are also a key element of the



wider wetland network for Inverclyde, and the region. Other than the mudflats there is very little in the way of wetlands along this stretch of coast.

This section does have a strong woodland network with Finlaystone, Parklea and Kelburn Park being key nodes connected via smaller stands of trees. In 2024 a series of new wildflower meadows were created in Parklea, Newark Castle, Kelburn Park, Coronation Park and Birkmyre Park. These form the beginnings of a grassland Nature Network through coastal and urban Inverclyde which will be a long-term programme.

Further west from Newark Castle all the way to West Bay, Gourock the coast is mostly heavily modified and abutted by a mix of industry, business, residential and transport corridors. This is interspersed by some greenspace, particularly west of Cardwell Bay, except for Battery Park this tends to be separated from the coast by the A770. Nature Networks for all habitat types are sparse in this coastal section apart from a sinuous woodland network running west from Gourock Train Station to Lunderston Bay.

South of Cloch Point to the boundary with North Lanarkshire has a strong woodland network albeit with a pinch point through Inverkip. The former Inverkip Power Station and surrounds is a key woodland network node. Coastal grasslands and wetlands are sparse in this section although two grassland nodes exist at the wind turbines at Tannel Hill and west of Wemyss Bay and the potential for linking these should be investigated.

### **Summary of Coastal Opportunities**

The LDP will have significant influence over much of the coastal zone in Inverclyde. Development and redevelopment must ensure that any remaining key habitats are protected and integrated into the design. Development should also be designed in such a way that Nature Networks are enhanced by provision of the appropriate habitat type(s) in the appropriate place. Grasslands and wetlands are extremely sparse across the coastal zone and any opportunity should be taken to start recreating the building blocks of networks through naturalised SUDS and meadows in new development.

There are many greenspaces immediately adjacent to the river corridor along its length and although most aren't immediately adjacent to the coastline they could make a significant contribution to connectivity along the coastal zone. New meadows have been created in coastal greenspaces in and around Port Glasgow, but many others present the opportunity for enhanced biodiversity, particularly amenity spaces with low functionality and diversity throughout the coastal zone. The Open Space Strategy should identify sites that could play a part in delivering Nature Networks.

The A8 corridor from Langbank to Newark roundabout has significant verges and a central reservation. These could deliver far more in terms of habitat connectivity, particularly for grasslands and represent an opportunity for partnership working with the landowners/managers to enhance biodiversity and connectivity.



### **Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan**

Considerable work has already been undertaken in identifying and defining Inverclyde's Nature Networks. This will be revised and updated over time as new and improved habitat is created, connectivity enhanced and the network expanded.

The LDP must ensure that:

- Key elements of the network are protected, including new ones as they are created.
- Where new development sites are allocated in the LDP, the site statements will need to clearly identify the biodiversity and Nature Network requirements to be delivered.
- The requirement for biodiversity enhancement and Nature Networks will impact on development proposals and this should be included in site selection criteria.
- For delivery through new development, the LDP will need to consider the long-term stewardship of biodiversity assets and how these are resourced and managed.
- The LDP will need to consider how and where off-site delivery should be targeted if on-site delivery isn't feasible.
- Nature Networks and biodiversity improvements will also be delivered through other policy areas including the Forestry and Woodland Strategy, Open Space Strategy, Flood Risk and Water Management, and the LDP must ensure these are mutually reinforcing.

### **Statements of Agreement / Dispute**

#### **Statements of Agreement**

NatureScot

Scottish Forestry

Scottish Environment Protection Agency





Topic	Soils
<b>Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended,  <u>Section 15(5)(a)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district.</li> </ul>
<b>NPF4 LDP Requirements</b>	<p><u>NPF4 Policy 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should protect locally, regionally, nationally and internationally valued soils, including land of lesser quality that is culturally or locally important for primary use.</li> </ul>
<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Inverclyde Peatland Restoration Project</a></li> <li><a href="#">Peatland ACTION</a></li> <li>Inverclyde Council Plan 2023 – 2028 - <a href="#">5908 Inverclyde Council Plan with Appendix.pdf</a></li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>	
<p>A three-year project to restore an area of peatland larger than 780 football pitches in Inverclyde has been given funding by Peatland ACTION.</p> <p>The Duchal Moor project will restore an area of 788 hectares of drained peatland in Inverclyde in a bid to cut carbon emissions. Inverclyde Council has been awarded £768,705 from NatureScot's Peatland ACTION partnership to carry out the work, which is due to begin on site in January 2024.</p> <p>The project has been supported by the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network's Clyde Peatlands initiative, which aims to increase the rate and scale of peatland restoration across the whole City Region. Inverclyde Council is one of the first local authorities in Scotland to carry out peatland restoration on a scale of this size.</p> <p>Direct council emissions have fallen from 19,104 tonnes in 2012/13 to 11,561 tonnes in 2019/20. Much of the upland countryside area of Inverclyde is peatland and restoring it can work wonders for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This peatland restoration project is one of the largest undertaken by a local authority in Scotland.</p> <p>Much of the peatland in Inverclyde had drainage ditches cut into it around 60 years ago to create moorland hunting estates. Now, it is more widely understood that a</p>	



restored peatland can reduce the amount of greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere, slow down water flow, prevent flooding and provide habitats for a range of wildlife, which improves biodiversity.

Peatland ACTION is a NatureScot partnership involving Scottish Water, Forestry and Land Scotland, and the national parks. As well as providing funding, the partnership supports applications throughout the process, manages contracts and helps to design restoration projects.

The development and delivery of the Duchal Moor project is being supported by Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership's Peatland Officer, who is also funded by Peatland ACTION.

## Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

See Natural Places schedule.

## Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

- Identify and map peatland areas of the district within LDP4.

### Statements of Agreement / Dispute

- None identified.



Topic	Forestry and Woodland
<b>Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended: Section 15(5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district.</li> <li>• The principal purposes for which the land is used.</li> </ul>
<b>NPF4 LDP Requirements</b>	<p><u>NPF4 Policy 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LDPs should identify and protect existing woodland and the potential for its enhancement or expansion to avoid habitat fragmentation and improve ecological connectivity, helping to support and expand nature networks.</li> <li>• The spatial strategy should identify and set out proposals for forestry, woodlands and trees in the area, including their development, protection and enhancement, resilience to climate change, and the expansion of a range of types to provide multiple benefits. This will be supported and informed by an up-to-date Forestry and Woodland Strategy.</li> </ul>
<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inverclyde Tree Management and Planting Strategy 2024 - <a href="#">10 - Tree Planting Strategy Committee.pdf</a></li> <li>• The Scottish Forestry Strategy (2019-2029) - <a href="#">Forestry Strategy 2019-2029.pdf</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Council Plan 2023 – 2028 - <a href="#">5908 Inverclyde Council Plan with Appendix.pdf</a></li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>	
<p><u>Tree Management and Planting Strategy</u></p> <p>Inverclyde Council hold a large area of land which contain a mix of woodland, small forest areas and individual or copses. Many of these trees are long established or have naturalised and grown unaided, a large proportion of these trees are not native to Scotland and tend to be more prone to disease.</p>	



Inverclyde Council have signed a Concordat agreement with Clyde Climate Forest to participate in the planting of 18 million trees across the Glasgow City Region by 2031. Our work is also underpinned by The Scottish Forestry Strategy (2019-2029). It is acknowledged by Clyde Climate Forest that to meet this target on a regional basis would take a sustained level of resources over time.

Trees are acknowledged to provide many positive benefits such as visual enhancement of the environment, surface water management during heavy rainfall, trees also contribute to carbon storage and encourage wildlife habitat and enriched biodiversity.

The Tree Management and Planting Strategy is for land within the Councils control and does not include trees on land owned by any other landowners or public bodies. The Council are working on a database of trees which are within its area, this database is only in its infancy with a priority to identify those trees in high amenity areas. Where there are issues with accessibility to trees or densely wooded areas shape files identifying the acreage will be created. Street trees and many of the trees in parks and public open spaces are already on the register.

## Strategy and Development

The importance of woodlands, and in particular woodland which are in close proximity to communities has increased in recent years largely in recognition of associated health and educational benefits. Woodlands and naturalised areas contribute to wellbeing and biodiversity amenity.

The aim of this strategy is to ensure that Inverclyde's trees, woods forests and naturalised hedgerows and meadows contribute to improving both the natural and social environment and that they enhance the enjoyment of our outdoor areas for our residents and visitors alike.

To this end the Tree Planting Strategy is broken down into a number of key objectives and strands:

- Woodland Expansion
- Heritage
- Control and management
- Community and Partner engagement
- Urban Trees
- Habitat development and Connectivity
- Climate Change
- Placemaking
- Access

### Woodland Expansion

Within Inverclyde, the area benefits from good conditions for tree growing which greatly contributes to the expansion of new woodlands. The topography and soil makeup of Inverclyde lends itself to a wide variety of tree species. In recent years there has been a number of trees planted in areas abutting existing woodland or creating new areas of trees. The Council's Grounds services, working with partner organisations, plan to identify new locations for tree planting within Inverclyde Council controlled land while ensuring woodlands are developed in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard.

Our regular independent tree survey has identified several rare species trees within Inverclyde. A large congregation of rare trees have been found in Kelburn Park. It could be possible with the introduction of other rare native species to have this area designated as an arboretum. Further investigation is required; however, this would provide an interesting addition to our woodland creation aims.

### Heritage

To ensure that established woodland and tree areas are protected and maintained in areas where they have been established over several years and form part of the local area history, the Council's Tree Management and Woodland Strategy will focus on native or naturalised species such as Acer, Malus (crab apple), Field Maple and Cherry and native species such as Birch, Rowan and Beech, Lime along with other trees that are suitable for such locations. This will look to re-establish woodland in areas they previously existed. For example, an area of Parklea had been a tree nursery and orchard, this area which over many years was turned into grassed land has been replanted with apple trees in recognition of its past.

### Control and Management

The Council have a responsibility to manage and control those trees within its ownership. Regular assessments, inspections and independent surveys are carried out and where necessary trees that are a risk to humans or property will be made safe for example by pollarding or monolithing or removed. Where a tree is removed and where possible a new tree will be replanted in its place. At present this is more prevalent due to the issues associated with Ash dieback. Since 2021 a total of 473 ash trees have been removed because of this disease and 184 trees removed for other reasons. All these trees have now been replaced with more robust native species.

### **Summary of Stakeholder Engagement**





## Community and Partner Engagement – Tree Management and Planting Strategy

Through community engagement and participation there are opportunities to foster community involvement in the management of woodlands. Working with our Clyde Muirshiel rangers, opportunities have been created for community tree growing or even engaging with local business to participate in the enhancement of our woodlands. Already we are engaged with Schools in community tree growing and this has been widely received and successful. Further opportunities exist to engage with other landowners and support their activities around tree planting. In addition to this, it is acknowledged that in some instances where trees are planned in the immediate proximity of households we may need to engage with individuals and explain and advise the proposals.

## Scottish Forestry consultation response:

## Tackling the Climate and Biodiversity emergencies

- Planting trees is recognised as a low-cost climate mitigation option: need to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places.
- Therefore, we would prefer that all areas are considered to have the potential for accommodating tree planting at some scale.

## Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

- Review policy context within the new LDP to require developers to plant trees within application sites.
- Review existing TPOs and establish new ones if necessary.

## Evidence needed to support LDP

- Spatial map showing extent of existing tree and woodland cover in Inverclyde area.
- Spatial assessment of opportunities for planting trees: consider enhancing and expanding linear tree and woodland features e.g. rivers, transport routes, wayleaves; identify areas of less agriculturally productive land and demarcate for tree planting.
- Analysis of gaps in enabling policies i.e., what new policies are needed to ensure that existing woodlands are protected and that where it is decided that woodland can be removed, all such areas must be compensated for by agreeing suitable planting proposals and conditioning these as part of planning consents.



- Identify the range of mechanisms and levers that Inverclyde might exploit to deliver the tree, woodland and forest related objective e.g. grants.

### Suggested issues for inclusion in LDP

- Increasing tree canopy cover (as a %) to support Scotland's Forestry Strategy target.
- Support climate change mitigation and adaption (including sequestration and mitigating flooding, cooling) and climate resilience planting (whether single trees or woodland/forests).
- Maintenance: sustainable forest/woodland management, improving safety and condition.
- Increasing adaptability and climate resilience of woodlands.
- Mitigating biodiversity loss via habitat and nature network creation.
- Ensuring new developments support climate change and biodiversity via inclusion of tree planting proposals as a condition of planning permission.
- Ensuring that where developments permanently remove trees, compensatory planting proposals are agreed and are delivered in advance of developments starting.
- Supporting public engagement in creation, management and use of woodlands.
- Consider the contribution that trees and woodlands can make to the local economy and promote opportunities for the sustainable use of locally grown timber and forest products.

Statements of Agreement / Dispute	
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- None identified.

Topic	Historic Assets and Places
<b>Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended.  <u>Section 15(5)(a)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district.</li> </ul> <p>Planning (Listed Buildings &amp; Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997</p> <p>Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979</p>
<b>NPF4 LDP Requirements</b>	<p><u>NPF Policy 7 Historic Assets and Places</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The LDP is required to support the sustainable management of the historic environment.</li> <li>The LDP should identify, protect, and enhance valued historic assets.</li> </ul>
<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<p><u>Inverclyde Links</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Inverclyde Heritage Strategy 2019-2029</u>  <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/10392/Inverclyde-Heritage-Strategy-2019-29">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/10392/Inverclyde-Heritage-Strategy-2019-29</a></li> <li><u>Listed Buildings Schedule 2024</u></li> <li><u>Maps of conservation areas (2023)</u></li> <li><u>Greenock West End Conservation Area Appraisal (2016)</u></li> <li><u>Quarriers Homes Conservation Area Appraisal (2020)</u></li> <li><u>Scheduled Monuments Schedule (2018)</u></li> <li><u>Archaeology Sites (2020)</u></li> <li><u>Gardens and Designed Landscapes (2018)</u></li> <li><u>Historic Marine Protected Area (2018)</u></li> </ul> <p>All the above documents can be found at the link below:  <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/planning-and-the-environment/planning-policy/conservation">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/planning-and-the-environment/planning-policy/conservation</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Supplementary Guidance on Enabling Development (2020)</u>  <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/8627/Supplementary-Guidance-Enabling-Development-Revised.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/8627/Supplementary-Guidance-Enabling-Development-Revised.pdf</a></li> <li><u>Supplementary Guidance on Planning Application Advice Notes (2020)</u></li> </ul>



<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/8626/Adopted-PAANs-SG-2020.10.pdf>

#### Other Links

- Buildings at Risk Register  
<http://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/>
- Our Past, Our Future – The Strategy for Scotland's Historic Environment 2023-28  
<https://app-hes-pubs-prod-neu-01.azurewebsites.net/api/file/4d7ec511-3fde-4235-a8b1-b02a00e751b7>
- Historic Environment Policy Scotland (2019)  
<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/historic-environment-policy-for-scotland-heps/>
- Managing Change in Historic Environment Guidance Notes  
[https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/?publication\\_type=37](https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/?publication_type=37)

### **Summary of Evidence**

#### **National**

Historic Environment Scotland's document Our Past, Our Future – The Strategy for Scotland's Historic Environment 2023-28 sets out the national mission for all organisations that work on the historical environment to sustain and enhance the benefits of Scotland's historic environment now and into the future.

#### **Inverclyde**

Inverclyde's past has gifted the present day with a rich and varied legacy of historic buildings and places which significantly contribute to the culture, character and sense of place, and which support tourism and the economy. Inverclyde Council maintains up to date data sets of all heritage assets including conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled monuments and other archaeological sites, and gardens and designed landscape. These can be found on the Council website and are taken into consideration when the Proposed Plan.

#### **Inverclyde Heritage Strategy**

Commissioned by the Inverclyde Cultural Partnership, the Strategy was prepared in consultation with community groups and organisations with an interest in culture and



heritage as well as with Inverclyde's communities. Heritage, as defined in the Strategy, encompasses the built environment (such as historic buildings and monuments) as well as artefacts and materials (from museums and archival collections to online resources); natural heritage (such as landscapes and wildlife); and intangible heritage (local stories, traditions and practices).

The aspiration of the Strategy is that by 2029 Inverclyde's heritage is a source of knowledge and pride across the region and is employed at every opportunity to support social, cultural and economic wellbeing across the diverse communities of Inverclyde.

### **Listed Buildings**

The Council's Listed Buildings Schedule records 248. Of this 248, 25 are Category A, 129 Category B and 94 Category C. Maps showing their location are available on the HES portal for which the reference numbers are provided in the index. There is an ongoing programme of reviewing requests for demolition and designation. There could be unlisted buildings which contribute to the character and setting of a place. There may be scope for the community to suggest further listings through the preparation of the Local Development Plan or the preparation of Local Place Plans to inform the LDP.

The Council will also work with interested parties to find suitable future uses for listed buildings.

### **Conservation Areas**

There are currently eight conservation areas designated in Inverclyde. The conservation areas are designated to protect and enhance the character and appearance of areas of special architectural or historic interest in Inverclyde.

Two areas have been identified by external sources for the creation of new conservation areas which will be investigated when time and staff numbers permit.

The Council is required by law to protect conservation areas from development which would be detrimental to their character by defining what is important about their character and appearance. To this end, Conservation Area Appraisals have been completed and published for two of the eight conservation areas with drafts prepared for three more. It is intended to complete Conservation Area Appraisals for all the conservation areas in Inverclyde.

Article 4 Directions, to limit permitted development have been applied to five of the conservation areas. The content of all these Article 4 Directions currently varies. To standardise these and create Article 4 Directions for those not yet covered, work has begun to complete a standard Article 4 Direction to apply to all eight conservation areas.





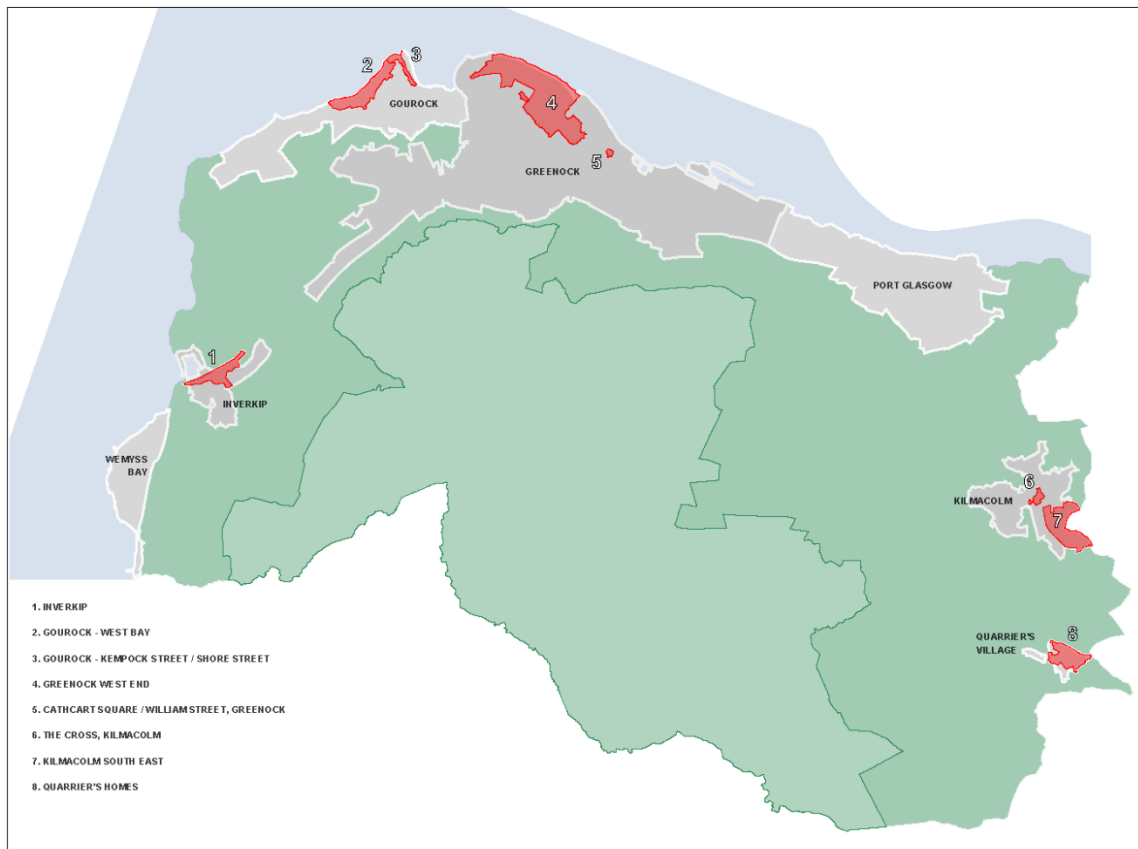


Figure 6 – Inverclyde Conservation Areas

## **Planning Application Advice Note 6 – Windows and Rooflights in Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings**

The Council seeks to ensure that the general quality of Inverclyde's built environment is improved to the benefit of all and is required to introduce policies and practice aimed at improving and enhancing the quality of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings. This Advice Note provides a guide to the issues that are considered in determining applications for planning permission and listed building. Proposals which accord with the principles will be recommended for approval.

### **Scheduled Monuments**

There are 31 scheduled monuments in Inverclyde. The majority are spread throughout the rural hinterland with a few scattered amongst the urban development along the coast. These range from remnants of prehistoric settlements through to 19th century industrial archaeology and WW2 anti- aircraft battery. There is one Guardianship site at Newark Castle. At either ends of the designation spectrum, there are the 15th century Newark Castle Guardianship Site and 634 local archaeology sites.

### **Archaeology Sites**



There are 634 archaeological sites of regional and local importance within Inverclyde. Divided into Parishes, there are 203 sites within the Greenock Parish, 33 in Gourock and 64 in Port Glasgow all within the urban areas whilst there are 118 sites in Inverkip Parish, 21 in Wemyss Bay and 197 in Kilmacolm/Quarrier's Village in the outlying Parishes.

There is provision for reporting of archaeological finds through the Council's website.

### **Gardens and Designed Landscapes**

Inverclyde has three sites in Historic Environment Scotland's Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes, recognising policies associated with important houses that designated based on their aesthetic, historical, scenic and nature conservation value. All three gardens and designated landscapes included in the Inventory have been designated in accordance with HES' Designation Policy and Selection Guidance. Inventory status means that a site's cultural significance can be considered in the planning process. Minor changes have been made to boundaries, in consultation with HES, to account for anomalies and ensure a strong boundary.

### **Historic Marine Protected Area**

Inverclyde has one marine historic asset of national importance, a wrecked vessel, believed to be Clydebuilt paddle steamer Iona I, purchased by Confederate agents to run the blockade of Southern ports during the American Civil War. It sank after a collision off Fort Matilda, near Gourock in the Upper Clyde Estuary in October 1862. It is located close to a major shipping channel.

### **Enabling Development**

Supplementary Guidance on Enabling has been published to assist development of historic environment assets or places that would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms in Inverclyde. Three developments have been completed with one future development identified. For such enabling development to be permitted, it has to be demonstrated that the proposed development is essential to secure the future of an historic environment asset or place which is at risk of serious deterioration or loss, it is the minimum necessary to secure the restoration, adaptation and long-term future of the historic environment asset or place and benefits to the historical environment. The beneficial outcomes for the historic asset or place must also be secured early in the phasing of the development.

### **Buildings at Risk Register**

The Buildings at Risk Register (BARR) brings together potential restorers and redevelopers with buildings and sites of architectural or historic importance that are



considered at risk or under threat. A building at risk may be:

- long-term vacant
- neglected and/or poorly maintained
- structurally unsound
- damaged by fire
- unsecured and open to the elements
- threatened with demolition

Inverclyde has 17 buildings on the BARR, all of which are listed. Three buildings are categorised as restoration in progress. The aim would be to remove more buildings from this list to improve the historical environment.

### Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

It is considered the Council has undertaken sufficient engagement with key stakeholders for this chapter and collected necessary evidence for Proposed Plan development.

**Historic Environment Scotland** – responded to a written request for comments. The records of the various designations within Inverclyde were analysed, identifying where they were sufficient and where there were opportunities or need to carry out further work.

HES Response: <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/17579/20240723-HES-Response.pdf>

**West of Scotland Archaeology Service** – Inverclyde Council withdrew from the service in 2013 and therefore has no body overseeing archaeology work. Any archaeology matters related to applications or reported finds are dealt with using suitably qualified professionals/consultants.

### Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

- Continue the maintenance and updating of the built heritage database.
- Continue to review boundaries of existing conservation areas and consider the creation of new conservation areas should investigation deem this is desirable.
- Complete Conservation Area Appraisals and Maintenance Plans for all the designated conservation areas.
- Create a uniform Article 4 Direction for all designated conservation areas.
- Consider how vacant listed buildings and non-listed buildings of local importance can be put to new uses, particularly vacant church buildings.
- Create a sub schedule of World War 2 scheduled monuments/ archaeological sites to create a trail highlighting the World War 2 heritage within Inverclyde.
- Explore means of getting buildings off the Buildings at Risk Register and into



positive use.

### Statements of Agreement / Dispute

The HES comment that built heritage policies are sufficient is accepted, as is the HES requirement for the completion of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans is agreed.

As stated in the Inverclyde Heritage Strategy, it is agreed that there is potential to use the built heritage to promote tourism and the local economy. Advantage needs to be taken of sites to ensure visitors, such as the 115,000 cruise ship passengers a year, remain in the area rather than passing through.

The number and distribution of Buildings at Risk in Inverclyde is disputed. HES records show there are currently 17 buildings not 16 as they state, which are divided into the following categories:

Building Use	Number	%
Residential	2	12
Industrial/church/ storage	8	47
Cottage	2	12
School	5	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

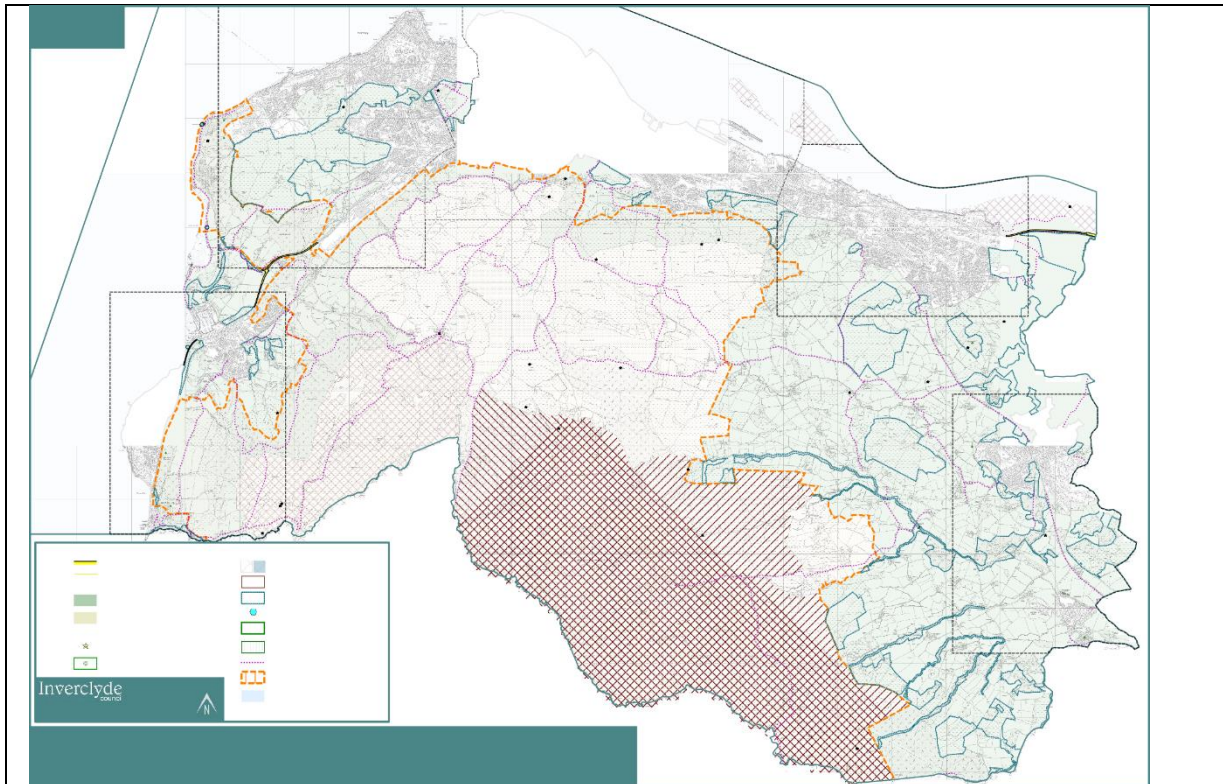
Table 3 – Buildings at Risk Summary

This does not concur with HES' breakdown of 25% cottages/country houses, 25% schools and the remainder industry, churches and storage which is actually the major group in Inverclyde and will have implications for the direction of resources.





Topic	Greenbelts
Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended:</p> <p>Section 15(5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district.</li> </ul>
NPF4 LDP Requirements	<p><u>Policy 8 – Greenbelts</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should consider using green belts, to support their spatial strategy as a settlement management tool to restrict development around towns and cities.</li> <li>Green belts will not be necessary for most settlements but may be zoned around settlements where there is a significant danger of unsustainable growth in car-based commuting or suburbanisation of the countryside.</li> <li>Green belts should be identified or reviewed as part of the preparation of LDPs. Boundary changes may be made to accommodate planned growth, or to extend, or alter the area covered as green belt. Detailed green belt boundaries should be based on evidence and should be clearly identified in plans.</li> </ul>
Links to Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inverclyde Council - <a href="#">Proposed Development Site Assessment</a> – 2021</li> <li>APRS - <a href="#">Formatted-Green-Belt-Advice-Note-2024-march-2024.pdf</a></li> </ul>
Summary of Evidence	
<p>The pattern of development within Inverclyde has been very much shaped by its geography, with a densely developed coastal strip giving way to a sparsely developed rural hinterland. This has been reinforced through the years by a planning strategy that has sought to contain development within the built-up area and minimise development in the Green Belt and Countryside. The benefits of this strategy have been a focus on the regeneration and renewal of the urban areas, the placing of development into sustainable locations close to existing services and infrastructure, and the protection of our rural environment.</p>	



**Figure 7 - Inverclyde Greenbelt Extents**

This has been achieved through policies which direct development to existing towns and villages and restrict development in the Green Belt and Countryside to appropriate types and locations. This approach is supported by national policy and Clydeplan and remains appropriate.

#### **Summary of Stakeholder Engagement**

- APRS have been consulted as Key Agency during the preparation of the Evidence Report, however had no comments to make on the content of the Council's DPRS.
- APRS advise within their draft Advice Note on Green Belts 2024 that all existing Scottish Green Belts should be reviewed by 2028 at the latest and that new Green Belt areas may be identified and included in proposed LDPs.

#### **Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan**

- Inverclyde Council has carried out a Greenbelt Review in 2018, and therefore it would be necessary to update this in preparation of the new LDP. This should take account of NPF4 provisions.
- It will be helpful within the LDP review and greenbelt review to make clear distinction between greenbelt and non-greenbelt areas within the countryside to ensure consistent application of policy.

#### **Statements of Agreement / Dispute**

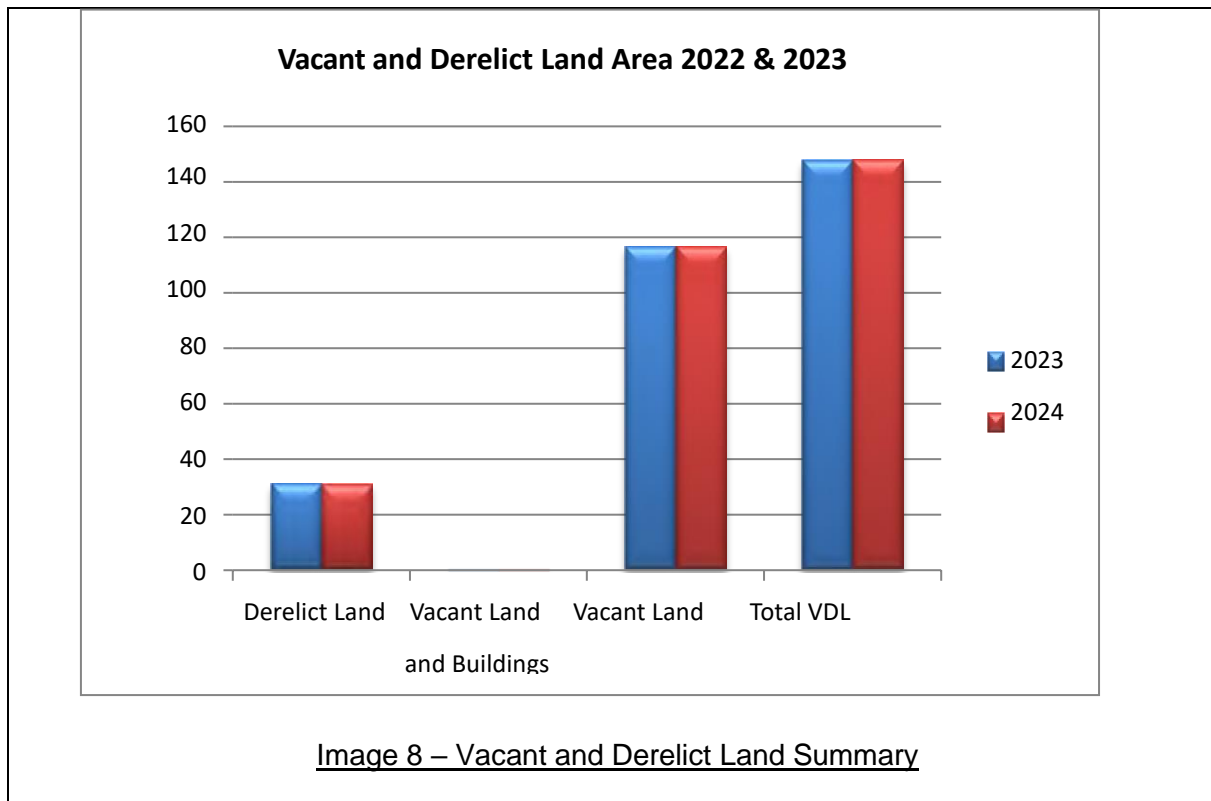


- None identified.



Topic	Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land, and Empty Buildings
Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended.</p> <p><u>Section 15(5)(a)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district.</li> </ul>
NPF4 LDP Requirements	<p><u>NPF4 Policy 9</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should set out opportunities for the sustainable reuse of brownfield land including vacant and derelict land and empty buildings.</li> </ul>
Links to Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Glasgow City Region Vacant and Derelict Land Report 2024 – Ryden report (PDF to be appended)</li> <li>Inverclyde Council Vacant and Derelict Land Supply 2024 – <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/17670/VDL-2024-Web-Report.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/17670/VDL-2024-Web-Report.pdf</a></li> </ul>
Summary of Evidence	
<p>There was 147.45ha (86 sites) of vacant and derelict land in Inverclyde on 31 March 2024. Of the land area, 78.95% was vacant land, 0.17% vacant land and buildings, and 20.88% derelict.</p> <p>Three sites, totalling 9.67ha, were fully taken up for new uses. The new uses for these sites were business and industry and residential development. No partially taken up sites were recorded.</p> <p>Over the previous year, the number of vacant and derelict sites decreased by 1.03%, with the land area decreasing by 0.14%.</p>	





### Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

#### **Inverclyde Council Public Protection response to consultation on Contaminated Land:**

Part IIa Contaminated Land, Environmental Protection Act 1990 (“Part IIa”), the accompanying 2006 statutory guidance and Planning Advice Note “PAN33” provide the regulatory framework for managing land quality. The aim is to bring land back into productive use, with a risk-based approach to assessing the land, water and wider environment in the context of the current or intended land use. Part IIa requires the local authority to produce a contaminated land inspection strategy, this is provided within Inverclyde Councils ‘Revised Strategy for Management of Land Contamination’ v2.2, March 2011. This document is due for review, anticipated following updates to water environment assessment methodology.

The remediation of significantly harmful contamination on human health, the water environment and wider environment including protected natural environments and property in the form of buildings is a requirement of the Part IIa Contaminated Land, Environmental Protection Act 1990. Type of receptor and “significant harm” are provided in the 2006 statutory guidance Part 3, A.24, Table A.



If there is intention to include naturalisation of SVDLs, historic landfills, abandoned railway routes etc, land quality (and water environment) should be a consideration in land quality impact assessment.

### **Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan**

- Continue annual monitoring and review of VDL sites in the new LDP.
- Identify and include any new sites through relevant processes and engagement.
- Ensure that LDP policies are sufficiently flexible (where appropriate) to support the regeneration of vacant and derelict sites, such as those in urban areas, town centres, or which are causing blight to communities through their current condition.

### **Statements of Agreement / Dispute**

- None identified.



Topic	<b>Coastal Development</b>  This schedule should be read together with ‘ <b>Flood risk and water management</b> ’ schedule.  It is noted that there are no <b>Aquaculture</b> developments at Inverclyde and therefore there is no schedule for this topic.
Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section	Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended. <u>Section 15(5)(a)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district.</li> </ul>
NPF4 LDP Requirements	<u>NPF4 Policy 10</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDP spatial strategies should consider how to adapt coastlines to the impacts of climate change.</li> <li>This should recognise that rising sea levels and more extreme weather events resulting from climate change will potentially have a significant impact on coastal and islands areas and take a precautionary approach to flood risk including by inundation.</li> <li>Spatial strategies should reflect the diversity of coastal areas and opportunities to use nature-based solutions to improve the resilience of coastal communities and assets. LDP spatial strategies should identify areas of developed and undeveloped coast and should align with national, sectoral and regional marine plans.</li> </ul>
Links to Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEPA Consultation response and Flood Maps</li> <li>GALLANT Map (showing partial flooding info)</li> <li>Clyde and Loch Lomond Local Plan District for 2016-2022 (<a href="#">Clyde and Loch Lomond Local Plan District   Flood Risk Management Strategies (sepa.org.uk)</a>).</li> <li>Inverclyde Council Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Impact Assessment Guidance (<a href="#">FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT - PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR DEVELOPERS.pdf</a>). To be superseded by</li> </ul>



	<p>LDP4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inverclyde Floor Protection Scheme 2013</li> <li>• Inverclyde Council Climate Change Plan 2018</li> <li>• Clydeplan Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</li> <li>• National Marine Plan Scotland 2015</li> <li>• National Marine Plan 2</li> <li>• Clyde Marine Planning Partnership - <a href="#">Clyde Marine Planning Partnership   Sustainable, coordinated management of the Clyde Marine Region</a></li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>	
<p>Inverclyde's waterfront location makes the area susceptible to coastal flooding, whilst the topography means that surface water flowing down the hillsides can combine with local burns to cause flooding events. During high tides or in stormy conditions, river and surface water flooding can also combine with coastal flooding to increase the impacts of flooding events.</p> <p>The following coastal settlements located within a designated Potentially Vulnerable Area due to flood risk: Gourock, Greenock, Inverkip and Port Glasgow west. There is flooding from coastal, river and surface water, however, recent flooding has occurred as a result of surface water.</p> <p><u>Greenock</u></p> <p>The town of Greenock is located on the south bank of the Firth of Clyde. The main source of flooding in the town of Greenock is surface water flooding, however there are also risks of river and coastal flooding. There are around 4,300 people and 2,700 homes and businesses currently at risk of flooding. This is likely to increase to 5,300 people and 3,200 homes and businesses by the 2080s due to climate change.</p> <p><u>Port Glasgow</u></p> <p>The main source of flooding in Port Glasgow west is surface water flooding, however there are also risks from river and coastal flooding. There are approximately 1,200 people and 660 homes and businesses currently at risk of flooding. This is likely to increase to 1,400 people and 790 homes and businesses by the 2080s due to climate change.</p> <p><u>Gourock</u></p>	





Gourock is located on the south bank of the Firth of Clyde and is within the Inverclyde Council area. The main sources of flooding associated with Gourock are coastal and surface water flooding, however there is also a risk from river flooding. There are approximately 1,200 people and 630 homes and businesses currently at risk from flooding. This is likely to increase to 1,600 people and 840 homes and businesses by the 2080s due to climate change.

### Inverkip

Inverkip is a village located on the east shore of the Firth of Clyde. The main source of flooding in Inverkip is surface water flooding, however there are also risks from river and coastal flooding. There are approximately 140 people and 100 homes and businesses currently at risk from flooding. This is likely to increase to 180 people and 120 homes and businesses by the 2080s due to climate change.

## **Summary of Stakeholder Engagement**

Key Agencies' views were sought during the preparation of the Evidence Report via email correspondence.

### SEPA

Evidence Report must align with SEA whereby the SEA scoping report should be included as part of evidence material.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment should be undertaken to inform the Evidence Report. This should be based on SEPA's updated guidance, which promotes a more strategic approach that is less resource intensive by drawing upon existing sources of information.

Evidence Report can establish and present a Site Appraisal Methodology, and this can link in with the approach to SEA site assessment. This should include questions in relation to flood risk, to strengthen resilience by promoting avoidance as a first principle and reducing the vulnerability of existing and future development to flooding.

LDP spatial strategies should consider how to adapt coastlines to the impacts of climate change. This should recognise that rising sea levels and more extreme weather events resulting from climate change will potentially have a significant impact on coastal and islands areas and take a precautionary approach to flood risk including by inundation. Spatial strategies should reflect the diversity of coastal areas and opportunities to use nature-based solutions to improve the resilience of coastal communities and assets. LDP spatial strategies should identify areas of





Response and maps received 01/11/2024.

Please note, this information is a high-level snapshot in time of our current capacity of our treatment works for initial screening and development planning purposes. Factors such as the total number of proposed developments, their scale and their distance from our treatment works may impact our ability to service them and therefore potential future growth investment may be required. It is a requirement of Scottish Water to identify and provide new strategic capacity that will meet the demand of all new housing development and the domestic requirements of commercial and industrial development. Therefore, we look forward to engaging with the local authorities to gain a better understanding of the future proposed developments (scale and location) which will inform our strategic plans to identify where our future growth investment priorities are.

#### Marine Directorate Scotland

- It would be relevant to incorporate information and the value of the wellbeing and amenity value of access to the coast for local communities.
- Coastal development - This part mentions projected sea level changes. In relation to this, and broader considerations for coastal processes, coastal defences, development at the coast, Dynamic Coast may be a valuable resource to consider (if not considered already), and has produced guidance for the development of CCAPs, which are also noted in this section - [Dynamic Coast - Resources](#)
- It is welcome to note that National and Regional Marine Plans are noted in the sections relating to Energy and Aquaculture. These Plans are relevant to other areas too, as they contain a broad range of policies. Other areas which are relevant include – Inverclyde Environment, Coastal Development and Tourism.
- Biodiversity – It may be relevant to refer to the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy within this section, especially considering the influence/how this will inform a future LBA.

Additional useful resources:

[Scotland's Marine Assessment 2020 \(SMA2020\)](#) – This provides the evidence base for the development of NMP2. The 'Productive' section may be of particular interest as it discusses the marine economy and includes a case study on Scotland's coastal town typology.



Scotland's Marine Economic Statistics – data is available according to Local Authority Area.

#### National Marine Plan 2015:

Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 required preparation and adoption of a National Marine Plan, covering Scottish inshore waters, which sets out strategic policies for the sustainable development of Scotland's marine resources out to 200 nautical miles.

The vision for the marine environment is: 'Clean, healthy, safe, productive and diverse seas; managed to meet the long-term needs of nature and people.'

The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 requires that marine plans set economic, social and marine ecosystem objectives and objectives relating to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. Plans must also state policies for, and in connection with, the sustainable development of the area to which this Plan applies.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development and use is presented as an overarching general planning principle of this Plan. The General Policies are considered necessary to achieve sustainable development and use. As sustainability is an overarching principle, the environmental, social and economic policies of this Plan are intended to be complementary with one another as elements of sustainability.

National Marine Plan 2 is at stakeholder engagement strategy stage of preparation. The strategy sets out overarching framework for engaging the people of Scotland, and beyond as NMP2 is developed and delivered.

#### **Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan**

- For the new LDP, the Council intends to carry out a Coastal Change Adaptation Plan (CCAP).
- Flooding from all sources will be considered in the SEA, which will be carried out for the new LDP and produced alongside the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for Inverclyde, in consultation with SEPA.

#### **Statements of Agreement / Dispute**

- None identified.





Topic	Energy
<b>Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 15(5) - the infrastructure of the district and how that infrastructure is used.</li> <li>• Section 3G- policies regarding low and zero carbon generating technologies in new buildings.</li> </ul>
<b>NPF4 LDP Requirements</b>	<p><u>Policy 11: Energy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LDPs should seek to realise their area's full potential for electricity and heat from renewable, low carbon and zero emission sources by identifying a range of opportunities for energy development.</li> </ul>
<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scottish Government Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (2023) <a href="https://www.gov.scot/publications/draft-energy-strategy-transition-plan/documents/">https://www.gov.scot/publications/draft-energy-strategy-transition-plan/documents/</a></li> <li>• Scottish Government Onshore Wind Policy Statement 2022 <a href="https://www.gov.scot/publications/onshore-wind-policy-statement-2022/documents/">https://www.gov.scot/publications/onshore-wind-policy-statement-2022/documents/</a></li> <li>• Landscape Capacity for Wind Turbine Development in Glasgow and the Clyde Valley (2014) <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/8315/GC V-L-scape-Capacity-Study-with-maps.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/8315/GC V-L-scape-Capacity-Study-with-maps.pdf</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Council Supplementary Guidance – Energy (2018) <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/377/Supplementary-Guidance-Energy-2018.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/377/Supplementary-Guidance-Energy-2018.pdf</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Net Zero Strategy 2021 – 2045 <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/14504/Net-Zero-Strategy_WEB.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/14504/Net-Zero-Strategy_WEB.pdf</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (2024) <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16979/Inverclyde-LHEE-Strategy-Final.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16979/Inverclyde-LHEE-Strategy-Final.pdf</a></li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scottish Government Heat in Buildings Strategy (2021)  <a href="https://www.gov.scot/policies/energy-efficiency/the-heat-in-buildings-programme/">https://www.gov.scot/policies/energy-efficiency/the-heat-in-buildings-programme/</a> </li> </ul>
<p><b>This schedule should be read in conjunction with the other relevant topic schedules in this Evidence Report.</b></p>	
<p><b>Summary of Evidence</b></p>	
<p><b>Scottish Government Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (2023)</b></p> <p>The Draft Strategy sets out the Scottish Government's key ambitions for integrating new ways of producing, transporting and using Scotland's energy.</p> <p>Scotland's energy future including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than 20 GW of additional renewable electricity on - and offshore by 2030.</li> <li>• An ambition for hydrogen to provide 5 GW or the equivalent of 15% of Scotland's current energy needs by 2030 and 25 GW of hydrogen production capacity by 2045.</li> <li>• Increased contributions from solar, hydro and marine energy to our energy mix.</li> <li>• Accelerated decarbonisation of domestic industry, transport and heat.</li> <li>• Establishment of a national public energy agency – Heat and Energy Efficiency Scotland.</li> <li>• By 2030, the need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans phased out and car kilometres reduced by 20%.</li> <li>• Generation of surplus electricity, enabling export of electricity and renewable hydrogen to support decarbonisation across Europe.</li> <li>• Energy security through development of our own resources and additional energy storage.</li> <li>• A just transition by maintaining or increasing employment in Scotland's energy production sector against a decline in North Sea production.</li> <li>• Maximising the use of Scottish manufactured components in the energy transition, ensuring high-value technology and innovation.</li> </ul> <p><b>National Grid projects – Erskine – Devol Overhead Line Replacement</b></p>	



The SP Energy Erskine – Devol 132kV Overhead Line project was granted consent in June 2023 for the reinforcement of 16km of existing overhead line of the electricity grid network with the purpose of ensuring security of supply.

## **Wind Energy**

### **The Scottish Government Onshore Wind Policy Statement (2022)**

The Statement sets an overall target for installed onshore wind capacity in Scotland of 20GW by 2030 whilst delivering it in a way that continues to enhance, the natural heritage and native flora and fauna, and supports actions to address the nature and climate crises.

### **Wind Energy Developments in Inverclyde**

In 2014 the Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Turbine Development in Glasgow and the Clyde Valley (Inverclyde) was prepared to provide a strategic view of landscape sensitivity to wind energy development, and available capacity for further development, across the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan area. This has not been updated as interest in wind turbine developments faded to almost zero after the announcement that Feed in Tariffs would end in March 2019. This document did, however, inform the wind energy spatial framework in the Supplementary Guidance – Energy 2018.

Between 2009 and 2016, 32 wind turbines were approved in Inverclyde ranging in height from 11m to 110m with a further 12 wall mounted mini turbines. The majority of developments were between one and three turbines with the largest being at Corlic Hill, comprising 8 x 110m turbines and ancillary buildings, which is now fully operational.

It is anticipated that there will be new pressure for wind turbines in areas previously not considered within Inverclyde, to meet the Scottish Government onshore wind target of 20GW by 2030.

## **Solar**

The majority of solar installations in Inverclyde are on domestic premises. Of the applications approved for solar panels since 2008, 3 have been for ground mounted panels with the remaining 27 sited on the buildings. There have not yet been any applications for commercial solar arrays.

## **Battery Storage**



Through 2023 and 2024, there have been two applications for battery storage in Inverclyde. One for 13 containerised battery units with an export capacity of approximately 5MW was granted in June 2024. The other for 280 containerised units with a capacity of 700MW is being considered under the Electricity Act with the proposal acceptable to Inverclyde Council.

With the increased demand for energy to meet Scottish Government targets and the means to store it also a necessity, it is likely that there will be greater demand for battery storage facilities in future.

## **Hydrogen**

### **The Scottish Government Hydrogen Action Plan (2022)**

Scottish Government believes hydrogen will play an extremely important part in Scotland's energy system, alongside renewable electricity. Hydrogen could produce a solution for parts of the economy and energy system that are difficult to electrify such as:

- Heavy duty on and off-road transport
- Shipping
- Aviation
- Industrial high temperature heat
- Synthetic fuels
- Energy storage solutions
- Domestic heating (parts)

The Hydrogen Action Plan confirms support for development of the hydrogen sector in Scotland and confirms ambition of at least 5GW installed renewable and low carbon hydrogen production capacity by 2030 and 25GW by 2045.

### **Inverclyde Hydrogen Briefing Note (2024)**

Inverclyde has a range of assets that are likely to be suitable for supporting development of clean hydrogen solutions. These include:

- Marine and coastal assets,
  - deep water shipping creates potential for greater opportunities to capture hydrogen production from water-based means – such as offshore wind and transhipment.
  - the coastal assets provide opportunities to store, import and export hydrogen.
- Excellent proximity to market





- the main arterial routes by vehicle connect the largest urban areas in Inverclyde providing multi-modal logistics,
- there is good connectivity for linking transport means to international airports, located within 30-minute drive time.

The transport links and geography together with a strong tradition and footprint in manufacturing make Inverclyde capable of supporting supply chain activities across a range of sectors.

- Excellent proximity to labour market
  - over 1 million in population located within 1 hour of Inverclyde.
  - academic presence in marine based activities located within 1 hour travel time to Inverclyde
  - Inverclyde offers a number of expansive industrial zoned areas and brownfield sites that could accommodate at scale roll-out of hydrogen production/storage and distribution, either related to marine uses, or related to on-site production,
  - Provides the opportunity co-locate with other renewable energy means such as solar and wind and provide links to battery storage which is likely to increase in Inverclyde.

### Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

Consultation with Inverclyde Council Energy and Climate Change Team and Carbon Reduction Officer.

The targets and priorities identified in the Council's Net Zero Strategy 2021-2045 will be reiterated in the Evidence Report, as seen in the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Schedule.

Although there has been no consultation on the various means of renewable energy production, specifically relating to the Evidence Report, there have been comments on the largest wind energy development which received 703 objections spread over a variety of issues including amenity, environmental concerns and safety and was granted after an appeal to the Scottish Ministers.

Despite the greater need, and Scottish Government support, for renewable energy, it is important to ensure that proposals are assessed against strong policies to ensure they are sited in the right places. There must be a balance between meeting energy targets and the consideration of other interests.

### Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan



- Re-examine the spatial framework for wind energy developments to identify areas where new developments could be located to provide additional electricity output.
- Create specific policy, or expand existing policy to address energy storage, taking account of its locational requirements of proximity to grid connections whilst limiting the impact on the landscape and taking account of the potential loss of suitable industrial sites
- Identify national grid upgrades and the location of associated supporting development (such as substations) to assist in locating renewable energy production and storage sites
- Support hydrogen developments within Inverclyde and identify sites appropriate for hydrogen storage, import and export

#### Statements of Agreement / Dispute

None



Topic	Zero Waste
Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended:  <u>Section 15(5)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (d) the infrastructure of the district</li> <li>• (e) how that infrastructure is used</li> </ul> <p>Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023:  <u>Regulation 9</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have regard to the national waste management plan.</li> </ul>
NPF4 LDP Requirements	<p><u>NPF4 Policy 12</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LDPs should identify appropriate locations for new waste management infrastructure to support the circular economy and meet identified needs in a way that moves waste as high up the waste hierarchy as possible.</li> </ul> <p><u>NPF4 Policy 18</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LDPs and delivery programmes should be based on an integrated infrastructure first approach. Plans should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- be informed by evidence on infrastructure capacity, condition, needs and deliverability within the plan area, including cross boundary infrastructure.</li> <li>- set out the infrastructure requirements to deliver the spatial strategy, informed by the evidence base, identifying the infrastructure priorities, and where, how, when and by whom they will be delivered; and</li> <li>- indicate the type, level (or method of calculation) and location of the financial or in-kind contributions, and the types of development from which they will be required.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Plans should align with relevant national, regional, and local infrastructure plans and policies and take account of the Scottish Government infrastructure investment hierarchy and sustainable travel and investment hierarchies in developing the spatial</li> </ul>





## Energy to Waste – General Black Bag Waste & Bulky Waste – Sites and Management

From 1st January 2024, Inverclyde Council has appointed an external contractor to manage general waste (i.e. Non recyclables). The Council's general waste goes to Glasgow Recycling & Renewable Energy Centre, 425 Polmadie Road Glasgow Scotland, Glasgow G42 0PJ. The Council currently sends approximately 18,500 tonnes of waste here per annum.

In relation to bulky waste, this waste is transported to Langmuir Way, Bargeddie G69 7RW, with an approximately annual tonnage of 6,800 tonnes per annum.

## Household Recycling

The Council provides a number of recycling provisions, including blue bins, blue bags, brown bins and green food waste containers to supplement the black bins.

This system allows you to sort your waste as follows:

- Blue: Dry recyclable materials
- Brown: Garden waste
- Green container: Food waste
- Black: Non-recyclable waste

Householders wishing to recycle garden waste in an Inverclyde Council brown bin need to buy a seasonal garden waste permit.

Inverclyde currently provide direct recycling services to around 35,800 households, covering approximately 91.5% of the households within Inverclyde. At present there are approximately 3,700 properties in Inverclyde which do not receive a kerbside recycling service. Inverclyde Council were early signatories to the Household Recycling Charter which looks to:

- enhance household waste and recycling services to increase resource recovery and improve their quality.
- customise services to meet the unique needs of all citizens, regardless of their household type or location.
- encourage citizens to participate in recycling and reuse services, ensuring that resources are fully utilised.
- commit to operating services in a way that guarantees staff safety, competence, and fair treatment, with the necessary.

Proposal to introducing kerbside recycling to a further 3300 households in 2025 will

mean that almost 99% of households within Inverclyde Council receive a direct recycling service. The increase in the number of properties receiving such a service should improve Inverclyde's overall recycling rate by 2%, from 47% to 49%.

The success and further development and improvements of the new scheme will be supported by monitoring activities which will be carried out to identify areas of poor participation / performance quickly and will allow interventions that will improve this. The activities will be as follows: -

- Measuring waste container set-out rates using existing refuse collection vehicle technology
- Checking contamination reports from refuse collection crews
- Area surveys by waste strategy officers with specific follow-up interventions
- Analysis of the types of waste materials received at Pottery Street and Ingleston Park
- Programmed waste compositional analysis
- Benchmarking
- Peer review through the Scottish Waste Managers Network.

Funding for additional recycling containers and bin storage signage will be sought from the Zero Waste Scotland recycling improvement fund (RIF) – small grant scheme. It is estimated that an amount of £90k will be requested. Should the overall funding bid be unsuccessful or not considered timeously alternative funding sources will be investigated. This will doubtless impact on the proposed delivery timescale and may require a revised scheme proposal.

### Commercial Waste

Inverclyde Council provides an integrated commercial waste collection recycling and disposal service to businesses throughout Inverclyde which ensures our customers are compliant with all current legislation and can also help them to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste.

The service is operated through a specialist fleet of vehicles that provide reliable, responsive and cost-effective services for all our customers. Support and advice are provided from our Commercial Waste section helping you to manage your waste in the best possible way.

The Council can offer customers a free zero waste compliance visit and no obligation quote, with the added benefit of the Council's commercial waste collection services being outside the scope of VAT.



Year	Waste Generated (T)	Recycled (T)	Recycle Rate (%)	Other Diversion (inc Incineration) (T)	Other Diversion (%)	Landfilled (T)	Landfill Rate (%)
2023	24544	11519	46.9%	637	2.6%	12388	50.5%
2022	24982	11685	46.8%	1534	6.1%	11763	47.1%
2021	26632	12905	48.5%	2651	10%	10822	40.6%
2020	29009	10759	37.1%	2030	7.0%	16149	55.7%
2019	27698	14944	54.0%	1771	6.4%	10984	39.7%

Table 4 – Inverclyde Council Waste Data Statistics

### Waste Incentives

#### Compost 2 Go – Pottery Street Recycling Centre

During spring and summer, Inverclyde residents can collect recycled garden compost from Pottery Street Recycling Centre. The compost has been generated from the brown bin garden waste collection service.

Compost can only be collected in specially designed Inverclyde Council compost bags. The bags can be purchased from the site attendants at Pottery Street at a cost of £2 each. Once you have a bag you can collect the compost free of charge. There is a maximum of 4 bags per household.

#### Real Nappy Grants

As Inverclyde Council strives to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill, funding has been created to assist Inverclyde parents, and parents to be, who want to purchase real nappies.

As part of the Real Nappy Grants scheme, the Council can offer grants of up to £80 to help towards the cost of purchasing washable, reusable nappies. Grants are issued on a 'first come first served' basis and are limited to one grant per household. The average child will use approximately 5000 disposable nappies by the time they reach two and a half with the majority of these ending up in landfill sites. Some estimates suggest that disposable nappies could take up to 500 years to break down.

Reusable nappies come in a variety of styles and colours, from the traditional square to the modern shaped type. Real nappies can be used on subsequent children



making them even better value and an environmentally friendly alternative to disposable nappies.

### The Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012

The Scottish Government's Waste (Scotland) Regulations places certain requirements on Local Authorities, businesses, and not-for-profit organisations to ensure that recycling services are of the highest quality and that they help Scotland to achieve its goal of becoming a zero-waste society.

The Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012 require your business to take the following actions:

- from 1 January 2014 businesses must present metal, plastic, glass, paper and card separately for collection.
- from 1 January 2016 all food businesses which produce over 5 kg of food waste per week must present it for separate collection it will be illegal to dispose of food into the public sewer, for example, by using a macerator.

### **Summary of Stakeholder Engagement**

#### Recycling – Communication Strategy

The roll out of the new services will mirror the previously successful roll outs including a detailed communication plan which will be tailored to ensure residents are aware of and are fully supported throughout the roll-out process. This will consist of a number of roadshows and events communicating to the following stakeholder groups: -

- Elected Members
- Members of the public
- Housing Associations
- Community Councils
- New Scots Integration Team

The communication strategy will include the following resources

- Social media including Facebook and X
- Council website
- Television screens within Council facilities and Doctors' Surgeries
- RCV banners
- Individual household letters and leaflets





- Recycling Calendars
- School visits

### **Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan**

- Ensure developers are aware of the Council's recycling facilities, targets and initiatives.

### **Statements of Agreement / Dispute**

- None.



Topic	Sustainable Transport and Infrastructure First
Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended,</p> <p><u>Section 15(5)(a)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district</li> </ul> <p>The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023: <u>Regulation 9</u> Have regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(e) (vii) any regional transport strategy,</li> <li>(e) (viii) any local transport strategy.</li> </ul>
NPF4 LDP Requirements	<p><u>NPF4 Policy 13</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should prioritise locations for future development that can be accessed by sustainable modes. The spatial strategy should reflect the sustainable travel hierarchy and sustainable investment hierarchy by making best use of existing infrastructure and services.</li> <li>LDPs should promote a place-based approach to consider how to reduce car-dominance. This could include low traffic schemes, shared transport options, designing-in speed controls, bus/cycle priority, pedestrianisation and minimising space dedicated to car parking. Consideration should be given to the type, mix and use of development; local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods; car ownership levels; the accessibility of proposals and allocations by sustainable modes; and the accessibility for users of all abilities.</li> <li>LDPs should be informed by an appropriate and effective transport appraisal undertaken in line with relevant transport appraisal guidance. Plans should be informed by evidence of the area's transport infrastructure capacity, and an appraisal of the spatial strategy on the transport</li> </ul>

	<p>network. This should identify any potential cumulative transport impacts and deliverable mitigation proposed to inform the plan's infrastructure first approach. Where there is likely to be an impact on the trunk road or rail network, early engagement with Transport Scotland is required.</p> <p><b><u>NPF4 Policy 18</u></b></p> <p>LDPs and delivery programmes should be based on an integrated infrastructure first approach. Plans should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be informed by evidence on infrastructure capacity, condition, needs and deliverability within the plan area, including cross boundary infrastructure:</li> <li>• set out the infrastructure requirements to deliver the spatial strategy, informed by the evidence base, identifying the infrastructure priorities, and where, how, when and by whom they will be delivered; and</li> <li>• indicate the type, level (or method of calculation) and location of the financial or in-kind contributions, and the types of development from which they will be required.</li> </ul> <p>Plans should align with relevant national, regional and local infrastructure plans and policies and take account of the Scottish Government infrastructure investment hierarchy and sustainable travel and investment hierarchies in developing the spatial strategy. Consistent early engagement and collaboration between relevant stakeholders will better inform decisions on land use and investment.</p>
<p><b>Links to Evidence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Transport Strategy 2 (<a href="https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/national-transport-strategy-2/">https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/national-transport-strategy-2/</a>)</li> <li>• SPT Regional Transport Strategy (<a href="https://www.spt.co.uk/media/nr2c0jtt/spt_regional-transport-strategy-2023-2038.pdf">https://www.spt.co.uk/media/nr2c0jtt/spt_regional-transport-strategy-2023-2038.pdf</a>)</li> <li>• SPT Regional Active Travel Strategy (draft)</li> </ul>



	<a href="https://www.spt.co.uk/media/orfnvtvd/spt_regional-transport-strategy-2023-2038-final-draft.pdf">https://www.spt.co.uk/media/orfnvtvd/spt_regional-transport-strategy-2023-2038-final-draft.pdf</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inverclyde Active Travel Strategy 2018. This is proposed to be updated in 2025. <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/9658/Inverclyde-Active-Travel-Strategy_v2.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/9658/Inverclyde-Active-Travel-Strategy_v2.pdf</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Net Zero Strategy 2021 – 2045 <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/14504/Net-Zero-Strategy_WEB.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/14504/Net-Zero-Strategy_WEB.pdf</a></li> <li>• Transport Scotland consultation response</li> </ul>
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### Summary of Evidence

The A8 and A78 trunk roads serve Inverclyde as well as the A770 connecting the A78 between the Bullring and Bankfoot Roundabouts via a coastal route through Greenock and Gourock and the A761, which provides a route from the A8 at Newark Roundabout through Kilmacolm and connecting with Renfrewshire near Bridge of Weir.

There are two train lines with 14 stations with routes to Glasgow Central from Gourock and Wemyss Bay. The area is also served by four ferry services from three terminals in Gourock and Wemyss Bay. Several bus companies also operate throughout the area, with upgraded bus stations at Greenock and Port Glasgow.

Inverclyde is also connected by a comprehensive core path network and National Cycle Network routes NCN75 and NCN 753, which provide active travel connections to Renfrewshire and Glasgow. These routes have seen significant upgrades between Greenock Ocean Terminal and Battery Park, Cloch Road (Cloch Lighthouse to Lunderston Bay), Lunderston Bay to Inverkip Beach and a route new route through Gourock Train Station. Furthermore, Regional Cycle Route R21 broadly follows the south shoreline of the Clyde Estuary, providing a link between Inchgreen Dry Dock and Newark Castle. Recently, this route was upgraded through Coronation Park to Newark Castle and adjacent park. Work is ongoing to improve or create several new cycle routes in the area and links to North Ayrshire.

Levels of walking and cycling remain low for everyday journeys, both nationally and locally, as illustrated by the mode share for people travelling to work/study reported in the 2011 Census. The main method of travel to work/study in Inverclyde is accounted for by car/taxi (54.3%), followed by public transport (18.9%), while active travel accounts for just over 15%.

Overall, very few people in Inverclyde, less than 1%, use bicycle as a main method of transport. However, walking to work/study has increased to 15.1% in 2011 from





11.3% in 2001. (ATS)

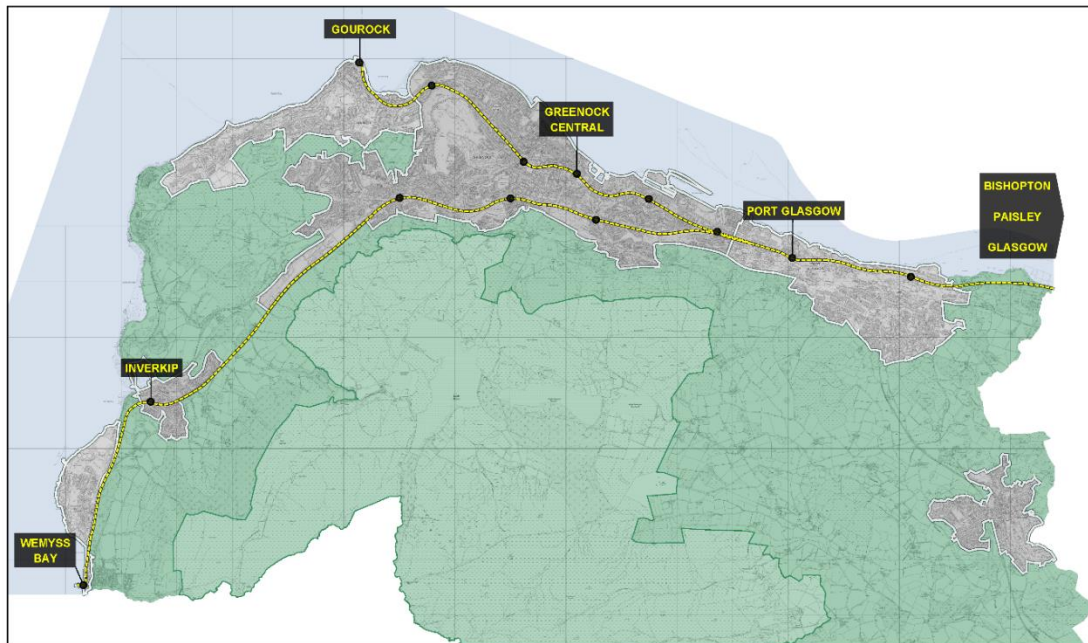


Figure 9 – Map showing the Rail Network at Inverclyde

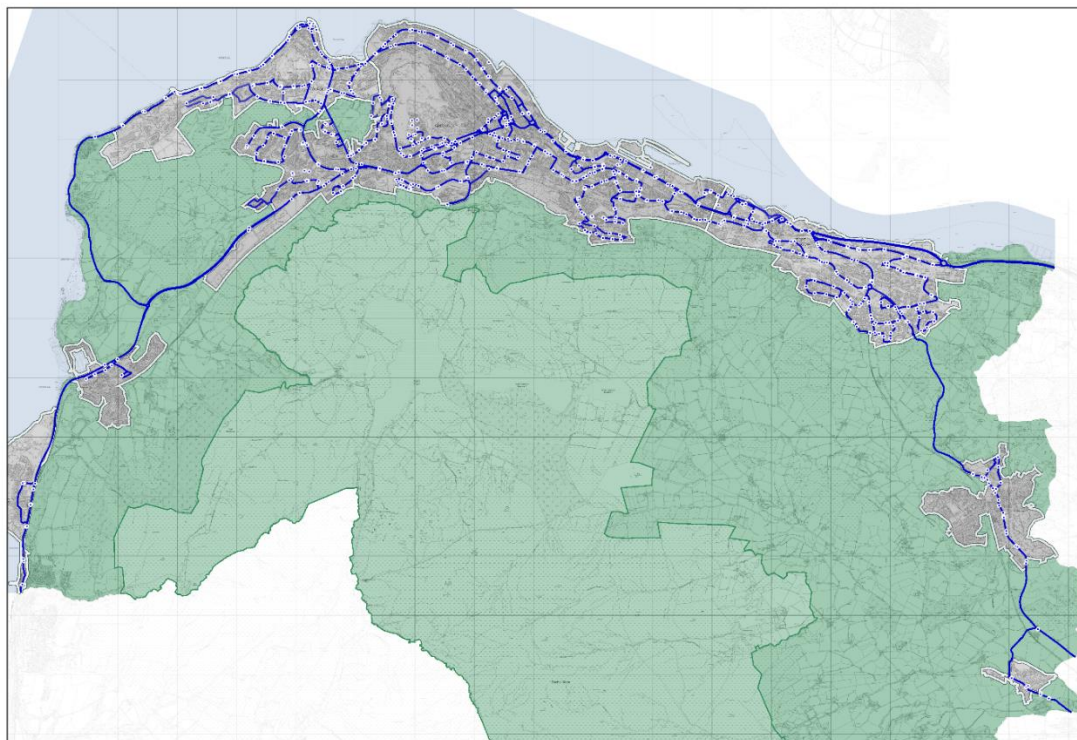


Figure 10 – Map showing the Bus Network at Inverclyde

### Summary of Stakeholder Engagement



## **Inverclyde Council Roads Service**

All new developments should consider access and routes through by order of hierarchy to prioritise sustainable travel – walking and wheeling, cycling, public transport, taxi or car sharing and finally private car. They should include active travel routes, be designed to be attractive to buses and designed to encourage speeds of 20mph or less.

Inverclyde Council are working as Lead to progress several major projects to improve the transport network. They include the demolition of the Bullring Roundabout and part of the Oak Mall to provide improved routes for walking, wheeling and cycling within Greenock Town Centre and to the new Ocean Terminal. Currently the road network at the interchange between the A8, A78 and A770 sever various parts of Greenock Town Centre particularly when the Oak Mall is closed. The routes which are available can be secluded and unattractive in the evenings. To enable the development of the large brownfield site at Inverkip Power Station, the Council will deliver junction improvements on the A78 at Inverkip. This will also improve road safety and provide improved access to public transport and cycling networks as well as pedestrian crossing facilities.

The Council continue to design and construct improvements to active travel routes throughout the area and linking to neighbouring Local Authority areas. They seek funding opportunities wherever possible.

Flood improvement schemes have been promoted by the Council either directly or in partnership with Transport Scotland and Scottish Water including major improvement on the A8 East Hamilton Street in 2023/24.

**Transport Scotland** consultation response, requirement to comply with National Transport Strategy 2.

### **STPR2**

Recommendation 31 - Trunk road and motorway climate change adaptation and resilience, is relevant to Inverclyde. The purpose of this recommendation is to adapt the trunk road and motorway network to the impacts of climate change to maintain resilience in the face of changing climatic conditions. Two sections of the A78 (Fairlie and Largs to Skelmorlie) are known vulnerable locations which feature in the South West Operating Company's disruption risk site register. Flood Management Plans have subsequently been developed for both locations and as detailed below works on the sea walls are being planned.

### **Growth Deal**

Inverclyde Council are working in consultation with Transport Scotland to deliver the



A78 Inverkip Infrastructure Project as part of City Deal. The Project involves upgrading and signalling three existing junctions in Inverkip as part of the regeneration of the old Scottish Power site at Brueacre south of Inverkip. Inverclyde Council have appointed Balfour Beatty contractor and Atkins Realis designer to undertake the work.

## Levelling Up Fund: Greenock Central Infrastructure Works

Greenock Central is a transformational Town Centre Regeneration Project seeking to address fundamental place-based challenges created by the negative legacy of roads infrastructure. It has been developed by Inverclyde Council with Transport Scotland and West College Scotland and will:

- Demolish the elevated A78 dual-carriageway that currently runs through the town centre, along with 40% of the existing Oak Mall retail space to remove severance and associated negative place perceptions, adverse environmental quality, rebalance retail space requirements and put the 'heart back into the town centre.
- Replace with a new high quality urban public realm, based around public squares and greenspace animated by activity created by mixed-use development, with priority given to pedestrian movement, place-making, and opportunities for follow-on investment. The elevated A78 trunk road will be replaced by an at-grade street with full active travel integration, remodelled as an urban signalised junction incorporating pedestrian / cycle crossings.

The project has been developed as a catalyst for regeneration and transformation of Greenock Town Centre. It addresses the fundamental challenges created by an elevated inner-urban road infrastructure, a failing retail mall, hostile pedestrian environments and restricted access that carves up the town centre, restricts connectivity between bus/rail stations and town centre and waterfront. Both accessibility and the image and profile of the town are adversely impacted with attendant environmental (noise/air pollution) and public safety issues.

The project is tightly scoped to maximise the outputs and regeneration outcomes. The project will deliver a transformed Greenock Town Centre radically restructuring of the centre in terms of place, connectivity, appeal, footfall and investment opportunity re-balancing retail /services /public realm space and creating a new sense of place based on live-work-learn-invest-visit as a place of choice. Full details of the proposed interventions, outputs are set out within the Business Case (Section 1).

- Demolition of c.500 metres of elevated Trunk Road section (A78)- agreed with Transport Scotland
- Demolition of three underpass pedestrian routes with significant user/safety





## challenges

- Demolition 6,500 m2 Mall based retail
- Creation of town Centre investment sites 20,000M2 to support new College Campus
- Restructuring 91 parking spaces (Bull Ring) with a balance of parking and active travel measures
- Transforming the town and town centre opportunities for successful place regeneration
- Rebuilding an at-grade 4-way signal controlled urban junction to create new public realm, support connectivity / safe mobility and town centre health & wellbeing
- Re-design of 765metres of existing elevated dual carriageway to provide an at-grade urban street supporting access and safe mobility and providing the enabler for town centre regeneration
- Masterplanned high-quality public realm space - c.5700m2 of (plus developer public realm)
- Removing the effective blight created by elevated transport corridor (V&DL)
- Provision of 1000m2 greenspace / park / tree planting
- Integrating 1400 linear metres of barrier-free footway/cycleways
- Provision of 4 Trunk Road Pedestrian Priority Crossings to facilitate town centre connectivity
- Provision of 16 DDA parking spaces / 6 Car club/Shared Use/Taxi spaces for town centre
- Provision of 12 E-electric (EV-UFC) and 24 E-Bike Charging Stations

## Development Management

Some developments have raised issues with pedestrian connectivity across the A8, for example, at Carlsdyke. Therefore, wider consideration of active travel connections interacting with the trunk road may be something that the LDP should consider.

In relation to the Oak Mall Shopping Centre, Greenock which involves demolition of the existing shopping centre and structure over A8, will involve significant disruption with temporary diversions to be put in place.

At Brueacre, Inverkip, mitigation will require signalisation of the A78 Main Street and Kip Marina junctions at the top end and another signalised junction at the south end with eventual closure of the existing slip road access at the Bruacare junction. In relation to the south junction, it is understood the Council has taken forward delivery of the necessary infrastructure mitigation as a Growth Deal project. The proposals for the site access are now understood to be a signalised T junction and reduced speed limit. Discussions between the Transport Scotland area manager, the



Operating Company, applicant and designers are ongoing.

Spango Valley, Greenock, mixed-use development comprising residential, industrial/business use, retail & leisure use and park & ride with associated roads infrastructure, access, open space, landscaping and drainage, has planning consent and requires upgrades to existing A78(T) junctions including improvements to the grade-separated junction and existing priority junction to signal-control.

### Bridges

The main works envisaged in the area will be to the A78 sea walls where scour protection, new VRS installation and possible widening is being investigated. The costs of this have yet to be identified.

### Rail

The installations of lifts to provide level access at Port Glasgow railway station was completed in 2023/24.

### Road Safety

Current concerns:

- A78 At Dunlop Street, Greenock – Issues with vehicles using access to housing adjacent to the roundabout
- A78 west of Dunlop Street – Active Travel scheme in programme

Planned schemes

- A78 Inverkip to Wemyss Bay – Solar studs, markings and signs – in conjunction with the Growth Deal scheme
- A78 Wemyss Bay – Junction VAS to be installed

## **Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan**

- Wider consideration of active travel connections interacting with the A8 trunk road.
- Consideration of accessibility for town centres, coastal edge and commercial and other industrial opportunities afforded through investment in the road network; or future planned improvements.

### **Actions for Transport (for Council owned vehicles)**

- Transport vehicle fuel choice to be prioritised towards electric vehicles where new/ replacement vehicles are required in line with Scottish Government requirements, aiming for a full electric car/van fleet by 2025, and electric refuse collection vehicles from 2028.





- Consider options on ownership models for fleet vehicles (e.g. purchase vs leasing/ shared ownership models), to maintain fleet energy efficiency. Take appropriate action to ensure access to an efficient low-carbon fleet for essential Council business.
- Review electric charging infrastructure availability, geographic locations and types vs requirements (e.g. access to fast charging points/ access to high-load charging points as needed for high-torque engines such as refuse vehicles). Build the charging infrastructure or collaborate with third parties to ensure appropriate charging points are available to support the effective use of electric vehicles for Council business.
- For authorised users of private vehicles for Council business (i.e. grey fleet users), monitor and analyse transport use, travel modes and emissions, and the effectiveness of the transport use overall. Communicate on options for private vehicle switches from petrol/diesel fuel to electric vehicles. Encourage car sharing where possible (post-COVID) and active travel, i.e. walking/cycling where possible.
- Assess and act on opportunities for Council Services to be supported by employees using active travel and public transport for transport needs, in line with the Scottish Government '20-minute neighbourhoods' concept – meeting day-to-day needs, including employment locations, within a 20-minute walk of their home; through access to safe walking and cycling routes, or by public transport. (NZS)

<b>Statements of Agreement / Dispute</b>
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- None.

## Inverclyde to date – (Liveable Places)

Topic	Design, quality and place and local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods
<b>Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended</p> <p>Section 15(5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district.</li> </ul> <p>Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014</p>
<b>NPF4 LDP Requirements</b>	<p><u>NPF4 Policy 14</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should be place-based and created in line with the Place Principle. The spatial strategy should be underpinned by the six qualities of successful places. LDPs should provide clear expectations for design, quality and place taking account of the local context, characteristics and connectivity of the area. They should also identify where more detailed design guidance is expected, for example, by way of design frameworks, briefs, masterplans and design codes.</li> <li>Planning authorities should use the Place Standard tool in the preparation of LDPs and design guidance to engage with communities and other stakeholders. They should also where relevant promote its use in early design discussions on planning applications.</li> </ul> <p><u>NPF4 Policy 15</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should support local living, including 20-minute neighbourhoods within settlements, through the spatial strategy, associated site briefs and masterplans.</li> <li>The approach should take into account the local context, consider the varying settlement patterns and reflect the particular characteristics and challenges faced by each place.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communities and businesses will have an important role to play in informing this, helping to strengthen local living through their engagement with the planning system.</li> </ul>
<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#"><u>Inverclyde SNA2022 FINAL 07-07-22.pdf</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>Localities - Inverclyde Council</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>08 Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023-33 (2) (1).pdf</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>Inverclyde Life</u></a> – information on activities and services which are available in each Locality.</li> <li><a href="#"><u>Inverclyde Council Plan 2023 – 2028 - 5908 Inverclyde Council Plan with Appendix.pdf</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation)</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>Find My Nearest Tap - Scottish Water (yourwateryourlife.co.uk)</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>Place skills for plan-making   Architecture &amp; Design Scotland (ads.org.uk)</u></a></li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>	



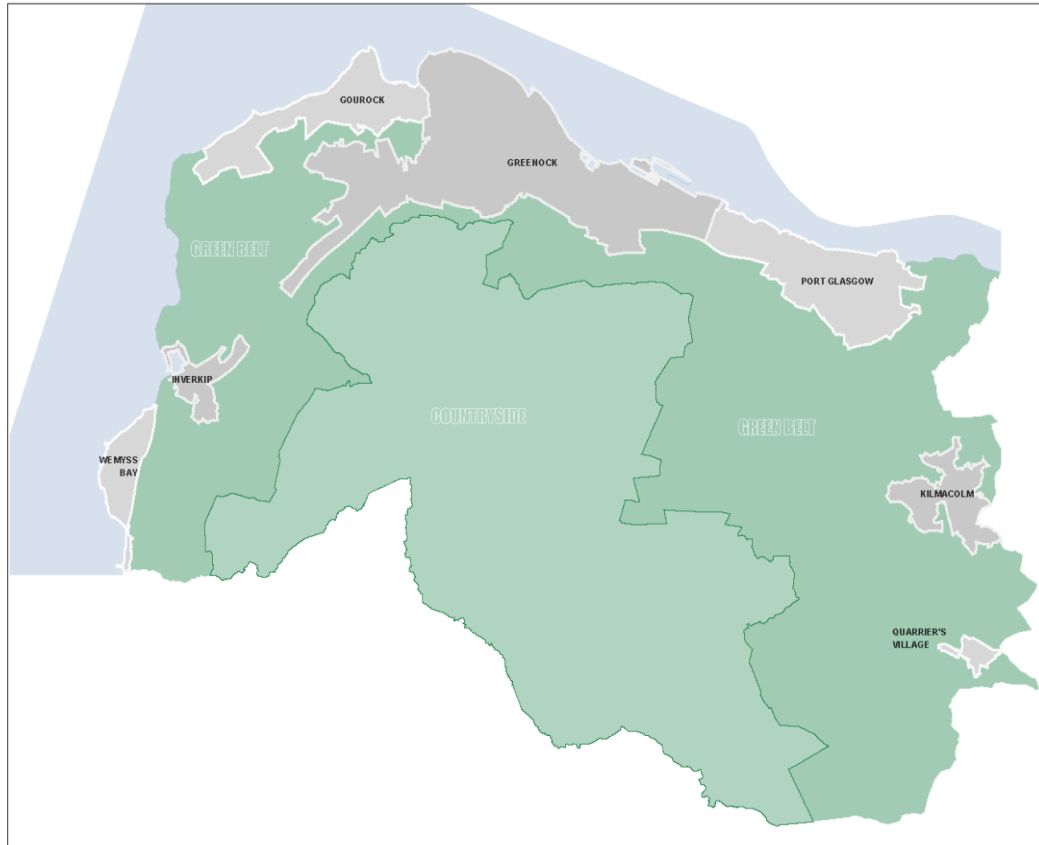


Figure 10 – Map showing Inverclyde Settlements

Inverclyde has six broad localities, or places, which are identified as follows:

#### Greenock East and Central

Greenock East and Central is located on the West Coast of Scotland, 25 miles west of Glasgow and has a population of around 20,119 which is approximately 26% of the population of Inverclyde. The locality area covers the town centre and east end of Greenock, the largest town in Inverclyde local authority area and the 12th most populous in Scotland.

Greenock's history began as a small fishing village in the 17th century. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the town flourished into a major port and industrial centre, thanks to its strategic location on the Firth of Clyde and the development of shipbuilding, sugar refining, and textile manufacturing.

The 20th century saw a decline in traditional industries like shipbuilding, but Greenock has adapted and emerged as a centre for commerce, with a thriving container port and cruise ship terminal.

The town boasts a scenic landscape with a unique blend of urban and natural elements. The Greenock waterfront features a diverse mix of historic and modern buildings, reflecting the town's rich past and ongoing development.





Notable buildings include the Victoria Tower, the Custom House, James Watt Dock, Waterfront Leisure Centre, and The Beacon Arts Centre.

## Greenock South and Southwest

Population in Greenock and Southwest is 14,624 which is approximately 19% of the total Inverclyde population.

The southern area of Greenock transitioned from farmland to residential area in the 20th century, mirroring Greenock's urban expansion. A few housing and industrial estates developed in the area during the latter half of the century.

## Port Glasgow

Port Glasgow is located on the West Coast of Scotland, 20 miles west of Glasgow and has a population of around 14,305 which is approximately 19% of the total Inverclyde population. The locality area covers the extents of the town of Port Glasgow, the second largest town in Inverclyde local authority area.

Port Glasgow's history is intertwined with the development of Glasgow's sea trade. In the 17th century, large ships couldn't reach Glasgow due to the shallow River Clyde. So, the city built a harbour downstream in 1668, establishing what was then called "New Port Glasgow." This new port thrived, becoming a major shipbuilding centre by the 18th century. Notably, the "Comet," Europe's first commercially successful steamship, was built in Port Glasgow in 1812.

The River Clyde was eventually deepened, allowing ships to sail further upstream. While Port Glasgow's importance as a port diminished, shipbuilding remained a dominant industry well into the 20th century. Even today, Ferguson Marine, a descendant of the area's early shipyards, continues to operate in Port Glasgow.

Port Glasgow today is a town with a mix of historic charm and modern living. The historic town centre boasts traditional buildings, including Newark Castle, and a range of independent shops and cafes. While shipbuilding is no longer the main industry, Port Glasgow offers a variety of job opportunities and amenities. The town centre has a mix of independent shops and national chains, while the nearby Retail Park provides further shopping options. Additionally, Port Glasgow boasts several parks and recreational areas.

## Kilmacolm and Quarriers Village

Kilmacolm and Quarrier's Village is located on the West Coast of Scotland, 25 miles west of Glasgow and has a population of around 5,734, approximately 7% of the total population of Inverclyde. The locality area covers the villages of Kilmacolm and Quarrier's Village, and the surrounding rural area.



Kilmacolm is a historic village in Scotland. Quarrier's Village, a smaller settlement within the Kilmacolm parish, has a more recent history. It was founded in the late 19th century as a philanthropic endeavour by William Quarrier to provide a home for Glasgow's orphaned and homeless children. Today, Quarrier's Village is a residential community, while Kilmacolm retains its historic charm.

Kilmacolm history stretches back to the 7th or 8th century, and its name reflects its religious roots – Kilmacolm means "Church of Columba." The village thrived during the cotton industry boom but later transformed into a popular destination due to its proximity to Glasgow. This led to the construction of grand homes by renowned architects like Charles Rennie Mackintosh, whose influence can still be seen in the village's architecture. Today, Kilmacolm is a sought-after residential area known for its beauty, rich heritage, and strong sense of community.

The wider civil parish of Kilmacolm encompasses a large area of farmlands and extends to the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park. This means that while you'll find amenities and a community within the village, the landscape around Kilmacolm offers a rural escape.

#### Greenock West and Gourock

Greenock West and Gourock is located on the West Coast of Scotland, 25 miles west of Glasgow and has a population of around 12,893, this is approximately 17% of the total population of Inverclyde. The locality area covers the town of Gourock and the west end of the town of Greenock.

Gourock's history stretches back centuries. Originally a small fishing village, records show King James IV set sail from here in 1494. The 17th and 18th centuries saw Gourock become a Burgh of Barony, with fishing playing a key role in the local economy. A significant turning point came in the early 1800s with the arrival of steamships. Gourock transformed into a key port for travel to western Scotland and the Highlands.

The late 19th century brought another major development: the railway. This made Gourock a more accessible destination, attracting day-trippers and even residents who could now commute to Glasgow thanks to the newly built tunnel. Today, Gourock remains a town with a rich history, evident in remnants like Gourock Park.

The waterfront promenade is a popular spot for walks, offering beautiful views of the Firth of Clyde. There is also a large beach at Lunderston Bay. Gourock even has a Victorian open-air outdoor pool, a popular spot for locals and visitors alike, especially in the summer.



The locality also encompasses the adjacent West End of Greenock which is an area that developed as Greenock prospered from shipbuilding and trade. Grand houses and villas were built for wealthy merchants, reflecting their success. Today, the West End is a designated Outstanding Conservation Area, preserving its architectural heritage. It is a residential area with a mix of historic buildings and modern amenities.

### Inverkip and Wemyss Bay

Inverkip and Wemyss Bay are located on the West Coast of Scotland, 30 miles west of Glasgow and has a population of around 9,025, which is approximately 12% of the total population of Inverclyde. The locality area covers the villages of Inverkip and Wemyss Bay, and the surrounding rural areas.

The villages of Inverkip and Wemyss Bay boast a shared history that stretches back centuries. Inverkip's roots trace back to the early 12th century when the land belonged to the monks of Paisley Abbey. By the 14th century, the Stewarts acquired the area and constructed the imposing Ardgowan Castle. For centuries, Inverkip remained a primarily agricultural village, with whispers of witchcraft even swirling around it in the 1600s.

A significant turning point for Inverkip arrived in 1865 with the establishment of the railway line connecting Glasgow and Wemyss Bay. This new transportation link completely transformed the village. Inverkip blossomed into a popular seaside resort, attracting day-trippers eager to escape the bustle of Glasgow and Greenock for a refreshing coastal getaway. The village even enjoyed a brief period as a ferry port for steamships.

Inverkip's marina development is a relatively recent addition to the town's story. While Inverkip thrived as a seaside resort in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the marina itself wasn't constructed until the 1970s. This development, known as Kip Marina, significantly boosted Inverkip's appeal as a boating destination.

There have been further additions to the marina in recent years. Plans were approved in 2016 for additional housing around the existing marina, creating a more integrated waterside community called Kip Village. This included expanding the marina itself to accommodate more boats.

Meanwhile, Wemyss Bay remained a quiet fishing bay until the late 18th century when it became part of the Kelly Estate. The arrival of the railway in 1865 mirrored Inverkip's experience. Wemyss Bay flourished as a seaside resort, drawing visitors alongside its neighbouring town. Today, both Inverkip and Wemyss Bay continue to be charming coastal destinations, offering a glimpse into their intriguing past.

- Locality Action Plans 2024 were produced for each of the above



localities based on the population, economic, social and health data gathered and consultation responses.

- Inequalities exist between the localities with Kilmacolm and Quarriers Village, Greenock West and Gourock and Inverkip and Wemyss Bay areas performing better across a range of indicators than Greenock East and Central, Greenock South and Southwest and Port Glasgow.
- The communities were invited to prepare Local Place Plans: [Local Place Plans - Inverclyde Council](#)

#### Inverclyde Population

- The percentage of one adult households is set to increase to 43% in Inverclyde by 2028.
- The percentage of households with 2 adults and +1 child will fall to 24% by 2043.
- Inverclyde's older population (75+) is set to increase by 55.5% by 2043.
- Inverclyde's in migration was 1,250 and out migration was 1,350.
- Inverclyde's population is set to fall 5% by 2028.

Locality	20% most deprived in Scotland	5% most deprived in Scotland	% of children aged 0-15 living in households in relative poverty	crime rate per 1,000 population in 2022	% working age population employment deprived
<b>Greenock East and Central</b>	22 of the 31 datazones	15 of 31 datazones	25.8	146.7	21.5
<b>Greenock South and Southwest</b>	11 of the 21	2 of the 21	30.8	55.5	15.9
<b>Port Glasgow</b>	16 of the 23 datazones	4 of 23 datazones	30.5	66.8	17.1
<b>Kilmacolm and Quarriers Village</b>	0 of the 8 datazones	0 of the 8 datazones	10	33.8	5.4
<b>Greenock West and Gourock</b>	2 of the 19 datazones	0 of the 19 datazones	12.5	34.7	8.3





<b>Inverkip and Wemyss Bay</b>	0 of the 12 datazones	0 of the 12 datazones	8.1	34.2	4.2
<b>Inverclyde</b>			23.1	72.5	14.3
<b>Scotland</b>			21.3	83.6	9.3

### Table 5 – Inverclyde Population Data

## Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

Community Planning is a way of working that places the service users at the heart of better service delivery as public sector partners, the voluntary sector and the private sector work together more effectively and efficiently. It is a development process aimed at influencing how mainstream resources are used for joined up service delivery and improved outcomes for the whole community. The essence of Community Planning is: “Partnership working between public agencies, the voluntary sector, the community, and businesses across an area, with a shared vision which is used to identify priorities to enhance service delivery for the sustained benefit and wellbeing of the community”. The Inverclyde Alliance is the Community Planning Partnership for Inverclyde.

Extensive engagement has been carried out with residents in each locality to find out what they think about living in this area and identify what improvements they would like to see take place. Each Locality Plan set original priorities in 2019 based on data analysis and local engagement.

During the development of the Inverclyde Alliance Community Partnership Plan 2023-33 a thorough Strategic Needs Assessment and public consultation was undertaken between 2021 and 2022.

The consultation involved six different research methods over eight weeks of consultation. There were a total of 2801 participants. The partnership vision is “Success For All – Getting It Right for Every Child, Citizen and Community” and the plan focuses on the themes of Empowered People, Working People, Healthy People and Places, A Supportive Place, and a Thriving Place.

Following the publication of this Partnership Plan 23-33, a review of the previous priorities for Locality Plans was carried out to ensure that they were still relevant to local needs and aligned with the new community planning partnership vision



and priority outcomes.

**Employment and Jobs** - The highest ranking and recurring issue that arose during consultation was employment and jobs. Participants highlighted the lack of jobs, the pay of the existing jobs and the sustainability of long-term employment in the area. Participants acknowledged that this is an issue that cannot be resolved quickly, however, they could see the long-term benefits of having a stronger employment base. A range of participants discussed how building an employment base will have knock on effects that help tackle the issues the area faces. They noted that depopulation, deprivation and poorer health and wellbeing can be linked to the erosion of Inverclyde previous manufacturing base.

**Community** - Another theme that arose in comments was surrounding community. Participants emphasised their desire that the Council and Partners work closer with communities and the already existing community groups. This highlights that there is a desire amongst Inverclyde's communities to be empowered and undertake more responsibility.

**Young People and Children** - The theme of young people arose in relation to several issues: employment opportunities, housing, leisure activities/facilities, and anti-social behaviour. The consensus amongst the participants was that there was a lack of employment opportunities and leisure facilities for younger people and this void has pushed them to engage in anti-social behaviour. Participants comments acknowledged that these people are the future of Inverclyde, but the area has challenges regarding the infrastructure to retain these people. This ties into the comments on housing where participants reported that there was a lack of access to housing for young people. The comments on young people show that the participants are concerned about the future of Inverclyde which will stem from the depopulation that the area is facing.

Comments on children often revolved around supporting those children that are living in poverty. The comments were aimed at providing these children with 'equal access' to things such as school meals, uniforms and other activities that they may not be able to take part in due to their socio-economic situation.

**Housing** - Housing was an issue that cropped up in every consultation. The comments predominately focused on difficulty of accessing housing due to affordability. Certain comments were also concerned with the quality of housing and the suitability of it for families. The clear thread through the comments on housing were orientated towards the future. Again, arguably stemming from the depopulation the area faces the participants emphasised the need to ensure that the current population has affordable housing so that they are retained in the



area. However, other participants suggested that better housing opportunities would also attract new people into the area. Thus, the narrative of these comments was generally concerned about population retention and attraction.

**Health and Wellbeing** - The theme of Health and Wellbeing was interlinked to a wide range of issues. Participants suggested that improving the general health and wellbeing of residents should be a priority as this can have long-term effects regarding life expectancy, hospital admissions and overall life fulfilment. They also noted the negative effects that alcohol and drug consumption can have on health and wellbeing. The lack of, and closure of leisure/fitness facilities was also suggested as being a source of poor mental and physical health and wellbeing. Much like the other main themes, poor health and wellbeing was viewed as a symptom of deep-rooted issues in the area such as a deprivation and economic stagnation. However, participants did suggest some direct actions on how to improve the general health and wellbeing in the area. The most illuminating suggestions came from the in-person consultation in Port Glasgow. The participants suggested deploying locality tailored health and wellbeing teams into communities to get residents involved in different classes and events. The suggestion of community led action highlights that Inverclyde's residents have a desire to tackle issues on the community level.

[The Place Standard tool is a way of assessing places. | Our Place](#)

[The Place Standard Tool - Inverclyde Council](#)

Scottish Government's Place Standard Tool has been used to produce and publicise the questionnaire at Inverclyde in October 2024 and the link has been issued to parents of Inverclyde pupils of all ages. The results from this survey will be used to inform the preparation of the new LDP, and responses collected have been summarised above.

### Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

- De-population and ageing population are also issues which are emerging from data gathered.
- A declining population has implications for the future of services within Inverclyde, in particular the projected decline in the numbers of young people and working age population, coupled with the substantial increase in the numbers of over 60s will place additional pressures on those services required by an ageing population. There is therefore a need to ensure that we retain our young people living in the area. This is anticipated to be achieved through initiatives to tackle population decline including promoting of housing,



regeneration, ensuring our town centres are vibrant and sustainable commercial and industrial growth is achieved through LDP policies and allocations.

- More local jobs will be an influencing factor on future population growth and critical to attracting migrants and retaining young people currently living in Inverclyde.
- Partners need to ensure that appropriate support is available that meets the changing needs of our older people e.g. older adults are at increased risk of being socially isolated which in turn impacts on health and wellbeing.
- The Inverclyde Alliance need to continue with their Strategy and Action Plan to attract people to move to the area. A poor perception of the area is the primary reason given by our young people who are considering leaving. Also, the vast majority of people leaving Inverclyde are moving elsewhere in Scotland and Inverclyde has been less successful than other areas in Scotland in attracting in migrants. Promoting a positive image of the area, alongside the continuing regeneration of the area, should be integral to the work of the partnership.
- There are significant inequalities between localities at Inverclyde in terms of poverty, deprivation and crime whereby areas like Kilmacolm, Wemyss Bay, Inverkip and Gourock are showing low rates across these indicators, while Greenock and Port Glasgow are exceeding the national average in some cases.
- This is an issue which has carried over from previous LDPs and would require to be addressed and prioritised in the new LDP.
- An Assessment of the proposed LDP 2021 will recommend ways in which inequalities in Inverclyde could be better addressed in terms of policy making.
- Place Standard Report for Inverclyde to be produced based on survey results from Inverclyde residents.

#### Statements of Agreement / Dispute

- General dissatisfaction conveyed through Place Standard Tool responses from some of the Inverclyde residents, especially those living in more deprived areas of the district.





Topic	Quality Homes
<b>Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended:</p> <p>Section 15(5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the housing needs of the population of the area, including, in particular, the needs of persons undertaking further and higher education, older people and disabled people;</li> <li>• the availability of land in the district for housing, including for older people and disabled people;</li> <li>• the desirability of allocating land for the purposes of resettlement.</li> </ul> <p>Section 16(2)(ab)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have regard to the list published under section 16E of persons seeking to acquire land in the authority's area for self-build housing.</li> </ul> <p>Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023:</p> <p>Regulation 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the availability of land in the district for housing, including for older people and disabled people</li> </ul>
<b>NPF4 LDP Requirements</b>	<p><u>NPF4 Policy 16</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LDPs are expected to identify a Local Housing Land Requirement for the area they cover. This is to meet the duty for a housing target and to represent how much land is required. To promote an ambitious and plan-led approach, the Local Housing Land Requirement is expected to exceed the 10-year Minimum All-Tenure Housing Land Requirement (MATHLR) set out in Annex E (of NPF4).</li> <li>• Deliverable land should be allocated to meet the 10-year Local Housing Land Requirement in locations that create quality places for people to live. Area that may be suitable for new homes beyond 10 years are also to be identified. The location of where new homes are allocated should be consistent with local living including, where relevant, 20-minute neighbourhoods</li> </ul>



	<p>and an infrastructure first approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse needs and delivery models should be taken into account across all areas, as well as allocating land to ensure provision of accommodation for Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Showpeople where need is identified.</li> </ul> <p><u>NPF4 Policy 17</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LDPs should be informed by an understanding of population change over time, locally specific needs and market circumstances in rural and island areas.</li> <li>• LDPs should set out tailored approaches to rural housing and where relevant include proposals for future population growth – including provision for small-scale housing and the appropriate resettlement of previously inhabited areas. Plans should reflect locally appropriate delivery approached. Previously inhabited areas that are suitable for resettlement should be identified in the spatial strategy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Links to Evidence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scotland's Census 2023 - <a href="#">Scotland's Census 2022 - Rounded population estimates   Scotland's Census</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Council – Local House Strategy 2023 – 2028 <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16899/Inverclyde-Local-Housing-Strategy-2023-2028.docx">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16899/Inverclyde-Local-Housing-Strategy-2023-2028.docx</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Alliance, Inverclyde Repopulation Action Plan 2019</li> <li>• Inverclyde Council Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021 – 2025 <a href="file:///C:/Users/pickettm/Downloads/02%20-%20Economic%20Strategy%20(1).pdf">file:///C:/Users/pickettm/Downloads/02%20-%20Economic%20Strategy%20(1).pdf</a></li> <li>• Glasgow City Region Housing Market Partnership – Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 <a href="https://a.storyblok.com/f/243567/x/bf84be341c/qcrhmp-hnda-3-june-2024-dc.pdf">https://a.storyblok.com/f/243567/x/bf84be341c/qcrhmp-hnda-3-june-2024-dc.pdf</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Council, Inverclyde Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2024/25 – 2028/29 <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16876/Inverclyde-SHIP-2024-2029.docx">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16876/Inverclyde-SHIP-2024-2029.docx</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Council Housing Land Audit 2023</li> <li>• Inverclyde Local Housing Land Requirement Paper –</li> </ul>



	2022 - 2040				
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>					
<p><u>Inverclyde's Housing Supply Target</u></p> <p>The Housing Supply Target (HST) outlines the estimated level of additional housing that can be delivered on the ground and informs the formation of the Housing Land Requirement. The Scottish Government Local Housing Strategy (LHS) guidance notes that this should be a summary of the level and type of housing to be delivered over the period of LHS together with an explanation around how the HST (split into market and affordable) has been determined.</p> <p>The Inverclyde HST paper was published in 2023 as a supporting piece of evidence for the Inverclyde LHS 2023-2028. The paper noted that to support the policy aspirations of Inverclyde Council and its partners, there would be a shift towards regeneration in the social rented sector rather than the previous absolute supply growth agenda. This shift to regeneration is reflected within the Inverclyde LHS 2023-2038 and will do so for future Strategic Housing Investment Plans (SHIP) over the duration of the current LHS. Moreover, as set by the Inverclyde Alliance there is a shift for housing policy to support a repopulation agenda that requires the expansion of private sector tenures.</p> <p>Because of such considerations then, the housing supply targets noted the pivot towards private sector housing over the next decade. Towards that end it was proposed that the HST will be 1875 units over the decade and will be split using a ratio of 60% private sector units to 40% affordable housing units. Affordable housing refers to social rented units and other tenures delivered through the AHSP, inclusive of social rented, mid-market rent, and new supplied shared equity models. It was determined that an annual basis for how these targets should be met would be too restrictive. Rather the HSTs has been set to be met over the duration of the strategy to support innovative regeneration strategies, not stifle them.</p> <p>The Inverclyde HST is presented within Table 6:</p> <table> <tr> <th>Housing Supply Targets 2023-2033</th><th>Tenure Breakdown</th></tr> <tr> <td>1875 units</td><td>60% Private Sector; 40% Affordable</td></tr> </table> <p><u>Table 6: Inverclyde Housing Supply Targets and Tenure Breakdown</u></p> <p>The Inverclyde LHLR will provide adequate land to deliver Inverclyde's Housing Supply Targets set within the Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2023-2028 as a minimum.</p>		Housing Supply Targets 2023-2033	Tenure Breakdown	1875 units	60% Private Sector; 40% Affordable
Housing Supply Targets 2023-2033	Tenure Breakdown				
1875 units	60% Private Sector; 40% Affordable				



## **Policy Off Projections**

Inverclyde is facing several unique challenges when compared with other areas in Scotland, such as major decreases in the working age population, high unemployment, significant health inequalities and areas of low housing demand. These factors create a challenging, complex mix of issues that influence the Inverclyde housing market. The following section outlines the ‘policy off’ evidence base which is used as the foundations in developing an appropriate LHLR to meet housing need and demand and the policy aspirations of Inverclyde Council and its partners.

### **Demographic Profile**

Mid-2021 population estimates, published by the National Records of Scotland show that between 1998 and 2021, the population of Inverclyde decreased by 8.9%. This was the highest negative percentage change out of the 32 council areas in Scotland. Over the same period, Scotland’s population rose by 8.2%. National projections predict a continuing population decline; the population of Inverclyde is estimated to reduce by a further 13% by 2040 without intervention.

Age Cohort	2022	2032	Inverclyde % Change	Scotland % Change
Children < 16	12,008	10,259	↓ -15%	↓ -8%
Working Age Population 16-24	47,265	40,995	↓ -15%	→ -2%
Pension Age (65 – 85+)	17,040	20,159	↑ 18%	↑ 20%
Total Population	76,313	71,413	↓ -6%	→ 1%

**Table 7 – Inverclyde Population Change 2022 – 2032 by Age**

The 2022 Scottish Census population estimates, published on the 14th of September 2023 estimate Inverclyde’s population is 78,400. This figure has decreased since the 2011 Census but is higher than the previously published NRS mid 2021 population estimate of 76,700. This illustrates that although population trends do still show a decline they are not as acute as previously thought. The widening dispersal of asylum seekers and humanitarian interventions such as Homes for Ukraine has introduced additional households to Inverclyde although it is not yet known what the lasting impacts of this will be on the area’s population.

In 2021, there were an estimated 37,958 households living in Inverclyde, an increase of 3% since 2001. This growth is significantly lower than the national rate with households increasing by 15% across Scotland over the same period.

In September 2020, National Registers of Scotland (NRS) published household projections for every local authority, based on 2018 population estimates. The





projections include a principal scenario, and variants based on alternative assumptions about migration trends (both high and low).

All three scenarios show a projected decrease in the number of households in Inverclyde between 2018 and 2043 without intervention. This ranges from a decline of 9% under a high migration scenario (37,640 to 34,219 households), to 10% under the principal scenario (37,640 to 33,878 households) and 11% under a low migration scenario (37,640 to 33,639 households).

### Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA)

The Scottish Government Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) practitioners guide state that HNDAs are designed to give broad, long-run estimates of what future housing need might be, rather than precision estimates. They provide an evidence-base to inform housing policy decisions in Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and land allocation decision in Development Plans.

The HNDA can therefore be seen as the starting point in the housing planning process when determining a policy off baseline of what additional housing units are required within a local authority area to meet housing need. This provides the initial basis in developing the housing land requirement to meet housing need within the area but does not reflect on how an area's policy aspiration may impact on housing delivery.

As part of the Glasgow City Region Housing Market Partnership, Inverclyde Council have recently completed a Housing Need & Demand Assessment (HNDA3) which provides a statistical estimate of how much additional housing units, by tenure and type, will be required to meet all future housing need and demand in the area. Table 3 outlines the estimations for additional housing units in Inverclyde as outlined within HNDA3:

<b>Principle Scenario Projection of New Households</b>	
Owner Occupation	0
Private Rent	0
Below Market Rent	0
Social Rent	180
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>

Table 8 – HNDA 3 Projections for Inverclyde

The HNDA used the Scottish Government's HNDA Tool which includes a range of pre-populated datasets and default calculations developed by the Scottish Government's Centre for Housing Market Analysis (CHMA). The HNDA Tool includes default





methodology. The MATHLR set by NPF4 proposes a minimum threshold for housing land allocations within the next Inverclyde Local Development Plan.

In June 2021, following the Scottish Government consultation on the spatial strategy for NPF4, Glasgow City Region Housing Market Partnership responded to initial figures set by the Scottish Government for the proposed MATHLR. Inverclyde Council as a partner within the Glasgow City Region Housing Market Partnership provided evidence and supporting information to inform the regions' response to the Scottish Government's consultation on MATHLR and the following information was taken into consideration in the finalisation of MATHLR numbers:

- housing system evidence including emerging HNDA housing estimates,
- historic housing completions,
- housing delivery targets aligned to Strategic Housing Investment Plans,
- local strategic drivers for housing delivery, including the delivery of the Glasgow City Region Deal and local economic development strategies.

**Following this process, the Minimum All Tenure Housing Land Requirement set by NPF4 for Inverclyde over a 10-year period is 1,500 units.**

NPF4 notes that to promote an ambitious and plan-led approach, the LHLR is expected to exceed the 10-year MATHLR. As previously demonstrated, Inverclyde's HST, set within the LHS, took cognisance of the MATHLR within its methodology and the formation of the targets were set higher to reflect this policy.

### **Policy On – Forming Inverclyde's Housing Land Requirement**

The following section will outline both the strategic framework and policy aspirations of Inverclyde Council and its partners which must be considered when setting the LHLR. The HNDA, MATHLR and demographic projections form an evidence base, an understanding of housing need and minimum land requirement but does not factor in aspirations for growth.

#### **Local Policy Context**

Under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 there is a statutory requirement for Community Planning Partnerships to produce a strategic plan that sets out its priorities for addressing local inequalities in partnership.

The Scottish Government's guidance on Local Development Planning states that; Local Outcomes Improvement Plans (LOIPs) must be considered in preparing LDPs. The 2019 Act removed the requirement for an LDP to provide a vision statement to avoid any potential conflict or duplication which may arise from having different visions



for an authority. The expectation is that the LDP contributes towards achieving the outcomes set by the LOIP and the LDP should create the linkage between the two policy documents by demonstrating how development and land use align with the overarching vision.

The Inverclyde Partnership Plan 2023-33 vision is ‘Success for All – Getting It Right for Every Child, Citizen and Community.’ and focuses on the themes of Empowered People, Working People, Healthy People and Places, A Supportive Place, and a Thriving Place. The plan sets the outcomes that the community planning partners in Inverclyde, known as the Inverclyde Alliance, will seek to improve. Theme 5 of the Partnership Plan focuses on creating a ‘Thriving Place,’ and includes the following housing and regeneration objectives:

- Growth in our working age population by encouraging people to stay here and attracting new people to settle here.
- Development of strong community-based services that respond to local need.
- Homes are energy efficient and fuel poverty is reduced.
- Increased use of active travel and sustainable transport options
- Easy access to attractive and safe public spaces, and high-quality arts and cultural opportunities.

These policy aspirations should be reflected within both the LDP and taken into consideration when setting a realistic LHLR. This will enable Inverclyde Council and its partners within the Inverclyde Alliance to provide a functional housing system, which supports growth in the working age population and energy efficient homes through the development of new housing.

### Inverclyde Economic Regeneration Strategy

Inverclyde’s economic ambitions and actions are outlined in the Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021-25. Actions are led by Inverclyde Council and recognise the importance of integrated partnership working with the private sector, the Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise and Skills Development Scotland in the delivery of the economic regeneration ambitions. The vision of the Inverclyde Economic Regeneration Strategy is:

***‘Inverclyde is a vibrant part of a strong city region with a competitive and thriving economy, sustainable communities and flexible and skilled workforce.’***

An improved housing offer, be it additional affordable housing through new supply or improved housing condition in existing stock, can be instrumental in supporting





economic regeneration efforts. The recruitment and retention of young people and the working age population underpins this work, feeding into the overall outcomes set within the Inverclyde Partnership Plan 2023 -2033 and should be recognised when setting the LHLR.

### Local Housing Strategy 2023 – 2028

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory duty for Local Authorities to produce a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) every five years supported by an assessment of housing provision including the need and demand for housing and related services. It is a requirement that the LHS must be submitted to Scottish Ministers, and that local authorities must keep their LHS under review.

On the 2nd of November 2023, Inverclyde Council's Environment & Regeneration Committee approved the Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2023-2028. The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) sets out the strategic direction, policies and plans that will enable Inverclyde Council and partners to deliver high quality housing and housing services to meet the needs of local people across all housing tenures. The LHS also sets out the important contribution that housing makes to enabling economic growth and regeneration, improving health and wellbeing, creating connected and sustainable places, reducing climate change, and tackling poverty across Inverclyde.

The Inverclyde HST paper was published in 2023 as a supporting piece of evidence for the Inverclyde LHS 2023-2028. The HST outlines the estimated level of additional housing that can be delivered on the ground and informs the formation of the housing land requirement.

The Inverclyde LHLR will provide adequate land to deliver Inverclyde's HST set within the Inverclyde LHS 2023-2028 as a minimum.

### Policy Aspirations for Population and Housing Growth

Although HNDA assessments are based on projections that indicate the continuance of a trend of overall population decline and an aging population, Inverclyde Council and partners in Inverclyde Alliance recognise that a declining and aging population will have implications in terms of the scale and nature of the future workforce and local demand for public and other services. These have been reflected in policy priorities since Inverclyde's Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2017-2022 which identified addressing population decline as Priority 1:

*"Inverclyde's population will be stable and sustainable appropriate balance of socio - economic groups that is conducive to local economic prosperity and longer-term population growth".*



Towards this Outcome, Inverclyde Alliance commissioned a Re-Population Strategy and Action Plan which sought to:

*“Halt and reverse the de-population of Inverclyde by 2025 through improving the employment, housing and infrastructure offer”.*

Regarding the housing component of the Repopulation Strategy, Inverclyde Alliance outlined an aim to grow the housing market wherein *“the evidence shows that while Inverclyde has successfully developed parts of its housing offer it has not produced an appropriate range and mix of private housing required to maximise its attractiveness to everyone. Inverclyde needs more private houses.”* The strategy focuses on attracting and retaining young people and families to live in Inverclyde, achievable through increasing “the level of private house building in spatial priority areas in Inverclyde.”

This general commitment to repopulation has been reaffirmed in the successor strategy to LOIP 2017-2022, the Inverclyde Partnership Plan 2023/33. Theme 5: A Thriving Place sets out an ambition to support the “growth in our working age population by encouraging people to stay here and attracting new people to settle here”. Clearly, an adequate housing offer functions as a precondition for this ambition to be achieved.

As such, the LHS with its scope for setting the agenda to enable suitable housing mixes across tenure, to realise strategic ambitions has its part to play. LHS 2023-2028 analyses challenges in Inverclyde’s housing system noting areas where housing as presently constituted requires improvement to meet demographic challenges, quality standards, decarbonisation imperatives. Thereafter, the LHS sets broad outcomes, action plans and delivery groups to meet such challenges. Regarding how the LHS agenda aims to support the repopulation agenda it does this through marking a transition from a growing absolute social rented housing supply to a regeneration focus supportive of interventions that supports a wider range of tenures.

In that regard, the SHIP with its focus on affordable homes can also assist the development of tenures suited to the wide range of needs of Inverclyde’s population whilst developing market segments via its ability to promote innovative tenure balances such as Mid-Market Rent and New Supplied Shared Equity. MMR and NSSE delivery models offer housing options for those not accounted for in social rented allocations policies catering to a wider range of socio-economic groups. As such they can also provide signals to private developers of market potential for additional private housing supply units,

Reflecting the aspiration to prioritise private sector housing growth, which underpins the repopulation agenda, Inverclyde’s Housing Supply Target paper (2023-2033) establishes a ratio of 60% private housing to 40% affordable housing. This emphasis



on private sector housing aims to increase Inverclyde's population, attract and retain a younger demographic, and support economic development goals. Affordable housing includes all tenures supported through the Scottish Government Affordable Housing Supply Programme (e.g., SRS, MMR, NSSE), providing ample scope for upgrading the social rented offer to meet the changing needs of Inverclyde's social rented population while offering a more diverse tenure mix that aligns more closely with private sector market-based allocations. Towards such ends, the HST supports a total of 1,875 units over the ten-year period from 2023 to 2033 (or 187.5 units per annum), with 1,125 private sector units and 750 affordable units.

### Setting Inverclyde's Housing Land Requirement

Taking both policy off projections (HNDA, MATHLR, Demographic projections) and the policy aspirations of Inverclyde Council and its partners into consideration, a LHLR is to be determined. This paper shall present three growth scenario options in the housing market: a principal scenario and alternative low growth and high growth scenarios.

Availability of land resources was previously established in our proposed Inverclyde LDP in 2021. The spatial strategy set a LHLR between 2012-2029 which covered capacity for 5070 units (1730 affordable; 3340 private).

A starting point for the LHLR is the MATHLR. As previously outlined, the MATHLR set by NPF4 dictates a minimum threshold for housing land allocations within the next Inverclyde Local Development Plan. The Minimum All Tenure Housing Land Requirement set for Inverclyde for the 10 years period (2023-2033) is 1,500 units. The LHLR will be set higher than this figure.

As previously stated, the Inverclyde HST outlines the estimated level of additional housing that can be delivered on the ground and should inform the formation of the LHLR. The LDP will need to provide adequate land to deliver Inverclyde's HST set within the Inverclyde LHS 2023-2028. On that basis, the LHLR will need to provide adequate land between 2023 and 2033 to meet the HST of 1875 units set within the LHS.

Estimated housing need for the Glasgow City Region was produced using the CHMA HNDA tool and was configured to use projections between 2022-2040. HNDA3 noted that estimated housing need for this period was 180 units. To align with the HNDA3, signed off as 'robust and credible' by the CHMA, the LHLR will be set for the same time period (2022-2040)

On the assumption that delivery will continue at the same pace of the HST, the LHLR would have to provide adequate land in Inverclyde to deliver 185 units per annum which would equate to 2960 units between 2024 and 2040. This figure provides a



starting point in developing different economic growth scenarios to determine a credible LHLR.

### Growth Scenarios

During the production of HNDA3, five separate economic scenarios were utilised to provide a selection of potential outcomes based on assumptions of the economic performance in the Glasgow City Region. These scenarios were factored into the HNDA tool to provide an estimated range of additional future housing units. Under the scenarios used within the HNDA tool, negative values of estimated housing need were produced for Inverclyde due to NRS household projections showing negative household growth in the coming years.

The decision was taken to disregard the negative household growth presented within the NRS 2012 household projections and statistical adjustments were made for it to remain steady (flat) across the projection period based on the last year of projected growth. This approach was approved by the Glasgow City Region Housing Market Partnership and produced the same result of 180 units of additional future housing units required in Inverclyde across all five scenarios. A summary of the five scenarios which were used within the production of HNDA3 are illustrated within table 9.

<b>Principal Scenario</b>	<b>Prevailing state of the Scottish housing market and economy</b> This is formed from the default settings provided by the CHMA that describe their 'prevailing state of the Scottish housing market and economy' scenario but which have adjustments to ensure no household decline and persistence of existing need over 10 years.
<b>Scenario A</b>	<b>Early Covid-19/Brexit impacts persist</b> Migration is constrained by the twin impacts of Brexit and Covid-19 over the longer term. The early trends for slower income growth and more rapid house price growth than the 'prevailing state' persist.
<b>Scenario B</b>	<b>Early post-Covid-19/Brexit impacts are weathered</b> Household formation continues to track positively against NRS low variant despite global conditions. Recent rapid house prices subsumed to 'prevailing state' over the projection period while income rises less rapidly than the 'prevailing state'.
<b>Scenario C</b>	<b>Pre-Covid-19/Brexit Levels anticipated</b> Household formation accelerates to 'prevailing state', with no negative impacts on migration or household formation from Covid-19 or Brexit. Economy re-adjusts to present moderate income and house price growth over the projection period.
<b>Scenario D</b>	<b>Economic Recovery</b> Household formation accelerates to 'prevailing state' as GCR generates high real terms income growth while maintaining 'core trend' house price and rental growth.

Table 9 – Overview of HNDA3 Scenarios modelled





To align with the development of HNDA3 and the assumptions used to determine estimated housing need, the formation of the LHLR will utilise three of the scenarios identified within table 9. To develop the LHLR a principal scenario will be adopted to demonstrate current interpretations of housing delivery, market and economic conditions and what a reasonable land allocation would be to meet this. The prevailing state of the Scottish housing market and economy will be the determinant for this scenario.

Two further scenarios will be required to illustrate low growth or high growth in housing delivery. For low growth, scenario A from table 9 will be identified as the position for determining the LHLR whereby trends for slower income growth and more rapid house price growth than the 'prevailing state' continue. To update this approach, this scenario will be focused on the impacts of continued Inflation, high interest rates and the cost-of-living crisis.

For high growth, scenario D from table 9 will be identified as the position for presenting an alternative LHLR and what a reasonable land allocation would be to meet this. In this scenario household formation accelerates as Inverclyde generates high real terms income growth and improved house price growth.

Table 10 outlines the Inverclyde LHLR growth scenarios.

<b>Principal Scenario</b>	<p><b>Prevailing state of the Scottish housing market and economy</b></p> <p>This is formed from the default settings provided by the CHMA that describe their ‘prevailing state of the Scottish housing market and economy’ scenario but which have adjustments to ensure no household decline and persistence of existing need over 10 years.</p>
<b>Scenario A – Low Growth</b>	<p><b>Continued Inflation, high interest rates and the cost-of-living crisis</b></p> <p>Migration is constrained over the longer term. The trends for slower income growth and more rapid house price growth than the ‘prevailing state’ persist. There is continued inflation, high interest rates and the cost-of-living crisis deepens.</p>
<b>Scenario B – High Growth</b>	<p><b>Economic Recovery</b></p> <p>Household formation accelerates as Inverclyde generates high real terms income growth and improved house price growth.</p>

Table 10 – Inverclyde Housing Land Requirement Growth Scenarios

## Principal Scenario – Prevailing State of the Scottish housing market and economy

As noted in table 10, the principal scenario for determining the LHLR will be to follow the prevailing state of the Scottish housing market and economy. Examining the house sale activity in the UK, Scotland and Inverclyde can provide indicators on the current state of the housing market and how this could be reflected in the delivery into the future.



The UK House Price Index (HPI) uses house sales data from HM Land Registry, Registers of Scotland, and Land and Property Services Northern Ireland and is calculated by the Office for National Statistics. As of April 2024, the average house price in the UK was £281,373. Property prices rose by 0.3% compared to the previous month and by 1.1% compared to the previous year. Table 11 shows the volume of sales and average house sale price for both Inverclyde and Scotland between 2021/22 to 2023/24:

	21/22	Volume of Sales	22/23	Volume of sales	23/24	Volume of sales
Inverclyde	£116,219	1,556	£117,861	1,249	£128,358	1,084*
Scotland	£175,042	108,785	£185,085	100,987	£186,379	83,757*

\*Sale volume data from March 2024 not available from UK House Price Index

Table 11 - UK House Price Index – Average House Sale Price

Demand for housing fell significantly in the UK since interest rates began to rise in late 2022. This mainly affected first-time buyers, facing higher borrowing costs and economic uncertainty. The current Bank of England base rate was maintained at 5.25% in summer 2024 and the current inflation rate is 2%. This would suggest the demand for market housing is not expected to increase significantly in the immediate future.

Table 11 demonstrates that the volume of sales has decreased while average house prices in Inverclyde and Scotland have risen each year between 2021/22 and 2023/24. This demonstrates a slower market activity in 22/23 and 23/24 in comparison to market in 2021/22 where there was significantly more house sale activity during the COVID period. It can therefore be inferred that the assumptions built into developing the HST in summer 2023 have continued and align with the 'prevailing State of the Scottish housing market and economy,' forming a basis in providing a principal scenario for the land requirement e.g. aspirational growth based on the current economic conditions and market.

Based on the principal scenario, a land requirement of 185 units per annum which equates to 3,330 units between 2022 and 2040 is proposed. **Therefore, the indicative LHLR requires the Local Development Plan to identify deliverable land in Inverclyde for 1,850 homes over its 10-year period.**

#### Low Growth (Scenario A) – Continued Inflation, High Interest Rates and the Cost-of-Living Crisis

A low growth scenario could refer to a combination of the factors of low growth, continued inflation, high interest rates and the cost-of-living crisis. Regarding low growth itself this refers to an economic climate where real income does not catch up with inflation already baked into household budgets intensifying headwinds on the housing market. The persistence of inflation, or the threat of its return necessitating continued high interest rates could create the conditions that have a slowdown impact



on housing market activity, with detrimental impacts for market entry for first time buyers. In the case of high inflation, this can carry over to house prices, which makes the overall housing less affordable for first time buyers. Moreover, inflation across all goods and services would squeeze household budgets, limiting abilities to save for deposit – a deposit that also diminishes in value over time in high inflation conditions. Continued high interest rates would likewise have a similar impact on first time buyers, in terms of making mortgages payments prohibitive for household budgets.

A low growth/high inflation/high-interest rate scenario will also have detrimental effects on the housing offer on the supply side also. In the case of private developers, continued high input costs with diminished effective demand will put pressure to not proceed with projects and await market recovery. For the affordable housing sector, these high input costs will continue to bite, and it is likely that cuts to the affordable housing supply budget would not be reversed due to fiscal pressures.

Given Inverclyde Councils strategic orientation towards growing the working age population, requires favourable market conditions to support private development, a low growth scenario would likely jeopardise economic development interventions at the local level. Migration would continue to be constrained over the longer term as depicted in HNDA3.

At the local and national level then a low growth scenario would likely lead housing growth to be led by the (diminished) social rented sector, where housing supply completions would be determined by current SHIP forecasts. The number of housing units programmed into the SHIP between 2024/25 to 2028/29 is 372. However, it has been indicated from engagement with RSLs that there will be a turn away from new build supply, towards consolidating their total stock supply. A low growth scenario would see numbers of new social rented units drop; moreover, social rented units cater to the existent population of Inverclyde and have marginal impact for new populations – as reflected in new social rented stock being correlated with low demand stock elsewhere for Inverclyde's RSLs.

The low growth scenario accordingly takes us towards the HST baseline scenario which is based on the closeness of MATHLR to the level of completions, and in relation to HNDA3 estimates. A fair judgment for the baseline in low growth conditions would deduct 25% off the MATHLR as set within the HST. This equated to 1125 units over the same ten-year period as the MATHLR; or 112.5 units per year. Therefore, the LHLR between 2022 and 2040 using this low growth scenario is to provide land for the delivery of 2,025 units.

#### High Growth (Scenario B) - Economic Recovery

Economic Recovery can refer to a favourable set of economic conditions at the national level that forms a virtuous circle with economic development objectives formed at the



local level. At the national level of government, high growth has been posited as the underlying condition of all policy offers. As such high growth features as the first mission of the incumbent Labour administration seeking to:

***“...secure the highest sustained growth in the G7 – with good jobs and productivity growth in every part of the country making everyone, not just a few, better off.”***

Present forecasts from the OECD position the USA with the highest real GDP growth for 2024, compared with the United Kingdom's 0.4%. If the UK was to match or exceed the USA, then growth would have improved markedly. Similar ambitions for growth functioning as a mechanism to support a 'wellbeing economy' are also articulated at the Scottish level of government suggesting policy coherence across both UK and Scottish levels of government. Moreover, in terms of housing policy both the United Kingdom and Scottish levels of government support the removal of barriers that would impinge upon housebuilding activities. Regarding interest rates, the International Monetary Fund has recommended UK interest rates to 3.5% by the end of 2025 which would positively affect housing market activity.

At the Inverclyde level, a growing economy would create conditions to realise our economic development and regeneration ambitions which are predicated upon growth of the private sector housing market and supply offer. This emphasis on private sector housing aims to increase Inverclyde's population, attract and retain a younger demographic, to support economic development and regeneration goals. Part of the prior work towards this scenario involves positive engagement with private sector developers and utilising the affordable housing supply programme to generate market segments such as through new supplied shared equity schemes.

Recent engagement between Inverclyde Council and Homes for Scotland has shown a working relationship can hopefully be formed with private sector developers to support growth in Inverclyde. Action 1.4 of the Local Housing Strategy Action Plan focuses on work to improve this relationship and states that Inverclyde Council will:

***‘Engage with private developers on the obstacles to commercial household building in Inverclyde and coproduce solutions to encourage commercial development.’***

Table 12 outlines the recent feedback from Homes for Scotland on future housebuilding activity in Inverclyde and the scope for developer involvement in each settlement.





Settlement	Unit allocation per settlement (%)	Green	Amber	Red
Gourock	20%			
Greenock				
Inverkip	5-20%			
Kilmacolm	40%			
Langbank	5%			
Port Glasgow	5%			
Quarrier's Village	5-20%			
Wemyss Bay	5%			

Table 12 – Home for Scotland Feedback on Future Housebuilding Activity

Furthermore, Inverclyde Council's housing land audit indicates a potential residential site capacity in excess of the principal scenario set earlier. Table 13 outlines the total residential capacity in Inverclyde in land.

Tenure	Capacity
Private	3470
Affordable/Social Rented	740
<b>Total</b>	<b>4210</b>

Table 13 – Potential Residential Site Capacity, Housing Land Audit

Whilst some of the land identified within the land audit may be deemed non effective, it demonstrates that there is plentiful land availability in excess of a principal scenario outlined earlier. If the economic conditions were favourable for a high growth scenario, then there is potential land available to support increased housing delivery. It is important the through delivery of the Local Housing Strategy and the advancement of the LDP, the land audit should be analysed to determine if it is providing suitable land for development in less optimistic growth scenarios, whether it is absent of strategic opportunities for settlement growth that could be captured through the LDP and which would stimulate housing development, and by obtaining market intelligence on the perceived, physical and softer barriers to development. This should be done through working collaboratively with private and public sector housing partners through the land audit process, through call for sites processes, through local place plans, through LHS delivery and by analysing urban capacity. Homes for Scotland has advised that the Council should write to all landowners of sites within the land audit to gain information about the proposed development aspirations for sites to assist to link land availability to a robust pipeline for development. This could also result in deallocating of non-effective sites that do not contribute to the delivery of houses in Inverclyde.



A high growth scenario that brings all the above elements from all levels of government in partnership with the private sector would have tangible impacts on housing growth in excess of our principal scenario. To ensure adequate supply for such a scenario in line with the HST methodology, it would be responsible to have +25% of LHLR above the principal scenario. This would mean a total of 4,163 units between 2022 and 2040.

#### Alternative Low and High Growth Scenarios

The low growth scenario accordingly takes us towards the HST baseline scenario which is based on the closeness of MATHLR to the level of completions, and in relation to HNDA3 estimates. A fair judgment for the baseline in low growth conditions would be to deduct 25% off the MATHLR as set within the HST. This equated to 1125 units over the same ten-year period as the MATHLR; or 112.5 units per year.

The indicative LHLR using a low growth scenario requires the Local Development Plan to identify deliverable land in Inverclyde for 1,125 homes over its 10-year period. This equates to a LHLR of 675 units of market housing and 450 units of affordable housing.

Economic Recovery can refer to a favourable set of economic conditions at the national level that forms a virtuous circle with economic development objectives formed at the local level. At the national level of government, high growth has been posited as the underlying condition of all policy offers. At the Inverclyde level, a growing economy would create conditions to realise our economic development and regeneration ambitions which are predicated upon growth of the private sector housing market and supply offer. This emphasis on private sector housing aims to increase Inverclyde's population, attract and retain a younger demographic, to support economic development and regeneration goals.

A high growth scenario that brings all the elements outlined above from all levels of government in partnership with the private sector would have tangible impacts on housing growth in excess of our principal scenario. To ensure adequate supply for such a scenario in line with the HST methodology, it would be responsible to have +25% of LHLR above the principal scenario.

The indicative LHLR using a high growth scenario requires the Local Development Plan to identify deliverable land in Inverclyde for 2,315 homes over its 10-year period. This equates to a LHLR of 1,389 units of market housing and 926 units of affordable housing.

#### **Summary of Stakeholder Engagement**



In August 2024, a meeting of Inverclyde Council's Local Housing Strategy Sub-group (including representation from the Development Planning team) with Homes for Scotland was undertaken to review housebuilding activity across Inverclyde. Some of the focus areas of this meeting included:

- Discussion on the existing status of the adopted and draft Local Development Plan and associated policies.
- Review of existing LDP Priority Places and blockers/obstacles to development from an industry perspective.
- Consideration of lessons learned from other planning authorities in relation to stagnant sites for housing to encourage and enable development.
- Review of IC Housing Land Requirement and allocated sites.
- Discussion on Inverclyde Council aspirations including review of corporate policy (i.e. Council Plan) to increase population and address population decline.

Initial feedback was also provided on future housebuilding activity in each respective settlement within Inverclyde and a breakdown of unit allocation with supporting commentary. Details of this feedback is summarised within Table X.

In January 2025, a follow up meeting was convened with Homes for Scotland with the planning service leadership and management team in Glasgow. The purpose of this meeting was to further dissect critical challenges in relation to the lack of housebuilding within Inverclyde since the adoption of LDP3 in 2019 and identify solutions to overcome the strategic housing challenges.

Wider Stakeholder Engagement has included:

- Local Authority Housing Colleagues – Janet Stitt, Damien Dempsey and Patrick Rodger (Public Protection, Strategic Housing)
- Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) – Engagement with RSLs through Local Housing Strategy Sub-Group meetings held on a quarterly basis.
- Private Sector Housing Representatives – Engagement with Homes for Scotland and one-to-one meetings with Senior Management of private house builders on existing/available sites within Inverclyde.

## Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

- LDP4 shall identify sufficient and suitable land for housing to ensure successful implementation of the Local Housing Strategy 2023 – 28 and Council Plan 2023 – 28 to enable the development of new housing in Inverclyde.
- LDP4 shall consider appropriate challenges in relation to infrastructure capacity, environmental risks and site appropriateness in relation to the allocated housing sites. It is noted that the housing completions for Inverclyde (e.g. 19 units up to September 2024) indicate that the availability of land is showing significant disconnect between development activity across both private and social housing tenures, and the plan will require to work collaboratively across the sector to identify physical barriers to development and perceived barriers to enable further

development. This will include consideration of whether although there is a significant supply of housing land, whether the current allocations are appropriate, within which, it is intended to explore with current landowners their intentions related to allocated sites to gain perspective on whether land ownership is providing a barrier to development; to identify if there are sites that should be removed from the effective housing land supply, or, indeed deallocated, if there are specific typologies of sites that do not appear to have any prospect of development (e.g. scale, location), and whether further land allocations are required.

- Discussions with Homes for Scotland indicated that it may be appropriate to develop bespoke analysis of demand drivers for settlements in Inverclyde to identify whether latent demand exist for consumers to purchase new houses in Inverclyde, and the Council is keen to work with the industry to develop this information.
- The above will require the housing land audit status to be brought up to date utilising intelligence gathered through the above actions, and assist the Council to move to a 'pipeline' situation whereby the land audit removes the disconnect between allocated land and delivery schedule by mapping short, medium and long term likelihood of sites being developed relative to their status in terms of being allocated, having planning permission in principle, having detailed consent, commenced sites and other valid information.
- While it is intended to hold a call for site following the evidence report stage, the Council has already commenced discussions with industry (through HFS forum as well as on a 1:1 basis with a range of developers) aspirations for development sites in Inverclyde to determine whether this can support development activity on allocated sites, or whether further allocations are required or desirable to support delivery of new homes. This is intended to add value to the call for sites process by ensuring deliverability is a key factor in reviewing land options for the emerging LDP.
- Related to all above, it is also recognised that although there appears to be technically sufficient land to meet future housing needs, the LDP will require to cover a longer period than its predecessors, and, accordingly, the above processes will be required to identify if there is deficiency in the existing land provision, or potential to increase housebuilding activity, the supply require to cover a longer period.
- Complete the supplementary guidance for provision of affordable housing previewed in the current LDP.

#### Statements of Agreement / Dispute

- As outlined in the schedule, discussions have been ongoing with industry, social housing providers and general public. There have been no submitted statements of dispute with the Council's findings, however, it is critical to reflect that the actions set out above as implications for the LDP require collaboration with industry given Inverclyde's unique housing market, low levels of development and how to form successful LDP position that support new housing





activity. Some of the areas that have been discussed with industry that the Council intends to adopt as approach is:

- Writing to landowners to clarify intentions with regards to allocated sites (HFS have provided the Council with information on how this has been successful in other locations to gain better clarity on the effectiveness of land allocations).
- Continued working with industry to ensure better intelligence informs the housing land audit to be able to update and utilise land audit information as a platform for future reviews.
- Exploring how to gain market perspective of demand drivers for new housing in settlements within Inverclyde.
- Continued engagement with builders on a 1:1 basis to underpin the public call for sites exercise and ensure it is informed by appetite for new development and deliverability, as well as demand for unallocated land.
- Additionally, the Council is holding a Housing Summit in spring 2025 to work with strategic level partners to unlock the housing challenges facing Inverclyde. This will include industry presentation of key issues and related discussion (expected to cover much of the above); RSL partners, government and political representatives. This is not intended to create a new plan for action, but to facilitate the approaches required for the LDP and to support LHS delivery.



Topic	Rural Homes and Rural Development
<b>Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 15(5)- the housing needs of the population of the area, including, the needs of persons undertaking further and higher education, older people and disabled people.</li> <li>• Section 15(5)(cc) - the desirability of allocating land for the purposes of resettlement</li> <li>• Section 15(5) – extent to which there are rural areas to which there has been a substantial decline in population</li> <li>• Section 16(2) (ab) – have regard to the list persons seeking to acquire land in the authority’s area for self-build.</li> </ul>
<b>NPF4 LDP Requirements</b>	<p><u>Policy 17 Rural Homes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LDPs should be informed by an understanding of population change over time, locally specific needs and market circumstances in rural and island areas. LDPs should set out tailored approaches to rural housing and where relevant include proposals for future population growth – including provision for small-scale housing such as crofts and woodland crofts and the appropriate resettlement of previously inhabited areas. The Scottish Government’s 6-fold Urban Rural Classification 2020 should be used to identify remote rural areas. Plans should reflect locally appropriate delivery approaches. Previously inhabited areas that are suitable for resettlement should be identified in the spatial strategy.</li> </ul> <p><u>Policy 29 Rural Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LDPs should identify the characteristics of rural areas within the plan area, including the existing pattern of development, pressures, environmental assets, community priorities and economic needs of each area. The spatial strategy should set out an appropriate approach to development in rural areas which reflects the identified characteristics. The Scottish Government’s 6-fold Urban Rural Classification 2020 should be used to identify remote rural areas. Spatial</li> </ul>



	<p>strategies should support the sustainability and prosperity of rural communities and economies. Previously inhabited areas which are suitable for resettlement should be identified in the spatial strategy.</p>
<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scotland's Census 2023 - <a href="#">Scotland's Census 2022 - Rounded population estimates   Scotland's Census</a></li> <li>Inverclyde Council – Local House Strategy 2023 – 2028 <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16899/Inverclyde-Local-Housing-Strategy-2023-2028.docx">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16899/Inverclyde-Local-Housing-Strategy-2023-2028.docx</a></li> <li>Inverclyde Alliance, Inverclyde Repopulation Action Plan 2019</li> <li>Inverclyde Council Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021 – 2025</li> <li>Glasgow City Region Housing Market Partnership – Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3 <a href="https://a.storyblok.com/f/243567/x/bf84be341c/gcrhmp-hnda-3-june-2024-dc.pdf">https://a.storyblok.com/f/243567/x/bf84be341c/gcrhmp-hnda-3-june-2024-dc.pdf</a></li> <li>Inverclyde Council, Inverclyde Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2024/25 – 2028/29 <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16876/Inverclyde-SHIP-2024-2029.docx">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16876/Inverclyde-SHIP-2024-2029.docx</a></li> <li>Inverclyde Council Housing Land Audit 2023</li> <li>Energy Statistics for Scotland Q2 2024 <a href="https://www.gov.scot/publications/energy-statistics-for-scotland-q2-2024/pages/energy-targets/#:~:text=Overall%20renewable%20energy%20target&amp;text=The%20rise%20in%20electricity%20generated,energy%20consumption%20from%20renewable%20sources">https://www.gov.scot/publications/energy-statistics-for-scotland-q2-2024/pages/energy-targets/#:~:text=Overall%20renewable%20energy%20target&amp;text=The%20rise%20in%20electricity%20generated,energy%20consumption%20from%20renewable%20sources</a></li> <li>Inverclyde Tourism Strategy 2016 - 2020 <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/9942/Inverclyde-2016-2020-Strategy-Final.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/9942/Inverclyde-2016-2020-Strategy-Final.pdf</a></li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>	
<p><u>Character of the Area</u></p> <p>Inverclyde is an area of unrivalled beauty, situated along the broad coastal reaches of the River Clyde with breathtaking views to the Argyll Hills and Scottish Highlands. The urban settlements follow the coastline from Port Glasgow in the east to Wemyss Bay in the south with the villages of Kilmacolm and Quarrier's Village nestled within the rural hinterland</p>	



largely covered by Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park which provides a range of options to stay in the area and partake in activities.

The Green Belt and Countryside is easily accessible for locals and visitors to enjoy the landscape and biodiversity. The scheduled monument, the Greenock Cut, with its visitor centre provides a popular visitor destination. The area is also a place of work with a number of farms dotted throughout the area.

### Rural Homes

Under the Scottish Government's Urban Rural Classification, the rural area of Inverclyde would be classed as accessible rural as it has a population of less than 3,000 people, and within a 30-minute drive time of a Settlement of 10,000 or more, being relatively close to the main towns in the area. Rural resettlement opportunities are not considered to apply.

A key priority for Inverclyde is to reverse depopulation although the population of the small villages of Kilmacolm, Quarrier's Village, Wemyss Bay and Inverkip are rising, contrary to the trend in the authority as a whole, where Inverclyde's population is set to fall by 5% by 2028. There is also a requirement in the current Plan for 25% of houses on greenfield housing sites in the Inverclyde villages to be for affordable housing. The supplementary guidance has not yet been prepared in respect of this requirement.

Inverclyde has a planning strategy that seeks to direct residential development to existing built up areas and minimise the encroachment of development into the Green Belt and isolated development in the Countryside. This is a sustainable approach in terms of reducing the need to travel and making use of existing infrastructure, whilst also supporting urban regeneration and protecting the rural environment. However, the Council does recognise the need for some new houses in the Countryside for operational or economic reasons, and that the reuse of existing houses and buildings can offer an opportunity for residential development that does not have an impact on the countryside environment.

### Succession Homes

Increasingly, there is a demand for housing where the next generation of a farming family is taking on the business and where a second dwelling is needed so that they can live on site without the retiring generation having to move out of the family home. In some cases, it is possible to use permitted development rights for the residential conversion of an existing farm building, but, if that is not the case, obtaining planning consent for a new build dwelling can be difficult, where the established criteria to justify an agricultural worker dwelling cannot be met.

Consideration should be given to policy criteria against which such succession houses could be assessed and, where appropriate, permitted, to meet a specific need.





### Rural Development

Development in Inverclyde's Green Belt and Countryside mainly relates to agriculture, farm diversification, equestrian and tourism and renewables.

Inverclyde possesses vast rural expanses that are crucial to the region's overall development. The focus on rural development in Inverclyde aims to bolster economic growth, improve the quality of life for residents, and ensure environmental sustainability.

### Tourism

Tourism is worth £64m (source: VisitScotland) to the local economy and employs up to 2,000 people. The sector is a resilient and important contributor to the economic and social sustainability of the area. Tourism is one of Scotland's most enduring industries and is recognised by many as the most sustainable long-term sector of the Scottish economy.

A key aim for Inverclyde is to increase the tourism sector by providing services and facilities to encourage people to the area thus making use of a resource not yet fully tapped into. Planning's role in this will be to ensure that as these facilities are developed, they are done in such a way as to protect the very aspects that make Inverclyde attractive. It is important to encourage sustainable tourism to boost the economy of Inverclyde whilst ensuring that the environment, that is the attraction, is still protected.

### Renewable Energy

Scotland has some of the most ambitious climate targets in the world, with a legally binding target of reaching net-zero emissions by 2045. The Scottish Government is working to scale up renewable energy to meet its climate change targets and maximize the economic benefits of the sector.

To date, there is one large wind energy development in the rural area above Greenock with a number of domestic turbines scattered throughout the rural area. With the increased need for sites, it may be necessary to reassess the spatial framework to identify future sites.

NPF4 states "As technologies continue to develop, storage and other forms of generation will grow" and also outlines general support for storage technology and capacity. Whilst they can be accommodated in industrial sites, this would result in the loss of such sites for other industrial uses. In Inverclyde one Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) has been granted in the rural area while another is pending.

NPF4 also details that the planning system should 'provide support' for energy storage. Policy 4 of the adopted and proposed Inverclyde Local Development Plan states that



proposals for infrastructure for the generation, storage or distribution of heat and electricity will be supported in principle where they contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gas production with criteria provided against which proposed developments can be assessed.

Rural development in Inverclyde is a multifaceted endeavour that requires a holistic approach to economic, social, and environmental well-being. By investing in agriculture, small businesses, renewable energy, infrastructure, healthcare, education, housing, and community services, the region can create a sustainable and prosperous future for its rural inhabitants.

## Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

- APRS have been consulted during the preparation of the Evidence Report.

## Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

- The Plan should address the means to increase development in the rural areas for both appropriate homes and other types of development, in particular tourism. It should consider whether local policies are required, or whether the in-principle areas of support through NPF4 are appropriate for Inverclyde's rural areas.
- Where local policies are in place, there should be a clear separation between principle rationale for new housing and design expectations through reviewing the content of the current supplementary guidance on design and reflecting its key components in local policies.
- The LDP should review the LDP policies on Green Belt and Countryside to frame them in more positive language whilst still addressing development in the rural area.
- Ensure that the articulation of greenbelt and countryside locations in Inverclyde is clear in interpretation of which policies are applicable in each circumstance.

### Statements of Agreement / Dispute

None identified.



Topic	Heating and Cooling
<b>Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended:</p> <p><u>Section 15(5)</u></p> <p>(d) the infrastructure of the district (including systems for the supply of water and energy)</p> <p>(e) how that infrastructure is used</p>
<b>NPF4 LDP Requirements</b>	<p><u>NPF4 Policy 19</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should take into account the area's Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES). The spatial strategy should take into account areas of heat network potential and any designated Heat Network Zones (HNZ).</li> </ul> <p><u>NPF4 Policy 18</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs and delivery programmes should be based on an integrated infrastructure first approach. Plans should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be informed by evidence on infrastructure capacity, condition, needs and deliverability within the plan area, including cross boundary infrastructure.</li> <li>set out the infrastructure requirements to deliver the spatial strategy, informed by the evidence base, identifying the infrastructure priorities, and where, how, when and by whom they will be delivered; and</li> <li>indicate the type, level (or method of calculation) and location of the financial or in-kind contributions, and the types of development from which they will be required.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Plans should align with relevant national, regional, and local infrastructure plans and policies and take account of the Scottish Government infrastructure investment hierarchy and sustainable travel and investment hierarchies in developing the spatial</li> </ul>



	strategy. Consistent early engagement and collaboration between relevant stakeholders will better inform decisions on land use and investment.
<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy - <a href="#">Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy - Inverclyde Council</a></li> <li>• Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Delivery Plan - <a href="#">Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy - Inverclyde Council</a></li> <li>• Heat Network Support Unit - <a href="#">Home - Heat Network Support Unit</a></li> <li>• Scotland's Heat Network Support Fund (SHNF) - <a href="#">Scotland's Heat Network Fund: application guidance - gov.scot</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Net Zero Strategy 2021 – 2045</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/14504/Net-Zero-Strategy_WEB.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/14504/Net-Zero-Strategy_WEB.pdf</a></li> <li>• Strategic Needs Assessment</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/15284/inverclyde-SNA2022-FINAL-07-07-22.pdf">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/15284/inverclyde-SNA2022-FINAL-07-07-22.pdf</a></li> <li>• Inverclyde Public Bodies Duties Climate Change Report (2023)</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/14089/inverclyde-Council-PBCCD-Annual-Report-2023.xlsx">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/14089/inverclyde-Council-PBCCD-Annual-Report-2023.xlsx</a></li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>	
<p>As part of its efforts to tackle climate change and fuel poverty, in 2022 the Scottish Government introduced a statutory duty for all Local Authorities in Scotland to produce Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies. These are to set out how the energy efficiency of buildings in the Local Authority area can be improved and how they can be heated using 'non-polluting' heating systems.</p> <p><u>Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy Overview</u></p> <p>The Local Heat and Energy Strategy (LHEES) for Inverclyde and the accompanying Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Delivery Plan has been prepared in response to the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (Scotland) Order 2022. This Order states that all Scottish local authorities are to publish an LHEES</p>	

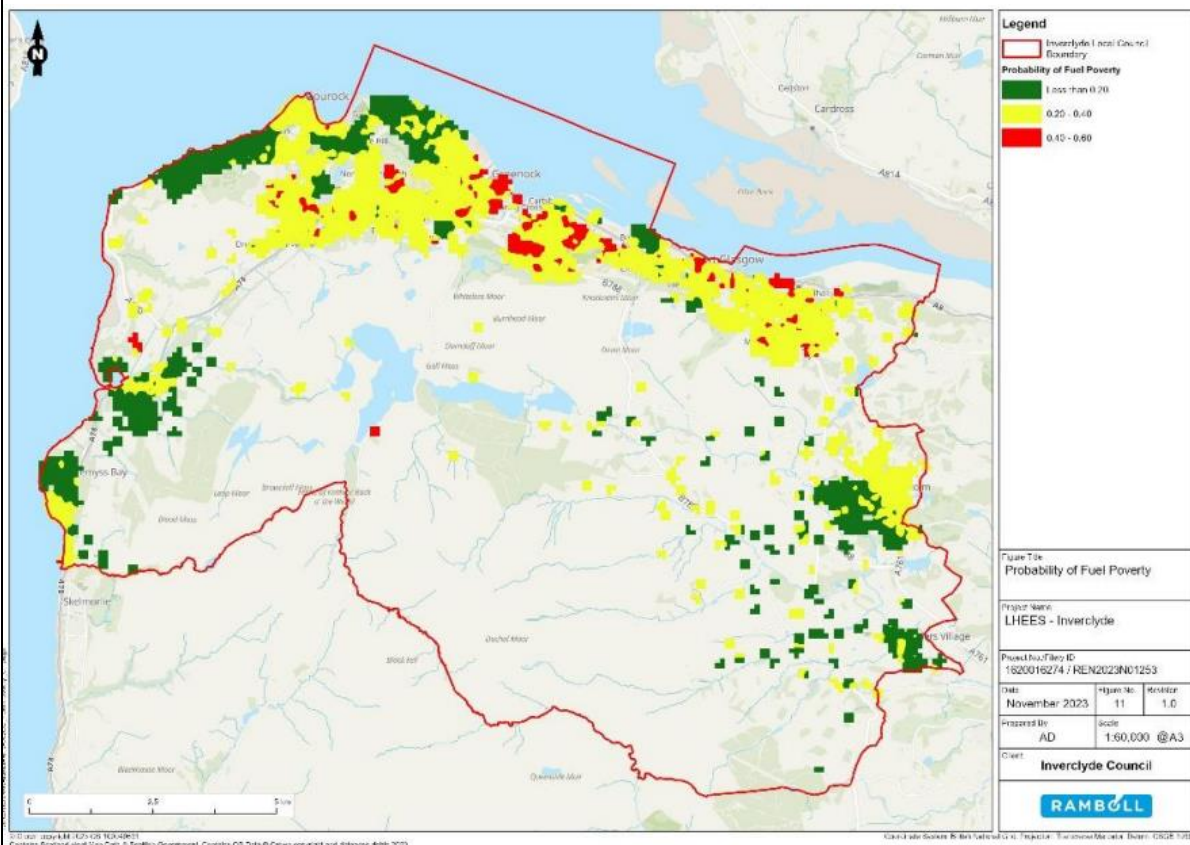




and an accompanying 5-year Delivery Plan in line with Guidance issued by the Scottish Government and thereafter update these documents every five years. This LHEES is a place-based and locally led strategy for Inverclyde covering the following aims:

- improving the energy efficiency of buildings
- decarbonising the heat supply of buildings via individual property-level, communal and district heating systems
- eliminating poor energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty

The LHEES is an area-wide approach, meaning it addresses all buildings in the Inverclyde area, not just the Council's own building stock. It covers all homes (whether owned by private landlords, owner-occupiers, or social landlords) and all non-domestic buildings (whether owned by the Council, other public bodies, businesses, or other bodies). The LHEES is not just a plan for the Council but one shared by all owners and occupiers of Inverclyde's buildings and thus will be delivered by all these people.



**Figure 11 – Map of Poor Building Energy Efficiency in Inverclyde (Probability of Fuel Poverty Raster)**

**Areas of Strategic Importance**



Inverclyde Council has strategically pinpointed key areas within the region that are pivotal to the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES). These areas have been carefully selected for their roles in the overarching strategy for energy efficiency and sustainable development:

**Infrastructure Development Areas:** This category captures regions earmarked for significant infrastructure enhancements, including areas awaiting essential retrofitting. These developments are crucial for modernising local facilities and utilities, paving the way for future-proofed, resilient communities.

**Residential and Community Wealth Areas:** These areas have been identified for their potential to bolster community wealth through housing improvements and the integration of social housing projects. The focus here is not only on uplifting living standards but also on driving down carbon emissions through energy-efficient housing solutions.

**Economic and Efficiency Improvement Areas:** Encompassing key economic zones, such as business districts and industrial parks, this classification emphasizes the dual goals of stimulating economic vitality and promoting energy efficiency within commercial and operational buildings.

These strategic areas are geographically represented by the following locations that are critical to the LHEES's successful implementation:

- Eastern Gateway
- Central Port Glasgow
- Greenock Town Centre

Each of these areas will play a prominent role the Council's commitment to targeted improvements and sustainable growth. They are instrumental in shaping the future direction of LHEES: reducing fuel poverty, influencing the creation of provisional heat network zones, and setting the stage for the integration of energy-efficient practices across Inverclyde. As the Council moves ahead, the intent is to capitalize on these areas' unique attributes, enhancing coordination across policy and project initiatives, to ensure optimal use of public resources. This integration aims to support a unified approach to accelerating community development and fostering a sustainable energy landscape in Inverclyde.

The strategy anticipates considerable energy savings across various wards, for example, a reduction of 3,036 kWh in the Central ward, alongside measurable bill savings. Moreover, the deployment of decarbonization technologies such as air



source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels is expected to lead to further energy cost reductions and carbon savings, reinforcing Inverclyde's commitment to a sustainable and economically beneficial energy future.

Ward	Measures		Average Cost per Property	Average Outcome Per Property		
	ASHP	PV		Energy Saving kWh	Energy Bill Saving	Kg CO2 Carbon Saving
Central	837	689	£26,059	10,758	£1248	2,457
East	801	493	£25,254	12,527	£1187	2,881
East Central	1061	642	£24,983	10,455	£1147	2,355
North	121	82	£26,307	15,150	£1167	3,336
South	872	721	£25,846	11,060	£1240	2,527
South West	886	676	£26,117	11,640	£1192	2,630
West	95	50	£24,707	10,959	£956	2,487

### Table 14 - Inverclyde Current Performance Data

This section provides a thematic overview of Inverclyde’s building stock in the context of heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency. It profiles characteristics such as energy performance; fuel type; tenure; type; and age. This information helps inform key decisions about the LHEES and its direction. The data is primarily sourced from the Home Analytics and Non-Domestic Analytics databases.

This provides a comprehensive summary of the current conditions of building stock and the current progress to date for the built environment in the entire Local Authority area. This will provide both a concise and visual overview of energy efficiency, insulation status, fuel types, renewable usage, and the heat demand of the area for both domestic and non-domestic building stock.

## Domestic Building Stock

To provide an overview of Inverclyde Council's Domestic Baseline, the Energy Saving Trust's (EST) 'Home Analytics' was utilised for the core dataset with data preparation and analysis performed using the Domestic Baseline Excel tool. The Domestic Baseline tool required non-domestic data for analysis of mixed-tenure and mixed-use buildings with One Scotland Gazetteer being the data source.

The key findings were:

- Inverclyde has just over 40,000 domestic properties
- Mains gas is the main fuel type accounting for 87% of all properties.

Electricity is second with only 10% of homes where it is the main fuel type.

- 50% of all domestic properties have an EPC rating of D-G
- 63% of all homes are owner occupied.

46% of the properties within Inverclyde have uninsulated walls, which is significant as the Energy Saving Trust estimates that uninsulated dwellings lose a third of their heat through walls and a quarter through the roof. This also contributes to fuel poverty through increased energy costs. Inverclyde has approximately half of its domestic properties in EPC bands A-C, which constitutes a reasonable energy efficiency standard and the other half in bands D-G which are of poor energy efficiency. This means that approximately 20,000 homes need to be brought up to standard.

#### Domestic Building Stock Analysis

Building Element	Percentage	Number of Properties
Uninsulated walls	45.82%	18,562
Loft insulation <100mm	10.35%	4,193
Single glazed windows	6.56%	2,656

Table 15 – Domestic Baseline Tool: Insulation Overview

#### Non-Domestic Building Stock

To provide an overview of Inverclyde's Non-Domestic buildings, the Energy Saving Trust's (EST) 'Non-Domestic Analytics' was used as the core dataset. This data set is the non-domestic equivalent to "Home Analytics" and is built from non-domestic EPC records among other datasets with statistical and geospatial modelling employed to develop a round profile of non-domestic stock. The Scotland Heat Map was another key data set and provided geographical boundary information. Data preparation and analysis was performed using the Non-Domestic Baseline Excel tool. It is important to note that in Scotland there is a lack of high-resolution measured data to inform the Non-Domestic Analytics model therefore the overall confidence of the model and information is not equal to that of the Domestic sector. The lack of detailed information and lower confidence may result in some variation of data such as heat demand.





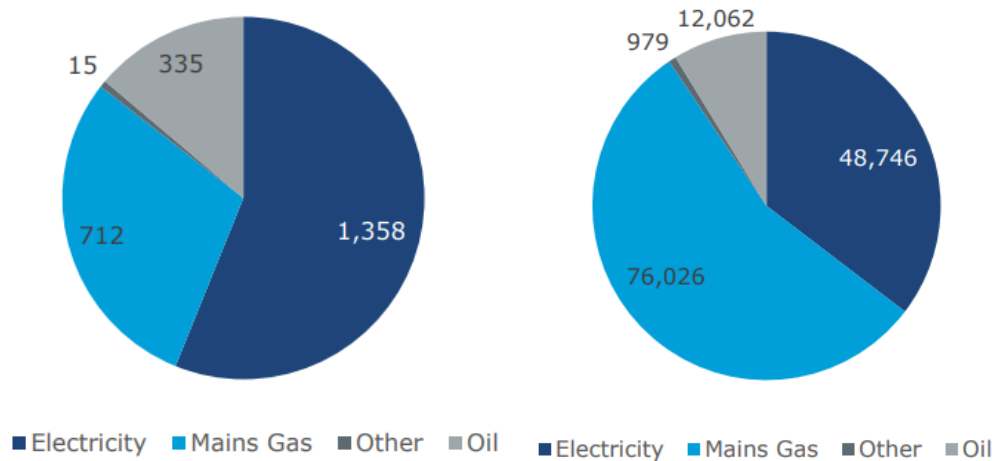


Figure 12 – Non-Domestic building by main fuel type (left) and heat demand fuel type MWh/yr (right).

A large proportion of the properties have electricity as main fuel, but the mains gas provides the largest proportion of heat demand. This reflects the presence of several high gas users contributing to demand figures. These buildings will be a key consideration for heat network planning as they can serve as anchor loads, improving the viability of a network. Since non-domestic buildings represent a large variety of buildings it is also challenging to understand the applicability of energy efficiency measures and heat decarbonisation options (especially with limited non-domestic building stock data).

### Overview of Heat Network Opportunities

The heat network opportunities shown in Figure 13 were a result of following the LHEES Methodology, along with local priorities as well as technical and physical constraints such as roads and railway tracks. A stakeholder workshop took place with key stakeholders such as RSLs, the Scottish Government, and Scottish Power Energy Networks where local and national goals were noted to ensure that the heat network opportunities were aligned with these. Inverclyde has identified heat network led approach to this LHEES due to ample opportunities and work to date.



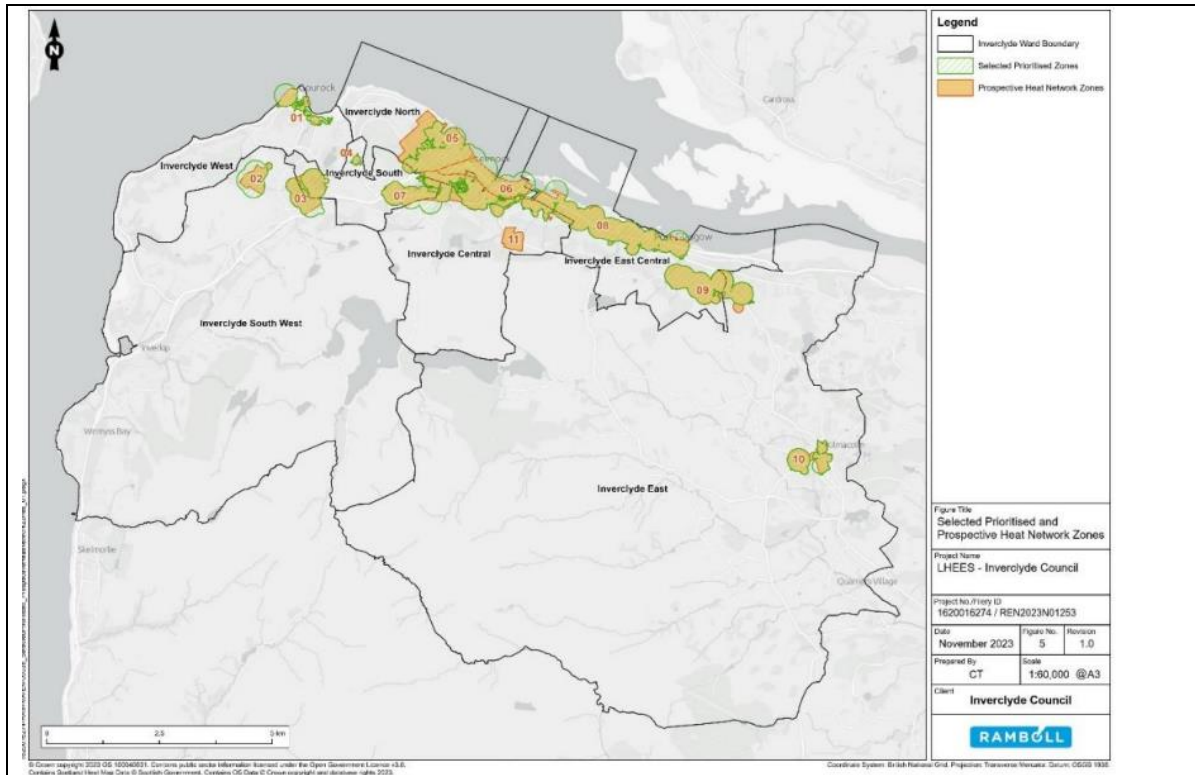


Figure 13 – Inverclyde Map including prospective heat network zones and selected prioritised heat network zones.

The Council is actively supporting the development of heat network projects in Inverclyde, reflecting a strong commitment to sustainable energy practices and decarbonization. Of the 17 heat network projects being supported by the Scottish Government through its Heat Network Support Unit as of March 2023, 2 are located in Inverclyde. Data from the Scotland Heat Map indicates that there were 8 heat networks and communal heating systems in Inverclyde as of 2023.

Among these proposals, the potential Greenock Waterfront Heat Network stands out as a flagship project which is part of Inverclyde Council's broader strategy to reduce emissions and transition to low-carbon heat sources. Inverclyde is assessing the feasibility of a Heat Network that will connect various buildings across the Greenock Waterfront area to a central heat source with zero direct emissions. The Council's feasibility report is highlighting the success of similar projects such as Queens Quay heat network, further up the river Clyde which provides heating via water source heat pumps to extract heat from the Clyde to supply hot water via a district heating network. Furthermore, the Greenock Waterfront Heat Network aims to utilize environmental heat sources, including air, ground, and water, which aligns with the regional shift towards innovative renewable energy solutions.

In 2018, River Clyde Homes undertook a pioneering initiative to enhance energy



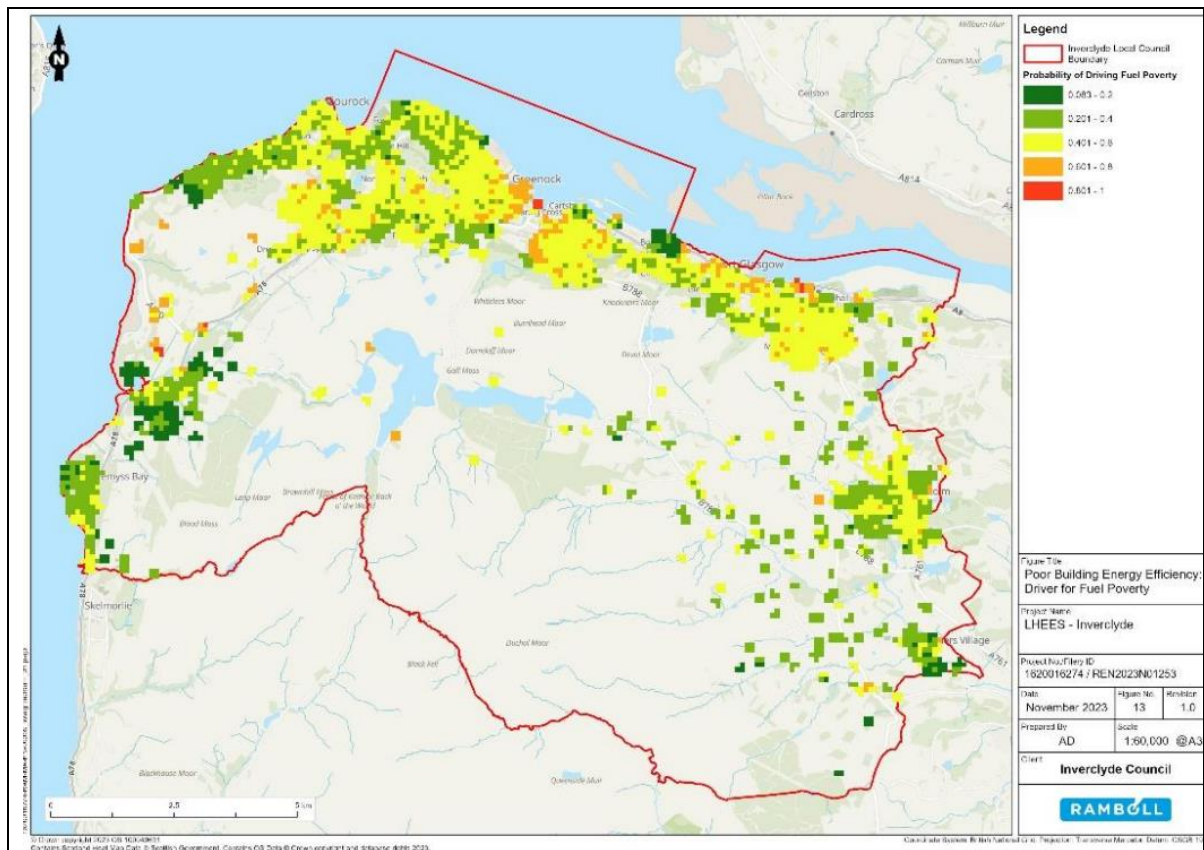
efficiency and sustainability in social housing by installing one of Scotland's first Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) in a social rented tower block. The project was executed at Kilblain Court in Greenock, which consists of 61 flats. This strategic move was part of a broader decision made in 2016 to replace gas boilers with low-carbon communal systems across their properties to not only improve safety but also to reduce emissions and meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH). The selection of the ASHPs was the outcome of a comprehensive options appraisal process, which included active customer involvement, ensuring the solution met the residents' needs and preferences. The switch from traditional mains gas to renewable technology resulted in a modest increase in energy efficiency and a significant improvement in the Environmental Impact Rating, which soared from 81 to an impressive 95 out of a potential 96.

This transition has been met with positive feedback from the residents of Kilblain Court, who now enjoy the dual benefits of warmer homes and reduced energy costs, exemplifying the tangible benefits of adopting renewable energy solutions in social housing settings.

#### Overview of Delivery Area Opportunities

Using the LHEES methodology, the Council has identified a significant amount of potential delivery area opportunities. This used domestic stock analysis to identify areas where poor energy efficiency is a driver for fuel poverty. To achieve this, the data for probability of fuel poverty was used as the basis of identifying hotspots. This was then blended with data which provided information on levels of energy efficiency. The result of the analysis was the identification of hotspots where there is a high indication of fuel poverty and high levels of poor energy efficiency.





**Figure 14 – Poor Building Energy Efficiency (Weighted Sum of Home Efficiency Factors Raster)**

In addition to this analysis, the council also assessed areas with a high concentration of heat pump ready properties which could be decarbonised with relative ease. These are properties with a reasonable or good level of energy efficiency and can have an individual or communal heat pump installed (sometimes with low-disruption and low-cost installations such as loft insulation or glazing). The council focused the analysis on on-gas properties as those are the most prevalent types of homes in Inverclyde. The requirements of these properties are:

- Not Category 0
- Property not listed
- Property not in conservation area
- Insulated walls
- Double/triple glazed windows
- Loft insulation > 99mm

The council reduced and combined these opportunities to five priority delivery area opportunities where they coincide with existing work Inverclyde and stakeholders are conducting or align with local and national targets for energy efficiency, fuel poverty and heat decarbonisation. These give priority delivery areas are the focus





for this five-year period (2024 – 2028), with the remaining delivery areas addressed in future to capture Inverclyde as a whole.

### LHEES Network Programme

Inverclyde aspires to demonstrate national leadership as a local authority area without a major city or hubs but with a major heat network presence. The council has taken initiative to seek out opportunities through feasibility studies to utilise the River Clyde as a potential heat source for heat network expansion throughout a northern coastal ‘heat belt’. The goal of this development is to contribute to the decarbonisation of the council area. In due course, this could also contribute to a ‘heat highway’ stretching across the central belt and create future opportunities for interconnectivity across the council areas.

The council has developed a feasibility for a waterfront heat network using the River Clyde. The feasibility study identified multiple heat sources and multiple technologies alongside potential locations for energy centres. The council also investigated additional heat sources in the event that the original malfunctions or the heat demand peaks, and additional energy is required. All heat networks will utilise zero direct emission sources as an unnegotiable policy decision, following Inverclyde’s commitment to decarbonising its heat supply. The waterfront heat network will potentially be the basis of a more expansive network beginning from Greenock Town Centre and with an aspiration of achieving the goal of a ‘heat belt’ across the northern coast of Inverclyde.

River Clyde Homes (RCH), the largest social landlord in Inverclyde, operates a number of locations with a heat network or some form of communal heating. As such RCH are a key stakeholder in ensuring existing and future heat networks are integrated into the heat belt where technically and financially feasible.

The council will endeavour to develop a heat network programme to progress work on this priority. This will consolidate and expand on the work completed to date at a more strategic and planned level.

### Council Non-Domestic Retrofit Leadership

Inverclyde Council wish to lead by example when it comes to retrofitting, decarbonising via heat pumps or connection to a heat network and making Inverclyde’s buildings future proof. It is the council’s view that, while the LHEES is an area-wide approach with action needed by all respective property operators, the LHEES will benefit if the council not only plays its part but does so in a way which inspires, helps and encourages others. The council’s Net Zero Strategy is at the



centre of the drive to making the council's estate net zero. This strategy follows an ambitious timeline to net zero and therefore is already an ideal opportunity to align to this delivery plan.

### Social Housing Leadership

All social housing in Inverclyde is provided by registered social landlords (RSLs) which are independent of the council (the council transferred its domestic stock to providers in 2007). The largest social housing provider is River Clyde Homes followed by Cloch Housing Association, and both have been consulted as part of developing this LHEES. This was a crucial factor for the development of delivery area retrofit plans and provisional heat network zones, as approximately 25% of the domestic stock is social housing. Due to these considerations, it is important to reflect collaboration with and leadership of social housing in the LHEES Programme.

Significant progress has been made to plan large scale transformation of Inverclyde's housing stock with the recent updates to Inverclyde's Local Housing Strategy (LHS) along with this LHEES. Social housing retrofit has been identified as a major way in which this momentum can be preserved and grown into implementation. The development of this LHEES involved engagement with RSLs, who have been encouraged to take a leading role in the retrofit of stocks and participation in heat network schemes. Delivery areas for property-level interventions have been identified with consideration to these stakeholders' goals along with the LHEES priority to focus on fuel poverty and social housing (which largely coincide). As such, implementation will also see RSLs lead activity, with the council's support, to encourage and promote retrofit in the identified areas.

### Town and Village Centre Regeneration

Inverclyde will align its ongoing work on regenerating towns and villages through the implementation of this LHEES. These regeneration priorities, as referenced in the Net Zero Action Plan, have been considered as part of prioritising heat network zone and delivery area opportunities. Works to develop heat networks will be linked to regeneration efforts, providing crosscutting benefits to promote wellbeing of town and village residents. The LHEES implementation will be considered alongside the regenerative actions to develop and enhance these locations, including road services, economic development, and strategic investments.

### **Summary of Stakeholder Engagement**



As an area-wide plan which concerns everyone in Inverclyde, it is imperative that the LHEES has cross-stakeholder buy-in. While the LHEES is a data-driven and evidence-based strategy, it is also subject to interpretation and prioritisation which feed into the decisions taken. The Council has taken steps, including stakeholder workshops and continuous consultation with from stakeholders, as well as a public consultation, to ensure people can provide their input and feedback on proposals. This section describes the stakeholder consultation and engagement work undertaken to date.

**Stage 1 – Policy and strategy review:** Stage 1 saw internal engagement with Council staff to ensure all relevant policies were captured for alignment. In addition, this stage included a stakeholder mapping exercise which identified the key stakeholders to engage for each stage (e.g. for heat networks key stakeholders included Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) and local housing associations such as River Clyde Homes among many others).

**Stage 2 – Data and tools library:** The Council identified and engaged with stakeholders responsible for datasets required to produce or add to the LHEES analysis. This primarily included Scottish Government (Scotland Heat Map); Energy Saving Trust (Home Analytics, Non-Domestic Analytics and PEAT data) and Scottish Power Energy Networks (Grid capacity data).

**Stage 3 and 4 – Strategic zoning and generation of delivery areas:** For stage 3 and 4 the Council invited numerous stakeholders to review the maps and other outputs in a workshop. Stakeholders helped to sense check emerging outputs and highlight any data that had been omitted, and to identify any indicators or areas that are considered to be strategically important for Inverclyde alongside challenges and opportunities, making use of crucial local knowledge. This workshop included inviting feedback on provisional heat network zones and building retrofit delivery areas where stakeholders advised on the scale of the ambition and fed back on boundaries of these.

Inverclyde Council undertook a public consultation between 4 March 2024 and 7 April 2024 on their draft Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and accompanying Delivery Plan, and relevant comments have been adopted where possible.

Date	Tasks
November 2022	Discussions took place with staff across a number of services to discuss the development of Inverclyde's LHEES. Since November, many council teams have been consulted regularly.



August 2023	The Council conducted a survey of several key stakeholders such as housing association representatives, energy and utilities providers, public bodies and various local authority departments. The survey found that housing and estate stakeholders considered climate change in their operations and either had or were planning to develop net zero. All stakeholders were open to engaging and supporting the Council to feed into the LHEES, including to share energy consumption information.
October 2023	The Council ran a stakeholder engagement workshop with key stakeholders to showcase initial outputs. Attendees included housing associations representatives, energy and utilities providers and various local authority departments.
November 2023	The Council shared a pre-draft LHEES with key stakeholders following their attendance at the workshop to gain feedback and ensure all stakeholders have been considered within the LHEES
December 2023	The Council ran a stakeholder engagement session with local Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to understand and consider key priority areas for the social housing in the Inverclyde LHEES. The Council submitted their draft LHEES to The Environment and Regeneration Committee for review, following which they submitted to the Scottish Government to meet the statutory requirements of the LHEES Order.
January – April 2024	The Councils Environment and Regeneration Committee considered the submitted draft of the LHEES and public consultation. The public consultation period lasted six weeks to ensure all feedback is captured.

### Table 16 – LHEES Stakeholder Engagement Timetable

Inverclyde Council has produced the final version of the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Delivery Plan, which has considered and integrated all consultee responses

## Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan





The policy landscape for carbon reduction and energy efficiency in Scotland is complex with multiple relevant policies and rapidly evolving targets. National policies give rise to a series of ambitious goals around energy efficiency improvements and reductions in fuel poverty. These were all recorded and reviewed as part of “Stage 1: Policy and strategy review” to ensure the LHEES was aligned to national priorities. Table 17 summarises the primary policies among these which were central to LHEES development, and how they intersect with local policies.

National Policy	Implications for Local Policy Development
Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019: Sets statutory targets for Scotland to achieve net-zero emissions by 2045, with interim reductions such as 75% by 2030.	Inverclyde Net Zero Strategy 2021-2045: Includes actions to drive the Council's estate to net zero such as identifying opportunities for lower emission alternatives to fossil fuel boilers (Action 2.8). Net Zero 2022-2027 Action Plan: Serving as an operational roadmap, this plan outlines specific actions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions within Inverclyde's operations. It supports the achievement of Scotland's interim target of a 75% reduction in emissions by 2030 through targeted local initiatives.
Climate Change Plan (2018, 2020): Outlines comprehensive policies for emissions reduction by 2032 across all sectors.	Net Zero Action Plan 2022-2027: Features actions such as identifying solar PV opportunities for public buildings (Action 2.7) and exploring lower emission heating alternatives (Action 2.8). Local Housing Strategy 2023 - 2028: Aims to improve housing conditions and energy efficiency to meet emission reduction targets.
Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019: Establishes targets for reducing fuel poverty in Scotland by 2040.	Local Housing Strategy 2023 - 2028: Addresses fuel poverty through housing condition improvements and energy efficiency initiatives; aims to reduce the overall energy demand and costs for residents, indirectly addressing one of the four drivers of fuel poverty — energy efficiency of the dwelling. Net Zero Action Plan 2022 - 2027: Includes measures for reducing household energy



<p>Heat in Buildings Bill (2023): Proposes updates and expansions to the existing framework to accelerate the rollout of heat networks across the country. It includes a ban on polluting heating systems by 2045 and mandates minimum energy efficiency standards for homes by 2033 (owner-occupied) and 2028 (private rented homes), aiming to combat climate change and improve energy efficiency. Heat in Buildings Strategy (2021): Aims for all buildings in Scotland to be energy efficient by 2035 and to use zero-emission heating and cooling systems by 2045. Aims for all buildings in Scotland to be energy efficient by 2035 and to use zero emission heating and cooling systems by 2045. Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021: A framework for developing heat networks throughout Scotland and statutory target of heat networks supplying 2.6TWh of thermal energy by 2027 (equivalent to approx. 120,000 additional homes) and 6TWh by 2030 (equivalent to approx. 400,000 additional homes)</p>	<p>demands.</p> <p>Inverclyde Net Zero Strategy 2021 - 2045: Supports the transition to non-polluting heating systems in line with the 2045 targets, while also aiming to meet the energy efficiency standards set for homes by the 2033/2028 deadlines. Net Zero Action Plan 2022 - 2027: Prioritises enhancing building energy efficiency, including initiatives like solar PV installations (Action 2.7) and transitioning to renewable heating systems in public buildings (Action 2.8). Local Housing Strategy 2023 -2028: implementation of retrofit programs and promoting the development of heat networks, which aligns with the Heat in Buildings Standard to enhance energy efficiency in homes by 2033/2028 and supports the expansion targets set by the Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021.</p>
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Table 17: Key national policies and the implication for Inverclyde policy development.

### Statements of Agreement / Dispute

- None identified.



Topic	Blue and Green Infrastructure, Play, Recreation and Sport
Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended,</p> <p><u>Section 15(5)(a)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district</li> </ul>
NPF4 LDP Requirements	<p><u>NPF4 – Policy 20</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should be informed by relevant, up-to-date audits and/or strategies, covering the multiple functions and benefits of blue and green infrastructure. The spatial strategy should identify and protect blue and green infrastructure assets and networks; enhance and expand existing provision including new blue and/or green infrastructure. This may include retrofitting. Priorities for connectivity to other blue and/or green infrastructure assets, including to address cross-boundary needs and opportunities, should also be identified.</li> <li>LDPs should encourage the permanent or temporary use of unused or under-used land as green infrastructure. Where this is temporary, this should not prevent future development potential from being realised.</li> <li>LDPs should safeguard access rights and core paths, including active travel routes, and encourage new and enhanced opportunities for access linked to wider networks.</li> </ul> <p><u>NPF4 Policy 21</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should identify sites for sports, play and outdoor recreation for people of all ages.</li> <li>This should be based on an understanding of the needs and demand in the community and informed by the planning authority's Play Sufficiency Assessment and Open Space Strategy.</li> <li>These spaces can be incorporated as part of enhancing and expanding blue and green infrastructure, taking</li> </ul>



	account of relevant agencies' plans or policy frameworks, such as flood risk and/or water management plans. New provisions should be well-designed, high quality, accessible and inclusive.
<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SNA - <a href="#">Inverclyde SNA2022 FINAL 07-07-22 (1).pdf</a></li> <li>• Sports Scotland consultation response</li> <li>• IC Open Space Audit 2015</li> <li>• Sport Scotland consultation response and Facility Planning Model (FPM)</li> <li>• Inverclyde Green Indicator (GCV Green Network Partnership) – Inverclyde Green Network Study 2008 <a href="https://www.gcvgreennetwork.gov.uk/publications/inverclyde-green-network-study">https://www.gcvgreennetwork.gov.uk/publications/inverclyde-green-network-study</a></li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>	
<p>Just over half of Inverclyde respondents (51%) to the Scottish Household Survey 2019 said that they live within 5 minutes walking distance to their nearest green or blue space. The percentage increases slightly for those respondents living in the 20% most deprived communities. Whilst overall, 80% of Inverclyde respondents said that they live within 10 minutes walking distance to the nearest greenspace. Walking distance to the nearest greenspace for those living in the 20% most deprived areas in Inverclyde is not statistically different to the overall figures for Inverclyde.</p> <p>The Council began an Open Space Review in 2011 and subsequently completed an Open Space Audit in 2015, to inform Local Plan preparation. The Open Space Audit assessed the quality and distribution of open spaces identified and is intended to inform the development of an Open Space Strategy, which would set quantity and quality standards for open space provision and establish clear policies and priorities for action in the new LDP.</p> <p>The data collected during the quality audit also supported the development of the Inverclyde Green Network Indicator, which is currently being finalised by the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership. There is more information on this in the Natural Places schedule.</p> <p>The audit identifies the distribution of open space types across Inverclyde and within individual settlements, covering the following 11 typologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural/Semi-natural Areas</li> <li>• Green Corridors</li> <li>• Public Parks and Gardens</li> </ul>	





- Residential Amenity
- Amenity Other (includes both Transport and Business Amenity)
- Play Areas/MUGAs
- Sports Areas
- Civic
- Allotments
- Institutions

Quality assessments would be most appropriate to six key open space types: natural/seminatural areas, green corridors, residential amenity areas, public parks and gardens, play areas and MUGAs. This approach is consistent with other Local Authorities within the Glasgow and Clyde Valley region and will allow the audit results to be comparable across the region.

The table below provides a breakdown of open space distribution across Inverclyde, however, does not include sites within the wider open space for example, play areas and MUGAs within public parks and residential amenity areas:

Area	No. of Open Spaces	Land Area (ha)
Port Glasgow	30	86.48
Greenock	59	243.88
Gourock	10	42.13
Inverkip	6	8.54
Wemyss Bay	8	13.77
Kilmacolm	3	7.47
Quarriers	2	4.34
<b>Total Settlements</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>406.61</b>
Greenbelt	7	205.01
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>611.61</b>

Table 18 – Open Space Distribution Across Inverclyde

Typology	No. Sites	Land Area (ha)	% of Total Typology
Natural/Semi	21	95.23	23.3
Sports	14	88.02	21.5
Public Parks	14	84.03	20.5
Cemeteries	4	40.18	9.8
Res Amenity	28	39.3	9.6
Green Corridors	13	23.69	5.8
Amenity Other	14	17.98	4.4
Civic	3	9.57	2.3
Institutions	1	5.92	1.4
Play Areas	27	2.95	0.7
Allotments	2	1.16	0.2



MUGAs	5	0.28	0.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>408.31</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 19 – Inverclyde Council Open Space Audit 2015

The above table shows the number, area and percentage of open space typologies across all settlements. Natural areas, sports areas and public parks account for 65% of all open space.

### **Summary of Stakeholder Engagement**

Sport Scotland consultation response and production of Facility Planning Model (FPM), October 2024.

Sport Scotland has undertaken national runs of Facility Planning Model (FPM) for sports halls (3 courts and larger), swimming pools and full-size synthetic grass pitches at Inverclyde in October 2024. This tool provides an objective assessment of likely demand for these facilities, with the following findings:

#### Halls

- Average build date of sports halls in Inverclyde is 1999 - the national average is 1990.
- Courts per head of population (8 per 10,000 in 2033) is higher than the national average of 7.
- All of Inverclyde is within 20-minute drive of at more than one 3-court hall.
- 76% of the local population can walk to a 3-court hall in 20 minutes or less – of those living in the 10% most deprived areas of Inverclyde, 88% are within this threshold.
- 31% of demand is from population living in the 10% most deprived areas of Inverclyde.
- Unmet demand is 9% - lower than the national average of 12% - and all of this is due to people living too far from a sports hall rather than facilities being full.
- 42% of hall capacity is predicted to be used in the peak period in 2033 –the national average is 59%.
- Used capacity of facilities varies with none shown to be operating at or close to full capacity. Lady Octavia Recreation Centre is busiest operating at 67% and 57% used capacity.

#### Swimming Pools

- Average swimming pool build date is 1999 compared to the Scottish average of 1989.
- Waterspace per head of population in Inverclyde is 15sqm and the national



average is 14sqm per 10,000.

- All of Inverclyde is within a 20-minute drivetime of at least 1 pool and 25% of the local population can walk to a pool within 20-minutes or less - 39% of the population living in the most deprived areas are within this walking catchment in 2033.
- Within Inverclyde, most demand is expected to be met (82% of demand).
- Unmet demand in Inverclyde is 18% and this is all because people live too far away from a pool and, of that, most (85%) is people who do not have access to a car.
- For people living in the 10% most deprived areas, around 21% of demand is predicted to be unmet compared to 14% nationally.
- Levels of visits imported and exported to and from Inverclyde in the peak period is broadly even with just 70 more visits per week exported in the peak period.
- Used capacity of pools at peak periods in Inverclyde is 50% in 2033. Port Glasgow Swimming Pool is busiest at 64% and 59% used capacity.

#### Full-size synthetic grass pitches

- Full size pitches per head of population is 2 pitches per 10,000 population compared to the national average of 1 pitch per 10,000 population.
- All the council area is within a 20-minute drive time of a full-size synthetic pitch.
- 77% of the population is within a 20-minute walk of a pitch – 31% are from the 10% most deprived areas in Inverclyde.
- Most demand (98%) is expected to be met in both scenarios – the 1 - 2% unmet demand is all due to people living outside the catchment of a pitch.
- Of the unmet demand, 2% is from people living in the 10% most deprived areas in both scenarios.
- Used capacity of pitches at peak periods is predicted to vary but is low overall (13%) with individual pitches shown to be operating at 21% capacity or less.
- In conclusion the FPM shows that Inverclyde is well served in terms of provision, use and demand of the sports facilities outlined above.

#### PSA

A Play Sufficiency Assessment Report will be produced for the new LDP in consultation with Play Scotland. The Report will be based on findings obtained from the 'Playing Out', which was concluded on 04/02/2025 and received 237 responses.

GCV Green Network comments are fully included in the Natural Places schedule.

#### SNA

Just over half of Inverclyde respondents (51%) to the Scottish Household Survey 2019 said that they live within 5 minutes walking distance to their nearest green or blue space.



The percentage increases slightly for those respondents living in the 20% most deprived communities. Whilst overall, 80% of Inverclyde respondents said that they live within 10 minutes walking distance to the nearest greenspace. Walking distance to the nearest greenspace for those living in the 20% most deprived areas in Inverclyde is not statistically different to the overall figures for Inverclyde.

## Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

- The quality of open spaces to be further assessed through the preparation of an Open Space Strategy for Inverclyde to sit alongside the new LDP.
- Active Travel routes should be improved/prioritised in the new LDP to allow more people to access sports facilities sustainably.
- Existing Supplementary Planning Guidance on Play Areas to be superseded by the new LDP, and planning policy requirements revised making provisions for Play Areas in development, based on the findings from the PSA Report.

### Statements of Agreement / Dispute

- None.





Topic	<b>Flood Risk and Water Management</b>  This schedule should be read together with ‘ <b>Coastal development</b> ’ schedule.
Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended:  <u>Section 15(5)(a)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the principal physical and environmental characteristics of the district</li> </ul> <p>Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023:  Regulation 9 requires the LDP to have regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any river basin management plan;</li> <li>any flood risk management plan; and</li> <li>any local flood risk management plan.</li> </ul>
NPF4 LDP Requirements	<p><u>NPF4 Policy 22</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should strengthen community resilience to the current and future impacts of climate change by avoiding development in areas at risk as a first principle. Resilience should also be supported by managing the need to bring previously used sites in built up areas into positive use; planning for adaptation measures; and identifying opportunities to implement improvements to the water environment through natural flood risk management and blue green infrastructure.</li> <li>Plans should take into account the probability of flooding from all sources and make use of relevant flood risk and river basin management plans for the area. A precautionary approach should be taken, regarding the calculated probability of flooding as a best estimate, not a precise forecast. For areas where climate change is likely to result in increased flood exposure that becomes unmanageable, consideration should be given to alternative sustainable land use.</li> </ul>



<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inverclyde Council Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Management Assessment: Planning Guidance for Developers</li> <li>• Flood Risk and Surface Water Management Protocol <a href="file:///C:/Users/pickettm/Downloads/Flood%20Risk%20Assessment%20and%20Surface%20Water%20Management%20Assessment%20-%20March%202024.pdf">file:///C:/Users/pickettm/Downloads/Flood%20Risk%20Assessment%20and%20Surface%20Water%20Management%20Assessment%20-%20March%202024.pdf</a></li> <li>• The SuDS Manual C753 Sewers for Scotland (current edition) <a href="https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/-/media/ScottishWater/Document-Hub/Business-and-Developers/Connecting-to-our-network/All-connections-information/SewersForScotlandv4.pdf">https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/-/media/ScottishWater/Document-Hub/Business-and-Developers/Connecting-to-our-network/All-connections-information/SewersForScotlandv4.pdf</a></li> <li>• SEPA Flood Risk Standing Advice for Planning Authorities and Developers (SEPA, 2020)</li> <li>• SEPA Planning Background Paper: Flood Risk (SEPA, 2018) <a href="https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/162837/lups-bp-gu2a-land-use-planning-background-paper-on-flood-risk.pdf">https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/162837/lups-bp-gu2a-land-use-planning-background-paper-on-flood-risk.pdf</a></li> <li>• SEPA Technical Flood Risk Guidance for Stakeholders, SEPA requirements for undertaking a Flood Risk Assessment (SEPA, 2022) <a href="https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/162602/ss-nfr-p-002-technical-flood-risk-guidance-for-stakeholders.pdf">https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/162602/ss-nfr-p-002-technical-flood-risk-guidance-for-stakeholders.pdf</a></li> <li>• SEPA Flood Risk and Land Use Vulnerability Guidance (SEPA, 2018).</li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>	
<p><u>Physical and Environmental Characteristics of Inverclyde</u></p> <p>With a vast and varied landscape, Inverclyde has a total area of approximately 63 square miles in the west Central Lowlands on a river/coastal setting with the Firth of Clyde to the north and the west. The largest body of inland water within Inverclyde is Loch Thom, immediately adjoining the Gryfe Reservoirs. The main river within Inverclyde is the Gryfe Water, flowing from west to east to meet the River Clyde.</p> <p>The geography of Inverclyde presents a large area of land in the south and central areas of the district at an elevated height, the highest point being Creuch Hill at</p>	



1447 feet above sea level. Large areas of the elevated countryside and peatland are undeveloped, with most of the population living in the main towns – Greenock, Port Glasgow, Gourock, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay – all on a coastal plain. The landscape in all of these towns presents large sloping hillsides leading down to the coastal waterfronts.

Consequently, the area is presented with risk and challenges in relation to flooding. Coastal, river and surface water flooding can be identified across Inverclyde in the SEPA Flood Map below.

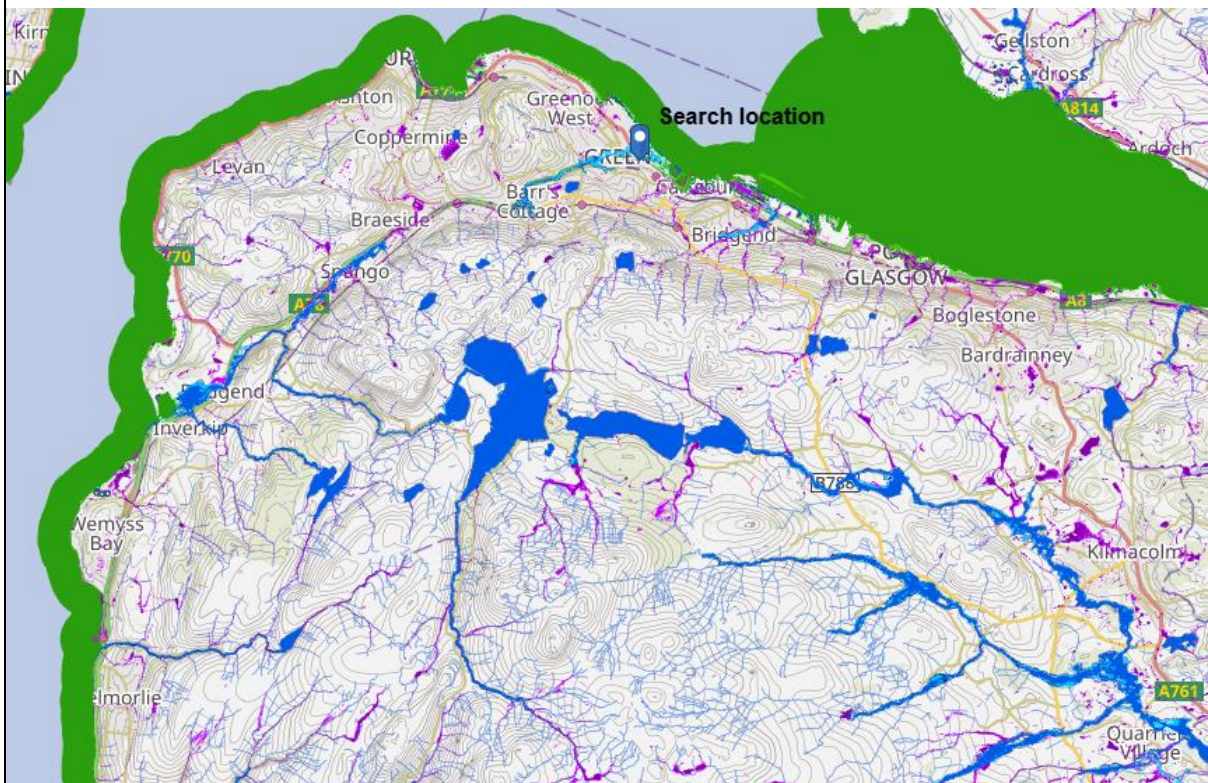


Image 15 – SEPA Flood Map indicating future coastal, river and surface water flooding

#### Inverclyde Flood Prevention Management

The Council has in place a significant programme for the investigation, design, and construction of various flood prevention schemes within Inverclyde, both as part of the Central Greenock Flood Prevention Project, and through a number of schemes out with the Central Greenock area. A summary of these schemes and their current stage of progression is included in the table below.

Flood Prevention Plan Outwith Greenock		
Scheme	Stage	Description
Crescent Street	Complete	Automatic Trash Screen (including maintenance)





Crescent Street	Complete	Additional Capacity
Drumfrochar Road	Complete	Replacement Culvert
Aberfoyle Road	Complete	Flow Control
Kings Glen	Complete	Attenuation
Mearns Street	Complete	Flow Control
Brougham Street	Complete	Additional Capacity
West Station	Complete	Additional Capacity
Lady Alice Pond	Complete	Automatic Trash Screen
Craigknowe Burn	Complete	Automatic Trash Screen
Bouverie Burn, Port Glasgow	Complete	Automatic Trash Screen
Devol Burn, Port Glasgow	Complete	Automatic Trash Screen
Oak Mall, Greenock	Complete	Scottish Water
Kilblane Street	Complete	Oak Mall floor prevention (Scottish Water phase 1)
Eastern Line of Falls	Planning	Cleaning out to improve capacity. Discussion ongoing with Scottish Water and Inverclyde Council regarding responsibility.
Eastern Line of Falls	Design	Improve access for maintenance purposes. Land ownership and agreements to undertake works are on-going. Officers are in collaboration with Scottish Water compiling an asset management plan of the Eastern Line of Falls.
Oak Mall Phase 3	Design	Scottish Water undertaking optioneering study and cost benefit analysis to further increase the flood resilience at the Oak Mall. Project has been delayed due to requirement to understand the impact / interface with the Greenock Town Centre Levelling Up project.
Glasgow Road, Port Glasgow	Complete	Minor Improvement
Glen Moss, Kilmacolm	Complete	Natural Flood Management Study
Bouverie Burn, Port Glasgow	Complete	Works completed to upsize existing pipe from 450 to 900 diameter to increase capacity to bypass the system at Bouverie Motors. Scheme designed to cope with 1 in 75-year event. A second phase is





		required, however no design or works committed due to funding position.
Inverclyde	Complete	Scottish Water have completed the Integrated catchment based study examining flooding hotspots in Inverclyde. The study provided detailed information regarding flooding mechanisms from overland flow, sewers and watercourses for the 1 in 200-year event. The study has highlighted 27 flooding clusters, 20 of which are sewer surcharges (Scottish Water) and 6 are overland flows (Inverclyde Council) and 1 is joint. Officers will investigate the overland flow and Scottish Water are investigating the sewer surcharges.
Glenmosston Burn, Kilmacolm	Complete	Construction of reservoir bund to attenuate flows in Glenmosston is complete.
Erskine	Complete	Integrated Catchment Study. Scottish Water Lead.
Gotter Water, quarries	Complete	External consultant detailed hydrological studies undertaken to assess fluvial (river) flooding from the Gotter Water. Studies concluded that fluvial flooding is not considered to be the main concern at this location, and that pluvial (overland) flooding is the primary mechanism for flooding. Council Officers designed a bypass piped system to remove the excess pluvial flooding via a pipe along Torr Avenue and back into the burn after Craigbet Road. Works complete.
A8 East Hamilton Street, Greenock	Construction	Officers from Inverclyde Council, Scottish Water and Transport Scotland continue to liaise. Trunk Road status means that Transport Scotland are lead. Operation of the existing surface water drainage system to the A8 has been assessed and found that after remedial repairs and cleaning of the carrier pipe to gullies, system has been damaged by the foul connection from the construction of the Ladyburn Industrial units. Transport Scotland are currently working on a solution to this problem. Scottish Water have pioneered a solution to the sewer surcharging at the Lady Burn and are currently on site.
Port Glasgow, Greenock, Gourock and Inverkip	Design	Surface Water Management Plans. Officers will prepare plans for consultation to include, areas of flood risk, objectives, option appraisals, preferred options, and estimated funding requirements.

Table 20 – List of priority areas for Inverclyde flood prevention and improvements



In 2014, the Scottish Government awarded grant funding to Inverclyde amounting to £1,743,466 for the Central Greenock Flood Prevention Project (comprising a number of discrete schemes) – this represented 79% of the original estimated total cost for the Project at £2,216,000. The balance of the funding (£472,534) to be made available from the previously approved Flood Action Plan. The next phase of the Flood Prevention Project Out with Greenock is funded by the Scottish Government, amounting to £932,000; the balance of the funding (£494,000) comes from the previously approved Flood Action Plan, giving a total funding of £1,426,000.

The Council is a Member Authority of the Clyde and Loch Lomond (CaLL) Local Plan District (LPD). The CaLL LPD is a partnership of ten Local Authorities, with Glasgow City Council as lead. The CaLL Group published its “Local Flood Risk Management Plan” in June 2016; the publication of the Plan is an important milestone in implementing the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 and improving how we cope with and manage flood events in the CaLL District. The Plan translates this legislation into actions to reduce the damage and distress caused by flooding over the first planning cycle from 2016 to 2022. There are a number of schemes arising from the Plan, which are out with the Central Greenock Flood Prevention Plan.

All identified Cycle 1 Local Flood Risk Management schemes have been completed by the end of 2023. However, it should be noted that the flood events have changed over the 5-year period with shorter duration extreme events more frequent and with changes to flooding areas.

Cycle 2 of Local Flood Risk Management Plan 2022-2028 was published in December 2022, and this details the flood priorities for the next 5 years. The priorities across Inverclyde for the next 5 years will be identified through the development of Surface Water Management Plans. From these plans it will be possible to identify priority areas and develop a list of schemes and estimated costs. This is required to be in a position to submit bids for any future rounds of Scottish Government funding and identify pressures for existing limited capital budgets.

#### Strategic Project Development – Flooding

The Cycle 1 projects and works completed to date have reduced flooding incidences in the areas targeted, however, it has been clear from the previous three rainfall events that new areas of priority have been highlighted. Officers have identified a list of potential projects outlined in the table below with resource now required to investigate potential solutions for these areas.



<b>Flood Prevention Plan 2024/27 Indicative Priority Areas</b>
Auchmountain Glen – Cartsburn Flooding
Eldon Street – Battery Park
Shore Street, Gourock
Bouverie Phase 2
Reservoir Attenuation – Whinhill, Knocknairs and Harelaw
Coastal Flooding

Table 21 – List of priority projects for Flood Prevention Plan development

To develop the necessary Surface Water Management Plans and manage, monitor and improve existing infrastructure to address flooding concerns additional resource in the area of flood management is required. Inverclyde Council and Transport Scotland will continue to discuss all flooding locations across Inverclyde at the quarterly roads infrastructure liaison meetings. The Flood Risk Management quarterly meetings are also on-going with Inverclyde Council, Transport Scotland and Scottish Water to discuss areas of flooding. Officers and elected members will also continue to participate in the Clyde and Loch Lomond (CaLL) Local Plan District (LPD) group meetings.

## Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Impact Assessment

Inverclyde Council has statutory duties under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 to reduce the risk of flooding. As part of these duties, the Council must not permit developments which have the potential to increase flood risk. Inverclyde Council's technical requirements for drainage and flooding that developers must comply with for planning applications are categorised in the following assessments, considering drainage and flooding impacts in planning applications:

- Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) – FRAs are required for applications where there is likely to be a risk of flooding.
- Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) – SWMPs are required for all applications to demonstrate how surface water will be drained from the site.

## Flood Risk Assessments

Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) are required for all applications where there is likely to be a risk of flooding from either coastal, fluvial (watercourse), pluvial (surface water), groundwater, or other sources of flooding. An FRA is required in instances where the site has one or more of the following:

- The online SEPA Flood Maps identify flooding at, or nearby, the site from any

source.

- Historic flooding has been recorded in the area.
- The proposed development is close to a watercourse, drainage ditch, or water body that poses a potential flood risk (within 50m)
- The development comprises of more than 5 dwellings
- Industrial or commercial developments greater than 250m2

The Flood Risk Assessment should make a reasoned evaluation of the potential flood risk from all sources of flooding, including coastal, fluvial, pluvial, groundwater, sewer inundation, or infrastructure failure such as canal, reservoir or flood protection structures.

Assessment of the pluvial flood risk (flooding from rainfall flowing overland) should feed into the SWMP. Inverclyde Council Roads department requires that a development site is not at risk of flooding from a 1:200-year return period storm event (including an allowance for climate change). Developments classified as Civil Infrastructure and most vulnerable under SEPA Flood Risk and Land Use Vulnerability Guidance (SEPA, 2018) must demonstrate that they are not at flood risk during a 1:1000-year return period storm event (including an allowance for climate change).

The detail required for a FRA is dependent on the complexity of the flood risk mechanisms, uncertainty, the site and the severity of the risk. Guidance on the appropriate levels of FRA required is described in CIRIA C624 under Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3. This hierarchy should be followed when considering flood risk at the proposed development and this should inform whether a more detailed level of FRA is required. Early engagement with Inverclyde Council is recommended to discuss the level of FRA required, prior to submitting a planning application.

## Hydrology and Climate Change Impacts

An up-to-date method for estimating design rainfall and river flow estimates should be used. FEH22 rainfall data is recognised as the most recent method available for estimating design rainfall. Applicants should clarify the method used to estimate design rainfall and demonstrate why alternative methods are more appropriate, if alternatives (such as FSR, FEH99 or FEH13 rainfall data) are used.

### Finished Floor Levels and Freeboard

Inverclyde Council's Roads department require a minimum freeboard of 600mm above the peak flood level. Where applicable a freeboard assessment may be undertaken to demonstrate that a lower freeboard is acceptable using an applicable method. The Council will not however accept a freeboard of less than 300mm.





New developments located behind a flood defence scheme must have a finished floor level at or above the peak flood level (including an allowance for climate change) with the required freeboard duly considered. Properties which do not achieve the minimum required finished floor level to minimise flood risk must be flood resilient. This may mean the use of flood resistant and flood resilient building techniques and products in the design.

#### Land Raising and Compensatory Storage

New development must not affect the ability of the functional flood plain to store and convey flood water. Removal of the functional flood plain by land raising will displace flood water and may have an unacceptable impact unless it is linked to the provision of compensatory storage. Generally, no development should be considered within the functional flood plain – defined by the 1:200-year return period storm event flood extent (including an allowance for climate change).

Land raising to protect a proposed development will not generally be acceptable if the development lies within the 1:200-year return period storm event flood extent (including an allowance for climate change). If the proposed development requires land raising within the functional flood plain, SEPA guidance on compensatory storage area should be followed (as referred to in SEPA Technical Flood Risk Guidance for Stakeholders, SEPA Requirements for Undertaking a Flood Risk Assessment (SEPA, 2022)).

Stilted development is a form of flood risk mitigation, where a building is elevated or supported by structures such as pillars. Stilted development may be considered appropriate, provided that all key principles are met including:

- The first occupied/utilised floor of the development is above the relevant flood return period level (including an allowance for climate change), plus a separate freeboard.
- The proposed development has a neutral impact on flood plain capacity and flow characteristics.
- The sites have been previously developed and are within a built-up area.
- Proposals do not create an island of development (i.e. development will adjoin developed areas outside of the functional flood plain).
- Safe, flood-free pedestrian access and egress is provided.
- The area that is susceptible to flooding is designed to be flood resilient and can drain effectively once flood waters subside.
- Owners and occupiers are made aware that the under-croft area is designed to flood and that the property title deeds record that the under-croft is susceptible to flooding and that development there should be limited.



### Watercourse Buffer Strips

'Buffer strip' is a term usually used to describe the area of land in the riparian zone between the watercourse and other land uses. Buffer strips have the potential to conserve, enhance and protect the water environment by safeguarding corridors that enhance blue-green infrastructure and enhance habitat connectivity promoting biodiversity.

The effectiveness of a buffer strip will be influenced by the width of the buffer, its characteristics and how it is managed. Inverclyde Council will typically accept no development within buffer strips.

<b>Width of watercourse</b> (measured between the top of banks)	<b>Minimum width of buffer strip</b> (measured from either side of the watercourse top of bank)
Less than 1m	6m
1 – 5m	6 – 12m
5 – 15m	12 – 20m
Greater than 15m	20m+

Table 22 – Watercourse Buffer Characteristics, Inverclyde

The table below provides the recommended minimum buffer strip widths, based on the width of the watercourse. However, these will be dependent on the site conditions. The buffer strip should be measured from the top of the bank and the minimum widths stated below are required on each side of the watercourse. The applicant must provide sufficient justification for why the recommended buffer strip cannot be provided.

Sewers for Scotland (Scottish Water, 2018) guidance on building over or near a sewer should be applied to culverted watercourses

### Surface Water Management Plans

Surface Water Management Plans (SWMPs) are required for all applications. The purpose of the SWMP is to demonstrate how surface water will be drained from the site and how attenuation and treatment requirements will be satisfied. This guidance document highlights the key criteria required to enable the Roads Dept. to be satisfied, before recommending an application for approval.

Householder applications are requested to follow the principles of this document which assessing flood risk and undertaking surface water management however they are not required to complete the self-certification declarations when submitting a planning application.



Applications for single new houses are still requested to complete a basic SWMP (and potentially an FRA) and comply with the surface water attenuation and treatment requirements described in this document. The SWMP should be prepared in line with best practice guidance within The SuDS Manual C753.

## Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

- SEPA and Scottish Water – see responses set out in ‘**Coastal Development**’ schedule.

## Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

- Inverclyde Council will ensure that new development is subject to detailed assessment in relation to flood risk and water management, with FRAs and SWMPs required to accompany development proposals.
- Policy requirements to be revised in LDP to reflect Policy 22 of NPF4 and SEPA recommendations.
- The Council will ensure that provision of SUDS within new developments will support biodiversity, water quality and climate change to deliver high quality proposals.
- LDP4 shall consider the need to review areas of flood risk where the risk is deemed to be unmanageable in relation to existing priority places or brownfield sites where it is intended to bring existing sites back into a new and appropriate use.
- Detailed consideration will be given to long term impacts of climate change from flooding in relation to coastal and waterfront developments which may present a significantly higher risk.
- Inverclyde SFRA to be produced in consultation with SEPA for new LDP.

### Statements of Agreement / Dispute

- None identified.



Topic	<b>Health and Safety</b>  This schedule should be read together with ' <b>Design, quality and place and local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods</b> ' schedules.
<b>Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended,  <u>Section 15(5)(a)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district</li> </ul>
<b>NPF4 LDP Requirements</b>	<u>NPF4 Policy 23</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDP spatial strategies should seek to tackle health inequalities particularly in places which are experiencing the most disadvantage. They should identify the health and social care services, and infrastructure needed in the area, including potential for co-location of complementary services, in partnership with Health Boards and Health and Social Care Partnerships.</li> <li>LDPs should create healthier places for example through opportunities for exercise, healthier lifestyles, land for community food growing and allotments, and awareness of locations of concern for suicide.</li> <li>Spatial strategies should maintain appropriate distances between sites with hazardous substances and areas where the public are likely to be present and areas of particular natural sensitivity or interest.</li> </ul>
<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Inverclyde SNA2022 FINAL 07-07-22.pdf</u></li> <li><u>Localities - Inverclyde Council</u> <a href="https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/community-planning-partnership/localities">https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/community-planning-partnership/localities</a></li> <li><u>Inverclyde Council Plan 2023 – 2028 - 5908 Inverclyde Council Plan with Appendix.pdf</u></li> </ul>





## Summary of Evidence

### Health

- Both the life expectancy for Males 74.3 and Females 78.6 is lower in Inverclyde than the Scottish averages of 76.8 and 81.
- The % of babies born at a healthy birthweight is 91%, this is 0.8% higher than Scottish average.
- Per 100,000 of the population, Inverclyde has 823 alcohol related hospital admissions. This is higher than the Scottish average of 673.27.
- Inverclyde had 33 drug related deaths in 2020. This is the same figure as the previous year.
- Per 100,000 of the population, Inverclyde has 12,539 emergency hospital admissions. This is higher than the Scottish average of 10,741.
- Smoking during pregnancy was highest among our most deprived areas, 22.7% and only 2.1% in our least deprived areas.

Longer lives do not necessarily mean healthier lives. Healthy life expectancy is an estimate of how many years a person might live in a 'healthy' state. Healthy life expectancy in Inverclyde is lower than that of Scotland as a whole. This has implications for services, particularly with a growth in those of pensionable age, which is not being matched by a growth in the working age population. Both males and females experienced a decrease in healthy life expectancy from the previous period (2017/2019).

Healthy life expectancy at birth 2018 – 2020 was 54.4 years for Inverclyde male compared with 60.9 years for Scotland male and 59.4 for Inverclyde female compared with 61.8 for Scotland female.

Despite Inverclyde being a relatively small area, life expectancy can vary significantly depending on where you live with life expectancy being at its lowest in the most deprived areas. Life expectancy is statistically higher in the localities of West Braeside, East Inverkip and West Gourock, Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Weymss Bay. The lowest are in Greenock Town Centre and East Central.

Child weight and growth can be used as a marker of their general nutritional and



physical health. Children in Inverclyde are at a slightly higher risk of weight problems compared to the national average. In Inverclyde:

- 65.3% of children are a healthy weight compared to 69.8% in Scotland
- 16.4% of children are at risk of being overweight compared to 14% in Scotland
- 17.8% of children are at risk of obesity compared to 15.5% in Scotland

#### Mental health

- There is a slightly higher percentage of people in Inverclyde with a mental health condition in comparison with the Scottish average. In Inverclyde 6.4% of the total population had a mental health condition recorded in the 2011 census, the Scottish figure was 4.4%.
- The rate of death from suicide in 2016-2020 (five-year average, age–sex standardised rate per 100,000 population) was slightly higher in Inverclyde at 14.58 than the Scottish average, 14.07. The chart below shows the rate of deaths from suicide of all Scottish Council areas.
- The percentage of the population prescribed drugs for anxiety/depression/psychosis was higher than the national average in 2020/21; 24% of Inverclyde's population compared to 19.29% of the whole Scottish population. The chart below shows how the percentage of the population prescribed drugs for anxiety depression / psychosis compares over the period 2016 / 2021 in both Inverclyde and Scotland.
- Alzheimer's Research UK estimate that 1,149 people in Inverclyde are living with dementia, approximately 1.4% of Inverclyde's population.

#### People supported by Social Services

- Rate per 1,000 Population of people who received social care services or support in Scotland, during 2020/21 and by the Health and Social Care Partnership providing this support - Inverclyde 54.2, Scotland 42.4. These services and support include home care, care home, meals, community alarm/telecare, housing support, social worker and day care. People involved in choosing and controlling their support through self-directed support options are also included.

Locality	% of population are over the age of 65	% of the population are under the age of 25	male life expectancy	female life expectancy	% of children at a healthy weight in primary 1



<b>Greenock East and Central</b>	20.4	24.7	70.7	77.5	61.8
<b>Greenock South and Southwest</b>	17.6	29.3	73.1	77	64.1
<b>Port Glasgow</b>	21.3	27.2	74.6	78.6	62.4
<b>Kilmacolm and Quarriers Village</b>	26.5	24.8	81.2	81	83.3
<b>Greenock West and Gourock</b>	27.4	20.8	76.7	82	69.6
<b>Inverkip and Wemyss Bay</b>	21.7	24.9	81.8	89.2	65.7

Table 23 – Health / Demographic Data for Inverclyde

#### **Summary of Stakeholder Engagement**

- See design, quality and place and local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods schedule.

#### **Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan**

- There has been a further decrease in life expectancy for both males and females in Inverclyde following an improvement in recent years. Stark health inequalities continue to exist in life expectancy and other health outcomes across communities in Inverclyde.
- Obesity is a growing issue both nationally and locally. Children in Inverclyde are at a slightly higher risk of weight problems compared to the national average and this has potentially serious implications for their health later in life. There is therefore a need to promote healthy, active lifestyles from early years onwards.



- Alcohol and drug misuse continues to be far higher than the national levels and targeted approaches through the work of the Alcohol and Drug Partnership will continue to be important.
- Based on current trends, an ageing population will result in a continued increase in the number of hospital admissions as well as increased demand for home care services. This will place an even greater demand at a time of shrinking budgets.
- Health inequalities within Inverclyde will be addressed by the new LDP directly and indirectly through a range of policy areas, including the six qualities of successful places, housing provision, economic growth, town centres and nature and environment policies.

#### **Statements of Agreement / Dispute**

- Agreement among Council Services to prioritise Health within new LDP.
- See summary of PST survey results above.





Topic	Digital Infrastructure
Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended:  <u>Section 15(5)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (d) the infrastructure of the district (including communication systems)</li> <li>• (e) how that infrastructure is used</li> </ul>
NPF4 LDP Requirements	<p><u>NPF4 Policy 24:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LDPs should support the delivery of digital infrastructure, including fixed line and mobile connectivity, particularly in areas with gaps in connectivity and barriers to digital access.</li> </ul> <p><u>NPF4 Policy 18:</u>  LDPs and delivery programmes should be based on an integrated infrastructure first approach. Plans should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be informed by evidence on infrastructure capacity, condition, needs and deliverability within the plan area, including cross boundary infrastructure.</li> <li>• set out the infrastructure requirements to deliver the spatial strategy, informed by the evidence base, identifying the infrastructure priorities, and where, how, when and by whom they will be delivered; and</li> <li>• indicate the type, level (or method of calculation) and location of the financial or in-kind contributions, and the types of development from which they will be required.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans should align with relevant national, regional, and local infrastructure plans and policies and take account of the Scottish Government infrastructure investment hierarchy and sustainable travel and investment hierarchies in developing the spatial strategy. Consistent early engagement and collaboration between relevant stakeholders will better inform decisions on land use and investment.</li> </ul>



### Links to Evidence

- Inverclyde Council Digital and Customer Services Strategy (draft) – 2024 – 25.
- Inverclyde Council Digital Strategy 2017 – 2020 - [15 Digital Strategy 2017 20.pdf](#)
- [04 Education ICT Infrastructure and Pupil Access to ICT from Home.pdf](#)
- HSCP Digital Strategy 2020 – 2024 - [09 Digital Strategy.pdf](#)

### Summary of Evidence

The proposed Inverclyde LPD states that – “Inverclyde has good digital connectivity, with 4G mobile and superfast broadband coverage available across most of the area. This is of benefit to the economy and social networks and contributes towards it being an attractive place to live and invest”.

#### **HSCP Digital Strategy 2020 – 2024**

The new Digital strategy has been developed as a guide for how we will design our digital services and structures to deliver positive outcomes for staff, service users and other stakeholders.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of effective digital services for staff and service users. In March 2020 services moved from traditional operating models to agile working during the pandemic with a large portion of staff working from home, many working between home and the community and others working between home and the office. Face to face visits for non-essential services became phone and video call interventions to maintain social distancing and keep staff and service users safe.

This Strategy reflects the positive lessons learned during the pandemic and seeks to build on the work already complete around services becoming more digitally enabled and agile.

#### **Changing Digital Landscape**

Data used in 2016 for the development of the adopted Local Development Plan identified that:

- 82% of adults (41.8 million) in UK used the internet every day or almost every day.
- 77% of adults bought goods or services online.
- 70% of adults accessed the internet ‘on the go’ using a mobile phone or smartphone, up from 66% in 2015.
- Internet use in the retired category has increased by 19.1% points since 2011 to 58.9%



- 81% of adults in the UK own a smart phone (91% of 18–44-year-olds).
- Over 55% of smartphone owners between 18–34 years old use instant messaging apps daily.
- Email usage on smartphones increased by 11% in 2016 to 71%

### **Inverclyde Council Webpages**

Inverclyde Council has approved a new digital strategy that will see online services and working practices developed.

The document highlights the use of digital media and services in people's everyday lives while recognising a sizable number of people in Inverclyde prefer the telephone or face-to-face interactions.

The Council has stated that - "The new strategy identifies a number of areas to be investigated and delivered by the end of this year. They include reviewing and revising the range of services available on the Inverclyde Online smartphone app, enabling Council Tax administration via the Council website and developing online access to other Council services."

Super-fast broadband is now available to over 93.4% of the population of Inverclyde and is expected to rise to over 96% by the end of the year.

Free Wi-Fi is already available in all of Inverclyde's public libraries and Inverclyde Leisure has plans to roll-out public Wi-Fi in their sports and community facilities.

Urban regeneration company Riverside Inverclyde are developing a town-centre Wi-Fi service to provide free or low-cost internet access initially in public spaces in Greenock but there are plans to expand the service across the area.

It was further added that - "The modern digital world is fast-moving and changes almost on a daily basis. It is vital that we as a provider of public services we do all that we can to keep pace with the development of technology while making ourselves accessible and efficient. This new strategy builds on the hard work already carried out over the past few years and sets achievable targets and aims that should improve the digital and online interactions between the Council and our customers."

### **Summary of Stakeholder Engagement**

- Views of Mobile Network Operators and Wireless Infrastructure Providers operating in the area sought via email on 17/01/2025 on:
  - Aerial Coverage
  - Programmed Investment in Digital Infrastructure
  - Gaps in Connectivity
  - Barriers to Digital Access



### Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

- Review the wording of Policy 14 in the proposed LDP in the new LDP to ensure this remains relevant and up to date for service providers, the wider public, developers and consumers in this fast-changing climate.
- The Council will support new digital communication infrastructure where it is sited to avoid adverse impact on: the streetscape; the amenity and operations of existing and adjacent uses; and the resources protected by the Plan's historic buildings and places, and natural and open spaces chapters.
- Update IC Digital Strategy in the new LDP.

Consider provision for digital infrastructure in the design of new developments in terms of allocations accommodating space for well-designed infrastructure and planning applications being assessed against policies that support good and adaptable digital connectivity.

### Statements of Agreement / Dispute

- None identified.





## Inverclyde Economy – (Productive Places)

Topic	Community Wealth Building
<b>Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended  <u>Section 15(5)(a)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district</li> </ul> <p>The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015</p>
<b>NPF4 LDP Requirements</b>	<p><u>NPF4 Policy 25</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should be aligned with any strategy for community wealth building for the area.</li> <li>Spatial strategies should address community wealth building priorities; identify community assets; set out opportunities to tackle economic disadvantage and inequality; and seek to provide benefits for local communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Inverclyde Life</u></li> <li><u>SNA - Inverclyde SNA2022 FINAL 07-07-22 (1).pdf</u></li> <li><u>Inverclyde Council Plan 2023 – 2028 - 5908 Inverclyde Council Plan with Appendix.pdf</u></li> <li><u>16 Inverclyde Community Wealth Building Strategy.pdf</u></li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>	
<p>Levels of deprivation vary significantly across Inverclyde. The highest levels of deprivation (i.e. most deprived 20%) are mainly concentrated in Greenock East and Central, Greenock Southwest and Port Glasgow. The most deprived data zone in Inverclyde is in Greenock Town Centre and East Central with a ranking of 1, which means that it is the most multiply deprived data zone in Scotland.</p> <p>The areas with least deprivation are mostly situated in Wemyss Bay, Inverkip, Gourrock and Kilmacolm. It is important to note however that not everyone living in a deprived area will be deprived and that not everyone living in our least deprived</p>	



areas will be affluent.

### Deprivation

- 45% of all (114) datazones are in the 20% most deprived in Scotland.
- 48% of all datazones are in 20% most income deprived in Scotland.
- 47% of all datazones are in the 20% most employment deprived in Scotland.
- 28% of households are living in fuel poverty, 4% higher than the national average.
- Inverclyde's participation rate amongst 16 – 19-year-olds is 93.3%. This is 1.2% higher than the Scottish average (92.1%).
- 23.8% of children in Inverclyde are living in poverty.
- (January 2020 data)

Inverclyde recorded a 6% increase in crime between 2019/20 and 2020/21, the same percentage increase was recorded in the previous year 2018/19 to 2019/20.

Over the longer period, 2011/12 to 2020/21, Inverclyde has had the 9<sup>th</sup> largest drop in total recorded crime in Scotland.

Locality	Community Voice Groups	Physical Assets
<b>Greenock East and Central</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greenock East Community Council</li> <li>• Tenants and Residents Associations               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Broomhill TARA</li> <li>- Greenock Central Association</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Parent &amp; Youth Councils</li> <li>• Auchmountain Committee</li> <li>• Craigend Committee</li> <li>• Greenock Town Board</li> <li>• Youth Connections (Gibshill)</li> <li>• Belville Gardens</li> <li>• Auchmountain Glen Project</li> <li>• Scout Group</li> <li>• Inverclyde SHED</li> </ul>	<p><u>Schools / Nurseries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notre Dame High School</li> <li>• Inverclyde Academy (catchment area)</li> <li>• St Patrick's Primary School</li> <li>• St Mary's Primary School</li> <li>• Whinhill Primary School</li> <li>• Lomond View Academy</li> <li>• Whinhill Nursery situated within the school,</li> <li>• Wellpark Children's Centre on Lynedoch Street</li> <li>• Kings Oak Primary School</li> <li>• All Saints Primary School</li> <li>• Blairmore Children's Nursery</li> <li>• Hillend Children's Centre</li> <li>• Glenbrae Children's Centre</li> <li>• Gibshill Family Centre</li> <li>• Happitots Nursery</li> <li>• Kidology</li> </ul> <p><u>Places of Worship</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prospecthill Christian Fellowship</li> <li>• St Patrick's RC Church</li> <li>• St Laurence's RC Church</li> <li>• St Mary's RC Church</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mount Kirk Church</li> <li>• Struthers Memorial Church</li> <li>• Westburn Church</li> <li>• Greenock West Church</li> <li>• Wellpark Mid Kirk</li> <li>• Greenock Baptist Church</li> <li>• Greenock East URC Church</li> </ul> <p><u>Health</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greenock Health Centre</li> <li>• Regent Medical Practice</li> <li>• Ardgowan Medical Practice</li> <li>• Roxburgh Medical Practice</li> </ul> <p><u>Public transport</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greenock West Station</li> <li>• Greenock Central Station</li> <li>• Cartysdyke Train Station</li> <li>• Bogston Train Station</li> <li>• Whinhill Train Station</li> <li>• Drumfrochar Station</li> </ul> <p>There is a frequent bus service in operation from Broomhill to the Town Centre (approximately 10-minute journey). However, after 6:30pm there is a limited bus service</p> <p><u>Other assets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scout Hall, Mearns Street</li> <li>• Crawfordsburn Community Centre</li> <li>• Auchmountain Community Centre</li> <li>• Gibshill Community Centre</li> <li>• Inverclyde SHED</li> <li>• Craigend Resource Centre</li> <li>• Broomhill Gardens</li> <li>• Greenock Town Hall</li> </ul>
<b>Greenock South and Southwest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greenock Southwest Community Council</li> <li>• Larkfield, Braeside &amp; Branchton Community Council</li> <li>• Grieve Rd Tenant Community Hall Management Committee</li> <li>• Lady Alice Parent Network</li> <li>• St Joseph's Parent Network</li> </ul>	<p><u>Schools / Nurseries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lady Alice Primary &amp; Nursery School</li> <li>• St Joseph's Primary &amp; Nursery School</li> <li>• Bluebird Family Centre</li> <li>• Aileymill Primary School</li> <li>• Aileymill Nursery</li> <li>• St Andrew's Primary School</li> <li>• Larkfield Children's Centre</li> <li>• Inverclyde Academy</li> </ul> <p><u>Places of Worship</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Margaret's Parish Church</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Andrew's Parent Network</li> <li>• Aileymill Parent Partnership</li> <li>• Branchton Community Centre Association</li> <li>• Upper Larkfield Tenants Hall Management Committee</li> <li>• Youth Connections Management Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Joseph's RC Church</li> <li>• St Andrew's RC Church</li> <li>• St Ninian's Parish Church</li> </ul> <u>Common good Property</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larkfield Industrial Estate</li> <li>• Whinhill Golf Club</li> </ul>
<b>Port Glasgow</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Port Glasgow West Community Council</li> <li>• Slaemuir Tenants and Residents Association</li> <li>• Chapelton Tenants and Residents Association</li> <li>• Clune Park Committee</li> <li>• Woodhall Community Association</li> <li>• Broadstone Gardens Residents Association</li> <li>• Park Farm Tenants and Residents Association</li> <li>• Riverside Club</li> <li>• Port Glasgow 2025</li> </ul>	<u>Schools / Nurseries</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Stephen's and Port High School Joint Campus</li> <li>• Craigmarloch School</li> <li>• Newark Primary School and Nursery Classs</li> <li>• Rainbow Family Centre</li> <li>• St Michael's Primary School</li> <li>• St Francis Primary School and Early Years</li> </ul> <u>Places of Worship</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Andrews Church</li> <li>• St John the Baptist RC Church</li> <li>• St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church</li> <li>• Holy Family RC Church</li> <li>• Port Glasgow URC Church St John's Primary School and Early Years</li> </ul> <u>Health</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Port Glasgow Health Centre</li> <li>• Dubbs Road Medical Practice</li> <li>• 3 Pharmacies</li> <li>• 4 Dental Practice</li> <li>• 2 Care Homes</li> </ul> <u>Public transport</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scotrail Stations - Port Glasgow, Woodhall, Bogston.</li> <li>• Port Glasgow Bus Station</li> </ul> <u>Culture and heritage assets</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newark Castle</li> <li>• Coronation Park</li> </ul> <u>Other</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Port Glasgow Swimming Pool</li> <li>• Boglestone Community Centre Gym</li> <li>• I-Youth Zone Port Glasgow</li> </ul>





<b>Kilmacolm and Quarriers Village</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kilmacolm and Quarrier's Village Community Council</li> <li>• Kilmacolm Residents Association</li> <li>• Kilmacolm Civic Trust</li> <li>• Kilmacolm ECO group</li> </ul>	<p><u>Schools / Nurseries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Columba's Primary School</li> <li>• Kilmacolm Primary School</li> <li>• St Columba's School</li> </ul> <p><u>Places of Worship</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kilmacolm Old Kirk</li> <li>• St Columba's Kilmacolm</li> </ul> <p><u>Health</u></p> <p><u>GP Practices:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Manasses &amp; Partners</li> <li>• Dr Simpson, Luty and Ormond (Dorema)</li> </ul> <p><u>Pharmacies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your Local Boots Pharmacy</li> </ul> <p><u>Dental Practices:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kilmacolm Dental Care</li> </ul> <p><u>Care Homes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marcus Humphrey House</li> <li>• Merrybrook</li> <li>• Quarriers - Ashgrove / Glen Valley</li> <li>• Quarriers - Davidson / Parkland / Kelly</li> <li>• Quarriers Fountainview</li> <li>• Riverview</li> </ul> <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kilmacolm Community Centre</li> <li>• Birkmyre Park Fitness Gym</li> <li>• Kilmacolm Library</li> </ul>
<b>Greenock West and Gourock</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gourock Community Council</li> <li>• Greenock West and Cardwell Bay Community Council</li> <li>• Eastern View Tenants and Residents Association</li> <li>• Parent &amp; Youth Councils</li> </ul>	<p><u>Schools / Nurseries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ardgowan Primary School</li> <li>• Gourock Primary School</li> <li>• Moorfoot Primary School</li> <li>• St Ninian's Primary School</li> <li>• Clydeview Academy</li> <li>• St Columba's High School</li> </ul> <p><u>Places of Worship</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elim Pentecostal Church</li> <li>• Gourock Baptist Church</li> <li>• Greenock Methodist Church</li> <li>• St Bartholomew's Scottish Episcopal Church</li> <li>• St John's Church</li> <li>• St John's Church of Scotland</li> <li>• St John's Episcopal Church</li> <li>• St Mary's Church</li> <li>• St Ninian's R.C. Church</li> </ul> <p><u>Health</u></p> <p><u>GP Practices:</u></p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ardgowan Medical Practice</li> <li>• Gourock Medical Practice</li> </ul> <u>Pharmacies:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lloyds Pharmacy</li> <li>• Pettigrew's Pharmacy</li> <li>• TLC Gourock Pharmacy</li> </ul> <u>Dental Practices:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ardgowan Dental Practice</li> <li>• Frederick Dental Practice</li> <li>• George Square Dental Practice</li> <li>• The Gourock Dental Practice</li> <li>• Weir Dental Surgery</li> </ul> <u>Opticians:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• William Aitchison</li> </ul> <u>Care Homes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alt-Na-Craig</li> <li>• Bagatelle</li> <li>• Barchester Balclutha Court Care Home</li> <li>• Belleaire House</li> <li>• Blackwood Care – Maclehose Court</li> <li>• Glenfield</li> <li>• Holy Rosary Residence</li> <li>• Quarriers</li> <li>• Sir Gabriels Wood's Mariner's Home</li> <li>• Westview</li> </ul> <u>Other</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gamble Halls</li> <li>• Gourock Library</li> <li>• McLean Museum</li> </ul>
<b>Inverkip and Wemyss Bay</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Community Council</li> <li>• Wemyss Bay Association</li> <li>• Parent &amp; Youth Councils</li> <li>• Inverkip Hub Committee</li> </ul>	<u>Schools / Nurseries</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inverkip Primary School and nursery class</li> <li>• Wemyss Bay Primary School and nursery class</li> </ul> <u>Places of Worship</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St. Joseph and St. Patrick's RC Church</li> <li>• Inverkip Parish Church</li> <li>• Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Parish Church</li> </ul> <u>Leisure</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inverkip &amp; Wemyss Bay Library</li> </ul> <u>Health</u> <u>Pharmacies:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TLC Inverkip Pharmacy</li> <li>• Wemyss Bay Pharmacy</li> </ul>



- Ivy Cottage Dental Practice
- Public Transport
- Inverkip Train Station
- Wemyss Bay Train Station
- Regular bus links

## Inverclyde Approach

- Procurement is part of the bedrock of an overall Community Wealth Building strategy via several initiatives.
- Inverclyde Council spend around one third (£30M) of its procurement budget with local suppliers and partners. This means that Inverclyde ranks 12th when compared to all Scottish Local Authorities in terms of spend with Local Suppliers. Our Strategy continues to build on this platform with initiatives to support local companies to bid for all public contracts both inside and outside Inverclyde.
- The Council funds the Supplier Development Programme alongside other Scottish Local Authorities and works in partnership with them to train our local companies on bidding for public sector contracts.
- Market pre-engagement with local suppliers is encouraged as part of our procurement strategy for all contracts. Contracts are lotted to enable local suppliers to bid for larger contracts and 50% of the field of bidders for quotations must be local.
- Regular Meet the Buyer events are held locally, nationally and as part of the City Deal programme.
- Regular reports to our Committees are given to our elected members. The Procurement Strategy acknowledges the need to analyse opportunities to grow the local supply chain to allow companies to be mature enough to bid, not just for Inverclyde contracts but for wider public sector contracts too.
- Community Benefits must be considered for all contracts and are embedded within every procurement exercise where there are benefits to be obtained.
- The environment and remedies to decrease the carbon footprint by using local supply are considerations in ensuring that our procurements are compliant with National Procurement legislation which demands that sustainable procurement is a major part of any tender's quality assessment.

- Through Meet the Buyer events, local engagement and individual meetings and communication, Local businesses are encouraged to look at public sector work as an opportunity to grow their Turnover. Local businesses are encouraged to bid for subcontract opportunities where the initiatives for them to tender as the lead bidder are not available.

#### Pillar: Fair employment

- Ethical Care Charter October 2016 - Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership became one of the first in Scotland to achieve trade union recognition for its high standards in homecare and conditions for workers.
- In August 2015 the Council and six trade unions signed the Inverclyde Council and Trade Union Pledge promising to work together to safeguard and deliver quality public services. The pledge also commits the Council and the trade unions to work together to promote greater employment opportunities for local people and to develop apprenticeship opportunities to benefit the local economy.
- Inverclyde Council implements Fair Work principles and maximise the potential of employees.
- As part of the £1 million Anti-Poverty Funding delivering apprenticeship support for young people and those most likely to be affected by poverty will be delivered.
- Inverclyde Council focuses on health issues as a barrier to employment through its Health Barriers to Employment activities. Established Workforce Wellbeing Champions across HSCP and Council to ensure that opportunities are taken through the Covid-19 response to develop an understanding of the wellbeing needs of the health and social care & council workforce to inform long-term work in this area. The Inverclyde HSCP Staff Wellbeing Task Group has been established to oversee and implement the national and regional work that focuses on ways the HSCP is responding to the national agenda for staff health and wellbeing. (national wellbeing network).
- Inverclyde Council funds and supports local employability service provision available in town centres localities and via community outreach, augmenting this with financial support to local businesses hiring local residents with a focus on excluded groups.
- IC (& HSCP) are an accredited Living Wage Employer and work with the Living Wage Foundation to raise the profile to local employers.
- We are a Disability Confident Leader and will continue to deliver events with the DWP to raise the profile of the Living Wage amongst local employers.
- We use our external website and the MyJobScotland recruitment portal to





raise the profile of the council being an employer of choice.

- As part of the 1140 early years expansion, we created apprenticeships at various levels to assist local people to move into this sector.
- We are reviewing how our recruitment application process could be more accessible and how we could advertise more in local places, including social media pages as part of our People & Organisational Development Strategy.
- The recent decision to create five entry level posts as part of the anti-poverty measures is an example of the Council creating entry level posts

### Pillar: Land and assets

- Inverclyde Men's Shed is an example of community asset transfer.
- Inverclyde Council's commercial property portfolio is managed locally by Council employees, and many properties are situated in locations that are likely to be of interest to local and independent operators. Rentals offered at commercial rates except where a property is listed as "difficult to let" in which case the property is available rent free for up to a year subject to certain criteria.
- Food and drink incubator units are being developed at Baker Street to support small local businesses.
- Locality planning groups are being established across Inverclyde. Inverclyde is working in partnership with its Community Planning Partnerships including the Third Sector Organisation to develop locality-based Communication and Engagement Groups across all 6 localities. These groups will encourage people living in the localities to become involved in democratic decision making in the areas where they live.
- We will continue to support Community Asset Transfers and increased community capacity through the locality planning process.
- The new Greenock Health and Care Centre will house Council staff. Remaining HSCP assets are being reviewed with a view to producing a cohesive asset plan in the future.
- The Inverclyde SHIP identifies sites throughout Inverclyde, including within and close to the town centres, with the Babylon site a specific focus of the current SHIP. The Council is also committed to undertaking strategic housing studies for Port Glasgow and Greenock town centres.
- As part of our housing land audit work (see relevant Schedule) we are compiling information on Council owned assets to determine whether they can be utilised to support housing growth.



### Pillar: Financial Power

- For individuals, Scotcash operates in Inverclyde to provide support to the financially marginalised. The Council operates various loans/grants schemes to support businesses.
- Strathclyde Pension Fund own Port Glasgow retail park.
- The Council works with partners including credit unions to encourage progressive finance.
- Shop local initiative.
- The Council has now developed a mainstreaming participatory budgeting approach which ties in with the locality planning arrangements across Inverclyde.

### Pillar: Plural ownership

- Inverclyde Council Business Development Team currently give advice and support to Social Enterprises. We also work with our Partner Agencies (CVS, First Port and Business Gateway) to give all-inclusive cooperative assistance to Not for Profit and Social Enterprises.
- Inverclyde Council Business Development Team working with Business Gateway will utilise Scottish Enterprise products including workplace innovation for local Businesses.
- At the moment Inverclyde Council Business Development Team works with Scottish Enterprise who are in collaboration with Cooperative Development Scotland. Their support would be utilised to assist these types of organisations when required.
- Inverclyde Council Business Development Team provide financial support to all types of SME organisations. This can comprise of a start-up Grant, Marketing and Training to assist them to progress.
- Business support and advice for management buy outs. At the moment Inverclyde Council Business Development Team working alongside Business Gateway would pull in expert Growth Help for family-owned businesses utilising Scottish Enterprise.
- The Council has prepared a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) focused on Council buildings.
- The Council currently provides management support to Riverside Inverclyde under a Service Level Agreement.



### Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

- Relevant Council Services were consulted during the preparation of the Evidence Report.

### Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan

- Income and employment deprivation is a significant issue for a large number of people living in Inverclyde. There is a need to ensure that those living in our most deprived areas maximise their incomes and that appropriate training and support is available to those that find it most difficult to move into the employment.
- Child poverty in Inverclyde is likely to be exacerbated by Covid-19, almost 1 in 4 children in Inverclyde are estimated to be living in poverty after housing costs. The root causes of child poverty need to be tackled by partners including, the promotion of the living wage, reducing unemployment, access to good quality, affordable childcare, adults' skills provision to assist in accessing employment, affordable housing.
- People in our most deprived areas are spending a higher proportion of their income on fuel. We need to ensure that our homes are energy efficient to keep bills down and that fuel poverty support is targeted towards lower income households.
- Whilst performing above the national average, closing the attainment gap and raising the skills of our young people will ensure that young people from are not disadvantaged from an early age.
- Whilst there has been an increase in recorded crime between 2018/19 and 2019/20, there has been a significant overall decrease between 2011/12 and 2020/21.
- Fire call outs in Inverclyde continue to be the highest in Scotland and deliberate fire raising is a significant issue in certain area of Inverclyde.
- A high proportion of Inverclyde respondents to the Scottish Household Survey rate their neighbourhood as a good place to live which is encouraging.
- Community Wealth Building agenda will be reflected within the new LDP whereby involving/employing local building contractors, suppliers and services would be encouraged for all new development.
- Supplementary Planning Guidance on (Section 75) Developer Contributions



Agreements to considered for preparation for the new LDP.

**Statements of Agreement / Dispute**

- None.





Topic	Business and Industry
Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended</p> <p><u>Section 15(5)(a)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district</li> </ul>
NPF4 LDP Requirements	<p><u>NPF4 Policy 26</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should allocate sufficient land for business and industry, taking into account business and industry land audits, in particular ensuring that there is a suitable range of sites that meet current market demand, location, size and quality in terms of accessibility and services.</li> <li>This allocation should take account of local economic strategies and support broader objectives of delivering a low carbon and net zero economic recovery, and a fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy.</li> </ul>
Links to Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Inverclyde SNA2022 FINAL 07-07-22.pdf</a></li> <li>Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023 – 2033 (<a href="#">6008 Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan (1).pdf</a>)</li> <li>Inverclyde Council Plan 2023 – 2028 - <a href="#">5908 Inverclyde Council Plan with Appendix.pdf</a></li> <li>GCR Economic Strategy (Dec 2021) - <a href="#">GCR-EconomicStrategy-Final.pdf</a></li> <li>GCR Employment Land and Property Markets (Sep 2024)</li> <li><a href="#">Industry &amp; Business Land Supply 2023 (2).pdf</a></li> <li><a href="#">Inverclyde Socio Economic Taskforce</a> (September 2024) – pdf</li> </ul>
Summary of Evidence	

## Economy

- Employment change in Inverclyde is set to increase by 2.3% between 2021 and 2024, compared to Scotland's 2.8%. Whilst between 2024 and 2031 it is forecast to be -2.2% in Inverclyde compared to 1.0% in Scotland.
- Gross weekly pay for employees living in the area is £570.10. However, this is less than the Scottish average of £622. Historically, there has been a large gap between the gross weekly pay for employees living in Inverclyde compared to the average in Scotland and Great Britain. Between 2010 and 2018 earnings in Inverclyde increased from £465.00 to £566.20. Despite the gross weekly pay being above the Scottish national average in the 2017 and 2018, it fell below it again from 2019 onwards. It has remained below the Scottish average in 2021, with the gap between them growing to £51.90.
- In 2020 the gross annual pay in Inverclyde was £25,888. However, the Scottish average was £29,935.
- In 2021 Inverclyde's business count was 1,585. However, this is a decrease from the 2020 figure of 1,620.
- 3.8% of Inverclyde's economically active population are unemployed. This is 0.1% lower than the national average.
- 19.2% of total employee jobs are in the Human Health and Social Work activities sector. An SDS employment forecast by industry predicts in 2031, that the largest key sector in Inverclyde in relation to people will be Health and Social Care. This reflects the increased demand that will come with an ageing population.
- The highest percentage of jobs in Inverclyde were in Professional occupations at 18.7%, followed by Sales and Customer Services occupations at 14.8% (January 2021 – December 2021).

## Businesses

- During 2021/22 there were 228 new business starts in Inverclyde, which is higher than in 2020/21.
- 21.4% of the Inverclyde working age population is economically inactive (January 2021-December 2021). Within this overall total:



- The number of students is 1.8% lower than the national average.
- The number who are long term sick is higher than the national average; 37.4% compared to 29.4% for Scotland and 24.6% for Great Britain.

Over the period January – December 2020 there were 5,200 workless households in Inverclyde which was 22.1% of households with at least one person aged 16 – 64. The rate of workless households in 2020 was higher in Inverclyde compared to Scotland 18.1% and Great Britain 13.6%.

82.1% of the working age population in Inverclyde have at least NVQ Level 1 qualifications, which is below than the Scottish average of 86.5% and the Great Britain average of 87.6%.

There has been an improving trend in the percentage of residents with no qualifications in Inverclyde in the past 10 years, however levels remain higher than both the Scottish and UK averages, although there was a narrowing of the gap in 2021.

## Glasgow City Region Report

- Inverclyde has a longstanding history of manufacturing and heavy engineering, especially marine engineering. The strategy (**Economic Regeneration Strategy**) seeks to build on existing strengths and identifies three key sectors for potential growth: marine engineering, financial and business services and leisure and tourism related. Focus on these areas of activity is likely to affect relative demand for employment land within the local authority. (GCR – Ryden report 2024).
- Productivity in the area is lower than that of the regional and national economy. Ensuring adequate employment land is available for businesses to locate to and invest in the area will play an important role in boosting local productivity. (GCR – Ryden report 2024).
- In recent years, Inverclyde has had some high-profile business closures including the IBM facility at Spango Valley (now demolished), offices on Riverside Business Park in Greenock, and the Amazon distribution facility at Faulds Road in Gourock. In addition, Berry BPI announced its manufacturing plant on Port Glasgow Road in Greenock is to close, and the EE contact centre in Greenock is closing and will relocate to Glasgow. These closures will increase property availability in the area. (GCR – Ryden report 2024).



- ## Office Property Market

- YOUR COMMUNITY  
YOUR INVERCLYDE**



(Figure D11). If the EE contact centre is added to this, it would take office availability to 21.8% which is structural market challenge rather than normal.

- Inverclyde's stock of office property is estimated at 940,000 sq.ft. It is dispersed across the area in town centres and upper floors in town centres, on business parks and in business centres. Around 60% of the office stock is 30 years or older although waves of modern development have been delivered too.
- The current office supply of c. 143,995 sq.ft. is contained within 31 offices. Much the supply is very adaptable to sub-divisible and flexible options in serviced offices/ business centres. The majority of available offices have a mid-range EPC rating. Inverclyde has an office availability rate of 15.3% which is above the rate for Glasgow City Region and has been rising recently and may rise again.
- The annual average office property take-up rate in Inverclyde is 16,500 sq.ft. in 9 offices. The majority of transactions are lettings rather than sales and for 1,000 sq.ft. or less. This signals an office market composed largely of micro and small businesses. Rents vary widely from £4.80 per sq.ft. for basic older buildings up to £12 per sq.ft. for modern office space.
- Office rents at this level are not sufficient to support new development. Refurbishment and sub-division may be a selective option for currently vacant office buildings, on a case-by-case basis if a market and economic rationale can be developed.

## Employment Land

- Inverclyde has a current allocated employment land supply of 17 Category A sites totalling 29.92 hectares. Category A sites are those available for industry and business purposes and free of significant constraints. The majority of sites are brownfield and less than 1 hectare. The largest site is 13.72 ha comprising the former IBM site at Spango Valley, Greenock.
- Average annual employment land take up is <1 ha and <1 site per annum, which suggests the employment land market is not particularly vibrant. Despite the allocated levels of employment land in Inverclyde only the Spango Valley site is currently on the market. This very large brownfield site is being marketed for a residential led mixed-use development of which employment land would be no less than 35% of the developable area. It is not currently a site suitable for local businesses.





- In terms of employment land transactions, 4 sites totalling 3.65 acres have been sold for employment use since January 2019. Two have known planning applications for industrial units.
- Recent speculative development in the area includes the Baker Street Food and Drink Hub which was completed in 2022. This comprises 6 specialist kitchen workshop units, of which 2 are currently on the market. Planning applications have been granted for other speculative employment space however these have yet to come to fruition. Some larger regeneration sites are still at the pre-development stage. Some expansion and refurbishment by existing businesses is also occurring.
- Half of businesses located in Inverclyde are in industries relating to employment land classes. In recent years there has been a collective decline of 15% in sectors relating to employment land. Trends vary between industries and suggest that demand for wholesale is growing whilst that for industries that would typically require office space is declining.
- Employment in wholesale sectors has also been the largest source of employment increase in recent years, whilst that associated with other employment land class categories has declined.
- Productivity in the area is lower than that of the regional and national economy. Ensuring adequate employment land is available for businesses to locate to and invest in the area will play an important role in boosting local productivity.

## Market Needs

**New build industrial property** - New-build industrial property is required to replace stock in tertiary areas which is ageing towards obsolescence. The strongest market is for smaller units. New development is likely to require public sector support (potentially direct development) unless occupier-led or cross-funded by higher value land uses.

**Refurbished industrial property** - There is scope to refurbish older stock on well-located estates to prolong their lives and deliver energy efficiency. Market failure would indicate that public sector support is required. The Council is in control of the upgrade of its own portfolio.

**Office/business space** - Hybrid working is compounding closures and reduced employment to drive rising vacancies, including of modern buildings. While there is



no current shortage of flexible office suites, vacated buildings should be tracked in case a specific opportunity to adapt arises support by market needs and an economic case.

**Serviced employment land** - Sites are allocated but market failure can mean that even minor constraints are a barrier to investment, while larger regeneration sites are still to be opened-up. Serviced employment land for local expansions and relocations and for mobile investment, including in target sectors such as marine, is therefore a priority.

### Inverclyde Taskforce

Further to the Inverclyde Taskforce on 26th June Scottish Government officials have requested that Inverclyde Council articulate the ask to government. Following extensive research from the Fraser of Allander Institute, the City Region Intelligence Hub and Arneil Johnstone and feedback from local business various investment opportunities are outlined below. The investments will support the socio-economic regeneration of the area.

The potential for this area is significant and with the correct support and investment Inverclyde could deliver meaningful change for the benefit of residents and businesses and align with our shared goals of making Inverclyde an even better place to live, work, do business, and visit.

The projects were developed through the Inverclyde Socio-Economic Taskforce, they are ambitious but very much achievable with the correct support and investment.

### **Business Premises**

Project 1 - Kelburn Industrial Estate is an industrial/commercial development in the east of the Local Authority area which is adjacent to the A8. Originally developed by urban regeneration company Riverside Inverclyde, we are seeking to expand these facilities as the current provision is full. RI can borrow £5 million, however require a further £3 million additional funding to deliver a 55,000ft<sup>2</sup> solution.

Project 2 - Port Glasgow Industrial Estate suffers from legacy buildings from the 1960–70s era. Their redundant nature makes them attractive for anti-social uses. We are seeking to demolish the central core of the area and provide alternative modern purpose facilities to make Port Glasgow an attractive proposition. We are seeking investment to the value of £22 million.

### **Business**



Project 1 - To ensure that the east/west displacement is not further exacerbated. Providing fiscal policy to afford Inverclyde business rate tax reduction in line with the GCR Investment Zone applicable to our industrial estates.

Project 2 - To expedite efficient traffic movement within the Inverclyde area we would seek to support Transport Scotland in the installation of a MOVA type traffic light solution for the main A8 trunk road, the cost of this is estimated at £500,000-£750,000.

### **Summary of Stakeholder Engagement**

- Alliance Plan – there has been public consultation, as well as consultation with Inverclyde Elected Members and Alliance partners.
- Ryden Report – overall, there is a strong alignment between the issues raised by consultees across wide-ranging land and property market discussions, and the policy, economic and market analyses.
- Socio-economic Taskforce - survey was undertaken with the Chamber of Commerce members, where 65 responses were received. It was concluded that pressures for Inverclyde include supply chain and associated costings, labour / skills shortage and lack of available funds and a high level of congestion driving into / out of Greenock.

### **Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan**

- Inverclyde's employment remains heavily reliant on the public sector. With public sector budgets reducing resulting in a shrinking workforce in this sector, this will put additional pressure on the local employment market.
- The reduction in the working age population of Inverclyde is a long-term issue for the partnership.
- The forecasted changes in the employment market means that partners must ensure that any planned / future training and upskilling opportunities take cognisance of the predicted market changes to ensure residents have the best possible chance of gaining employment locally.
- Following a positive trend up to 2015 there has been a decline in the number of new enterprise births. Inverclyde's business base remains relatively narrow with a lower business survival rate than the Scottish average. Growing small businesses is one route to employment growth.



- Business density remains below the Scotland average and there continues to be a challenge in growing private sector jobs.
- Tackling entrenched rates of benefit dependency remains a challenge. Inverclyde consistently exceeds the rest of Scotland for rates of alcohol & drugs addiction, clients reporting with mental health issues or disabilities and clients with additional barriers such as Carers. Additional, targeted support is required for those furthest from the employment market.
- The number of residents in Inverclyde with no qualifications is higher than the Scottish average and acts as a barrier to finding employment.
- Although there are industrial properties available, the options in any particular size or location are not extensive and occupiers may still experience limited choice of premises suited to their requirements.
- Reported market failure – industrial stock that's available (1960s/1970s buildings) is low demand because it often does not meet the occupier requirements due to energy performance (environmentally obsolete).
- 'Energy performance is an increasingly important feature of industrial buildings, both in terms of carbon emissions and energy costs. Nine of the available industrial units in Table D5 have a registered EPC rating. 5 buildings have mid-range EPC ratings of C, D or E and 4 have G, which is the worst. These building could be termed 'environmentally obsolete' without appropriate improvements.'
- There is a need to attract new employment to the area and the Plan identifies a generous supply of development land, including large scale sites such as Spango Valley and Inchgreen, medium sized sites at Main Street, and smaller sites such as Baker Street (all Greenock). This supply is intended to meet the aspirations of different sectors and business sizes.
- From a funding perspective, Inverclyde is considered high priority for public sector funding and recently received an award from the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund to help transform Greenock Town Centre. From an employment perspective it has also created new employment space via its previous URC and the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund for example at Custom House. The current postponement of the Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme and the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund could impede the progress of pipeline projects as could the ability of the Council to provide any match funding given the pressure of budgets currently. City

Region Deal funding will improve the viability of employment land at the former Inverkip Power Station site and Inchgreen. There is a possibility that City Deal funding will be used to create a public sector led commercial property fund for the area. Projects may also come forward to be included in the Innovation Zone.

- Even before the recent rises in development costs and reduced investment values, Inverclyde struggled to support speculative development. Provision of modern industrial stock will thus fall to refurbishment of suitable existing stock, occupier-led development, public sector development and (potentially) cross-funding through higher value land uses.
- Land allocations for employment land/offices may need to be revised to suit new demand. Policies should incentivise and prioritise development of new commercial space in line with the task force priorities.
- The requirements for the type of space that businesses are looking for is changing, with demand requirements for spaces that have strong internet connections and facilitate AI technology. Ensuring that these facilities are available within the region will be important for growing the regional economy and supporting local employment.

#### **Statements of Agreement / Dispute**

Increasing employment levels ranked highest most important subject area during open public consultation for the Inverclyde Alliance Plan. 'The highest scoring item was 'increasing employment levels', followed by 'creation of good jobs' and 'improving health and wellbeing'. These three items are interlinked, and this is highlighted further on through participants comments linking job creation to higher employment and poor health and wellbeing to Inverclyde's economic challenges.'

The need to deliver new commercial space is supported through the broad range of partners within the Inverclyde Socio Economic Taskforce. Further the Glasgow City Region has endorsed a commercial space development programme as part of its reallocation of City Deal funds, which is to be delivered by 2030.





Topic	City, town, commercial and local centres, and retail
Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended:  <u>Section 15(5)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district and the principal purposes for which the land is used.</li> </ul>
NPF4 LDP Requirements	<p><u>NPF4 Policy 27:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should support sustainable future for city, town and local centres, in particular opportunities to enhance city and town centres. They should, where relevant, also support proposals for improving the sustainability of existing commercial centres where appropriate.</li> <li>LDPs should identify a network of centres that reflect the principles of 20-minute neighbourhoods and the town centre vision.</li> <li>LDPs should be informed by evidence on where clustering of non-retail uses may be adversely impacting on the wellbeing of communities. They should also consider, and if appropriate identify, any area where drive through facilities may be acceptable where they would not negatively impact on the principles of local living or sustainable travel.</li> <li>LDPs should provide a proportion of their Local Housing Land Requirements in city and town centres and be proactive in identifying opportunities to support residential developments.</li> </ul> <p><u>NPF4 Policy 28:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDPs should consider where there may be a need for further retail provision. This may be where a retail study identifies deficiencies in retail provision in terms of quality and quantity in an area, or when allocating sites for housing or the creation of new communities, in terms of the need for neighbourhood shopping, and supporting local living.</li> <li>LDPs should identify areas where proposals for healthy food and drink outlets can be supported.</li> </ul>



<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greenock Town Centre Action Plan - pdf</li> <li>• Gourock Town Centre Action Plan - pdf</li> <li>• Port Glasgow Town Centre Action Plan - pdf</li> <li>• Greenock Masterplan – pdf file</li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>	
<b><u>Town Centres and Local Centres</u></b>	
<b><u>Greenock</u></b>	
<p>As the region’s capital town, Greenock has the potential to take a leading role in the Inverclyde economy. The town offers a wealth of opportunities, with a strong combination of activity - cultural / creative/ educational/ services of a ‘tier one’ centre. Greenock has an active waterfront, with marine uses operating out of Inchgreen, James Watt Dock, the East India and Victoria Harbours, and a busy freight and cruise ship port at Greenock Ocean Terminal. The LDP Monitoring Report (2020) assessment of retail and floorspace mix from 2011-2016 indicates that Greenock has seen a steady trend in convenience retail and leisure uses, with comparison retail accounting for the largest proportion of floorspace mix at around 30% in 2016. A Place Standard Survey was also undertaken with 1,393 respondents for Greenock East and Central locality.</p>	
<p>There are various recently completed developments in Greenock, including the £20m Greenock Ocean Terminal cruise ship visitor centre which has created over 70 jobs and is expected to provide a £26m boost to the Scottish economy. Public realm and transport improvements will also significantly enhance the visitor experience, including the £3.2m redevelopment of Greenock’s traditional high street, West Blackhall Street, to provide active travel infrastructure and new public realm areas.</p>	
<b><u>Greenock Central</u></b>	
<p>In 2023, Inverclyde Council secured Round 2 Levelling Up Funding (LUF) from the UK Government for Greenock Central. The Greenock Central project will re-establish a vibrant mixed-use town centre created through the restructuring of the Oak Mall Shopping Centre and A8/A78 Trunk Road transport infrastructure re-connecting the central core of the town centre. The development involves demolitions, realignment of road infrastructure and public realm improvements as follows:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road Infrastructure – Demolition of the elevated A8/A78 trunk road with</li> </ul>	

reinstatement at street level, and reconfiguration of the Bullring roundabout to provide a smaller signalised junction. This will create a safer and more attractive town centre retaining Clyde Square and connecting the east and west of the town with a more traditional pattern of streets, squares and quality public realm.

- Oak Mall – Proposals will demolish around 40% of the eastern part of the Oak Mall, with a new entrance created to the west of the new road alignment and a smaller mall continuing to operate, connecting to Dalrymple Street and West Blackhall Street.
- Public Realm – Proposals will ensure barrier free access, improve safe movement within the town centre and build on the retained quality of Clyde Square. Proposals include areas of greenspace, street trees, seating and a network of pedestrian & cycle paths linking to controlled pedestrian crossings of the A8/A78.

### Greenock Long Term Plan

An additional £20m investment was secured for Greenock as part of the UK Government's Long-Term Plan for Towns initiative which seeks to empower communities to create a 10-year Town Plan for regeneration. The investment will provide communities with the tools to change Greenock's long-term future through creation of a ten-year endowment-style fund to be spent on local people's priorities. A Town Board has been established, and initial public consultation was held in June 2024. The development of the 10 Year Plan is progressing with further consultations due in autumn 2024 and the Long-Term Plan anticipated to be submitted to Government for approval in late 2024.

### Movement and Connectivity

- Greenock Central Station, Greenock West Station and local bus services provide a good level of public transport and connectivity to Glasgow and the West Coast, supporting locals, visitors and tourists.
- The TCA identifies a lack of safe pedestrian crossing from underpass at the Bullring roundabout to connecting waterfront and Ocean Terminal.
- Connection within the varied parts of the Town Centre is problematic – reducing accessibility, awareness, exploration, movement, footfall and dwell time.



- There is a lack of accessibility at the Central Station, and no footbridge or lift access to platforms.

## Streets and Built Realm

- The town centre architecture reflects a strong cultural and built heritage.
- Prominent historic stone archway to Central Station, but facilities could do with upgrading.
- Eastern side of Town Centre at Cathcart Street is poorly connected to Western part of Town Centre at West Blackhall Street. There are no connecting network of spaces/pedestrian links.
- Various vacant buildings / units on Cathcart Street and around the town centre create a negative first impression of Greenock.

## Town Centre Spaces

- With reconfiguration of Bullring roundabout and Oak Mall, public realm area around Cathcart Street, Cathcart Square and Wallace Place would benefit from enhanced activity/accessibility.
- Lack of good outdoor play spaces in town centre. Well Park playpark not easily accessible from town centre.
- Opportunities to improve links to greenspaces and parks in the town centre and at the waterfront.
- Town centre spaces can feel unsafe and unwelcoming for pedestrians, particularly at night.

## Town Centre Uses

- Retail – Town Centre subject to ongoing reconfiguration of retail uses with 40% of the Oak Mall Shopping Centre to be demolished. West Blackhall Street has recently received an upgraded public realm scheme to enhance place quality. Town Centre would benefit from enhanced mix of uses and additional retail, hospitality and arts.
- Tourism & Leisure – Range of successful cultural, leisure and tourist attractions in and around town centre/waterfront provide a solid base for

locals and visitors to explore.

- Heritage – Greenock has rich shipbuilding and industrial heritage but would benefit from additional signage and a programme of cleaning / maintenance of statues and information plaques.
- Residential – Additional housing is required to sustain Greenock’s existing population and to support growth. Town Centre Living would enhance Greenock’s place quality whilst supporting national objectives of creating 20-minute neighbourhoods.

### Footfall Monitoring Data

The Greenock Town Centre Action plan provided a focussed review of town centre footfall. This study identified the following:

- Average monthly footfall figures declined by 14.68% from October 2019 to October 2023, below UK and Scotland averages.
- Monthly footfall figures in October 2023 were estimated to be approximately 600,000.
- Monthly footfall figures have seen gradual increase since January 2021. But with exception of December 2022, total footfall figures have not returned to pre-pandemic levels of approx. 700,000.
- Footfall figures from October 2023 highlighted that approx. 44% of visits were medium duration for a length of 20-40 minutes typically for targeted shopping and grocery shopping. Approx 36% of visits were longer durations for a length of between 60 – 90 minutes typically for shipper browsing (clothes) and big grocery shops.

## Town Centre Vision

Greenock Town Centre has a long and rich history that fosters a strong shared sense of identity and belonging. Greenock is Inverclyde's strategic centre. It is home to the largest concentration and selection of retail, leisure, education and commercial uses in Inverclyde. This includes cinema, leisure centre, Greenock Ocean Terminal, Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock West College Scotland campus and a number of restaurants, pubs and nightclubs that provide evening activity. Combined with its strategic waterfront location this makes Greenock a fantastic place to live, work and visit, and to enjoy and engage in civic activity and celebration.



Our vision is to build on Greenock's strengths and create a 'whole town' place appeal that will ensure Greenock's continued role as strategic centre with an appealing retail, cultural, leisure and educational offer. Promote Greenock's connections to Glasgow, its quality-of-life and 20-minute neighbourhood attributes, creating a vibrant successful town centre.

## Gourock

Gourock was a runner up in the 2019 Great British High Street Awards, highlighting the town's appeal and potential to contribute significantly to the Inverclyde economy. Gourock offers a wealth of opportunities, with a combination of activity (cultural/ leisure/ retail/ creative). It connects to the regional economy with growth potential (port / tourism / food & drinks). The LDP Monitoring Report (2020) assessment of retail and floorspace mix from 2011-2016 indicates that Gourock saw a steady convenience retail and leisure trend, a decrease of around 10% in comparison retail and increases in vacant uses, with leisure uses accounting for the largest proportion of floorspace. A Place Standard Survey was also undertaken with 1,393 respondents for Gourock and Greenock West locality.

Gourock has benefitted from recent investment with the town centre remodelled to ease traffic and parking congestion on the traditional-style Kempock Street, which is home to a number of independent traders and draws in both locals and visitors. The town centre has also benefitted from investment in the train station and outdoor swimming pool, in addition to environmental improvements along the waterfront and at the pierhead. This town centre improvement has radically changed Gourock town centre and placed it in a positive position to improve retail and leisure trade. Out with the town centre, it is predominantly residential, with the Faulds Park area being the main employment location.

A study of Gourock town centre identified the following key considerations.

## Movement and Connectivity

- Gourock Ferry Terminal, Gourock Rail Station and local bus services provide a good level of public transport and connectivity to Glasgow and the West Coast, supporting needs of local people and businesses, visitors and tourists.
- The new N75 cycle connectivity and shared path provides flat walking route during station open times.
- There is a lack of clear pedestrian waymarking/signage at arrival from the

Ferry and Train stations.

- The streets often have excessive street clutter, including safety railings which obstruct pedestrian accessibility.
- Re-alignment of traffic within the town centre has created a one-way road with traffic travelling south on Kempock Street and north on Albert Road which has positively impacted traffic congestion. However, there is a lack of safe pedestrian crossing.

### Streets and Built Realm

- The town centre has a strong cultural and built heritage.
- “Wee Annie” would benefit from a programme of cleaning/maintenance.
- Kempock Place Kiosk has received funding from a range of upgrades to allow use by community or business groups.
- Some shop fronts on Kempock Street and Shore Street have a tired appearance and would benefit from external improvements – painting, cleaning and repairs would be appropriate.
- Various vacant and derelict buildings/units on Shore Street create a negative first impression of Gourock

### Town Centre Spaces

- Gap Sites on Kempock Street provide views of the Clune and occasional event space but have limited seating/designated viewing points to encourage use.
- Lack of good outdoor play spaces in town centre and play space at Gourock Promenade is small and in need of improvement.
- Kempock Point at the waterfront does not encourage people to use the space or take in views of the Clyde.
- Shore Street Community Garden by Inverclyde Shed is an attractive, successful community use.
- Gourock Park and Walled Garden is an attractive greenspace providing



- community growing space, events space and green space.
- Kempock Gardens is focal point during festive period but currently underused throughout the year.

- Town Centre Uses

- Leisure – Gourock Lido is Scotland's oldest outdoor heated swimming pool, with views of the Clyde. The Greenock Lido is a strong asset which would benefit from a programme of upgrades.
- Tourism – Opportunities have been identified to encourage Waverley Paddle Steamer to reintroduce Gourock as a ferry stop, perhaps at Kempock Point.
- Retail – There are successful examples of independent retailers operating.
- Community – The Gamble halls provide good examples of community use, supporting strong sense of community belonging and identity.
- Marine Leisure – Inverclyde is one of Scotland's Marine Leisure capitals. There are opportunities to enhance waterfront leisure activity.

## Town Centre Vision

Our vision is about celebrating and enhancing Gourock Town Centre as a unique destination. Gourock Town Centre has a long and rich history that fosters a strong shared sense of identity and belonging. It is home to a wealth of independent shops, historic assets, and unique tourism and leisure facilities, including the oldest open-air heated swimming pool in Scotland. Combined with its strategic waterfront location on the south bank of the Firth of Clyde, this makes Gourock fantastic place to live, work, and visit, and to enjoy and engage in civic activity and celebration.

### Port Glasgow

Port Glasgow town centre has a strong sense of identity, with a historic street grid that remains largely intact. The majority of the building stock in the town centre is late Victorian, Edwardian and early 20th Century tenements, mostly of red sandstone finish, which gives the town centre a strong visual coherence. The combination of the multi-storey blocks and tenements in the town also creates potential for town centre living. Port Glasgow town centre's role has changed in recent years from mainly convenience shopping for the town's residents to offering large format food and non-food shopping that draws shoppers from across Inverclyde. The LDP Monitoring Report (2020) assessment of retail and floorspace



mix from 2011-2016 indicated that convenience retail accounted for the largest proportion floorspace mix at around 40% in 2016.

Port Glasgow has seen significant investment in recent years through the redevelopment of the former Scott Lithgow shipyard and the re-routing of the A8 trunk road, which together enabled the development of modern format retail units as part of an extended town centre and the development of over 400 houses in the former Kingston yard area. Inverclyde Council has also recently invested in improving the public realm within the town centre's traditional core, and is undertaking renovations of the King George VI building, the town centre's oldest building.

## Movement and Connectivity

- Port Glasgow's waterfront is one of its key assets. Yet it is "cut off" from the Town Centre by the A8 and the Comet Roundabout. Ensuring safe and direct pedestrian links to Mirren's Shore may be critical to the Town Centre's regeneration.
- Upgrades to coastal cycle paths can provide improved active travel opportunities.
- Connections within the varied parts of the Town Centre are problematic – reducing accessibility, awareness, exploration, movement, footfall and dwell time.
- Port Glasgow Station and local bus services provide a good level of public transport and connectivity to Glasgow and the West Coast, supporting needs of locals, visitors and tourists.

## Streets and Built Realm

- Strong public art, cultural and built heritage.
- Some historic building in need of repair / refurbishment.
- Category B listed King George VI building on King Street is undergoing refurbishment and retrofitting for community use.
- Various vacant buildings / units in and around town centre create a negative first impression of Port Glasgow.



## Town Centre Spaces

- Coronation Park / Waterfront would benefit from additional attractions/community facilities such as a community café or heritage hub.
- Opportunity to improve links from Town Centre to waterfront and Coronation Park.
- There is a lack of a safe boundary between Coronation Park and the A8.
- Gateway at Argyll's Parade / The Comet would benefit from upgraded public realm.
- Huntly Terrace public space would benefit from an upgrade opportunity to connect links from Town Centre to retail park.

## Town Centre Uses

- Retail – Town Centre retail at Princes Street / King Street has declined with the opening of the retail park. Town Centre would benefit from enhanced mix of uses including hospitality, culture, residential, leisure and tourism. Improved connection to waterfront would address disjointed Town Centre core.
- Heritage – Port Glasgow has rich shipbuilding and industrial heritage but would benefit from additional signage and a programme of cleaning / maintenance of statues/information plaques.
- Residential – There are a number of vacant residential units within the town centre which would benefit from refurbishment. The development of Mirren's Shore would also present the opportunity to create a high-quality residential and mixed-use development.
- Port Glasgow Town Hall provides a good community use but has limited opening hours and presence within the town centre.

## Footfall Monitoring Data

The Port Glasgow Town Centre Action plan provided a focussed review of town centre footfall. This study identified the following.

- Average monthly footfall figures declined by 17.92% from October 2019 to



October 2023, below UK and Scotland averages.

- Monthly footfall figures in October 2023 were estimated to be approximately 450,000.
- Monthly footfall figures have seen gradual increase since January 2021. But with exception of December 2022, total footfall figures have not returned to pre-pandemic level of approximately 550,000.
- Footfall figures from October 2023 highlighted that approximately 44% of visits were medium durations for a length of 20 – 40 minutes typically for targeted shopping and grocery shopping. Approximately 36% of visits were longer durations for a length of between 60 – 90 minutes typically for shopper browsing (clothes) and big grocery shops.

Town Centre Vision

Port Glasgow has a long and rich history that fosters a strong shared sense of identity and belonging. It is home to a selection of retail, leisure and tourism uses and has a wealth of historic assets and strong historic street form. Combined with its strategic waterfront location on the south bank of the Firth of Clyde, this makes Port Glasgow a fantastic place to live, work, and visit, and to enjoy and engage in civic activity and celebration. Building on Port Glasgow's strengths will create a 'whole town' place appeal that promotes Port Glasgow's coastal location and its connections to Glasgow and the west coast, and its quality-of-life attributes, to offer a successful, vibrant town offer.

- October 2023, below UK and Scotland averages.
- Monthly footfall figures in October 2023 were estimated to be approximately 450,000.
  - Monthly footfall figures have seen gradual increase since January 2021. But with exception of December 2022, total footfall figures have not returned to pre-pandemic level of approximately 550,000.
  - Footfall figures from October 2023 highlighted that approximately 44% of visits were medium durations for a length of 20 – 40 minutes typically for targeted shopping and grocery shopping. Approximately 36% of visits were longer durations for a length of between 60 – 90 minutes typically for shopper browsing (clothes) and big grocery shops.
- Town Centre Vision
- Port Glasgow has a long and rich history that fosters a strong shared sense of identity and belonging. It is home to a selection of retail, leisure and tourism uses and has a wealth of historic assets and strong historic street form. Combined with its strategic waterfront location on the south bank of the Firth of Clyde, this makes Port Glasgow a fantastic place to live, work, and visit, and to enjoy and engage in civic activity and celebration. Building on Port Glasgow's strengths will create a 'whole town' place appeal that promotes Port Glasgow's coastal location and its connections to Glasgow and the west coast, and its quality-of-life attributes, to offer a successful, vibrant town offer.

October 2023, below UK and Scotland averages.

- Monthly footfall figures in October 2023 were estimated to be approximately 450,000.
- Monthly footfall figures have seen gradual increase since January 2021. But with exception of December 2022, total footfall figures have not returned to pre-pandemic level of approximately 550,000.
- Footfall figures from October 2023 highlighted that approximately 44% of visits were medium durations for a length of 20 – 40 minutes typically for targeted shopping and grocery shopping. Approximately 36% of visits were longer durations for a length of between 60 – 90 minutes typically for shopper browsing (clothes) and big grocery shops.

Town Centre Vision

Port Glasgow has a long and rich history that fosters a strong shared sense of identity and belonging. It is home to a selection of retail, leisure and tourism uses and has a wealth of historic assets and strong historic street form. Combined with its strategic waterfront location on the south bank of the Firth of Clyde, this makes Port Glasgow a fantastic place to live, work, and visit, and to enjoy and engage in civic activity and celebration. Building on Port Glasgow's strengths will create a 'whole town' place appeal that promotes Port Glasgow's coastal location and its connections to Glasgow and the west coast, and its quality-of-life attributes, to offer a successful, vibrant town offer.

October 2023, below UK and Scotland averages.

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- Monthly footfall figures have seen gradual increase since January 2021. But with exception of December 2022, total footfall figures have not returned to pre-pandemic level of approximately 550,000.
- Footfall figures from October 2023 highlighted that approximately 44% of visits were medium durations for a length of 20 – 40 minutes typically for targeted shopping and grocery shopping. Approximately 36% of visits were longer durations for a length of between 60 – 90 minutes typically for shopper browsing (clothes) and big grocery shops.

Town Centre Vision

Port Glasgow has a long and rich history that fosters a strong shared sense of identity and belonging. It is home to a selection of retail, leisure and tourism uses and has a wealth of historic assets and strong historic street form. Combined with its strategic waterfront location on the south bank of the Firth of Clyde, this makes Port Glasgow a fantastic place to live, work, and visit, and to enjoy and engage in civic activity and celebration. Building on Port Glasgow's strengths will create a 'whole town' place appeal that promotes Port Glasgow's coastal location and its connections to Glasgow and the west coast, and its quality-of-life attributes, to offer a successful, vibrant town offer.

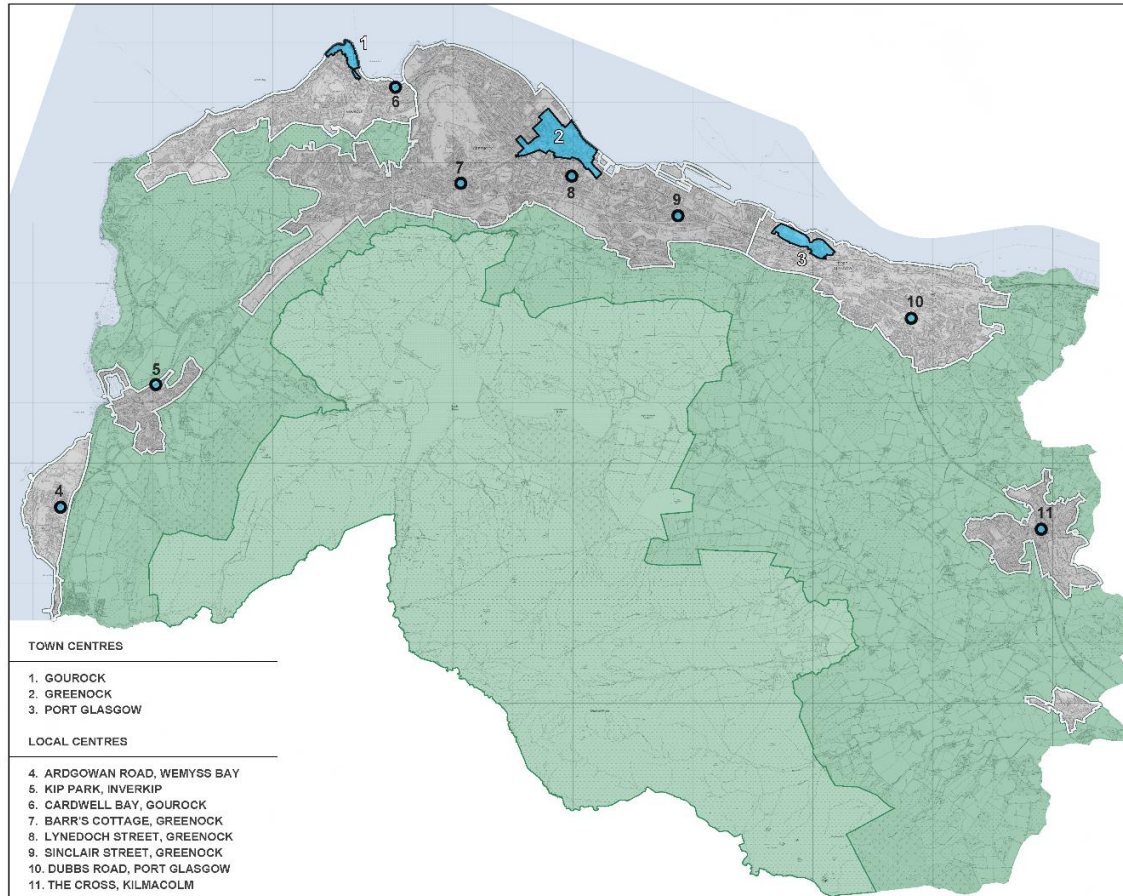


Image 16 – Map of Town and Local Centres

## Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

### Greenock

#### Stage 1 - Meeting Local Stakeholders

Firstly, a Town Centre Walkaround took place in June 2024 with representatives from Inverclyde Council, Greenock Town Centre Regeneration Forum, Councillors, local businesses and community members. The purpose of this was to gather stakeholder and community views on the issues and opportunities for the Town Centre. The group discussed various stakeholder suggested actions during the Town Centre Walkaround which covered a wide range of themes and objectives.

#### Stage 2 - Outlining Ideas for Discussion

A Long List of 15 Town Centre actions were presented on a set of Consultation Boards at a Public Drop-In Consultation Event on Tuesday 25th June 2024 in Greenock Town Hall. This list included the following topics.



### ENHANCE PLACE QUALITY

- Improve Pedestrian Connections
- Town Centre Waymarking & Signage
- Improve Lighting & Security (CCTV)
- Enhance Parks, Greenspace & Play
- Improve Built Heritage
- Public Transport Facilities – Bus
- Public Transport Facilities – Rail

### DEVELOP A VIBRANT, MIXE-USE CENTRE

- Promote Mixed-Use Development
- Additional Retail, Leisure & Tourism
- Town Square
- Town Centre Living
- Local Attractions & Heritage Trail
- Business Start-Up Centre

### PROMOTE SAFE MOVEMENT & ACTIVE TRAVEL

- Improve safe / accessibility for all
- Active Travel Connections

We asked the public to review the suggestions and choose their top 5 Priority Actions or suggest alternatives. The consultation material was also made available online for two weeks following the event to capture additional feedback. A total of approximately 55 people attended the in-person event, and the online site was viewed 659 times by 453 individuals 25th June – 9th July 2024. We received 92 responses online and 10 written responses at the in-person event.

### Stage 3 - Identifying Priorities & Projects

Taking on board the respondents' feedback, the 15 projects were prioritised and grouped into Priority, Early and Medium-Term Actions. A Draft Town Centre Action Plan is now being published online for consultation for a period of 4 weeks, encouraging feedback from stakeholders and community members. Feedback received from respondents during this third stage of engagement will subsequently inform the final version of the Greenock Town Centre Action Plan.

### **Gourock**

### Stage 1 - Meeting Local Stakeholders

Firstly, a Town Centre Walkaround took place in April 2024 with representatives



from Inverclyde Council, Gourock Town Centre Regeneration Forum, Councillors, local businesses and community members. The purpose of this first stage of engagement was to gather stakeholder and community views on the issues and opportunities for the Town Centre. The group discussed 30+ stakeholder suggested Actions during the Town Centre Walkaround which covered a wide range of themes and objectives.

### Stage 2 - Outlining Ideas for Discussion

For the second stage of the engagement, suggestions raised at the Town Centre Walkaround were combined and consolidated into a Long List of 15 Town Centre Actions under the strategic objectives as follows:

#### ENHANCE PLACE QUALITY

- Town Centre Public Realm
- Shopfront Improvement & Town Dressing
- Promenade Lighting & Furniture
- Town Centre Deep Clean
- Building on current place assets

#### DEVELOP THE DESTINATION

- Upgrade Lido Experience
- Town Centre Waymarking & Signage
- Town Centre Play
- Enhance Marine Leisure access
- Develop Local Attractions & Heritage Trail
- Waverley Paddle Steamer Stop

#### PROMOTE SAFE MOVEMENT & ACTIVE TRAVEL

- Enhance Pedestrian and Cycle Facilities
- Improve safe accessibility for all
- Remove Street Clutter
- Upgrade Park & Greenspace links
- Encourage exploration

#### SAFEGUARDED BUILT ASSETS & HERITAGE

- Develop Vacant and Derelict Building Briefs
- Stronger intervention/ Statutory notices
- Establish Support Funding Programme
- Support Investment/Redevelopment

The Actions Long List was presented on a set of Consultation Boards at a Public Drop-In Event where a wider group of residents, local interest groups, Local





Members were asked to their views on an initial outline project list. Consultation Event on Thursday 6th June 2024 in Gamble Halls, Gourock. We asked the public to review the suggestions and choose their top 5 Priority Actions or suggest other ideas or alternatives. The consultation material was also made available online for two weeks following the event to capture additional feedback. A total of approximately 50 people attended the in-person event, and the online site was viewed 602 times by 425 individuals 6th-21st June 2024. We received 154 responses online and 13 written responses at the in-person event.

### Stage 3 - Identifying Priorities & Projects

Taking on board the respondents' feedback, the 15 projects were prioritised and grouped into Priority, Early and Medium-Term Actions. A Draft Town Centre Action Plan is now being published online for consultation for a period of 4 weeks, encouraging feedback from stakeholders and community members. Feedback received from respondents during this third stage of engagement will subsequently inform the final version of the Gourock Town Centre Action Plan.

## **Port Glasgow**

### Stage 1 - Meeting Local Stakeholders

Firstly, a Town Centre Walkaround took place in April 2024 with representatives from Inverclyde Council, Port Glasgow Town Centre Regeneration Forum, Councillors, local businesses and community members. The purpose of this first stage of engagement was to gather stakeholder and community views on the issues and opportunities for the Town Centre. The group discussed a wide range of stakeholder suggested actions during the Town Centre Walkaround which covered a broad range of themes and objectives.

### Stage 2 - Public Consultation Event

For the second stage of the engagement, suggestions raised at the Town Centre Walkaround were combined and consolidated into a Short List of 5 Town Centre Action areas which form the strategic objectives as follows:

1. Reconnect the Town Centre
2. Strengthen Town Centre Gateway
3. Encourage a Mix of Uses
4. Develop the Waterfront Destination
5. Improve Pedestrian

The Action areas were presented on a set of Consultation Boards at a Public Drop-





In Consultation Event on Wednesday 19th June 2024 at the Port Glasgow Town Hall.

We asked the public to review the suggestions and vote for their Priority Actions or suggest alternatives. The consultation material was also made available online for two weeks following the event to capture additional feedback. A total of approximately 20 people attended the in-person event, and the online site was viewed 323 times by 232 individuals 19th June – 3rd July 2024. We received 40 responses online and various post-it note comments were recorded in person.

### Stage 3 - Online Public Consultation

Taking on board the respondents' feedback, the 5 Action areas were reviewed and developed. A Draft Town Centre Action Plan is now being published online for consultation for a period of 4 weeks, encouraging feedback from stakeholders and community members. Feedback received from respondents during this third stage of engagement will subsequently inform the final version of the Port Glasgow Town Centre Action Plan.

### **Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan**

- The spatial priorities of the plan should reflect the prioritise and vision for the towns as set out in the Action Plans. Specific interventions that have a place-based impact (or which can be reflected in policies) should be drawn out and incorporated into the priorities of the Plan.
- Formulation of Town Centre Design Guidance for developers to accompany the new LDP and ensure attractive and active Town Centres in the district.
- For Greenock, the spatial priorities of the plan should reflect the delivery capacity of the Town Fund, the Greenock Central Levelling Up project and the Town Centre Action Plan, and the Greenock Ocean Terminal and provide a flexible framework to coordinate future developments to drive the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre.

### **Statements of Agreement / Dispute**

The Town Centre Action Plans were approved by Environment and Regeneration Committee in October 2024 and are utilised by the town centre regeneration forums as a basis for defining future priorities. The production of the document was developed in conjunction with wider interest in the town centre reflected and in agreement with the content.



Topic	Tourism, Culture and Creativity
<b>Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended:</p> <p><u>Section 15(5)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district;</li> <li>the principal purposes for which the land is used; and</li> <li>the desirability of maintaining an appropriate number and range of cultural venues and facilities (including but not limited to, live music venues) in the district</li> </ul>
<b>Links to Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inverclyde Tourism Strategy 2016 – 2020</li> <li>Discover Inverclyde - <a href="#">Welcome to Inverclyde - Discover Inverclyde</a></li> <li>Tourism Strategy for Scotland 2020 - <a href="#">Scotland's National Tourism Strategy Beyond 2020</a></li> <li>Glasgow Tourism Strategy 2030 - <a href="#">glasgow-2030-tourism-strategy-october-2023.pdf</a></li> <li>Scottish Tourism Alliance - <a href="#">Scotland Outlook 2030 - Scotland's tourism strategy</a></li> <li>Inverclyde Tourist Group</li> <li>Visit Scotland - <a href="#">VisitScotland's Strategic Framework for 2024-2027   VisitScotland.org</a></li> <li>Inverclyde Leisure - <a href="#">Inverclyde Leisure   IL</a></li> <li>Greenock Town Centre Action Plan - pdf</li> <li>Gourock Town Centre Action Plan - pdf</li> <li>Port Glasgow Town Centre Action Plan - pdf</li> <li>Inverclyde Council – Short Term Lets Planning Guidance – <a href="#">(05 - STL Guidance (3).pdf)</a></li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Evidence</b>	
<p><u>Tourism Overview</u></p> <p>Tourism is worth £60m (source STEAM) to the local economy and employs up to 1,000 people. The sector is a resilient and important contributor to the economic and social sustainability of the area. Tourism is one of Scotland's most enduring</p>	



industries and is recognised by many as the most sustainable long-term sector of the Scottish economy.

Much has changed since the previous 2009-2016 strategy was written. Developments across digital and social media continue to make the customer more discerning, smarter and more demanding by the day.

Inverclyde sits in an enviable position of being a maritime destination, rich in history and heritage and linked directly with Glasgow and the Clyde Estuary. The tourism and hospitality offering has several large operators and is well served by a range of smaller locally owned businesses. Inverclyde is ideally suited to maximise its location as an events base for local, regional and international water-based activities.

The area is set to go through a major investment with the recently announced City Deal development plan with £30m planned to be invested in local infrastructure projects.

The area is further strengthened by its proximity to the main markets as recognised by local business. Such a position makes for the area being a prime day trip and event orientated destination.

There is however an ongoing challenge to attract water-based activity providers and to pull together interest groups and businesses operators, no matter the size of business, to share in the ambition to provide the customer with the very best experience.

Public sector resources are restricted and there is a new approach towards destination development with local groups and the business communities taking the lead in setting the local agenda. Local businesses are leading the way in determining the future of the sector whilst aligning with a national strategic framework. Future success is dependent on a continued partnership approach between private and public sectors. There remains a challenge in attracting and retaining a range of higher quality accommodation and food and beverage businesses. Such a gap in the local offering will hold back tourism development and restrict making the most from the visitor economy.

The strategy sets out to be bottom up, industry driven, aimed at bringing growth to businesses that chose to engage, share and contribute to a customer experience driven industry. Collaboration between groups, membership bodies, sector and event-based interest groups is essential for the area to realise its full potential. The strategy is based upon a partnership approach between public and private sector stakeholders to jointly influence, guide change and grow the value, volume and



resilience of the tourism sector.

The Strategy sets our key aims and ambitions that will in turn require annual detailed action plans to be prepared by the proposed Inverclyde Tourism Partnership Group. Inverclyde has the very real potential to stake a claim as Scotland's leading maritime waterfront destination with a strong offering attracting the lucrative day visit family market. To do this however it must be recognised that the private sector cannot do it all on their own and strong partnership must remain in place between public and private stakeholders.

### Discover Inverclyde

*Discover Inverclyde* is the area's Tourism and Visitor brand. It is used to reinforce our place identity and to clearly articulate and highlight its authentic character and attributes.

Inverclyde Council lead the *Discover Inverclyde* brand activations, and work in partnership with businesses, trade organisations, transport operators, community and voluntary organisations and other public bodies, including Visit Scotland, to maximise the profile of the area and ensure consistent, relevant and appealing positioning.

We produce regular seasonal editions of a Digital Magazine which showcases news and provides inspiration for things to see and do across the area.

Inverclyde's Brand Identity:

Discover Inverclyde focus on reinforcing the unique strengths that the Inverclyde tourism industry can offer, and have distilled these into five broad thematic pillars:

1. **Outdoor Activities:** Within a quick commute from Scotland's biggest city, Glasgow, you will find a wealth of outdoor activities and opportunities to connect with nature. We have five golf clubs, many marine activities, and a great range of walking & cycling routes. From the Greenock Cut, to Lyle Hill, the famous Esplanade and Gourock outdoor pool we have several iconic experiences to offer.
2. **Heritage and Culture:** The area has an important and globally significant history. Greenock was the birthplace of James Watt; it was also the location for the world's first Burns Club as well as the first dock built on the Clyde in 1711, which later expanded along with sugar, refining and other industries. We have a rich built environment and a number of key historical sites and museums including Newark Castle, Finlaystone Estate, Ardgowan House,



the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Museum and the Watt Institution. The new Wyllieum is a unique cultural attraction, located at Greenock Ocean Terminal.

3. **Events:** Inverclyde famously hosts the Gourock Highland Games at Battery Park in May, the first Highland Games of the Scottish season. We also have a number of other summer events. Greenock is home to the Beacon Arts Centre with an exciting programme for all audiences. There are also lots of independent events which take place year-round which we promote including the Gourock Farmers Market and the Galoshans Festival which celebrates Greenock's unique Halloween tradition. Inverclyde Council helps to coordinate the area's programme for the national Doors Open Days initiative.
4. **Food and Drink:** Inverclyde has a burgeoning food and drink industry with innovative businesses such as The New Chocolate Company, Inverclyde Gin, Titan Spirits, Shipyard Gin as well as the exciting development of The Ardgowan Distillery. We also have some fantastic local accolades and awards which will appeal to any gastro visitor like "Best Pizza in Scotland" awarded to Tonino's Pizzeria in Greenock.
5. **Towns and Villages:** Each of our towns and villages: Greenock, Gourock, Port Glasgow, Wemyss Bay, Inverkip, Kilmacolm and Quarriers Village has its own unique character. With strong communities, history, and landmarks such as The Shipbuilders of Port Glasgow sculptures, the Kempock Stone, The Cloch Lighthouse and more, there are different experiences to be enjoyed throughout Inverclyde.

There is a dedicated website [www.discoverinverclyde.com](http://www.discoverinverclyde.com) as well as Facebook, X and Instagram social media accounts.

Current follower figures in November 2024:

- Facebook – 11,000
- X – 4,342
- Instagram – 2,198

Hashtag: #DiscoverInverclyde

## Inverclyde Tourism Strategy 2016 – 2020

As outlined in the Inverclyde Regional Tourism Strategy (2016-2020), Inverclyde tourism is worth £60m to the local economy and employs up to 1,000 people. The





sector is a resilient and important contributor to the economic and social sustainability of the area.

The Strategy's vision is for Inverclyde to be recognised as a leading coastal and day visit designation, with the target of increasing the value of local tourism by £4m. To achieve this aim, the Strategy seeks to develop the marine tourism offering, maximise access to the waterfront, maximise the potential of outdoor activities and recreation, increase visibility of coastal heritage trails, arts and culture, and develop the food and drink offering.

The Strategy acknowledges the ongoing challenges with attracting service providers to realise these tourism targets and outlines the importance of creating a strong partnership between public and private sector stakeholders in order to lead and shape the delivery of the Strategy.

The role of Inverclyde Council in Tourism development of the area is to:

- Develop tourism projects.
- Work to attract and maximise economic benefit from cruise ship visits to the Greenock Ocean Terminal.
- Work with VisitScotland to maximise promotion of Inverclyde tourism opportunities.
- Provide discretionary financial assistance to tourism businesses and tourism development project groups.
- Gather information about the volume and value of tourism in Inverclyde and share with local partners and tourism providers.
- Work with the Local Area Tourism Partnership to deliver actions and outcomes identified in the Inverclyde Tourism Development Strategy 2016-2020.

This Local Area Tourism Partnership brings together representatives of the Tourism industry to deliver the Inverclyde Tourism Strategy 2016 - 2020 and includes:

- Discover Inverclyde
- Greenock Chamber of Commerce
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Inverclyde Tourist Group
- Inverclyde Council



- Visit Scotland
- Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park
- Local community groups
- Representatives drawn from tourism businesses across Inverclyde

### Inverclyde Leisure

Inverclyde Leisure is a registered charity, a community focused non-profit company established in 2001 for the purpose of delivering sport, leisure & health primarily in Inverclyde. Inverclyde Leisure operates community halls, parks and pitches, sports facilities, health and fitness facilities, swimming pools, ice facilities, golf course and an athletics stadium.

Below is Inverclyde Leisure's portfolio.

- 7 Fitness Gyms
- 2 indoor Swimming Pools
- 1 Outdoor (open-air) Swimming Pool
- 1 Leisure Centre (including ice rink)
- 3 Sports Centres
- 6 3g Pitches
- 17 Grass Pitches
- 1 Golf Course
- 3 Town Halls
- 1 Athletics Stadium
- Community Facilities & Booking Office
- Indoor Bowling Club

Inverclyde Leisure's Mission is to provide great experiences and fun activities for customers.

The governance of Inverclyde Leisure is overseen by a Board of Directors comprises of 9 Directors who are also company members. This includes:

- Four Directors from the local business community
- Four nominated members from Inverclyde Council
- One employee Director

Inverclyde Leisure works in partnership with Inverclyde Council and aims to provide a quality service for its customers, employees and stakeholders by delivering great value facilities and services.

### Inverclyde Perspective



The tourism industry in Inverclyde is growing industry with the development of the Greenock Ocean Terminal which has increased the number of day visitors to the area.

## Greenock Ocean Terminal

Greenock Ocean Terminal is a visitor attraction and the main cruise destination port in the West of Scotland.

It is located on the beautiful Firth of Clyde and is 24 miles/39 km from Glasgow. The stunning £20 million visitor centre was officially opened in August 2023. Peel Ports Clydeport is one of the busiest ports in the UK with over one hundred cruise ships visiting during the summer season, as well as several hundred cargo and container ships throughout the year.

Construction of the new Greenock cruise ship visitor centre is now complete as part of a £19.2 million development, welcoming passengers and crew from some of the world's largest and most luxurious vessels to Inverclyde.

The project, led by Inverclyde Council, was part of the £1 billion Glasgow City Region City Deal funded by the Scottish and UK governments, with contributions from Peel Ports (£8m), operators of the existing Greenock Ocean Terminal, and the George Wyllie Foundation via the Dunard Trust (£1.5m).

The dedicated cruise ship visitor centre features an arrivals/departure hall as well as a museum paying tribute to the late, world-famous artist George Wyllie, who worked as a Customs Officer in Greenock and lived for many years in Gourrock, and a high-end restaurant and roof terrace with panoramic views of the River Clyde.

A new 200-metre floating pontoon was recently completed by the port operators as part of the overall project and the development is expected to increase visitor numbers and provide a £26m boost to the Scottish economy.

2023 was a record year for cruise ship numbers with Greenock welcoming over 150,000 passengers from around the world.

The volunteer led Inverclyde Tourist Group provide information on the local area to disembarking passengers. Collateral, signage and assets are support by Inverclyde Council.

## Accommodation





STEAM data obtained in 2024 identifies the following sites within Inverclyde.

Site + Address	Total Units and Pitches
Cloch Caravans, Cloch Road, Gourrock, PA19 1BA	35
Kellybank Caravan Park, Kellybank, Wemyss Bay, PA18 6BB	125
Wemyss Bay Holiday Park, Wemyss Bay PA18 6BA	539
	Total = 699

Table 25 – Inverclyde Camping, Caravan and Touring Sites

STEAM data shows that there are 16 different paid accommodation establishments – including short term lets and cottage/chalet rentals – with over 1900 beds at the height of the summer season, falling to 542 beds at the lowest point of the season. The 2024 STEAM data shows that there are only 2 self-catering establishments which are not touring/camping.

The Scottish Government set out a Financial Memorandum and Business Regulatory Impact Assessment for the Visitor Levy Bill consultation. Within these there is information on the number of registered accommodations by employee size per local authority and the cost of introduction.

The BRIA states from ONS data that there are 10 accommodation businesses within Inverclyde which is 0.3% of the total number of accommodation businesses in Scotland. As stated above this is at odds with data the Council holds.

The impact assessment stats that the introduction of the bill will bring local authority benefits such as improved local empowerment, support to local facilities, a source of revenue to develop tourism. However, there are also disbenefits including levy administration costs, set-up and ongoing admin costs, communication and consultation costs. The BRIA estimates that this would require 3-5 new FTE, procurement and maintenance of IT systems and operational budget. Indicative estimates of set up costs are between £60,000 and £250,000 per year and on-going costs range from £190,000 to £500,000 per year per local authority.

Inverclyde Council welcomes the introduction of new powers for local authorities to introduce a visitor levy however at this stage, further work is required to assess the impact of such levy and whether it would be worthwhile to introduce in this area. With many of Inverclyde's visitors' day visitors from other parts of Scotland or from the cruise ships, it is difficult to assess whether the introduction would generate





sufficient funding that would support its administration as well as provide sufficient investment in tourism in Inverclyde to make the introduction worthwhile.

As noted in the response, under the questions about definition our return states that cruise passengers should be included in the visitor levy. The Scottish Government have stated that the Levy does not make provision for any type of taxation of cruise ship passengers. The impact of cruise ship passengers disembarking is recognised however they set out risks that locally administered cruise disembarkation levy can lead to behaviour change from the cruise industry.

In addition, as we can see from the STEAM data tourism is still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and the hospitality and tourism businesses are feeling the pressure from the cost of doing business. Scottish Tourism Alliance states in their response to this consultation that the introduction of the visitor levy is still a contentious issue with a significant proportion of businesses opposed to its introduction.

As an area which is aiming to grow the sector, attract more visitors to Inverclyde and make the area an attractive place for our residents and visitors alike, a delicate balance must be struck to ensure that if introduced, a visitor levy does not set accommodation at a significantly higher price point than the equivalent overnight accommodation in neighbouring authorities.

In addition to the points above it should also be noted that a large amount of Inverclyde's hotels' rooms are currently used for refugees therefore difficult to assess the potential impact of overnight hotel use as the statistics would currently be distorted.

# Tourism Strategy for Scotland 2020

Outlined within the Tourism Strategy for Scotland, it is recognised that the tourism sector is one of the key economic industries in Scotland. With over £4.5bn generated annual from overnight visitors and a further £6.2bn generated from day visitors, tourism in Scotland contributed an approximate £11bn to Scotland's economy.

Tourism in Scotland also contributes over 200,000 jobs in both rural and urban settings. Tourism employment provides vital support and business especially in rural area., allowing less populous communities to prosper. Over 20,000 tourism related businesses benefit whilst also feeding into other sectors such as retail, transport, construction and food and drink.

## Tourism Visitor Levy – Scottish Government Visitor Levy Consultation



The Visitor Levy (Scotland) Bill was introduced in May 2023, and if passed will give local authorities the power to introduce a visitor levy, sometimes known as 'tourism tax' in its area, if it wished to do so.

Under the Bill, Councils would be able to apply visitor levy which would be collected by the accommodation providers and remitted to the relevant local authority on a regular basis (the default being quarterly). The Bill also lets local authorities set different rates for different areas or at different times

All money raised would have to be reinvested locally on facilities and services substantially for or used by visitors, enhancing the visitor experience and benefitting local communities and their economies. The Bill states that money collected from the Visitor Levy should only be used to develop, support or sustain services that are substantially for people who visit the area for leisure. This could cover things like improving transport links to an area that is popular with tourists, creating a visitor centre or promoting the area as a tourist destination.

#### Gourock Highland Games

Gourock Highland Games take place annually in Battery Park and they are the first Games of the Scottish season. In 2025, the event takes place on 11th May.

The event comprises of pipe band and drum major competitions; highland dance competitions; heavyweight events; mini highland games; children's entertainment; gift and craft stalls, a food trader village and a range of community groups and charities. Admission is free.

The event attracts local, national and international visitors and over the course of the day there is an audience of approximately 6,000 – 10,000.

#### Port Glasgow Comet Festival

The Comet Festival takes place in Coronation Park Port Glasgow annually in June to commemorate the launch of the Comet. The Comet was the first passenger carrying steamship in Europe. The festival has been part of the Port Glasgow community since 1986.

The annual event takes place at Port Glasgow's Coronation Park from 11.30 am through until 6pm and is jointly organised by the Comet Festival Committee and Inverclyde Council. In 2025, Port Glasgow celebrates the 250th anniversary of its creation and several celebratory projects are being organised. It is planned that the Comet Festival will be extended from a one-day event to a three-day event (Fri,



Sat, Sun) and will be a focal point of the year.

The festival is free to attend and features live music, funfair, children's activities, stalls, and food and drink tents.

### Development Management

Numerous short term let applications have been submitted to the Council in recent years for changes of use from residential accommodation to short term lets of 'sui generis' use class. Many of these applications have resulted in strong opposition from the neighbours on grounds of residential amenity. This influx, which was caused by changes to the relevant Housing legislation, require to be addressed in the new LDP.

## **Summary of Stakeholder Engagement**

**Visit Scotland** have responded to the Council's consultation request as follows:

"tourism and the visitor economy is mentioned throughout the existing LDP and across its various policy areas, and of course, it would be positive to see this continue in LDP4.

One aspect which seems significant is the capital investment which has now been delivered at Greenock's Ocean Terminal (August 2023) as part of the Glasgow City Region Deal. The current LDP notes the dedicated cruise ship berth "highlights the growing importance of tourism in Inverclyde's economy." This is in addition to the newly opened visitor centre, Wyllieum Gallery and Scott's restaurant.

With the number of cruise passengers (and crew) who berth at the terminal significantly increased, it is important to consider – and strategize – how Greenock town centre and surrounding areas within Inverclyde can capitalise on the economic opportunities both in terms of tourism business support and place-making. For example, VisitScotland are currently working with Inverclyde Council to support a number of businesses in the area's visitor economy to take advantage of this new market by becoming travel-trade ready, discoverable and bookable online. This is encompassed by the strategic priority of promoting [Responsible Tourism](#) and supporting the industry to achieve net zero ambitions. In addition, VS very much welcome this activity as a partnership approach and note the importance of various local stakeholders who support the visitor economy in Inverclyde such as the voluntary services of the Inverclyde Tourist Group.

In terms of the visitor experience, there is also links to tourism around town and local centre regeneration/repurposing to attract visitors into the key areas, encourage longer (overnight) stays and spend.



Furthermore, it would be positive to see the continuation of focus around Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park which is a key natural asset not just for Inverclyde, but for the wider Glasgow City Region. VisitScotland is a partner of the Castle Semple / Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Liaison Group which includes a number of stakeholders from across Inverclyde and Renfrewshire.”

### **Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan**

- The role of Tourism will be a focal point of the new Local Development Plan, with planned economic growth for Inverclyde through the tourism industry with emphasis on the cruise ship industry through Greenock Ocean Terminal.
- The development of new tourism policy will require the review and update of the Inverclyde Council Tourism Strategy. A review of this strategy will be undertaken in conjunction with various stakeholders in relation to economic development, local businesses, town centres, tourism partners and other interested parties.
- Revise Policy 27 – ‘Tourism Development’ in the proposed LDP to include criteria for the assessment of short term let applications to make Council position clearer for developers and the public alike, for instances where these developments are likely to be acceptable and otherwise.

### **Statements of Agreement / Dispute**

- The findings of the evidence report have been informed by consultation across the tourism sector and public. This has taken a number of forms including: -
- Consultation undertaken as part of the emerging Economic Growth Plan, which consulted with a broad range of businesses and stakeholders in the sector, to identify barriers, challenges and opportunities for Inverclyde tourism sector. This found support for promoting businesses within and supporting the tourism sector (including coastal and marine related opportunities, and food, drink and accommodation provision to support the sector.) This has generally been supportive of directing and promoting our towns and coastal region as primary destinations for visitors.
- Engagement through town centre actions plans and related to Town Fund and Levelling Up project have all supported the role of strong town centres and networks of centres approach to maximise the benefit for our town centres and their role in supporting tourism. Active travel linkages, good signage, quality placemaking, investment in town infrastructure have all been identified as factors that support the tourism sector.
- General engagement through public engagement channels related to the plan have supported the above findings.



- No areas of dispute have emerged through engagement to develop the Evidence Report.





## **Conclusion**

The evidence outlined in the detailed schedules of this report has indicated that whilst there is abundant recent information available to move forward with producing the new LDP, further assessments are required. These have been listed in the 'Summary of Implications for the Proposed Plan' sections for each topic and will be reflected in the Delivery Programme for LDP4. Gaps and uncertainties in evidence have been largely eliminated by making recommendations for these additional assessments.

The information gathered points to re-curing issues of de-population, poor health, deprivation, inequalities and unemployment. This indicates that approach to development should be reviewed in the new LDP. The new Plan will therefore be restructured, to make it more developer focussed and to illustrate the authorities' development-friendly stance. This may start combating these issues, which are also 'Inverclyde Council Priorities' in a climate-conscious way, by promoting and encouraging development, eventually improving Inverclyde's image and making it an attractive place to live and invest. Inverclyde Economy topics such as Tourism, Culture, Industry, Business, Town Centres and Retail would therefore be re-positioned to front load the new LDP to give these themes more emphasis, encouraging sustainable development in the district.

Furthermore, policies within LDP3 will be reviewed and compared with the policy context set out in NPF4 to be either retained, amended or removed within LDP4. This would allow the Council to reinforce some policy requirements and avoid duplication as necessary.

## **Analysis, Issues and Implications**

The information gathered within each detailed topic schedule has provided a base for the preparation of LDP4, including actions, implications, and recommendations for taking forward the new Plan. The recommended actions will be further reviewed, refined, and confirmed before being included within the Delivery Programme for implementation of the Plan.

## **Appropriateness and Assessment of LDP3**

Due to the Homes and Communities chapter of the 2019 adopted LDP (LDP2) being quashed at the Court of Session, work started immediately on the preparation of a replacement LDP which resulted in the 2021 Proposed LDP (LDP3) which has the status of a material consideration, as it did not progress to adoption prior to Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 coming into effect.

Given the limited time between the two LDPs, there is little change in the priorities identified for LDP2 and LDP3 therefore the assessment will refer to the most recent LDP3.

The overall aim of LDP3 is to contribute towards Inverclyde being an attractive and inclusive place to live, work, study, visit and invest, through encouraging investment and new development, which is sustainably designed and located, and contributes to



the creation of successful places. This is underpinned by a Sustainable Development Strategy comprising:

- Creating Successful Places
- Tackling Climate Change
- Connecting People and Places

and a Spatial Development Strategy made up of:

- Our Towns Villages and Countryside
- Our Homes and Communities
- Our Town and Local Centres
- Our Jobs and Businesses
- Our Historic Buildings and Places
- Our Natural and Open Spaces
- Creating Successful Places

The Council is keen to have more successful places in Inverclyde, and all new development will be expected to contribute to creating successful places through adhering to the six qualities of distinctive, *resource efficient, safe and pleasant, adaptable, easy to move around and welcoming* when considering development proposals. This is particularly important in relation to the Plan's Priority Projects and Priority Places, which reflect major Council investments and the larger scale regeneration opportunities in Inverclyde.

### Priority Projects

LDP3 identifies a number of projects which the Council expects to be a lead or major partner in. These projects mark a major investment in the economy, infrastructure, housing and the communities of Inverclyde, and LDP3 offers them in-principle support.

An update on the projects is provided below.

#### Glasgow City-Region City Deal

- Greenock Ocean Terminal – this £20million project to expand the Ocean Terminal quayside and deliver a new terminal building and visitor centre was completed in August 2023 in order to increase visitor capacity, improve the arrival/departure environment for cruise ships, increase capacity for freight handling and incorporate a museum and dining facility. This facility will assist in growing Inverclyde as a tourist destination with benefits for employment and the economy.

- Inverkip infrastructure – the £4m project to address the restricted network and junction capacity on the A78 trunk road in and around Inverkip has been amended and is due to start in early 2025. It will address the significant redevelopment site at Inverkip Power station, address housing need, support population growth and secure economic and employment benefits.



- Inchgreen, Greenock – more than £11million was invested in 2024 in a major upgrade of facilities at the waterfront industrial site to help attract new tenants and to pave the way for further inward investment in the wider Inchgreen Marine Park recognising the importance of Inchgreen as a key industrial site and the huge opportunities for creating jobs and boosting the local economy.

## Affordable Housing Supply Programme

The Council, through its housing association partners, has an ambitious programme for the delivery of new quality affordable homes. The Local Housing Strategy 2017-22 indicates that 390 new affordable homes were delivered through the delivery of the Strategic Housing Investment Programme 2017-22 with a further 51 new affordable homes specifically designed for wheelchair users. More have been completed since 2022 and are scheduled throughout future years. The Housing Land Audit records of affordable homes constructed since 2022 have been completed but these have yet to be finalised.

## Inverclyde Green Connections

Work is continuing along with GCV Green Network to work on the nature networks to assist in protecting and restoring the habitats of essential species and their movement through the landscape.

The Green Connections programme will continue, as funding permits to improve connections between neighbourhoods and deliver green networks and placemaking.

NatureScot's Peatland Action programme has brought about the restoration of one area of peatland within Inverclyde with another in the pipeline which was not anticipated at the time of preparing LDP3 but still accommodated by Policy 16.

## Priority Places

A number of larger scale development opportunities with the potential to transform the surrounding area and potentially the wider Inverclyde area. These are at:

- The Harbours, Greenock
- James Watt Dock/Garvel Island, Greenock
- Former Inverkip Power Station
- Peat Road, Hole Farm, Greenock
- Spango Valley, Greenock
- Drumfrochar Road, Greenock
- Port Glasgow Eastern Gateway
- Port Glasgow Industrial Estate

Due to the size and complexity of these sites, they are seen as long-term development opportunities but are considered priority sites due to the importance the Council places on them for creating quality places.

Some movement has been made at the Port Glasgow Eastern Gateway where a contractor has been appointed for the first phase of demolition including 15 tenement blocks as well as a former school and church buildings.

### **Tackling Climate Change**

Achieving the target of net zero by 2045 requires Inverclyde to continue, through its actions and planning policies, to pursue the further reduction of greenhouse gases through delivering sustainable developments in sustainable locations, supporting the generation of heat and electricity from sustainable sources, sustainable waste management and sustainable travel.

### **Supplying Energy**

In principle, heat and electricity infrastructure that help reduce greenhouse gases are supported, subject to their impact on the proposed development which will continue.

The guidance on energy will have to be re-examined to address the spatial framework for the siting of wind turbines should more sites require to be found. Also, guidance on the siting of battery storage units is required to ensure the increasing number of applications are dealt with appropriately.

### **Heat Networks**

It is the Council's view that, as an area with a relatively high density of heat demand, heat networks should play a central role in the decarbonisation of Inverclyde's buildings.

To date, one heat network has been installed in Inverclyde in Broomhill in association with River Clyde Homes with a further flagship heat network project planned for the Greenock Waterfront with the potential to extend further.

### **Waste Reduction and Management**

Inverclyde is well served with waste services, particularly recycling. There are 36 neighbourhood recycling centres and 3 large recycling centres. There are no major planning applications anticipated for waste management infrastructure in Inverclyde. Proposals for smaller scale sustainable facilities will be supported in principle, subject to consideration of their impacts and the quality of site restoration, where required.

### **Climate Change Adaptation**

Climate change adaptation is required to prepare for the negative effects of climate change and be in a position to take advantage of any opportunities.

The Council, as a member of Climate Ready Clyde has signed up to the Glasgow City Region Climate Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan 2021 to work strategically to minimise risks and take opportunities from climate change.

### **Managing Flood Risk**



Due to its location and its history of flooding, flooding is likely to be the most likely impact on Inverclyde with the rise in sea levels and more frequent extreme weather events.

The Planning Guidance on Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Impact Assessment has been produced to assist developers. Now 10 years since publication, this may benefit from a review.

### **Connecting People and Places**

Inverclyde is very well served with transport connections both by road, rail and ferry. There is also a comprehensive core path network and National Cycle Network routes.

### **Promoting Sustainable and Active Travel**

Transport is critical to the prosperity and sustainability of Inverclyde's communities. Economic activity and growth rely on a transport network that enables the efficient movement of people and goods around and beyond Inverclyde.

Sustainable and active travel are important in cutting emissions to tackle climate change by moving away from more polluting modes of travel. It is also important to identify where additional transport infrastructure and services are needed to support new development and ensure that developers contribute towards its provision. It must, however, also be ensured that any proposed development does not have an adverse impact on the transport and active travel network.

Sustainable and active travel will have more importance in the new LDP given the focus on local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods in NPF4.

The proposals in the Inverclyde Active Travel Strategy will continue to be promoted and implemented.

One area of transport that could be investigated and promoted in the new LDP is public transport routes and access to drop off points up and down the Clyde rather than just across the river.

### **Communications Infrastructure**

Good digital connectivity allows businesses to reach their markets and people to keep in touch and work flexibly. The good digital connectivity in Inverclyde has been enhanced by the advances and investment in equipment accelerated during Covid which have facilitated an increase in hybrid working and the resultant benefits of reduced travel.

### **Implementation and what the evidence gathered means for the future of Inverclyde**

The evidence gathered has allowed officers to identify Key Priorities for Inverclyde as set out and explained above. These Priorities will underpin the structure of the new





LDP to better deliver on these established outcomes for the district through the planning process.

## SEA & site appraisal methodology for appraising sites

SEA Site Appraisal Methodology is included within the Inverclyde Council SEA Scoping Report January 2025, which should be read in conjunction with this document.

## Gate check and LDP4

The next stage in the preparation of the new LDP for Inverclyde is the submission of this Evidence Report to the Scottish Ministers for ‘Gate Check,’ whereby a decision can be made on whether there is sufficient evidence to progress preparing the new LDP<sup>4</sup>.

