



## **EAST AYRSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**


### **DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCHEME**

**2023**

**April 2023**

## **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Local Development Plan 2017**
- 3.0 Minerals Local Development Plan 2020**
- 4.0 Local Development Plan 2**
- 5.0 Local Development Plan 3**
- 6.0 Participation Statement**
- 7.0 Regional Spatial Strategy**



1.1 Every planning authority must prepare a Development Plan Scheme on at least an annual basis. This sets out the authority's timetable for preparing and reviewing their Local Development Plan and outlines how this will be done. The Development Plan Scheme must also contain a Participation Statement which sets out how people can get involved in the plan preparation process.

1.2 In April 2017, East Ayrshire Council adopted the East Ayrshire Local Development Plan (2017). This replaced the East Ayrshire Local Plan (2010) for all matters excluding minerals. In January 2020, East Ayrshire Council adopted the East Ayrshire Minerals Local Development Plan. This means the development plan now comprises the Minerals LDP (2020) and the East Ayrshire LDP (2017).

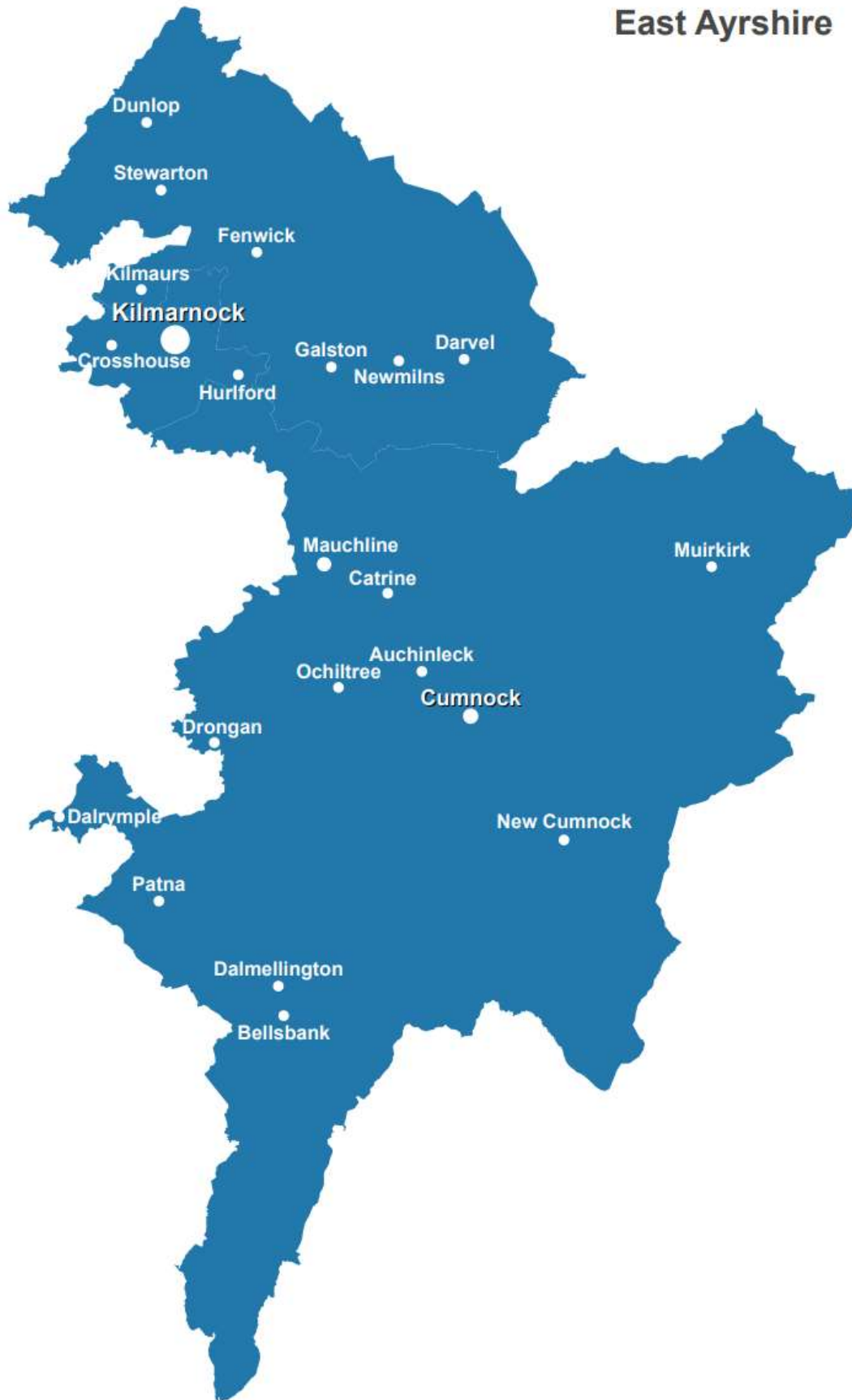
1.3 In addition to the aforementioned documents, the Council has approved a number of statutory Supplementary Guidance and non-statutory Planning Guidance documents. The statutory Supplementary Guidance forms part of the Local Development Plan (see section 3 below).

1.4 The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 brought forward a new system for development plans, which meant for the first time, the National Planning Framework would have statutory status and form part of the Development Plan, sitting alongside Local Development Plans. Following the necessary public consultation and parliamentary scrutiny, National Planning Framework 4 was adopted by the Scottish Government on 13 February 2023. It is therefore now part of the Development Plan and is being used in the determination of planning applications in East Ayrshire, and indeed throughout Scotland

1.5 The preparation of East Ayrshire LDP2, which once adopted will supersede both the East Ayrshire LDP (2017) and Minerals LDP (2020), is now well advanced. The Proposed Plan was published for consultation in May 2022. At the meeting of full Council on 5 December 2022, it was agreed that the Plan would be submitted without modifications to Scottish Ministers for Examination. Subsequently, the Plan was submitted to Examination on 24 February 2023. It is anticipated that the Examination Report will be provided to the Council by the end of 2023.

1.6 The East Ayrshire LDP (2017), East Ayrshire Minerals LDP (2020) and the emerging LDP2 cover the whole of the East Ayrshire area as shown on the map below:

# East Ayrshire



## 2. EAST AYRSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2017

2.1 The East Ayrshire Local Development Plan was adopted on 3 April 2017. The Action Programme associated with the Plan was updated in 2019 and then again in 2021. It was submitted to Scottish Ministers and can be viewed on the Council's website. The Action Programme will be reviewed again in 2023.

2.2 The LDP 2017 refers to several pieces of Supplementary Guidance that required to be produced to support the policies of the Plan. These documents are clearly linked to policies within the Plan, and are therefore statutory in nature and form part of the Development Plan. As per table 1 below, these have all now been produced and adopted. In addition, several non-statutory pieces of planning guidance have been produced.

**Table 1: Supplementary Guidance and Planning Guidance**

Statutory Supplementary Guidance	Non-statutory planning guidance
Developer Contributions (2017)	Community benefits from wind energy development (2017)
Affordable Housing (2017)	Ayrshire and Arran Forestry and Woodland Strategy (2014)
Financial Guarantees (2021)	Knockroon Design code (2010)
Planning for Wind Energy (2017)	Ayrshire Landscape Wind Capacity Study (2013)
Heat Generation (2017)	Bank Street / John Finnie Street Conservation Area Management Plan (2007)
Dark Sky Park Lighting (2017)	Catrine Conservation Area appraisals (2005)
Public and private green infrastructure / open space standards (2017)	Galston Conservation Area appraisal (2014)
Shop front design guidance (2017)	Cumnock Conservation Area appraisal (2009)
Display of Advertisements design guidance (2017)	Dalmellington Conservation Area appraisal (2017)
Production of Masterplans (2017)	Green infrastructure strategy (2015)
Housing Market Areas (2018)	Waterside (Doon Valley) Conservation Area appraisal (2018)
Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (2018)	East Ayrshire Landscape Wind Capacity Study (2018)
Housing in the Countryside (2018)	Mauchline Conservation Area appraisal (2019)
Householder design guidance (2018)	Piersland Park (Kilmarnock) Conservation Area Appraisal (2021)

Newmilns and Greenholm Placemaking Map and Action Programme (2018)	Piersland Park (Kilmarnock) Design Guidance (2021)
Catrine Placemaking Map and Action Programme (2019)	Mauchline Conservation Area Management Plan (2023)
Ochiltree Placemaking Map and Action Programme (2019)	Hagshaw Energy Cluster – Development Framework (2023)
New Cumnock Placemaking (2020)	
Dalrymple, Skeldon Mills and Hollybush (2020)	

2.3 The LDP 2017 contains placemaking maps for Kilmarnock, Cumnock, Galston, Stewarton and Dalmellington. They set out projects and proposals that will help make the settlements as successful as they can be. Within the LDP, the Council makes a commitment to prepare placemaking maps for the rest of East Ayrshire’s settlements and sets out a timetable for this in the Action Programme. Since the adoption of LDP, this process has continued and placemaking plans, or Place Plans, have been prepared by a number of communities, with support from the Council. The Place Plans have been adopted as statutory supplementary guidance and therefore form part of the LDP. The speed of preparing and adopting the plans has been impacted by the covid pandemic, which hindered communities coming together. The work is also very much dictated by the capacity of communities to work with the Council on preparing plans.

2.4 Table 2 below shows progress with the production of place plans. The timetable is subject to change and dependent on both the willingness of communities to get involved and the work of the Council’s Vibrant Communities team, which is working with communities to prepare Community-led Action Plans. Paragraphs 5.8 – 5.9 below, explain how the system of preparing Place Plans will evolve moving forward

**Table 2: Progress with place plans**

Year	Settlement	
Adopted	Newmilns and Greenholm	Catrine
	Ochiltree	New Cumnock
	Dalrymple, Skeldon and Hollybush	
Nearing Adoption	Darvel and Priestland	Auchinleck
Underway	North West Kilmarnock	Kilmaurs
	Mauchline	Galston
	Gatehead	Dalmellington, Waterside & Bellsbank
	Drongan, Rankinston and Stair	
Not yet commenced	Crosshouse & Knockentiber	Hurlford & Crookedholm
	Patna and Polnessan	Netherthird, Craigens and Skerrington
	Dunlop and Lugton	Fenwick and Laigh Fenwick
	Cumnock	Logan, Lugar and Cronberry
	Stewarton	Kilmarnock - New Farm Loch
	Muirkirk	Kilmarnock - Shortlees, Bellfield, Caprington & Riccarton
	Moscow & Waterside	Sorn
	Patna & Polnessan	Burnside, Leggate, Connel Park and Bank Glen
Kilmarnock – Bonnyton, Grange & Howard	Kilmarnock -Southcraigs	

### 3. EAST AYRSHIRE MINERALS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020

3.1 The Minerals Local Development Plan (MLDP) was adopted on 13 January 2020. The MLDP is accompanied by 4 pieces of statutory supplementary guidance and non-statutory planning guidance, one is which is currently under preparation

**Table 3: Minerals Plan Statutory Supplementary Guidance/Non-statutory Planning Guidance**

Title	Statutory/Non-statutory	Progress/Timescale for Production
Peat, Excess Soils and Sewage Sludge	Non-statutory	Adopted (2021)
Community Benefits for Minerals	Non-statutory	Adopted (2021)
Financial Guarantees	Statutory	Adopted (2021)
Strategic Woodland Creation	Non-statutory	To be adopted Q2 2023

3.2 The Action Programme associated with the Minerals Local Development Plan was approved by Cabinet in March 2020. Scottish Ministers subsequently approved the Action Programme and it is available to view on the Council's website. It will be reviewed and updated in 2023.

## 4. EAST AYRSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2

4.1 The preparation of the East Ayrshire Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2), which will for the first time, incorporate all minerals related matters, is now at an advanced stage.

4.2 As reported in previous Development Plan Scheme's, due to the age of the Adopted LDP (2017) a decision was made by the Council in 2019 to move forward with an LDP under the existing legislation (Town and Country Planning Act (1997) as amended by the Planning (etc) Scotland Act (2006)). This was in contrast to most other Planning Authorities, which opted to hold off, before preparing under the 2019 Act.

4.3 In November 2020, the Scottish Government published transitional guidance, with the purpose of helping to guide a smooth transition towards full implementation of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. The key requirement relative to the preparation of East Ayrshire's LDP2 was that for Local Development Plans to be adopted under existing procedures (as defined by the 1997 Planning Act, updated by the 2006 Planning Act), the Proposed Plan would have to be published for consultation **by June 2022**. LDPs that did not reach Proposed Plan consultation stage by June 2022 would be subject to the new procedures and requirements brought forward by the 2019 Act, effectively therefore having to return to the start of the plan making process. As reported in paragraph 1.5, East Ayrshire LDP2: Proposed Plan was published on 26 May 2022, therefore meeting the June 2022 deadline.



4.4 The finalisation of the Proposed Plan was complicated, and slightly delayed, by the publication of Draft National Planning Framework 4, issued for consultation in November 2021. Whilst acknowledging the draft would be subject to the change, the Council took the decision



to, where possible and appropriate, reflect the direction and content of the draft NPF4 within the LDP2 Proposed Plan. Whilst acknowledging an element of risk in so far as the draft NPF4 would be subject to change, the Council considered that the greater risk would be to not reflect draft NPF4, which would likely have resulted in more significant inconsistencies between NPF4 and LDP2, to the detriment of plan-led planning in East Ayrshire.

4.5 Following the close of the consultation on 26 July 2022, all representations received were logged, acknowledged and the analysed. 303 separate representations were received containing 529 separate points of objection. The objections were grouped into 45 issues, split into thematic policy issues and spatial issues.

4.6 On 5 December 2022, a report was taken to a meeting of Full Council, setting out the recommendation that modifications to the Plan were not required and that the Plan should instead be submitted to Scottish Ministers for Examination into unresolved objections. The recommendation was agreed by Council and subsequently on 24 February 2023, the Plan and supporting documentation was submitted to Examination. At the time of writing, a Reporter has not yet been appointed, but this is anticipated to happen by the end of March 2023. Whilst there is currently no certainty over timescale, it is anticipated that the Examination will conclude and the Examination Report be submitted to the Council before the end of 2023.

4.7 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been being carried out for LDP2. Work commenced during preparation of the Main Issues Report (MIR), with further detailed work done on the policy and site allocations contained within the Proposed Plan. The SEA ensures that environmental considerations are integral to the plan making process from the outset. Where environmental impacts are identified, the SEA identifies mitigation measures that should be incorporated within the Plan. The SEA process is open and transparent; at key stages the public and statutory consultation authorities have made comment on the process and their comments have helped to shape the SEA and plan making process.

## **5. EAST AYRSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 3 (LDP3)**

5.1 LDP 3 will be prepared in accord with the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. Whilst the Act received royal assent in summer of 2019, several pieces of secondary legislation remain outstanding. In particular the Development Planning Regulations and Guidance, consulted on in draft format in 2022, have not yet come into force; the regulations have been laid before parliament and are, subject to committee approval, expected to be enacted in May 2023, while the associated guidance will be published later in the year. This leaves some uncertainty around the requirements of plan making, moving forward to LDP3. Therefore the milestones set out in table 3 and described below are at this stage considered to be indicative and may be further refined in future iterations of the Development Plan Scheme, when the secondary legislation and guidance is complete.

5.2 LDP3 will be a new style local development plan with a 10 year plan period. The plan preparation process will be very different to how previous local development plans have been prepared. Some of the key requirements are described below:

## Requirement for an Evidence Report

5.3 The first stage of preparing LDP3 will be to prepare an Evidence Report. This is a new stage, replacing the previous requirement to prepare and consult on a Main Issues Report.

5.4 The preparation of the Evidence Report is a mechanism to ensure that sufficient research, monitoring and engagement is carried out to underpin the subsequent Plan. This stage of the process will not focus on site specific matters, instead it should provide a summary of baseline data and information relevant to the preparation of a deliverable, place-based and people-focused LDP. The likely types of data and information to be gathered through this process will include:

- Vacant and derelict land information
- Town centre health check data
- Open space strategy (now a statutory duty)
- Play sufficiency assessment (now a statutory duty)
- Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping report
- Housing needs and demand assessment
- Public health and wellbeing indicators
- Infrastructure and planned investment information

5.5 Evidence gathering will require close collaboration with a range of stakeholders. Community engagement will be critical to ensure challenges and opportunities are fully captured within the report. As per table 4 below, it is anticipated that the LDP3 Evidence Report will be published and submitted to Scottish Government in **quarter 4 of 2024**.

## Gate Check process

5.6 The Gate Check exercise will provide an independent assessment of whether a planning authority has sufficient information to prepare an LDP. Scottish Ministers will be responsible for appointing a person to assess the Evidence Report, normally a Reporter from the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals. The intention of the exercise is to both ensure Plans are evidence based and reduce the level of debate arising at Examination at the end of the plan process.

5.7 After assessing the evidence report, where the appointed person deems it sufficient, the planning authority can proceed to prepare and publish its Proposed Plan. Should the information contained in the report be deemed insufficient, the planning authority will be asked to revise its Report and then resubmit.

## Local Place Plans

5.8 The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 for the first time introduced new legal requirements around Local Place Plans (LPPs). There is now a legal requirement for planning authorities to invite communities to prepare LPPs. If these meet the criteria set out within the Circular 1/2022 Local Place Plans, then the planning authority must register the LPP and consider it in the

preparation of its Local Development Plan. The invitation to local communities to prepare an LPP must be published early in the Plan preparation process, to allow communities adequate time to prepare a Plan. As per table 4 below, this invitation will be published before the end of 2023.

5.9 Specific to East Ayrshire, the new legislative requirements will impact to an extent on the way that Place Plans have been prepared to date; whilst the process embedded within the Council is community-driven, it is supported by quite intensive Council involvement, through both the Development Planning and Regeneration Team and Vibrant Communities. It would not be possible for this level of support to be offered to all communities over a relatively short period. However, it is important that communities are supported to an extent, in terms of advice and signposting, to ensure they are aware of the legal requirements of a LPP and to make sure they understand how they can best prepare an LPP that can be taken on board within the Local Development Plan. This is critical in maximising the value of the work the community do and ensuring their voice can fully contribute to planning in East Ayrshire. Information will therefore be available for all communities to help guide them in the process, whilst more intensive officer support will be targeted to those communities, with little experience in preparing community led plans or which demonstrate a desire to prepare a LPP but have limited capacity.

## Proposed Plan

5.10 Whilst the statutory requirement to prepare a Proposed Plan is maintained through the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, the new style plans should differ in content and structure; they are intended to be more place based, with emphasis on maps and site briefs, rather than thematic policies that are instead now set out within National Planning Framework. As per table 4 below, it is anticipated that the LDP3 Proposed Plan will be published in **quarter 3 of 2026**.

## Examination and Adoption

5.11 The process for examination and adoption is relatively unchanged within the new system of development planning. The Examination will be carried out by a Reporter appointed by Scottish Ministers, who will examine all elements of the Plan to which unresolved objections relate. Further procedures, such as hearing sessions or request for written submissions, will be undertaken should the reporter require more information to assess the Plan.

5.12 As per table 4 below, it is anticipated that the LDP3 Proposed Plan will be submitted to Ministers by **quarter 1 of 2027** for Examination, subject to the extent of issues raised through consultation. Thereafter adoption is anticipated in **quarter 1 of 2028**.

**Table 4: Timetable for LDP2 and LDP3**

Year / Quarter		LDP2 milestones	LDP3 proposed milestones
<b>Previous years</b>			
<b>2019</b>		LDP2 Member Officer Working Group established and operational  Main Issues Report and Monitoring Statement Prepared	
<b>2020</b>		<b>Publication of Main Issues Report (MIR) &amp; Interim Environmental Report</b>  Analysis of Responses to MIR  Early preparatory stages of Proposed Plan	
<b>2021</b>		Preparation of Proposed Plan and Environmental Report  Consideration of Draft NPF4 and integration into Plan	
<b>2022</b>		<b>Publication of and consultation on Proposed Plan</b>  Analysis of objections and preparation of Examination paperwork	
<b>Current year</b>			
<b>2023</b>	Quarter 1	<b>Submit Proposed Plan and all necessary documentation to Scottish Ministers for Examination</b>  Publicise submission of Plan  Reporter(s) appointed to examine the Plan.	
	Quarter 2	Support / facilitate Examination process as required, in terms of Further Information Requests	

		Prepare supplementary and non-statutory planning guidance	
	Quarter 3	Prepare and publish for consultation supplementary and non-statutory planning guidance	Prepare work plan and engagement strategy for Evidence Report
	Quarter 4	Examination may continue  Post-Examination, consider the conclusions of the Examination Report and publish intention to adopt notice.  Adopt supplementary and non-statutory planning guidance. Continue work on outstanding pieces of supplementary guidance	Commence early Evidence Report engagement and data gathering  Invite communities to prepare Local Place Plans
<b>Future Years</b>			
<b>2024</b>	Quarter 1 - 2	<b>Adoption of Plan</b>  Publication of Action Programme  Publication of SEA post-adoption statement Complete all outstanding pieces of Supplementary guidance and non-statutory planning guidance	Ongoing preparation of Evidence Report
	Quarter 3		Ongoing preparation of Evidence Report
	Quarter 4		<b>Evidence report approved by Full Council and submitted to Scottish Government</b>
<b>2025</b>	Quarter 1		Successful completion of Gatecheck by Scottish Government
	Quarter 2 - 4		Preparation of Proposed Plan
<b>2026</b>	Quarter 1		<b>Proposed Plan approved by Council and published for consultation</b>

	Quarter 2 - 4		Analysis of objections and preparation of Examination paperwork
2027	Quarter 1		<b>Submission to Scottish Government for Examination</b>
	Quarter 2 - 3		Examination ongoing
	Quarter 4		Examination report received
2028	Quarter 1		<b>Adoption of the Plan</b>

## 6. PARTICIPATION STATEMENT FOR LDP2 and LDP3

### Engagement on LDP2

6.1 On the basis of the advanced stage of LDP2 preparation, opportunities for further engagement on the Plan are now limited. Key engagement activities undertaken to date which have underpinned the preparation of LDP2 include:

- Member-officer Working Group (MOWG)

A Member-Officer Working Group (MOWG) was established in 2019 and has met regularly throughout the development plan preparation process to ensure effective early and ongoing involvement in the plan preparation process by elected members and officers from a range of relevant departments across the Council and Community Planning partner organisations. The MOWG has assisted in shaping the Proposed Plan, actively reviewing and refining draft policies and site allocations.

- Key Agencies Group (KAG)

The Key Agencies are bodies specified by Scottish Ministers who are under a duty to co-operate with planning authorities throughout the development planning process. The Key Agencies are defined in the regulations as:

- NatureScot;
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency;
- Scottish Water;
- Scottish Enterprise; and
- Health Boards.

In addition, the following bodies, whilst not key agencies have the same level of involvement:

- Historic Environment Scotland;
- Transport Scotland; and
- Forest and Land Scotland.

Since 2021, the KAG has been successfully working collaboratively with the Council and local stakeholders, focussing spatially on South Central Kilmarnock and Stewarton. By bringing stakeholders together a far more comprehensive understanding has been gained of the issues facing these areas and the potential solutions. The early and continued engagement of the KAG has significantly improved place outcomes and has provided opportunities to align resources more effectively and bring greater certainty for communities.

Aligned to KAG, community engagement was undertaken which helped inform the development of two draft development frameworks for Stewarton and South Central Kilmarnock. These were consulted on alongside the LDP2 Proposed Plan and feedback will be used to refine the documents in order that they can be approved as Supplementary Guidance.

- Consultation on the Proposed Plan

The LDP2 Proposed Plan was consulted on from 27 May 2022 until 22 July 2022. At 8 weeks, the consultation period was 2 weeks longer than the statutory requirement, allowing for part of the timeframe overlapping with the summer holiday period. The consultation was publicised through local press adverts, the Council's website and social media. Although covid restrictions were in place until quite close to the consultation period, and meant there was considerable uncertainty around what level of in-person consultation was achievable, a number of events were ultimately held. Drop in sessions were held in Kilmarnock, Cumnock and Dalmellington, where staff were on hand to answer questions and provide more information on the Plan. One-to-one in person sessions were held in Stewarton, in response to the complex issues in the town. In addition, all community councils and other community and interest groups were offered the opportunity for officers to attend meetings to discuss the Plan.

## Engagement on LDP3

6.2 As set out in table 4 above, the Council is currently at the very start of the LDP3 process, with the preparation of LDP2 still ongoing. Coupled with this, as already noted, the Local Development Plan Regulations and Guidance are still yet to come into force as well as new guidance on effective community engagement. Therefore the detailed approach to public engagement for LDP3 is still to be fully mapped out. **Whilst the steps below set out the broad approach to engagement at key stages of the LDP3 process, this will be set out in more detail in the next Development Plan Scheme programmed for early 2024.**

- Engagement to inform the Evidence Report

The preparation of the Evidence Report will be the key phase for engaging communities and seeking their views on what is good about their places, what are the challenges and what are the opportunities for improvement, redevelopment and growth.

A range of mechanism will be used, both face-to-face focussed sessions and online engagement tools, with the aim of reaching different groups and demographics that are more likely to respond to particular engagement methods.

As well as residents and community bodies, Evidence Report gathering will aim to engage the following specific groups:

- Elected Members
- Children and young people
- East Ayrshire Equalities forum
- Key agencies and other public stakeholders (Scottish Ministers, Forestry and Land Scotland and Transport Scotland)
- Local businesses and landowners
- Key Council departments and East Ayrshire Leisure
- Locality Planning Groups



- Engagement to inform the Proposed Plan

It is intended that soon after the completion of the Gate Check stage, a 'Call for Ideas' process will be undertaken to inform the preparation of the Proposed Plan. Similar to the Call for Priorities, Issues and Proposals that was undertaken to inform LDP2, the intention of the Call for Ideas is for anyone to suggest matters that should be included within the Proposed Plan, including, but not limited to site suggestions. The Call for Ideas will be publicised through the Council's website, local press, social media channels and targeted engagement with community bodies and interest groups. In addition, effort will be made to engage with local young people, through working with local schools and/or youth organisations.

- Engagement on the Proposed Plan

The Proposed Plan and accompanying documentation will be formally consulted on for a minimum period of 12 weeks as per the requirement of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. The following steps will be taken after publication of the Proposed Plan to ensure that the maximum amount of people and organisations can put across their views.

- Press release in all local newspapers circulating within East Ayrshire and on the Council's web site advising people of the consultation period. The Local Development Plan team's mailing list will also be utilised to publicise the consultation.
- Social media will be fully utilised, with assistance from the Council's communications team, to increase reach and to ensure as many people as possible know about the consultation.
- All key agencies and other interested organisation and stakeholders, including Scottish Ministers, Forestry and Land Scotland and Transport Scotland will be consulted.
- Face to face sessions will be targeted, planned and timed to maximise attendance. In particular, officers will work with the Council's vibrant communities and Member-Officer Working Group to identify particular communities or groups of communities, where there may be a particular desire for a face to face event.
- Copies of the documentation will be made accessible in all local community libraries and in Council Offices for information and consultation purposes. The documents will be placed on the Council's website and arrangements will be made for representations on the documents to be submitted to the Council electronically via a dedicated local development plan email address.

In cases where a proposal for development of a specific site is likely to have a significant effect on the use or amenity of that site or of neighbouring land, formal notification of the preparation of the plan will also be given, in terms of Regulation 14(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2008, to the owner, lessee or occupier of any premises situated on that site or to the owner, lessee or occupier of any premises situated on the neighbouring land concerned.

## **Consultation on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

6.3 The Consultation Authorities (NatureScot, SEPA and Historic Environment Scotland) will be consulted via the SEA Gateway at every stage of the Environmental Report. The Report will also be available for public comment alongside the Proposed Plan. The MOWG has sight of the Environmental Report content to date at every meeting as the Plan is drafted and is invited to comment.

## **7. AYRSHIRE REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY**

7.1 The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 introduced a requirement for planning authorities to prepare Regional Spatial Strategies. The Act indicates that strategies will be non-statutory (so will not form part of the Development Plan) but should inform both the NPF and Local Development Plans. It also indicates that they should focus on strategic development, defined as being development that will have an impact on more than one local planning authority.

7.2 An indicative Ayrshire RSS was approved by the Council's Cabinet in September 2020. It was also approved by North and South Ayrshire Council's as well as the Regional Economic Partnership Board. The interim strategy was intentionally 'light weight', without the full detail and engagement that would be expected of a full RSS, prepared to help inform the NPF4 but in advance of guidance being published.

7.3 The guidance on Regional Spatial Strategies has not yet been published by the Scottish Government. During the course of 2023, officers will continue to engage with counterparts in North and South Ayrshire Councils both to explore opportunities for joint working in relation to LDP Evidence Reports and to map out how the RSS work will be resourced, governed, managed and delivered.