

North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2

Survey Paper - Evidence Report

Tourism

Purpose of Topic Papers

We are currently identifying and assessing the evidence available for each policy topic area identified in NPF4 and the Scottish Government's local development planning guidance.

We will issue online surveys for each topic, or group of topics, outlining:

- the relevant information and datasets we have identified so far
- our assessment of the evidence gathered, based on the identified information and datasets
- any potential connections to other topic areas
- potential implications for site selection at the Proposed Plan stage, and
- potential implications for the Local Development Plan

This will be an early opportunity for you to confirm if we have identified the appropriate evidence, provide any other evidence you have or would like us to consider, and offer your views on our initial considerations of the use and implications of the available evidence.

We will then consider the responses to the surveys and what they mean for our evidence base. This will help inform the preparation of our Evidence Report later this year.

Some of the information gathered are particularly technical on a specific topic, and may not be relevant to everyone. We welcome comments on all or some of the information published. There will be more opportunities to comment as we progress through the LDP preparation process.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 requires planning authorities to prepare an Evidence Report that contains sufficient information to enable the authority to prepare a Local Development Plan.
- 1.2 The Evidence Report has two main functions. The first is that it should set out the evidence that will be used to inform and prepare a new Local Development Plan. The second is for local authorities to identify the issues they think based on the evidence presented that need to be addressed by the new Local Development Plan, and for other interested parties and stakeholders to express what they think are the issues.
- 1.3 There are specific matters that the Evidence Report must cover; these are set out in the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019:
 - *the principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district;*
 - *the principal purposes for which the land is used;*
 - *the size, composition, health, and distribution of the population of the district;*
 - *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;*

- *the availability of land in the district for housing, including for older people and disabled people;*
- *the desirability of allocating land for the purposes of resettlement;*
- *the health needs of the population of the district and the likely effects of development and use of land on those health needs;*
- *the education needs of the population of the district and the likely effects of development and use of land on those education needs;*
- *the extent to which there are rural areas within the district in relation to which there has been a substantial decline in population;*
- *the capacity of education services in the district;*
- *the desirability of maintaining an appropriate number and range of cultural venues and facilities (including in particular, but not limited to, live music venues) in the district;*
- *the infrastructure of the district (including communications, transport and drainage systems, systems for the supply of water and energy, and health care and education facilities);*
- *how that infrastructure is used; and*
- *any change which the planning authority thinks may occur in relation to any of the matters mentioned above.*

1.4 This survey paper examines the **Tourism** topic for the forthcoming North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 (NLLDP2). The paper identifies what evidence and information has been sourced and subjected to an initial assessment as to the relevance of that evidence and information to NLLDP2.

1.5 Key points from the evidence and information on this topic are highlighted and potential future relevance is discussed with a view to this informing the approach in progressing the Evidence Report and NLLDP2 more generally.

1.6 The final Evidence Report will detail the stakeholder engagement and public survey that has taken place in developing its conclusions and will highlight the agreements and disputes that have arisen through this process.

2. Identification of Relevant Evidence

2.1 The relevant evidence has been identified through an evaluation of the **Tourism** topic and assessment of available information linked to the topic. Where available evidence shared by external stakeholders has been included. Should additional evidence become available we will consider its implications for the Evidence Report.

3. Consideration of Relevant Evidence

3.1 The following is an explanation of evidence sources which have been used in this Survey Paper and are considered potentially relevant for NLLDP2.

Main Evidence considered:

Source: The Plan for North Lanarkshire (2019)

Reason for using the Evidence:

The plan sets out the vision for North Lanarkshire to be a place to Live, Learn, Work, Invest and Visit. NLLDP2 will be a tool to assist in the realisation of this vision. The vision consists of five priorities that are comprised of 25 high level Ambition Statements. The Plan recognises that North Lanarkshire has the ambition to be the

<p>place to visit and play. As a visitor location, North Lanarkshire offers distinctive, authentic experiences which provide value for money and are accessible to all; and has the ambition to do more.</p> <p>Links to Evidence: The Plan for North Lanarkshire and North Lanarkshire Council Climate Plan</p>
<p>Source: The National Tourism Strategy</p> <p>Reason for using the Evidence: Outlines the tourism strategy for Scotland and the role it has to play in our economy and aims to help achieving net zero.</p> <p>Links to Evidence: ‘The Scotland Outlook 2030’</p>
<p>Source: The North Lanarkshire Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2022-2026</p> <p>Reason for using the Evidence: sets out the vision and ambitions for the tourism sector in the area and how the council and our local, regional and national partners can best support the industry with the many opportunities and challenges it currently faces</p> <p>Links to Evidence: : NLC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2022-26</p>
<p>Dataset Name / Source: VisitScotland – Trends for Tomorrow</p> <p>Reason for using the Evidence: Discusses tourism trends and opportunities that they offer.</p> <p>Links to Evidence: Travel & Tourism Trends - Latest Industry Research VisitScotland.org</p>

4. **Assessment of Evidence**

Scotland

- 4.1 The National Tourism Strategy, [‘The Scotland Outlook 2030’](#), represents the longer-term industry-led tourism strategy for Scotland. The strategy acknowledges that the role of tourism has evolved due to the climate crisis, technological advancements, the EU exit, and shifts in consumer behaviour. The mission to enhance the benefits of tourism across Scotland by delivering the very best for visitors, businesses, people, communities and environment is connected to the national aim to reach net zero by 2045, improved community wellbeing and sustainable economic growth.

The NTS identifies 4 key priorities with a set of commitments for Scotland –

- Our passionate people
- Our thriving places
- Our memorable experiences
- Our diverse businesses

North Lanarkshire

- 4.2 Tourism is a key sector for the North Lanarkshire economy. The [North Lanarkshire Tourism Strategy](#) sets out the vision and ambitions for the tourism sector in the area

and how the council and our local, regional and national partners can best support the industry.

North Lanarkshire Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. The tourism sector has a key role to play in supporting North Lanarkshire to achieve net zero carbon emissions.

The tourism sector in North Lanarkshire is varied and includes attractive countryside areas, market towns, around 51 cultural venues, country parks, museums and other visitor attractions. The accommodation sector includes around 26 hotels, across a range of sizes and budgets, and several guest houses, bed and breakfasts, camping and glamping facilities.

The North Lanarkshire Tourism Strategy and Action Plan identifies 3 key priorities for the area –

1. Business – we will build business resilience, sustainability, and profitability.
2. People and Skills – we will attract, develop and retain a flexible, resilient and skilled workforce.
3. Place - we will create and develop an attractive, competitive, and sustainable destination that offers authentic and memorable experiences.

Events

- 4.5 Events are essential to Scotland's economy and support thousands of jobs. These benefits are also found more widely in the supply chain and in tourism. The North Lanarkshire Events Strategy sets out the council's aim to prioritise events which can have a measurable impact on: economic benefit, tourism, community participation, delivery of The Plan for North Lanarkshire and exposing North Lanarkshire to a national and international audience. The council has an established history of hosting large scale events including Glasgow European Championships 2018, Glasgow Commonwealth Games in 2014, the Tour Series, the 2011 International Children's Games and the 2017 British Transplant Games.

Assets

- 4.3 North Lanarkshire's many assets include:

Cultural (including natural and historic assets) - over 300 listed buildings, seven conservation areas, museums such as Summerlee, Antonine Wall World Heritage Site including Arniebog Distance Stone and Silvanus Sculpture.

Country Parks - North Lanarkshire is home to a wide range of opportunities for the promotion of leisure activities that benefit the health and wellbeing of individuals, including 6 country parks and gardens, 6 town parks, 9 local nature reserves, over 350 sites of importance for nature conservation, and 171 play areas. Strathclyde Country Park, Drumpellier Country Park and Palacerigg Country Park are the focus of our Country Parks for the Future programme, and each has a strategic masterplan with an ambitious ten-year vision which promotes a range of key tourism opportunities.

Sport – 18 sport and leisure facilities managed by NLC including Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility and Time Capsule Waterpark.

Leisure & events – the Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility hosts indoor athletics and pitch facilities and is home to Scotland's national rugby sevens team, country parks host a range of cultural and sporting events, and conferencing facilities in the area

include the DoubleTree by Hilton Glasgow Westerwood Spa & Golf Resort, Dakota Hotels Eurocentral; and Summerlee and Ravenscraig Regional Sport Facility.

Food and Drink – there are many vibrant and award-winning eating and drinking places, from farm shops and butchers to gourmet restaurants and bars.

Trends and Statistics

4.4 VisitScotland identified 3 key travel trends for Scotland 2024-2027:

People with passion - Evolution towards more connected travel experiences. These give rise to a tourism model that focuses on deep, authentic community engagement and tailored journeys. This model also places people at its heart.

Places and immersive experiences - A global shift towards authentic travel. This prompts the industry to offer deeper cultural connections and personalised exploration. This is particularly relevant for Scotland's rich heritage and hidden gems.

Power to change - A new generation of travellers are increasingly eager to access responsible and meaningful experiences and events. Businesses will need to continue to adapt and embrace to fulfil this desire. Responsible Tourism is a key climate change factor.

Local Development Plan

4.5 Local Development Plans are expected to identify the principal cultural, social and built heritage characteristics of the district and the desirability of maintaining an appropriate number and range of cultural venues and facilities in the authority area. Local Development Plans should support the recovery, growth and long-term resilience of the tourism sector. The spatial strategy should identify suitable locations which reflect opportunities for tourism development. Key NPF4 Policies include:

Policy 30 Tourism – the policy intent is to encourage, promote and facilitate sustainable tourism development which benefits local people, is consistent with our net zero and nature commitments, and inspires people to visit Scotland.

Policy Outcomes:

- Communities and places enjoy economic, social and cultural benefits from tourism, supporting resilience and stimulating job creation.

The current North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan recognises the positive economic impact which tourism development can bring to communities. There are a number of areas in North Lanarkshire that already have some Visitor Economy facilities, as well as locations identified in the Area Strategies that have been specifically designed to cater for this part of the economy. These comprise 5 wider Visitor Economy Areas (Kilsyth Hills and Kelvin Valley, Palacerigg Country Park, North Lanarkshire Canals, Drumpellier Country Park / Seven Lochs Wetland Park and Strathclyde Country Park) and 6 specific Visitor Economy Locations (Auchinstarry, Broadwood, Time Capsule, Summerlee, Ravenscraig regionals sports centre and Wishaw sports centre) providing tourism, leisure and visitor economy facilities.

The NL Tourism Strategy and Action Plan states 'we will support appropriate investment and growth in tourism development areas'.

Visitor Economy Areas are currently identified at locations in North Lanarkshire as outlined above. NPF4 seeks to encourage, promote and facilitate sustainable tourism development which benefits local people. It further supports proposals for new/extended tourist facilities or accommodation in locations identified in the LDP. Therefore there is consideration to be had for those locations in the forthcoming NLLDP2. Two potential options to consider are a North Lanarkshire-wide approach to consideration of tourism related proposals, subject to the criteria of NPF4 Policy 30. Or continued identification of specific areas where the council would support these types of proposals.

Short-term lets

NPF4 Policy 30 e) states that proposals for the reuse of existing buildings for short term holiday letting will not be supported where the proposal will result in an unacceptable impact on local amenity or the character of a neighbourhood or area; or the loss of residential accommodation where such loss is not outweighed by demonstrable local economic benefits.

In certain locations across the UK, short term lets are becoming more predominant and can result in impacts locally where there are higher numbers of such applications.

North Lanarkshire saw a small rise in short-term lets applications from 2021/22 – 2022/23. Approximately the same number of applications were received the following financial year in 2023/24. There is no identified geographic pressure/concentration of short-term lets at present in North Lanarkshire, and therefore no considered strain on communities within this context.

5. Potential Connections in Evidence

- 5.1 The Plan for North Lanarkshire is the council's main strategy for the area to improve services and outcomes for the communities who live here. It provides a shared ambition for inclusive growth and prosperity for all. It sets a path for the council and partners to follow. The Plan covers a wide range of activities that can impact on carbon emissions and help to make North Lanarkshire a more sustainable place to 'live-learn-work-invest-visit'.
- 5.2 In the UK the past four decades have been warmer than the one before. In North Lanarkshire it is expected that the average summer temperatures will increase, and the number of rainy days will reduce. The volume of rain on summer's wettest day will increase. Our winters are expected to be milder. Whilst the impact of climate change may seem to be less severe locally, in recent years we have seen an increase in severe weather events. These can affect us through:
- *Travel Disruption*
 - *Emergency Response Situations*
 - *Loss of power supply*
 - *Landslides*
 - *Flooding*
 - *Disruption to service Delivery*
- 5.3 The council recognised that it must take action and declared a climate emergency in June 2019. Concerned about the impact of climate change on biodiversity, North Lanarkshire Council became a signatory of the Edinburgh declaration on Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Tourism - implications for topic 1 tackling the climate and nature crises and topic 2 climate mitigation and adaptation

- 5.4 NPF4 Policy seeks to ensure that any development proposal brought forward will require to give significant weight to the global climate and nature crises in its consideration.
- 5.5 There are opportunities for 'responsible tourism' to help towards tackling climate change. In addition, any tourism related proposals will need to be considered in terms of impacts on the surrounding environment. Some locations may have more sensitivities than others, such as safeguarded natural heritage historic environment assets.

Conclusion in terms of implications for topic 1 and 2

- 5.8 While there is potential for adverse effects on the environment, further assessment of proposals as outline in NPF4 will ensure that there are no significant adverse impacts from tourism related proposals.

Other topic/policy overlaps stated in NPF4

- 5.9 It is possible that connections may exist with the following topics and in the following ways.

- 5.10 There is potential for some positive effects for the following topic areas:

Tackling the climate and nature crises

Climate mitigation and adaptation

Natural places

Historic assets and places

Sustainable transport

Design, quality and place

Rural homes

Health and safety

Community wealth building

City, town, local and commercial centres

Retail

Rural development

Culture and creativity

The tourism industry in North Lanarkshire has potential to provide positive impacts on other policy related areas where the benefits can include economic growth, inclusion, nature benefits and tackling climate change.

- 5.11 There is potential for some negative effects for the following topic areas:

Tackling the climate and nature crises

Climate mitigation and adaptation

Natural places

Historic assets and places

Any type of culture/creative/tourism related development has the possibility to have an impact on its surroundings. However, it is expected that the policy requirements of NPF4 as a whole would minimise any impacts.

6. Site Selection Implications

- 6.1 Impact of any proposals on surrounding environment – footfall, noise, disturbance.
- 6.2 Protection of natural heritage assets such as SACs, SPAs and the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site.

7. Implications for North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2

- 7.1 Based on the evidence, analysis and views presented in this survey paper, North Lanarkshire Council currently considers that the topic policy in NPF4 for tourism may require a policy intervention in the Local Development Plan to consider locally specific issues to support decision making in this regard.