



The Dunbar and West Barns Local Place Plan 2025 – 2035 Action Points



Action Plan: Introduction

This document is supported by the Local Place Plan Report which details the results of consultation exercises which took place in Dunbar and West Barns during 2023. The findings were considered by the steering group who sought to collaboratively agree how best to respond to the communities' views. This process is detailed in the accompanying Report and this Action Plan takes these findings a stage further to identify individual priorities and actions for land use within each of the sections.

The Dunbar Local Place Plan focuses on land use around concepts that are central to Scottish Government National Planning Framework 4 and policies to promote Sustainable Places. Acknowledging the global climate and nature crises is at the heart of this approach which we have adopted. It is structured around the themes of Distinctive, Liveable and Productive Places and it is vital that local planning decisions deliver options that will allow us to make lifestyle choices that promote sustainability.

Community feedback identified a very broad range of issues - some linked to land use e.g. the need for a more diverse range of housing and the loss of agricultural land and others relating to facilities, services and quality of life. We recognise the importance of these other concerns and will work with a number of groups and agencies to deliver improvements. Community Champions are needed to take these ideas forward and many, in addition, will only be deliverable if and when large scale public funding becomes available.



Dunbar and West Barns Action Plan



This map shows Ward Boundaries identified in 2007. Because Dunbar and West Barns share so many of the same amenities and services, we decided that our Local Place Plan should cover both Dunbar and West Barns Community Council Areas.

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Action Plan - Distinctive Places

This map shows our “green spaces” including agricultural land. Some of this land represents formal sport and leisure facilities, a few of these are in and close to internationally important and environmentally sensitive areas. The map also shows remaining woodlands and shelter-belts. These diminishing natural features should be protected, connected & enhanced. Our historic Town Centre and Harbour areas must also be enhanced.

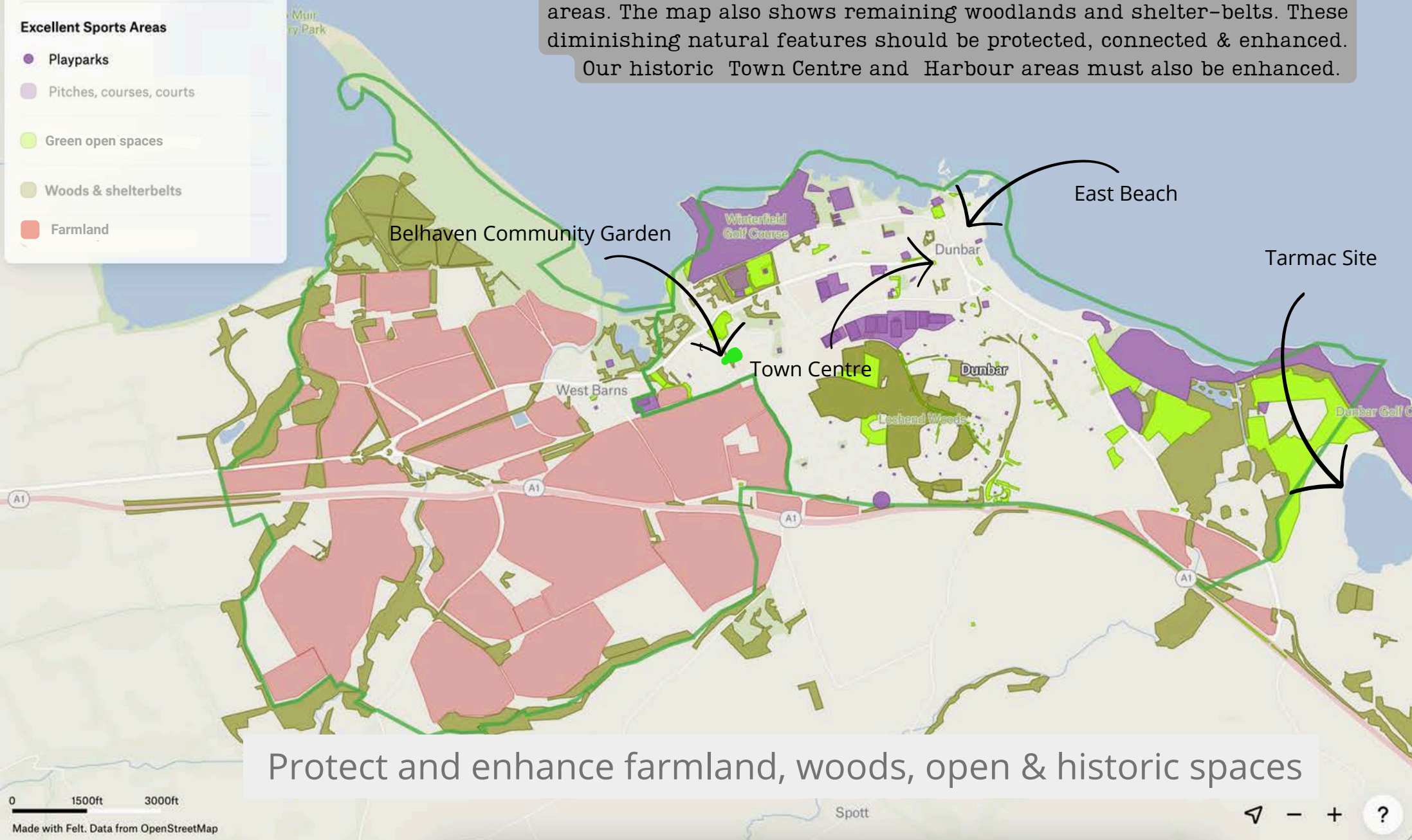
Legend List

Area of Interest

- Dunbar
- West Barns

Excellent Sports Areas

- Playparks
- Pitches, courses, courts
- Green open spaces
- Woods & shelterbelts
- Farmland



Protect and enhance farmland, woods, open & historic spaces

Distinctive Places

Residents of Dunbar and West Barns appreciate and wish to sustain the qualities that make this locality special. Our coastline is threatened by the adverse impacts of increasingly severe storms and action to protect the coastline as well as the buildings, harbour and paths alongside it are critical to preserve existing land use. Increasing biodiversity, improving natural carbon stores and retaining local food production are essential in securing our future. These aspirations have an impact on health and wellbeing, the local economy and the environment. This appreciation inspires community involvement. There are many groups and initiatives that set out to promote these aims and through collaboration and support they can play a significant role in developments.

Priority - Protecting Natural Places & Built Environment	Recommended Action
Green Spaces identified on map must be protected.	Identify mechanisms to secure sites e.g. Fields in Trust Status. Support Community Action through Partnerships at local and strategic level
Increase biodiversity - identify & assess sites for new opportunities and restoration. Create opportunities for walking, cycling and other social, recreational activities.	Collaborate with Tarmac, East Lammermuir Community Council, identify other partners e.g. NatureScot, RSPB, DELAP and other community groups to deliver planned improvements.
Belhaven Community Garden to be retained as a space for community growing, a therapeutic & educational resource and to promote biodiversity in the locality.	Community Asset Transfer Group to build on existing support for community ownership. Identify further developments to deliver social prescribing approaches including external agencies and potential partners
Revitalise the High Street, Harbour and East Beach areas	Town Centre Action Group formed to identify feasible projects to restore/maintain building fabric, promote unique selling points, develop activities and events, communication, marketing & information, signage, transport links and parking. Identify resources, partners, funding.

Local Plan Area

- Dunbar Community Council
- West Barns Community Council

wetland network

A network analysis of good wetland creation opportunities

ancient wood inventory

Areas that have the oldest recorded woods

native wood survey

A survey that identified native woods

woodland network

A network analysis of good woodland creation opportunities

Wetlands and woodlands are cost effective low tech carbon sinks or stores, which if associated with wildlife corridors e.g. along riverine valleys can enhance conservation objectives and create great places to visit and experience wild things. Nature based solutions present a cost effective opportunity to tackle climate change impacts - so these areas need to be protected.



The Plan: Response to Climate Change Map

Liveable Places - Housing

Housing development in Dunbar and West Barns has focused on building large family homes. Services and infrastructure struggle to meet the population's needs resulting from an increase of 60%. There is now significant demand for smaller starter homes for young people and suitable accommodation for those downsizing and the elderly. This trend will intensify as the young family population matures and moves through different life stages. Property value and rentals have risen sharply creating strong demand for more affordable homes as people are priced out of the market. There is very little land left to supply these needs and no further approval should be given to development of housing that does not address these issues.

Priority - Meet Community Housing Needs Ensure supply meets a range of needs for affordable, accessible housing.	Action Points
Campaign to raise awareness with Local & Central Government to make Planning system respond to social need not developers preferences.	Community conversations to explore issues and what responses would be acceptable to ensure future needs are met.
Explore new models of investment and housing design to meet needs of affordability, accessibility & adaptation,	Identify local Champions to research sources of expertise and support in developing this agenda - Development Trust Association Scotland, Architects and ELC Housing & Planning Departments.
Co-produce with East Lothian Council plans to build Council Houses or houses specifically designed to meet the needs identified in this plan, so that application can thereafter be made to seek a change of use of land to Housing where necessary, such change being to meet the exclusive needs of the co-produced plan. In no other circumstances should green spaces or land identified for other purposes be changed to Housing use.	

Liveable Places - Moving Around

The concept of Liveable Places where essential services can be accessed locally using active travel modes is attracting interest. Many people would like to walk and cycle more but there are barriers which have been investigated in the recent Connecting Dunbar study. Possible ways to remove them and make walking and wheeling in all its forms a viable choice are presented in the Report included in this Plan. These initiatives could help to promote the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

Priority - Promote Active Travel	Action Points
Create new active travel routes, improve existing core paths, improve road safety for cycling and walking.	Work with Sustaining Dunbar, Sustrans, ELC and Developers to deliver improvements - routes, layouts, signage, lighting, traffic calming measures and cycle parking Present proposals to Community and continue to Engage for Change.
Secure active travel route and traffic management on Spott Road and connection to the A1.	Consider options in Connecting Dunbar Report and East Lammermuir LPP Develop feasible planned responses with agencies listed above.
Improve accessibility for people with impaired mobility.	Set up a representative group to scrutinise and ensure that this requirement embedded in all development proposals. Seek funding to make beaches and other green breathing spaces accessible.
Encourage Active Travel by installing signposts for routes around town & surrounding area supported by a series of maps showing different routes to a number of destinations.	Develop collaboration between Dunbar Trades' Association, Schools, Local Authority, Community Councils and other representative groups to fund and promote campaign.
Cargo Bike Promotion.	Participation by Sustaining Dunbar in East Lothian Council trial scheme

Liveable Places - Transport Links

The need to reduce car use is well understood but to achieve this the alternatives must be viable.

Improvements to train and bus services are essential but in a rural area, and for various personal reasons, the car will often remain as the preferred option. The challenge is to develop responses to complex and sometimes contradictory needs.

A travel hub at the railway station with better access could improve connectivity for all forms of transport but issues of car parking remain.

Priority	Action
Journey Hub Improved bus and train services	Support the development of a Journey Hub centred on the train station. Enable access to the Station from the south platform (2). Involve Rail Action Group East Scotland, Rural East Lothian Bus Users and Community Rail Partnership to continue work with transport providers to improve services including better co-ordination of timetabling. Survey commuters travel and demand for around town bus services.
Better utilisation of existing parking arrangements. Ensure parking remains free in the town centre.	Effective signage for existing parking, realtime information about available spaces. Whilst active travel must be facilitated it is also important to recognise the importance of cars to others and they should not be disadvantaged. Proposals to charge for car parking in the town centre create an unfair competitive advantage to retailers with free out of town parking provision.
Improve parking provision for visiting buses and camper-vans. Review lorry parking out of town.	Consult managers/owners of potential sites. ELC Swimming Pool and Lauderdale Park, John Muir Country Park, Shore Road Car Park, West Barns Bowling Club, East Links Family Park.

Legend List

Local Plan Area

-  Dunbar Community Council
-  West Barns Community Council

Bike parking

data from OSM and partially verified

Traffic controls

Public Parking Open Street Map

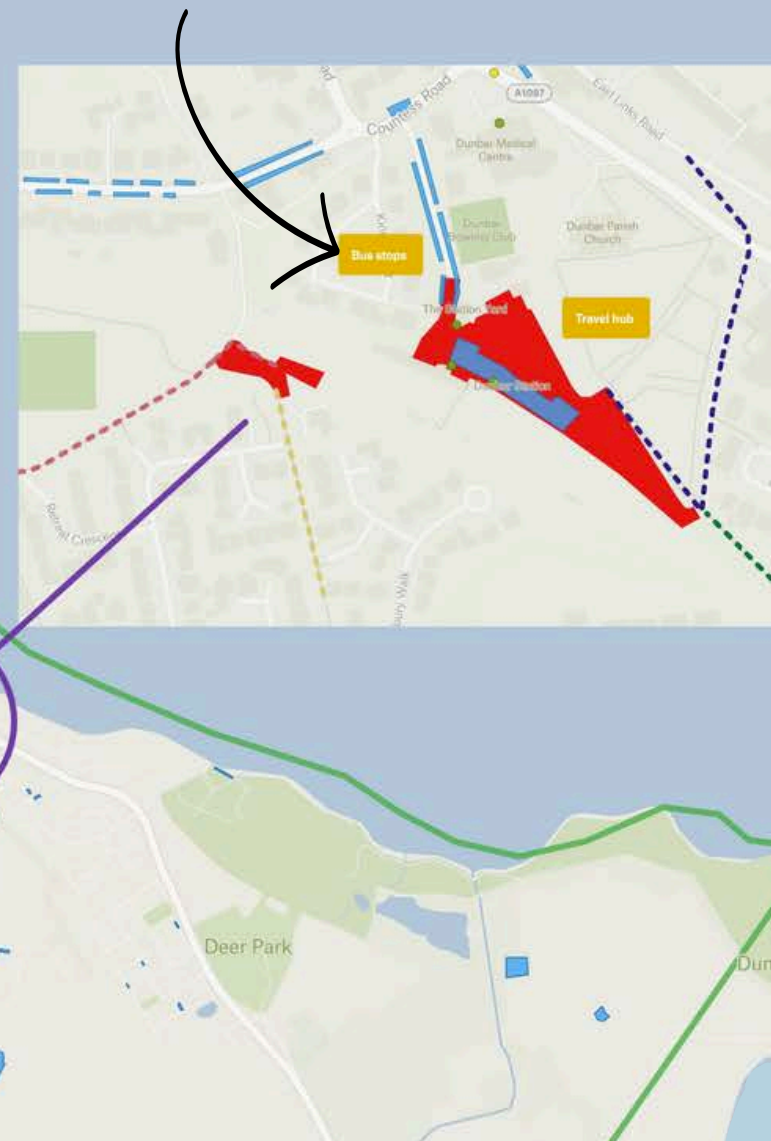
New Active Travel Station Access

-  From Hallhill Car Park
-  New entrance North
-  Routes to School 2008
-  Spott Rd North

Travel Hub

The map shows that there are a large number of public car parks, many are located within a short walk of the town centres. An audit, better signage and possibly expansion of some sites will be looked at. There's some limited data publicly available for public car charging points.

The diagram below shows the location and potential for a new Travel Hub centred on Dunbar Train Station. This would link rail and bus travel with additional cycle and car parking.



Moving Around : Transport & Parking

0 1000ft 2000ft

Made with Felt. Data from OpenStreetMap

Liveable Places - Social Activities

Our community is fortunate in having many groups, clubs and events that bring people together. Sports provision is considered to be strong in the area however there is demand for more creative activities, a theatre base, live music and a social hub. A recurring theme is lack of information about what is happening and more effective communication channels are needed. The area's population total is 11,324 with 1312 aged 0 - 9 and 1582 aged 10 - 19. Of the few existing facilities for young people, and those proposed, most are sports related and more information about what facilities young people require is needed.

Priority - increase range of activities across all ages	Recommended Action
Facilities for Young People	<p>The proposed development "the Space Dunbar" could deliver a unique facility for the community and especially for young people.</p> <p>Reclassify the agricultural land to be used by the Space as Class 11 Assembly and Leisure.</p> <p>Need to canvass young people about their range of social activities</p>
Increase knowledge about existing social facilities and activities for the Community. Encourage full use of existing facilities creating vibrant social hubs.	<p>The Bleachingfield Centre and Hallhill Healthy Living Centre are valuable assets and community hubs. The ways in which they can deliver activities to fill the gaps in current provision should be explored. Community Champions to be identified to take this forward.</p>
More support for Older People	<p>There are a number of community projects that could attract more members with better publicity and more resources.</p> <p>DELAP sub group to investigate sources for additional funding.</p>
Improve communication of community news	<p>Identify local champions with an interest to Investigate possible options for sharing community news using a range of channels.</p>

Action Plan - Liveable Places



Health and Wellbeing

Productive Places - Economy and Tourism




Traditional industries have been replaced but tourism is still a significant strand of the local economy. It helps to keep the town centre as an attractive destination for visitors and local residents and maintain a sense of community. Local traders have survived changes in shopping and leisure habits but are about to face a new phase of edge of town development. There is an urgent need to promote the Town's unique features to visitors and residents alike. The wider area is also about to experience a massive surge in development related to generation of renewable energy but it is unclear how this will affect local employment and the economy.

Priority	Action Points
Enhance the High Street, East Beach and Harbour Areas to increase footfall and spend in the town centre.	Develop a Historic Town Centre Action Plan, see map for area.
Provide more business units of all sizes and co-working space.	Development potential identified at the future Dunbar Business Park
Develop semi derelict buildings in the town centre	These offer potential for economic and tourism benefits and should be included in the Town Centre Action Plan.
Dunbar Business Park / East Lothian Retail Park	This proposed new development has the potential to bring new employment to the area and more retail choice. Impact on the town centre should be monitored.
More Local Training	Support should be given to the expansion of local training and learning opportunities. This land use is encouraged to support local skills development.

Action Plan - Productive Places

Legend List

Area of Interest

-  Dunbar
-  West Barns
-  Dunbar Town Centre

2018 LDP Policies

Safeguard

-  Employment
-  Harbour
-  Transport

Country Park

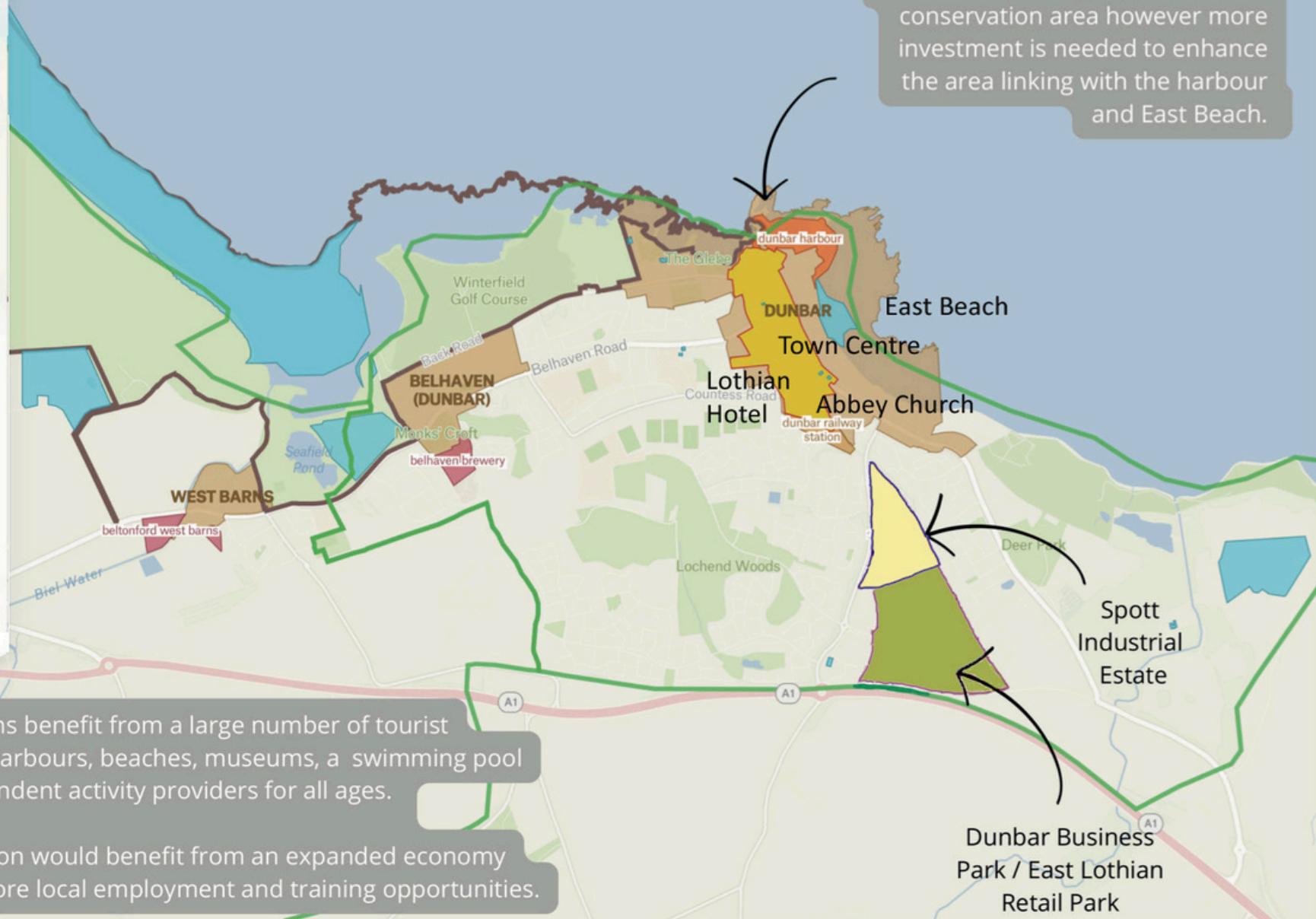
Safeguard

Conservation Areas

Safeguard

-  Belhaven CA
-  Dunbar CA
-  West Barns CA

Dunbar has a busy High Street in a conservation area however more investment is needed to enhance the area linking with the harbour and East Beach.



Dunbar and West Barns benefit from a large number of tourist attractions including harbours, beaches, museums, a swimming pool and a range of independent activity providers for all ages.

Our growing population would benefit from an expanded economy and the creation of more local employment and training opportunities.

Develop and promote local economy

Sustainable Places - Distinctive, Liveable, Productive

The principles of the Scottish Government's National Planning Policies for Sustainable Places are the foundation for this Plan. Our aim is to identify ways in which we can build a thriving community that is respectful of the needs of others and our natural environments. Making healthy life style choices possible and using our community networks to reduce inequalities is vital.

Given that prevention is better than cure we are mindful that this approach can help us to deal with the reduced level of resources available at this time. We need the ability to influence strategic decision-making processes but we also need to build resilience by strengthening partnerships, having a realistic appraisal of our capacity and responsibilities and celebrating our achievements.

PRIORITY	RELATED POLICIES
Distinctive Places - protecting natural places and the built environment	National Planning Framework Policies Supporting Biodiversity - 3,1,4,5,6,8. Positive impacts on health and environmental quality -14,23, historic environment 7, local living 15, Town Centre First 27, Community Wealth Building 25 Other related documents ELC - Climate Change Strategy 2024, Planning Guidance on Local Living & 20 Minute Neighbourhoods
Liveable Places - meeting community housing needs	National Planning Framework Policies Homes that meet diverse needs 16, 15 Other related documents - ELC Local Housing Strategy 2024 - 2029 Scottish Government - Consultation Paper on Enhancing accessibility , adaptability and usability of Scotland's housing.
Liveable Places - getting around	National Planning Framework Policies Promoting Active Travel and Public Transport - 13, 15

Sustainable Places - Policy Framework

PRIORITY	RELATED POLICIES
Liveable Places - getting around Promoting active travel and recognising the needs of diverse groups and abilities to ensure safety, ease and access.	National Planning Framework Policies Promoting Active Travel and Public Transport - 13, 15 Other relevant documents - ELC Local Transport Strategy 2018 - 2024, Visitor Management & Destination Plan, LDP 2018
Productive Places - sustain local economy and identify opportunities relating to new industries.	National Planning Framework Policies Town Centre First - 27, 30, 31. Derelict buildings 9 Renewables small scale & communities 11
Social Places - ensure that facilities meet the social needs of people of all ages.	National Planning Framework Policies Play, Sport, Recreation 21. Promoting wellbeing is one of the Principles that underpins the Framework. Other relevant documents - ELPA Report for LDP 2023
COMMUNITY RESEARCH	LINKS
Dunbar Community Council & Dunbar Trades Association Sustaining Dunbar	https://connectingdunbar.org.uk

Dunbar and West Barns Local Place Plan Report 2024



With thanks to representatives from:
Dunbar Community Council
West Barns Community Council
Dunbar and East Linton Area Partnership
Sustaining Dunbar
Dunbar Trades Association

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