

Sandness

Local Place Plan

2026 - 2036

“a safe, strong, sustainable, self-reliant community, for the benefit of all”



Sandness Community Development Ltd.
Brimtod, Boust, Sandness,
Shetland, ZE2 9PL
sandnesscd@gmail.com



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1. Executive summary

The Sandness Local Place Plan sets out a 10-year vision for *creating a safe, strong, sustainable, self-reliant community, for the benefit of all*. With a population of 160 and located 30 miles from Lerwick, Sandness faces challenges common to many remote, rural settlements—fluctuating school rolls, an ageing population, limited services, minimal public transport, and a limited supply of affordable housing for local folk. Yet Sandness also has significant potential, with good community assets, a successful local employer, a vibrant social enterprise, a beautiful natural location, a strong community commitment to sustainability and a real sense of safety and of belonging.

This plan has been developed through extensive and sustained community engagement. From this process emerged a set of local priorities for the development, use and conservation of land and buildings in our community. The plan also makes suggestions for policies and policy amendments that will support the community's priorities and conserve our local environment.

Our Local Place Plan aligns with national and regional policies, including the 3 statutory documents: National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4); The Shetland Partnership Plan; and The Shetland Local Development Plan 2014. Our Local Place Plan proposals support climate action, rural development, and inclusive participation.

The Local Place Plan sits alongside the Sandness Community Development Plan which will be the route by which its proposals will be delivered. This will be reviewed in coming months to ensure they complement each other. Based on what the community has said, the Local Place Plan has identified nine core issues:

1. Limited facilities for community and visitor outdoor activity
2. Lack of affordable housing
3. Lack of a community hub for services, food and other goods
4. Limited transport opportunities and potentially unsafe roads – within and out-with Sandness
5. Barriers to working in Sandness
6. Untapped potential for community food production
7. Need for greater biodiversity
8. Excess reliance on fossil fuels, and concern about community benefit from renewable energy
9. Risk from coastal erosion to property access and agricultural land

Informed and owned by the local community, with a strong vision, clear objectives and with regard to relevant national and regional policies and strategies, our Local Place Plan will provide the basis for securing a strong, resilient and thriving future for Sandness and its residents.

2. Introduction

In 2024 Shetland Islands Council invited local communities to create Local Place Plans (LPP). After liaising with Sandness and Walls Community Council, the Board of Sandness Community Development Ltd (SCD) decided on 12 November 2024 to develop a LPP for Sandness.

Sandness Community Development Ltd. (SCD) is a membership organisation made up of residents from the Sandness community. Currently the membership amounts to 41% of the Sandness population eligible to vote on SCD activity and business. SCD is overseen by the Board of Directors elected from the Ordinary Membership. It has a contracted Development Worker, funded through the HIE Development Resource Scottish Government (DRSG) to support the delivery of community development. SCD is a charity and a company limited by guarantee.

Local Place Plan Delivery

This Local Place Plan sets out the preferred land use for Sandness, and the process through which it has been prepared. SCD supports the residents of Sandness to participate in decisions that affect the place in which they live, their livelihoods and their health and wellbeing. Through the LPP the community will have a greater influence over the way in which land and buildings are developed, used and conserved.

The SCD Board maintained an overview of the LPP process with detailed work and decision making achieved through the work of a sub group consisting of representatives from:

- SCD Board of Directors
- Sandness and Walls Community Council
- Sandness Community Hall SCIO
- Sandness Parent Council
- Jamiesons of Shetland Ltd
- Transition Turrieffield CIC

and the SCD Development Worker.

Advice and support were received from Shetland Islands Council Planning Service and Planning Aid Scotland.

Sections 6 (Proposals for Policy), 9 (Statement in Relation to Statutory Impact Assessments) and 10 (Strategic environmental assessments), have been included to provide a comprehensive document. Wording has been drawn from SIC support documents and tailored to illustrate the Sandness context, as it is thought to be the most appropriate phrasing by the sub-committee responsible for preparing the Sandness Local Place Plan.

The Sandness Local Place Plan will be reviewed alongside the Sandness Community Development Plan on a regular basis by the Sandness Community Development Board of Directors. It will be revised and revalidated every 5 years from publication, informed by the evolving needs of the community.

Evidence informing the Local Place Plan

Proposals for the development, use and conservation of land and buildings set out in this document, have been informed by the needs, ideas and concerns expressed by local residents through a specific LPP consultation process undertaken between September 2025 and July 2026.

Evidence for the LPP proposals has also been taken from the Sandness Community Development Plan (see page 6), and has taken into account specific building and land-based information from existing documents and data including:

- Children's Living Well Locally Plans for the Westside, Shetland', 2023.
- Sandness Active Travel Audit 2025 – issues and opportunities
- Shetland Local Development Plan, supplementary guidance-Local Nature Conservation Sites 2014
- Historic Environment Scotland PastMap <https://pastmap.org.uk/map>



Loch of Collaster

3. Vision and Objectives

The Sandness Community Development Plan (SCDP) sets out the goal and ambitions of the Sandness community, and this has formed the baseline for our LPP consultation and helped define the themes for the proposals.

Our vision for Sandness is a safe, strong, sustainable, self-reliant community, for the benefit of all.

Our objectives are expressed in pursuit of the following ambitions:

- Strengthen the bonds that connect the community
- Facilitate better access to food, goods, services, advice and support
- Have enough affordable houses (to buy or to rent) for those who want to live and work here
- Develop opportunities and facilities that enable people to work in Sandness
- Protect and enhance the natural environment and cultural heritage of the community
- Take action to address climate change
- Welcome tourists and visitors without detracting from Sandness' natural charm
- Be well-prepared to respond to emergencies and other disruptions

The SCDP is the product of a 2022 consultation with the local community to understand needs and ideas to make the Sandness a better place to live and work. From this and building on a community feasibility study undertaken in 2012, the SCDP was drawn up and adopted by the community in November 2024. Further reviews of specific objectives were triggered by the Melby pier feasibility community consultation, completed in September 2025.

The SCDP is a 'live' working document which underpins wide ranging development within the Sandness community, for the benefit of residents and visitors to the area. The SCDP will be reviewed in the light of the Sandness LPP, it will be delivery vehicle for the LPP and will be kept under regular review. This will ensure a unified approach to community planning in Sandness. A copy of the current SCDP can be found [here](#)



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4. Community profile

For the purpose of this LPP the Sandness boundary has been drawn from the southmost edge of the bay of Deep Dale in the west, across land to the southmost edge of the Voe of Snarraness in the east. The east, west and northern boundary line is dictated by the coastline and defined as the low water mark. It includes the small islet, the Holm of Melby.

Map 1. Sandness LPP Boundary



Sandness is a small remote rural community on the far west of the Shetland mainland. Its population of 160 is spread out over an area of approximately 9.5km². The majority (>95%) of land is croft land, either owner occupied or rented as tenancies from the Vaila Estate, and private house plots. The remaining non-croft land is: the industrial estate (approx. 5685m²) belonging to Shetland Islands Council and the Melby pier site (approx. 1255m²), owned by the community.

Within the community there are a number of businesses, including Jamiesons of Shetland spinning mill, a successful family business employing over 30 individuals with many of its staff living in Sandness, or nearby communities. R Garrick Agri Services is also a local employer and Transition Turriefield CIC operates as a voluntary run community growing group. Others Sandness residents are economically active in crofting and related enterprise or manage individual smaller, single person businesses, run on a self-employed basis.

The community is very active with residents giving many voluntary hours to their specific interest groups, including Sandness Community Development, Sandness Community Hall SCIO, the Parent Council, the Bairns Party Group and Transition Turriefield. There has also been keen interest and participation in the community ownership of Melby pier process, to ensure the site is preserved for future generations.

Like most remote rural communities there has been a significant loss of services over the recent decades and there are sizable challenges to retaining residents and maintaining a sustainably viable community. At present Sandness retains its primary school, and there are a number of families in the community with babies and young children. However, the school is at risk of mothballing in the next few years under current Local Authority protocols.

There are 88 houses in Sandness, 17 of which are currently unoccupied or owned by non-residents and used as holiday homes. Only one is used as a commercial holiday let. There is an unmet demand for homes to retain young people who have grown up here and to encourage more families into the community to maintain the school roll. A housing needs analysis is currently being undertaken by external consultants to quantify the demand.

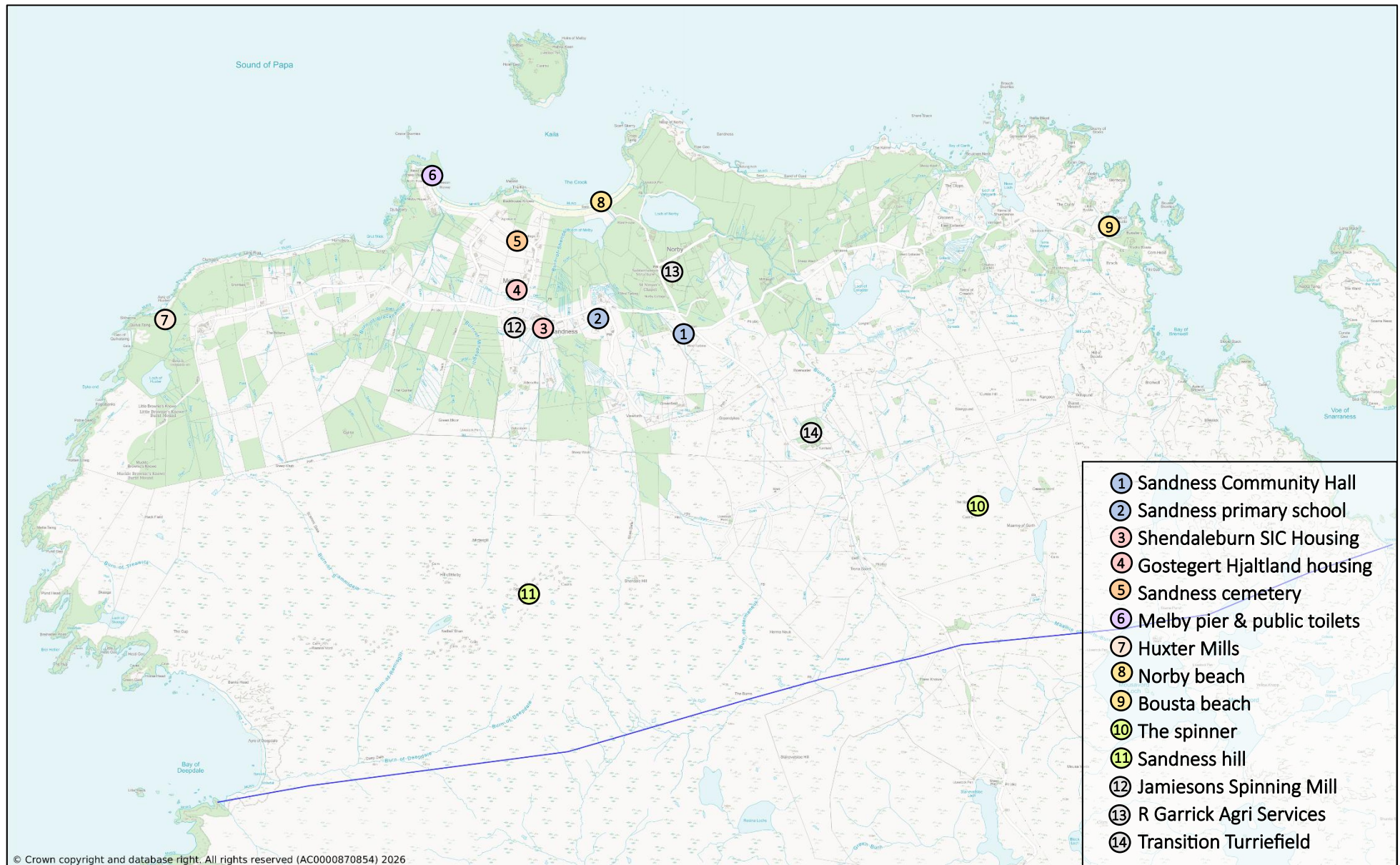
The last 10 years has seen a reduction in access to health services in the community. In 2020 the NHS ended the provision of weekly GP surgeries in Sandness. The nearest Doctor's surgery and shop is 7 miles away; Lerwick and the nearest supermarket and hospital is 30 miles and leisure centre for sporting activities, 15 miles away.

Public transport is limited to commuter buses to Lerwick in the morning and back again in the afternoon and evening. At present it is not possible to travel to Sandness for work using public transport, or to nearby communities for shopping or leisure activities. Lerwick is a 1.5 hour bus journey from Sandness, or 45 minutes by car. Not all residents can drive or have access to a car.



Sandness, looking north

Map 2. Key places in Sandness



5. Proposals for the development, use and conservation of land and buildings

This section sets out the development proposals for the use of land and buildings in the Sandness area. It also outlines the limits for development where residents have highlighted the need to protect the natural environment and historic culture.

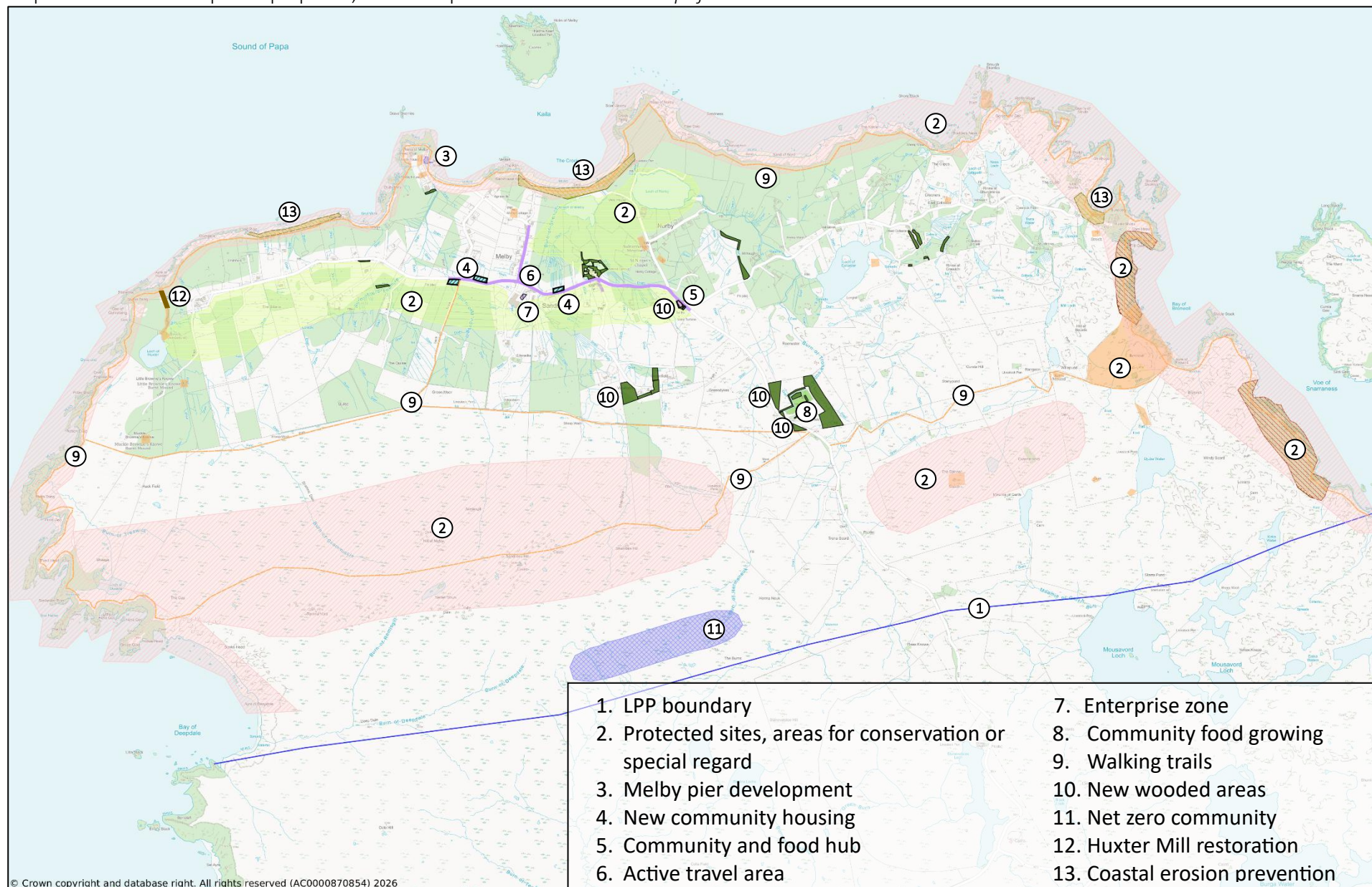
These proposals have been generated through community and stakeholder consultation, desk-based research with relevant documents and made use of local knowledge, support the objectives set out in our SCDP and have been aligned with both national and local planning priorities. They cover:

- Housing
- Community facilities
- Rural development
- Renewable energy and Net Zero
- Environment, Green and Blue Infrastructure
- Community Resilience



Sandness, Looking west across Norby beach

Map 3. Sandness development proposals, overall map. *Please see individual maps for more detail*



Policy Alignment

The Sandness LPP proposals have been drawn up to support the policies and outcomes set out in Scotland's National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), Shetland Local Development Plan 2014 (LDP) policies, and the Shetland Partnership Plan 2018-2028 (SPP) priorities. The description of the proposals demonstrates how each aligns with specific policies and outcomes, but all of the proposals support the overarching policies of:

- NPF4 1: Tackling Climate and Nature Crises
- NPF4 2: Climate Mitigation & Adaption
- NPF4 3: Biodiversity
- LDP-GP1: Sustainable Development
- LDP-GP2: General Requirements for All Development

In addition, our involvement in the LPP process and the development of the resulting proposals support all four of the Shetland Partnership Priorities:

1. Participation – Empowering communities to influence decisions and shape services.
2. People – Improving health, reducing poverty, and supporting wellbeing.
3. Place – Enhancing the quality of life through better environments and infrastructure.
4. Money – Building economic resilience and reducing inequality of opportunity.

Overarching principles

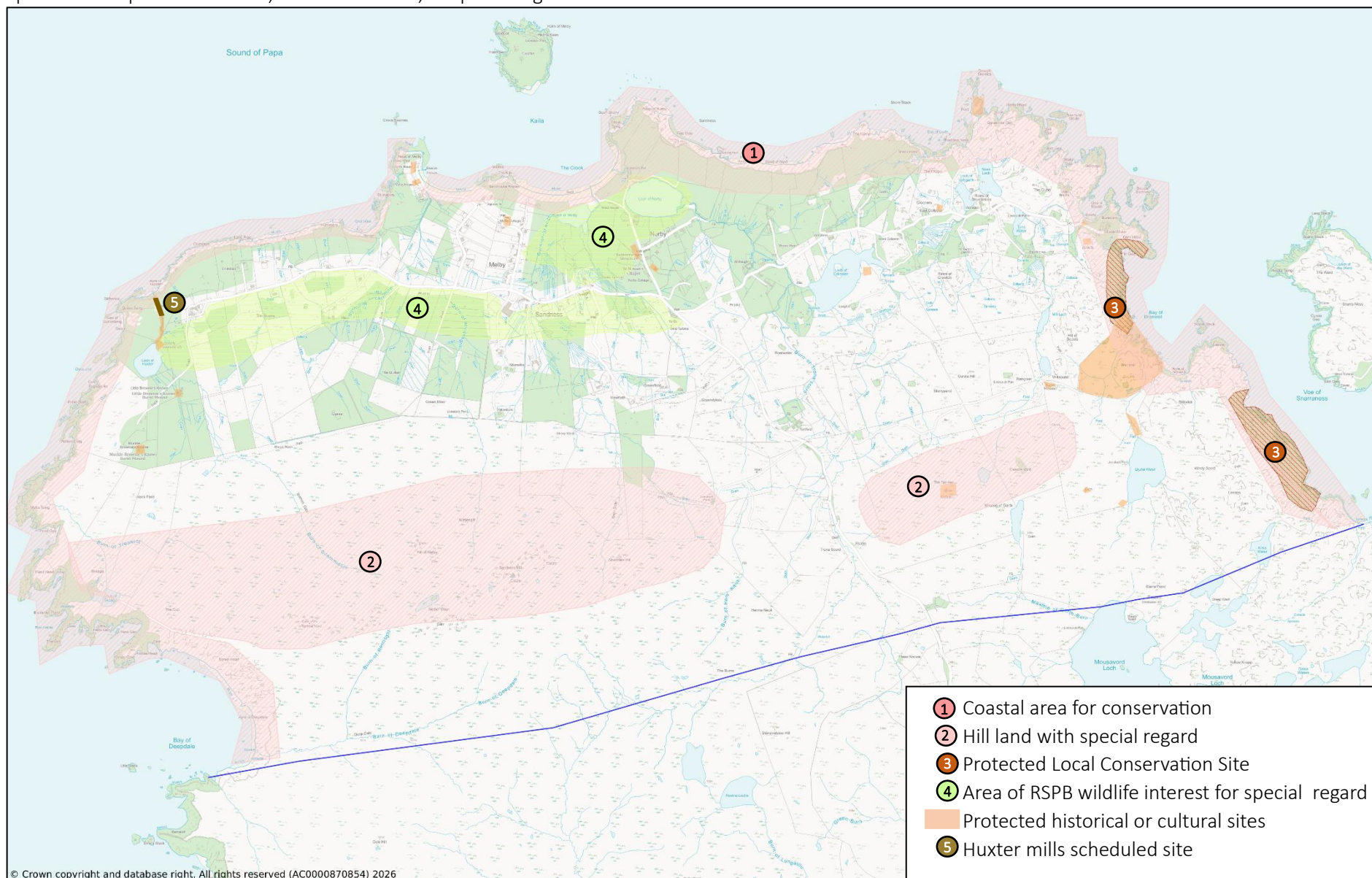
In all consultations with the residents of Sandness, the remote rural nature, the natural beauty and charm of the area has emerged as a source of community pride. They wish to see this maintained, and any development must preserve and respect the historical, cultural, or environmental value of the site. It must not harm or destroy the existing nature of the area.

Map 4. identifies broad zones of particular concern have been identified in the LPP, as have areas which have protected status as Local Nature Conservation Sites, and areas identified by the RSPB as bird breeding habitats of interest. The map also identifies the Huxter Mills site because of the enduring interest it attracts from visitors and active plans for their restoration resulting from community suggestion in this and previous consultations. Historic Environment Scotland identifies many sites of historic significance in Sandness, many of which are shown on Map 4.



Huxter mills

Map 4. Areas of protected status, for conservation, or special regard

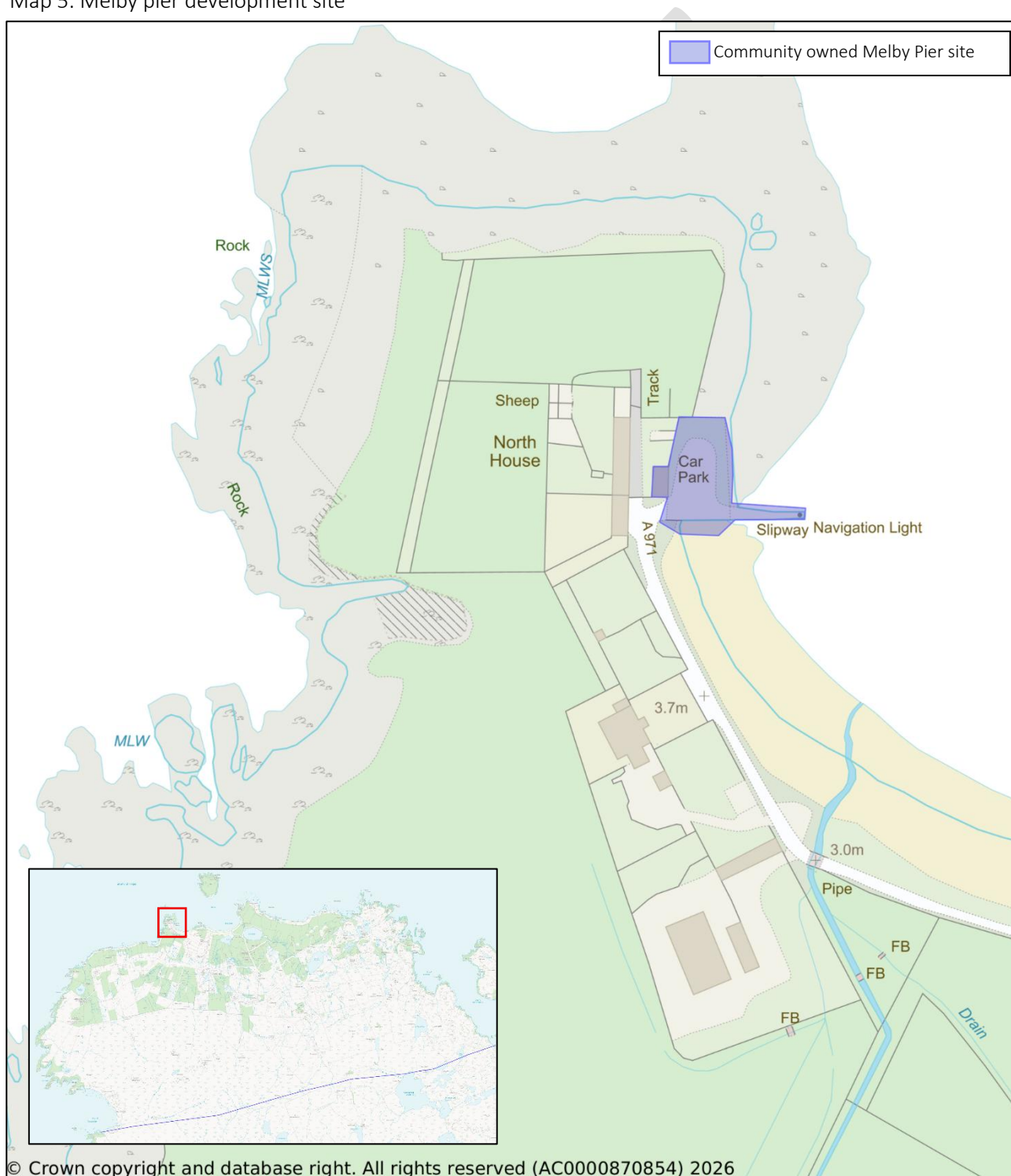


1. Melby pier – New tourist development and outdoor community activity site

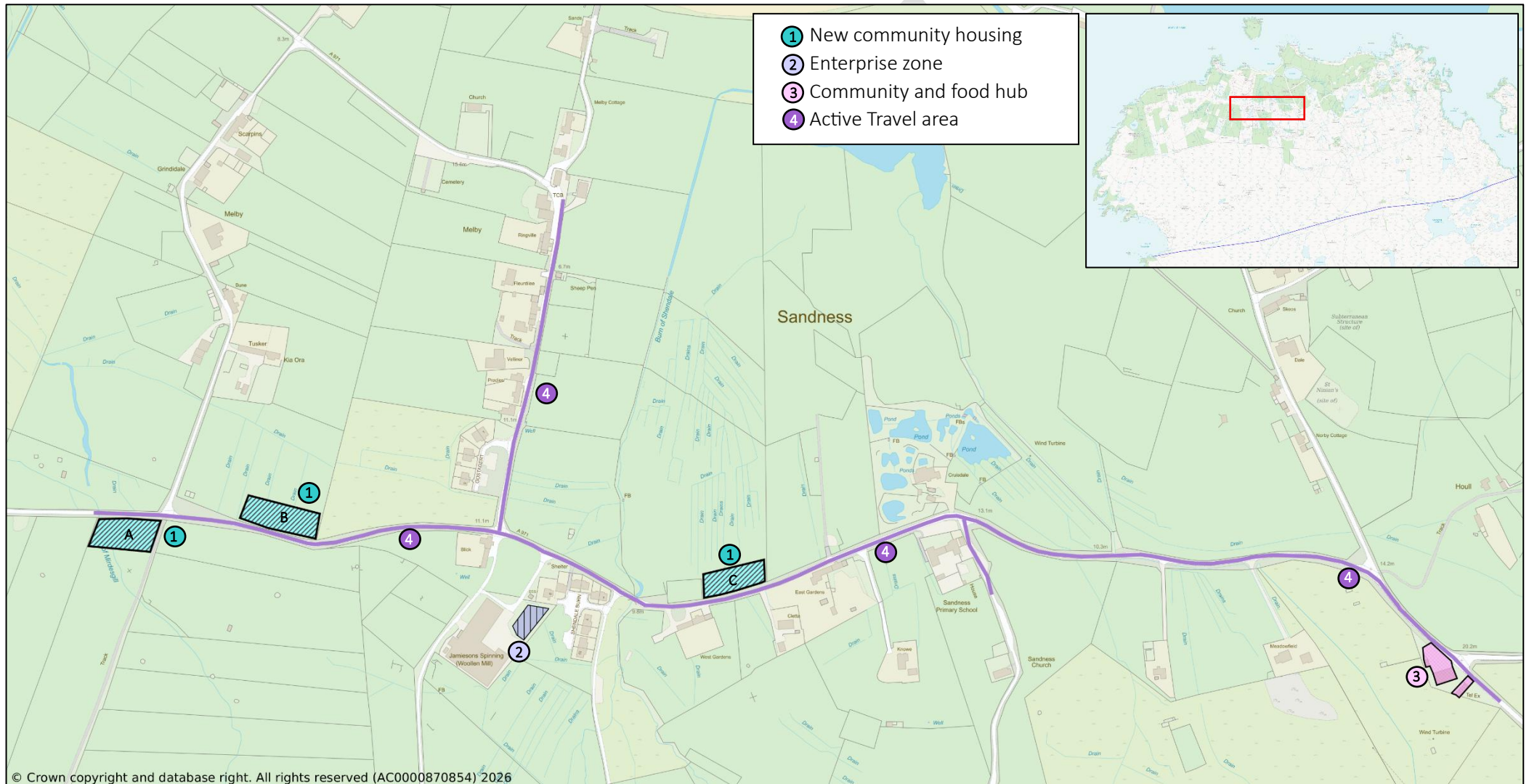
Upgrading and refurbishing the facility to provide improved amenities for sea and shore-based activities and visitor camping, including: regulated campervan parking and hook-ups, a camping böd, grey and chemical waste disposal, laundry and dry store. **Map 5.** Picture page 25.

The development aligns with NPF4 policies 21 Play Recreation and Sport, 29 Rural Development 30 Tourism and LDP CFI Community Facilities and Services, ED2 Commercial and Business developments and CTS1 Coastal Development. It also supports the SPP priorities for community wealth building and encouraging people to be connected to their community.

Map 5. Melby pier development site



Map 6. Central Sandness development



2. Community Housing 1 – Refurbishment of existing empty houses

At present there are 17 properties in the Sandness area which are empty or used as holiday homes. Only one is used as a commercial holiday let. None of the properties have been specifically identified for development. However, it is community preference to bring existing empty properties back into use over building new properties. Refurbished existing buildings will provide community managed affordable homes to help retain young people in the community and attract families to the area. Use of a limited number of empty houses as commercial holiday lets would also be acceptable to increase local economic activity. Using existing buildings will help retain the 'wide open' feel of the community and make use of current utility services to the properties.

This proposal supports NPF4 policies 9 Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings, 16, Quality Homes, 17 Rural Homes, and LDP GP1 Sustainable Development and H4 Affordable Housing. It supports the SPP by seeking to provide affordable housing to those in need.

3. Community housing 2 – Building of new family homes

For young people and young families, to increase long term community viability. Landowners have indicated a willingness to consider the use of their croft land for affordable community housing development of up to 3 plots of 1-2 family houses. The sites would be developed, owned and managed by the community. **Map 6.** Picture i. ii. and iii. appendix 6.

This proposal supports with NPF4 14 Design Quality and Place, 16 Quality Homes and 17 Rural Development; LDP H4 Affordable Housing and H5 Siting and Design, supporting the SPP by providing affordable housing to those in need.

4. Combined community and food Hub

Development of a Community Hub, making use of the existing Hall and adjacent buildings. On the north side of the Hall site there is a two roomed building, built as a doctor's surgery in 1986, owned by the Sandness Hall SCIO. To the south side there is a telephone exchange currently owned by BT Openreach, but soon to become obsolete with the change to Digital services. A centralised community and food hub will provide a social space for the community increasing the opportunity for informal meeting, improve contact with local services and support, as well as expanding access to local food. **Map 6.** Picture iv. appendix 6.

The development aligns with NPF4 1 Tackling the Climate Crises, 15 Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods, 26 Community Wealth Building, 27 City Town and Commercial Centres; LDP CF1 Community Facilities and Services and supports the SPP by helping people connect to their community, supporting a low carbon economy and helping to retain services and people in the community

5. Active travel area

To link areas of housing, school Hall and community hub. Extended pavements, dropped curbs and a permanent reduced speed limit in central Sandness will encourage walking and cycling for short journeys to access local services. Cycle paths could be considered if space allowed. **Map 6.** Picture v. appendix 6.

Improving active travel supports NPF4 policies 13 Sustainable Transport and LDP TRANS1 Integrated Transport. It promotes SPP priorities People, keeping active and Place, creating positive places.

6. Enterprise zone

Further business development will support community resilience and increase opportunity for employment. Community preference is for any new, larger scale construction for business development (beyond that needed for crofting activities), to be sited on the exiting third industrial estate plot in central Sandness.

Map 6. Picture vi. appendix 6

Enhance business opportunities supports NPF4 policies 26, Business and Industry and 29, Rural Development; LDP ED1 Support for Business and Industry and ED2 Commercial and Business Developments. It aids the SPP priority Place by supporting opportunity for employment and maintaining sustainable communities

7. Community food growing

1. An extensive community food growing space already exists in the Sandness area. The land will be used to involve more local residents, increase local food production and supply the local food hub with fresh produce. **Map 7.**

2. Most residents of Sandness have access to outside areas. A number already have food growing spaces, and others aspire to grow their food. Encouraging individual households to set aside plots for food production will increase health and wellbeing, reduce food miles and benefit local biodiversity.

Maintaining community food growing supports the delivery of our SCDP and NPF4 policies 1 Tackling the Climate Crises, 15 Local living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods; LDP NH3 Biodiversity; LDP HE5 Gardens and Designed Landscapes and CF1 Community Facilities and Services. As well as promoting the SPP priorities of People and Place by connecting people to their community, helping develop a low carbon economy and providing services to retain people in the community.

8. Linked walking trails

There are a number of coastal and hill paths throughout Sandness. Paths will be linked with the provision of interpretive signage and visitor information to create at least 5 circular walk options for residents and visitors. It will increase tourist engagement and better choices for outdoor activity for health and wellbeing. **Map 7.**

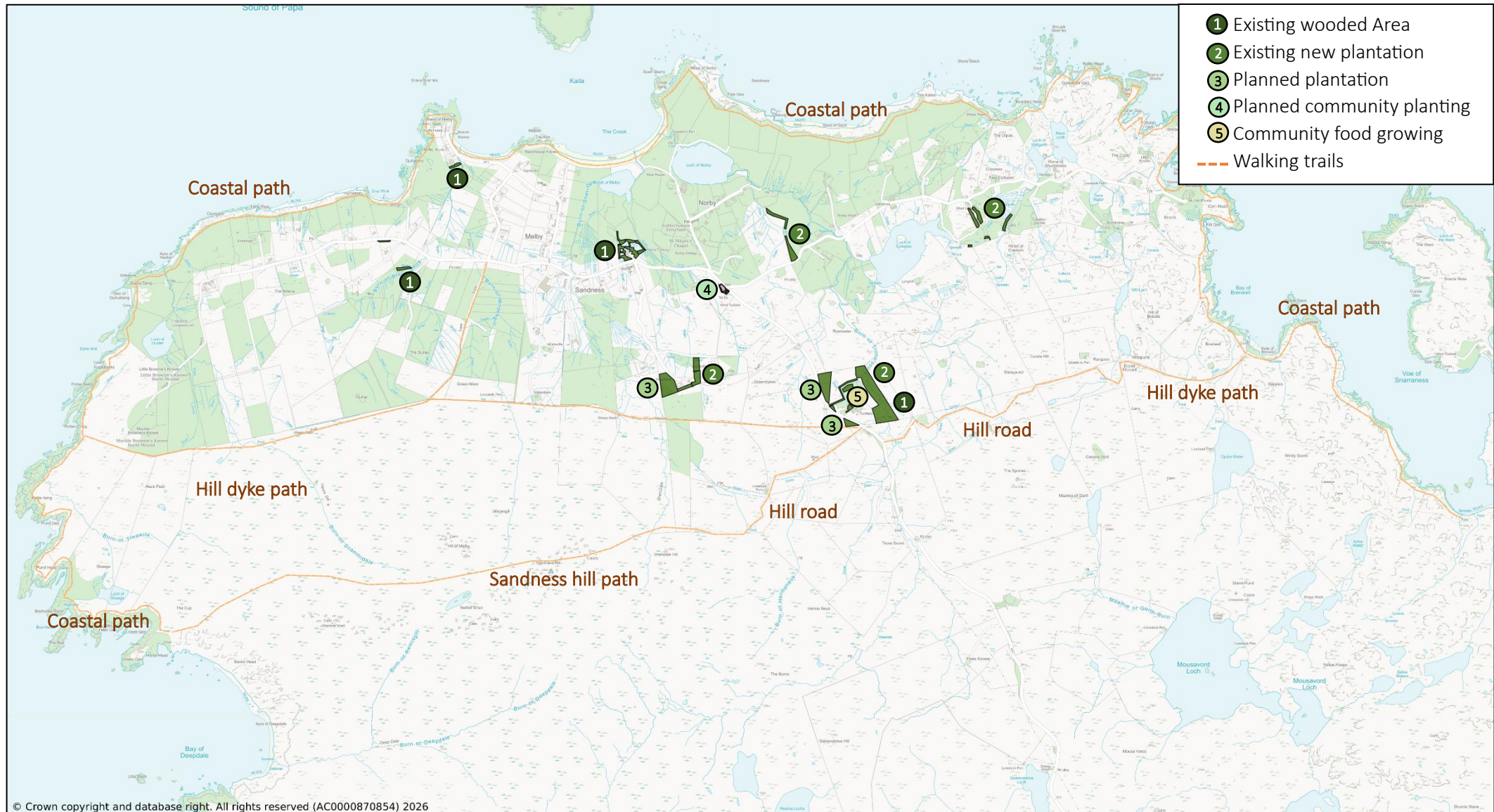
Identifying and linking walking trails supports the delivery of our SCDP and aligns with NPF4 21 Play Recreation and Sport, 30 Tourism; LDP CF1 Community Facilities and Services and supports the priorities of SPP People, keeping active and places for positive living.

9. Wooded areas and better biodiversity

There are number of existing wooded areas in Sandness of various ages. Expanding existing woodland areas and creating new sites, including a community garden with trees, will provide more places for outside public activity. Encouraging low input and wild spaces in the community will improve local biodiversity and reduce our community carbon footprint. **Map 7.**

This proposal supports the delivery of our SCDP and aligns with NPF4 policies 3 Biodiversity, 6 Forestry, woodland and trees; LDP NH3 Biodiversity, HE6 Trees and Woodlands and CF2 Open Space. It supports SPP priorities People, by creating spaces they can be active and Place, making the community a positive place to be.

Map 7. Walking trails, wooded areas and community food growing



10. A Net Zero Community 1—Multi-individual household renewables

Seeking multi-household initiatives for renewable energy, such as ground source, or solar, will support residents to reduce their household carbon emissions as well as household bills.

Supporting the community to install renewable household energy aligns with NPF4 policies 1 Tackling the Climate Crises, 11 Energy and LDP RE1 Renewable Energy Place. It helps to develop a low carbon economy, create positive places and an environmentally sustainable community, supporting the SPP priority Place.

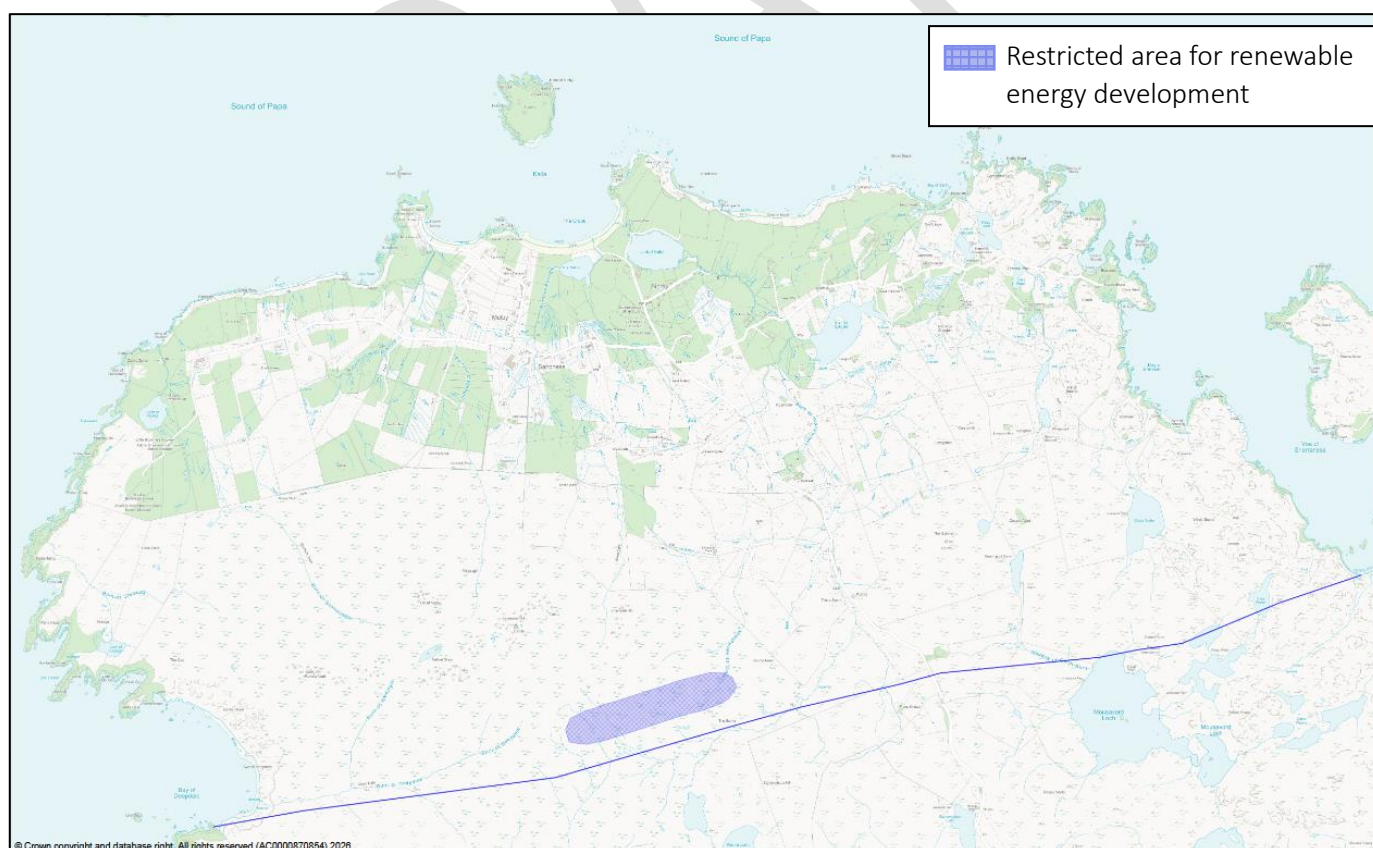
11. A Net Zero Community 2—Community led renewable energy

Appraising the potential for community led larger scale project to support local energy use, reduce household bills and generate income for further community development. **Map 8.**

Community preference is for any larger scale renewable energy project to be limited to the site indicated. In any development proposal for renewable energy production by external parties, the community would prefer to have a significant proportion of community benefit included in the proposals.

Exploring local community energy projects aligns with NPF4 policies 1 Tackling the Climate Crises, 11 Energy and NPF4 29 Rural Development; LDP RE1 Renewable Energy Place and, in addition to supporting the SPP Priority Place with developing a low carbon economy, creating positive places and an environmentally sustainable community, it also contributes to Money-community wealth building.

Map 8. Restricted area for renewable energy development



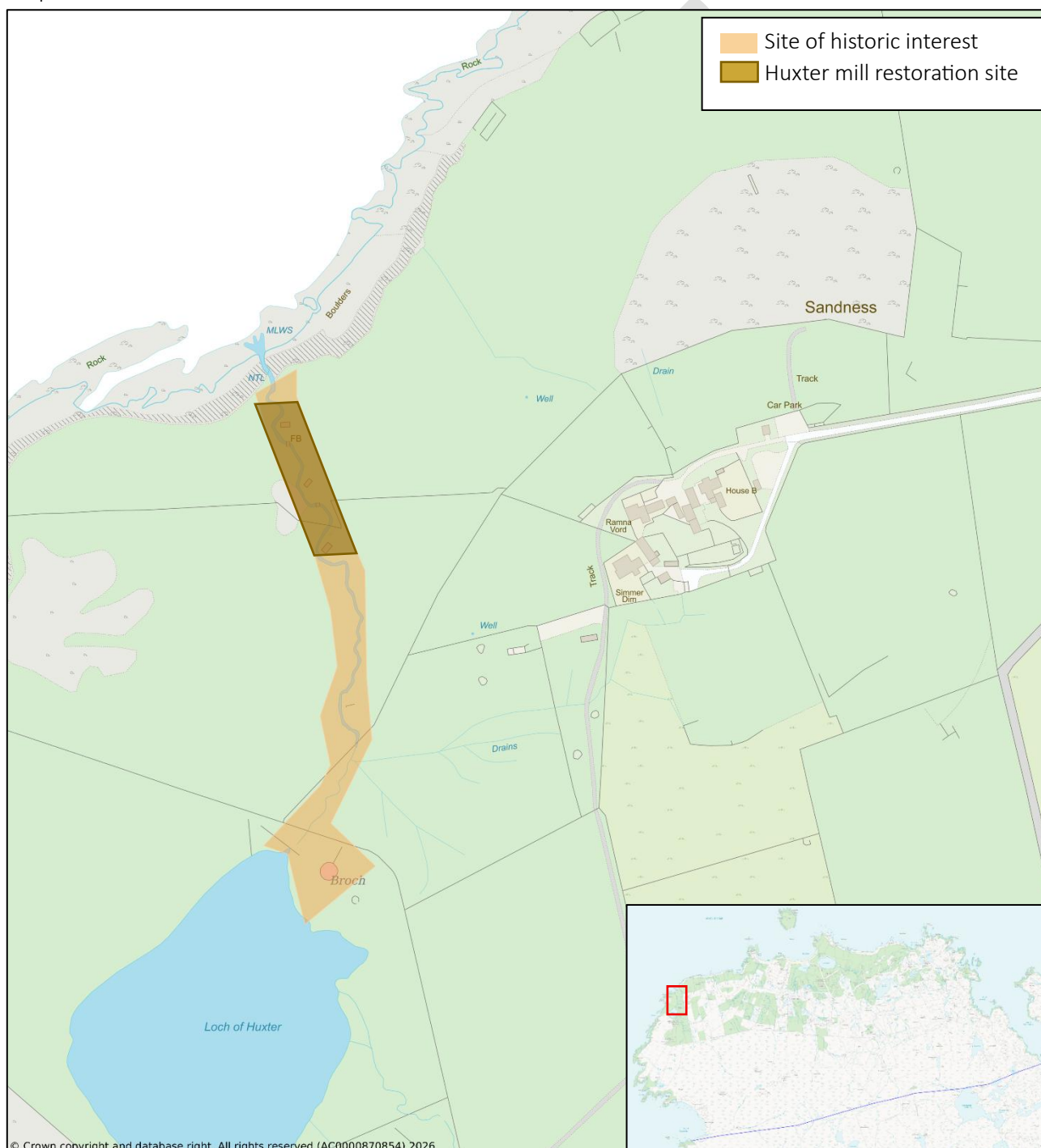
12. Huxter mills restoration

To protect and enhance this historic community asset. Huxter mills have an A category listing by Historic Environment Scotland. The restoration of the buildings and stabilising of the site to offer long term protection from the elements. A destination for visitors to the area, the repair and regeneration of the site will preserve historic buildings that are rapidly degrading and provide further community options for tourist engagement.

Map 9. Picture page 12.

This proposal aligns to NPF4 policy 7 Historic Assets and Places and LDP HE2 Listed buildings. It supports the SPP priority People, helping to maintain a good place to live and Money, community wealth building.

Map 9. Huxter mills restoration site



13. Coastal erosion prevention

Minimising the loss of working croft land and protecting access to housing. This will maintain existing income generation and retain habitable properties within the community. **Map 10.** Picture vii. Appendix 6.

This proposal supports the NPF4 policy 2 Climate Mitigation and Adaption, and 20 Blue and Green Infrastructure; LDP WD1 Flooding avoidance and SPP Place by maintaining positive places and supporting their environmental sustainability.

Map 10. Sites of coastal erosion



6. Proposals for planning policy

In developing this LPP it has become apparent that some aspects of existing planning policy do not accurately reflect the reality of life in a remote rural community like Sandness. The following proposals are made here to inform the review of the existing Shetland Local Development Plan (LDP), and the development of its successor. Together they aim to encourage the new LDP to fully reflect this reality and to support sustainable development in ways that are practical, inclusive and locally appropriate, while always respecting the integrity of NPF4.

Suggested NPF4 policy amendments

NPF4 Policy 2: Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

Policy Proposal:	Permit low-density, energy efficient housing in rural settlements
Rationale:	Communities like Sandness are characterised by dispersed housing rather than compact developments. Low density housing enables more proportionate development that supports demographic sustainability. Links to comments on community housing in our consultation.
Proposed amendment:	Allow context-sensitive low-density housing where it supports community resilience and climate adaptive design.

NPF4 Policy 7: Historic Assets and Places

Policy Proposal:	Enable flexible reuse of historic buildings to support community resilience
Rationale:	Adaptive reuse of buildings, including those at risk of dilapidation, supports local enterprise and housing without compromising heritage. Links to our plans for Melby pier, community housing and Huxter Mills.
Proposed amendment:	Permit adaptive reuse of historic assets where proposals are community-led and demonstrably encourage community resilience and well-being. Within a community-approved framework.

NPF4 Policy 13: Sustainable Transport and NPF4 Policy 24: Digital Infrastructure

Policy Proposal:	Include community transport and digital infrastructure as valid alternatives to conventional public transport.
Rationale:	The extreme remote location of Sandness requires innovative locally managed solutions to ensure residents have access to goods and services. Links to our plans for Active Travel.
Proposed amendment:	Expand the definition of sustainable transport to include community-managed mobility, mobile service provision and digital access in remote areas.

NPF4 Policy 14: Design, Quality and Place and NPF4 Policy 17: Rural Homes

Policy Proposal:	Recognise vernacular and community-led design as valid expressions of quality
Rationale:	Prescriptive, generic standards do not reflect distinctive rural traditions and values. Links to our proposals for housing 1 and 2.
Proposed amendment:	Permit community-defined design quality and location of sites where proposals are locally-led and culturally appropriate.

NPF4 Policy 15: Local Living

Policy Proposal:	Create more flexible frameworks for the '20-minute neighbourhood' concept to suit the remote communities that exist across the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.
Rationale:	Remote communities like Sandness will never have walkable access to services. More flexible models are required to ensure such communities remain sustainable. Links to our intentions for a community Hub and increasing local food growing.
Proposed amendment:	Define 'local living' in rural Shetland as access to goods and essential services in ways that match local patterns of living, such as via a community-managed hub.

Suggested issues for consideration in the review of the Shetland Local Development Plan

Rural Development and Resilience

Policy Proposal:	Limited recognition of the unique needs and risks for small rural communities in planning policy.
Rationale:	Sandness is strongly motivated by the determination to remain viable and sustainable. Policies that encourage consolidation and centralisation place communities like Sandness at risk. Links to our proposal for an Enterprise Zone and aspirations in our SCDP.
Proposed Objective:	Give increased priority to rural resilience in Shetland-wide policies and strategies. Permit development in rural communities which has sustainability of the community and the local economy as a core purpose, particularly if it is community-led.

Meanwhile Land and Building Use

Policy Proposal:	Insufficient recognition of the positive contribution made by temporary use of vacant land and buildings.
Rationale:	Longer-term development often requires testing for viability. Allowing flexible and temporary uses of land and buildings would stimulate creativity and opportunity without longer term risk in situations when resources are limited. Links to our plans for Community housing 1. and Melby pier.
Proposed Objective:	To permit and encourage meanwhile uses where they support community well-being and do not conflict with longer-term planning objectives.

Energy Generation and Transmission Infrastructure

Policy Proposal:	Limited localised planning guidance that enables sensitive development of renewable energy infrastructure.
Rationale:	The desire to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and energy costs sits alongside concern about the intrusive impact of large-scale infrastructure. Strengthening mechanisms for local involvement, requirements for community benefit and siting to reduce visual impact would increase receptiveness to potential development. Links to our Net Zero Community 2 proposal.
Proposed Objective:	To introduce measures that require community consultation and visual impact mitigation for energy infrastructure affecting rural settlements, including when designated as national infrastructure projects. To prioritise schemes that contain demonstrable community benefit – including in reduced household and business energy costs.

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7. Evidence of statutory regard

This part of the Local Place Plan demonstrates how we have given regard to the Scottish National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), the Shetland Local Development Plan 2014 (LDP 2014), and the Shetland Partnership Plan (SPP). It also includes potential issues and mitigation strategies for the proposals.

Development Proposal	NPF4 Alignment	LDP2014 Alignment	SPP Alignment
Melby pier – New tourist development and outdoor community activity site	NPF4 21 Play recreation and sport NPF4 29 Rural development NPF4 30 Tourism	CF1 community facilities and services ED2 Commercial and business developments CTS1 Coastal development	People -people are connected to their community, living in good places and keeping active Money -Community wealth building
Community Housing 1 – Refurbishment of existing empty houses	NPF4 9 Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings NPF4 16 Quality homes NPF4 17 Rural homes	GP1 Sustainable development H4 Affordable housing	People -housing need
Community housing 2 – Building of new family homes	NPF4 14 Design, Quality and Place NPF4 16 Quality homes NPF4 17 Rural homes	H4 Affordable housing H5 Siting and design	People —housing need
Combined community and food Hub	NPF4 1 Tackling the climate crises NPF4 15 Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods NPF4 26 Community wealth building NPF4 27 City, town, local and commercial centres	CF1 Community facilities and services	People -connected to their community; low carbon economy, Place -retaining people in the community
Community food growing 1	NPF4 1 Tackling the climate crises NPF4 15 Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods	NH3 Biodiversity HE5 Gardens and designed landscapes CF1 Community facilities and services	People -connected to their community; low carbon economy, Place -retaining people in the community
Community food growing 2	NPF4 1 Tackling the climate crises NPF4 15 Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods	NH3 Biodiversity HE5 Gardens and designed landscapes	People -low carbon economy Place -positive places
Enterprise zone	NPF4 26 Business and Industry NPF4 29 Rural Development	ED1 Support for Business and Industry ED2 Commercial and Business Developments	Place -people accessing employment and sustaining communities
Linked walking trails	NPF4 21 Play recreation and sport NPF4 30 Tourism	CF1 Community facilities and services	People -keeping active Place -positive places

Development Proposal	NPF4 Alignment	LDP2014 Alignment	SPP Alignment
Active travel area	NPF4 13 Sustainable transport	TRANS1 Integrated transport	People -keeping active Place -positive places
Wooded areas and better biodiversity	NPF4 3 Biodiversity NPF4 6 Forestry, woodland and trees	NH3 Biodiversity HE6 Trees and woodlands CF2 Open space	People -keeping active Place -positive places
A Net Zero Community 1—Multi-individual household renewables	NPF4 1 Tackling the climate crises NPF4 11 Energy	RE1 Renewable energy	Place —low carbon economy, positive places, environmentally sustainable
A Net Zero Community 2—Community led renewable energy	NPF4 1 Tackling the climate crises NPF4 11 Energy NPF4 29 Rural development	RE1 Renewable energy	Place —low carbon economy, positive places, environmentally sustainable Money -community wealth building
Huxter mills restoration	NPF4 7 Historic Assets and Places	HE2 Listed buildings	People —living in good places Money —community wealth building
Preventing coastal erosion	NPF4 2 Climate Mitigation and Adaption NPF4 20 Blue and Green Infrastructure	WD1 Flooding Avoidance	Place -positive places, environmentally sustainable



North House and the Melby pier site

Potential issues and mitigation strategies

Development Proposal	Potential conflict	Document & Policy	Mitigation strategy
Melby pier – New tourist development and outdoor community activity site	Visitors exceed capacity Overspill into surrounding area	LDP CF1 Community Services and Facilities CTS1 Coastal development	Site management and practice Establish overspill measures
Community Housing 1 – Refurbishment of existing empty houses	Owners are reluctant to give up houses	LDP H4 Affordable Housing	Individual and community engagement Engage with SIC Empty Homes Officer
Community housing 2 – Building of new family homes	Density and visual impact	NFP4 6 Design Quality and Place LDP H5 Siting and design	Community consultation Ensure low impact design
Combined community and food Hub	Sustainability	LDP CF1 Community Services and Facilities SPP Delivery Risk	Planning and hub management
Community food growing 1	Limited participation Sustainability	SPP Delivery Risk	Individual and community engagement
Community food growing 2	Limited interest Limited time Reluctance to release land	SPP Delivery Risk	Individual and community engagement
Enterprise zone	Limited demand	LDP ED1 Support for Business and Industry LDP ED2 Commercial and Business Developments	Engage with SIC and business community
Linked walking trails	Landowners unsupportive	LDP CF1 Community Facilities and Services	Individual and community engagement
Active travel area	Drivers ignoring speed limit	NPF4 13 Sustainable Transport LDP TRANS 1 Integrated Transport	Clear signage, media coverage and community information
A Net Zero Community 1—Multi-individual household renewables	Not enough householders interested Lack of funding	LDP RE1 Renewable Energy	Individual and community engagement Robust business and site management plan

Development Proposal	Potential conflict	Document & Policy	Mitigation strategy
A Net Zero Community 2—Community led renewable energy	Developer and community friction	NPF4 29 Rural Development LDP RE1 Renewable Energy	Developer and community engagement Need for Shetland wide policy
Huxter mills restoration	Historic Environment Scotland restrictions Sustainability	NPF4 7 Historic Assets and Places LDP HE2 Listed Buildings	Sensitive development plans Robust business and site management plan
Preventing coastal erosion	Coastal sensitivity Erosion risk	LDP CST1 Coastal Development	Native planting, flood modelling, flood management



The Cliffs of Gurd, looking towards Papa Stour

8. Community support

The Sandness Local Place Plan proposals have significant support from a wide cross-section of the community. A range of engagement techniques have been used to consult with residents over period of ten months, between September 2025 and July 2026. The data has been underpinned by findings from prior community consultations:

- **Sandness Feasibility Study 2012** (Penny Armstrong), responses were received from 81% of full-time occupied households
- **Sandness Strategic Development Plan 2023** (CJM Consultants) 22% returns and a total of 66 engagements
- **Melby Pier Feasibility Study 2025** (Alan Jones Associates), 110 responses equating to 55% community engagement

Information was also extracted from an external consultation by A Place in Childhood, **Children and Teenagers Living Well Locally Westside Plan 2025** on behalf of Shetland Islands Council. Eleven primary school aged children participated and 5 teenagers.

Based on this evidence the Sandness Local Place Plan has the broad support of Sandness residents.

Recognising that there are frequent requests for consultation responses, and hoping to avoid consultation fatigue, we used a variety of techniques to increase accessibility for Sandness residents. LPP specific events were organised and we made use of existing meetings and local bar nights to provide a chance to engage and comment. Overall, there were twelve opportunities when residents could participate in our Local Place Plan consultation:

Focus group with Landowners and tenants

September 2025

In acknowledging the extent of crofting tenure in the defined area for the Sandness LPP, it was essential to understand the thoughts of landowners and tenants on land developments that might impact on them. A meeting was arranged in the local Hall on 30th September 2025 and all crofters individually invited, including those not resident in the community but owning, or using, local land. The Vaila Estate landowner was also invited. An explanation of the LPP process and outcomes was given, followed by a focus group exploring the crofters' perspective on potential land developments. The event was facilitated by a representative of SIC Planning department, responsible for LPP development. Nine landowners/tenants attended. Participants showed an understanding of the value of a LPP to support a stronger community.

Mapping event

October 2025

Following the Sandness Community Development AGM an explanation of the LPP purpose and process was given to attendees of the meeting. Two large maps of the designated area and post it notes were set out for residents to plot suggestions for development. There was also opportunity to suggest areas of concern, or any additional issues not covered by the SCDP. Sixteen residents participated, discussing potential sites for housing, tourist development and renewable energy, as well as expressing concern for over-development and the loss of natural or historic assets.

Online questionnaire

September 2025 to January 2026

Running concurrently with other consultation engagement events was an online questionnaire (see appendix 3, page 40) the form was anonymous and accessible online between 7th July 2025 and 16th January 2026. Links to the form and reminders were sent out regularly with the community newsletter throughout the time period. We have found this to be an excellent way to reach a wider section of the community. Paper copies were also offered; however, none were requested. Follow up interviews were offered to discuss issues in more depth. Sixteen responses to the form were received, with five requesting follow up interviews.

Interviews

November to December 2025

Five follow up interviews were conducted following request from the online questionnaire to discuss issues in more depth. In addition, to ensure everyone had opportunity to participate, fifteen crofters, including two active landowner crofters who are not resident in Sandness, were offered interviews. There was no take-up of interviews, however, four individuals contributed through email and telephone conversations.

Placecheck tool

November 2025

The online Placecheck tool <https://www.placecheck.info/maps/sandness2> was offered to residents in November 2025 as an additional method to map suggestions and concerns for land and buildings in the community. A group walk around was thought to be unsuitable at the time of year. Little interest was shown in this method and only two individuals engaged with it.

Follow up discussion with landowners and tenants affected by proposals

March 2026

Following the analysis of consultation responses, it was thought important to discuss specific proposals with crofters on whose land it would have impact, before finalising the draft map and distributing it to the community for comment. Three crofters were consulted as well as the landowner of the Vaila Estate. All were willing to have proposals for development which affected their land included in the LPP.

Community draft map consultation event

June 2026

The draft map and presentation were made available at an evening community event at Sandness Hall on 11th June 2026, to present the consultation findings and explain the proposals. The event saw only 3 individuals present; however, it did engage residents who had not been previously involved. Feedback was positive, particularly from some who had attended out of concern for potential developments.

Community draft map consultation drop-in sessions

June 2026

Drop in sessions to view the draft map, ask questions and comment on proposals were available at the Sandness Hall bar night on 6th June 2026, afternoon and evening of Friday 12th, and throughout the day of Saturday 13th June. The map was also available to view after a further Hall evening event on Tuesday 16th June 2026. Attendees were asked to comment in particular on housing, business, tourist and renewable energy development; to voice their concerns over any proposals outlined on the draft map and to identify anything that was missing that they thought should be included. Landowners and tenant were also asked again if there were sites that they would consider for development. Overall, 21 residents viewed and commented on the map and proposals for development.

Online draft map consultation

June to July 2026

A further opportunity to anonymously comment on the proposals was provided through the online route (see appendix 5, page 45) asking similar questions to the in-person drop in sessions. The form was available throughout the draft map consultation period from the 10th June to 3rd July 2026. See appendix 5, page 44. Only four responses were received through this route.

Community engagement and consultation outputs

In total, 44 individuals participated in the Local Place Plan consultation process. An engagement rate of 40% of adults over the age of 16 living in, or having land, in the Sandness community. Over 50% were landowners.

Summary of comments underpinning the proposals

Development Proposal	Comments
Melby pier – New tourist development and outdoor community activity site	• Melby pier feasibility study (<i>Jan 2025</i>) • Melby Pier as base for accommodation and water based activities e.g. kayaking (<i>online questionnaire Sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>) • Camping bod maybe at the Melby pier (<i>online questionnaire Sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>)
Community Housing 1 – Refurbishment of existing empty houses	• Definitely a need for housing for local people, young folk wanting to stay in the community (<i>Interview 4. Dec 2025</i>) • The community needs families with young children (<i>Interview 2. Nov. 2025</i>) • I would like to see empty houses brought back into use (<i>landowners/tenants focus group Sept 2025</i>)
Community housing 2 – Building of new family homes	• Make sure Sandness does not become a built up area (<i>Interview 1. Nov 2025</i>) • I would be happy to consider giving up land (poorer land preferred) if I could see the benefit to the community (<i>landowners/tenants focus group Sept 2025</i>) • Sites should be close to existing services, especially sewerage, or within easy connection (<i>online questionnaire Sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>)
Combined community and food Hub	• There is a case for helping folk with food and chatting to them, if that could be brought all together and maybe run from the hall (<i>interview 4. Dec 2025</i>) • Community shop should be with the hub (<i>interview 1 Nov 2025</i>) • At the hall (<i>mapping event Oct 2025</i>)
Community food growing 1	• We need access locally grown produce; to reduce food miles and have fresh produce, I don't have time to grow my own (<i>interview 1 Nov. 2025</i>) • I dislike the difficulty in accessing fresh produce and more locally grown produce would be good (<i>interview 2. Nov 2025</i>) • [Located at] A place with good soil and access (<i>online questionnaire Sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>)

Community food growing 2	• I already grow my own (<i>online questionnaire Sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>) • Support for folk who want to grow their own is needed (<i>interview 2. Nov 2025</i>)
Enterprise zone	• Businesses should be at the industrial estate (<i>mapping event Oct 2025</i>) • At the industrial estate (<i>online questionnaire Sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>)
Linked walking trails	• A full coast walk (with individual sections do-able separately) (<i>online questionnaire Sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>) • More marked paths possibly linking to the costal walk (<i>online questionnaire Sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>) • Waymarked paths: the Hill; hill daek; coast; around Sandness (<i>online questionnaire Sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>)
Active travel area	• Active travel needs pavements! No extra lighting please (<i>interview 2. Nov 2025</i>) • Perhaps a footpath, cycle path or pavement to the hall past the school (<i>interview 4. Dec 2025</i>)
Wooded areas and better biodiversity	• Increase the woodland and improve our biodiversity (<i>landowners/tenants focus group Sept. 2025</i>) • There are opportunities for using land for planting trees and improving biodiversity for any crofter (<i>landowners follow up meetings Mar 2026</i>)
Huxter mills restoration	• Huxter mills are beautiful and it would be good to get them done up (<i>interview 3. Nov 2025</i>) • Refurbish the Huxter mills (<i>online questionnaire Sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>) • The state of the Huxter mills really bugs me [] They need to be done up (<i>interview 1. Nov 2025</i>)
Preventing coastal erosion	• Bousta and Norby (<i>mapping event Oct 2025</i>) • On the coast between Melby and Huxter in places along the footpath (<i>online review questionnaire June 2026</i>)
A Net Zero Community 1—Multi-individual household renewables	• All, or any! —solar panels, ground source heat, air source heat, household wind turbine, other (<i>online questionnaire Sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>)
A Net Zero Community 2—Community led renewable energy	• Bring on the renewables, if the community benefit [] it would be good for the community to benefit, but it has to be done well, with respect to the environment and look of the place (<i>interview 4. Dec 2025</i>) • If renewable energy projects had a real community benefit, then it would be okay. (<i>interview 3. Nov 2025</i>) • I'm all for renewables, but they have to be for the benefit of the community and not detract from the nature of the landscape. No big developments (<i>interview 1. Nov 2025</i>)

All methods of community engagement generated findings on housing, business and tourism development, community food, open spaces and renewable energy. A majority of residents are in favour of using existing infrastructure over building new. There was a strong desire to maintain the rural charm of the community. A summary of these findings can be found in appendix 4.

Summary of comments informing the need for conservation or special regard in some areas:

Why we should have conserved areas or special regard for sites:
• We need to have protected areas so it stays unspoilt (<i>mapping event Oct 2025</i>) • Sandness is special and the environment faces enough threat, so should always be considered and protected (<i>online questionnaire sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>) • The priority is for the community to have mindful remembrance of why we love what we do about Sandness, so we don't overdo it (<i>interview 1. Nov 2025</i>)
What we should protect:
• We need to be "careful" in all areas (<i>online questionnaire sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>) • Coastline is SSSI and has to be protected (<i>interview 4. Dec 2025</i>) • Working croft land (<i>online questionnaire sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>) • Sandness hill, to protect the peat and the wildlife (<i>online questionnaire sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>) • Most of the Coastal Path other than Melby Pier (<i>online questionnaire sept 2025 to Jan 2026</i>)

Resolving concerns

The main concern expressed was that over-development for business or tourism would harm the dispersed remote nature of the area. Development of proposals have taken this into account and sought to make use of existing infrastructure and limit new development to maintain the open feel of the community.

Some residents, who had not participated in the consultation so far, came along to the draft map consultation drop-ins with concerns about what development might look like. After viewing the proposals and draft map, all were satisfied that suggested development had been considered and chosen in a sensitive manner.

Two individuals raised concerns about one of the sites suggested for renewable energy development. There was worry that it would impact on sites of historic and natural importance nearby. This site has been removed from the proposals.

Summary of community engagement and support

Our consultation and engagement process has identified nine core issues which have influenced the proposals in the Sandness Local Place Plan:

1. Limited facilities for community and visitor outdoor activity
2. Lack of affordable housing
3. Lack of a community hub for services, food and other goods
4. Limited transport opportunities and potentially unsafe roads – within and out-with Sandness
5. Barriers to working in Sandness
6. Untapped potential for community food production
7. Need for greater biodiversity
8. Excess reliance on fossil fuels, and concern about community benefit from renewable energy
9. Risk from coastal erosion to property access and agricultural land

Community participation in the process has demonstrated a high level of support for the proposals. Where concerns have been raised, they have been allayed through further information, clarification and negotiation. Where appropriate, changes have been made to the siting of development, or removed altogether to meet community approval. This final plan has been informed by Sandness residents and is widely supported as a document that will help maintain a strong sustainable community for the future.

DRAFT

9. Statutory impact assessments

In preparing the Sandness Local Place Plan the community has given due regard to the following statutory impact assessment frameworks:

Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA)

The LPP promotes equality by identifying and addressing barriers to housing, transport, services, food and participation. Proposals involving affordable housing, a community hub, renewable energy and improved transport infrastructure are designed to benefit all residents, including older people, young adults, disabled individuals, and those experiencing poverty. The engagement process actively sought input from under-represented groups, and the plan reflects a commitment to inclusive design and equitable access to opportunities.

Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)

Children and young people were directly involved in shaping the LPP, through the 'Living Well Living Locally' process. Their input influenced proposals for transport, more woodland, affordable housing and local access to food. The wider community wants its children to be involved in decisions affecting them, to be safe and healthy, and to access services that support their wellbeing and development. Retaining Sandness School, while not a feature of the LPP, is fundamental to Sandness being a place that children see as their home.

Fairer Scotland Duty (FSD) Assessment

The LPP contributes to reducing inequalities of outcome by addressing transport poverty, housing affordability, cheaper energy, local food and access to essential services. Proposals are designed to strengthen the bonds of the community, support local enterprise and jobs, and improve the quality of life for those facing disadvantage. The plan reflects a place-based approach to tackling inequality, aligned with the principles of the Fairer Scotland Duty.

Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA)

Sandness is a community on the western edge of a Scottish island at the end of seven miles of single-track road. It is geographically isolated, has very limited access to services, and faces demographic pressures. The LPP has been shaped by these realities and proposes locally appropriate solutions that enhance resilience, sustainability, and community capacity. The plan supports the principles of the Islands Act by promoting island-proofed development and empowering local decision-making.



Melby

10. Strategic environmental assessments

In preparing and implementing the proposals within this Local Place Plan, the Sandness community recognises the importance of ensuring that all development, conservation and policy suggestions be in line with Scotland's Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) framework.

The LPP assumes that the SEA process provides a robust framework for assessing proposals for the development of land and buildings. This will help safeguard environmental quality and community wellbeing by requiring that plans and proposals are considered in relation to the ten SEA topics:

1. Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna: Proposals will aim to protect and enhance local habitats, support native species, and integrate biodiversity into design through planting, green infrastructure and ecological connectivity.
2. Population and Human Health: All proposals seek to improve wellbeing through better housing, transport, access to services, and opportunities for physical activity, social interaction and healthy living.
3. Soil: Development will be designed to avoid or minimise soil degradation, promote sustainable land use, and support food-growing initiatives that improve soil health and productivity.
4. Water: Proposals will incorporate sustainable drainage systems, flood and coastal erosion mitigation measures, and protection of watercourses, ensuring water quality and resilience to climate impacts.
5. Air: By promoting active travel, reducing reliance on long car journeys, and supporting local living and renewable energy use, the plan aims to reduce emissions and improve air quality.
6. Climatic Factors: Climate adaptation and mitigation are central to the plan, through energy-efficient buildings, low-impact transport, and green infrastructure contributing to net zero goals and climate resilience.
7. Material Assets: The plan actively supports the reuse of existing buildings and infrastructure, efficient use of land, and investment in community assets that deliver long-term value and sustainability.
8. Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage): Proposals respect and celebrate Sandness' heritage, with adaptive reuse of historic buildings and interpretation features that reinforce local identity.
9. Landscape – Sensitive siting, design codes, and landscape screening will be used to protect Sandness' visual character and natural beauty, particularly in areas of high scenic value.
10. Interrelationships between the Above Factors – The plan takes a holistic approach, recognising that environmental, social and economic factors are interconnected. Proposals are designed to deliver multiple benefits across these domains, ensuring integrated and sustainable outcomes.

The eventual delivery of each proposal will require detailed design, using the SEA topics as a guiding framework to ensure that development is environmentally responsible, socially inclusive, and locally appropriate.

Using the SEA process, we are satisfied that none of our proposals is inherently incompatible with the SEA framework.

Appendices



View over Norby loch, looking towards Sandness hill

Copy of Sandness Local Place Plan – Information Notice

Information Notice

Issued by: Sandness Community Development Ltd
Date of Issue: 18 September 2026
Consultation Period: **18 September – 16 October 2026 (28 days)**
Contact: SCD Secretary
Email: sandnesscd@gmail.com

Purpose of this Notice

This notice is issued in accordance with **Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Place Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 2021**. It informs you that the Sandness Community Development Ltd, a recognised community-controlled body, has prepared a Local Place Plan (LPP) for the Sandness community area. We are now undertaking the statutory 28-day notification period prior to submission to Shetland Islands Council. You are invited to review the proposed LPP and submit any representations by 16 October 2026.

About the Sandness Local Place Plan

The Sandness LPP sets out a community-led vision for the development, use, and conservation of land and buildings in Sandness over the period 2026–2036. It includes proposals for housing, transport, community facilities, food growing, local enterprise, renewable energy and environmental enhancement, and makes suggestions for planning policy amendments aligned with National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). The LPP has been shaped by extensive community engagement and reflects the priorities of Sandness residents, businesses, and organisations.

Where to View the Proposed Local Place Plan

The draft LPP is available for public inspection at the following locations:
Shetland Islands Council Offices (Planning, Community Development, Environment)
Sandness Hall
Jamiesons of Shetland Spinning Mill, Sandness
Sandness Primary School
Online: www.sandness.org.uk/lpp
Copies are available in:

- Standard and large print
- By post upon request (email or call 01595 872272)

How to Respond

Please send any comments or representations by 23:59 on 16 October 2026 to:

Email: sandnesscd@gmail.com

Post: Sandness Community Development Ltd Brimtod, Bousta, Sandness. ZE2 9PL

All responses will be reviewed by the Sandness LPP Steering Group prior to submission to Shetland Islands Council. If you have included your contact information in your communication with us, you will be contacted to advise you of the action taken to incorporate your representation into the LPP. **If you do not wish to be contacted about your representation, please state that clearly when commenting.**

List of Consultees – Sandness LPP Pre-Submission Consultation

Shetland Islands Council – Planning Service
Shetland Islands Council – Community Planning and Development Service
Shetland Islands Council – Roads and Transport
Shetland Islands Council – Education and Children’s Services
Shetland Islands Council – Environmental Health
Shetland Islands Council – Housing Services
Shetland Islands Council – Economic Development
Shetland Islands Council – Climate Change and Energy Team
Sandness and Walls Community Council Clerk
Sandness and Walls Community Council Chair
Cllr Liz Peterson, Shetland Islands Council (Westside)
Cllr Mark Robinson, Shetland Islands Council (Westside)
Sandness Community Hall SCIO, Sandness ZE2 9PL
Henry Anderton, Muckleburgh view, Burrastow, Walls ZE2 9PD
Barbara Jack, Whistlebare, Sandness ZE2 9PL
Peter Jamieson, Sillerdykes , Sandness ZE2 9PL
John & Angie Nichols, Grava, Sandness ZE2 9PL
Alan Robertson & Penny Armstrong, Turriefield, Sandness ZE2 9PL
Joann & Jimmy Sinclair, Sillerford, Sandness, ZE2 9PL
Robert & Karen Williamson Brekkavidur, Sandness, ZE2 9PL
Jamiesons of Shetland Spinning Mill, Sandness, Shetland, ZE2 9PL
Transition Turriefield, Sandness, Shetland, ZE2 9PL
R. Garrick Agri Services, Norby, Sandness, ZE2 9PL
Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)
Historic Environment Scotland
NatureScot
RSPB (Shetland)
Shetland Amenity Trust
Voluntary Action Shetland

Summary of responses received

To be added once the statutory consultation period is concluded.

Community engagement summary

Focus group with landowners and tenants

Sandness Hall, **30th September 2025, 7pm**

Facilitated by SIC Planning department

Participants: 9 Sandness landowners/tenants

Agenda:

- Introduction to Local Place Plans
- Overview of the statutory process
- Discussion on land use and development and the role of crofters
- Opportunity to voice any concerns about development or the creation of an LPP

Key outcomes:

- Crofters attending would consider giving up land for development in principle, if they can see the benefit to the community and have been consulted about it from the start
- Crofters would prefer to give up poor ground for development over good grazing

Other key observations:

- Bring back into use empty houses
- Need to retain the primary school for the sustainability of the community
- Increase woodland and improve biodiversity
- Is there potential for cycle paths?

Concerns raised:

- If land is protected through the LPP, future crofters might struggle to get planning permission

Community Draft map consultation event

Sandness Hall, Thursday **11th June 2026 7pm**

Facilitated by: SCD Development Worker

Participants: 2 Sandness landowners/tenants and 1 Community Councillor

Agenda:

- Formal presentation of the consultation findings and resulting proposals
- Map viewing
- Comments, questions and concerns
- Suggestions for amendments

Discussions on:

- Health, accessibility and need to travel to doctors
- Community housing: utilities, the need to decroft land and unused houses
- Business use: fence on OS map is in the wrong place, it is shown on Blick land
- Tourism development: consider bike tourism for income generation
- Renewable energy: need to prevent big business taking without supporting the communities

Key outcomes:

- Those present were happy with the proposals and sites represented on the map
- No changes were suggested

Community draft map consultation drop-in sessions

Sandness Hall, **Saturday 6th June 2026** 7pm to 11pm; **Friday 12th June 2026** 2pm to 8pm; **Saturday 13th June 2026** 10am to 4pm; **Tuesday 16th June 2026** 8.30 to 9.30pm

Facilitated by: SCD Development Worker

Participants: 21 Sandness residents over the four sessions

Agenda:

- Informal presentation of the consultation findings and resulting proposals through conversation
- Map viewing
- Comments, questions and concerns
- Suggestions for amendments

Discussions on:

- Placement of development suggestions, including housing, business development, community growing and walking trails
- Extent of protected, conservation areas or special regard sites
- Planned woodland
- Areas of coastal erosion
- Placement of renewable sites

Key Outcomes:

- Participants were pleased to see the sensitive nature of proposals
- Additional areas of woodland were added to the map
- The hill area of special regard was extended
- A third area of coastline was noted as suffering from erosion
- One area suggested for renewable energy was moved further south from Sandness Hill
- One area suggested for renewable energy projects was removed

Concerns raised:

- Land suggested for renewable energy projects near the Djuba water loch was thought to be too near historical and environmental sensitive sites

Appendix 3.

Copy of online questionnaire

September 2025 to January 2026

Distributed via email. Paper copies available on request.

Sandness Local Place Plan

*The LPP will set out things we would like to see happen, such as maintaining services, or to provide amenities we have lost or are missing. It will also show areas we want to protect from any development to preserve our natural environment, history or culture. **We would like to hear your thoughts and ideas.***

*The document gives us a voice with the Council. It helps us challenge any development we don't want and provides support for the things we do (Melby pier, for example). **Any ideas that go into the LPP will come back to the community for consultation, before the document is submitted to SIC.***

1. Are you:

- A Sandness resident, without croft land
- A Sandness resident landowner, or tenant of a croft
- Someone who owns, or has use of, land in Sandness, but doesn't live in the ZE2 9PL postcode
- Someone who doesn't live, or have land, in the ZE2 9PL postcode, but has an interest in Sandness

2. Thinking about the need for housing for young families, or to allow young people to stay in the community, do you think *(tick all that apply)*:

- There should be sites available for new builds
- Existing empty houses should be refurbished
- Other

3. Please tell us where these house sites could be, or which houses you think could be refurbished:

4. Sandness residents have said they would like a community hub, where do you think this could be?

- In the centre of Sandness
- At the Melby pier site
- At the Hall
- Other

5. Should a shop/access to food be combined with the community hub? YES/NO

6. If NO, where should it be located?

7. There is an empty business site on the industrial estate (next to the Spinning Mill), if new businesses want to build in Sandness should they be located there? YES/NO

8. If NO, where should it be located?

9. Does your household need better broadband? YES/NO

10. If YES, in which area of Sandness is your house located?

- Bousta road
- Norby road
- Lambton road
- Central Sandness
- Melby road
- In the 'Block'
- Huxter road
- Other

11. Would you like to see more opportunity for community food growing in Sandness? YES/NO/Other

12. If YES, where do you think it could be sited?

Rural communities are being encouraged to increase their offerings to visitors and generate income from tourism. We would like to find out what you think about this, what opportunities there might be, and how we might protect the area from any negative impact.

13. 'Controlled tourism' such as a cafe, marked footpaths, outdoor activities, croft based holiday activities and accommodation, for example, is an option to bring financial, or other benefits to the community, but minimise the negative impact on our environment. Please tell us what you think about this:

14. Please tell us if you have any ideas for controlled tourism activities, and where you think they could be located:

15. Which areas of Sandness do we need to be careful about increasing use by tourists?

- Sandness Hill
- Bousta and beaches
- Norby and its beaches
- The Kames
- Breck Beach
- Melby beach and pier
- Huxter mills and cliffs
- Other

16. Please tell us why they need to be protected:

17. Are there areas in Sandness that should be protected from development of *any* kind? YES/NO

18. If YES, which areas should be protected and why?

19. If No, why don't they need protection?

In other rural locations in Shetland, external companies (e.g. SSE, Statkraft) have begun large scale energy projects without the involvement of local residents. Permission for development of these projects is given by the Government and not the Local Authority. It is important to know what our community think about these types of development so we are prepared, and can be clear in our response, if any external company seeks planning permission for a large development in, or near, Sandness.

20. Please tell us your thoughts on developments using wind turbines, that might be sited locally:

21. Please tell us your thoughts on developments using tidal power that might be placed in Papa Sound:

22. Please tell us your thoughts on developments using solar panels, that might be sited on local land:

23. Renewable energy projects can also be on a much smaller scale. In the future we might be eligible for community energy projects, which help householders reduce their energy costs and carbon emissions. Would your household be interested in (*tick all that apply*):

- Solar panels
- Ground source heat
- Air source heat
- Household wind turbines

24. Please tell us any other thoughts, ideas or comments you have on development and land use in Sandness, that you think it would be helpful for us to know:

Thank you for taking the time to complete the form, we appreciate it and it will help us draw up the Sandness Local Place Plan. If you have any questions about the process, or Local Place Plan itself, please get in touch at sandnesscd@gmail.com.

25. If you would like to take part in an interview about potential land use and development in Sandness please provide your name and email address. We will get in touch to arrange a suitable day/time with you:

Appendix 4.

Summary of consultation findings

September 2025 to July 2026

Respondents

- Sixteen responses received. Half were from landowner/tenants, and half residents without croft land

Housing

- Housing is a key issue
- Need to bring families in
- 52% would like to see existing houses coming back into use/not being used as holiday homes
- Crofters don't want to give up land, or sell on houses on their land, mostly due to concern of long-term consequences impacting on them/their crofting activities
- Fewer (44%), think there should be land available for new housing
- There is an even split between those who want, or expect houses to be built centrally (due to the availability of utility services), and others who would like new builds to be spread out to prevent 'built up areas'

Community hub & shop

- 69% suggest a community hub should be at the hall/centrally accessible
- 81% suggest shop and hub should be combined

Business development

- 88% thought any business development should be at the industrial estate, some acknowledged location might depend on the needs of the business

Community food growing

- 62% suggested more community food growing
- Some acknowledged it was access to food they wanted rather than being able to grow their own
- Sites suggested: central with hub/shop, Gostegert, Turriefield

Tourism

- General agreement that Sandness has a lot to offer, but that it must be protected from over use and/or development
- Possibilities for controlled tourist development:
 - Walks & trails
 - Camping and accommodation
 - Melby activities
 - Café
 - Huxter mills site
 - Opportunities on individual crofts

Renewable energy development

- 60% were positive about renewable energy development, as long as there is community benefit and the community have a say in the development
- 20% are against renewable development
- Needs to be sensitively sited
- Tidal is the most popular, but a number of responders have said they don't know enough about it
- Small scale solar is preferred rather than large areas
- 20% have a preference for individual household development rather than the bigger projects
- 94% had an interest in having their own household renewables

Protected areas

- There is a general consensus that the whole area of Sandness should have a degree of protection
- Key areas for protection:
 - Natural habitats for wildlife protection
 - Beaches
 - Working croft land
- Important to recognise the impact of development on existing infrastructure, e.g. roads

Active travel

- Need for better/more footpaths and dropped kerbs
- Reduce speed limit
- No extra lighting
- Cycle paths

Broadband

- 69% would like better connectivity

Additional general comments

Development

- Any development should be beneficial to the community as a whole and should maintain Sandness as a viable place to live.
- Development in the form of businesses and housing and expansion of the school are all necessary to make Sandness a viable community in the long term. It cannot remain as it is. There will have to be compromises.
- Sandness, like the rest of Shetland, is and always has been a crofting community. Extreme care has to be taken to ensure that any future development does not pose any further risk to a way of life that has already eroded beyond recognition.

Housing And young families

- Attracting some young families is important to keep Sandness a thriving community and maintain the school. I think that any development should prioritise this.

Bus service

- Need for improved bus service

Appendix 5

Sandness LPP Review Questionnaire

10th June to 3rd July 2026

Distributed via email. Paper copies available on request.

A Local Place Plan is a legal document that outlines what a community wants, or doesn't want, for development in its local area. We have consulted with the community, collated ideas, spoken with landowners to identify which are the most viable, and plotted those on a draft map. We would now like to know what you think about the suggestions

In this section we would like to know what you think about the areas identified for development. **Please review the map sent in the email along with the link to this questionnaire before you start.**

1. We would like to know if you think the areas highlighted on the map are the best places for potential development

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Community housing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Business use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tourist development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Community renewable energy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. If you disagreed, or strongly disagreed with any of the suggestions above, please explain why

3. Please tell us any other comments you have about the map

4. Are there any of these sites missing from the map:

	Yes	No
Walks & trails	☐	☐
Protected areas	☐	☐
Historical, Cultural, natural sites	☐	☐
Tree plantations	☐	☐
Coastal erosion	☐	☐

5. If you answered yes to any of the above, please tell us the location of the site and why it should be included on the map:

Croft landowners or tenants

In this section we would like to ask specifically about land your croft. We are aware the community consultation might not have heard everyone's views. We want to make sure you have the chance to have your views heard, and any ideas you have included in the Local Place Plan if you would like to.

6. Are there sites on your land you would consider selling/leasing for:

	Yes	No
Community housing	☐	☐
Business use	☐	☐
Renewable energy	☐	☐

7. If you answered yes to any of the above, please tell us what and where:

8. Are there existing houses on your land you would consider leasing or selling for community housing? If yes, please tell us the name of the property:

9. Are there sites on your land you are considering using for:

	Yes	No
Tourist development	☐	☐
Woodland or wildflower planting	☐	☐

10. If you answered yes to either of the above, please tell us where they are and what type of development you are considering:

11. Please tell us anything else you would like us to know in relation to your land and the Local Place Plan

12. If you have suggested sites in questions 5, 7, 8, or 10 above, we would like to chat about this in more detail. Please tell us your name, email address or telephone number, so we can get in touch

Thank you for taking the time to look at the draft map and complete the form. It helps us have the correct details in the Sandness LPP. If you would like to discuss any aspect of the Local Place Plan, please email: sandnesscd@gmail.com, or telephone: 01595 870272

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Appendix 6

Photographs of sites of proposal sites



i. Community housing site A. (Kia Ora) Proposal 3.



ii. Community housing site B. (Kia Ora) proposal 3.



iii. Community housing site C. (Gardens) proposal 3.



iv. Community and food hub site (Sandness Hall) proposal 4.



v. Part of Active Travel area (Sandness primary school) proposal 5.



vi. Enterprise zone (industrial estate) proposal 6.



v ii. Coastal erosion at Bousta beach

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Statutory Compliance Notice

This LPP has been prepared by a community-controlled body (BDL); it contains proposals relating to the development and use of land and buildings; it has had regard to NPF4, the Shetland LDP (2014) and the Shetland Partnership Plan (2018–2028); and it is supported by evidence of community engagement. This LPP is intended for validation and registration under the Town and Country Planning (Local Place Plans (Scotland) Regulations 2021.

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