



DORNOCH PLACE PLAN

A summary of previous plans, recent developments and ideas for the future



What is a Place Plan?

- ▶ New legislation from the Scottish Government is strengthening communities say in their own areas and this is widely called “*Place Planning*” or “*Place Based Planning*”.
- ▶ The Highland Council “*Future Highlands*” Strategy also support this process and is encouraging communities to participate.
- ▶ The *Dornoch Masterplan* is due to be updated in 2023 and a Place Plan has been supported by *DACC*, the *Dornoch Focus Group HIE* and *The Highland Council*.
- ▶ The *Levelling Up, Economic Prosperity & Investing in Communities* funds are available to us BUT we must be organised and work together.
- ▶ Dornoch is well placed to not only consult with the community to create and agree priorities but to also deliver on ideas and projects with a proven record and well organised community groups and volunteers.
- ▶ **BUT WE NEED TO KNOW WHAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS**



Haven't we had plans before?

- ▶ Between 2009 & 2021 there have been **nine** significant economic and community plans that were either specifically for or included Dornoch.
- ▶ All the plans covered housing, roads & transport, business & service development, recreation management, tourism and the natural environment.
- ▶ The plans have been led by The Highland Council, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and The Sutherland Community Partnership but often the delivery has been done by or with local Dornoch community groups.
- ▶ The most important of these plans have been
 - ▶ *2012 Highland Wide Development Plan* which identified the need for new housing developments and created zones for the development of 400 new homes
 - ▶ *2013 Economic Masterplan* that has provided the blueprint for grants & investments and Dornoch as a regional tourist & service centre.
 - ▶ *2018 Dornoch Community Plan*, which had the most extensive and significant community consultation, and focused on affordable housing, accessible transport and the need for less seasonal employment opportunities.

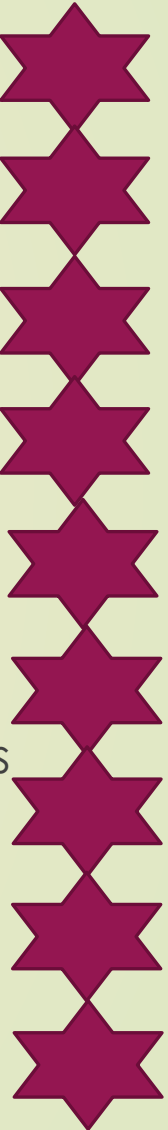


What happened next?

- ▶ 300 new homes built with 25% classified as “affordable” but prices are still rising.
- ▶ *Visit Dornoch* has created momentum for Dornoch as a destination and inward investment in construction, hospitality and retail has flourished but increased visitor numbers have caused transport and housing issues.
- ▶ Golf tourism continues to thrive (despite COVID) but longer stays and “active travel” still need to grow.
- ▶ New student accommodation and UHI investment has increased young student population but no significant diversification of employment or digital businesses yet.
- ▶ *The Hub*, funded and managed by DACIC, is now open and full of tenants and small businesses but there still seems to be demand for more business premises.
- ▶ The conservation area plan was adopted and runs until 2027 but no other town centre plan created e.g., parking management, use of public spaces.
- ▶ The Beach is award winning and accessible to all thanks to the Dornoch Beach Group and Common Good Fund.
- ▶ Public Toilets are under renovation in the Square and the Beach Toilets already refurbished but run by DACC.
- ▶ Many community-based and volunteer groups continue to offer support and services including the food bank, support groups, health and childcare.

What's still on the "to do" list?

- ▶ 150 more homes to be built (25% affordable or for rent) and ongoing discussions with Springfield to ease construction and traffic.
- ▶ DADCA working on plans for new social housing (8 units).
- ▶ Dornoch South car park under construction that should remove coaches from the Square.
- ▶ DACIC working on plans for a MUGA (outdoor multi sports games arena).
- ▶ Dornoch South and new planning permissions may revitalize the business park.
- ▶ DACIC running a BID application (Business Improvement District) to raise funds for future economic development.
- ▶ Dornoch Trust to purchase *Earls Cross Woods* for the community and plans to support *The Queen's Canopy* underway
- ▶ New ESRA lifeboat facility to be completed.
- ▶ 20MPH town speed limit & beach car parking consultations planned for 2022





What we thought we could we do next?

- ▶ **Housing** - What does the new housing legislation, including licensing for short term and holiday lets, mean and how else could we help to meet the community need for social housing and long-term rentals?
- ▶ **Jobs & the Economy** - Should we continue to create spaces and opportunities for new and different businesses and investments including understanding the opportunity Cromarty Firth and renewable energy may offer?
- ▶ **Net Carbon Zero** - Should we develop our green spaces, woodlands, beaches and trails for both residents and to promote "active travel" walking and cycling routes for visitors?
- ▶ **Sustainable Tourism** - Do we need a comprehensive Visitor Management Plan to address seasonal spikes in traffic and associated issues including parking and other infrastructure?
- ▶ **Recreation** - Would a *Recreation Management Plan* help the town invest in physical assets e.g., a new sports centre but also maximize those we already have, physical and natural, for public use?

Large projects that will require resource.

- ▶ **Housing** – Sutherland Community Partnership now has a new Housing Sub Committee chaired by Marianne Hutchinson. The focus is community led housing development. The Short Term Let scheme is now in place. The impact will be seen next Spring / Summer. The Highland Council have asked if Dornoch would like to consider a Control Area Consultation?
- ▶ **Jobs & the Economy** – The BID is well underway and as part of that process a local 5 – year business improvement district strategy would have to be created by the BID Board.
- ▶ **Net Carbon Zero** – An EOI was made to Sustrans to create a circular walking and cycling route around Dornoch. This was rejected as it did not fit the criteria of walking to and from work and school (!)
- ▶ **Sustainable Tourism** – Although some work has been done on parking & traffic management a wider parking plan is on hold due to staff sickness at THC. The Coull Links Development will make this a contentious project.
- ▶ **Recreation** – The developments at Dornoch South & the School do both form part of this. There is no outdoor RMP in place but DACC woodlands and support for the Core Path and JOGT are meaningful.

NOVEMBER 2022 – SOME PROGRESS, BUT NEED RESOURCES TO DO MORE

Do we want to pull these together or happy as is?

THEME	EXPERT & INFORMATION	COMMUNITY LEAD	FORMAT	FORMAT
HOUSING	COMMUNITY TRUST & THC	THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL	HOUSING STOCK SURVEY	SUTHERLAND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP
ECONOMY	UHI & HIE	DACIC	BID PROCESS CONSULTATION	IN FLIGHT
NET CARBON ZERO	SUSTRANS	DORNOCH TRUST	PATHS FOR ALL APPLICATION	APPLICATION REFUSED
VISITOR MANAGEMENT	THC	DACC	FORMAL CONSULTATION REQUIRED	DISPLAY & CONSULT MEETING
RECREATION	TBC	DACIC / DADCA	COMMUNITY SURVEY	SOCIAL MEDIA SURVEYS

Consultation

- ▶ The new legislation is designed to make sure communities work together to create shared plans, solve problems and target resources and funding together,
- ▶ The principles include
 - ▶ **Community led** - engagement must include and involve of all parts of a community.
 - ▶ **Co-ordinated** – plans and projects should be prioritised under one plan even though they will be managed and delivered by different services, groups, teams and volunteers.
 - ▶ **Communicated** – simple and accessible information should be regularly shared
 - ▶ **Realistic and Honest** – Plans need to be achievable, and ideas must include proposals for funding and other resources
- ▶ We need to share these early plans with other stakeholders – Kyle of Sutherland DT, Sutherland Community Partnership, Dornoch Firth Group, DADCA, faith groups, UHI, Dornoch Academy **and who else?**

Future Highlands

- ▶ The Highland Council's priorities include
 - ▶ Economic Recovery - including use of the *Shared Prosperity & Levelling Up* funds
 - ▶ Future Employment & Business Growth - including use of the *Economic Prosperity* fund to support digital expansion and low carbon outcomes
 - ▶ Community wealth building including supporting community groups and 3rd sector organisations
 - ▶ Net Zero Carbon – including prioritizing the hydrogen economy and the renewable energy sector
 - ▶ Healthy & Active Highland – including the development of active travel networks, long distance routes and sports facilities
 - ▶ Transport – including new models for public transport and infrastructure investment