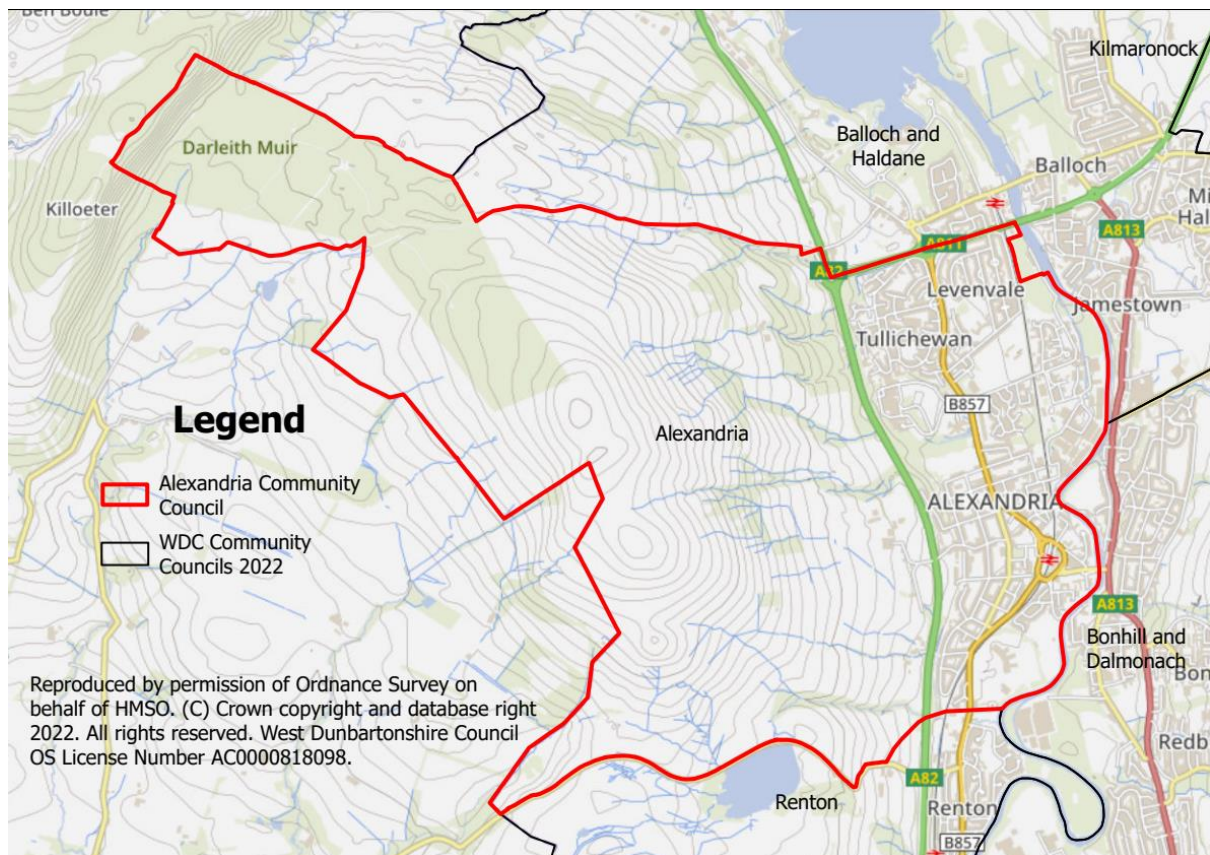


Alexandria Local Place Plan 1

October 2025



Introduction

A Local Place Plan (LPP) is a community-led plan setting out proposals for the development and use of land.

Local Place Plans, offer communities the opportunity to develop proposals for their local area, expressing their aspirations and ambitions for future development.

Alexandria Community Council is pleased to introduce this limited Place Plan developed for the people of Alexandria. This LPP was developed by the Community Council and partner organisations who live, work and care about Alexandria.

These are:

- The Vale of Leven Trust
- Tullichewan Tenants and Residents Association
- Central Alexandria Tenants and Residents Association
- Alexandria BID Company (Alexandria Traders)

In preparing this LPP the Community Council and partners have had regard for National Planning Framework 4, West Dunbartonshire's Adopted Local Development

Plan (2010), West Dunbartonshire's Proposed Local Development Plan (2020) and Leven Locality Plan 2024 ([Leven Locality Plan](#)).

The local place plan shares several of the themes and priorities specified in Leven Locality Plan (2024):

- Improvements to the town centres- LPP provides a tangible, site-based regeneration proposal.
- Health and Wellbeing- LPP creation of an accessible and inclusive space.
- Community Spaces and Activities- LPP seeks to designate land for community and cultural use.
- Traffic Parking and Pavements- LPP proposes pavement improvements and access improvements.
- The local economy, jobs and employment- LPP proposes infrastructure to foster local enterprise and footfall.

Consideration was also given to the consultations our community has contributed to over recent years where the future of Alexandria Town Centre was deliberated. These include Alexandria Masterplan2030 Vision (2021).

This limited LPP is Local Place Plan 1 for Alexandria, and the intention is to develop a further plan that encompasses a wider area. The focus of LPP 1 are two sites within the area shown on the map below. These are:

- Mitchell Way
- St. Andrew's Church yard and cemetery.

Both these sites have seen significant change in recent years with the demolition of St. Andrew's Church following a fire and the demolition a block of flats on Mitchell Way. LPP1 will present ideas for the future of these two sites and how and why they should be used to both benefit the people of Alexandria and enhance our community.

To comment or ask any questions about LPP1 please contact Alexandria Community Council:

Harry McCormack (Secretary)

Alexandria Community Council

c/o Tullichewan Community Flat

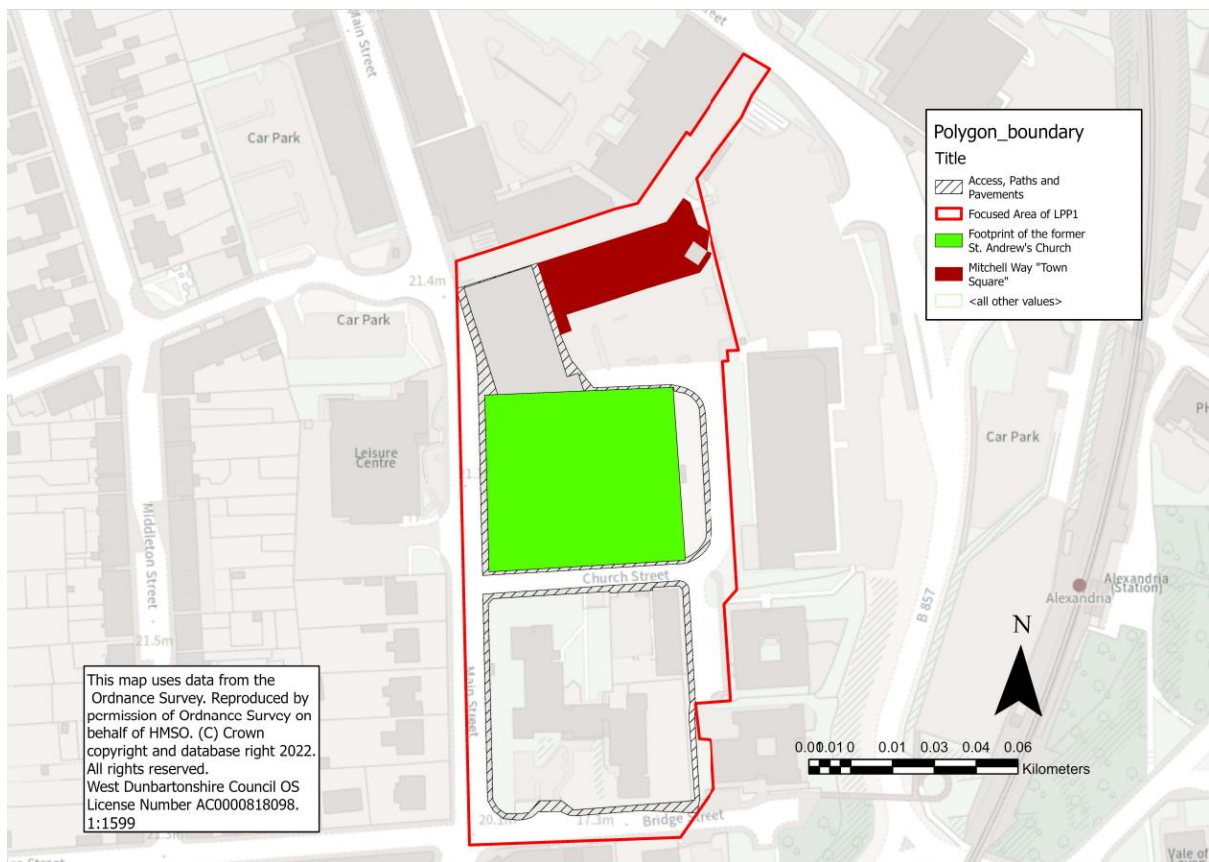
2/1 McGregor Walk, Alexandria.

G81 0JE

harrymccormack.alexandriacc@gmail.com

What does the LPP1 cover

LPP1 covers Mitchell Way, St. Andrew's Churchyard and cemetery and the access routes to these sites.



About Alexandria

Established as a town in the early 18th century, Alexandria expanded significantly due to the textile industry locating on the banks of the river Leven.

Just over 6000 people live within Alexandria (2022) and over 20,000 people living in the surrounding Vale of Leven. Alexandria is the **heart of the Vale of Leven** though this may seem unlikely to any casual observer of our town. Like town centres across Scotland, Alexandria suffered from decline due to the loss of industry and lack of investment in the area.

Despite its issues, Alexandria has a thriving and active community life. Our partners in developing LPP1 include The Vale of Leven Trust. Their actions have brought impetus, activities and engagement to the town. The same is true of Central Alexandria Tenant and Residents Association whose volunteers have created and tend to growing spaces in and around Alexandria- adding colour and life.

Recent and future developments in Alexandria will help improve the look and feel of the town. Developments include the Green Corridors in and around Alexander Street and down to the Leven, the improvement work done to the Smollett Fountain and proposed Mitchell Way uplift.

Mitchell Way

Mitchell Way was until 2023 a “major eyesore” (Masterplan 2021) and in need of urgent attention. In previous decades, Mitchell Way had been a busy street with a variety of shops, businesses and local services. However, in the recent past it became a dark, dirty and miserable place for the few shops and businesses that remained in the street; shoppers and the community lived in darkness in the shadow of decaying flats.

West Dunbartonshire Council listened to local people’s concerns and demolished the flats on the south side of Mitchell Way in late 2023.

The difference this has had to Mitchell Way is immense. Sunlight now rains down on the remaining premises and on local people who visit them. The new open aspect of the street has created view to the hills and green spaces beyond Bonhill.

“A heart for Alexandria- in the heart of the Vale”

Further improvements are planned for Mitchell Way in the shape of WDC’s up-lifting Mitchell Way Project which will improve lighting, pavements etc. This work however doesn’t cover the footprint of the demolished flats.

We propose that this newly opened area where the flats used to be is retained as open space within the next development plan and we support its developed and improvement as a public space in the future. We propose that the entire footprint of the previous flats is retained for open space. This could be a multi-use community space for Alexandria; Providing Alexandria’s town square and a heart for Alexandria.



West Dunbartonshire's Proposed Local Development Plan (2020) proposes this area be used for housing. We believe this to be a mistake and one suitable alternative sites for housing development are available now or soon will be available within Alexandria Town Centre. An example being the proposals at Gray Street.

We believe that local people support this view.

Alexandria Community Council carried out a survey at a recent Alexandria Market and almost 200 people gave their opinion on the future use of the site at Mitchell Way. 75% of those questioned wanted the space to be retained for community use with suggestions including:

- A bandstand like Clydebank (Three Queens Square)
- Seating and benches
- Something like Colquhoun Square, Helensburgh
- Coffee and food carts
- Skate and play equipment

A place where local people can gather, where community events and performances can be held would be of great benefit to Alexandria. We believe the benefit to local people in terms of community cohesion, reduced isolation and mental wellbeing can justify this cost.

The Alexandria BID Company (formed by Alexandria Traders) has a vision of Alexandria Town Centre as a place where people will visit and stay for a while- be that local people or people from further afield. Alexandria Town Square has a contribution to make to that vision by increasing footfall in the Town Centre, increasing the likelihood of people staying longer to shop and spend locally thus, improving the local economy.

National Planning Framework 4 defines the qualities of successful places. In developing the proposals in LPP1 consideration was given to these and reflect the following policy areas:

- Health: Social Connectivity, environmentally positive places, Positive Social Interaction
- Pleasant: Enjoyment-people feel at ease and spend more time outdoors
- Sustainable: community and local living

St. Andrew's Churchyard and Cemetery

St. Andrew's Church was built in 1840 and was a place of worship for 155 years before it closed in 1995. It was used as a children's soft-play for a time but lay unused from 2012.

There were plans to reopen St. Andrews as an arts and creative space prior to the Covid pandemic but these never really got off the ground, though some funding was secured and preliminary works carried out on the building. The Church was, however, seriously damaged by fire in April 2022 and subsequently demolished on safety grounds in October 2022.

The churchyard has been locked since and no access to the cemetery permitted. The cemetery has several historically significant graves within including the Smollett Mausoleum.

In the Local Plan 2010 and LDP 2020 the Church and Yard is not designated as protected open space. We propose that it should be retained and designated as protected open space within the next local development plan.

The footprint of St. Andrew's Church is privately owned. We propose that through negotiation with the current owners, the site is taken into public and, eventually, community ownership.

Community or public ownership would allow the community to decide a fitting way to use the space vacated by the Church and allow access to the Churchyard. Suggestions include a garden of remembrance.

The Churchyard is a place of cultural and local significance to the people of Alexandria, and it should be protected as such within the next local development plan. This is a new designation under National Planning Framework 4 and think it should apply to this site.

The community partnership that is making this proposal have good community links and consult with local people regularly and are therefore confident that the proposals herein reflect community opinion and will have community backing. The Alexandria Masterplan consultation highlighted the importance of the then church and churchyard to the people of Alexandria.

Access, Paths and Pavements

The paths that connect Mitchell Way and St. Andrew's Churchyard require attention. At a recent engagement event involving older people in Bridge Court Sheltered Housing, the condition of the pavements on Main Street was highlighted. These concerns are in the process of being addressed by WDC. However, some paths and pavements not within scope of the current plans require improvement: in some

instances, this is simply a maintenance or cleaning issue, where others the problems are more serious.

Good quality and well-maintained footpaths and pavements are essential to support accessibility and 20-minute neighbourhoods in line with NPF4.t



Paved footpath connecting Bridge Street and Church Street.

There are examples of desire paths which support access and 20-minute neighbourhood access across Alexandria. We propose that these are mapped, adopted and incorporated into the next local development plan.

We note that the LDP 2020 shows areas of Alexandria Town Centre for public realm improvement we believe that this should be extended along Main Street to include Bridge Street and Church Street.

Links to National Plans

National Planning Framework 4 states that Local Development Plans should encourage the permanent or temporary use of unused or under-used land as green infrastructure and defines the qualities of successful places. In developing the proposals in LPP1 consideration was given to these and reflect the following policy areas:

- **Health:** Social Connectivity and creating a sense of belonging and identity within the community environmentally positive places, Positive Social Interaction
- **Pleasant Places:** positive social interactions including quality of public realm, civic spaces, streets and ensuring a lively and inclusive experience
Enjoyment, enabling people to feel at ease, spend more time outdoors and take inspiration from their surroundings.

- **Sustainable:** active local economy including opportunities for local jobs and training, work spaces, enabling working from home, supporting community enterprise and third sector
community and local living including access to local services and facilities, education, community growing and healthy food options, play and recreation and digital connectivity