



Appendix 6

DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

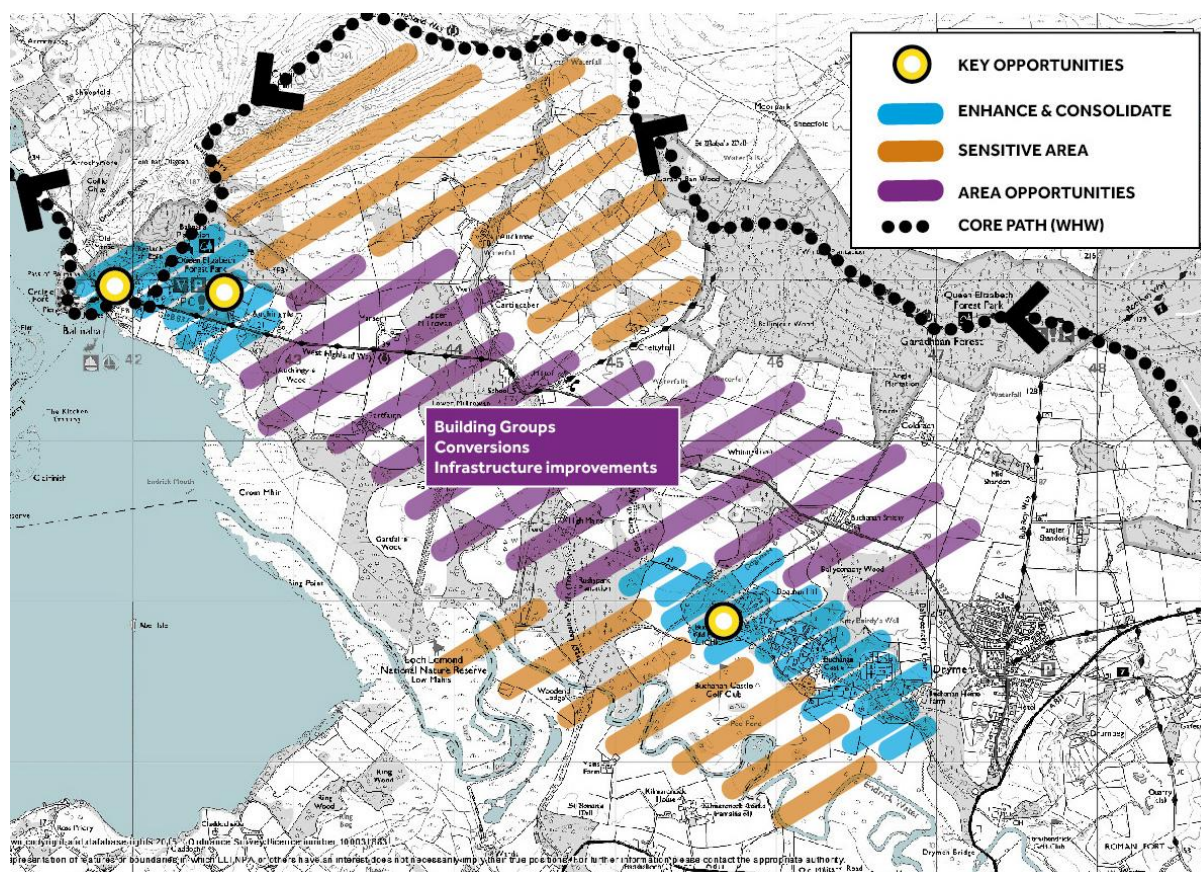
BUCHANAN SOUTH RURAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Buchanan (South): Supplementary Guidance

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This Draft Supplementary Guidance supports the Local Development Plan policies on Housing, Economic Development and Visitor Experience by providing more detailed guidance for the southern area of Buchanan Community Council area which extends from Balmaha to Buchanan Castle Estate. Map 1 illustrates the area covered by this guidance. This includes Balmaha, Milton of Buchanan, Buchanan Smithy and Buchanan Castle Estate as well as the countryside area around these. The area is defined to the south by the Endrick Water and to the north by Conic Hill and the Queen Elizabeth Forest Park.¹
- 1.2. Comments are invited on this Draft Supplementary Guidance as part of the consultation on the Proposed Plan between the 18th May and the 29th June 2015.

Map 1: Area covered by Rural Development Framework Area



¹ The area stretching north from Balmaha towards and including Rowardennan is excluded as it is not subject to the same development pressure (when compared to the rest of the Community Council area). The policy guidance for this area contained in the National Park Plan (Approved 2012). The local development plan does not identify this area as having potential for further new tourism development on account of its road access, traffic pressures at peak times and capacity of available infrastructure. Instead, policy focuses on improvements to visitor infrastructure to better manage pressures and improve the visitor experience of the eastern side of Loch Lomond.

- 1.3. It provides guidance on the **types of new development** that may be supported and the **general locations** that are likely to be considered appropriate, as well as highlighting the special characteristics that are to be protected and/or enhanced. All other types of development within this area will be guided and considered within the policy framework contained within the local development plan.

2. Local Development Plan Policy Guidance for Buchanan – Background and Context

The *Local Development Plan spatial strategy* directs the majority of new development to sites within the *towns and villages* identified in the plan and recognises that some development may be accommodated within the *countryside* to help support prosperous and sustainable communities and businesses, whilst protecting and enhancing environmental quality, as required by Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), which has the overarching aim of supporting diversification and growth of rural areas.

The development plan identifies that the *countryside* area contains several *small rural communities*, alongside numerous *building groups in the countryside*, and provides planning guidance for development in these locations, alongside guidance for new development within *open countryside*.

Balmaha and Milton of Buchanan are identified in the development plan as *small rural communities*. These are differentiated in the plan from *settlements*, such as nearby Drymen, due to their size and/or their more rural nature and characteristics, limited development opportunities and the need to protect their development pattern, individual sense of place and special landscape qualities.

Buchanan Smithy and Buchanan Castle Estate would be considered by the development plan to be *building groups in the countryside*, albeit Buchanan Castle Estate is considerably large scale and is not read as a building group with identifiable character; being more aptly described more as a collection of houses, generally set within large plots and within an established landscape setting.

Within the Buchanan area, the development plan supports appropriate rural development in all of these locations (including provision of affordable housing, diversification of the rural economy and small scale tourism development). Such development is guided at present by criteria based planning policies which are used to consider and determine planning applications when they come forward.

During consultation with communities, land owners and businesses, there was a strong and shared desire to develop more of a spatial dimension to this guidance, to consider future development in the area in a more coordinated manner, rather than on a continually ad hoc basis, and to provide more detailed guidance on what appropriate development might be, as well the general locations where this might be acceptable.

Consultation around the time of the Main Issues Report stage of preparing the Proposed Plan allowed for more detailed consideration of this, and whilst it is not possible to pre-empt all development proposals, this allowed an opportunity to collectively think about the area and its future, develop a shared vision for this, take stock of what is already

planned or in the pipeline, possible alternative uses for some sites and potential new sites.

This was informed by various stages of work including the community's own action planning work (2007-2010, currently being updated), consultation on LIVEPark: National Park Main Issues Report (Spring/Summer 2014), the Drymen and Balmaha Charrette (Spring 2013) and the East Loch Lomond Visitor Management Plan (Draft 2014).

3. South Buchanan Community Council Area

The area covered by this guidance is a part of the National Park with a unique set of planning pressures, due not least to its beautiful setting on the east side of Loch Lomond and relative proximity to Glasgow and the Central Belt. There are visitor pressures at peak periods; community concerns over the scale of development and the balance between holiday accommodation and housing for the local community; aspirations for more opportunities for water and land based outdoor activities and connectivity; and ambitions for development by local landowners. Much of the area, including all the land to the south of the B837, lies within the Loch Lomond National Scenic Area.

The setting of the Buchanan landscape, at the eastern gateway to the National Park and its proximity to Loch Lomond and its world renowned landscape, gives it a strong sense of place.

The key landscape characteristics of the area and special qualities, which can be summarised as follows:-

- The **wider countryside** area is characterised by a range of land types, ranging from lowland wetlands, parkland, mixed woodland and rolling farmland, rising up to moorland and peat bogs, including the prominent peak of Conic Hill. Livestock farming predominates, generally with sheep and cattle on the low ground and sheep on the high ground.

The landscape character is of distinctive open parallel ridges and moorland, rolling farmland with estates, including the Buchanan Castle designed landscape and attractive small estate planned communities and building groups. This is dominated by the iconic and distinctive visual qualities of Conic Hill and Gualann giving the Buchanan landscape an exposed landscape setting and high legibility.

This area of the National Park is visually significant due to the influence of the Highland Boundary Fault Zone where the lowland estate and designed landscape provides the pastoral setting and foreground to the imposing landscape of parallel ridges, which in turn provide the backdrop to the bigger mountains beyond. This is particularly evident at Drymen Bridge.

- **Balmaha** has a limited sense of enclosure and the landscape clearly takes precedence over the built form, giving a rural characteristic to the area. The main approach via the B837 offers views across to Loch Lomond, and is tree lined and attractive with much of the existing development screened by trees and hedges. The village is a dispersed, low density collection of houses and tourism related businesses including pub, shop, hotel, cafe, visitor centre and boatyard at the village

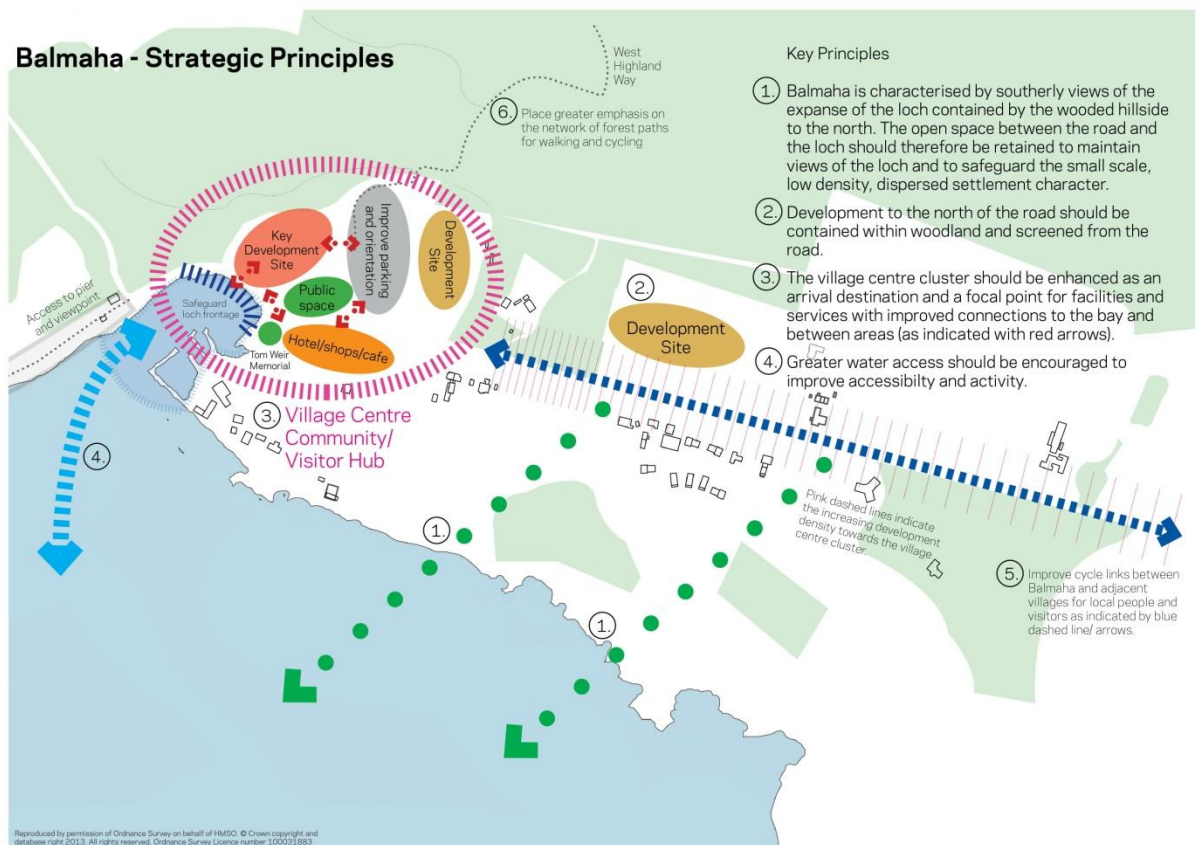
centre next to the bay. Various gap sites presently detract from the quality of the village centre and the experience of this for locals and visitors alike.

- **Milton of Buchanan** contains the local primary school, church and village hall which all serve the wider Buchanan area. It is an attractive small village, located at the site of the former sawmill and meal mill with a number of piend-roofed estate cottages which contribute to its distinctive character.
- **Buchanan Smithy** comprises of a linear pattern of housing lying to the north of the B837, including two distinctive rows of early nineteenth century cottages. Originally built for estate workers, the village originally included a smiddy, hence its name.
- **Buchanan Castle Estate** is a large estate of mostly mid and late 20th century houses along with a golf club, all located within part of the former policies and garden grounds of Buchanan Castle, now in a ruinous condition. The estate is rural in character and most properties are set with large mature garden grounds. The lack of street lighting, pavements and through traffic gives the estate a rural and quiet characteristic. The undeveloped policies of Buchanan Castle are included on the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland. Access is via a private road via of the A811.

4. Area Strategy

BALMAHA

- The 'Strategic Principles' plan for Balmaha illustrates the key sites and characteristics that require focussed attention over the short to medium term. Development proposals for these sites are at various stages in the planning process and it is anticipated that work will commence on these over the short to medium term. Given the scale of development already proposed, it is not envisaged that support will be given to additional development proposals coming forward unless they help deliver the development priorities identified below or are small scale.



Development proposals should:

- reinforce its existing low density development pattern and retain its lochside and, particularly on the northern side of the approach into Balmaha, forested/woodland rural character.
- respect and enhance the character of the village,
- assist in the creation of a central village focus for visitors and residents in the vicinity of the car park, including the creation of public open space
- be primarily low density, although gradually increasing towards the centre of the village
- contribute to:
 - Establishing improved connections to the loch, pier, viewpoints and walking/cycling routes.
 - The retention and, where possible, enhancement of views from the road to the loch.
 - Improved car parking and more opportunities for water transport.
 - Focus on the provision of affordable housing to meet the communities housing needs.

Development Priorities

- The centre of Balmaha needs careful and focussed attention and future development should provide good connections between the various sites, helping to establish a strong sense of place and create a unified and cohesive village centre.
- Striking an appropriate balance between visitor accommodation and housing is a key issue for Balmaha. Recent development proposals have focussed on providing visitor

accommodation, with no new housing being built and some existing housing now being used as holiday homes.

- In order to redress the balance, a site on Forestry Commission land is now formally identified for housing within the Local Development Plan, with potential also for workshop provision. In line with the local development plan housing policy for the small rural communities, this housing will be for affordable housing needs. Some open market housing will be supported where this is demonstrated as necessary to help fund the provision of affordable housing on site. [insert reference to Local Development Plan Housing Policy]
- Land behind Montrose House, which benefits from planning consent for visitor accommodation, is also considered to be a potentially suitable housing site should additional land be required to help meet affordable housing needs over the longer term (and subject to access being confirmed).
- More detailed design guidance for new development in Balmaha is contained within the current National Park Authority's Sustainable Design Guidance (this is being revised at present, but the advice is still relevant) here http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/images/stories/Planning/PDF/LocalPlan/Finalised%20Draft/Sustainability%20Guide%20ch3_4.pdf

MILTON OF BUCHANAN

Due both to its location and existing presence of community facilities, Milton of Buchanan offers an opportunity for limited expansion through the development of small-scale housing developments to meet local affordable housing needs. Any new development would be best located adjacent to Crietyhall Road, and would need to be of appropriate scale and design quality. A development brief should be agreed with the planning authority prior to planning consent being sought.

BUCHANAN SMITHY

No extension to Buchanan Smithy is anticipated during the lifetime of the forthcoming Local Development Plan.

BUCHANAN CASTLE ESTATE

The Estate has limited opportunities for further development due its landscape setting and infrastructure constraints (particularly private road access).

Opportunities for small-scale development potentially include:

- Small scale ancillary development related to the existing golf club such as self-catering lodges for visitors and small business units (Class 2 or 4) which do not generate significant amounts of customer or delivery traffic. Any new development should be justified in terms of supporting the long term viability of the golf club, and would need to be carefully located and designed. A development brief should be agreed with the planning authority prior to planning consent being sought.
- Sympathetic restoration or consolidation of the ruined Buchanan Castle (B-Listed) to ensure its long term viability. This may be coupled with limited enabling residential development to provide financial support for the Castle's restoration or consolidation. Any new development, which may be within the Castle site or within the nearby local vicinity, would need to be sensitively located and

designed. A development brief should be agreed with the planning authority and Historic Scotland prior to planning consent being sought.

- The former quarry site benefits from planning permission for visitor accommodation however could alternatively provide for small scale housing development, in accordance local development plan policy which is supportive of new affordable housing within building groups in the countryside [insert link]. This would require to be low density to reflect the characteristics of the surrounding development pattern. Consideration will be given as to whether it may be appropriate in this instance to require a commuted payment in lieu of onsite affordable housing delivery to help provide offsite affordable housing at an alternative location within the local area, such as Milton of Buchanan, where the school is located.
- The sub division of garden grounds for new development will generally be resisted in order to conserve the character and low density development pattern of the Estate.

WIDER COUNTRYSIDE

The outstanding landscape setting of the countryside should be conserved by focussing new development within Balmaha, Milton of Buchanan and Buchanan Castle Estate.

Development proposals within the wider countryside will be supported where they:-

- relate to the renovation, conversion or extension of existing buildings, including the establishment of a new rural business within an existing building, or
- are demonstrated as necessary in connection with operating an established rural business

New isolated development in the countryside will generally not be supported.