Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority

Local Development and Land Use Plan

Call for Sites Assessment Methodology

Sep 2026

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INTRODUCTION

Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority is publishing their “Site Assessment Methodology” in line with the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and Local Development Planning Guidance (May 2023) that require authorities to engage with stakeholders, including publishing a site selection methodology to set out how they intend to consider and identify the most appropriate sites for allocation in the new Local Development and Land Use Plan.

Our “Call for Land, Sites and Ideas” (launched in January 2026) provides a key opportunity to influence the new Local Development and Land Use Plan (LDLUP). This non-statutory engagement stage presented an opportunity for people to suggest ideas for future land use and development opportunities and to actively help inform the preparation of the new plan.

We aim to review a series of sites, that have come through various sources, this includes the sites submitted as part of the Call for Sites process, the remaining undeveloped allocated sites in the current Local Development Plan and sites contained within the validated Local Place Plans (where a clear boundary and proposed use have been identified).

This Site Assessment Methodology explains the process we will use to assess potential sites for development as part of the new Local Development and Land Use Plan. The methodology is shaped by the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), the Local Development Planning Guidance (2023) and the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. These require planning authorities to take a proportionate and transparent approach to site selection, with Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) integrated throughout.

This methodology identifies the guiding principles for establishing potential new site allocations, consistent with national planning policy and sustainable development. The document will be used as part of the evidence base to support the National Park Authority in selecting the opportunities for development in the new Local Development and Land Use Plan. It is important that sites and land are promoted at this early stage in the process to fully inform the Proposed Plan and to ensure all reasonable options are assessed.

The methodology aims to assess the suitability and deliverability of candidate allocations. We take a balanced view across a number of themes. We will look at the role a site can play in creating successful places and supporting community life. We will also consider the capacity and resilience of the systems and services that make development possible, such as

transport, utilities and community facilities. The methodology also aims to assess the potential environmental effects, including how development might influence climate resilience, nature, soils, water, landscape and cultural heritage.

The outcomes will form part of the preparation for the proposed Local Development and Land Use Plan. They will ensure that all reasonable options for site allocation are assessed and that the plan reflects national policy priorities as well as local needs.

METHODOLOGY

All submitted proposed development sites will undergo both a strategic assessment and a detailed site assessment using a consistent framework. Each assessment will record the relevant evidence, opportunities, constraints, potential mitigation and implications for suitability and deliverability. Together, these assessments will provide a robust and transparent basis for ultimately considering which sites should be included in the Proposed Plan.

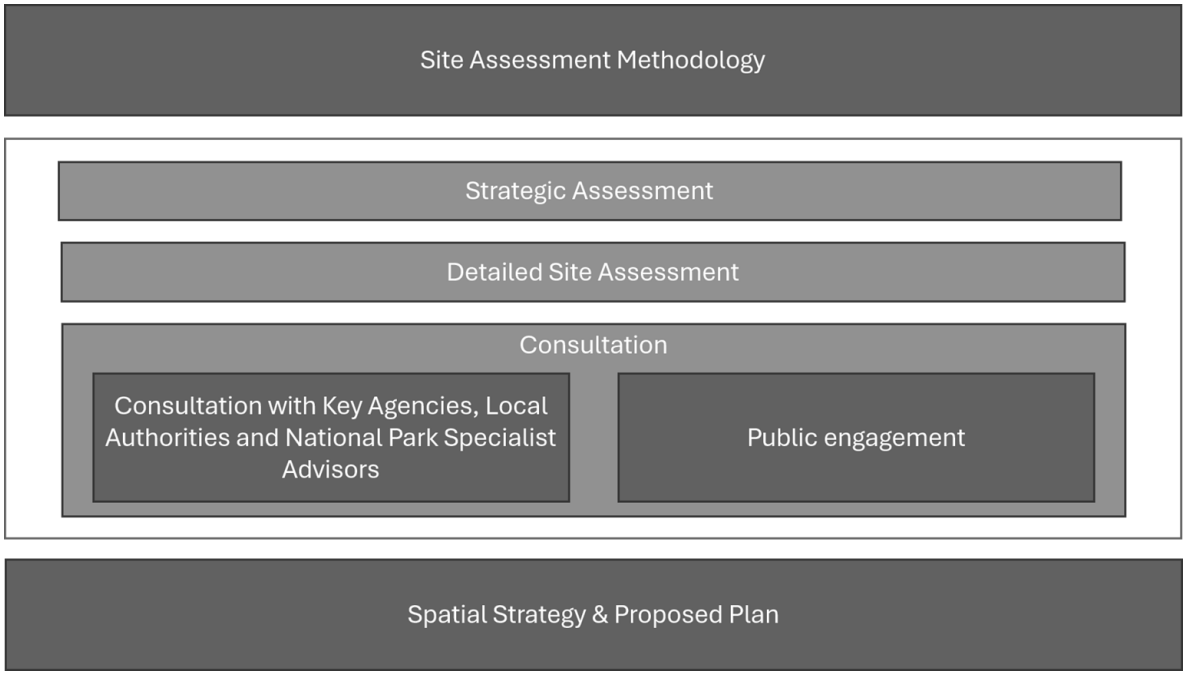
This methodology sets out the framework for :

- Review infrastructure capacity and identify areas of constraint
- Highlight potential development locations, including opportunities to support our long-term vision, set by the National Park Partnership Plan to achieve a *"Thriving place that is nature positive and carbon negative."*
- Apply a detailed assessment using the Site Assessment and SEA Checklist
- Identify land and sites that should not be considered for development

This methodology for site location and site assessment is based on NPF4 policies and embeds Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) requirements. It is designed to identify locations and sites that are preferable for development in SEA terms. This assessment process will help inform the decision making for creating the spatial strategy of LDLUP. The flowchart below (fig.1) provides a summary of the assessment process.

It is important to note that not all submissions will be taken forward to the Proposed Plan. Once all sites have been assessed this will help us establish a list of preferred (and alternative) sites that can then be considered for potential inclusion in the new plan where they could help contribute to delivering development needs identified through the new spatial strategy.

Figure 1: Site Assessment Methodology



ASSESSING THE DEVELOPMENT SITE PROPOSALS

Strategic assessment

The strategic assessment considers every submitted development site against the existing policies, strategies and evidence relevant to the National Park. It seeks to establish the strategic context for each proposal

Sites will firstly be considered in light of this strategic context to determine and record the extent to which each site could contribute to the National Park Partnership Plan outcomes; how it could address the key implications identified in the LDLUP Evidence Report; how it could support climate and nature objectives; and how it responds to Local Place Plan priorities and evidence of community engagement.

Detailed site assessment

Following the strategic assessment, every submitted development site will undergo a detailed site assessment using the Key Agency Group (KAG) Site Assessment and SEA Checklist that was submitted to the Evidence Report Gatecheck (see Appendix 1 further below). The detailed site assessment will consider the site's opportunities, potential environmental effects, constraints, suitability and deliverability, including whether identified constraints can be satisfactorily addressed through mitigation. The checklist provides a consistent structure for assessing each site, with the level of detail proportionate to the proposal and its potential effects. It covers:

- significant environmental and natural heritage constraints;
- flood risk and other physical constraints;
- landscape and cultural heritage constraints;
- access and infrastructure constraints; and
- other factors that could fundamentally affect the suitability or deliverability of development.

The completed assessment will identify the site's key opportunities and constraints, any mitigation required and any residual effects.

To support this assessment, initial Site Visits will be undertaken by the LDLUP Project Team to review the detailed site assessment with the site characteristics and surroundings. During each visit, officers will consider relevant constraints and sensitivities, potential mitigation, enhancement or enabling opportunities, and the site's contextual surroundings, general capacity and suitability for the proposed use. Officers will record any matters requiring further information or assessment.

Consultation with Key Agencies, Local Authorities and National Park Specialist Advisors

The National Park's internal advisers (as applicable) will be consulted for their specialist feedback on the suitability of sites under consideration. Additionally, external consultation will be undertaken with Key Agencies and the relevant Local Authority service

departments on all sites, within their respective remits and council areas. This consultation covered, but was not limited to, housing, landscape, nature and transport matters.

Relevant specialist advice will be recorded and considered alongside the other assessment evidence. Where advice identifies a constraint, uncertainty or need for further information, the site assessment will explain its implications for the proposal, including the potential for mitigation.

Public Engagement

A list of all Sites received will be published online and a period of informal public engagement and in-person events within communities will take place (between 21st Sept to November 2026). Sufficient time will be allowed for the public to comment after completion of the in-person events.

Information about each site will consist of:

- a site name
- site size (hectares)
- proposed use/development;
- mapped boundaries.

The submissions shared at this stage have no planning status and are provided for information only.

All comments received through the above noted engagement, that raise material matters or key information regarding the sites, shall be recorded and shall be considered as part of the overall site assessment.

FINALISING THE DECISION FOR THE LDLUP

The National Park Authority will consider the strategic and detailed site assessment findings together, alongside relevant specialist advice, information received through public engagement, identified development needs and consider these findings in light of the

emerging spatial strategy. This process will then inform the final site selection of preferred and alternative sites to be included in the Proposed Plan (currently scheduled for summer 2027).

APPENDIX I: DETAILED SITE ASSESSMENT

Site Name:	Source of site suggestion: All landowners/interested parties identified/aware?	Current site reference	Site History/Previous planning applications, existing local plan policies and proposals, historic reference numbers:
Settlement:	GIS Site Ref: Previous ref:	Outside settlement boundary?	
OS Grid Ref:	Site Size (ha):	Is the site an allocation in the adopted Local Development Plan; sites proposed through call for ideas or any other sites with potential? No Yes ref. Yes but different boundary	Summary Description (topography, features, boundaries, neighbouring issues, access, exposure, aspect etc. Site visit/GIS observations:
Current Use e.g. is the site brownfield, vacant and derelict land, greenfield, agricultural?	Proposed Use:	Relevant policies/proposals from Local Development Plan or NPF4:	Any restrictive covenants relating to the use of the land/ buildings contained within the proposed candidate site?
Is the candidate site on Common Good Land? (land or assets historically held by former burghs and now	Is there a requirement to prepare place-based development briefs or masterplans?	Insert Location Plan:	Insert Photographs if available:

managed by local authorities for the benefit of the community)			

Topic – water Related SEA topics: population and human health, material assets, climatic factors	NPF4 Policy Topic	Scoring Pre-mitigation	Mitigation	Enhancement	Scoring Post-mitigation	Comments/conclusions
Could the proposal affect the condition of the water environment (Water quality, physical condition, water resources, and the migration of wild fish)? See RBMPs for further detail on water condition.	Flood risk and water management Coastal development Blue and green Infrastructure					
Could the proposal have a direct impact on the water environment (for example, result in the need for watercourse crossings or a large-scale	Flood risk and water management Coastal development					

abstraction or allow the de-culverting of a watercourse?	Blue and green infrastructure					
Can the proposal connect to the public foul sewer?	Infrastructure First					
Can the proposal connect to the public water mains? If not, is there a sustainable water source that is resilient to the periods of water scarcity?	Flood risk and water management Infrastructure First					
Are there wetlands or boggy areas on the site?	Flood risk and water management					
For large scale developments, are there any private or public water supplies within 250m of the site which may be affected?	Infrastructure First					
Flood Risk Relative to the floodplain, as defined in	Flood Risk and Water					

NPF4 could the proposal be at risk of flooding (from any source) or result in additional flood risk elsewhere? If flood risk is not fully understood, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) should be undertaken. Specify which of the following flood sources are applicable: fluvial, pluvial, sewer, groundwater or coastal.	Management Coastal Development					
Could the development of the site help alleviate any existing flooding problems in the area?	Flood risk and Water management					

Topic – Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna Related SEA topics: soils, water, climatic factors	NPF4 Policy Topic	Scoring Pre-mitigation	Mitigation	Enhancement	Scoring Post-mitigation	Comments/conclusions
To what extent will the proposal conserve,	Biodiversity					

restore and enhance biodiversity in line with the NPPP?	Natural Places					
Will the proposal facilitate the creation of nature networks and improve ecological connectivity in line with the NPPP?	Natural places Biodiversity					
International Designations (SAC/SPA, Ramsar site) Will the proposal affect any International Designations?	Natural places Biodiversity					
National Designations Will the proposal affect national designations – e.g. SSSI, NNR	Natural places Biodiversity					
To what extent will the proposal safeguard and enhance Scottish Biodiversity List habitats?	Natural places Biodiversity					

Will the proposal protect, improve and expand forests, woodland and trees (including ancient and long-established woodland and ancient and veteran trees) in line with the Trees and Woodland Strategy?	Natural places Biodiversity					
Protected Species–e.g. bats, otters, etc - can it be ascertained if protected species will be affected and will a site survey be required?	Natural places Biodiversity					
Are there local geodiversity sites or wider geodiversity interests that could be affected by the proposal?	Soils Natural place Biodiversity					
How will habitat connectivity or wildlife corridors be affected by the proposal – will it result in habitat fragmentation	Biodiversity Tackling the climate and nature crisis					

or greater connectivity?	Forestry, trees and woodland.					

Topic – Climatic Factors Related SEA topics – population, human health, water, biodiversity, material assets, soils, air, cultural heritage, landscape	NPF4 Policy Topic	Scoring Pre-mitigation	Mitigation	Enhancement	Scoring Post-mitigation	Comments/conclusions
To what extent will the proposal involve sediment extraction/reclamation or changes in coastal processes that could result in coastal flooding?	Climate mitigation and adaptation Coastal Development					
To what extent will the proposal promote and enable adaptation to climate change?	Climate mitigation and adaptation					
To what extent does the	Climate					

proposal use nature based solutions for climate change mitigation and adaptation?	mitigation and adaptation Infrastructure First Blue and Green infrastructure					
To what extent does the proposal maintain and enhance resilience of existing and planned grey and green infrastructure?	Climate mitigation and adaptation Infrastructure first Blue and Green infrastructure					
To what extent does the proposal have good proximity to services and good access to existing or proposed public transport and active travel network?	Climate mitigation and adaptation Infrastructure First.					

Topic – Air Quality Related SEA topics – climatic factors, soils, population and human health	NPF4 Policy Topic	Scoring Pre-mitigation	Mitigation	Enhancement	Scoring Post-mitigation	Comments/conclusions
Could the proposal lead to Local Air Quality Management thresholds being breached in an existing Air Quality Management Area?	Climate mitigation and adaptation Health and Safety					
Could the proposal lead to the designation of a new Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)	Health and Safety					
Does the proposal introduce a new potentially significant air emission to the area (e.g. combined heat and power, an industrial process, large scale quarry	Health and Safety					

etc.)?						
Will the proposal lead to a sensitive use being located close to a site with noise/odour issues or a site regulated for emissions to air by SEPA (e.g. new housing adjacent to a large manufacturing factory)	Health and Safety					

Topic – population and human health Related SEA topics – climatic factors, air, water, soils, material assets	NPF4 Policy Topic	Scoring Pre-mitigation	Mitigation	Enhancement	Scoring Post-mitigation	Comments/conclusions
Is the proposal within the vicinity of a major accident hazard site or major	Health and Safety					

accident hazard pipeline?						
Will the proposal affect service infrastructure: Education capacity - Secondary School Catchment Area/ Primary school catchment area Health provision/GP Capacity						
To what extent will the proposal affect the quality and quantity of open space and connectivity and accessibility to open space or result in a loss of open space?	Design, Quality and place local living and 20 min neighbourhoods Blue and green infrastructure Play, recreation and sport					
To what extent will the proposal affect core path	Sustainable Transport Design, quality and place					

links or other key access networks such as cycle paths, coastal paths and rights of way?	Local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods Infrastructure First					
Will the proposal have the opportunity to incorporate new or enhance existing blue and/or green infrastructure providing multiple benefits such as enhanced biodiversity, management of surface water?	Blue and Green infrastructure Infrastructure First					

Topic – Soils Related SEA topics – landscape, cultural heritage, water, biodiversity, flora and fauna, material assets.	NPF4 Policy Topic	Scoring Pre-mitigation	Mitigation	Enhancement	Scoring Post-mitigation	Comments/conclusions

Does the proposal make use of a brownfield site or contaminated and vacant and derelict land? If on brownfield, is the site naturalised?	Soils Brownfield, vacant and derelict land					
Are there any contaminated soils issues on the site and if so, will the option employ remedial actions to ensure the site is suitable for use (as defined in PAN 33)?	Soils					
Is the proposal on peat or carbon rich soils and could the development of the site lead to a loss of peat or carbon rich soils?	Soils Climate mitigation and adaptation					

Does the proposal result in the loss of prime agricultural land or land that is culturally or locally important for primary use as identified by the Local Development Plan?	Soils					

Topic – Landscape Related SEA topics – climatic factors, air, water, soils, material assets, biodiversity, population and human health	NPF4 Policy Topic	Scoring Pre-mitigation	Mitigation	Enhancement	Scoring Post-mitigation	Comments/conclusions
National landscape designated sites To what extent will the Special Landscape	Natural Places					

Qualities of the National Park be affected?						
Non designated landscape features and key landscape interests Does the proposal ensure that development does not exceed the capacity of the landscape to accommodate it? Such as current settlement boundaries, existing townscape and character of surrounding area and its visual qualities?	Natural Places					
To what extent will the proposal affect features of landscape interest, including the distinctive	Natural Places					

character of the landscape and the qualities of wild land?						

Topic – Cultural Heritage Related SEA topics – Climatic factors, air, water, soils, material assets, biodiversity, landscape	NPF4 Policy Topic	Scoring Pre-mitigation	Mitigation	Enhancement	Scoring Post-mitigation	Comments/conclusions
Does the proposal protect or enhance the site or setting of: • World Heritage Sites* • Scheduled • Monuments • Listed buildings • Inventory battlefields • Inventory gardens and • designed landscapes • Conservation Areas	Historic assets and places Natural Places					

• Undesignated historic • environment assets • Streetscapes and • settlement patterns monuments • Local Designed Landscapes						
Does the proposal promote or enable the retention, maintenance and sustainable use or reuse of historic buildings and infrastructure?	Historic assets and places Zero waste Infrastructure first Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings City, town, local and commercial centres Rural Development					
Does the proposal: Support the repair and appropriate retrofit of	Historic assets and places Tackling the					

historic buildings? Support the transition to green energy supply in historic buildings? Include adaptation measures to make the historic environment assets and places more resilient to the effects of climate change (e.g. coastal erosion, flooding etc)?	climate and nature crises Climate mitigation and adaptation Design, quality and place Infrastructure first Quality homes Flood risk and water management Rural homes					
Does the proposal: Enable the historic environment to support creation of high-quality places and spaces? Promote sustainable, responsible tourism, recreation and cultural activity?	Tourism Culture and creativity Design, quality and place Play, recreation and sport Local Living and 20 minute neighbourhoods					

Topic – Material Assets – Deliverability/ sustainability constraints Related SEA topics – climatic factors, air, water, soils, population and human health.	NPF4 Policy Topic	Scoring Pre-mitigation	Mitigation	Enhancement	Scoring Post-mitigation	Comments/conclusions
Will the site be delivered within the Local Development Plan timeframe? Other site servicing constraints, e.g. electricity pylons, underground gas pipelines etc.						
Site aspect – does the site make best use of solar gain? Is the site protected from prevailing winds?	Design Quality and place Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Heat and Cooling					

Is the site in an area of heat network potential or a designated Heat Network Zone (HNZ)?	Climate Mitigation and adaptation Heat and cooling					
Vehicular Access constraints or opportunities - Is the network capable of accommodating active travel, public transport, other shared modes, and private vehicle traffic generated?	local living and 20 min neighbourhoods Sustainable transport					
Is the site close to a range of facilities? Can these be accessed by public transport or active travel?	local living and 20 min neighbourhoods Sustainable transport City, town, local and commercial centres					
Does the proposal minimise demand for	Zero waste					

primary resources by reusing an existing building?						
For waste infrastructure and facilities (except landfill and EFW) does the proposal complies with the criteria listed in NPF4 policy 12 d)?	Zero waste					