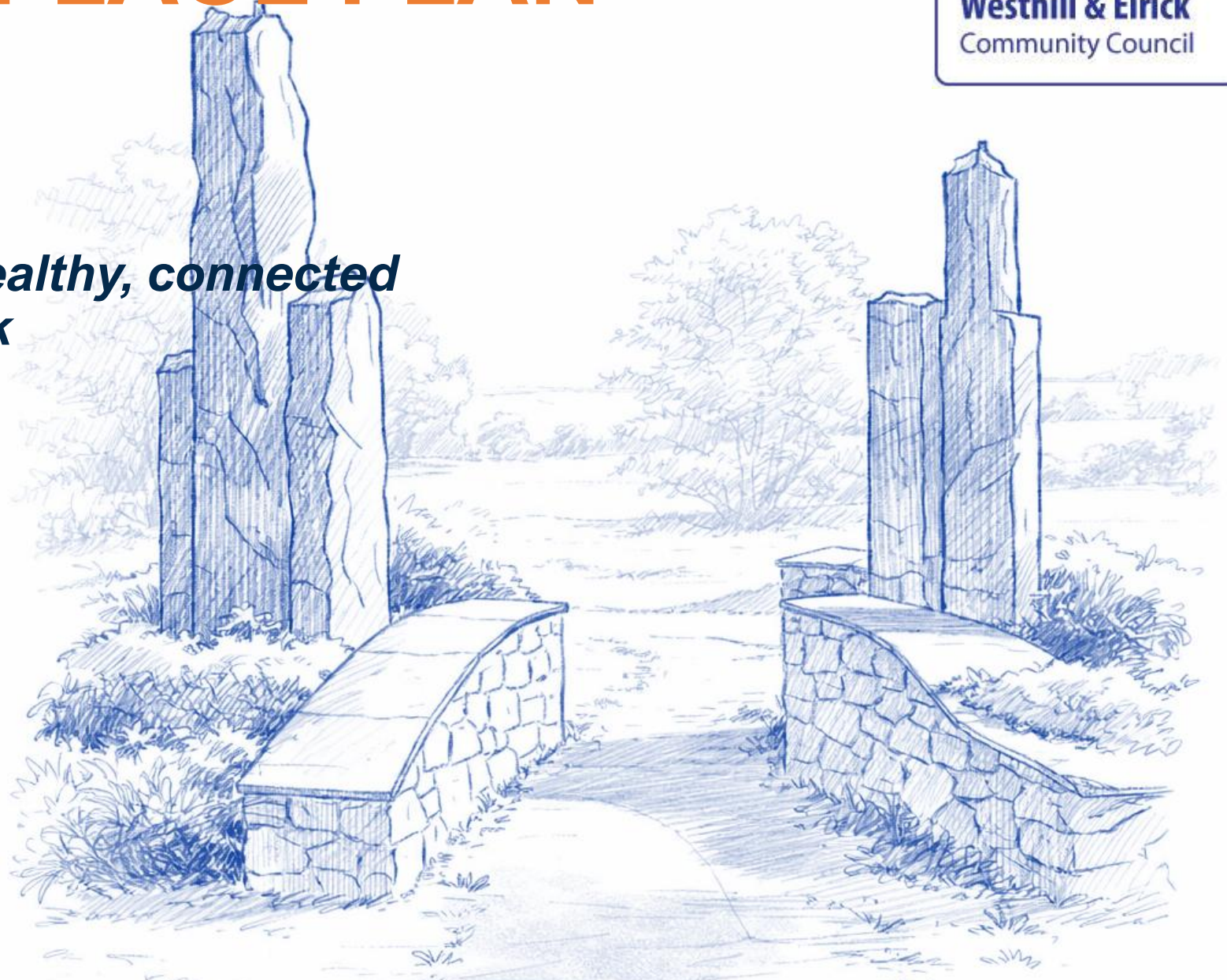


# WESTHILL & ELRICK LOCAL PLACE PLAN 2025/26



*Supporting a healthy, connected  
Westhill & Elrick*





## Compliance Statement

This Local Place Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Place Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 2021. It contains:

1. Maps of the Local Place Plan Area - Maps showing the land to which this Local Place Plan relates will be included in the final version of the document.
2. Identification of the Community Body - This plan has been prepared by Westhill and Elrick Community Council on behalf of the Westhill and Elrick community, supported by a Steering Group comprising representatives from across the settlement.

We can be contacted by emailing [planningwecc@gmail.com](mailto:planningwecc@gmail.com)

3. A Statement of Proposals - The plan sets out proposals for the development and use of land within the Westhill and Elrick Local Place Plan area. These proposals reflect the priorities identified through extensive community engagement and Community Identity, Transport and Roads, Town Centre and Local Facilities, Green Space and Movement, Infrastructure and Growth

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Westhill and Elrick Local Place Plan has been prepared by Westhill and Elrick Community Council, with the involvement of the residents within the area. The plan has its roots in the Westhill and Elrick Community Action Plan 2024-29 which assessed the views of almost 300 survey participants in a process which commenced in late 2023.

The resulting plan, agreed with Aberdeenshire Council, set out the action required for addressing the communities' top priorities. This plan is an extension of the [Community Action Plan](#) showing where we want development within the area.

# 2. WHAT IS A LOCAL PLACE PLAN?

The Plan sets out what the community wishes to see within their community. The Plan contains proposals for the future development of land as desired by the local community: those that live, work or visit the Westhill and Elrick area and use its services and facilities. The Plan will guide Aberdeenshire Council about what our community would like to see in, the currently under preparation, Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2029. The Plan will also guide developers about the type of development and investment that the community desires. The Local Place Plan will evolve over time. Where changes are required, and provided there is clear justification, the plan will be updated to reflect new circumstances

Not only has the plan been prepared in the context of the views and aspirations of local people but it has also taken into account the strategy context of various national and local policy documents, principally:

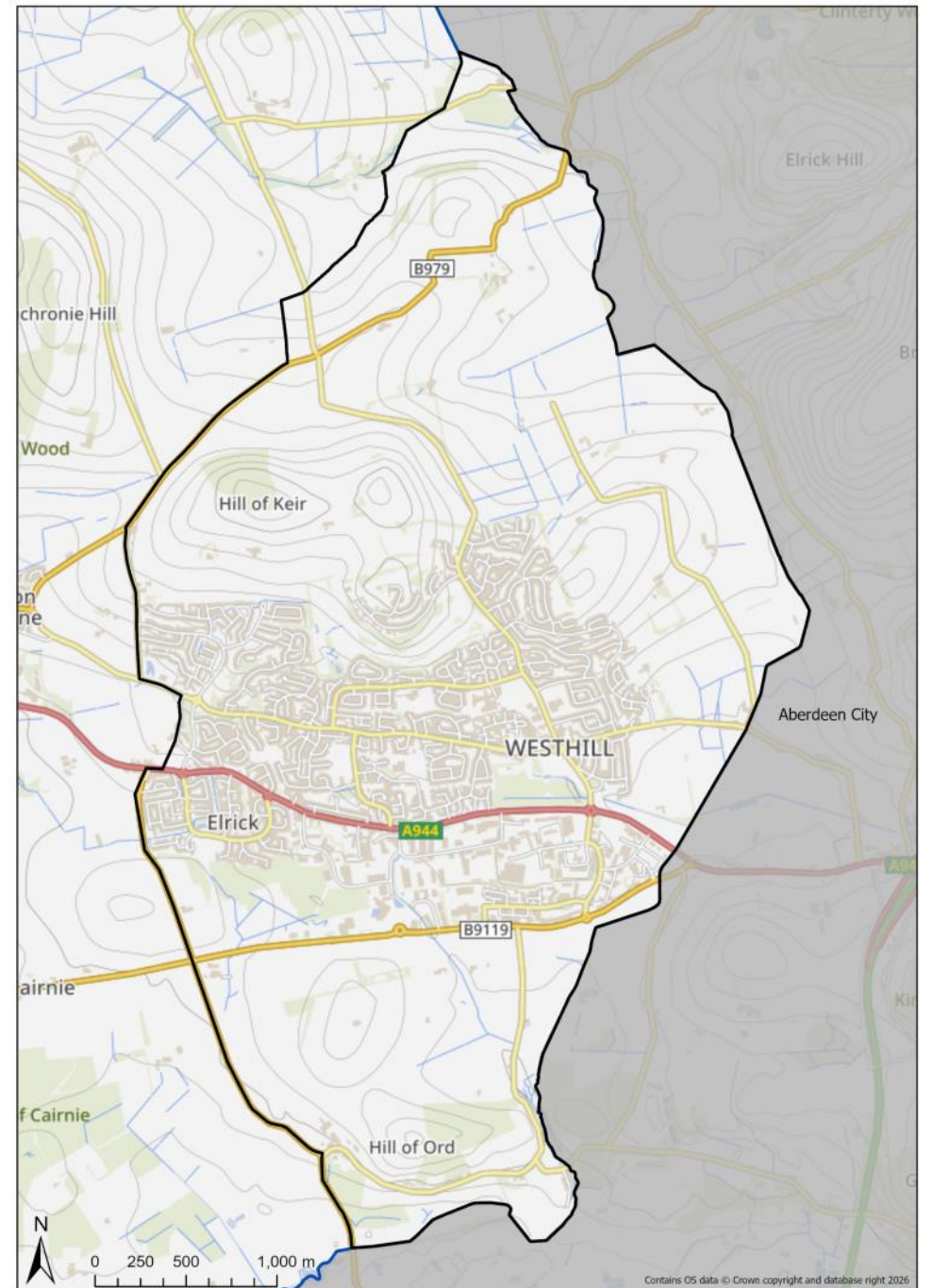
- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) - the National Spatial Strategy for Scotland. It sets out the spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments and national planning policy.
- Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2023 (LDP) - Within the context of NPF4, the LDP sets out the policies that will be used for determining planning applications. It sets out exactly where development is expected to take place over the next five years, up to and beyond 2031.



### 3. WHAT AREA DOES THE LOCAL PLACE PLAN COVER?

The Local Place Plan covers the whole of the Westhill and Elrick Community Council area. Westhill is a suburban town in Aberdeenshire, located 7 miles (11 km) west of the city of Aberdeen. As of 2022, it has a population of 11,750, making it one of the largest towns in Aberdeenshire.

The town is a blend of villages and farms that were gradually incorporated during its expansion in the latter half of the 20th century, most notably Elrick.



## 4. HOW DID WE DEVELOP THE LOCAL PLACE PLAN - GETTING YOUR VIEWS

In November 2025 this year we held an event across two days at Westhill Community Church. Residents were asked:

- ? What they liked about their community
- ? What they disliked
- ? What they liked to see changed and where

They were asked to note their comments on “Post-it” notes and add these to maps the area.




**Westhill & Elrick  
Local Place Plan  
Map Engagement Event**

Westhill Community Church  
Old Skene Road, AB32 6AQ

Wednesday 26th November 2025  
10am to 2pm & 4.30pm to 6.30pm  
Thursday 27 November 2025  
10am to 3pm

**Your Place • Your Voice**  
Help us map out the future of Westhill & Elrick.  
Share what matters most about where you live.  
Tell us what should be protected, improved, or changed.

- Green spaces you love
- Areas for change
- Routes that need improving
- New ideas for facilities

 **Over 60 residents across the Westhill and Elrick area participated in these events and contributed their thoughts and ideas.**



# Online Survey Overview

In addition to the in-person Map Engagement Event, an online survey was carried out to widen participation and ensure that those unable to attend events in person could still contribute to the Local Place Plan. The survey was promoted locally, including through community networks and local Facebook pages.

A total of 61 responses were received via the online survey, in addition to 23 questionnaires completed at the Map Engagement Event, providing a combined evidence base of 84 responses.

## Westhill & Elrick Local Place Plan

Westhill & Elrick Community Council is developing a Local Place Plan (LPP) - a new way for local people to influence how land is used and developed in the years ahead.

Unlike the Community Action Plan (CAP), which captured a wide range of local priorities, the LPP focuses specifically on planning and land use issues, such as:

- Where new housing or business development should go (and where it shouldn't).
- How we protect valued green spaces and community facilities.
- How we improve paths, transport links, and local connections.

Join us at **Westhill Community Church** on **Wednesday 26th** and **Thursday 27th November** for a map-based drop-in event.

You'll be able to share ideas directly on large maps of Westhill and Elrick, highlighting what matters most to you.

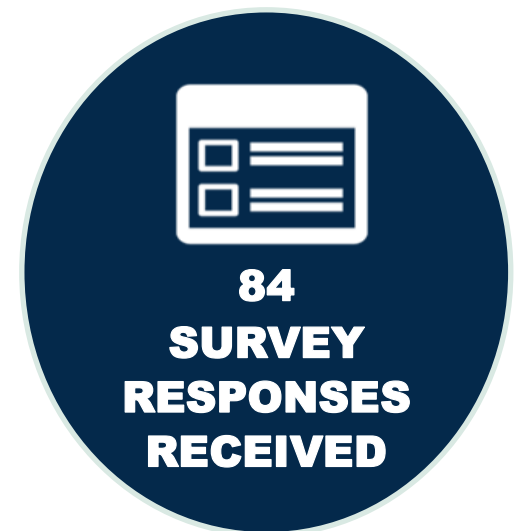
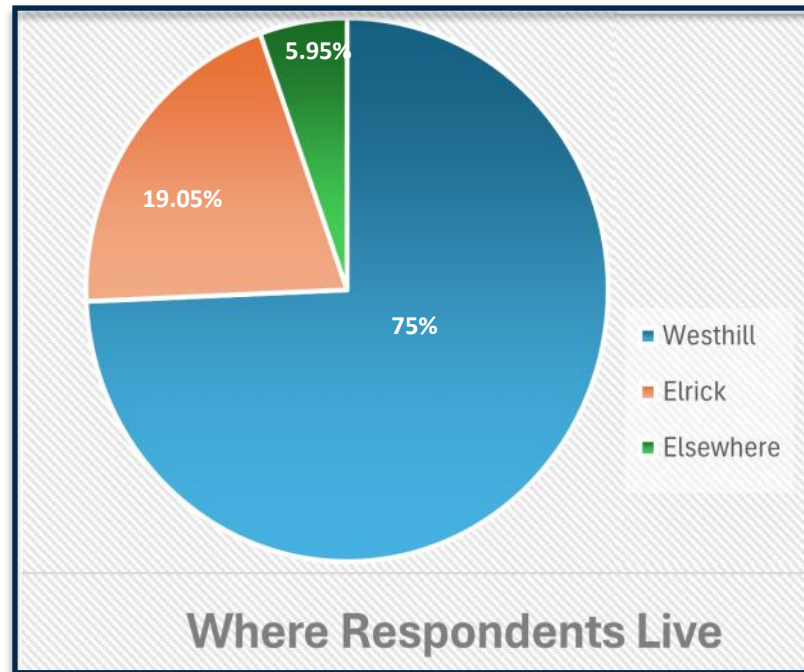
**Your local knowledge will help shape a plan that reflects both communities and ensures their voices are heard in future planning discussions.**



## Geographic Spread of Responses

The pie chart below shows the geographic distribution of online survey responses, with participants identifying whether they live in Westhill, Elrick, or elsewhere within the wider area.

The results demonstrate that responses were received from across the Community Council area, with strong representation from Westhill and Elrick. This indicates that the survey captured views from the communities most directly affected by the Local Place Plan, while also allowing space for perspectives from people who use or move through the area.



The results of the questionnaire can be found [here](#)

## Age Profile of Respondents

The age profile shown in the chart below relates to respondents to the main online survey, where the majority of responses were received from adults aged 35 and over, with particularly strong representation in the 45-65+ age ranges.

No responses from under-18s were received through the main survey. This is not unexpected given the format and promotion of the survey, which was primarily aimed at adult residents.

To ensure that younger voices were included in the Local Place Plan evidence base, a separate, youth-friendly survey was carried out. This survey received 70 responses from young people, providing a substantial and complementary dataset focused on how younger residents experience and use local spaces.

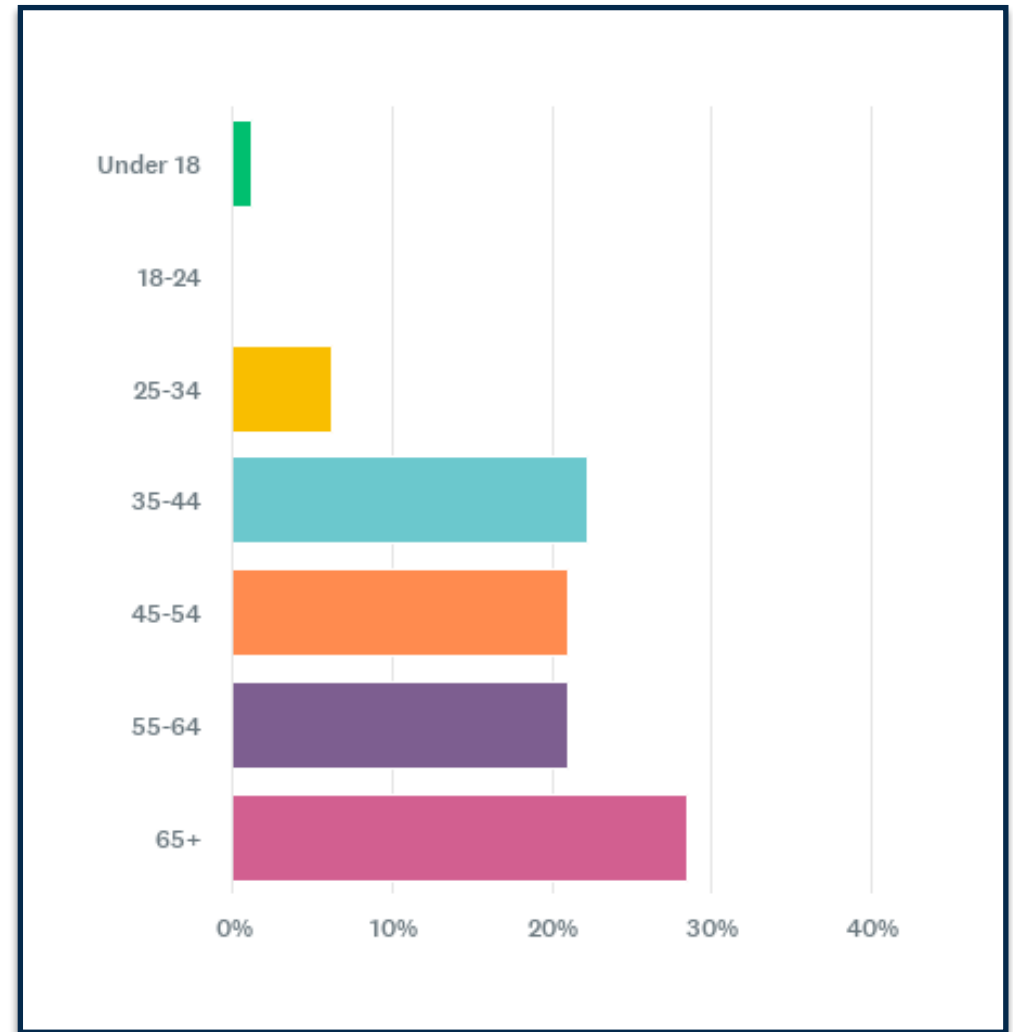
## Integrating Youth and Main Engagement

The youth survey findings have been considered alongside the main survey results rather than as a standalone exercise. While the format and language differed, the themes emerging from young people, particularly around sport and activity spaces, places to meet, and safe routes for walking and cycling, strongly reinforce priorities already identified through main engagement.

Taken together, the engagement activities demonstrate a consistent and well-aligned set of priorities across different age groups and engagement formats. While the main online survey primarily captured responses from adult residents, the dedicated youth survey ensured that younger voices were also represented within the evidence base.

There is a high degree of alignment between the two datasets, particularly around the need for **accessible green space, active and recreational facilities, safe movement routes,** and **community-focused places** that support wellbeing and social connection. The youth engagement strengthens and validates the findings from earlier stages, providing confidence that the emerging proposals reflect shared aspirations across generations.

*Age profile of respondents to the main online survey. Engagement with young people was carried out separately through a dedicated youth survey.*



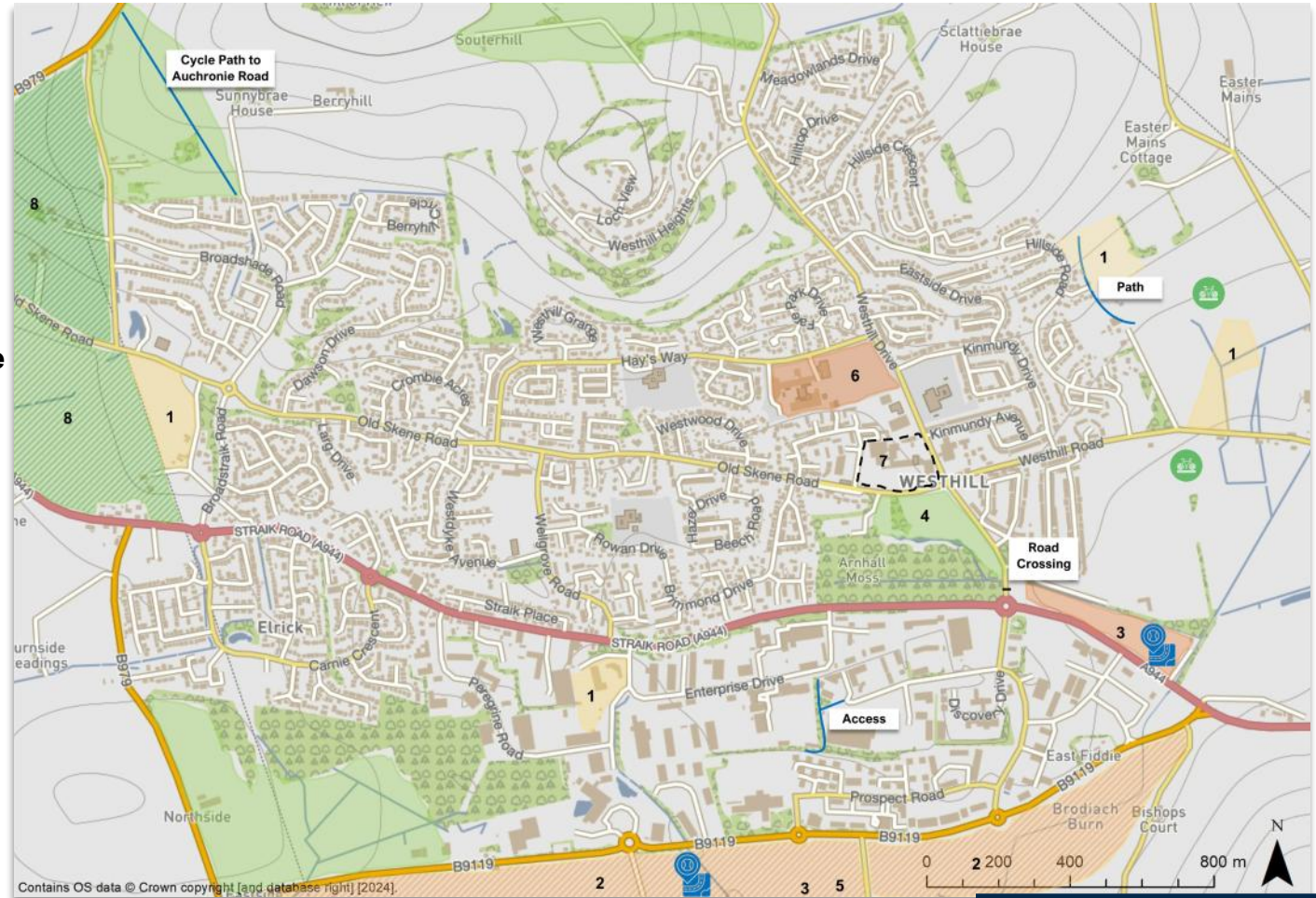


## 5. WHAT YOU TOLD US

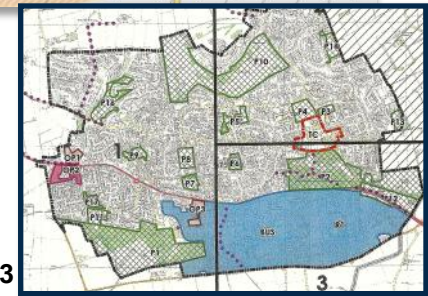
In November 2025 two sessions were held in the Westhill Community Church venue. Over 60 participants were involved in discussions about the future of their community. In addition, a detailed survey was prepared which attracted 61 respondents and 23 were completed at the November events. The mapped areas represent a spatial interpretation of community feedback and are intended to illustrate principles and priorities rather than fixed site allocations.

### KEY

- Protected / safeguarded area**  
*Areas where the primary intent is to retain green space, landscape character or environmental value.*
- Connectivity / movement opportunity**  
*Areas where improved walking, cycling or connections may be supported.*
- Area for improvement / community use**  
*Areas where careful change or enhancement of existing uses may be appropriate to support community needs.*
- Area for consideration: housing to meet local need**  
*Areas where the principle of housing may be supported, subject to further consideration, where it responds to identified local need and aligns with Local Place Plan priorities.*
- Mixed, Inclusive Neighbourhoods**  
*Areas intended to provide a balanced mix of homes for older people, families and those seeking to enter the housing market, creating inclusive, walkable neighbourhoods with access to services, green space and community facilities.*
- Strategic Settlement Gap**  
*Land identified to maintain the physical separation and distinct identities of Westhill and Kirkton of Skene, protecting landscape character and preventing coalescence between settlements.*



See section 8 on page 13 for proposal numbers and how they link up with the map



## 6. SPATIAL STRATEGY/KEY SPATIAL PRINCIPLES

### Strategic Settlement Gap: Westhill – Kirkton of Skene

Community engagement consistently highlighted concern about the potential coalescence of Westhill with Kirkton of Skene. Maintaining clear separation between the two settlements was identified as important to preserving local character, landscape setting and rural identity.

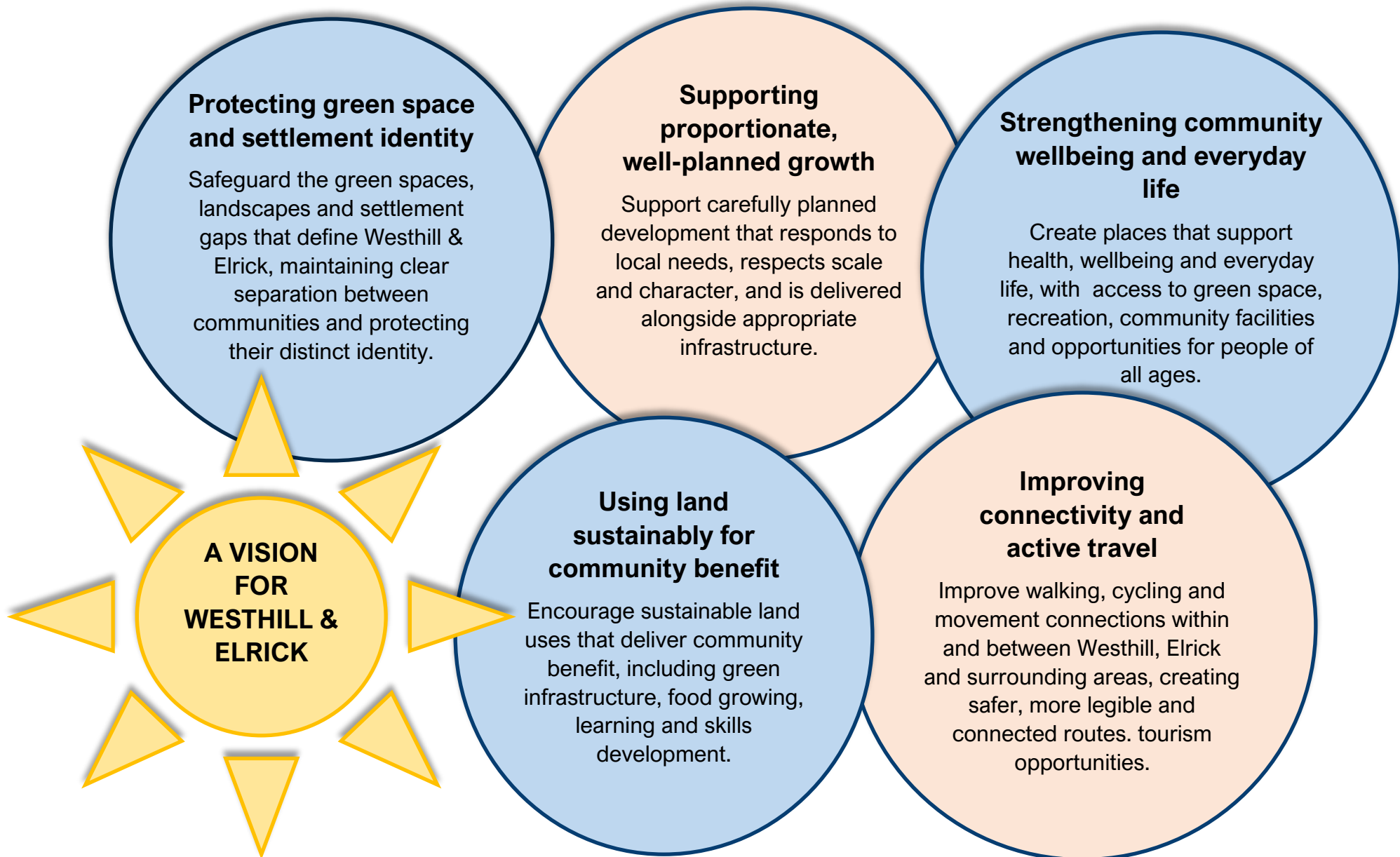
The area of land beyond Hill of Keir Road, as shown on the LPP map, is therefore identified as a **Strategic Settlement Gap**. The primary spatial intent for this area is to retain openness and prevent development that would lead to settlement coalescence.

Appropriate land uses within this area are those that maintain its open and rural character, including agriculture, grazing, arable use and landscape management.



## 7. A VISION FOR WESTHILL AND ELRICK

Westhill & Elrick will be places where growth is carefully managed, green space and identity are protected, and land use supports healthy, connected communities now and into the future.



## 8. LOCAL PLACE PLAN PROPOSALS

*Following a review of the feedback gathered through community engagement, including the Map Engagement Event, online survey and youth survey, and having regard to National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2023, and existing Community Action Plan priorities, the following proposals have been identified for inclusion in the Westhill & Elrick Local Place Plan.*

*These proposals reflect issues consistently raised by the community and focus on land use, spatial planning and place-based outcomes within the scope of a Local Place Plan. Together, they set out a clear direction for future development, investment and protection of key areas.*

### Westhill & Elrick

#### 1. Housing to Support an Ageing Population

There is strong community support for the provision of **smaller, well-designed homes suitable for older people**, reflecting changing household needs and an ageing population.

##### Key considerations include:

- *Affordable housing*
- *Homes suitable for older people (including downsizing and accessible homes)*
- *Appropriate scale, design and integration with surrounding areas*
- *Infrastructure-led and place-sensitive development*
- *Seek provision of a minimum of 20% smaller two-bedroom homes within new housing developments, reflecting local housing need*

Residents expressed **little appetite for further large family housing**, and highlighted the financial pressures faced by older people living alone, including the impact of Council Tax banding on single-occupancy properties. Smaller, accessible homes would allow residents to remain within the community as their needs change, supporting independence and wellbeing.

The Local Place Plan supports the delivery of **age-appropriate housing** within Westhill, designed to be accessible, energy-efficient and close to services and amenities.

#### 2. Mixed, Inclusive Neighbourhoods

There is support for the creation of **mixed, inclusive neighbourhoods** that bring together housing for older people alongside homes suitable for younger people and first-time buyers.

Such areas should be designed as **complete communities**, with access to local amenities, green space, and opportunities for social interaction. This approach would support downsizing for older residents while helping younger people remain in the area, strengthening community cohesion across generations.

The Local Place Plan supports **mixed housing development** that promotes intergenerational living, accessibility, and proximity to services.

#### 3. Sports and Active Recreation Hub

Young people and families identified a strong need for improved **sports and active recreation facilities**, including spaces for running, cycling and informal activity. There is particular interest in facilities such as a **pump track** and outdoor activity hubs that can be used by a wide range of age groups. These spaces are seen as important for physical health, mental wellbeing and social connection, particularly for younger residents.

To support the long-term vitality and sustainability of the hub, opportunities could also be explored to **incorporate small flexible business units**, providing space for start-ups, small enterprises and community-focused services while supporting local economic resilience.

The Local Place Plan supports the development of a **sports and active recreation hub** that complements existing facilities and encourages regular, informal use.

#### 4. Playpark and Sensory Garden - Denman Park

Building on priorities identified through the Community Action Plan, there is strong support for enhancing **Denman Park** through the development of an improved playpark and a **sensory garden**.

These facilities would provide inclusive, accessible outdoor spaces for children, families and people of all abilities, and would strengthen Denman Park's role as a valued community asset.

The Local Place Plan supports the enhancement of Denman Park as a **multi-functional, inclusive green space**.

## 8. LOCAL PLACE PLAN PROPOSALS (cont.)

### 5. Allotments and Community Growing

Residents expressed interest in expanding opportunities for **allotments and community growing**, supporting local food production, skills development and wellbeing.

Community growing spaces are seen as valuable for social connection, environmental sustainability and intergenerational learning.

The Local Place Plan supports the identification and protection of land suitable for **community growing and allotments**, ensuring long-term access for community use.

### 6. Community Hub and Multi-Use Facilities

Community feedback highlighted interest in exploring opportunities to strengthen and better coordinate **community facilities and services** through the creation of flexible, multi-use spaces.

There is support for further exploration of options that could bring together community activities, meeting space, services and social uses in a **central and accessible** location, improving how facilities are used and supporting long-term community needs.

As part of this approach, opportunities could also be considered for the inclusion of **small flexible business units** within community hub facilities, supporting local enterprise and creating links with other hub spaces to encourage a vibrant, mixed-use community environment.

The Local Place Plan supports the **principle of exploring opportunities for enhanced, multi-purpose community hub facilities**, subject to further community discussion, feasibility and partnership working.

### 7. Town Centre Uses and Vitality

Residents highlighted a desire for a **more varied mix of shops and services** in Westhill, with less emphasis on fast food outlets and charity shops, and greater diversity in retail, cafés and restaurants.

There is interest in improving coordination, activity and identity within the town centre. As part of this, the Local Place Plan supports exploring mechanisms that could help deliver town centre vitality, including the potential future exploration of a **Business Improvement District (BID)**.

While not a planning policy, this could provide a delivery mechanism to support aspirations around economic activity and place-making.

### 8. Strategic Settlement Gap

There is strong community support for protecting the **Strategic Settlement Gap between Westhill and Kirkton of Skene**, to prevent coalescence and maintain the distinct identity of both settlements.

This area is valued for its landscape character, agricultural use and role in defining settlement boundaries.

The Local Place Plan supports the protection of the Strategic Settlement Gap from development that would undermine its function or character.

### 9. Protection of Green Belt and Green Spaces

Residents expressed clear support for the protection of existing **Green Belt and green spaces**, recognising their importance for landscape setting, biodiversity, recreation and wellbeing.

While some green spaces may have potential for appropriate community uses, there is strong opposition to unnecessary loss of green land to development.

The Local Place Plan supports the **protection and appropriate use of Green Belt and green spaces**, ensuring they continue to serve environmental and community functions.

## Bringing the Proposals Together

*Taken together, these proposals form a **coherent spatial strategy** for Westhill and Elrick that responds to identified community needs while aligning with national and local planning policy. The strategy seeks to support a balanced and inclusive settlement pattern by directing development to appropriate locations, strengthening existing centres and community assets, protecting valued landscapes and green spaces, and safeguarding the distinct identities of surrounding settlements.*

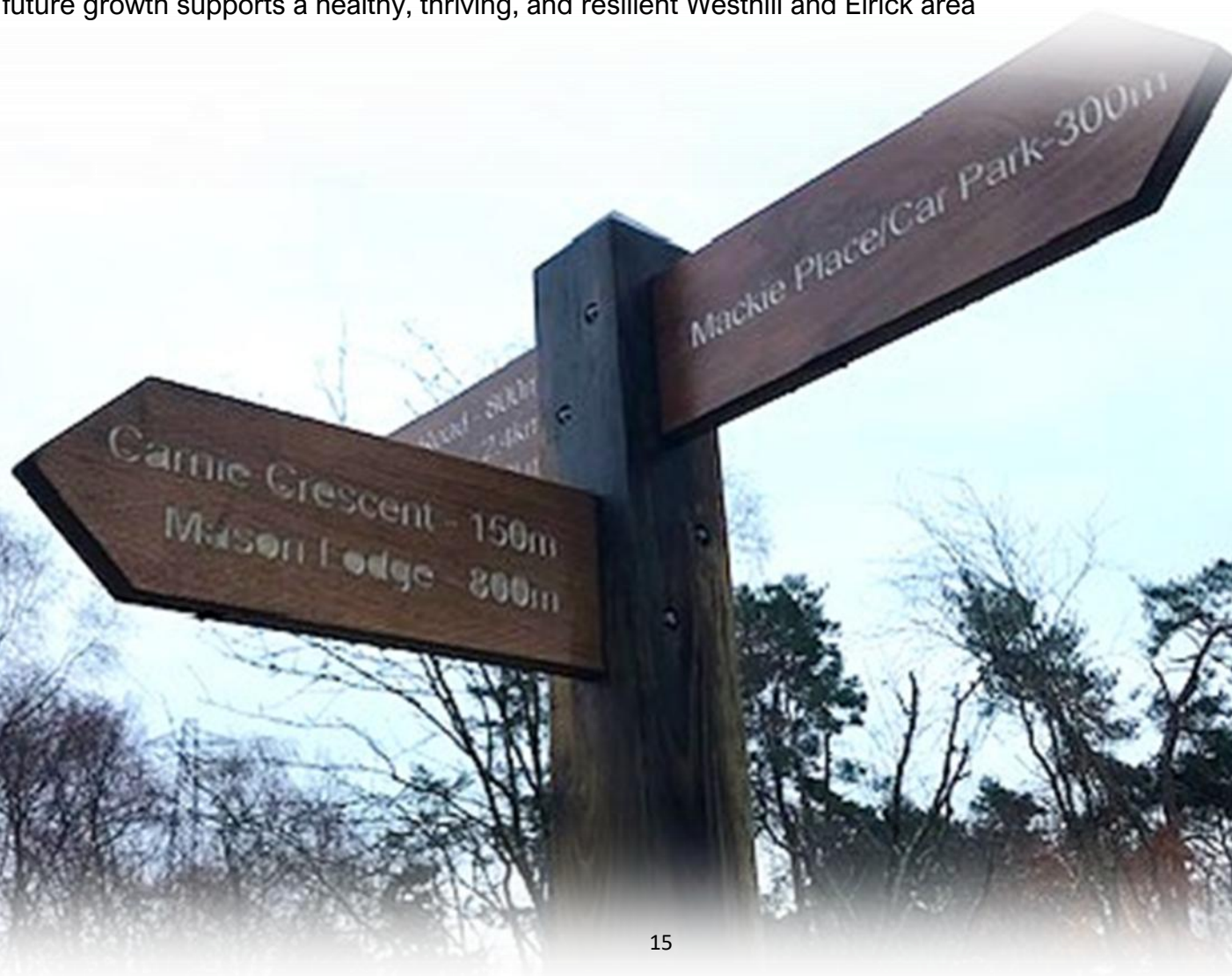
*Rather than promoting isolated projects, the Local Place Plan sets out an integrated framework that links housing, community facilities, active travel, green infrastructure and economic vitality. This approach provides clarity on where change is supported, where protection is required, and how future development can contribute positively to the long-term sustainability, wellbeing and character of Westhill and Elrick.*

## 9. CONCLUSION

This Local Place Plan reflects the voices of residents across the Westhill and Elrick area and sets out a shared vision for future development and land use. It builds on the Westhill and Elrick Community Action Plan and extensive engagement through meetings, surveys and local events.

At this stage, the plan represents the collective priorities identified by the community and provides clear proposals for housing, services, green space, and infrastructure. It is now being shared with Aberdeenshire Council Planners and will be subject to further community consultation.

The Westhill and Elrick community is committed to working collaboratively with the Council and other stakeholders to refine and deliver this plan, ensuring that future growth supports a healthy, thriving, and resilient Westhill and Elrick area



## 10. CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT LPP

The team circulated the draft plan to Ward 13 Aberdeenshire Councillors in March 2026 following which the community was consulted on the draft plan.

Community consultation on the draft plan opened on 16th March 2026 and closed on 12th April 2026. The consultation draft plan was made available [here](#)

(<https://www.Westhill and Elrickcc.co.uk/community-action-local-place-plans>). The consultation was advertised on the WECC website, by posters around the village, and on social media (<https://www.facebook.com/Westhill and ElrickCC>).

For the purposes of the Information Notice to be served pursuant to the Town and Country Planning (Local Place Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 2021, the following Aberdeenshire **Councillors and Community Councils will be formally notified:**

**Councillors - Iris Walker, Fatima Joji, Ron McKail, and Craig Miller**

**The following Community Councils adjoin the area covered by this plan:**

**Echt & Skene, Fintray & Kinellar, Kintore & District, and Inverurie,**

See Appendix 4 for supporting evidence for Local Place Plan process

## Submission to Aberdeenshire Council

This plan is being submitted to Aberdeenshire Council for registration as a Local Place Plan in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, the Town and Country Planning (Local Place Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 2021 and Planning Circular 1/2022: Local Place Plans.

## **11. APPENDICES**

### **Appendix i.**

#### **Online Questionnaire Responses**

Available online [here](#)

#### **Youth Survey Summary**

Responses from the Youth Survey broadly reinforce the key themes identified through the wider community engagement, including the online survey and map-based activities. No significant divergence was identified between youth responses and the main dataset in relation to land-use priorities.

Young people placed particular emphasis on access to informal recreational spaces, opportunities for sport and activity, and safe routes for walking and cycling. These responses strengthen the overall evidence base by adding detail and emphasis to emerging priorities around active spaces, community facilities, connectivity and the use of green space, and support the inclusion of such proposals within the Local Place Plan.

## **Appendix ii.**

### **Westhill and Elrick Community Council Constitution**

The Westhill and Elrick Community Council governing document is available online at:

<https://westhillelrick.org/people-make-a-place/>

## Appendix iii.

### WESTHILL AND ELRICK: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Strengths	Weaknesses
Strong sense of community and local identity	Traffic congestion and road conditions
Access to green spaces, parks and countryside	Limited public transport and connectivity
Good walking routes and opportunities for outdoor activity	Lack of facilities and spaces for young people
Peaceful environment and attractive setting	Town centre lacks vitality and variety
Active community groups and volunteers	Winter maintenance and pavement safety
Proximity to Aberdeen while retaining local character	Limited local services within walking distance

## SWOT Analysis

### 1. Strong and valued sense of community

Participants consistently describe Westhill as:

- A good place to live
- Peaceful, clean, and well cared for
- Friendly, with strong neighbourly connections
- A place people travel to for community activities

### Implication for the LPP:

Protecting community identity and cohesion is a clear priority. Future development will need to be framed as *supporting* this, not eroding it.

### 2. Transport, roads, and winter maintenance are dominant concerns

Across weaknesses and threats, there is strong emphasis on:

- Road conditions and potholes
- Traffic congestion and safety
- Reliability and cost of public transport

Pavement gritting, icy surfaces, and winter maintenance

### Implication for the LPP:

Movement and accessibility are major lived issues. Some concerns sit outside LPP control, but land-use planning can still support safer layouts, pedestrian priority, and active travel connections.

### 3. Clear appetite for town centre and local vitality

There is repeated reference to:

- The need for more independent cafés and restaurants
- Desire for places that encourage people to stay longer
- A sense that existing retail areas feel dated
- Lack of informal community meeting spaces

### Implication for the LPP:

There is a strong opportunity to explore town centre regeneration, mixed-use space, and a stronger “heart” to the community.

## Appendix iii.

### WESTHILL AND ELRICK: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Opportunities	Threats
Opportunities included ideas around food growing and land-based activity, with an emphasis on community benefit, skills and sustainability	Loss of green space and settlement coalescence
Potential to improve walking, cycling and active travel connections	Over-development without matching infrastructure
Scope to enhance community and recreational facilities	Increased traffic and pressure on roads
Town centre regeneration and mixed-use development	Erosion of community identity and character
Better use of green infrastructure for wellbeing and recreation	Climate impacts and pressure on natural assets
Small-scale, appropriate development to meet local needs i.e. two bedroom dwellings suitable for older residents and first time buyers	Development driven by external priorities rather than local need

#### SWOT Analysis (cont.)

#### 4. Green space and active travel are major strengths and opportunities

Participants value:

- Existing green spaces and walking routes
- Opportunities to move without using a car

- Potential new connections (e.g. off-road paths, links to Brimmond Hill)
- Interest in growing spaces and allotments

#### Implication for the LPP:

A connected green and active travel network is emerging as a key asset and opportunity.

#### 5. Concern about scale, infrastructure, and futureproofing

There are strong questions around:

- Over-expansion without matching infrastructure
- Traffic capacity
- Water, drainage, and utilities
- Electric vehicle charging and future readiness
- Quality and standards of new housing

#### Implication for the LPP:

Growth is not being rejected outright, but there is a clear expectation that it must be planned, proportionate, and infrastructure led.

## **Appendix iv.**

### **Supporting Evidence for Local Place Plan Process**

Available online [here](#)