

North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2

Survey Paper - Evidence Report

Rural Homes and Rural Development

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 requires Planning authorities to prepare an Evidence Report that contains sufficient information to enable the planning authority to prepare a Local Development Plan.
- 1.2 The Evidence Report has two main functions. The first is that it should set out the evidence that will be used to inform and prepare a new Local Development Plan. The second is for local authorities to identify the issues they think based on the evidence presented that need to be addressed by the new Local Development Plan, and for other interested parties and stakeholders to express what they think are the issues.
- 1.3 There are specific matters that the Evidence Report must cover; these are set out in the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019
- the principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district;
 - the principal purposes for which the land is used;
 - the size, composition, health, and distribution of the population of the district;
 - the housing needs of the population of the area, including, in particular, the needs of persons undertaking further and higher education, older people and disabled people;
 - the availability of land in the district for housing, including for older people and disabled people;
 - the desirability of allocating land for the purposes of resettlement;
 - the health needs of the population of the district and the likely effects of development and use of land on those health needs;
 - the education needs of the population of the district and the likely effects of development and use of land on those education needs;
 - the extent to which there are rural areas within the district in relation to which there has been a substantial decline in population;
 - the capacity of education services in the district;
 - the desirability of maintaining an appropriate number and range of cultural venues and facilities (including in particular, but not limited to, live music venues) in the district;
 - the infrastructure of the district (including communications, transport and drainage systems, systems for the supply of water and energy, and health care and education facilities);
 - how that infrastructure is used; and
 - any change which the planning authority thinks may occur in relation to any of the matters mentioned above.
- 1.4 This topic paper examines evidence in relation to the **rural homes and rural development** topic for the forthcoming North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 (NLLDP2). The paper identifies what evidence and information has been sourced and

subjected to an initial assessment as to the relevance of that evidence and information to NLLDP2.

- 1.5 Key points from the evidence and information on this topic are highlighted and potential future relevance is discussed with a view to this informing the approach in progressing the Evidence Report and NLLDP2 more generally.
- 1.6 The final Evidence Report will detail the stakeholder engagement and public survey that has taken place in developing its conclusions and will highlight the agreements and disputes that have arisen through this process.

2. Identification of Relevant Evidence

- 2.1 The relevant evidence has been identified through an evaluation of the rural homes and rural development topic and assessment of available information linked to the topic. Where available evidence shared by external stakeholders has been included. Should additional evidence become available we will consider its implications for the Evidence Report.

3. Consideration of Relevant Evidence

- 3.1 The following is an explanation of evidence sources which have been used in this Survey Paper and are considered potentially relevant for NLLDP2.

Main Evidence considered:

Source: The Plan for North Lanarkshire (2019)

Reason for using the Evidence:

The plan sets out the vision for North Lanarkshire to be a place to Live, Learn, Work, Invest and Visit. NLLDP2 will be a tool to assist in the realisation of this vision. The vision consists of five priorities that are comprised of 25 high level Ambition Statements. These statements amongst other issues cover maximising the use of marketable land, and maintaining a clean, safe and attractive environment and specific to this topic look to ensure a housing mix that supports social inclusion and economic growth, refocusing town centres and communities to be multi-functional connected places and grow the sustainability and diversity of North Lanarkshire's economy.

Links to Evidence: [The Plan for North Lanarkshire](#) and [North Lanarkshire Council Climate Plan](#)

Source: National Records of Scotland (mid-year estimates and 2018-based Population Projections (Principle Projection))

Reason for using the Evidence: The data contains statistics on the projected future population of councils including North Lanarkshire Council.

Links to Evidence: [Population Projections for Scottish Areas \(2018-based\) | National Records of Scotland \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](#)

Source: National Records of Scotland (Small Area Population Estimates) Mid-2021

Reason for using the Evidence:

The data contains small area population estimates to provide statistics at a local level within council areas. Each datazone can be categorised according to the Scottish Government's Urban Rural classification.

Links to Evidence: [Small Area Population Estimates \(2011 Data Zone based\) | National Records of Scotland \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk)

Source: Local Housing Strategy 2021-2026 (North Lanarkshire Council)

Reason for using the Evidence:

The strategy contains information on and details of the approach to Housing in North Lanarkshire, and is underpinned by an assessment of housing need, demand and provision, in order to support and create vibrant and sustainable communities.

Links to Evidence: [Local Housing Strategy 2021-2026.pdf \(northlanarkshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk)

Source: 2023 Housing Land Audit (North Lanarkshire Council)

Reason for using the Evidence:

Provides a snapshot of the housing land supply across North Lanarkshire as of the base date of 31st March, including proposals for housing in rural areas.

Links to Evidence: [Housing land supply | North Lanarkshire Council](https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk)

Source: Scotland's Census 2022

Reason for using the Evidence:

Provides rounded population estimates of population change for Scotland and local authorities.

Links to Evidence: [Scotland's Census 2022 - Rounded population estimates | Scotland's Census \(scotlandscensus.gov.uk\)](https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk)

Source: Action Plan to address Depopulation Feb 2024. Sub-Council Area Population Projections

Reason for using the Evidence:

The data contains projections of population change at sub-council area to allow a targeted and place based approach to supporting communities in these areas.

Links to Evidence: [Sub-Council Area Population Projections | Improvement Service](https://www.improvementservice.gov.uk)

Source: Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2020

Reason for using the Evidence:

Provides a method of defining urban and rural areas across Scotland. Based upon two main criteria, population and accessibility, to differentiate between urban, rural and remote areas. A classification system may identify the rural population distribution and demographic profile, including, where relevant, areas where there has been a substantial decline in population over time.

Links to Evidence: [Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2020 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

Source: North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan GIS Map Layers (General Urban Area, Green Belt, Countryside)

Reason for using the Evidence:

The map shows three of the five land use character areas identified in North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2022. Character Areas have a purpose defined by the range of uses found in that place, or the range of uses we would like to encourage. The uses encouraged in these character areas are outlined in the policy document.

Links to Evidence: [North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan.pdf](#)

Source: [Understanding Scotland's Places](#)

Reason for using the Evidence:

The platform is formed of three parts. The first two elements have been created using national data sets – a new typology of Scottish towns, and an assessment of towns' inter-relationships. The third part of the platform is the **USP Your Town Audit**, which gathers local information which complements the national data available through USP.

Links to Evidence: [Understanding Scotland's Places](#)

Source: Transport Scotland Route map to achieve 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030

Reason for using the Evidence:

A route map to achieve a 20 per cent reduction in car kilometres by 2030 and in doing so have produced a framework of sustainable travel behaviours that can be applied to both rural and urban settings.

Links to Evidence: [A route map to achieve a 20 per cent reduction in car kilometres by 2030 | Transport Scotland](#)

Source: NLC Biodiversity Action Plan 2023 - 2027

Reason for using the Evidence:

The NLBAP seeks to ensure we continue to conserve and enhance the habitats and species that contribute to North Lanarkshire's character and heritage as well as targeting the Nature Emergency. This has direct links and actions for the rural area.

Links to Evidence: [North Lanarkshire Biodiversity Action Plan](#)

Source: North Lanarkshire Economic Regeneration Delivery Plan 2023 - 2028

Reason for using the Evidence:

The plan sets out how the council will improve economic opportunities and outcomes for everyone in North Lanarkshire and aligns with wider local and national strategies.

Links to Evidence: [NLC Economic Regeneration Delivery Plan](#)

Source: North Lanarkshire Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2022-26

Reason for using the Evidence:

Sets out the vision and ambitions for the tourism sector in North Lanarkshire and how the council and partners can support the industry.

Links to Evidence: [Tourism Strategy and Action Plan \(northlanarkshire.gov.uk\)](#)

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|--|
| <p>Source: Health & Social Care Strategic Commissioning Plan 2023-26</p> <p>Reason for using the Evidence: Sets out ambitions for improving the health and wellbeing of North Lanarkshire's population.</p> <p>Links to Evidence: About Us Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire (hscnl.org.uk)</p> |
| <p>Source: Historic Environment Scotland Listing, scheduling and Designations. NatureScot Protected Areas - national, regional and local designation.</p> <p>Reason for using the Evidence: Provides locations of historic and natural environment designations and will contribute to protection of our environmental assets in rural areas.</p> <p>Links to Evidence: Listing, Scheduling and Designations Historic Environment Scotland Downloads (historicenvironment.scot) NatureScot data services NatureScot</p> |
| <p>Source: Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs)</p> <p>Reason for using the Evidence: LOIPs outline the key priorities for each community board area and an approach to achieve improved outcomes for each area.</p> <p>Links to Evidence: Local Outcome Improvement Plans (northlanarkshire.gov.uk)</p> |

4. Assessment of Evidence

- 4.1 The evidence presented in this topic paper relates to Policy 29 Rural Development and to a lesser extent Policy 17 Rural Homes. A separate evidence paper on Housing will be prepared jointly for Policy 16 Quality Homes and Policy 17 Rural Homes, as the data sources in relation to that topic are relevant and overlap for both policies.

For Policy 17 Rural Homes, National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) states LDPs should be informed by an understanding of population change over time, locally specific needs and market circumstances in rural and island areas.

It goes on to say that LDPs should set out tailored approaches to rural housing and where relevant include proposals for future population growth, including provision for small scale housing such as crofts and woodland crofts and the appropriate resettlement of previously inhabited areas.

Proposals for housing in rural areas and future population growth are shown in NLLDPs Housing Land Supply and the Housing Land Audit which is updated annually. Further opportunities may emerge as part of the NLLDP2 process, informed by the Local Housing Strategy, and following the identification of a Local Housing Land Requirement (LHLR) which is expected to exceed the Minimum All Tenure Housing Land Requirement (MATHLR) as set out for North Lanarkshire in Annex E of NPF4. This element of rural homes policy will be considered as part of the housing topic paper.

For Policy 29 Rural Development, National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) states LDPs should identify the characteristics of rural areas within the plan area, including

the existing pattern of development, pressures, environmental assets, community priorities and economic needs of each area. The spatial strategy should set out an appropriate approach to development in rural areas which reflects the identified characteristics. This element of rural development policy will be considered below as part of the joint paper.

For the purpose of this paper, the overlap between both policies relates to NPF4's requirement to use the Scottish Government's 6-fold Urban Rural Classification 2020 tool to identify remote rural areas and areas previously inhabited, that have experienced population decline and may be suitable for resettlement.

This paper is set out in three sections:

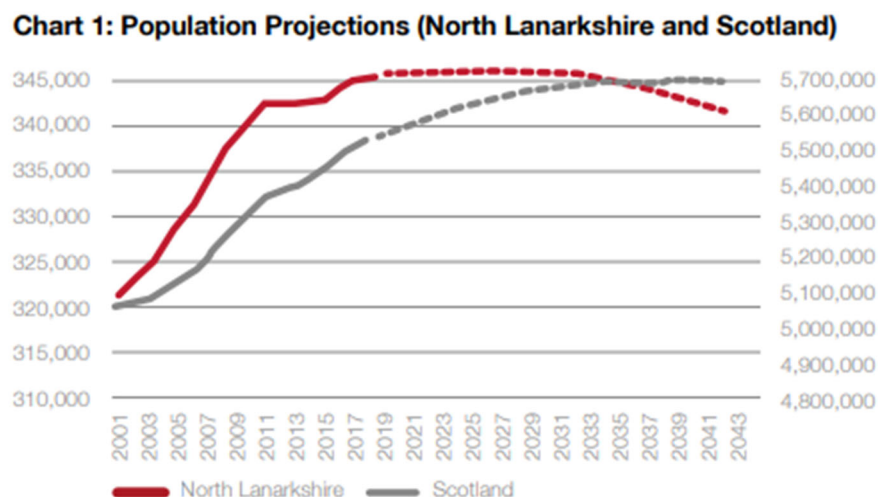
1. Demographic change- the demographic change for North Lanarkshire Council to identify areas of population decline
2. Rural Areas - the identification of North Lanarkshire's rural areas using Scottish Government's 6 fold Urban Rural Classification 2020 tool
3. Characteristics of Rural Areas

Demographic change

National Records of Scotland

- 4.2 The population of North Lanarkshire has been steadily increasing for the past 19 years, from 321,180 in 2001 to 341,140 in 2020. Latest population projections suggest that this growth will continue until 2027, although at a much slower rate than previous years (0.3%). After 2027 the population is projected to decline by approximately 1.2% (4,008 people), returning to 2011 levels by 2043.

Figure 1: Population Projections (North Lanarkshire and Scotland)



Source: NRS Mid-Year Estimates and 2018-based Population Projections (Principle Projection)

Population growth is not experienced uniformly across the authority area. The National Records of Scotland Mid-2021 Small Area Population Estimates and the

Action Plan to address Depopulation 2024 both provide population data at local level across the authority area.

The National Records of Scotland Mid-2021 Small Area Population Estimates provides population estimates for small areas called data zones. These are a small unit of geography used to provide statistics on population data at a local level. Data zones nest within council areas.

During the period mid-2020 to mid-2021 for Scotland as a whole, the small area population estimates highlight:

- that the number of people living in large urban areas has fallen and in contrast, the populations of rural areas, small towns, and other urban areas have either increased or fallen more slowly than the previous year.
- most people still live in large urban areas (38%) and other urban areas (34%), compared with accessible rural areas (12%), accessible small towns (9%), remote rural areas (5%), and remote small towns (3%).
- Every council area has pockets of population growth and decline. Areas which saw the largest proportion of data zones increase in population were mainly rural and island council areas in the year to mid-2021. Population growth in these areas was substantially higher than the growth observed in the previous year.

Local Housing Strategy 2021-2026 (North Lanarkshire Council)

4.3 The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) sets out the local context for North Lanarkshire. North Lanarkshire is home to 341,140 people and is the fourth largest local authority area in terms of population. It is ideally situated in heart of Scotland with excellent transport links to the rest of Scotland and beyond. It covers an area of approximately 470 square kilometres, over a quarter of which is urban. Around two-thirds of the population live within the six main settlements of Airdrie, Bellshill, Coatbridge, Cumbernauld, Motherwell and Wishaw. The remainder of the population live in smaller village communities across North Lanarkshire. With a population density of 726 people per square kilometre, North Lanarkshire is the 5th most densely populated council area in Scotland. The LHS 2021-2026 concludes there are no distinctive rural housing or housing related services issues in North Lanarkshire.

For LHS and strategic planning purposes, the area was split into 3 main Housing Sub Market Areas and 10 Local Housing Markets Areas:

| Housing Sub Market Area | Local Housing Market Area |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Airdrie and Coatbridge | Airdrie |
| | Coatbridge |
| Cumbernauld | Cumbernauld |
| | Kilsyth |
| | Moodiesburn |
| Motherwell | Bellshill |
| | Motherwell |
| | Shotts |
| | Viewpark |
| | Wishaw |

Urban-rural populations for North Lanarkshire

4.4 Each data zone within the council area is categorised according to the Scottish Government's 6-fold Urban Rural Classification. (See paragraph 4.7 below for more details).

Figure 2 below shows that there are four of the six categories of urban-rural that exist within North Lanarkshire: Large Urban Areas, Other Urban Areas, Accessible Rural Areas and Accessible Small Towns.

Figure 2: Population change by Urban Rural area 2011-2021 (source: NRS 2021)

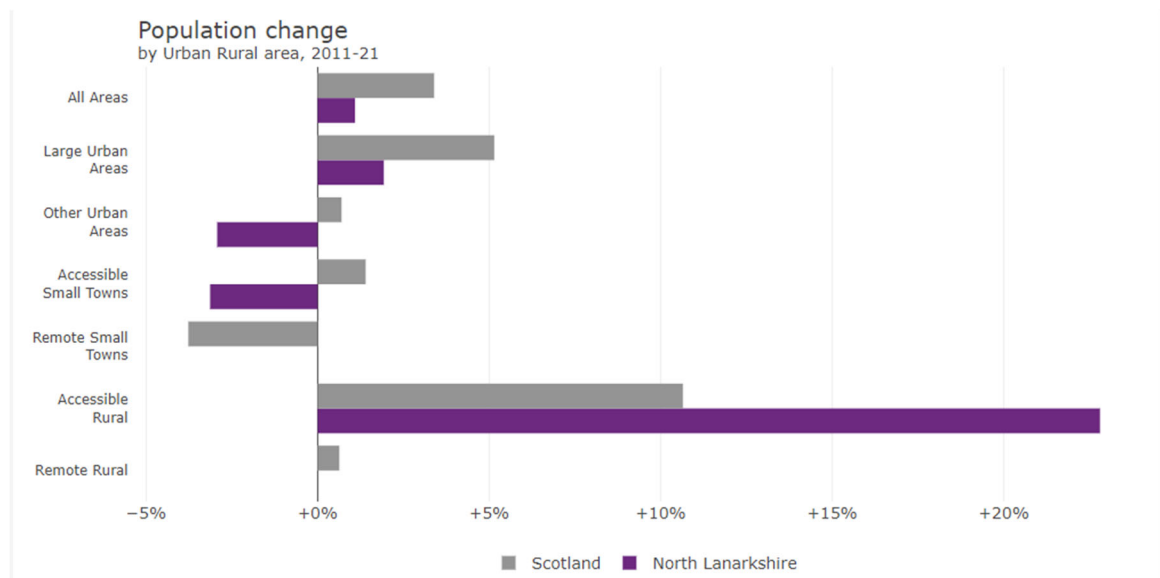


Figure 2 demonstrates that for North Lanarkshire, the category with the greatest population growth over the last decade is Accessible Rural, followed by Large Urban Areas, whilst populations in Other Urban Areas and Accessible Small Towns decreased.

The small area population estimates report provides a few possible reasons for these population changes, some of which are linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of these include:

- the increase in remote working which have prompted people to move away from cities since they no longer need to live close to the buildings where they previously worked, and
- suspension of face-to-face e-teaching and increase in online learning. For example, some students may have moved from their term-time addresses to elsewhere, including to their parents' addresses.

4.5 The Council considers another explanation for the rise is population growth within accessible rural areas may also be linked to housing delivery during that period, particularly in Ravenscraig and the Gartcosh/Glenboig Community Growth Area, which both fall within the accessible rural classification but are becoming more urban in nature given the amount of development that is either underway or expected at these locations and their proximity to Glasgow.

During 2011-2022, North Lanarkshire Council experienced a 3.7% increase in the number of households. The Census 2022 states that the general pattern across council areas is that household numbers increased faster than the population since the last census.

4.7 **Action Plan to Address Depopulation 2024**

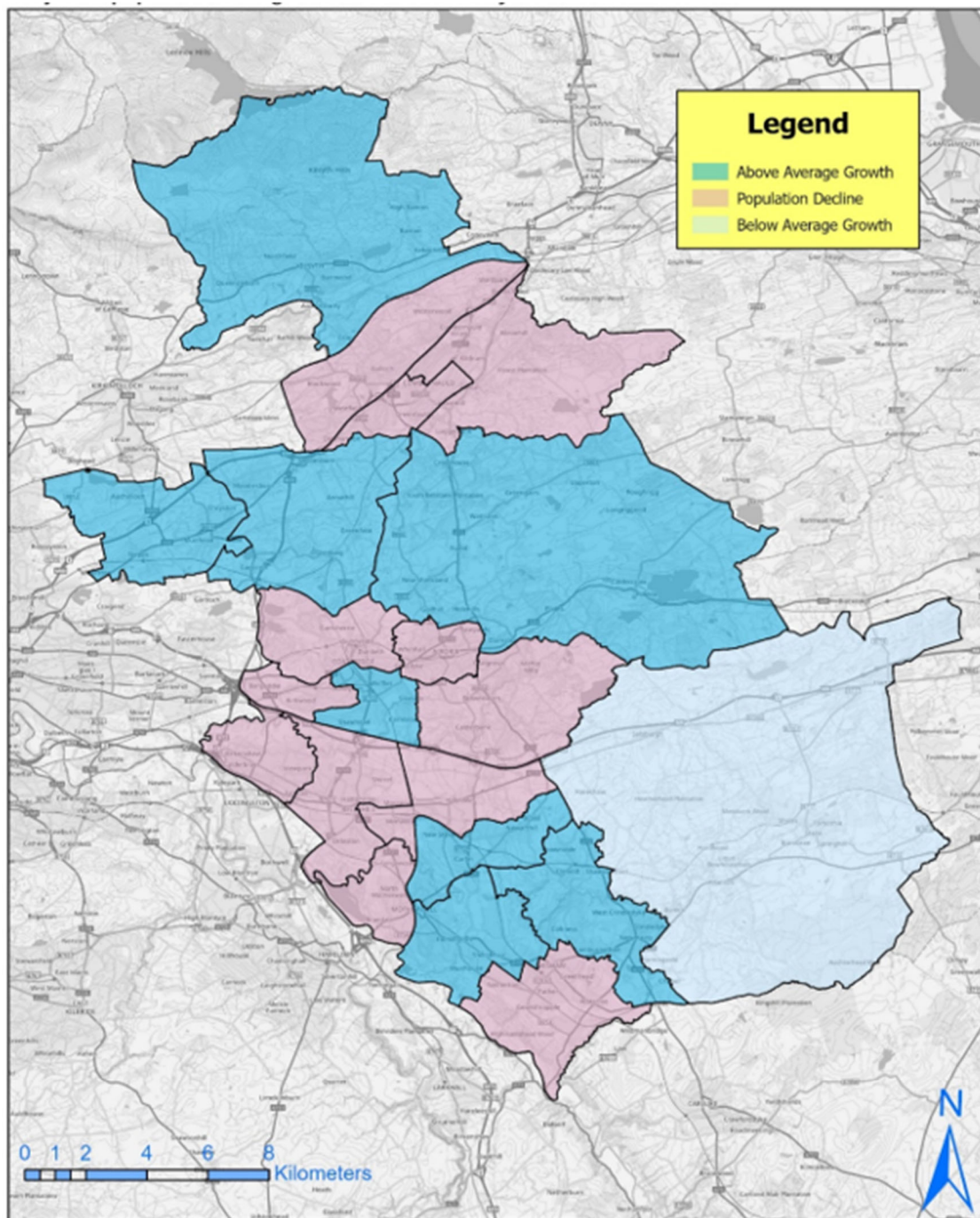
Scottish Government's Action Plan to Address Depopulation 2024 paper, prepared to support Scotland's Population Strategy 2021, highlights that not all population growth is experienced uniformly across local authority sub-areas.

Depopulation as a phenomenon typically occurs at a smaller, local level, and population projections covering entire local authorities, as set out below, can mask trends occurring within smaller geographies.

The Action Plan to Address Depopulation provides a map of projected population change 2018-2030 for the whole of Scotland. This shows that population growth is projected to be in the central belt and urban areas, while most examples of population decline have been observed in, and are projected to mainly be in, the West of Scotland. It also shows population projections at sub-local authority level arranged by three categories: 'Population Decline', 'Above Average Growth' and 'Below Average Growth'.

A version of this map (see Map 1 below) has been prepared layering the projected population change 2018-2030 over the North Lanarkshire council boundary and ward areas (see Appendix 1 for a breakdown of council ward area names).

Map 1: Projected population change at sub-local authority level from 2018-2030



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Whilst it is evident that there are sub-authority areas that are projected to experience population decline the map does not take into account the various development opportunities and council strategies that are either existing or will emerge as part of

the forthcoming NLLDP2, that will influence the outcome for these areas and potentially offset the projected decline.

Rural Areas

- 4.8 The Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2020 has been produced in line with the Scottish Government's core definition of rurality which defines settlements of less than 3,000 people to be rural and areas classified as remote are based on drive times from settlements of 10,000 people or more. The 6-fold classification distinguishes between urban, rural and remote areas through six categories.

Using the population thresholds of 125,000, 10,000 and 3,000 people, Settlements are grouped into the following categories:

(1) Large Urban Areas - populations of 125,000 or more

(2) Other Urban Areas - populations of 10,000 to 124,999

(3) Small Towns - populations of 3,000 to 9,999

(4) Rural Areas - populations less than 3,000

Accessibility is measured in terms of drive times to an urban area. This is done by calculating 30 and 60 minute drive times from the population weighted centroids of Settlements with a population of 10,000 or more (i.e. Large and Other Urban Areas). The results allow areas to be classified in terms of accessibility by the following categories:

(1) Accessible - Areas within a 30 minute drive time of a Settlement with a population of 10,000 or more.

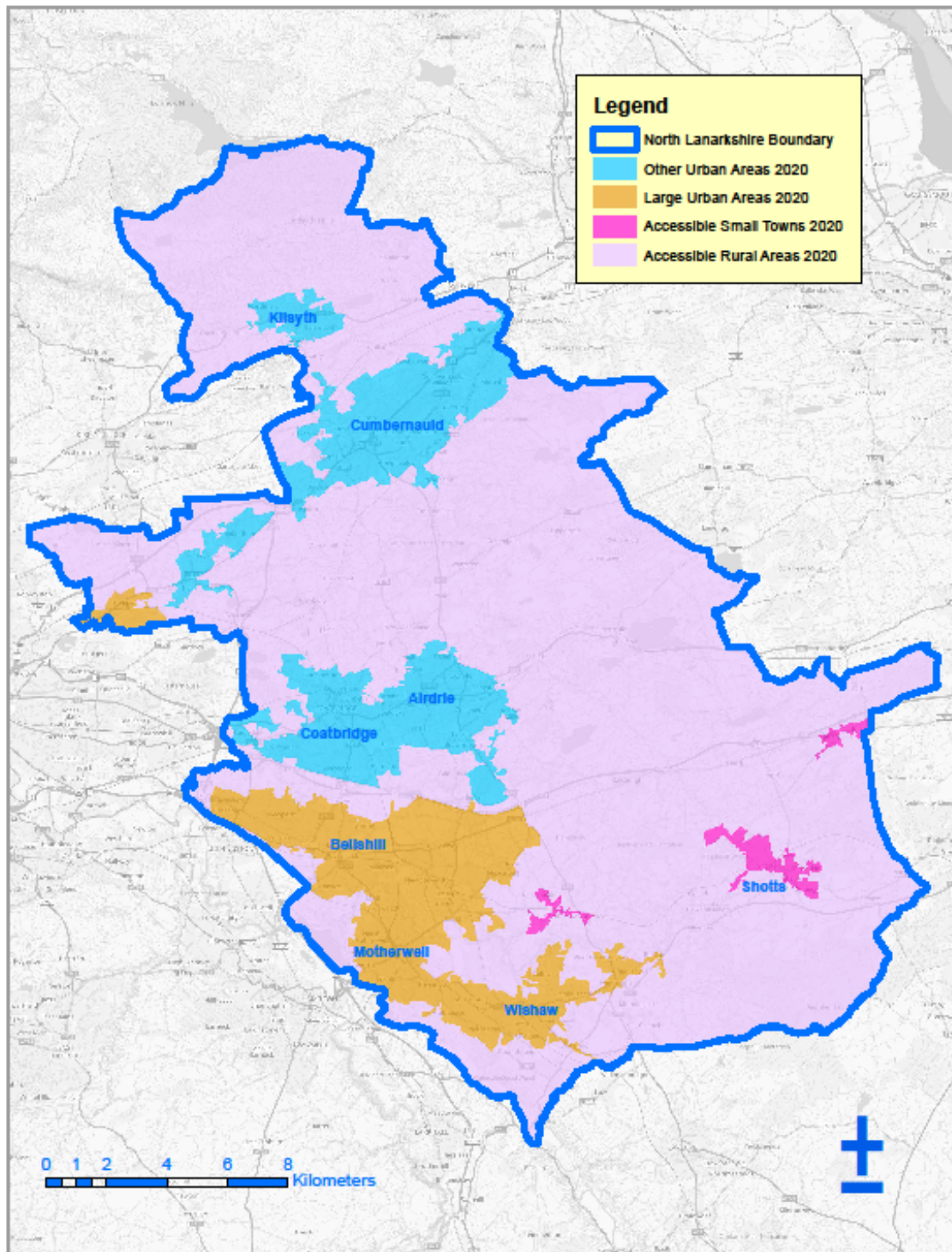
(2) Remote - Areas that are more than a 30 minute drive time (6-fold classification), **or** areas that have a drive time between 30 and 60 minutes (8-fold classification) from a Settlement with a population of 10,000 or more.

(3) Very Remote - Areas that are more than a 60 minute drive time from a Settlement with a population of 10,000 or more (8-fold classification only).

- 4.9 Map 2 below shows the 6-fold categories and demonstrates where these have been allocated across the North Lanarkshire area.

Map 2: Urban Rural Classification 2020 (Scottish Government) within NLC boundary

Map of Urban Rural Classification 2020 (Scottish Government)



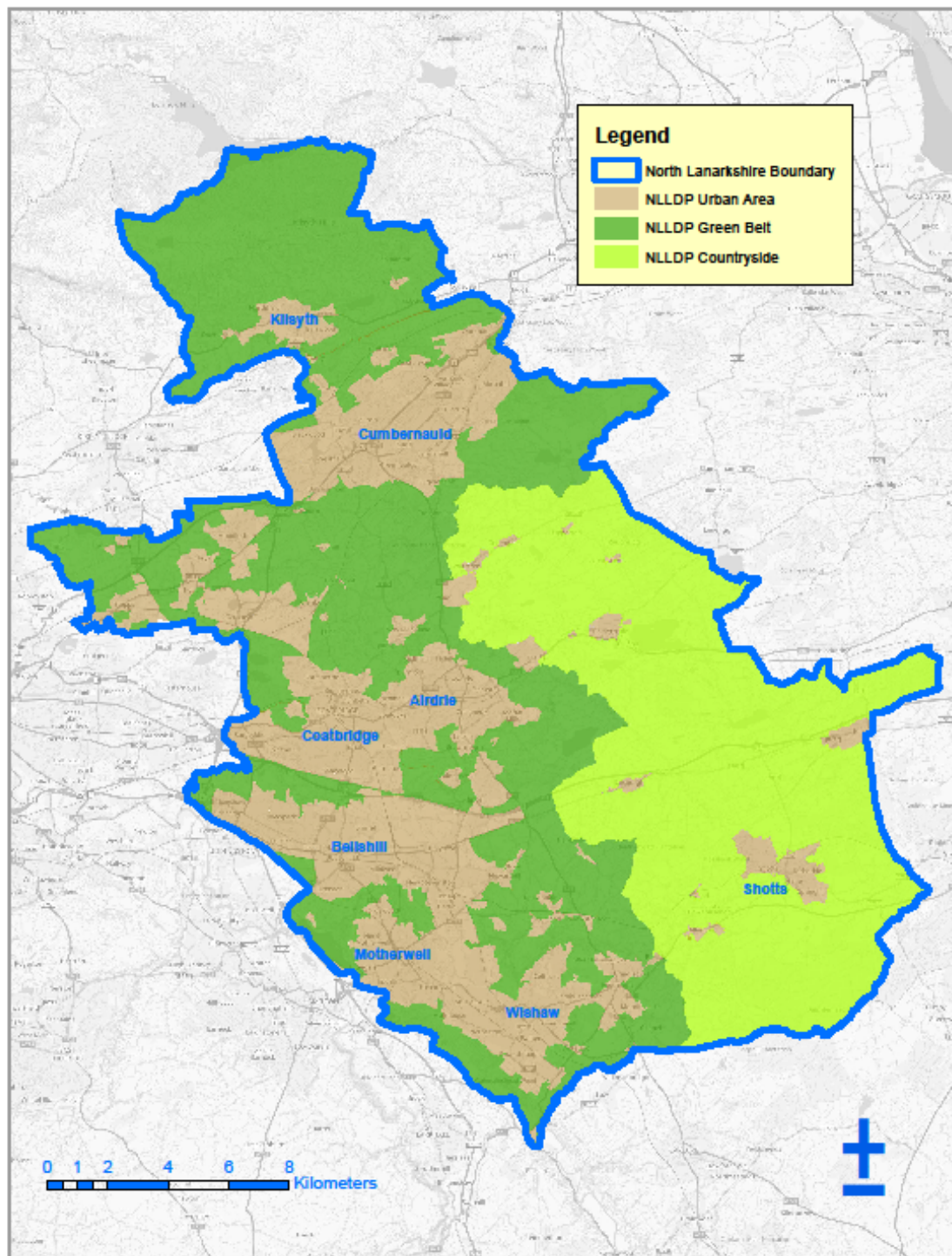
As demonstrated, only 4 of the 6 categories are applicable to North Lanarkshire – Other Urban Areas, Large Urban Areas, Accessible Small Towns and Accessible Rural Areas.

NPF4 outlines that the Scottish Governments 6-fold Classification 2020 should be used to identify remote rural areas. Map 2 demonstrates that the Urban Rural Classification 2020 does not identify any area as a Remote Rural Area, and therefore would not apply to North Lanarkshire.

The policy principles of NPF4 Policy 29 Rural Development closely align with those of the adopted NLLDP Policy PP5 Countryside. Map 3 below outlines where our existing Green Belt and Countryside locations are for North Lanarkshire. Map 4 (also below) overlays the Green Belt and Countryside locations with the Accessible Rural Areas identified in the Urban Rural Classification 2020.

Map 3: Green Belt, Countryside and Urban Areas NLLDP 2022

Map of NLLDP 2022 Green Belt, Countryside & Urban Areas



4.10 Map 4 compares the SG Urban Rural Classification with the NLLDP Urban and Rural boundaries. This shows some major differences where the Urban Rural Classification identifies areas as Accessible Rural, however our own mapping defines some of these areas as urban in terms of existing land uses and proposed uses in the adopted North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2022. This includes the following areas:

Ravenscraig – The masterplan for Ravenscraig continues to be delivered, including the development of a significant number of houses, alongside a regional sports facility, college, nursery and restaurant. Plans for improved access, infrastructure and the preparation of land for significant business development are also ongoing.

Gowkthrapple – regeneration plans are underway for new housing, open space and green corridors.

Reema Road (Bellshill) – Mossend Railhead expansion and development of Mossend International Rail Freight Park (including use classes 5 and 6)

Gartcosh – Gartcosh/Glenboig Community Growth Area, Gartcosh Enterprise (industry/business), Kilgarth Specialised Site.

Drum Mains/Orchardton Woods – existing industrial/business location with plots included within marketable land supply.

Cumbernauld Community Growth Area (Mid-Forest/Palacerigg) – Significant work is underway to deliver the CGA. At the time of writing, planning application 22/01051/MS for 300 houses is pending consideration by the planning authority.

Given the justification above for the areas which the council considers to be urban in nature, it is considered that our own established countryside boundary is a more accurate and up-to-date reflection of the ‘accessible rural area’.

Characteristics of Rural Areas

4.11 NPF4 states that LDPs should identify the characteristics of rural areas within the plan area, including the existing pattern of development, pressures, environmental assets, community priorities and economic needs of each area.

- Existing pattern of development
The Green Belt and Countryside boundaries used in the adopted NLLDP 2022 (shown in Map 2 above) reflect our most up-to-date position in terms of the existing pattern of development where these boundaries are drawn considering existing settlements and proposed developments. However, this has still to take into account the various development opportunities and council strategies that are either existing or will emerge as part of the forthcoming preparation of NLLDP2, this may influence the pattern of development for North Lanarkshire.
- Pressures
We will seek to continue to identify pressures in our rural areas at the proposed plan stage as more localised information becomes available. Transport Scotland have developed a route map to achieve a 20 per cent reduction in car kilometres by 2030 and in doing so have produced a framework of sustainable travel behaviours that can be applied to both rural

and urban settings including reducing the need to travel, living well locally, switching modes and combining trips or sharing journeys. There is acknowledgement that car use reduction will be more difficult in rural areas where there is more reliance on the car and access to public transport is not as good. People living in rural areas are more likely to have access to and use a car, as well as use it more frequently.

The NLC Biodiversity Action Plan states that changes in agricultural practice, including an increase in the use of chemical fertiliser and pest and weed control, has led to a profound loss of semi-natural habitat in rural areas.

- Environmental assets

Within our rural areas we will seek to identify and protect/promote natural heritage and historic environment assets at international, national and regional/local levels. These will be provided as per designations identified by NatureScot and Historic Environment Scotland, and other assets as identified by the Council and partners.

The Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network will provide well-connected, high quality, multi-use greenspaces throughout the region. It will link urban and rural areas. The Blueprint incorporates a Strategic Access Network and Strategic Habitat Network to identify existing Green Network assets that should be protected and managed, where there are gaps in the networks and opportunities to address those gaps. Six locations are identified within North Lanarkshire as Strategic Delivery Areas for the Green Network:

- Broadwood
- Gartcosh
- Holytown/Mossend
- Ravenscraig
- Gowkthrapple/Wishaw
- Waterloo

North Lanarkshire has over 300 farms supporting a range of habitats and wildlife. Farmland is not only beneficial to wildlife, but as well as producing food, they have rich cultural value and play an integral role in rural economies. Biodiversity is not only under threat from intensification, but also the loss of farmland to development such as housing, landfill and wind farms. National trends in the decline of key farmland species groups such as waders are mirrored in North Lanarkshire. The NLC Biodiversity Action Plan seeks to incorporate within design guidance information to encourage the construction of artificial barn owl nest boxes and Kestrel nest boxes in proposed development or conversions of rural or agricultural buildings.

- Community priorities

Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) outline key priorities for each community board area based on the needs of the local communities. This includes priorities such as improvements to public and community transport in the Kilsyth area and improved digital infrastructure for the communities of Shotts.

The Council will be undertaking place-based surveys for the wider public which, along with other consultation, will feed into the community priorities in rural areas for the proposed plan and help to characterise these areas. In addition, the Council is currently developing its approach to Community Wealth Building and is engaging with community, voluntary and business networks.

- Economic needs

The North Lanarkshire Tourism Strategy acknowledges the large rural offering that the area has as an asset. It also identifies our well-established network of walking and cycling routes including the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site as well as the recently created Arniebog distance stone and award-winning Silvanus sculpture creating destinations and bringing the area's roman heritage to life. Kilsyth and Clyde Valley is an attractive but underutilised rural area containing a wide-range of visitor attractions namely: Forth and Clyde Canal, Colzium Estate and Visitor Centre, Antonine Wall World Heritage Site, Dumbreck Marshes, Banton Loch, Dullatur Nature Reserve and a well-developed path network. The council has a wide range of opportunities for the promotion of leisure activities that can benefit the health and wellbeing of individuals - this includes 6 country parks and gardens, 6 town parks, 9 local nature reserves, over 350 sites of importance for nature conservation, and 171 play areas.

The Health & Social Care Strategic Commissioning Plan 2023-26 sets out ambitions for improving the health and wellbeing of North Lanarkshire's population. It outlines that a forecasted ageing population means that as a result of people living longer, it is anticipated that this will result in an increase in the number of people with long term conditions and an increase in the number of people with multiple conditions. Alongside other long standing public health issues, it is expected that the demand for health and social care services will increase. Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy trends have not improved in Scotland since around 2012 and this is also the case for North Lanarkshire. North Lanarkshire also has a higher proportion of its population living in the most deprived datazones compared to the Scottish position – 33% of North Lanarkshire's population live in the 20% most deprived datazones compared with Scotland's 19%. There are six health and social care Locality Profile's for across North Lanarkshire which provide information and statistics on health and social care related indicators across the North Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership.

The Economic Regeneration Delivery Plan 2023 – 2028 and associated Action Plan outlines improvements to economic opportunities and outcomes for everyone in North Lanarkshire. This includes delivering new homes, reshaping town centres, attracting investment and improving infrastructure for new and existing business and industry sites, as well as upgrading our roads, active travel networks and digital connectivity.

The ERDP outlines that although North Lanarkshire has great road and rail infrastructure, access to and from many of our rural communities and business locations is dependent upon car ownership. Car ownership across most of North Lanarkshire is relatively low and, post-covid, commercial bus routes have worsened. In 2019, legislation was approved to permit local authorities to run public bus services. However, such services, where most needed, are likely to be commercially unviable and would need to be heavily subsidised. As the council progresses with other infrastructure investment plans across North Lanarkshire, as with all other capital programmes, rising construction costs and inflation continues to impact on proposals. As such, there is a clear need to prioritise this investment to help achieve goals for inclusive economic growth, net carbon zero and digital connectivity. Although motorway corridors provide North Lanarkshire's main strategic business locations, consultation undertaken as part of the development of the

2023-2028 ERDP has highlighted that for those without cars, accessing these locations is difficult from towns and settlements across North Lanarkshire due to a lack of public transport options (as is the case for those residents from smaller and rural settlements trying to access employment opportunity in general).

The Scottish Rural Development Programme provides money and support for projects run by businesses, individuals and groups to help: create vibrant rural communities; protect and enhance the environment; support rural businesses; and help the farming industry grow.

5. Potential Connections in Evidence

- 5.1 The Plan for North Lanarkshire is the council's main strategy for the area to improve services and outcomes for the communities who live here. It provides a shared ambition for inclusive growth and prosperity for all. It sets a path for the council and partners to follow. The Plan covers a wide range of activities that can impact on carbon emissions and help to make North Lanarkshire a more sustainable place to 'live-learn-work-invest-visit'.
- 5.2 In the UK the past four decades have been warmer than the one before. In North Lanarkshire it is expected that the average summer temperatures will increase, and the number of rainy days will reduce. The volume of rain on summer's wettest day will increase. Our winters are expected to be milder. Whilst the impact of climate change may seem to be less severe locally, in recent years we have seen an increase in severe weather events. These can affect us through:
- Travel Disruption
 - Emergency Response Situations
 - Loss of power supply
 - Landslides
 - Flooding
 - Disruption to service Delivery
- 5.3 The council recognised that it must take action and declared a climate emergency in June 2019. It has committed itself and the area of North Lanarkshire to achieving net-zero by 2030. Concerned about the impact of climate change on biodiversity, the council became a signatory of the Edinburgh declaration on Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Rural Housing & Rural Development - implications for policy 1 tackling the climate and nature crises

- 5.4 NPF4 Policy 1 seeks to ensure that any development proposal brought forward will require to give significant weight to the global climate and nature crises in its consideration. The spatial strategy should reduce emissions and adapt to current and future risks of climate change by promoting nature recovery and restoration in the area.
- 5.5 The policies have a direct link to nature in rural areas where they will seek to safeguard and enhance the character of rural areas including environmental assets, thereby providing a positive impact on nature. Any development proposals will also be given consideration in terms of suitable location, scale and design and transport requirements.

Rural Housing and Rural Development – implications for policy 2 climate mitigation and adaptation

- 5.6 NPF4 Policy 2 seeks to ensure that emissions from development are minimised, and places are more resilient to climate change impacts.
- 5.7 People living in rural areas are more likely to depend on car usage for transport however proposals will require to give consideration to the transport needs of any proposals and its appropriateness to the location.

Conclusion in terms of implications for topic 1 and 2

- 5.8 It is considered that the principles instilled in policies 17 and 29 will benefit those in policies 1 and 2 by assisting the climate and nature crises and tackling climate mitigation and adaptation where they seek to ensure that there will not be any negative impacts.

Other topic/policy overlaps stated in NPF4

- 5.9 It is possible that connections may exist with the following topics and in the following ways.
- 5.10 There is potential for some positive effects for the following topic areas:
- Policy 9 Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings
 - Policy 4 Natural places
 - Policy 5 Soils
 - Policy 7 Historic assets & places
 - Policy 8 Green belts
 - Policy 13 Sustainable transport
 - Policy 14 Design, quality and place
 - Policy 15 Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods
 - Policy 18 Infrastructure first
 - Policy 16 Quality homes
 - Policy 20 Blue and green infrastructure
 - Policy 22 Flood risk and water management
 - Policy 26 Business and industry
 - Policy 27 City, town, local and commercial centres
 - Policy 28 Retail
 - Policy 30 Tourism
 - Policy 31 Culture and creativity

Policies 17 and 29 seek to encourage rural economic activity and provide high quality sustainable rural homes in the right locations. They will support proposals that will contribute to the viability, sustainability and diversity of rural communities ensuring that they are suitably located and designed while safeguarding and enhancing the rural area character, service function of small towns, natural assets and cultural heritage.

- 5.11 There is potential for some negative effects for the following topic areas:
- Policy 13 Sustainable transport
 - Policy 33 Minerals

Given the nature and characteristics of rural locations, sustainable transport may be more difficult to implement where car reliance is higher. That said, policy 13 also clearly aims to ensure that proposals support sustainable travel in sustainable locations which support local living. The policies also seek to safeguard rural area characteristics, natural assets and cultural heritage, there is some potential for conflict of possible mineral proposals where they might impact on these areas.

However, it is expected that the policy requirements of NPF4 would minimise any impacts.

6. Site Selection Implications

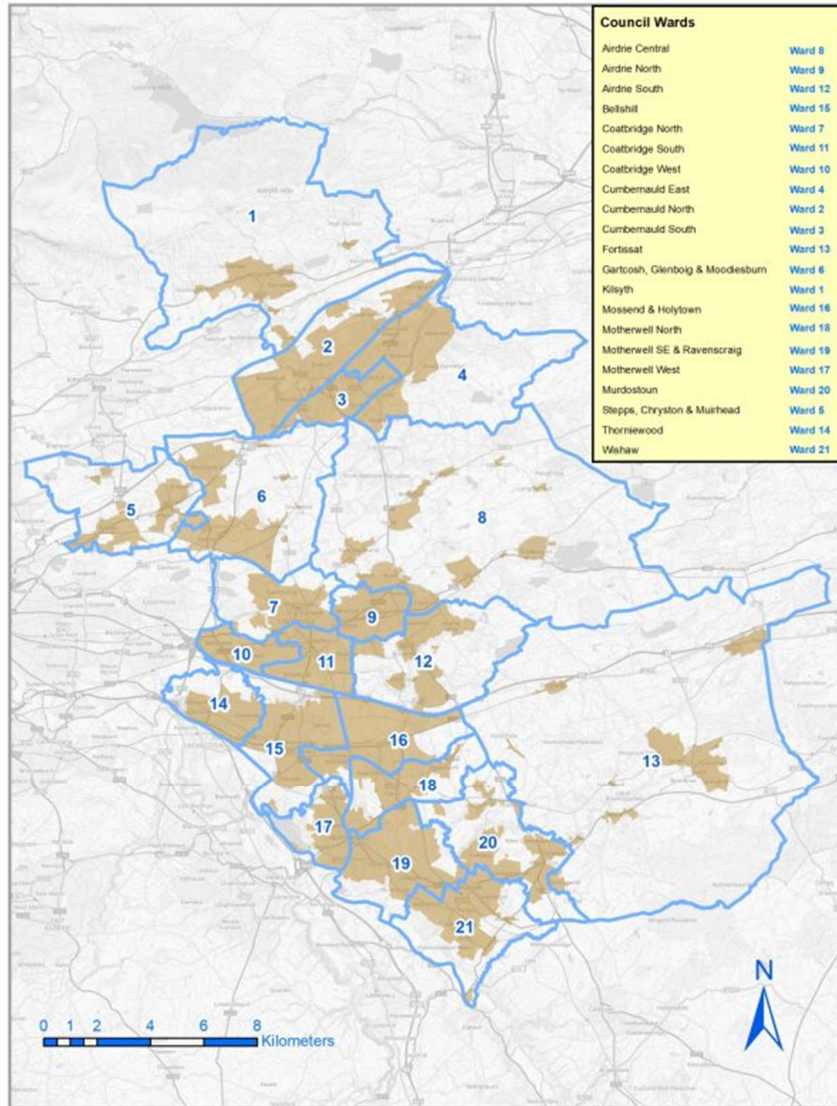
- 6.1 Consideration of impact on the Green Belt and Countryside (accessible rural locations) boundaries.
- 6.2 Ensuring that the characteristics of rural areas are safeguarded in the consideration of any rural location proposals including environmental assets, cultural heritage and service function of small towns.
- 6.3 Consideration of relevant infrastructure to support proposals including sustainable transport and digital infrastructure as well as connections with urban areas.
- 6.4 Ensuring there is a range of housing development sites available in the rural area to mitigate population decline if deemed necessary.

7. Implications for North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2

- 7.1 There are no remote rural areas identified in North Lanarkshire. Policy 17 Rural Homes part (c) and Policy 29 Rural Development part (c) are not applicable to North Lanarkshire.
- 7.2 Population growth trend towards accessible rural areas in the west of North Lanarkshire closest to other urban and large urban areas.
- 7.3 Ageing population and increase in number of smaller households.
- 7.4 It's unclear whether Policy 17 and 29's part (d) is applicable to North Lanarkshire. We consider this may be less of an issue for North Lanarkshire local authority, which is located in the central belt of Scotland compared to local authorities in west or south-west of Scotland.
- 7.5 Pressures of an increased population in accessible rural areas and the required service provision to support sustainable communities whilst contributing towards local living and considering the economic and transport needs of these communities.
- 7.6 Based on the evidence, analysis and views presented in this survey paper, North Lanarkshire Council currently considers that the topic policy in NPF4 for rural homes and rural development may require a policy intervention in the Local Development Plan to consider locally specific issues to support decision making in this regard.

Appendix 1

Map of Council Wards



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