
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

30 September 2020

Planning Committee

Title:	Conservation Area Assessments
Purpose:	To inform Committee of the production of 10 Conservation Area Assessments and recommend appropriate actions.
Recommendation:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the Committee note the Assessments and their findings.2. To approve the recommended alteration of the Conservation Area boundaries at Dalry, Lamlash and Dreghorn.3. That the Council proceeds with the legal process to designate the revised Conservation Areas.4. That the Conservation Areas Appraisals are adopted as non-statutory Supplementary Guidance.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 In 2019, Austin-Smith: Lord (on behalf of the Council), carried out Conservation Area Assessments in 10 of North Ayrshire's Conservation Areas. The aim of the assessments is to appraise the special historical interest of the designated areas. Within the reports are management plans which contain recommendations to the Council designed to protect and enhance our Conservation Areas.
- 1.2 The purpose of the assessments is to further understand what is important about the Conservation Areas, including their characteristics and highlighting why these places are worthy of protection and enhancements. The assessments include the historical context, an appraisal of the townscape and a character assessment. These documents are considered vital in the delivery of the recently adopted Local Development Plan and the aims of the Council Plan of facilitating inspiring places.
- 1.3 Within the assessments, perhaps the most significant recommendations include whether to alter the legal boundary of each Conservation Area. The table below shows a summary of these recommendations for each of the 10 assessments including an officer recommendation to either accept the changes or not.

2. Background

- 2.1 Conservation Areas were first introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) (Scotland) Act 1997 provides the current legislative framework for the designation of conservation areas.

- 2.2 A Conservation Area is defined in the Act as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.
- 2.3 All planning authorities are required by this Act to determine which parts of their area merits Conservation Area status. North Ayrshire Council has 13 Conservation Areas varying in character from rural to seaside towns and urban areas and village centres.
- 2.4 In 2019, to aid the delivery of the Local Development Plan (LDP), Austin-Smith: Lord were appointed to carry out Conservation Area Assessments for 10 of the 13 Conservation Areas. These included: Beith, Corrie, Dalry, Dreghorn, High Corrie, Irvine Harbour, Lamlash, Perceton, Skelmorlie and West Kilbride. These complement similar assessments recently carried out for Irvine Town Centre, Kilbirnie and Millport.
- 2.5 The Assessments have the following structure;
1. Introduction
 2. Historic Development
 3. Townscape Appraisal
 4. Character Assessment
 5. Conservation Area Boundary
 6. Preservation and Enhancement
 7. Conservation Area Management Plan
- 2.6 It is intended that the documents are used to facilitate development that will preserve and enhance the special historic character by increasing the information available to both applicants and decision makers on what contributes to that character. The Management Plans contain within them a series of recommendations for the Council to consider pursuing. Some examples of the recommendations include publishing leaflets containing information on making enhancements to historic buildings that make positive impacts on their character. Another example of recommendations is highlighting key potential development sites which have the potential to significantly improve the townscape of the Conservation Area.
- 2.7 These documents are considered vital to the delivery of the Local Development Plan. In particular, policy 9 of the Plan which is entitled; *Preserving and Enhancing our Conservation Areas*. As non-statutory supplementary guidance, the Conservation Area Appraisals will be material in the assessment and consideration of change within Conservation Areas that require consent, for example by highlighting buildings and features of special historic character that must be preserved or enhanced by new development.
- 2.8 The Assessments have been subject to targeted stakeholder consultation, including Historic Environment Scotland, Community Councils, Development Trusts, Civic Trusts and the Community Planning Partnership. It is hoped that the consultation will help increase awareness and support for development which enhances our Conservation Areas.
- 2.9 The consultation exercise took place from 10th July 2020 until 21st August 2020, with extended time period agreed with some stakeholders. A summary of issues raised from the consultation is below.

Beith Cultural and Heritage Society

The above stakeholder's comments relate to the Beith Conservation Area Assessment. The assessment is a valuable source of photographs, historical information and suggested improvements but is weaker on suggestions for early and longer-term improvements, potential funding and the wider context of Scottish Government Climate Change Strategy and relationships with other aims for a stronger inclusive and sustainable economy.

The response details some wider proposals that could aid the sustainable regeneration of Beith.

Officer Response: The comments of support are welcome. The comments relating to the wider aims of the Scottish Government relating to Climate Change and sustainable development/regeneration are noted. It is recognised that the Conservation Area Assessments are just one aspect of the wider context of delivering enhancements for North Ayrshire's towns. It is considered that the points raised by Beith Cultural and Historical Society can be taken forward by the Conservation Area Assessment in its current form. Wider Council programmes such as the progressing regeneration strategy and Climate Change strategy will be informed by assessments such as the Conservation Area Assessments and the organisation's comments will be shared to help those strategies reflect the views of the stakeholder.

In terms of funding streams available, it is considered that the more information that is available through assessments such as this, the better chance both the Council and other bodies have in securing funding. The assessments can also act a catalyst for development, raising awareness of how sustainable development and regeneration can be achieved.

It is recommended that when the Council looks to deliver the actions proposed in the Conservation Area Management Plans, that Officers engage with stakeholders such as the Cultural and Heritage Society to prioritise actions for best value and to develop working relationships which can be mutually beneficial for regeneration of the town.

West Kilbride Community Council

The Community Council's comments relate to the West Kilbride Conservation Area Assessment. The Community Council questions some of the information contained within the documents such as the population of the village. The response also highlights other statements that it considers inaccurate.

The response also highlights that the Conservation Area should be extended to take in the War Memorial at Yerton Brae and the Railway Station.

In principle there is support for the recommendations contained with the Conservation Area Management Plan for West Kilbride. One of the recommendations is for the Council to open up discussions with Historic Environment Scotland to review listings of a number of buildings within the Conservation Area. The Community Council highlighted that they feel that only the aforementioned war memorial and the Village Hall are reviewed for listing.

The response also details that the Community Council believes that new materials should be accepted for environmentally sound reasons should the design be in keeping. The Community Council highlight that the Council should consider making grant funding available where costs are beyond normal.

Officer Response: the comments received from the Community Council are noted and welcomed. Changes have been made to the Assessments where appropriate regarding the inaccuracies found in the report.

With regards to the extension of the Conservation Area, it is recommended that the Council agree and support the consultant's assessment of the boundary. The consultants believed the boundaries of the Conservation Area are strong boundaries and should not be altered at this time. With regards to the war memorial and the railway station, these are currently offered protection through other designations and including them within the Conservation is not considered necessary at this time.

With regards to the listings review, it is considered that the Council should proceed as per the consultant's recommendations. Should discussions with Historic Environment Scotland conclude that a formal review should take place, then this will be subject to further consultation, providing further opportunity for stakeholder input. The Community Council's support for further investigation into the listing of the Village Hall is noted and welcomed.

Skelmorlie Community Council

The Community Council's response relates to the Skelmorlie Conservation Area Assessment. The response highlighted the Community Council agree that the Conservation Area is unique and should be protected. The response also highlights that trees make a valuable contribution to the area and that no more houses should be built that compromise these assets.

Officer Response: The comments from the Community Council are welcomed. It is considered that the Conservation Area Assessment as presented satisfies the concerns raised as far as their remit allows. Council Officers will continue to work with the Community Council to deliver the recommendations contained within the document as appropriate.

Arran Civic Trust

The Arran Civic Trust showed support in principle for the Assessments and considered them to be interesting and well observed. The Trust did highlight, however, that it had concerns that the alteration of the boundary of Lamlash Conservation Area may lead to inappropriate development on what is a key approach to the village. Also highlighted was the importance of the trees covered by the Tree Preservation Order, the old Gate Lodge of Whitehouse and the Victorian Perimeter wall. All of which could be in danger of being lost due to inappropriate development.

The trust also showed concern over the lack of 'people' orientated narrative in the reports, stating that people also contribute to Conservation Areas.

Additionally, the creation of another Conservation Area at Lochranza is discussed in their response. Highlighting that there are some outstanding historical assets, including the castle that may merit designation.

The response also raised issues such as the abundance of holiday and second homes in the Conservation Areas, stating that they were having an impact on local society. While in support of tourism and the Road Equivalent Tariff, there should be concern over the balance of resident and tourism in the islands villages to not over rely on tourism.

Officers Response: The Civic Trust's comments are welcomed and noted. The concerns raised are also noted and should any change take place, further consultation will be required to formally change the boundary. The change in boundary in question is considered a reasonable one. The site in question is allocated for development in the Local Development Plan. The removal of the site (referred to as Whitehouse Hotel, Lamlash in LDP2) from the Conservation Area does not mean that development should not be of an appropriate standard to safeguard the new boundary of the Conservation Area. Any new development (whether within or adjacent to the Conservation Area) will have to demonstrate that the special historic character of the area is not unacceptably impacted upon. The Assessments will help the Council make a more informed decision on how development could be accommodated on the site.

With regards to the narrative and including a more people orientated assessment, it is considered that the assessments can act as a catalyst to involve residents, businesses and visitors in the delivery of the assessments. The Conservation Area Management Plans for the Arran Conservation Areas include actions which involve these groups to become more involved in the development of their areas.

The comments relating to the balance between tourism and residents are noted, however, it is considered that these issues are outwith the scope of the assessments.

With regards to a new Conservation Area being designated at Lochranza, the creation of new designations did not fall into the remit of this project. There will be a chance to investigate new Conservation Areas in the future as part of the Local Development Planning process.

Arran Community Council

The Community Council highlighted that the assessments were shared with their members and that no specific comments were raised.

Summary of Conservation Area Assessment Findings

- 2.10 The assessments concluded that each of the Conservation Areas contained special historic qualities which merit their designated status. As part of the assessment, analysis of each of the legal boundaries was undertaken with a view to making recommendations for alterations, including enlargements and reductions.
- 2.11 Table 1 below shows the recommendations made by the consultants and Officer recommendations for delivering those.

Table 1: Recommendations for Conservation Area Boundary changes

Conservation Area	Austin Smith Lord Recommendation	NAC Officer Recommendation and reason for deviation (if applicable)
Beith	No Boundary Changes	Accept
Corrie	No Boundary Changes	Accept
Dalry	Extension west on New Street	Accept – subject to consultation
Dreghorn	Consider Reducing to remove the new housing estate at Station Brae	Accept – subject to consultation
High Corrie	No changes	Accept
Irvine Harbour	Two Minor changes	Rejected- both sides Montgomerie street contribute to built environment and removing the newly built flats from designation could potentially allow permitted development which could affect the setting in a detrimental manner. The extension is also recommended to be rejected as this would bring an industrial business into the CA and would be considered as a restriction that outweighs the conservation merit.
Lamlash	Reduction – removal of sports facilities and Whitehouse area.	Agreed- subject to consultation with stakeholders.
Perceton	Reduce to take away Perceton Row and new housing.	Reject- The row contributes positively to the built environment and the modern housing is unique enough to contribute and continue to do so.
Skelmorlie	No Changes	Agreed
West Kilbride	No Changes	Agreed.

- 2.12 In addition to recommendations relating to the boundary of each Conservation Area, each Appraisal is accompanied by a Draft Conservation Area Management Plan. These Management Plans set out a range of objectives and actions to enhance each Conservation Area. Further consideration will be given to the prioritisation and implementation of these objectives.

Next Steps

- 2.13 In accordance with Section 62 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) (Scotland) Act 1997, once a planning authority has decided to amend a Conservation Area, notice of a re-designation reflecting the change must be published in the Edinburgh Gazette and at least one local newspaper and formal notification sent to Scottish Ministers and Historic Environment Scotland. This process will be undertaken and the Conservation Area Appraisals published on the Council's website.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Committee takes the following actions:

1. That the Committee note the Assessments and their findings.
2. To approve the recommended alteration of the Conservation Area boundaries at Dalry, Lamblash and Dreghorn.
3. That the Council proceeds with the legal process to designate the revised Conservation Areas.
4. That the Conservation Areas Appraisals are adopted as non-statutory Supplementary Guidance.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from the report.

Human Resources

- 4.2 There are no Human Resource implications arising from the report.

Legal

- 4.3 Following the re-designation of some Conservation Areas, the legal and decision-making framework may change. Further context and implications to this is provided in the above report and within the Assessment documents.

Equality/Socio-economic

- 4.4 The information contained within the assessments will aid discussion with stakeholders including community groups and members of the public. The preservation and enhancement of our historic environments can have significant impacts on equality and socio-economic outcomes.

Environmental and Sustainability

- 4.5 The assessments refer to the impact the historic environment can have on the local environment and recommends actions which can significantly improve them. This improvement can contribute to the desirability of our environment and can contribute to their success.

Key Priorities

- 4.6 The improvement of town centres will support the Council Plan themes of:
- Growing our economy, increasing employment and regenerating towns
 - Working together to develop stronger communities
 - Helping all of our people to stay safe, healthy, and active
 - Protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations

Community Wealth Building

- 4.7 Community Wealth Building has five pillars for harnessing existing resources to enable local economies to grow and develop: Procurement; Employment; Land and Assets; Financial Power; and Democratic Ownership of the Local Economy. There are opportunities for developing more sustainable futures for our Conservation Areas across a number of these pillars that will be explored as we develop our CWB strategy and action plans. These are likely to feature most prominently within the priority on Land and Assets workstreams.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Further consultation will be required as per the legislative framework for Conservation Areas that are proposed to be re-aligned.



RUSSELL McCUTCHEON
Executive Director (Place)

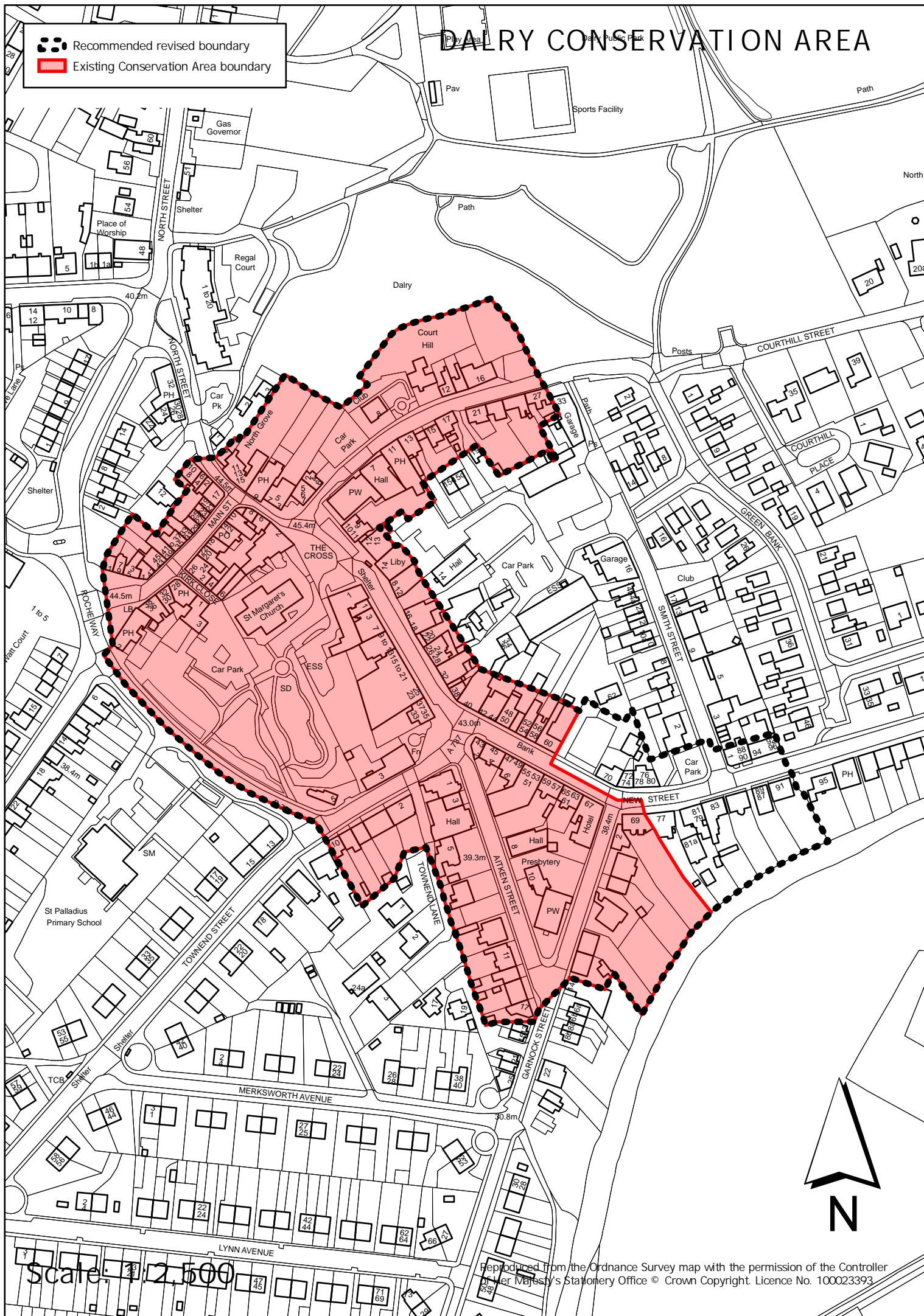
For further information please contact Thom Ledingham, **Planning Officer (Strategic Planning)**, on **01294 324623**.

Background Papers

1. Conservation Area Assessments

DALRY CONSERVATION AREA

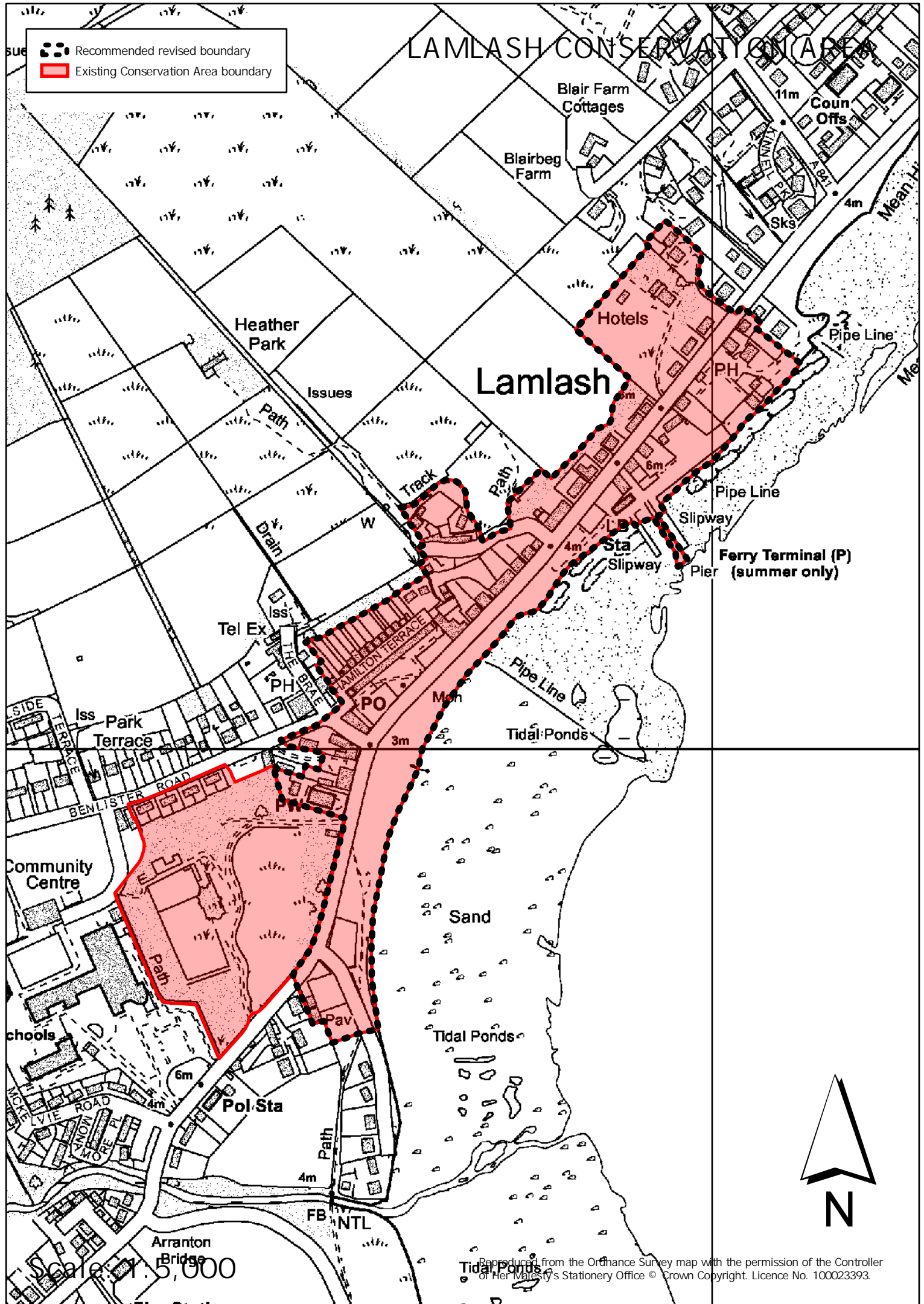
-  Recommended revised boundary
-  Existing Conservation Area boundary





Scale: 1:2,500

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~~LAMLASH CONSERVATION AREA~~



DREGHORN CONSERVATION AREA

-  Recommended revised boundary
-  Existing Conservation Area boundary

Annick Way

22m

Sheep Wash

Capringstone

Subway

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Annick Country Park

Path

Path

Path

Subway

31m

Brewery

War Memorial
Corsehill Mount

Cemetery

PW

Liby

Playing Field

Dreghorn

Recreation Ground

Dreghorn Primary School

Corsehill Mount Roundabout

24m

Iss

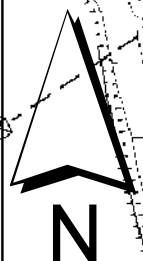
Iss

Outfall

Iss

27m

24m



Scale: 1:6,500

Drain

Pipeline

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