

Alness and Invergordon Active Travel Masterplan

October 2021



HI TRANS
THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

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The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd



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Alness & Invergordon Active Travel Masterplan



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The Active Travel Masterplan identifies a series of actions to support the essential transition to low carbon transport. These actions are a starting point that will enable the Council to identify funding to develop detailed feasibility and design of potential options, to undertake public and stakeholder consultation, and implement the actions. All of this subsequent work will be subject to prior approval by elected Members at appropriate Committees

The updated Alness & Invergordon Active Travel Masterplan will feed in directly to the Inner Moray Firth (IMF) Local Development Plan 2 (LDP). The IMF LDP is where the framework for supporting people to make healthier, low carbon travel choices is set. For some, this will mean supporting a transition to low carbon car travel, whilst for other active travel and public transport will provide sustainable travel options. The Active Travel Masterplan identifies a series of actions to support the essential transition to low carbon transport. These actions are a starting point that will enable the Council to identify funding to develop detailed feasibility and design of potential options, to undertake public and stakeholder consultation, and implement the actions. All of this subsequent work will be subject to prior approval by elected Members at appropriate Committees.



13.5km of high-quality active travel infrastructure physically separated from vehicular traffic connecting key land uses



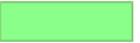
2 Neighbourhood Mobility Hubs at Invergordon and Alness train stations to deliver active travel facilities and facilitate multi-modal travel

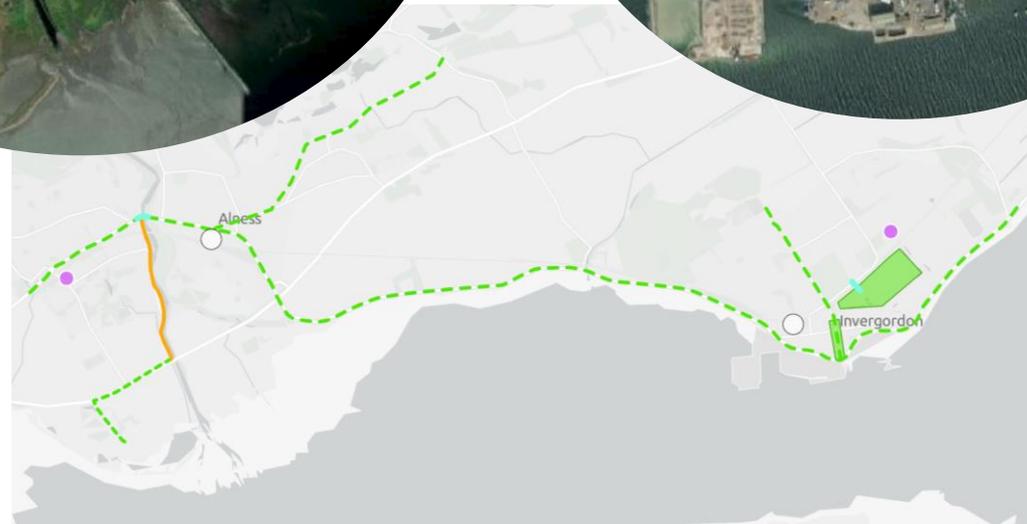


Secure cycle parking at key locations to encourage commuting, leisure and every-day trips by bike



Masterplan Overview

-  High Quality Active Travel Route /Cycle Street
-  Proposed Minor Improvements (e.g. resurfacing/widening/better signage)
-  Placemaking
-  Active Travel Bridge
-  Mobility Hub / Public Realm Improvements
-  Proposed Cycle Parking



Alness & Invergordon Active Travel Audit 2010

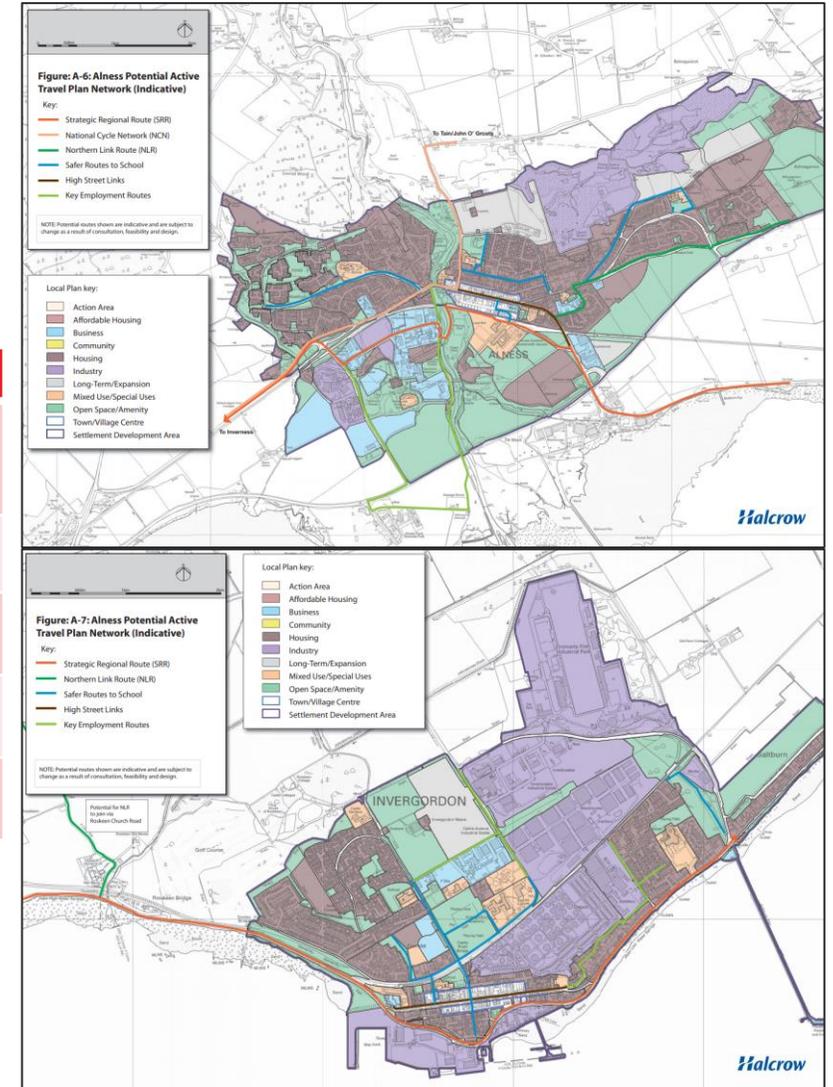
Overview

The Alness and Invergordon Active Travel Audit 2010 provides an overview of existing active travel conditions, potential active travel improvements and a prioritised action plan for both towns. The audit recognises the amount of movement between Alness and Invergordon due to the shared services across these towns, emphasising the need for a coordinated approach which incorporates both areas.

The table below summarises the prioritised action plan identified within this audit:

Name	Description
Priority 1: Develop a high quality strategic active travel route	Provide a safe and attractive walking and cycling route linking the towns of Alness and Invergordon to encourage more active travel between the two towns with onward connections to Saltburn and Evanton.
Priority 2: Network improvement strategy	Sign and maintain existing routes to develop a network in Alness and Invergordon.
Priority 3: Promote uptake of travel plans by local employers	Work with local employers to produce travel plans and provide guidance in encouraging their workforce to travel by more sustainable modes.
Priority 4: Planning guidance to guarantee active travel routes in future developments	Set out clear guidelines and policy objectives to ensure any development in the area considers the needs of pedestrians and cyclists above vehicular traffic.
Priority 5: Improve public transport facilities	Improve public transport facilities to encourage people making longer journeys to travel by public transport and active travel modes rather than private car.

Many of the actions identified within the prioritised action plan have seen minimal progress since completion of this audit. Therefore, the majority of these recommendations remain applicable to this study and will be considered within this masterplan. Further details regarding the Alness and Invergordon Active Travel Audit 2010 can be found in Appendix A and [here](#).



Desktop Review

Introduction

The desktop review has been carried out in a structured and targeted manner. Select sources of data and information have been collated, reviewed and analysed to produce an evidence base used to inform virtual site audits, stakeholder engagement and eventually the final masterplan. Data and information sources reviewed were including, but not limited to:

- Local Context and Demographics
- Alness & Invergordon Active Travel Audit (2010)
- IMF Local Development Plan 2 (Main Issues Report, 2021)
- HITRANS Active Travel Strategy (2018)
- Census 2011 Transport Data
- Department for Transport STATS19 Accident Data
- Active Travel, Transport and Geographic Mapping

This process was crucial in providing local context and an understanding of the geographic conditions and transport characteristics across the Inner Moray Firth (IMF) and within Alness & Invergordon specifically.

More details regarding findings from the desktop review can be found in Appendix A.

Policy Review

Policy related to active travel in Alness & Invergordon has been reviewed, such as the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2 (IMF2) Main Issues Report 2021 and the HITRANS Active Travel Strategy (2018).

The key headlines are as follows:

- The IMF is the most urban and populated area of the Highlands, therefore is well suited to providing facilities that promote sustainable travel choices.
- Alness is a key service and employment centre with a diverse range of businesses, services and shops.
- Invergordon is largely based around its deep water harbour, which has invested significantly in energy and tourism facilities. Steady growth in the cruise ship industry has seen passenger numbers reach 200,000 annually (pre Covid).
- Transport issues for Alness include poor active travel links from the east of Alness and requirements to upgrade the existing A9 junction within proximity of the town if development to the east of Alness continues.
- Transport issues for Invergordon include local traffic and parking issues which have emerged alongside the growth of the harbour and improving public realm and connections between the B817 and the town centre.
- The active travel priorities for Alness and Invergordon include developing a high quality strategic regional route, delivering a network improvement strategy and promoting uptake of travel plans to local employers.



Desktop Review

Development Areas and Proposals

Key development proposals and areas throughout Alness & Invergordon and the surrounding area have been identified through a review of the IMFLDP2 Main Issues Report. Consideration of new developments presents an opportunity to future-proof high quality active travel infrastructure that enables walking, wheeling and cycling to be undertaken by users from development occupation.

The following key developments proposed for Alness & Invergordon have been identified within the IMFLDP2 Main Issues Report:

Development Area	Land Use	Site Reference	Site Status
Alness East	Mixed Use (Housing, Community)	AL04, AL05, AL07, AL19	Preferred/ Alternative
Teaninich Industrial Estate/ Alness Point	Mixed Use (Business, Industry)	AL08, AL10	Preferred
Dalmore	Mixed Use (Housing, Business, Industry, Retail)	AL06, AL11, AL12, AL16	Preferred
Invergordon Harbour	Industry	IG05	Preferred

A review of development sites identified within the IMFLDP2 Main Issues Report shows that significant housing development could be delivered in Alness East and mixed-use development to the south of Alness. Invergordon Harbour is also considered a significant development. These locations will be important areas to serve with high quality active travel facilities and will be a key consideration in the development of this masterplan.



©The Highland Council- Alness IMF2 sites



©The Highland Council- Invergordon IMF2 sites



Desktop Review

Baseline Data Review

Baseline data sources related to active travel in Alness & Invergordon have been reviewed to inform the masterplan. This includes Department for Transport (DfT) STATS19 accident statistics and Census 2011 data, such as method of travel to work or study, distance of travel to work or study and Census Datashine Commute.

Census 2011

The key headlines gathered from reviewing Census 2011 data are as follows:

- Census method of travel to work or study data illustrates that active modes account for 27% of all journeys to work or study in Alness & Invergordon, which is higher than the walking and cycling mode share for Highland and Scotland.
- Despite a high active travel mode share, Census distance of travel to work or study data shows that 30% of trips less than 5km are by private vehicle.
- Around 29% of Alness & Invergordon households do not have access to a private car, which outlines the importance of alternative modes of travel.
- Census Datashine shows a significant amount of movement between Alness and Invergordon. Other key destinations include Evanton, Dingwall and Inverness.

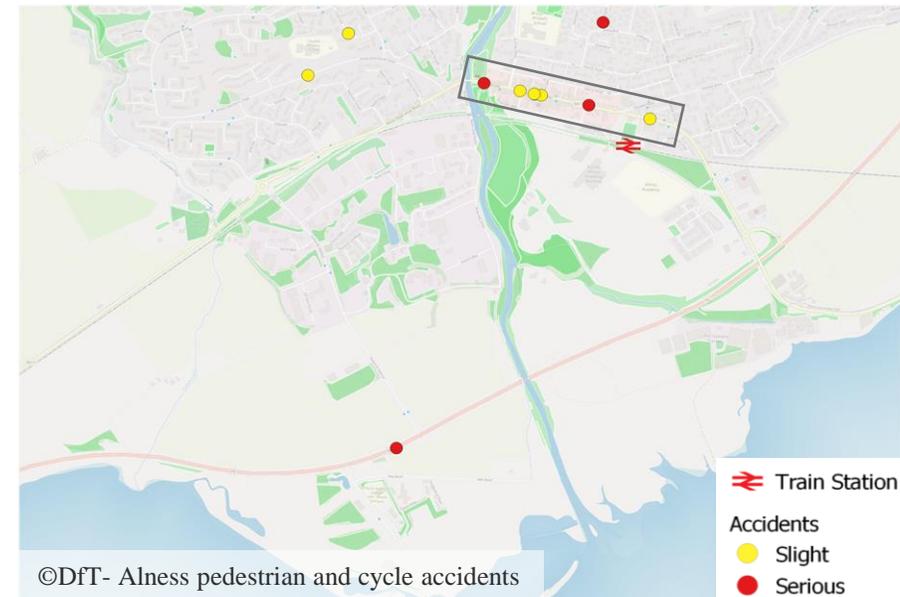
	Walking	Cycling	Public Transport	Can/Van	Work from Home	Other
Alness & Invergordon	24.6%	2.1%	7.6%	51.8%	11.5%	2.4%
Highland	17.7%	2.4%	10.7%	52.2%	14.9%	1.4%
Scotland	18.5%	1.3%	16.9%	49.9%	11.3%	2.1%

Accident Statistics

Pedestrian and cycle accident statistics available for the previous 5 years (2015-2019) recorded by the DfT were reviewed using the Crashmap online mapping tool.

The following conclusions can be drawn from this analysis:

- There were 11 reported pedestrian and cyclist accidents within Alness from 2015-2019, 4 of which were serious collisions. No incidents involving pedestrians / cyclists were reported for Invergordon.
- 7 of the 11 reported accidents for Alness were located on Alness High Street, with 2 of these collisions being classified as serious. Alness High Street was therefore identified as an accident cluster within the town.



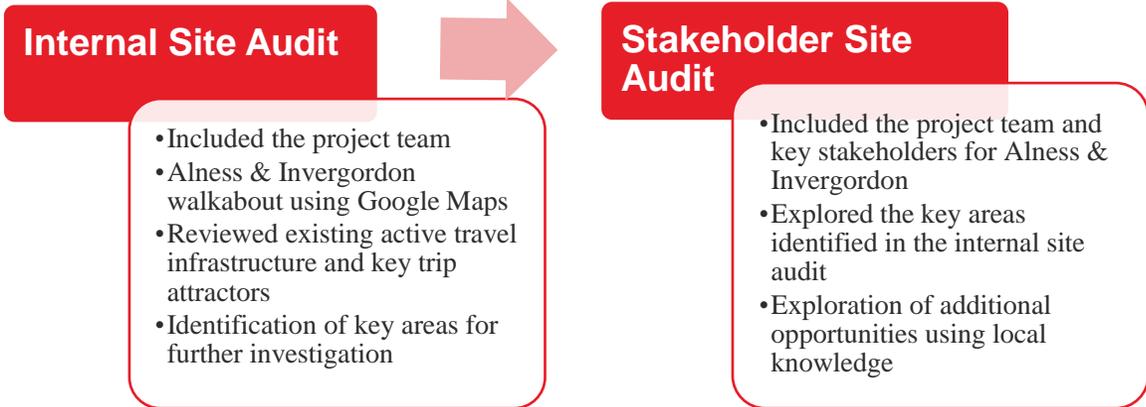
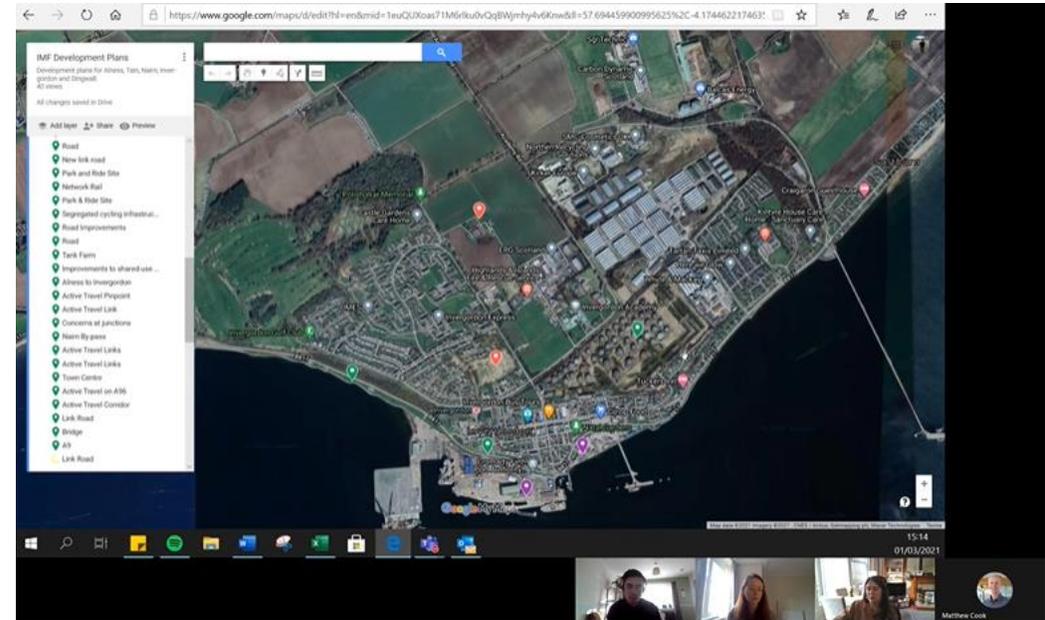
Virtual Site Audits

Methodology

Virtual site audits were conducted using digital methods due to Covid-19 restrictions in place at the time of the project. These audits built on the knowledge and understanding of the town developed during the desktop review stage.

An initial virtual site audit of Alness & Invergordon was conducted using Google StreetView and various mapping sources, namely Google Maps and Open Street Map. A systematic approach was taken during the session, which was informed by the desktop review stage. Furthermore, areas which required further investigation were noted to be discussed in more detail with local people during follow up stakeholder virtual site audits.

The initial project team audit was followed by a stakeholder virtual site audit. This was hosted using Microsoft Teams where a selected number of ward managers and community groups were invited to join. Each party was invited to take control of the screen to “walk through” areas using Google StreetView and highlight key issues or opportunities. This session was recorded, allowing for the discussion to be revisited and viewed/ discussed within the wider project team.



Virtual Site Audits

Internal Virtual Site Audit

The key high-level observations made during the internal site audit for Alness & Invergordon were as follows:

- A high-quality active travel link between Alness and Invergordon would be beneficial as the two locations share many services.
- Alness High Street has seen a number of accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists, providing a safe active travel route with dedicated crossing points would help to address this.
- There are a number of key employment areas that would benefit from improved basic active travel facilities, such as cycle parking.
- The train stations within each area have the potential to form neighbourhood mobility hubs.
- There are some key barriers within each area that prohibits the movement of those walking and cycling, this includes the River Averon, A9 and the tank farm in Invergordon.
- There is significant development taking place to the north east of Alness, active travel links to new developments should be incorporated where possible.

The internal virtual site audit provided the project team with an understanding of key areas throughout Alness & Invergordon and active travel issues and opportunities. The key themes identified above were investigated further during stakeholder virtual site audit discussions.



©Arup- B817 pedestrian and cycle bridge over River Averon (July 2021)



©Google – B817 route between Alness and Invergordon



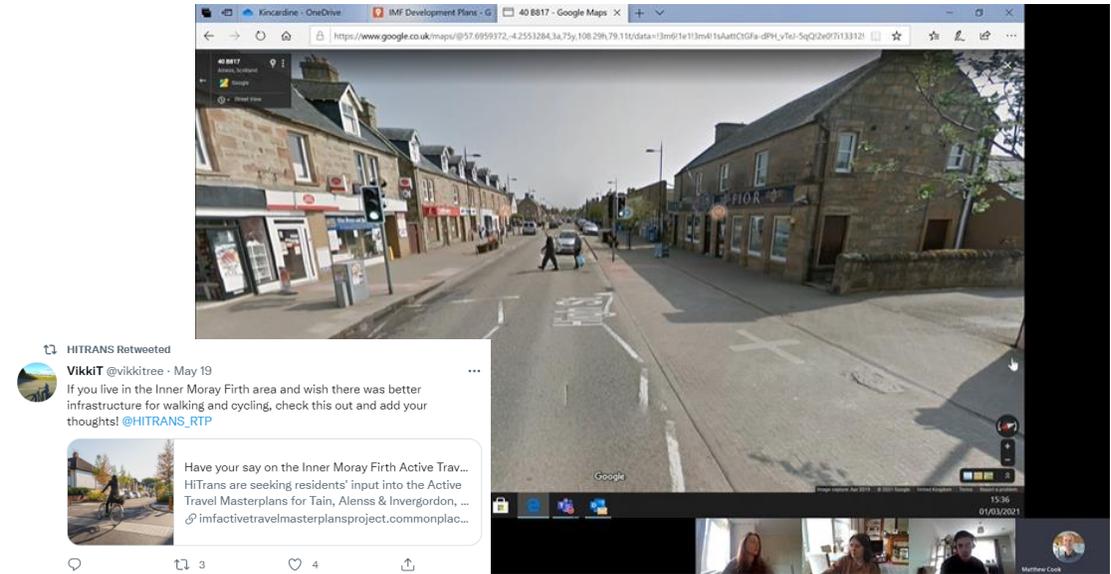
Stakeholder Engagement

Methodology

The stakeholder engagement exercise was carried out using a number of techniques. This included a stakeholder virtual site audit, 1:1 meetings through Microsoft Teams, email correspondence and the online Commonplace platform. The stakeholders and community groups directly engaged with within Alness & Invergordon, which were agreed with HITRANS and THC at the beginning of the project, included the following:

- Highland Council Ward Manager for Alness & Invergordon
- Cromarty Firth, Tain and Easter Ross Councillors
- Highlife Highland
- Invergordon Community Council
- Invergordon Development Trust
- Alness Community Group
- Alness Heritage Centre

In addition to the above individuals and groups, the wider public were invited to engage through the Commonplace platform. This platform was shared via social media platforms, community groups and councils.



A number of digital methods were used to engage with stakeholders and a degree of flexibility in the method of contribution was taken to ensure all stakeholders could easily input into the masterplan.

Tools included the use of Google My Maps to collect stakeholder comments, Miro to create workshop white boards, Microsoft Teams to host online meetings and workshops and stakeholders were able to contribute with telephone and written responses if preferred. In addition, the Commonplace Platform was used to give the wider public an opportunity to identify key issues and suggestions related to active travel improvements through dropping comments within specific locations onto an interactive online map.



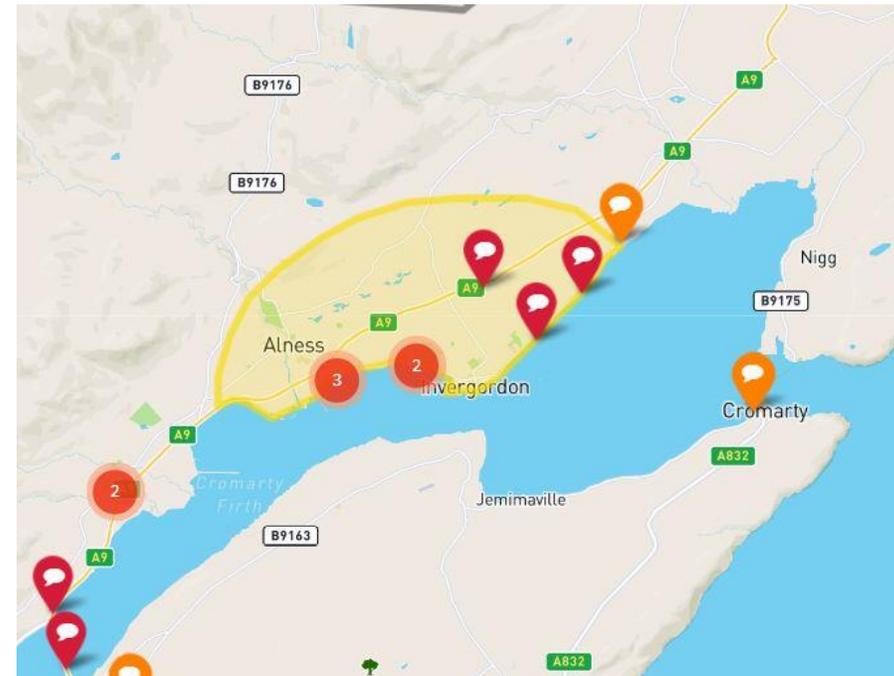
Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder Feedback

Key outcomes from the stakeholder engagement stages were as below. All stakeholder comments can be found in Appendix B.

- There is desire for a **signalised crossing on the B817** to better connect the centre of Invergordon to the port.
- **King Street** has the potential to be an **active travel connection** between the port and the High Street. The connection could be extended on Castle Road/Castle Avenue/Castle Close into northern Invergordon linking into housing developments.
- An **active travel route** should be explored through **tank farm** in Invergordon which is a current barrier to walkers and cyclists.
- Explore potential to make **improvements to active travel link** on **B817** between Invergordon and Alness.
- Consideration should be given to the **surrounding villages and towns** (e.g. Milton) that do not have many amenities and are therefore reliant on Alness and Invergordon.
- **Invergordon and Alness share a lot of services**, a strong link between them is important.

- The **waterfront** is a key destination within Invergordon.
- The **railway line, A9 and River Averon** are all key barriers to active travel within Alness.



Action Development

Methodology

Following the desktop review, virtual site audits and stakeholder engagement, the action development stage of informing the masterplan was undertaken.

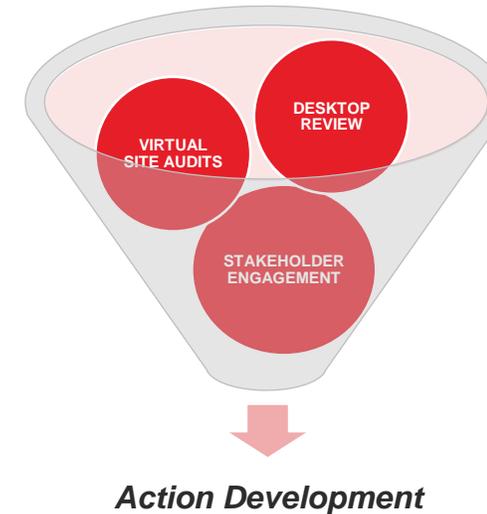
The action development and refinement stage has been a collaborative process with HITRANS, THC and local stakeholders. It takes account of the information gathered throughout the project stages as well as the conversations held to ensure the network is not only functional, but desirable by those who will benefit from its use.

Easy wins have been identified from the actions. These are actions that can have a high impact in the area and can be delivered at a relatively low cost and quick timeline. These actions can generate initial momentum for more active travel trips across Alness & Invergordon while longer term actions are implemented to compliment and expand the network.

The preliminary/concept nature of the proposals and the information provided is intended to help inform further stages of scheme development. While no detailed design work has been carried out under this commission, a number of recommendations for future strategic active travel improvements have been made. These recommendations have been informed by the comprehensive baseline data gathering exercise, virtual site visits / observations, desktop review and stakeholder comments but have not incorporated a detailed assessment of information such as

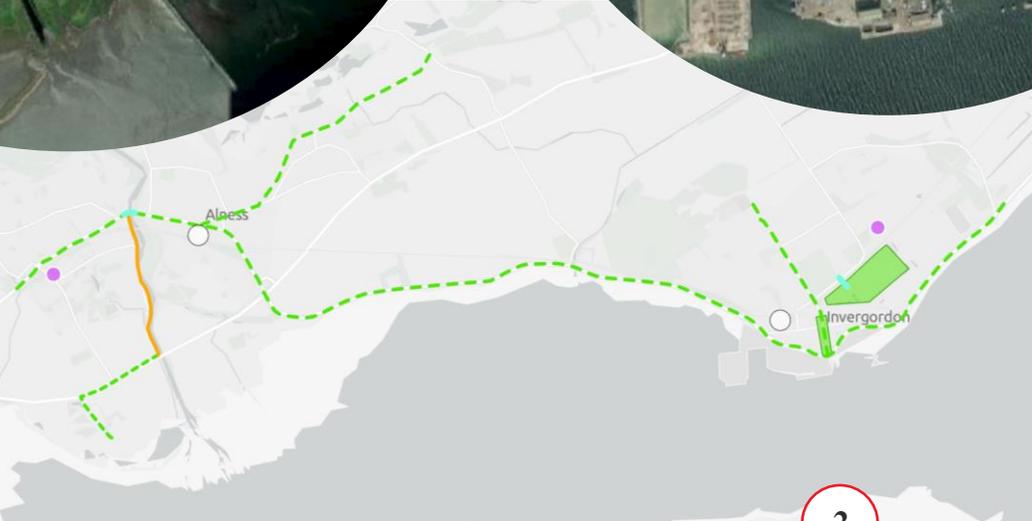
topographical surveys, public utilities, land ownership and planning /environmental constraints. Contemporary information on these and other issues should be collected, analysed and recorded as part of the next phase of the design process to inform the detail of the future active travel improvements.

High level cost estimates have been calculated for each the proposals, these are subject to further investigation and should therefore only be treated as an indication.



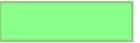
Action Development

-  High Quality Active Travel Route /Cycle Street
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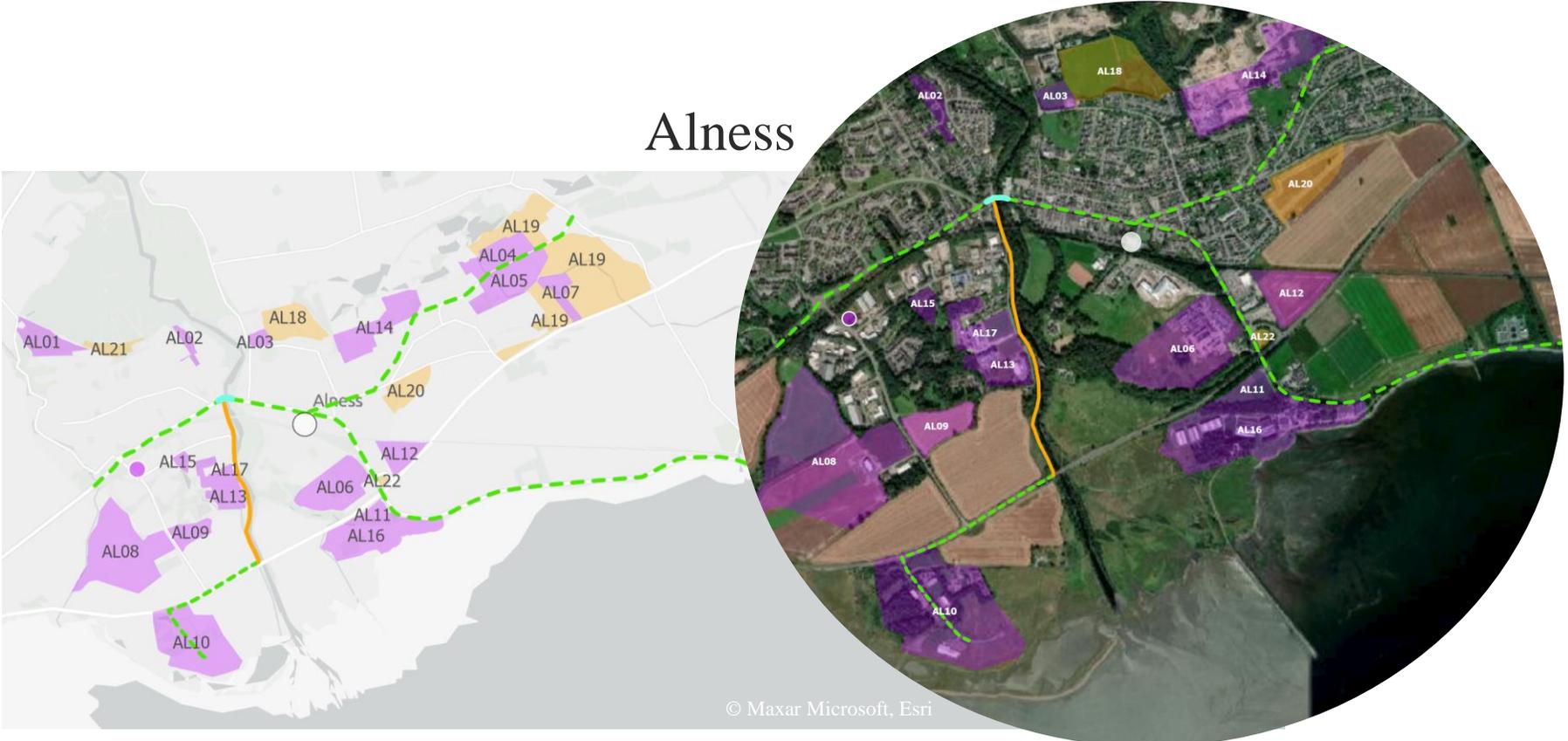


Action Development

At the time of writing, The Highland Council has published the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan Main Issues Report. This sets out the Council’s initial preferences for future development land. Alongside the range of other considerations made in this audit, these Main Issues Report site preferences have been used to inform the audits undertaken.

-  High Quality Active Travel Route /Cycle Street
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-  Placemaking
-  Active Travel Bridge
-  Mobility Hub / Public Realm Improvements
-  Proposed Cycle Parking
-  Local Development Plan (LDP) preferred development sites for Alness and Invergordon
-  Local Development Plan (LDP) alternative development sites for Alness and Invergordon

Alness

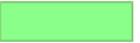


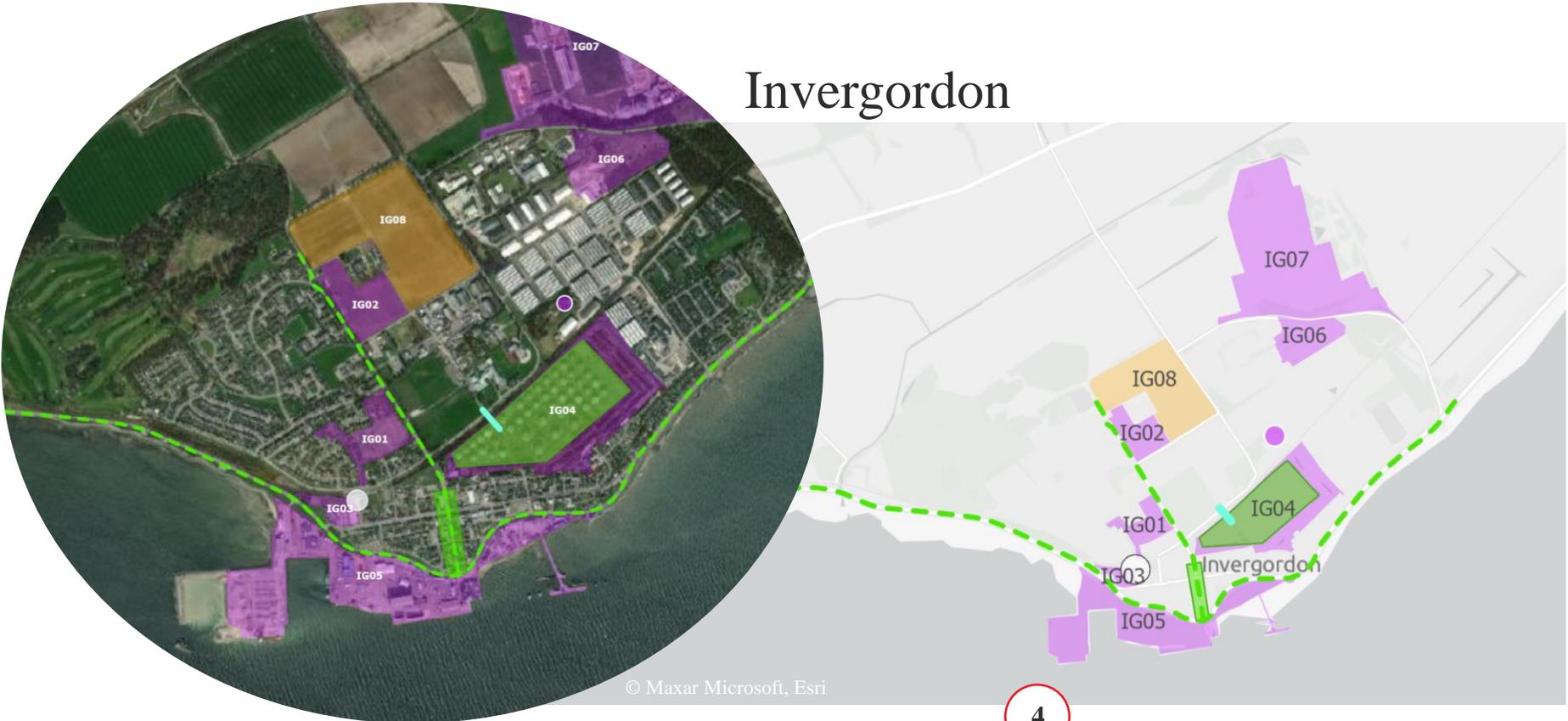
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-  Local Development Plan (LDP) alternative development sites for Alness and Invergordon



Action Development

Action	Route/Measure	Section	Description/type	Extent (km or item)	Cost Range*	Easy Win (Y/N)	Developments in close proximity
1	<u>High quality infrastructure on B817</u>	B817, between Invergordon and Alness from Woodsdie Gardens to Teaninich Avenue	Segregated active travel infrastructure where possible, including safe crossing points at desire lines	8.80	£2,000,000 - £4,000,000	N	AL06, AL08, AL11, AL12, AL16, IG03, IG04, IG05
2	<u>High quality infrastructure on Birch Road</u>	Birch Road, Old Milnafua Road and Obsdale Road, between Achnagarron and High Street	Segregated active travel infrastructure where possible, including safe crossing points at desire lines. Quiet streets potential where vehicle flows are low	2.30	£500,000 - £1,000,000	N	AL04, AL05, AL07, AL19, AL20
3	<u>High quality infrastructure to Alness Point</u>	A9, between Averon River Path and Alness Point Business Park	Segregated active travel infrastructure where possible, including safe crossing points at desire lines	1.00	£240,000 - £460,000	N	AL10
4	<u>High quality infrastructure on King Street</u>	King St, Castle Road and Castle Avenue	Segregated active travel infrastructure where possible, including safe crossing points at desire lines	1.40	£300,000 - £700,000	N	IG02, IG03, IG04, IG05, IG08
5	<u>Minor improvements on Averon River Path</u>	Averon River Path, from High Street to A9	Minor improvements including signage and resurfacing	1.20	£180,000 - £240,000	Y	AL13, AL17
6	<u>Waterway Averon Active Travel Bridge</u>	Over the River Averon, west of the High Street	An active travel bridge across the A9 to provide a pedestrian and cycle crossing, replacing/upgrading the existing bridge	1.00	£100,000 - £500,000	Y	AL13, AL15, AL17

*Typical Costs for Cycling Interventions & Spons (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/614812/typical-costings-for-ambitious-cycling-schemes.pdf)



Action Development

Action	Route/Measure	Section	Description/type	Extent (km or item)	Cost Range	Easy Win (Y/N)	Developments in close proximity
7	<u>Public realm improvements and neighbourhood mobility hub at Alness Railway Station*</u>	Alness railway station	Improvements to the public realm at the station, including seating, cycle repair stand, lockers, sheltered cycle parking, information board	1.00	£180,000 - £230,000	N	AL06, AL12, AL22
8	<u>Public realm improvements and neighbourhood mobility hub at Invergordon Railway Station*</u>	Invergordon railway station	Improvements to the public realm at the station, including seating, cycle repair stand, lockers, sheltered cycle parking, information board	1.00	£180,000 - £230,000	N	IG01, IG03, IG05
9	<u>Public realm and placemaking between Invergordon Harbour and High Street</u>	King Street and High Street	Improvements to the public realm including seating, secure cycle parking, parklets and other active travel amenities	1.00	£150,000 - £200,000	Y	IG03, IG05
10	<u>Public realm and placemaking at tank farm</u>	South east Invergordon, between Academy Road and Joss Street and Seabank Road	Improvements to the public realm including seating, secure cycle parking, potential for active travel link through with development of site	1.00	£150,000 - £200,000	N	IG04
11	<u>Academy Road Active Travel Bridge</u>	Over the railway line, between Academy Road at Mackean Crescent and tank farm	An active travel bridge across the railway line to provide a pedestrian and cycle crossing, replacing/upgrading the existing bridge	1.00	£100,000 - £500,000	N	IG01, IG04
12	<u>High quality cycle parking</u>	Identified sites at the Teaninich Industrial Estate and Inverbreakie Industrial Estate	High quality cycle parking that is sheltered	2.00	£20,000 - £40,000	Y	AL08, AL09, IG04



Sustainable Development

Alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals

As an indication of how the Masterplan actions align with a commitment to positive social, economic and environmental outcomes, we have used the SDG symbols opposite to indicate where there is a link to the proposed action.

This page provides a summary of how 10 of the 17 SDGs are connected to active and sustainable travel.



Improving local transport networks can improve access to education and employment opportunities, helping to reduce unemployment and deprivation, as well as promoting lifelong learning.

By supporting the uptake of active modes of transport we can reduce air pollution in the local area, as well as reducing the risk of developing a range of cardiopulmonary health conditions.

In developing connected and safe active travel networks, we can support the needs of a range of societal groups with different preferences, concerns and priorities when it comes to making transport decisions.

Making improvements to the urban realm – such as placemaking – alongside investments in active travel infrastructure can support town centres, vibrant places, and developing a sense of place and community.

Through investing in active travel we seek to reduce the reliance on the private car for short trips, and encourage multi-modal journeys to and from public transport stops. Promoting a mode shift reduces carbon emissions, and the contribution of the transport sector to climate change.



Actions

Action 1 – High Quality Active Travel Route on B817

The B817 is a local distributor road which runs east-west between Alness and Invergordon. This is the main vehicular route between both towns, and connects key land uses such as both railway stations, employment areas, supermarkets in Alness and Invergordon Harbour.

There is currently a shared footway/cycleway along the B817 from Dalmore to Invergordon. However, this is around 1 metre in width and of poor quality in parts, therefore does not meet the standard within active travel guidance such as *Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 1/20)*.

This action proposes a **high quality active travel route** from Teaninich Industrial Estate (Alness) to Woodside Gardens (Invergordon). This should be segregated infrastructure where feasible and provide safe crossing points on desire lines.

This proposal has the potential to provide a strong strategic active travel link between both towns and therefore facilitate a shift to active modes from short private car journeys. This route should be progressed further through the undertaking of a feasibility study.



Actions

Action 2 –High Quality Active Travel Route to Alness East

This action proposes a **high quality active travel route** between Alness town centre and Alness East development area. This route should be segregated infrastructure where possible and include safe crossing points on desire lines. In addition, the provision of quiet streets and modal filters should be considered where traffic volumes are low.

Alness East is a key development area within Alness, with significant housing allocations identified as preferred sites within IMFLDP2. This creates an opportunity to future-proof sustainable transport infrastructure and provide new residents with high quality active travel facilities upon occupation.

Discussions with key stakeholders outlined that an active travel connection to this location would bring significant benefits to an expanding area of the town. This route would also provide active travel connectivity to other key land uses such as Obsdale Primary School.

This route should be explored further through the delivery of a feasibility study.



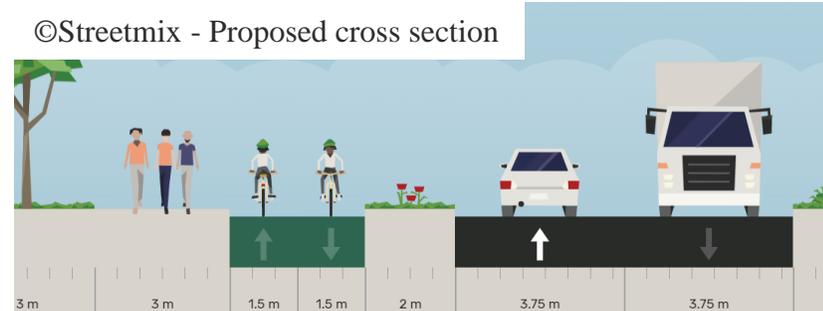
Actions

Action 3 – High Quality Active Travel Infrastructure to Alness Point

The stakeholder engagement stage identified a desire to create a link Between Alness and Alness Point Business Park which has multiple key land uses such as North Highland College Alness Campus. Stakeholder engagement indicated that the A9 is currently a barrier to active travel movement due to high vehicle speeds and problematic junctions for pedestrians and cyclists.

It is proposed that **high quality active travel infrastructure** be provided on the A9 or alternatively the existing off-road River Averon path. If on a trunk road, this route should be segregated infrastructure where possible and include safe crossing points on desire lines.

This proposal will significantly improve safety for active travel users, whilst also ensuring access to Alness Point Business Park by active modes. This route will also connect with other actions such as improvements to the River Averon path seen in Action 5. Furthermore, this action will also provide links to the Alness Point IMFLDP2 development site. This action should be developed further through feasibility work and will require support from Transport Scotland should the A9 be the preferred route.



Action 4- High quality Active Travel Infrastructure on King Street, Castle Road and Castle Avenue

This action proposes the delivery of **high quality active travel infrastructure** on King Street, Castle Road and Castle Avenue, with the provision of segregated infrastructure where feasible and safe crossing points on desire lines. Where constraints may not allow segregated infrastructure, such as along King Street, the delivery of a **cycle street** may be considered.

A review of local policy indicated a desire to enhance connectivity between the town centre and Invergordon Harbour for visitors using the harbour. Therefore, this route runs north-south through Invergordon, connecting residential areas to the north, the town centre and the harbour.

This route will provide a high quality active travel connection through Invergordon and improve the propensity to walk, wheel and cycle for residents and visitors to the town. This action effectively links with multiple IMFLDP2 preferred sites in Invergordon, including redevelopment of the harbour (IG05) and housing development to the north (IG01 and IG02).

This route should be explored further through the delivery of a feasibility study.



©Lets Talk Coventry- segregated active travel route



Actions

Action 5- Minor improvements on Averon River Path

The River Averon Path is currently a footpath which runs north-south along the River Averon and links the town centre to the south of Alness. Stakeholder engagement indicated that this footpath could be improved in parts, with issues such as poor surface quality, lack of signage and overgrown vegetation in parts.

This action proposes **minor improvements** along this footpath from B817 High Street (north) to the A9 (south) to ensure the footpath is to a suitable standard for walking, cycling and wheeling. Minor improvements may include widening where feasible, improved signage, resurfacing and cutting of vegetation.

This proposal will improve access to green space within Alness, whilst also linking with an existing shared footway/cycleway which provides access to Alness Railway Station.

This action will connect to other masterplan proposals on the B817 and the link to the Alness Point Business Park in Action 3. These improvements also have the potential to provide connections to IMFLDP2 preferred sites for business and industry, such as AL13 and AL17.



©Arup- River Averon path (July 2021)



©Arup- Connswater Community Greenway



Action 6- Waterway Averon Active Travel Bridge

The existing Waterway Averon Bridge is a pedestrian bridge which runs east-west over the River Averon and parallel to the B817. The River Averon was identified by key stakeholders as a barrier to active travel movement, which highlights the importance of the bridge. However, the bridge is currently unsuitable for pedestrians and cyclists due to having poor surface quality, low barriers and a width of around 1 metre.

It is proposed that an **active travel bridge** be provided over the River Averon. This would consist of improvements to the existing bridge, including structural improvements, resurfacing and widening where feasible to ensure the bridge is suitable for walking, wheeling and cycling.

Improvements to the bridge would ensure safe and attractive east-west active travel connectivity for Alness. This action would also link with other masterplan proposals, such as along the B817 and River Averon Path. This action also has the potential to support preferred IMFLDP2 business and industry sites AL13, AL15 and AL17 with travel via active modes.



©Urban Realm- Renfrewshire Active Travel Bridge



Action 7- Neighbourhood Mobility Hub at Alness Railway Station

Alness Railway Station is located to the east of Alness High Street and is currently accessed via Station Road and Station Court. There are a number of services and amenities within walking distance of the station, such as housing, schools, medical facilities, supermarkets and shops. However, active travel access is currently limited to footways and there are very limited facilities within the station.

It is therefore proposed that a **neighbourhood mobility hub** and **public realm improvements** are delivered at the Alness Railway Station. This may include seating, cycle repair stand, cycle lockers, sheltered cycle parking and an information board. Public realm improvements will strive to create a more attractive environment both within and surrounding the station.

This action will bring significant benefits to Alness, including better connections between active travel and public transport and a greater propensity to undertake multi-modal journeys. This action will also create a more attractive station environment to encourage an uptake in rail travel. The hub would connect to the nearby bus stops on Alness Academy Drive which is used by the 25 bus service linking Inverness, Alness, Invergordon and Tain.



Actions

Action 8 - Neighbourhood Mobility Hub at Invergordon Railway Station

Invergordon Railway Station is located to the west of Invergordon High Street and is currently accessed via Station Road. Both the High Street and Invergordon Harbour are within walking and/ or cycling distance from the station. However, rail travel is currently unattractive within Invergordon, with active travel access being limited to narrow footways and minimal facilities within the station.

This action proposes that a **neighbourhood mobility hub** and **public realm improvements** are delivered at the Invergordon Railway Station. This may include seating, cycle repair stand, cycle lockers, sheltered cycle parking and an information board. Public realm improvements will strive to create a more attractive environment both within and surrounding the station.

This action will bring significant benefits to Invergordon, including better connections between active travel and public transport and a greater propensity to undertake multi-modal journeys. This action will also create a more attractive station environment to encourage more people to travel by rail to access amenities such as Invergordon Harbour. The hub would connect to the nearby bus stops on Station Road which is used by the X25 and 25 bus services linking Inverness, Alness, Invergordon and Tain.



©CoMoUK



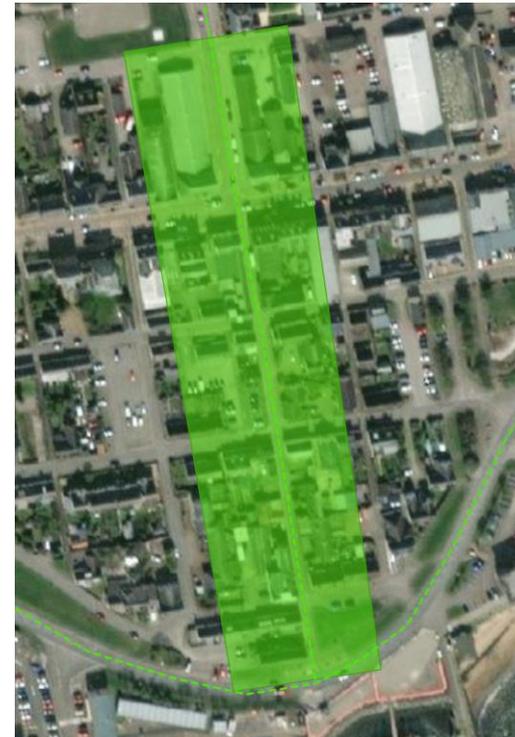
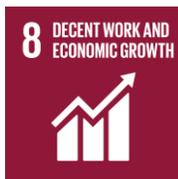
Action 9 - Public Realm Improvements and Placemaking between Invergordon Harbour and High Street

This action proposes **public realm improvements and placemaking** between Invergordon Harbour and High Street. These improvements may include seating, secure cycle parking facilities, planters and street furniture. Parklets may also be considered as part of this action, which consists of transforming vehicle parking spaces into attractive public realm for people to sit, interact and enjoy.

Stakeholder feedback placed emphasis on the harbour as a key destination within Invergordon. Analysis of IMF2 indicated a desire to improve the public realm between the harbour and the High Street, which would create a more attractive environment for visitors, such as passengers using the harbour, to spend time within the local area. This action would also support local businesses through facilitating an increase in footfall.

This action would effectively link in with masterplan proposals such as active travel infrastructure along the B817, King Street, Castle Road and Castle Avenue. In addition, these proposals would also link with IMF2 development sites IG03 and IG05

Many public realm and placemaking improvements could be trialled at a low cost with a view of these interventions becoming permanent.



Actions

Action 10 - Public Realm Improvements and Placemaking at Tank Farm

Tank Farm is a derelict site located to the east of Invergordon surrounded by residential dwellings. The area is IMFLDP2 preferred site IG04 for mixed-use development (housing, retail, business and community).

Stakeholder engagement highlighted Tank Farm as a potential improvement area within the town and current barrier to active travel movement, in particular for east-west journeys.

This action proposes **public realm improvements and placemaking** at Tank Farm in line with IG04 being delivered. This may include seating, planters, secure cycle parking, street art and signage, to create an attractive environment for all users. This action also presents an opportunity to incorporate initiatives such as Invergordon off the Wall; a local voluntary art-based community regeneration project.

This action should also consider the delivery of an active travel route through the development site layout. This would ensure permeability for active travel users undertaking east-west journeys.



Action 11 - Active Travel Bridge on Academy Road

This action proposes an **active travel bridge** be delivered on Academy Road over the railway line to provide a pedestrian and cycle crossing and access to Tank Farm. There is a disused bridge currently on Academy Road, therefore this action could consist of redevelopment of the existing bridge.

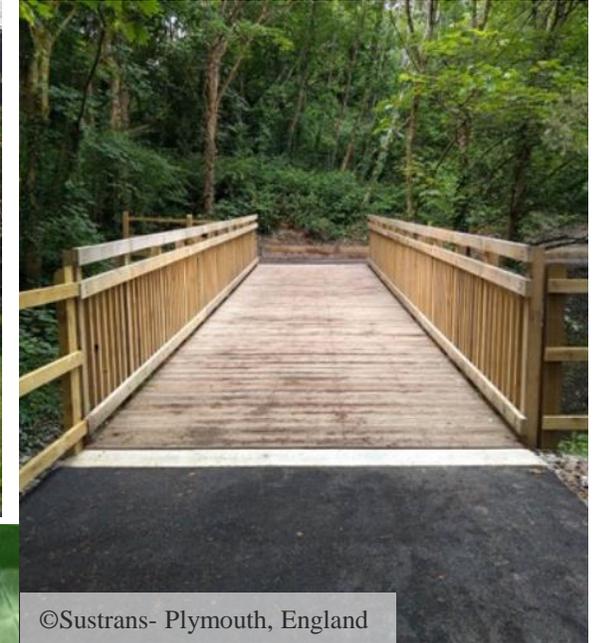
This proposal would include structural improvements, resurfacing and widening where feasible to ensure the bridge is suitable for walking, wheeling and cycling.

This bridge would ensure a safe and attractive active travel link from Invergordon Academy and Invergordon Leisure Centre to the rest of the town. This action would also link with other masterplan proposals, such as improvements to Tank Farm.

This action should be explored further through a feasibility study.



©Google – existing disused bridge



©Sustrans- Plymouth, England



Actions

Action 12 - High Quality Cycle Parking

Stakeholder feedback, including targeted stakeholder discussions and public engagement through commonplace, identified the importance of improving active travel facilities across Alness and Invergordon, including cycle parking.

Therefore, this action proposes the delivery of **high quality cycle parking** at 2 key locations; Teaninich Industrial Estate (Alness) and Inverbreakie Industrial Estate (Invergordon) These facilities should be sheltered and secure, which will enable users to park their cycle safely and conveniently. This will ultimately increase the propensity to cycle for everyday journeys across Alness and Invergordon, providing secure cycle parking at key attractors and employment areas.

Strategic cycle parking locations will compliment the active travel routes and actions identified previously and serve key trip attractors and employment areas across both towns with high quality cycle parking.



Actions

Green/ Blue Infrastructure and Placemaking

The active travel actions outlined previously will be supplemented by **green/ blue infrastructure and placemaking measures**.

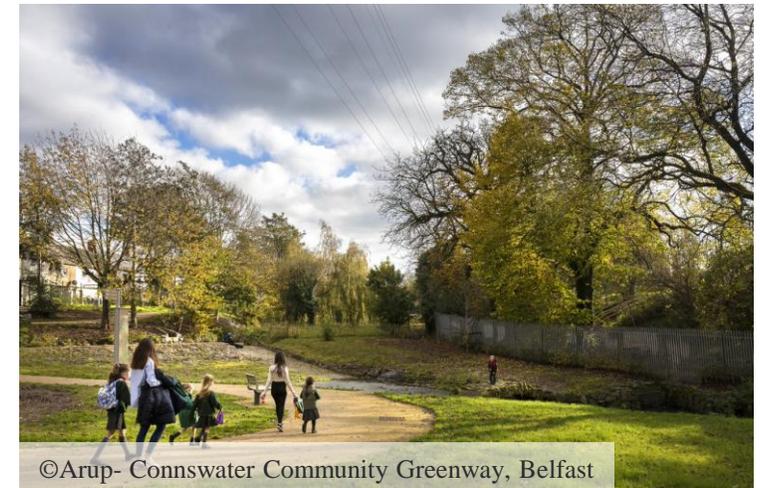
Biodiversity will be enhanced through the provision of green infrastructure. This may include trees and additional verge allowed to grow for wildlife purposes along proposed routes, and community planters along quiet streets that benefit wildlife. In addition, actions should strive to include blue infrastructure such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and water management features. Incorporating measures that enhance green and blue infrastructure will bring holistic benefits, including improvements to health and wellbeing, air quality and taking climate action.

Placemaking measures will also be incorporated into proposed actions where feasible. This may include parklets, street furniture, street art and signage and wayfinding. The aim is to create vibrant spaces where people feel safe and want to linger and enjoy. This will benefit local residents and local businesses through increasing footfall and social interaction.

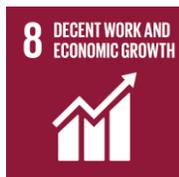
Therefore, green/ blue infrastructure and placemaking will be incorporated into proposals to deliver social, economic and environmental goals for Alness & Invergordon.



©Arup- Windmill Street Parklet, London



©Arup- Connswater Community Greenway, Belfast



Summary

Summary and Conclusion

The proposals identified throughout the Alness & Invergordon Active Travel Masterplan were informed by a structured desktop review exercise, virtual site audits, targeted stakeholder engagement and wider public engagement.

The key highlights of the masterplan are as follows:

- High quality active travel infrastructure on B817, A9, Birch Road, King Street, Castle Road and Castle Avenue.
- High quality active travel bridges on the B817 over the River Averon (Alness) and on Academy Road over the railway line (Invergordon).
- Neighbourhood mobility hubs at Alness Railway Station and Invergordon Railway Station.

Delivery of these actions will create a continuous, coherent active travel network for the town, and bring a wide range of positive social, economic and environmental impacts for the local area. The actions identified throughout this masterplan will also be utilised to inform the development of IMFLDP2 and the planning and delivery of sustainable, active transport infrastructure in Alness & Invergordon.



Appendices

Please scroll...

Appendices

A – Desktop Scrapbook

Please scroll...

Desktop Review Scrapbook

Alness and Invergordon Active Travel Masterplan

Contents

1. Background
2. Inner Moray Firth Overview
 - Masterplan Towns Fact-file
 - Policy Review
 - National Cycle Network Overview
3. Alness and Invergordon
 - Existing Travel Audit (2010)
 - Policy Review
 - Baseline Data Review
 - Existing Active Travel Network and Mapping
4. Desktop Review Conclusions

Section 1-Background

1. Background

Arup has been appointed by HITRANS to produce an Active Travel Masterplan for the Inter Moray Firth (IMF) Development Plan area. This includes the towns of Alness and Invergordon, Dingwall, Nairn, and Tain.

This document provides the findings and analysis from the key elements of the desktop review stage. This includes a review of policy in relation to the wider IMF region, followed by a localised review of the 4 Masterplan locations.

Documents and data reviewed includes:

- Previous Active Travel Audits.
- Local Transport and Planning Policy.
- Baseline data, including census data, movement flows and accident statistics.
- Mapping, including core paths plans and the Scottish Index for Multiple Deprivation.



© Google Maps

1. Background

Existing Active Travel Audits- Key Data Sources for Refresh:

Item	Detail within Previous Audits	Actions for Masterplans refresh
Census Data	Census Travel to Work/Study Statistics (mode share; distance travelled to work/study)	Update to include Census 2011 data.
Movement Flows	Pedestrian and cycle movement flows; Traffic Counts; AADT flows; Speed Data.	Update to most recent data, ideally within the last 5 years. Sources include Open-Source Data (eg Cycling Scotland, Traffic Scotland) and Highland Council Data.
Accident Data	Data from previous 5 years (includes Pedestrian/Bicycle, Pedestrian/Car, Bicycle/Car and Serious Injuries)	Update to include most recent data from previous 5 years (2015-2019 pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular accidents).
Public Transport Information	Existing bus services and extension of bus services for each area.	Public transport not within project scope, however the Masterplans will consider public transport hubs and undertake a high-level review of key public transport characteristics.
Policy documents	Vision and objectives related to active travel.	Update to include recent documents: IMF Local Development Plan (Draft 2021); IMF Local Development Plan (Adopted 2015); HITRANS Active Travel Strategy (2018).
Core Paths Plan	Highland Council Core Paths Plans.	Bring up-to-date to include most recent CPPs.
Travel Plans	School Travel Plans.	School Travel Plans are not available online, therefore will request from Highland Council.

Section 2- Inner Moray Firth Overview

2. Alness and Invergordon Fact-file

	Alness	Invergordon
Population size	5,782 (+2% 2012-16)	4,075 (-4% 2012-16)
Main employment locations	Manufacturing and construction	Manufacturing and construction with an industrial history (oil rigs, wind turbines, distilling)
Key medical facilities	-	County Community Hospital
Key education centres	Alness Academy; Bridgent Primary School; Coulhill Primary School; Obsdale Primary School;	Invergordon Academy; South Lodge Primary School; Park Primary School.
Main features	River Averon; Train station; A9 to the south; Supermarkets (Morrisons and Lidl); Teaninich Distillery.	Train station; Large disused fuel tanks; Industrial port; Industrial warehouse to the east.
Cycle & Walk mode share	26.3% (24.7% walk, 1.6% cycle)	27.1% (24.3 walk, 2.8% cycle)
Demographics	~50% of the population between 25-64 (working age), majority of households are on-person, or cohabiting.	

2. Policy Review – IMF Local Development Plan 2 Main Issues Report

Key points:

- This is a consultation document that does not yet represent approved planning policy of Highland Council and are not yet used in the determination of planning applications.
- This document sets out HC's initial ideas and preferences for future planning policy within the Inner Moray Firth in order to encourage debate and comment.

Vision and Outcomes:

- Growing communities- IMF communities will function as networks of locally resilient and self-supportive places which are attractive, safe, socially inclusive and healthy with good access to services and amenities.
- Employment- the IMF economy will strive to become greener, circular and more diverse, with multiple thriving sectors such as sustainable tourism, renewable energy, construction and general industry.
- Connectivity- walking and cycling will be the most attractive option for everyday journeys, with public transport, shared mobility and electric vehicles being preferred options for longer journeys. IMF will also be easy to travel between settlements efficiently and sustainably.
- Environment- the environmental quality of places will be safeguarded and further enhanced where possible.

2. Policy Review – IMF Local Development Plan 2 Main Issues Report

Main Issues

- **Addressing the climate and ecological emergency**
 - Ensuring new development is accessible via active and sustainable travel.
 - Creating a healthier, more sustainable transport network.
- **Supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economy**
 - Town centres first policy, creating thriving, attractive town centres through infrastructure and placemaking.
- **Growing the most sustainable places**
 - Ensuring places are well served with a diverse range of sustainable transport options that cater for local demographics, including an ageing population.
 - Ensuring development is located in more sustainable locations.
- **Creating a more healthy, sustainable transport network**
 - Walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport must be the best ways of getting around for all in the IMF.
 - Ambitious aim within LDP to ensure road space is equally shared among other transport modes.
 - The IMF is the most urban and populated area of the Highlands, therefore is best-suited to incorporating sustainable travel choices.
 - This will reduce the reliance on private car travel for all types of journeys across the IMF, and create a fairer and equal transport system for all.
- **Placemaking**
 - Must be incorporated at every stage of design in order to improve the quality of places.
 - Placemaking principles- resource-efficient, easy to move around, welcoming, distinctive, safe and welcoming and adaptable.

2. Policy Review – IMF Local Development Plan (Adoped 2015)

Vision and Spatial Strategy:

Aims and objectives for 2030:

- Increase the number of jobs, people and facilities;
- Have a growing City;
- Safeguard and enhance its special places;
- Make it easy for people and wildlife to move about through a green network;
- Have more efficient forms of travel;
- Resolve infrastructure constraints;
- Diversify the local economy; and
- Be regenerated and renewed.

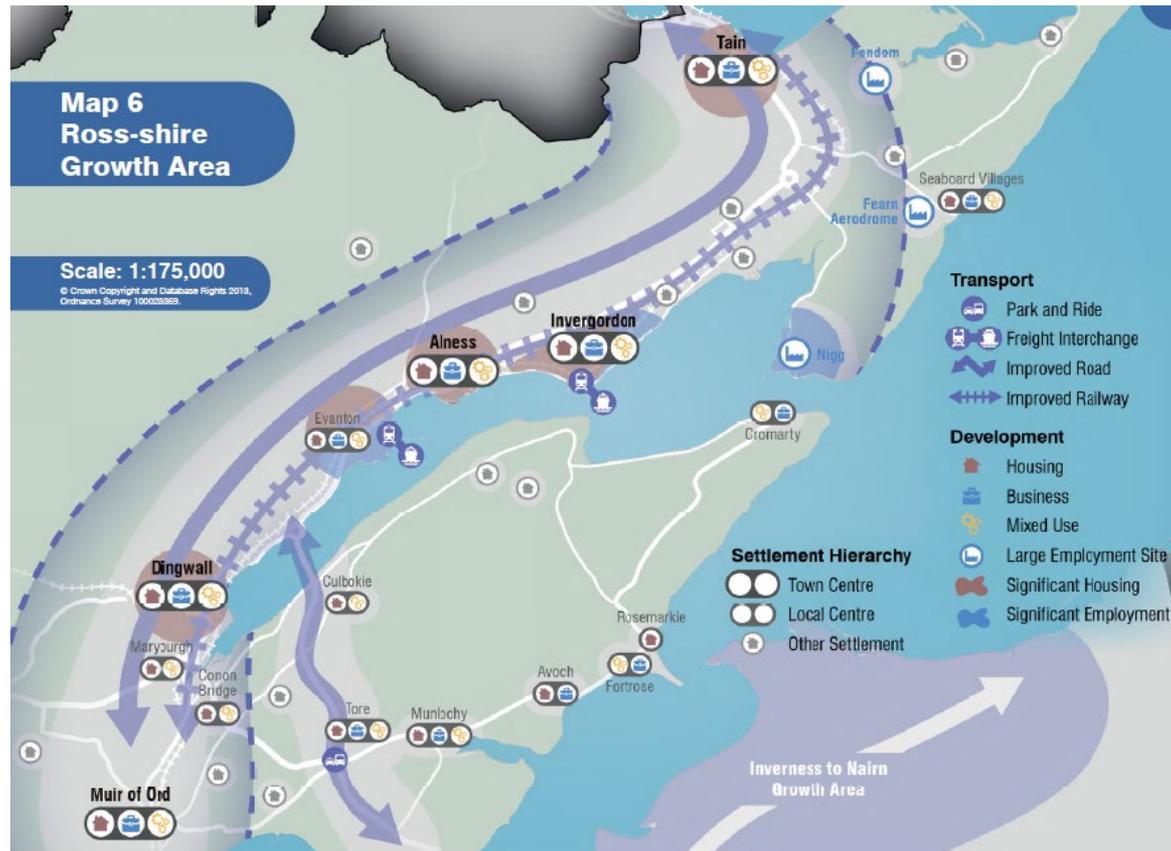
Transport/ Active Travel:

- The IMF is well-suited to a shift towards more sustainable forms of travel due to being one of the most densely populated area of the Highlands. The IMF area is therefore well-suited to the delivery of an active travel network.
- Development within existing settlements should be located within active travel range (eg 400m walking distance) of key services and amenities such as employment and community facilities.
- New developments are required to contribute towards local and strategic transport projects identified within this plan in the form of Developer Contributions.

2. Policy Review – IMF Local Development Plan (Adoped 2015)

Ross-Shire

- Potential for the development of an active travel network around Alness, Dingwall, Invergordon and Tain.
- Rail line enhancement to improve journey times and attractiveness of rail travel for longer distance journeys- potential to encourage links between rail and active travel.



2. Policy Review – Highland Wide LDP (2012)

Accessibility and Transport

- Development must be located and designed so that the need to travel is reduced and sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling are encouraged.
- Sustainable trip making must also be promoted between key land uses such as housing, schools, employment areas and retail.
- Examples of carefully designed interventions that promote active travel include ‘home zones’ and ‘safe routes to school.’
- The rural nature of much of the Highlands means significant use of the private car for longer journeys. However, there remain clear opportunities to promote sustainable trip making, through promoting multi-modal journeys, where active travel can be undertaken for part of the journey.

Policy 56- Travel

- Development should be well-served by sustainable transport modes from the outset and provide opportunity for modal shift away from private car.
- Active travel proposals must consider key travel desire lines.
- Opportunities for walking and cycling must be maximised.

2. Policy Review – Highland Wide LDP (2012)

Tain

- Tain is identified as a key business and industrial location, with land safeguarded for prospective future development that Highland Council would support.
- Tain is also a key service centre within the IMF.

Alness/Invergordon

- Alness Business Park is identified as a key business and industrial location, with land safeguarded for prospective future development that Highland Council would support.
- Invergordon port is a key economic development area for growing industries such as tourism and renewable energy. Invergordon Tank Farm is classified as a major regeneration area for future redevelopment.

Dingwall

- Dingwall is a key service centre within IMF.
- Dingwall Business Park is identified as a key business and industrial location, with land safeguarded for prospective future development that Highland Council would support.

Nairn

- Nairn is a key service centre within IMF.
- Key development areas- Lochloy, Sandown, Delnies and Nairn South. These developments promote the expansion of Nairn as a town. Opportunity to promote active travel upon development occupation.

2. Policy Review – HITRANS Active Travel Strategy (2018)

Key Objectives

- Increase mode share of walking and cycling to work and school within each HITRANS local authority area.
- Increase number of people walking and cycling using selected key routes, and monitor impact of interventions.
- Maintain local, regional and national investment in active travel.

Challenges

- Long-term funding/ revenue streams and resourcing (eg winter maintenance and reliance on volunteer support).

Identified Action Plan

Action	Examples
Marketing and Promotion	Behavioural change measures, cycle training, message delivery, school travel.
Planning and Policy	Increased funding, increased partnerships to promote active travel.
Public Transport Integration	Station cycle parking/facilities, cycles on buses, bus stop reviews.
Maintenance	Existing route maintenance such as litter picking on routes, local route audits.
Infrastructure	Trunk road active travel improvements, feasibility studies for routes, speed limits, cycle parking provision, cycle hire schemes.
Development Planning	Links between active travel and new development, high quality designing.

2. Policy Review – HITRANS Active Travel Strategy (2018)

Tain

- A9 Missing links on NCN1 at Cromarty Bridge and Tain to Dornoch Bridge

Alness/ Invergordon

- Priority 1: Develop a high quality Strategic Regional Route
- Priority 2: Network improvement strategy
- Priority 3: Promote uptake of travel plans to local employers (Now HItravel PTP)

Dingwall

- Priority 1: Dingwall Schools Accessibility Plan
- Priority 2: Maryburgh to Dingwall School Walking and Cycling Route
- Priority 3: Install Cycle Parking in Dingwall Town Centre

Nairn

- B9090: Cawdor Road Railway Bridge active travel improvements
- Priority 1: Reducing severance caused by A96 and Railway
- Priority 2: Ensuring cycleways and footpaths be provided to and within new developments
- Priority 3: Improving links to wider access networks including NCN 1 and Coastal Paths

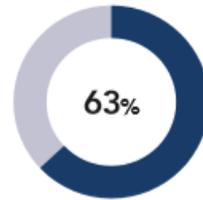
2. Policy Review – Cycling Scotland Monitoring Report 2020

Highland

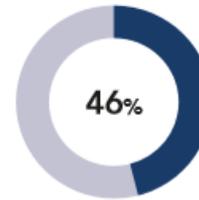


Trends and context

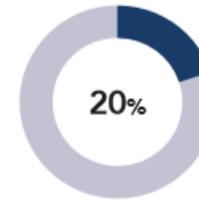
Proportion of journeys under 5km



Households with access to one or more bikes for private use



Households with no access to a car for private use



Workplaces

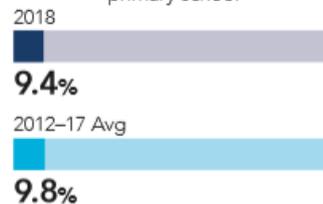
Employees cycling to work usually/regularly



24
Cycling Friendly Employers
employing
3,759
staff

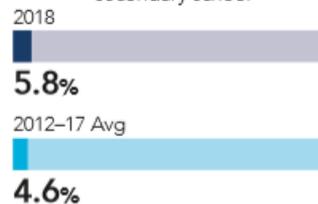
Schools

Pupils cycling to primary school



15
Cycling Friendly Schools
reaching
5,890
pupils

Pupils cycling to secondary school



29.8%
Percentage of primary schools
delivering Level 2 Bikeability
Scotland training

Active travel budget*

Capital
£640,321

Revenue
£209,977

2018/19

* Method of financial calculations will vary by council. Figures provided by local area may not capture full spend.

- There is a significant proportion of trips under 5km across Highland, despite the sparsely populated nature of the region.
- There is clear room for improvement in relation to cycling to work and study. Both infrastructure and behaviour change initiatives could stimulate shift towards active travel

2. Policy Review – Inner Moray Firth Modal Shift Strategy (2020)

Key Messages

- Population growth of around ~0.5%/year within the IMF Development Area.
- Need to make public transport more competitive with the car, particularly in terms of journey times.
- Higher use of the car and lower use of public transport in the Highlands compared with the national average.
- Travel plans are becoming more common, particularly for large employers. However, after their production, limited action to promote more sustainable transport is seen.
- 1.6km is found to be the cut-off point whereby individuals in the IMF area select to drive (~3 minutes) over walking (~20 minutes).
- The main focus for modal shift is Inverness since it is experiencing the most severe traffic congestion and has the most trips which could be shifted to active modes.
- Nairn has been allocated significant housing allocation between 2011-2031 (2,500 new homes).
- A number of proposed transport schemes have been discussed including Kinnairdie Link Road in Dingwall and a new rail station at Dalcross (between Inverness and Nairn).

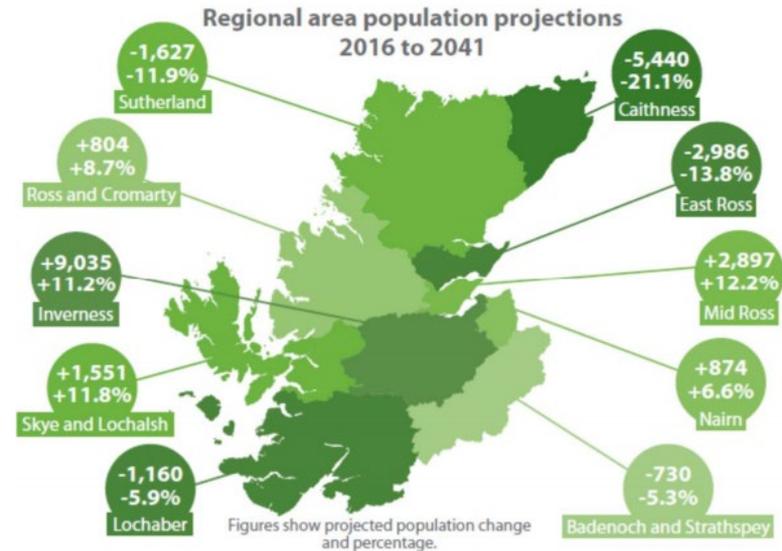
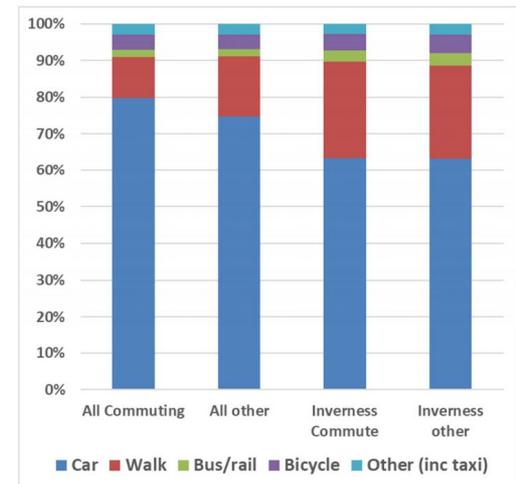


Figure 3.6 – Mode Share Estimates derived from Population and Accessibility characteristics of Census output areas and Scottish Household Survey trip data



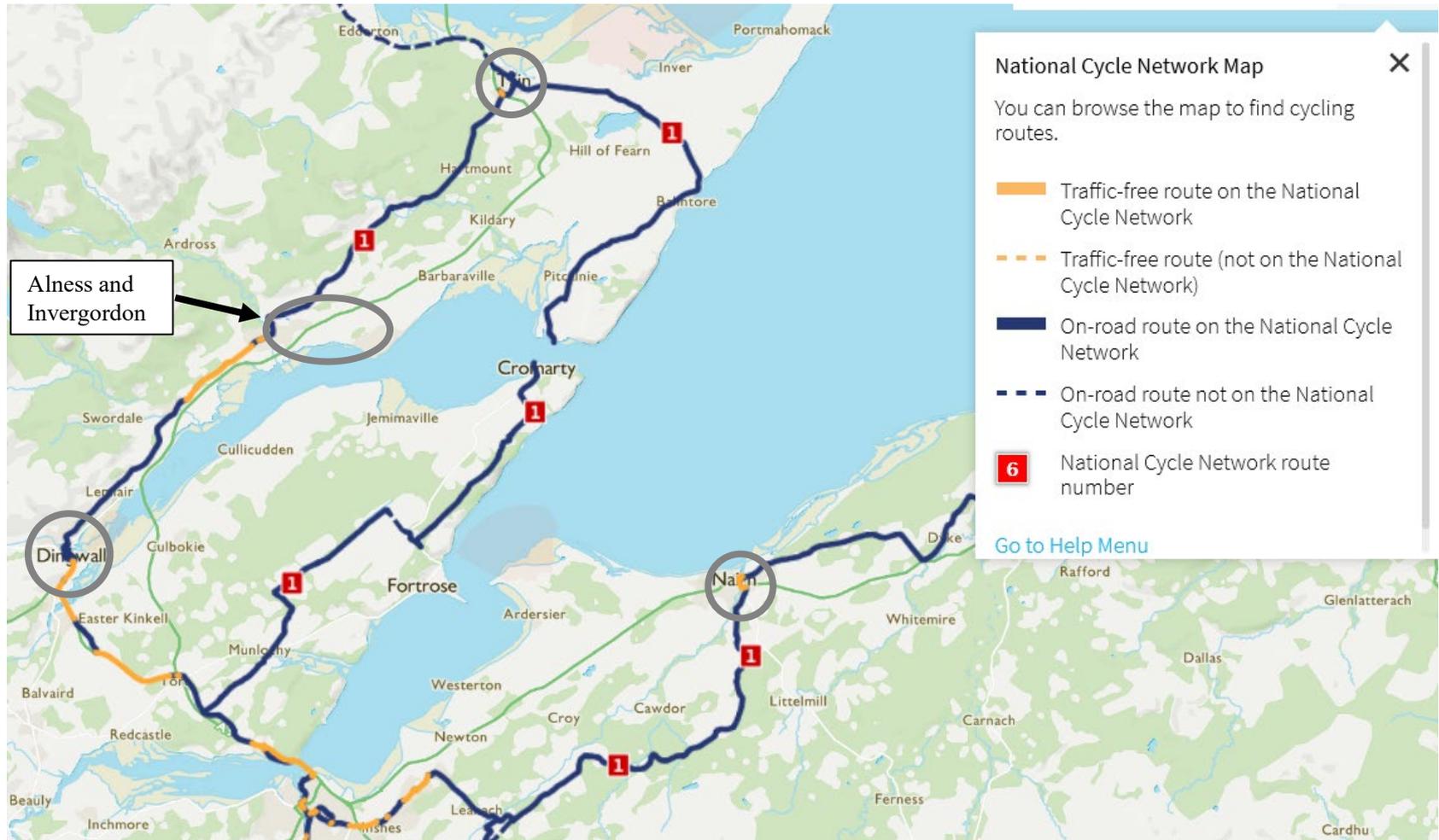
2. National Cycle Network- IMF Overview

The National Cycle Network (NCN) links many of the towns, villages, and tourist attractions within the IMF area. Apart from Invergordon, all of the study towns see the route go through the town.

The NCN passes close to Dingwall, Alness and Tain railway stations. This facilitates multi-modal trips.



2. National Cycle Network- IMF Overview



- The vast majority of NCN routes across the IMF are on-road routes.
- There are small sections of traffic-free routes in Nairn, Dingwall, Tain and on approach to Alness and Invergordon.

Section 3- Alness & Invergordon

3. Alness & Invergordon Active Travel Audit 2010

Summary Points:

1. There is a considerable amount of movement between the two towns, particularly as Invergordon does not have a large supermarket and residents in Alness rely on the hospital in Invergordon.
2. Currently no formalised pedestrian/cycle routes between the towns, although there are potential routes which could be used. This Strategic Regional Route was considered top priority in the audit, particularly as the short distance (6.5km) can be covered by bike.
3. There are part-time 20mph zones outside all of the schools in both settlements except Bridgend Primary School (Alness).
4. The B817 is the most direct and commonly used route between Alness-Invergordon. This road is narrow, especially considering the HGV traffic on this road. There are sections of this 50mph road with no pavement or segregated cycleway. There is a cycle path on part of the route, but flaws were identified (i.e. no dropped crossings, poor quality surface, not continuing all the way to Alness). At points there are retaining walls creating pinch points for pedestrians and cyclists.
5. Abundant free car parking across both towns.
6. Relatively good cycle parking provision across both towns (high street, train stations, leisure centres, hospitals).
7. Frequent bus services during peak hours, but no bus services between 11:30-14:30.
8. Recent developments within both towns have been designed for priority car access, with limited consideration for active modes.
9. Suggestions were made to collaborate with businesses to promote active travel incentives and update organisational travel plans (e.g. superstores, schools, county community hospital, others in business parks).

3. Alness & Invergordon Active Travel Audit 2010

Invergordon Main Messages:

1. A disused Seabank tank farm within the centre of town is a barrier to active travel (no paths through the land, detours required)
2. Poor active travel infrastructure around the new community hospital.
3. Popular routes to school are in need of upgrades: along Saltburn Woodland and from Golf View Terrace to Seabank Road.
4. No bridge at Invergordon Train Station – considerable walk needed for passengers to retrieve bikes.

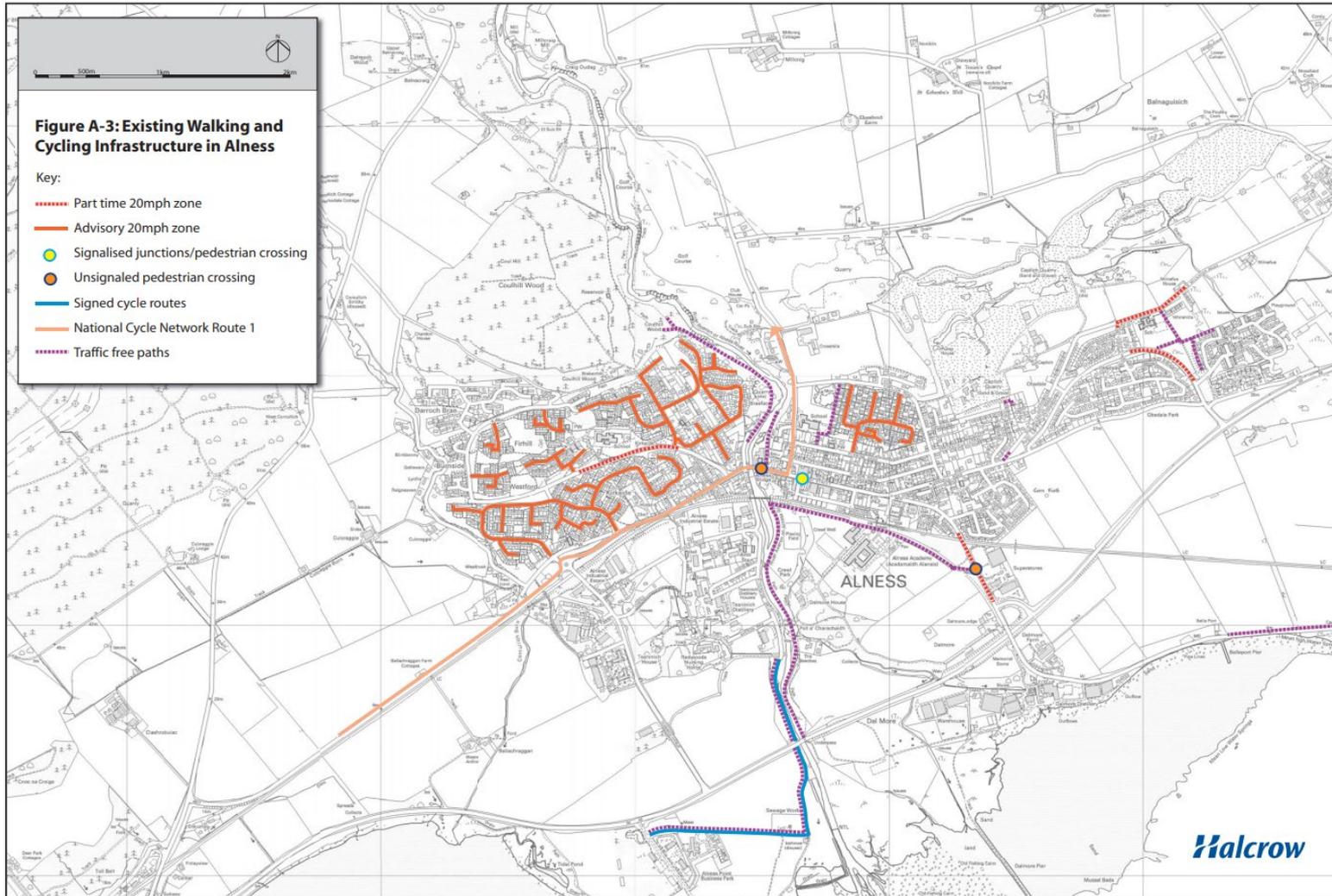


Alness Main Messages:

1. Key employment centre (Alness Point Business Park, Caplich Quarry)
2. Walking and cycling routes are present (Safer Routes to School, NCN1), but could be better signed and promoted. Routes should be improved before they are promoted. NCN signage at the Teatinich Avenue/B817 roundabout is highlighted as an area for improvement.
3. Traffic free cycle route between Alness and the Point Business Park, however needs improvements (cyclists must dismount under A9 bridge).
4. No facilities to cross the A9 and no footways linking the A9-B817 despite there being bus stops.
5. The riverside cycle path to Alness Point Business Park requires maintenance.
6. There is a project to refurbish and sell unwanted bicycles at the high school (run by past and current students).

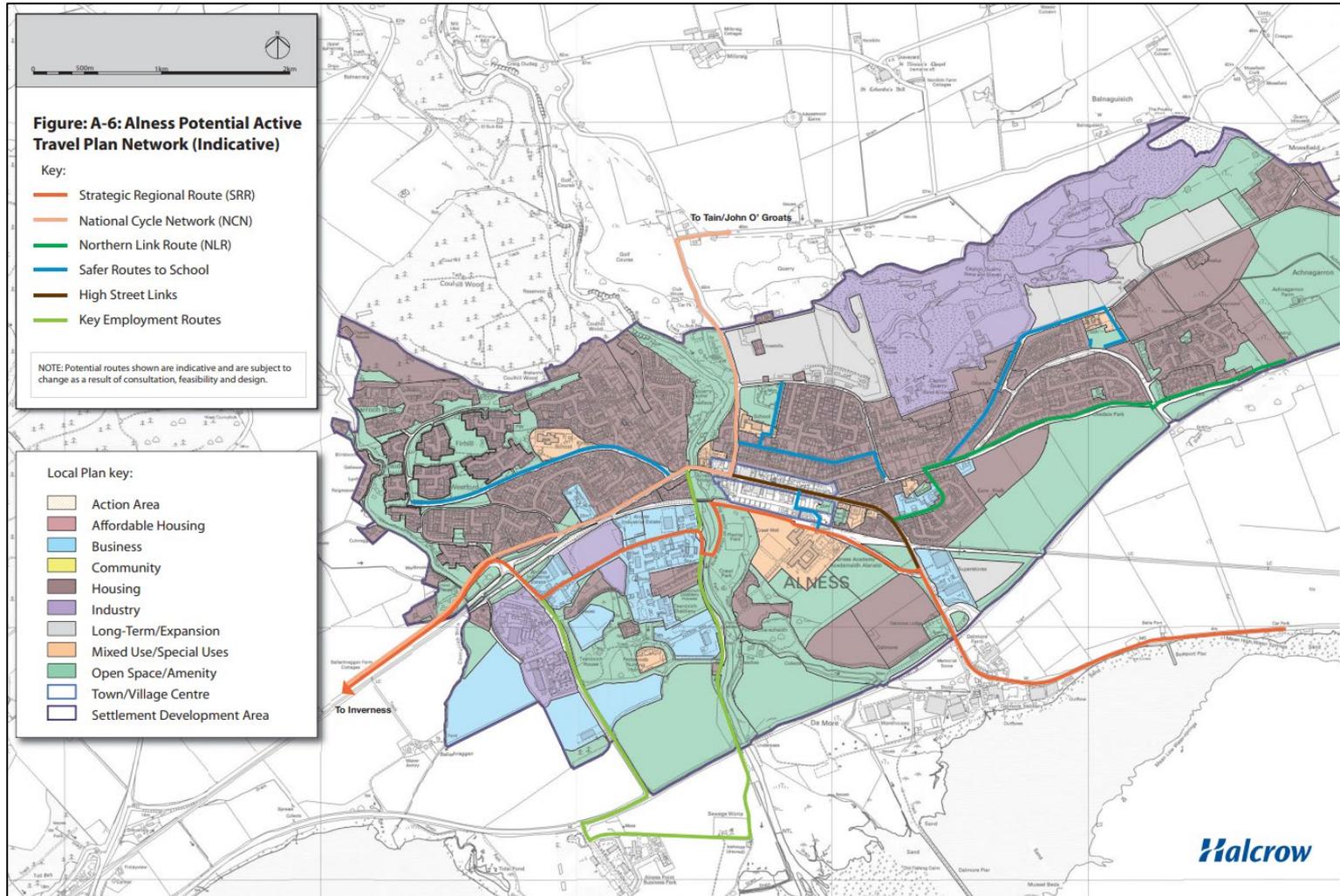
3. Alness & Invergordon Active Travel Audit 2010

Alness Existing Active Travel Infrastructure (2010)



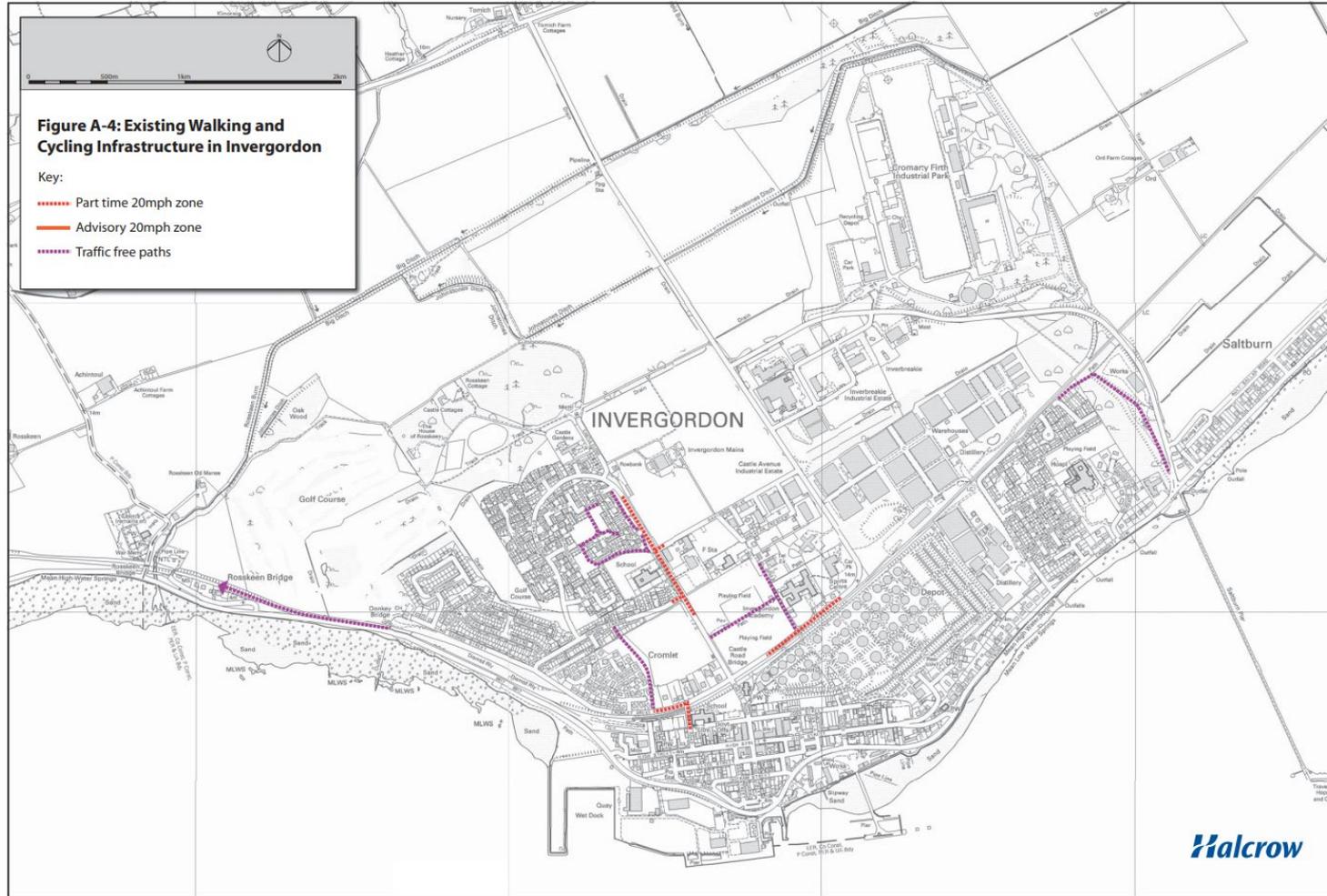
3. Alness & Invergordon Active Travel Audit 2010

Alness Proposed Active Travel Network (2010)



3. Alness & Invergordon Active Travel Audit 2010

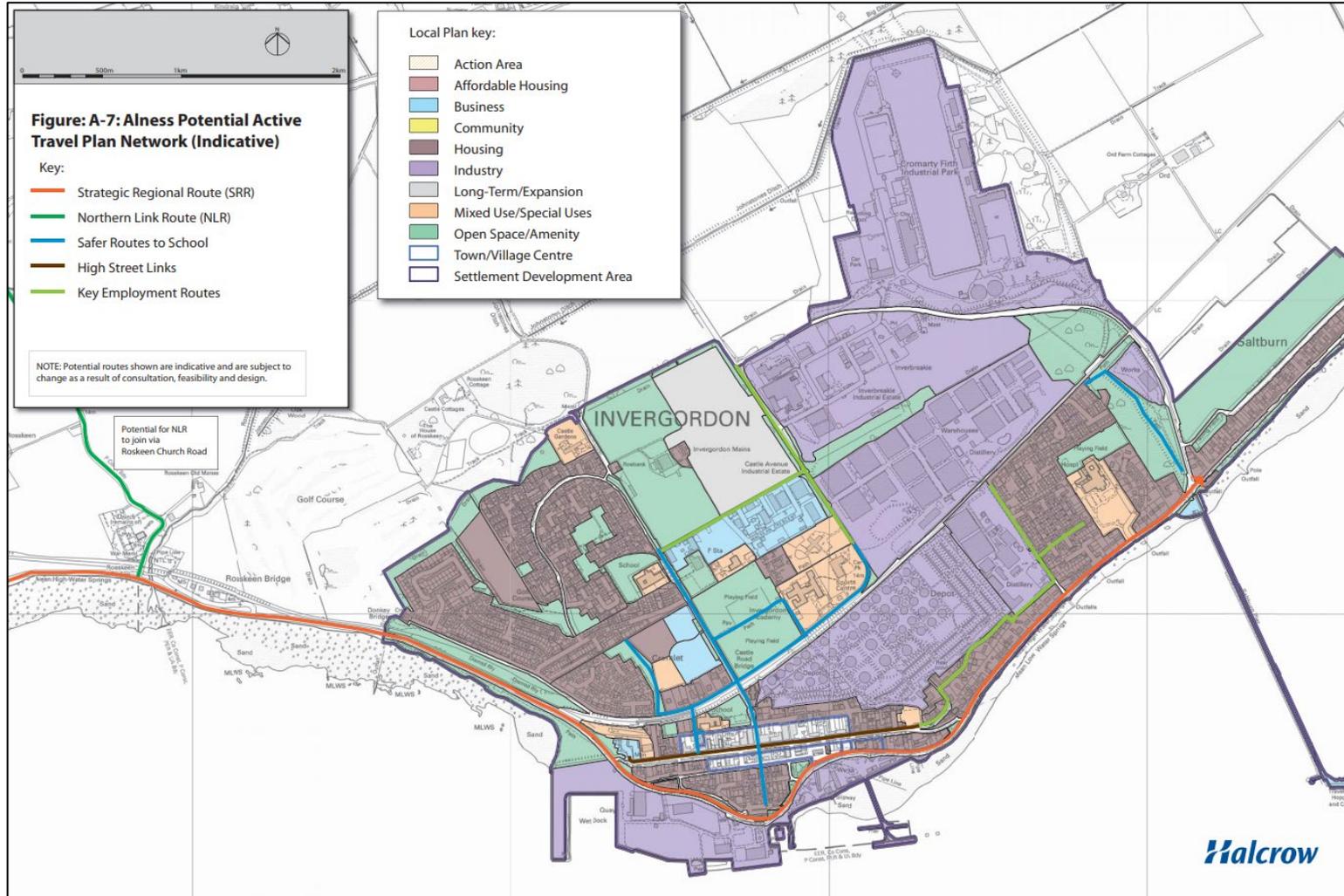
Invergordon Existing Active Travel Infrastructure (2010)



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3. Alness & Invergordon Active Travel Audit 2010

Invergordon Active Travel Proposed Network (2010)



3. Policy Review- IMF Local Development Plan (Draft 2021)

Settlement profile- Alness

Overview:

- Alness is a key service and employment centre with a diverse range of businesses, services and shops. Business and industrial estates provide significant employment.
- Thriving town centre that was “Great British High Street” Scottish Champion Award winner in 2018.
- Housing growth is focussed on Alness East, with housing allocations also to the north and south of the town.

Transport Issues:

- Poor **active travel links to the town from Alness East**, with missing footpaths and narrow roads.
- **New/upgraded junction on A9** if Alness East development continues.

Placemaking Priorities:

- Protect and enhance the vibrant town centre.
- Improve and expand on active travel links.
- Maintain high quality rural setting and quality green spaces.

3. Policy Review- IMF Local Development Plan (Draft 2021)

Settlement profile- Alness



- Preferred sites (green) are primarily located to the south, including Dalmore, Teaninich Industrial Estate and Alness Point. These key employers are likely to expand moving forward.
- Alness East- masterplan undertaken for this location and there is an interest in active travel/ transport links from the town centre to Alness East.

3. Policy Review- IMF Local Development Plan (Draft 2021)

Settlement profile- Invergordon

Overview:

- Invergordon is largely based around its deep water harbour, which has invested significantly in energy and tourism facilities.
- Steady growth in the cruise ship industry has seen passenger numbers reach 200,000 annually.
- However despite this growth, the population has declined since the last census 2011 by 2.5%.

Transport Issues:

- Local traffic and parking issues have emerged within the town since the growth of the harbour.
- Traffic issues persist on the Tomich junction- requires working alongside Transport Scotland.

Placemaking Priorities:

- Improve the **public realm along the B817** and **connections between the harbour area and the High Street** to enhance the visitor experience and links with the local community.
- Continue to enhance the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre to better attract visitors such as those from cruise ships and travelling on the NC500.

3. Policy Review- IMF Local Development Plan (Draft 2021)

Settlement Profile- Invergordon

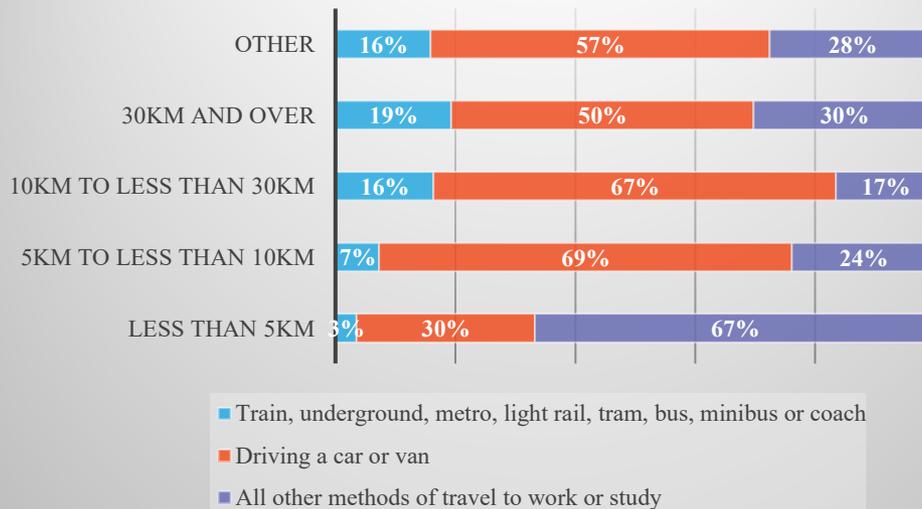


- Preferred development sites (green) are primarily surrounding the harbour area and the town centre of Invergordon.

3. Baseline Data – Census Data (AInness/Invergordon)

Work or study from home	Underground, metro, light rail or tram	Train	Bus, minibus or coach	Taxi or minicab	Driving a car or van	Passenger in a car or van	Motorecycle, scooter or moped	Bicycle	On foot	Other
11.5%	0.0%	2.3%	5.3%	0.7%	40.3%	11.5%	0.2%	2.1%	24.6%	1.6%

Distance of Travel to Work or Study- AInness and Invergordon

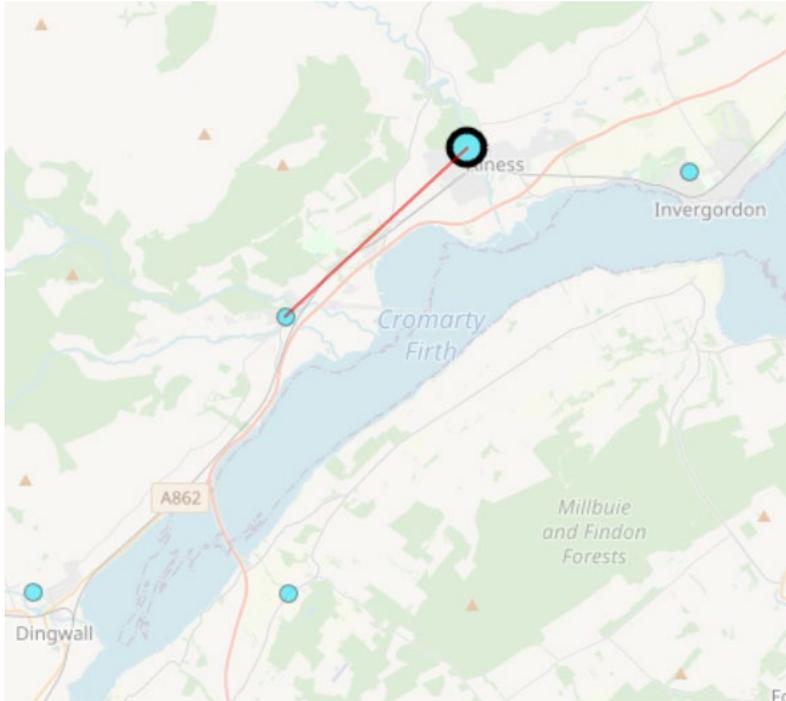


- Active travel accounts for almost 27% of all trips to work or study.
- Around 30% of trips less than 5km are undertaken via private vehicle. It is likely that a large proportion of these trips will be of a walking and/or cycling distance.
- Private vehicles are the preferred mode of transport for journeys above 5km, alongside a small percentage of public transport trips.

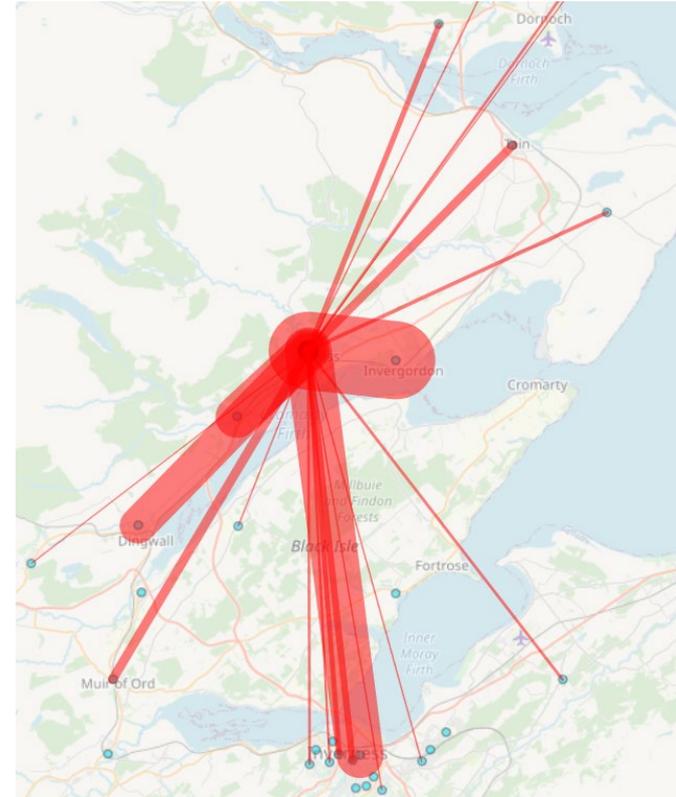
3. Baseline Data – Census Datashine Commute (Alness/Invergordon)

Alness

Walking:



All Modes:

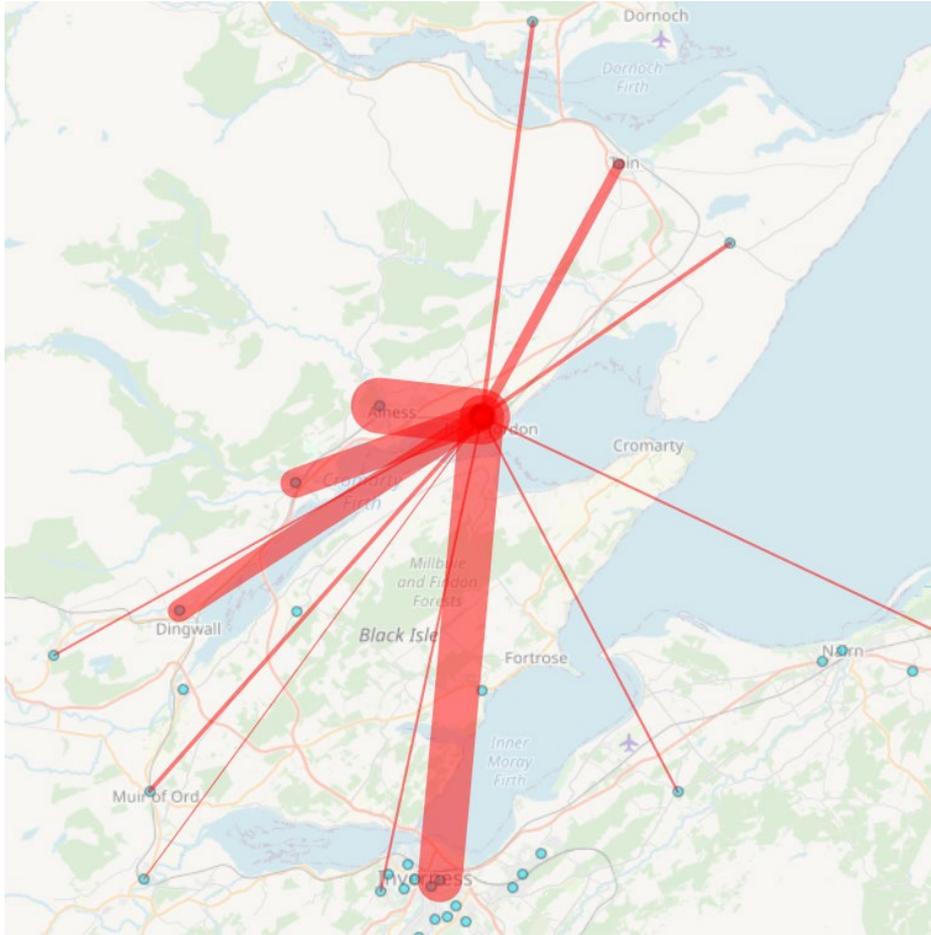


- There is significant amount of movement between Alness and Invergordon. Other popular destinations from Alness include Dingwall and Inverness.
- There are commuter walking trips between Alness and Evanton

3. Baseline Data – Census Datashine Commute (Alness/Invergordon)

Invergordon

All Modes:

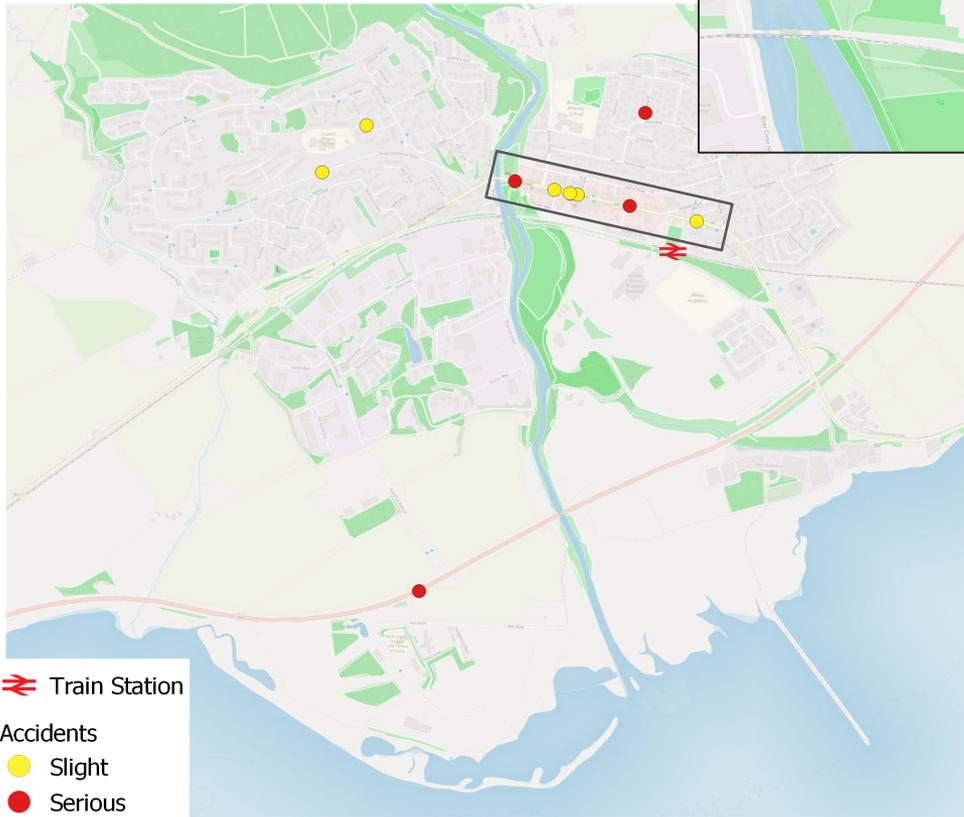


- There is a significant level of movement between Invergordon and Alness.
- Other common commuter destinations from Invergordon include Evanton, Dingwall and Inverness.

3. Baseline Data – Accident Statistics 2015-19

Alness

Between 2015-2019 in Alness there were 11 reported pedestrian and cyclist accidents, 4 of which were serious.



-  Train Station
- Accidents
 -  Slight
 -  Serious

7 of the 11 accidents occurred on the High Street (see enlarged map). 2 of the collisions on the High Street were serious. This could be due to the degree of on-street parking, and lack of safe pedestrian crossing points.

Data source: DfT via Crash Map

3. Baseline Data – Accident Statistics 2015-19

Invergordon

Between 2015-2019 in Invergordon there were 2 reported pedestrian and cyclist accidents, both of which were slight.



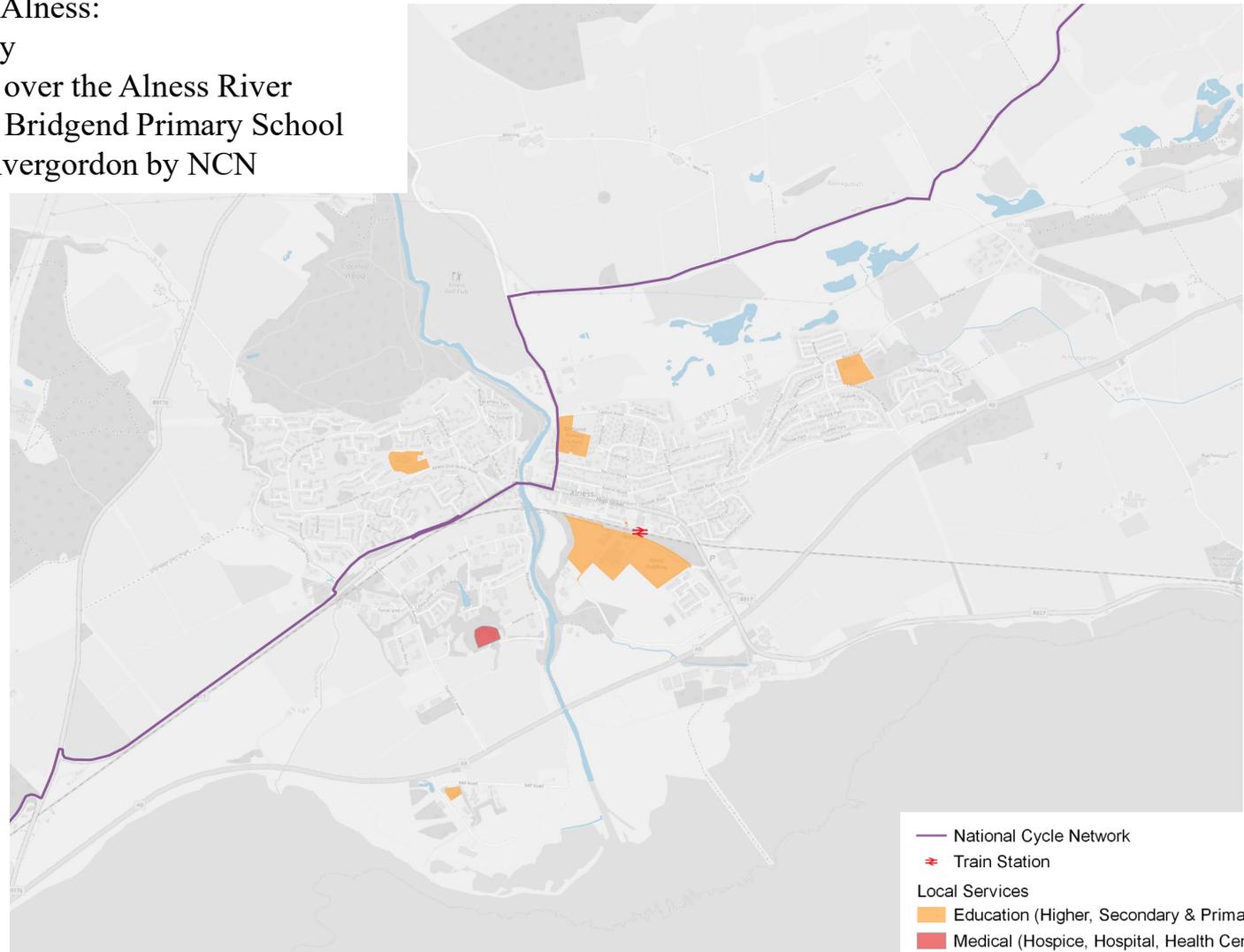
Data source: DfT via Crash Map

3. NCN - Alness

Features of the NCN in Alness:

- East-West route only
- Provides a crossing over the Alness River
- Passes directly past Bridgend Primary School
- No connection to Invergordon by NCN

Continuous to Tain



3. NCN Examples - Alness

- National Cycle Network
- ✚ Train Station
- Local Services
 - Education (Higher, Secondary & Primary)
 - Medical (Hospice, Hospital, Health Centre)



A Narrow footway on one side of the road outside Bridgend Primary School



B Narrow mixed-use bridge across Alness River



C The only other river crossing point

3. NCN Examples- Alness

- National Cycle Network
- + Train Station
- Local Services
 - Education (Higher, Secondary & Primary)
 - Medical (Hospice, Hospital, Health Centre)



D Mixed use path to divert pedestrians/cyclists away from an upcoming roundabout



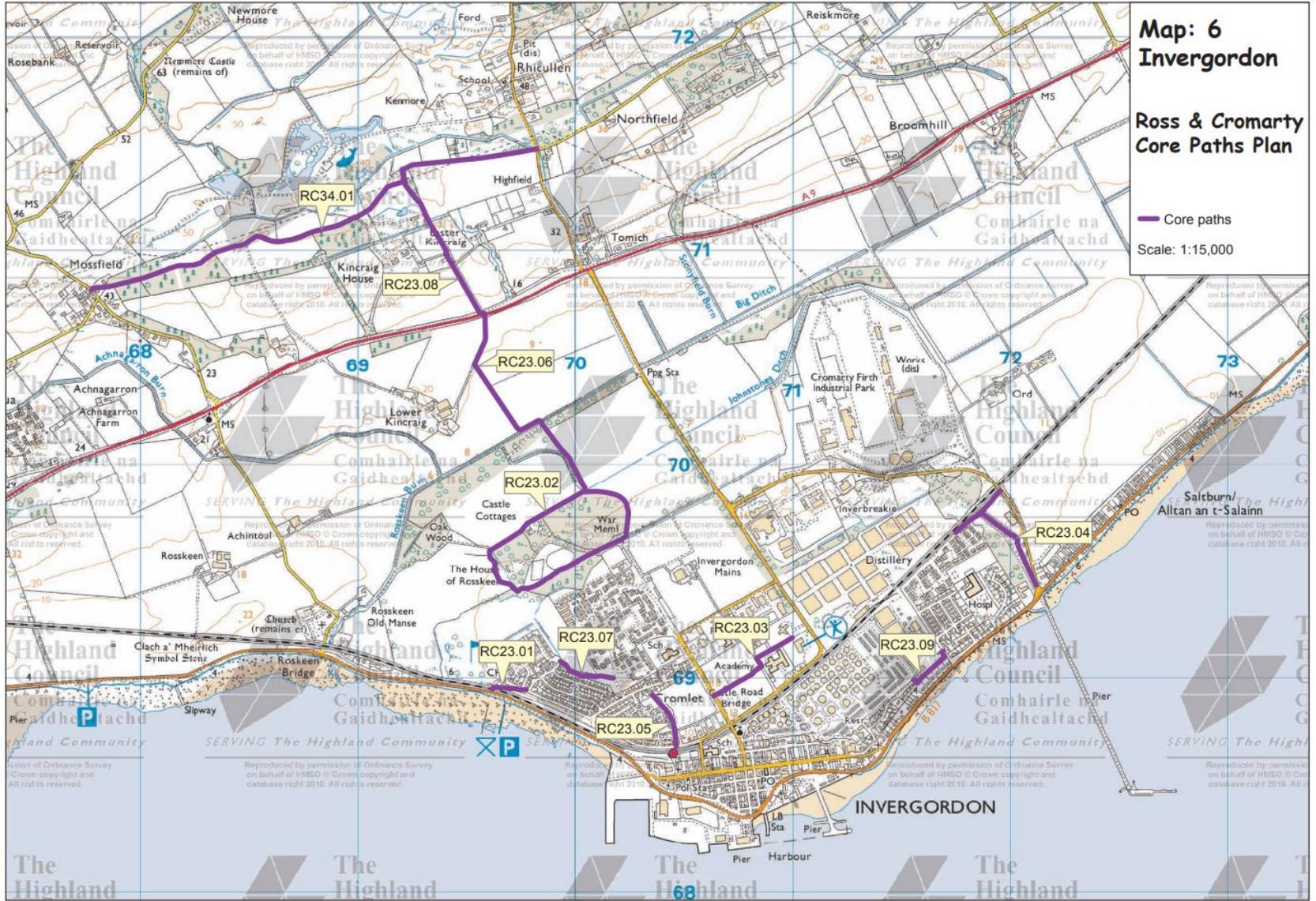
E Segregated path with grass verge alongside the B817

3. Core Paths Plan – Alness (2011)



September 2011

3. Core Paths Plan – Invergordon (2011)



September 2011

3. Scottish Index for Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2020- Alness/Invergordon



- Neighbourhoods to the west of Alness are among the 20% most deprived in Scotland.
- To the east of Alness, there is an area among the 10% most deprived in Scotland which is neighbored by an area among the 10% least deprived. This suggests that there is a significant amount of inequality within this town.
- Invergordon has a neighbourhood among the 5% most deprived in Scotland to the north west of the town.

Section 4- Desktop Review Conclusions

4. Desktop Review Conclusions

The desktop review has been important in providing geographical context and an understanding of transport characteristics and active travel conditions across the IMF and Alness and Invergordon.

Key Conclusions

- The IMF is the most densely populated area of the Highlands, which creates an opportunity to promote sustainable travel behaviour.
- Census 2011 data demonstrates a significant reliance on private car trips for everyday journeys across all Masterplan towns. This is despite a large proportion of journeys being below 5km and of a walking and/or cycling distance.
- Accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists have been reviewed. Accident clusters have been identified, for example within Alness town centre, where multiple collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists were reviewed.
- NCN routes across all masterplan areas are largely for on-road cycling and are of poor quality, with minimal segregated cycling infrastructure.
- There are very few disincentives for users to travel by private car, which is demonstrated by the large amount of free car parking across all Masterplan areas. This is potentially counter intuitive to encouraging travel via active and sustainable modes.
- Public transport hubs such as rail stations across the Masterplan towns create an opportunity to facilitate multi-modal trips, for example through cycle parking, walkable spaces and walking and cycling infrastructure linking to public transport hubs.

4. Desktop Review Conclusions

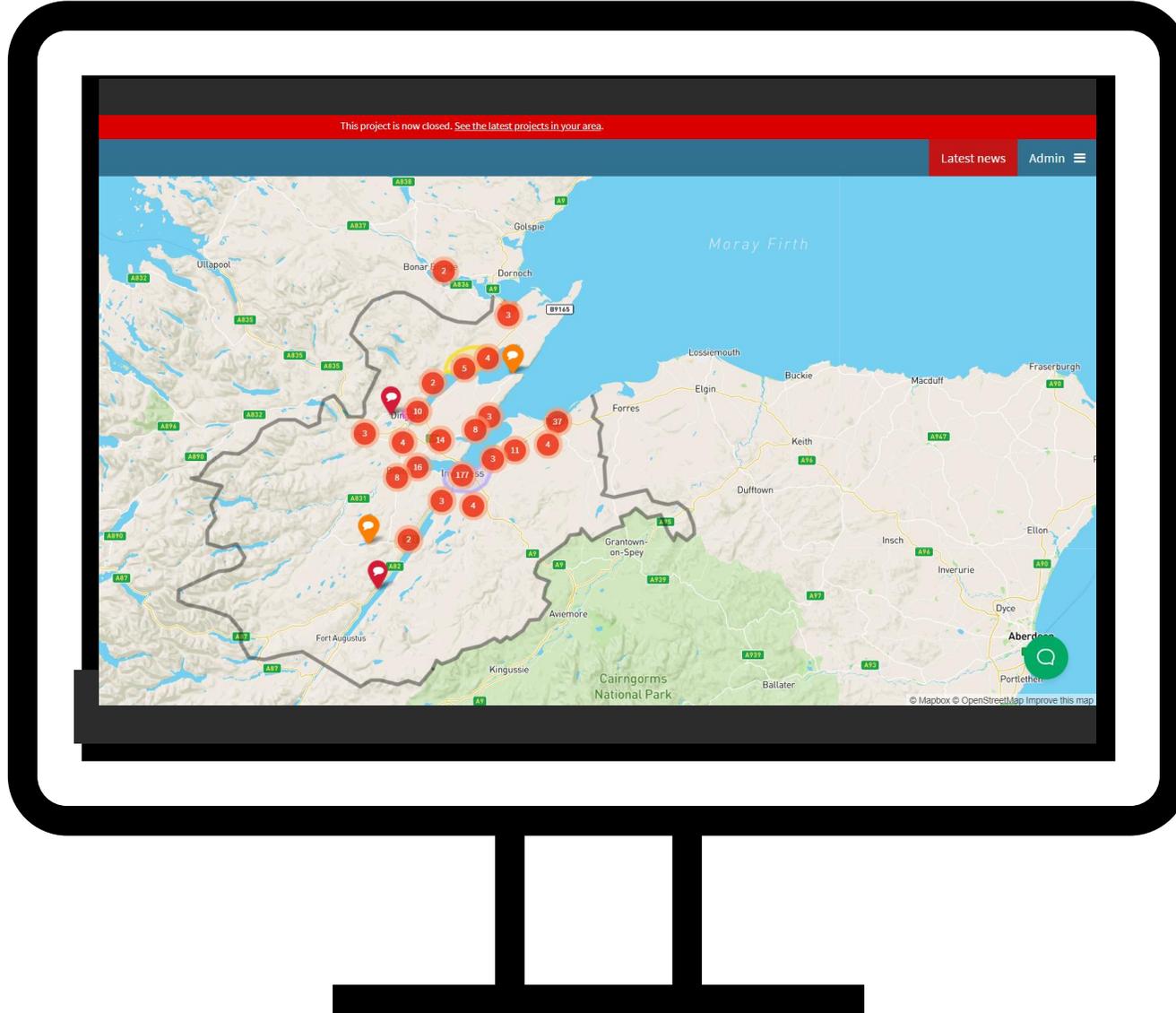
Issues to inform Site Audits/ Stakeholder Engagement

- Key destinations identified from census datashine commute.
- Key development and employment locations identified from the LDP and planning officer discussions.
- Accident clusters, for example within Alness High Street.
- NCN routes across all Masterplan towns.
- Transport Infrastructure surrounding schools.
- Free car parking across all Masterplan towns.
- Public transport hubs across the Masterplan towns and the potential to facilitate multi-modal trips.

Appendices

B – Stakeholder Comments

Please scroll...



View Comments

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